LABELS IN THE HISTORY OF LEXICOGRAPHY: FROM BAILEY TO JOHNSON

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FROM CAWDREY TO JOHNSON

In the 1747 *Plan* to the *Dictionary of the English Language*, Samuel Johnson famously advertises his work as a text that avoids the "pompous luxuriance" of previous dictionaries, which he dismisses as "miscellaneous". In texts such as the 1747 *Plan* or the 1755 *Preface*, the eighteenth-century lexicographer presents his dictionary as resulting from careful "selection" and as an attempt of bringing (a modicum of) "order" to the English language. This representation relies on the familiar dichotomy heterogeneousness/homogeneousness (which can be seen as one of the versions of the fundamental opposition nature/culture). Other well-known texts advertising the 1755 *Dictionary*, such as, for example, Lord Chesterfield's 1754 Letters to the *World*, contribute to shape a representation which persists in certain contemporary accounts of lexicography, namely one which features a wide gap between Johnson's prominent "dictionary" and a(n) (often anonymous) legion of previous heterogeneous texts (which Chesterfield dismisses as "word books", where words have been "jumbled indiscriminately together").

As often-used phrases such as "from Cawdrey to Johnson" or "from Caxton to Johnson" emphasize, Johnson's *Dictionary* has long maintained its position as a "landmark" (or "cornerstone") in both the history of lexicography and the history of English. When commenting upon the boundaries that are conventionally assigned to Early Modern English, in the popular *Stories of English*, David Crystal underlines that scholars sometimes choose to "avoid precise dates altogether, preferring a less specific time reference such as fifteenth to eighteenth century, a historical notion such as Renaissance English, or a descriptive statement such as English from Caxton to Johnson" (Crystal 2004: 285).

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Discursive accounts of the history of English ordinarily stipulate dates such as Old, Middle and Modern. As Jim Milroy pointed out in "The Legitimate Language – Giving a History to English", such accounts can be certainly viewed as having the characteristics of "codification", "which embodies the received wisdom of what language was in the past and how it came to have the form that it has now, and it is regarded as, broadly, definitive" (Milroy 2002: 7). In Milroy's view, mainstream histories of language "establish a canon for the orthodox history of English" (2002: 7). "Johnson" is undoubtedly part of this canon, being employed as a convenient label in the codification involved by such histories. As Jack Lynch showed in the 2005 "How Johnson's Dictionary Became the First Dictionary", The *Dictionary* is still viewed as "the first dictionary" of the English language in several non-specialist accounts, while a significant number of recent reference books regard it as "the first modern dictionary of English" (See also an illuminating discussion on the role of Johnson's *Dictionary* by Busse 2015).

The excerpt below, taken from the chapter on Lexicography in the 2011 *Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics*, is representative of the way in which Johnson's *Dictionary* is recorded by the history of English lexicography:

> Robert Cawdrey's *A Table Alphabetical* (1604) is usually considered as the first printed monolingual English dictionary. However, the history of lexicography remembers Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) as the first modern and innovative dictionary of English" (Fontenelle 2011: 53).

The use of the verb "remember" draws attention to the essential function of history, while the recurrent use of the superlative "first" reminds us of the inherent component of hierarchization present in historical accounts. The adjective "modern" is employed as a way of differentiating Johnson's *Dictionary* from another dictionary which has claims to a first place in English lexicography, namely Cawdrey's *A Table Alphabetical*. There is also the "leap" from Cawdrey (1604) to Johnson (1755) that the author of the excerpt makes, following previous histories of English lexicography. This "leap", which directly transports the reader from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the latter half of the eighteenth century, is also present in the title of one of the best-known histories of lexicography, *The Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson*, by Starnes and Noyes (1946/1991).

We can see that "Cawdrey" and "Johnson" function as points of reference in the history of lexicography, having acquired the value of labels, which fulfil a conventional function in a system of periodization. While the dictionaries of "Cawdrey" and "Johnson" function as useful landmarks for readers interested in a general view of English lexicography, the dictionaries existing in between have been subjected, in the overview required from the reference book which readers are meant to consult, to a process of "erasure" (in the sense of Irvine and Gall (2000: 38).

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At the turn of the twentieth century, the well-known lexicographer James Murray criticised this type of erasure, underlining that Johnson is only one of the stones in the "cairn" of lexicography:

> But the replies of the latter are typical of the notions of a large number of persons, who habitually speak of 'the Dictionary,' just as they do of 'the Bible,' or 'the Prayer-book,' or 'the Psalms'; and who, if pressed as to the authorship of these works, would certainly say that 'the Psalms' were composed by David, and 'the Dictionary' by Dr. Johnson. Whereas, in truth, Dr. Johnson had been preceded by scores of workers, each of whom had added his stone or stones to the lexicographic cairn, which had already risen to goodly proportions when Johnson made to it his own splendid contribution. For, the English Dictionary, like the English Constitution, is the creation of no one man, and of no one age; it is a growth that has slowly developed itself adown the ages. Its beginnings lie far back in times almost prehistoric (Murray 1900: 11).

