

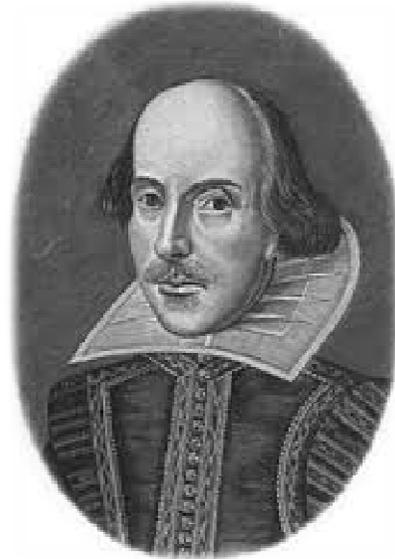


Literary explorations, culture and language in the Reform

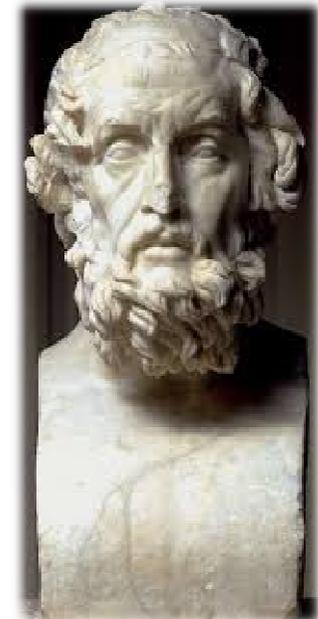
Rome, TESOL 38TH National Conference, 29 -30 November, 2013

Silvia Ballabio

Why still literature?



CERVANTES





Harold Bloom, and the Western Canon

*The true use of Shakespeare
or of Cervantes, of Homer
or of Dante, of Chaucer or
of Rabelais, is to augment
one's own growing inner
self.*

Still literature? How?

P. Roth , and the sociology of the family

T.S. Eliot , and the use of visuals

How to present a classic as modern

Charles Dickens, : identifying a theme and a thesis , and selecting materials.

The theme-centred approach in pills.

What, what for and how



The theme-centred approach

Just a taste of what it could be.....

Theme

❖ an idea which is expressed through a work (of art)

✓ *Multiculturalism*

✓ *The toll of war*

✓ *A changing family*

✓ *The desert, a place without desire*

✓ *Dickens' crusade against evil*



Philip Roth