Contemporary histories of lexicography are also keen to point out that Johnson was "only following in the steps of his predecessors" (Béjoint 2010: 67). Like Murray, Henri Béjoint, the author of the 2010 *Lexicography of English*, is against a representation of the history of lexicography based on abruptness and radical change:

> It is probably unreasonable to see the eighteenth century as a radical change from earlier times in lexicography. The history of dictionaries is more a series of gradual changes in several directions, with the occasional leap and bound, than straightforward linear and regular evolution. Still, the eighteenth century and Johnson above all were the beginning of modern lexicography, when dictionaries became formalized and began being designed as portraits of a language and considered as such by the public. One can say that the effects of Johnsonian lexicography, the use of literary quotations and the historical method, culminated in the first edition of the OED, and that they are still felt today. Modern dictionaries still aim at recording the "whole" language, they use a corpus, and the larger GPD's still illustrate every word and sense by quotations from authentic, if not always, literary, texts. But the history of lexicography was not finished (Béjoint 2010: 82).

However, we have to note that the twenty-first century metalexicographer envisages the history of lexicography as multilinear, rather than Murray's unilinear "cairn". While emphasizing that readers should not represent the history of lexicography in an abrupt and unidirectional manner, but rather as "a series of gradual changes in several directions", Béjoint nevertheless makes in a sentence, introduced by a concessive adverbial, the generalization that "the eighteenth century and Johnson above all were the beginning of modern lexicography". In spite of the more nuanced approach to the history of lexicography, Johnson's *Dictionary* maintains, in the twenty-first century, the function of a "landmark" that it fulfilled in earlier accounts. As Béjoint underlines, the gradualness characterizing lexicography is nevertheless "occasionally marked by leaps and bounds".

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Béjoint's view of Johnson as marking the beginnings of modern lexicography is shared by Allen Reddick in the chapter dedicated to Johnson and Richardson in the 2009 *Oxford History of Lexicography*. In an image similar to that created by the phrase "leaps and bounds", Allen Reddick presents the *Dictionary* as "surpassing" his predecessors:

> But Johnson's Dictionary was certainly not the first monolingual English dictionary: there were important predecessors from which Johnson borrowed or by which he was influenced. Yet Johnson's Dictionary surpassed the aims and achievements of other dictionaries of his day, combining the best features of current lexicography in what may be considered the first modern dictionary of English (Reddick 2009: 156).

As can be seen, Reddick explicitly refers to Johnson's Dictionary as "modern". However, just as Murray did in the early twentieth century, Reddick insists upon the recuperation of Johnson's precursors. Nathan Bailey is undoubtedly one of these precursors, and it will be significant to focus on the representation of his role in a history of lexicography, examining the way in which the representation of this predecessor contributes to the general representation of Johnson's role.

FROM BAILEY TO JOHNSON

Joan C. Beal suggestively phrases one of the subsections of her well-known book, *English in Modern Times 1700–1975* as a question: "Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755). A Modern Dictionary?".While it is not characterized by the same "discursive violence" (a term borrowed from Crowley 1990) which a phrase such as "from Cawdrey to Johnson" carries, a representation of Johnson as "the first modern dictionary of English" nevertheless involves an implicit widening of the gap between Johnson and eighteenth-century predecessors such as Nathan Bailey or Benjamin Martin who, while envisaged in some accounts as part of the eighteenth-century "modern lexicography" (see Starnes and Noyes 1946/1991), are not explicitly or individually ascribed the label "modern".

In order to attenuate the abruptness that the representation of Johnson as "the first modern dictionary" involves, linguists such as Joan C Beal (*English in Modern Times 1700–1975*) or Henri Béjoint (in the *Lexicography of English*) decompose the label "modern", representing the modern dictionary as a bundle of features, based on N. Osselton's 1983 metalexicographic work. Both Beal (2004) and Béjoint (2010) list the combination of features that Osselton saw as defining the dictionary in its modern form, from 1750 to 1850: (1) the dictionary as a scholarly record of the whole language, (2) the dictionary using a corpus, (3) the dictionary of the literary language, (4) the normative dictionary (Béjoint 2010: 77–78, Beal 2004: 41). Both linguists discuss the extent to which Johnson's dictionary fits this prototype of the modern dictionary.

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In questioning and decomposing a label such as "modern", recent linguists draw attention to the overgeneralization that is conveyed by the rhetoric underlying popular accounts of lexicography:

> Popular accounts of eighteenth-century lexicography suggest a seamless synecdoche with Johnson's own work, with perhaps a cursory mention of Nathan Bailey's popular *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* (first published in 1721, and in print in various editions throughout the century) (Mugglestone 2012: 141).

Lynda Mugglestone's use of the phrase "seamless synecdoche" certainly emphasizes the extent to which often-embraced representations underlying the history of lexicography offer an ideally homogenized overview, which results in the near erasure of significant dictionaries, such as those of Nathan Bailey, which were extremely popular in their day. According to previous researchers, Bailey's work, which was reprinted in multiple editions over the years, was, in its various versions, "the most popular dictionary of the eighteenth century" (Reddick 1996: 32, Reddick 2009: 156), its publication and marketing continuing even after Bailey's death.

Following Murray's representation of lexicography as "slow growth", recent texts focusing on the history of lexicography attempt to highlight a continuity between Samuel Johnson and Nathan Bailey, who emerges as one of Johnson's recuperated predecessors. In *English in Modern Times 1700–1945*, Joan C Beal refers to Nathan Bailey as to a "bridge" to Johnson, a metaphor which underlines an attempt of creating a history of lexicography in terms of continuity, gradualness, rather the abruptness involved by the phrase "from Cawdrey to Johnson".

> In this, he perhaps acts as a bridge between the dictionaries of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and Johnson. Bailey also anticipates Johnson in his treatment of old and obsolescent words, including items taken from glossaries of literary figures such as Spenser and Shakespeare, both of whom were also much cited by Johnson (Beal 2004: 39).

While Beal represents Bailey as "anticipating Johnson", Starnes and Noyes's authoritative account of the lexicography up to Johnson (first published in 1946) saw Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum* (first printed in 1730) as one of the "milestones" on the road to Johnson, while Johnson (with the lexicographer Benjamin Martin as his immediate precursor) is envisaged as a "culmination of early English lexicography" (Starnes and Noyes 1991: 117), as marking" a change in the concept of dictionary and of the lexicographer's function" (Starnes and Noyes 1991: 146):

> The Dictionarium Britannicum is thus the second **milestone** on the road that leads to **Johnson and on to scholarly modern lexicography**: the Kersey-Phlips New World of Words of 1706 had **pioneered** as the first folio universal dictionary; now Bailey's

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> Dictionarium Britannicum in 1730 made signal advances in scope, etymology, and other lexicographical technique (117, My emphasis).

As the metalexicographer Fredric Dolezal has shown, Starnes and Noyes have had an "important and continued influence on general works on English lexicography" (Dolezal 2007: 2), especially on histories of lexicography such as Sidney Landau (1984/2001) or Jonathon Green (1996). I would like to focus here on Starnes and Noyes's representation of Bailey's work as a "milestone" on the road to the "pivotal" Johnson and on the manner in which the labels that these metalexicographers use to refer to Bailey and Johnson are taken over by later accounts of English lexicography such as Green (1996), Landau (1984/2001), Jackson (2002), underlining that more recent histories of English lexicography, such as Cowie (2009) and Bejoint (2010) attempt to avoid the labels given by such previous accounts.

Certainly, Nathan Bailey is not the only significant name that is mentioned by accounts of lexicography which make a point of recording Johnson's predecessors. Benjamin Martin's Lingua *Britannica Reformata* (1749) is a text that has often been labelled as a "precursor" to Johnson. However, it is to be noted that, while Martin's work is more frequently described as anticipating Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary*, Bailey's dictionaries are more briefly characterized, and often envisaged as a mere "basis" for Johnson's subsequent work. It is significant to underline that in *The Evolution of English Lexicography*, James Murray referred to Nathan Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum* in the following terms:

> In 1730, moreover, he [Bailey] brought out with the aid of some specialists, his folio dictionary, the greatest lexicographical work yet undertaken in English, into which he also introduced diagrams and proverbs. This is an interesting book historically, for, according to Sir John Hawkins, it formed the working basis of Dr. Johnson (Murray 1900: 30).

As can be seen, the epithet "interesting" is employed by Murray to refer to Johnson's *Dictionary*. However, the use of the adverbial "historically" as well as that of the adverbial clause of reason emphasize that the value of this text is given by its having been the "working basis" for Johnson's more famous dictionary.

Indeed, Sir John Hawkins' mention of "Nathan Bailey, a school master" and of the "interleaved copy of Bailey's dictionary in folio" (Hawkins 1787: 175) as a starting point for Johnson's *Dictionary* (see also Reddick 1996), as well as the popularity of his dictionaries in the eighteenth century, are among the few pieces of information concerning Bailey's work included in the twentieth-century and even in twenty-first-century histories of lexicography. For example, Howard Jackson's *Lexicography* (2002) refers to Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum* in similar terms to those employed by Murray, stating that it was "important not least because it was used by Samuel Johnson as the basis for his dictionary" (Jackson 2002: 39).

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FROM HETEROGENEOUSNESS TO HOMOGENEOUSNESS

As Henri Béjoint notes in *The Lexicography of English*, "Johnson came to be known as Dictionary Johnson and his Dictionary soon became *the* dictionary in the English-speaking world." (Béjoint 2010: 75). Béjoint's emphasis on the definite article is extremely significant, drawing attention not only to the "definitive", monumental status of Johnson's text, which has been extensively discussed by scholars, but also highlighting that Johnson's *Dictionary* is perceived in a unitary, homogeneous manner as if it were just one single text.

As the metalexicographer Fredric Dolezal has repeatedly emphasized in his work, a dictionary is not just a text, but a sum of texts, and it is a well-known fact that Johnson's folio *Dictionary* has gone through several editions (the first, 1755 and the fourth, 1773, being notable among them). Moreover, eighteenth-century readers were probably more familiar with Johnson's work in "the two-volume octavo that Johnson abridged from the folio for the benefit of the "common reader" (Dille 2005a: 198). Johnson's *Dictionary* was revised by Henry Todd in the early nineteenth century (1818), this text, entitled *Todd's Johnson*, also circulating in an abridged version by Alexander Chalmers (1825). A "miniature" Johnson by Reverend Hamilton in the 1790s for the instruction of schoolboys can also be added to the list of the various existing versions (Dille 2005b: 26). However, in spite of the existence of these various versions, it is on the more "definitive", unitary status of Johnson's *Dictionary* that sentences like the one quoted below insist. As can be seen, the authority of Johnson's *Dictionary* is set against the mere "variety" of the dictionaries produced by Bailey:

> Although lexicographers such as Nathan Bailey had published a variety of dictionaries in the eighteenth century, it was Johnson who produced the authoritative dictionary that was used for at least one hundred years and that served as a basis for other dictionaries (Mitchell 2005: 204).

An analysis of the relation between "Johnson" and "Bailey" as labels in the history of lexicography should emphasise the fact that the history of lexicography does not record "Bailey's Dictionary", but a variety of eighteenth-century dictionaries which had several subsequent editions:

(1) *An Universal Etymological English Dictionary* (first published in 1721)
(2) Volume II (of *An Universal Etymological Dictionary*) (first published in 1727)
(3) *Dictionarium Brittanicum* (first published in 1730)
(4) The Scott-Bailey, *A New Universal Etymological Dictionary* (1755), this edition being revised by J.N Scott thirteen years after Nathan Bailey's death

From the very beginning there is a marked difference between the representation of Johnson's *Dictionary*, which is, in spite of its several editions and versions,

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canonized in the collective memory as one immutable text, and Nathan Bailey's dictionaries. This contrast between unicity and multiplicity can be also read as an opposition between the apparent homogeneity of Johnson's *Dictionary* and the implicit heterogeneousness that Bailey's various texts involve.

Starnes and Noyes's authoritative history of lexicography, *The English Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson 1604–1755* (1946/1991) gives a detailed account of the lexicography before Johnson. While Johnson's *Dictionary* is frequently mentioned and compared with previous dictionaries, the authors do not choose to include a separate chapter on Johnson. The absence of a separate presentation of Johnson's text gives an abstract quality to it: Johnson's text does not appear as tangible, but rather as a pure "landmark", an idealized a point of reference or, as the authors themselves call it, "a culmination of early English lexicography" (Starnes and Noyes 1991: 171).

According to Starnes and Noyes's, the modern dictionary is characterized by "the tolerant inclusiveness and service to all types of people" (171). However, while Bailey's dictionaries can be seen as characterized by a similar tolerant inclusiveness, since they are, as we well know from the famous title page of the *Dictionarium Britannicum*, addressed to a wide audience, Starnes and Noyes do not view the second edition of the *Dictionarium Britannicum* (1736) as a modern dictionary, but as one marked by features which modernity would frown upon. This is how Starnes and Noyes refer to the 1736 (second edition) of Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum*:

> The author has here yielded to the **cardinal temptations** which have beset lexicographers all along: he has included too many **oddities** and **he has drawn no clear or consistent distinction between the provinces and methods of the dictionary and the encyclopaedia**. In these respects, however, Bailey was **merely of his time**, whereas in innumerable other respects he was much in advance of it; **furthermore the very features which seem regrettable from a modern point of view** may well have conduced most to his **enormous contemporary popularity** (Starnes and Noyes 1991: 125, My emphasis).

Although the use of the phrases "merely of his time" and "point of view" is meant to show that the authors are aware of the anachronism that a recontextualization of Bailey as a contemporary lexicographer would involve, when Starnes and Noyes underline that Bailey's dictionary-encyclopaedia distinction is not "clear or consistent", the authors nevertheless use this label "encyclopaedia" in a twentieth-century sense.

Starnes and Noyes' reliance on the concept of a dictionary with "proper limits", hence a dictionary that is imagined as homogeneous, is emphasized by the authors' quoting Trench's 1857 *On Some Deficiencies of English Dictionaries* in order to criticize the heterogeneousness of the second volume (1727) of the *Universal Etymological English Dictionary*:

> Archbishop Trench's familiar indictment of the lexicographers preceding Johnson seems especially applicable to this volume: A Dictionary ought to know its own

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> limits, not merely as to what it should include, but also what it should exclude Our early lexicographers, from failing to recognize any proper limits to their work, from the desire to combine in it as many utilities as possible, present often the strangest medleys in the books which they have produced. These are not Dictionaries of words only, but of persons, places, things; they are gazetteers, mythologies, scientific encyclopedias, and a hundred things more; all, of course, most imperfectly, even according to the standard of knowledge of their own time, and with a selection utterly capricious of what they put in, and what they leave out. (Starnes and Noyes 1991: 110, quoting Trench 1857).

While, as researchers such as Jack Lynch or Henri Béjoint have shown, the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries already articulated a distinction between *un dictionnaire des mots* and *un dictionnaire des choses* (J. Lynch 2005b, Béjoint 2010), the boundary between the dictionary and the encyclopaedia was more fluid than it is today, authors centring on the history of ideas, such as Richard Yeo and Jeff Loveland, drawing attention to the fact that the clarity of the dichotomy (dictionary of words/dictionary of things) was often obscured in the discourse about encyclopaedias, as well as signalling the existence in the late seventeenth and in the first half of the eighteenth century of a tripartite distinction (rather than the contemporary bipartite one): dictionaries of arts and sciences, universal dictionaries and (geographico)-historical dictionaries (Yeo 2001, Loveland 2013). Moreover, Loveland underlines that areas of overlap existed between genres, in spite of their separate labels: "historically, a convergence between the genres of the universal dictionary and the dictionary of the arts and sciences was favoured by borrowing between the two genres" (Loveland 2013: 168). The fact that Starnes and Noyes use of the label "encyclopaedic" for the areas of convergence with the dictionary of arts and sciences emphasizes Bailey's "transgression" of what these authors see, following Trench's framework, as the firm boundaries of the dictionary genre:

> "And as an English Dictionary ought not to include the technical words of different sciences, as little ought it to attempt to supply the place of popular treatises on the different branches of human knowledge; it must everywhere know how to preserve the line firm and distinct between itself and an encyclopedia" (Trench 1860: 60).

However, a firm line between a dictionary and an encyclopaedia is as much an idealization as a definitive separation between words and things. In a comment to Sidney Landau's maxim that "dictionaries are about words, encyclopaedias are about things" (Landau 1984: 6 qtd. in Considine 2005: 195), John Considine quotes Werner Hullen, who showed that all dictionaries, and not only those which we label encyclopaedic, contain encyclopaedic knowledge more or less openly (Hullen 1999: 10). The conceptualization of a neat separation between dictionaries of words and dictionaries of things is, as Considine argues, undoubtedly simplistic, as "any dictionary is bound to make some statements about the things represented by

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words, and the problem faced by lexicographers is that of deciding how far these statements should go" (Considine 2005: 195).

N. Osselton's representation of Johnson in his metalexicographic work as "more narrowly linguistic" (2009: 232) than that of previous lexicographers underlines the fact that the contemporary framework is one which conceptualizes the "linguistic" dimension as separate from dimensions such as the "encyclopaedic". Ideally, the dictionary is imagined as autonomously linguistic and distinct from the encyclopaedia. However, Osselton's cautious use of a degree phrase ("more narrowly") indicates that this separation is by no means a neat one. The illusion that there are firm boundaries between words and things is undermined by pertinent questions such as the one famously asked by Taylor: "Where, and on what criteria, do we draw the line between what a speaker knows in virtue of his knowledge of a language and what he knows in virtue of his acquaintance with the world?" (Taylor 1995: 81, also qtd. in Béjoint 2010). Fredric Dolezal drew attention to the fact that, in general, "dictionaries are typologically mixed" (Dolezal 2007: 7–8). This representation of the heterogeneousness inherent to all dictionaries (and to all genres, after all) is one that is meant to counterbalance the idealization of a dictionary as homogeneous (namely one that has "proper limits").

In their text, Starnes and Noyes draw attention to the use of "much colourful material" in Bailey's *Dictionnarium Britannicum*, emphasizing that it is more similar to a non-discriminating, "all-purpose" reference book, than to a dictionary.

> The *crispness*, the *clarity*, and the *accuracy* which had been gradually developing in the definitions are here **wantonly** sacrificed for the novelty of presentation. Definitions added or rewritten at this time tend to be **leisurely, continuous, essaylike**; and *the basic and often prosaic meanings* are lost among the **picturesque derived** meanings, legends of **varied** origins, historical and artistic associations, and **shrewd**, **trite**, or **facetious** advice on the conduct of life. When so **much colourful material** is incorporated, the *more pedestrian tasks of the lexicographer* are naturally neglected; and **the result is a readable "all-purpose" reference book rather than a fine dictionary** (Starnes and Noyes 123, My emphasis).

The use of terms such as "essaylike" and "readable", as well as phrases such as "colourful material" present Bailey's work in its anthological dimension. The "prosaic" and "pedestrian" tasks of the lexicographer are contrasted with the "picturesque" and the "leisurely", which is meant to instruct readers by entertaining. There is an obvious critical tone that the authors adopt when they talk of the entertaining features of Bailey's text, the use of the adverb "wantonly" showing that the authors view such traits as excess which clutters the "crispness, the clarity and the accuracy" which should characterize a lexicographical text.

The opposition that Starnes and Noyes make between an all-purpose reference book and the dictionary is reminiscent of the "diction of competition" (Mugglestone 2012) that Johnson and Chesterfield use in texts that advertise the 1755 *Dictionary*. The labelling of the *Dictionarium Britannicum* as "an all-purpose reference book"

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bears echoes of the contrast that Chesterfield made in 1754 between the previous "word-books" (where words were jumbled indiscriminately together) and Johnson's *Dictionary*, as well as of Johnson's representation of these pervious dictionaries as conveying a "miscellaneous idea".

Starnes and Noyes's use of the noun "oddities" earlier in the text creates the image of Bailey's *Dictionarium* as "a curio shop". In an article focussing on Johnson as an instance of modern authority, Deirdre Lynch pointed out a parallelism between early eighteenth-century dictionaries and encyclopaedias (as means of organising information) and the first museums with which they were coeval such (such as Don Saltero's oddity stuffed coffeehouse or the Royal Society repository). According to Deirdre Lynch, both these means of organising information existed to exhibit the world's miscellanies, apparently without discrimination, in contrast with, the selective, monumental 1755 *Dictionary* (D. Lynch 1990: 376). It is to be noted that Starnes and Noyes are not equally critical of the first edition of *An Universal Etymological English Dictionary*. However, the representation of some of Bailey's texts as miscellaneous, heterogeneous and excessive is taken over by subsequent works in the history of lexicography

In later works focussing on the history of lexicography, Jonathon Green hyperbolically describes Bailey's work in terms of monstrosity – a familiar trope which has been used throughout the ages to represent information overload ("[Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum]* had now become a **monster**, packed full of words and information," Green 1996: 196). While not equally critical of the *Dictionarium Britannicum*, which he sees as the standard before Johnson, Sindey Landau nevertheless refers to Bailey's 1721 *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* by stating that the lexicographer had "no clear idea of the distinction between a dictionary and an encyclopedia" (obviously echoing Starnes and Noyes here). Bailey is depicted as opting for many entries which have "no lexical relevance" (Landau 2001: 54), and Landau also refers to Bailey's "profligate use of space", which, he underlines, would seem very odd in a contemporary dictionary. The adjective "profligate" echoes Starnes and Noyes's evaluation of "wanton" in one of the previous excerpts on Bailey, bearing similar Puritan overtones. Bailey's 1727 supplementary volume is described by Landau as containing "a miscellany of encyclopedic information" (54).

Referring to the later editions of this second volume, Landau emphasizes that this volume was extensively modified in order "to prune it of some of its encyclopedic excesses" (56). It is to be noted however that Landau, as well as other metalexicographers of his time, refers to Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum* as the lexicographic standard before Johnson. Nevertheless, echoes of Bailey's representation as a "curio shop" (a representation underlined by the phrase "bewildering array of sources" that Starnes and Noyes employ regarding one of the versions Bailey's text), still faintly reverberate in Osselton's section on Bailey in the 2009 Oxford *History of Lexicography*:

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> Though it is thus **astonishingly** rich in contents, the *Dictionarium Britannicum* contains nothing that is new in lexicographical method**.** The **surprisingly** numerous self-explanatory derivatives now introduced (including improbable ones such as eternalness and undistinguishableness) are given full headword status. Where in the bigger dictionary there is a greater complexity of meaning or a wider range of meanings (as for the word column) no attempt has been made to structure the information given. In the **mammoth** sequence of entries to be found for many words in the Dictionarium Britannicum the English dictionarymay be said to have reached the limits of what mere alphabetic listing could do (Osselton 2009: 153, My emphasis).

Coming back to Landau's earlier reference to "encyclopaedic excess" concerning Bailey, we note that this springs from the assumption of firm boundaries between the dictionary and the encyclopaedia. In fact, a representation of a clear separation between the encyclopaedia and the dictionary relies on the dichotomy linguistic/non-linguistic, which, certainly, the eighteenth century did not conceptualize in the same manner as the linguists of the twentieth century did. Structuralism, as well as Chomsky's generative-transformational paradigm (which postulates an autonomous language faculty) can be seen as two-level approaches, which rely on "a bifurcation of meaning into a purely linguistic component and a non-linguistic, or encyclopaedic component" (Taylor 1995: 282). This idealization of a "distinctiveness of linguistic knowledge *vis-à-vis* conceptual, and encyclopaedic knowledge" (283) has been in fact criticized by cognitivism, having become, as Taylor shows, the hallmark of this approach. It may perhaps not be an overgeneralization to state that the structuralist linguistic-conceptual bifurcation can be seen as a continuation of the nineteenth-century philologists' conceptualization of a neat distinction between the dictionary and the encyclopedia (See also Milroy 2012: 577 for a discussion of language as a "self-contained entity"). The "proper limits" that Trench and Murray imagined for their dictionaries seem to suggest so.

CONCLUSION

As David Harvey notes, since "modernity is about the experience of progress through modernization, writings on the theme have tended to emphasize temporality, the process of becoming, rather than being in space and place (Harvey 1990: 3). The decontextualization followed by recontextualization triggered by the representation of Johnson's *Dictionary* in a history of lexicography (or a history of English) involves an automatic re-imagination of this *Dictionary* as a chapter in a narrative of progress. While reference books (various handbooks and histories) canonize Johnson and re-imagine his *Dictionary* as a "cornerstone" of English lexicography, maximizing the lexicographer's innovative impact and erasing previous dictionaries, histories of lexicography attempt to recuperate some of the previous dictionaries as "milestones" in "a progression towards the modern dictionary" (Beal 2004). However, Starnes and Noyes's authoritative representation of a heterogeneous Bailey, meant

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to emphasize Johnson's later homogeneousness (1946/1991) is part of a discourse of modernity where the general-purpose dictionary stages itself as selection (a museum rather than a curio shop), as "a portrayal of language" rather than a storehouse (language imagined as homogeneous, language imagined as autonomous).

Starnes and Noyes's representation is taken over by later histories of lexicography (such as Green 1996 or Landau 1984/2001). These (more general) accounts widen the gap between Johnson and Bailey even more because, unlike Starnes and Noyes's fine-grained history (which discusses and compares versions of Bailey's work), they present Bailey's lexicographical work exclusively in its role as a milestone to Johnson. Such works make labels such as "disorder" and "heterogeneousness" appear more prominent in Bailey's case, managing to render even less visible encyclopaedic and anthological dimensions which are in fact present in Johnson's *Dictionary* (see Visan 2009 among others). Twenty-first century histories, such as Cowie's 2009 *Oxford History of English Lexicography* and Béjoint's 2010 *Lexicography of English*, attempt to bridge the gap between Johnson and his predecessors, employing less definite labels to represent the dictionaries before Johnson and promoting a more nuanced approach, meant to emphasize gradualness, rather than offer abrupt contrasts. Nevertheless, in spite of an attempt in these more recent texts to concentrate on the areas of continuity with previous dictionaries, the inherent teleology and the generalizing overview characterizing a "history" of lexicography preserves the imagined homogeneity of Johnson's *Dictionary* and continues to maximize its innovative impact:

> The strictly chronological narrative has the strength of being accessible and coherent in its presentation; chronology, like alphabetic order, has the advantage of presenting a complex set of texts in an immediately understandable and usable format. However, the very appeal of accessibility and seeming coherence has the possibility of encouraging a narrative of "influences", or an uninformed ideology of "progress" or "evolution" in the history of English dictionary (Dolezal 2007: 8).

One can thus discern that Johnson's *Dictionary* maintains, even in these more recent accounts, the prominence of a "landmark", and continues to function as part of an ideology where language is (still) imagined as homogeneous and where a dictionary is meant to be a portrayal of that homogeneity.

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LABELS IN THE HISTORY OF LEXICOGRAPHY: FROM BAILEY TO JOHNSON

(Abstract)

Emphasizing upon the importance of research into the history of language ideology as well as into the ideological attitudes of historical linguists (Milroy 2012), I have concentrated on the representation of Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* in contemporary histories of English lexicography: Starnes and Noyes's 1946 *The English Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson 1604–1755* (which is still one of the most cited and most influential texts in the history of English lexicography), Green 1996, Landau 1984/2001, Jackson 2002, Cowie 2009, Béjoint 2010. In order to gain a better understanding of the ideologies underlying a history of English lexicography, I have focused on a comparison of the labels used to represent Johnson's *Dictionary* with those labels employed in the representation of the dictionaries of one of Johnson's immediate predecessors, the eighteenth-century lexicographer Nathan Bailey. Arguing that, in the overview offered by a historical account, Johnson's predecessors are, at least partially, subjected to a process of "erasure" (Irvine and Gal 2000), the paper chooses to concentrate on the way in which these contemporary histories of English lexicography represent Johnson's "pivotal" role versus that of Bailey, who is the author of popular dictionaries, such as *An Universal Etymological English Dictionary* and the *Dictionarium Britannicum* (whose second edition was used by Johnson as a basis for the word list of Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary*).

The paper shows that Starnes and Noyes's representation (of a more "heterogeneous" Bailey versus a more "homogeneous" Johnson, see also Beal 2004)) at the basis of which lies the view of a language/dictionary as autonomous and as homogeneous (See also Milroy 2012) is taken over by certain histories of the late twentieth century (such as Green 1996 and Landau 1984/2001). These histories employ labels (with evaluative overtones) that maintain a wide gap between the "pivotal" Johnson and "encyclopaedic" predecessors such as Bailey, making the contrast between the two eighteenth-century lexicographers appear more marked than in Starnes and Noyes's original text. More recent histories of English lexicography (Cowie 2009, Béjoint 2010) attempt to bridge the gap between the representation of Johnson and that of his predecessors, employing less definite labels to discuss dictionaries.

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ETICHETE ÎN ISTORIA LEXICOGRAFIEI: DE LA BAILEY LA JOHNSON

(Rezumat)

Subliniind importanţa cercetării în domeniul istoriei lexicografiei, precum şi aceea legată de ideologiile lingvistice ale lingviştilor istorici (Milroy 2012), lucrarea se concentrează asupra reprezentării *Dicţionarului* lui Samuel Johnson în istoriile contemporane ale lexicografiei: Starnes and Noyes (1946/1991) *The English Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson 1604–1755* (care este şi în ziua de astăzi unul dintre cele mai de impact şi cele mai citate texte din istoria lexicografiei engleze), Green 1996, Landau 1984/2001, Jackson 2002, Cowie 2009, Béjoint 2010. Pentru a înţelege mai bine ideologiile de la baza lexicografiei engleze, m-am axat asupra unei comparaţii a etichetelor folosite în reprezentarea *Dicţionarului* lui Johnson cu etichetele folosite pentru a reprezenta dicţionarele unuia dintre predecesorii lui Johnson, lexicograful secolului optsprezece Nathan Bailey. Arătând că, în vederea de ansamblu oferită de istorie, predecesorii lui Johnson sunt, cel puţin parţial supuşi unui proces de "ştergere" (Irvine and Gal 2000), lucrarea alege să se centreze asupra modului în care istoriile contemporane ale lexicografiei engleze reprezintă rolul "crucial" al lui Johnson faţă de acela al lui Bailey, care este autorul dicţionarelor populare în secolul optsprezece *An Universal Etymological English Dictionary* şi *Dictionarium Britannicum* (a cărui ediţie secundă a fost folosită ca bază pentru *Dicţionarul* lui Johnson 1755).

Lucrarea arată că reprezentarea lui Starnes şi Noyes (a unui Bailey "eterogen" faţă de un Johnson "omogen", vezi şi Beal 2004) la baza căreia se află perspectiva asupra limbii/dicţionarului ca autonome şi omogene (vezi şi Milroy 2012) este preluată de anumite istorii din secolul douăzeci (precum Green 1996 sau Landau 1984/2001). Aceste istorii folosesc etichete (cu tonuri evaluative) care menţin o distanţă mare între "crucialul" Johnson şi precursori "enciclopedici" precum Bailey, făcând contrastul dintre cei doi lexicografi ai secolului al optsprezecelea să apară chiar şi mai marcat decât în textul original al lui Starnes şi Noyes. Istorii mai recente ale (Cowie 2009, Béjoint 2010) încearcă să compenseze această distanţă între reprezentarea lui Johnson şi a predecesorilor săi, alegând să folosească etichete mai puţin definitive în discuţia lor asupra dicţionarelor.

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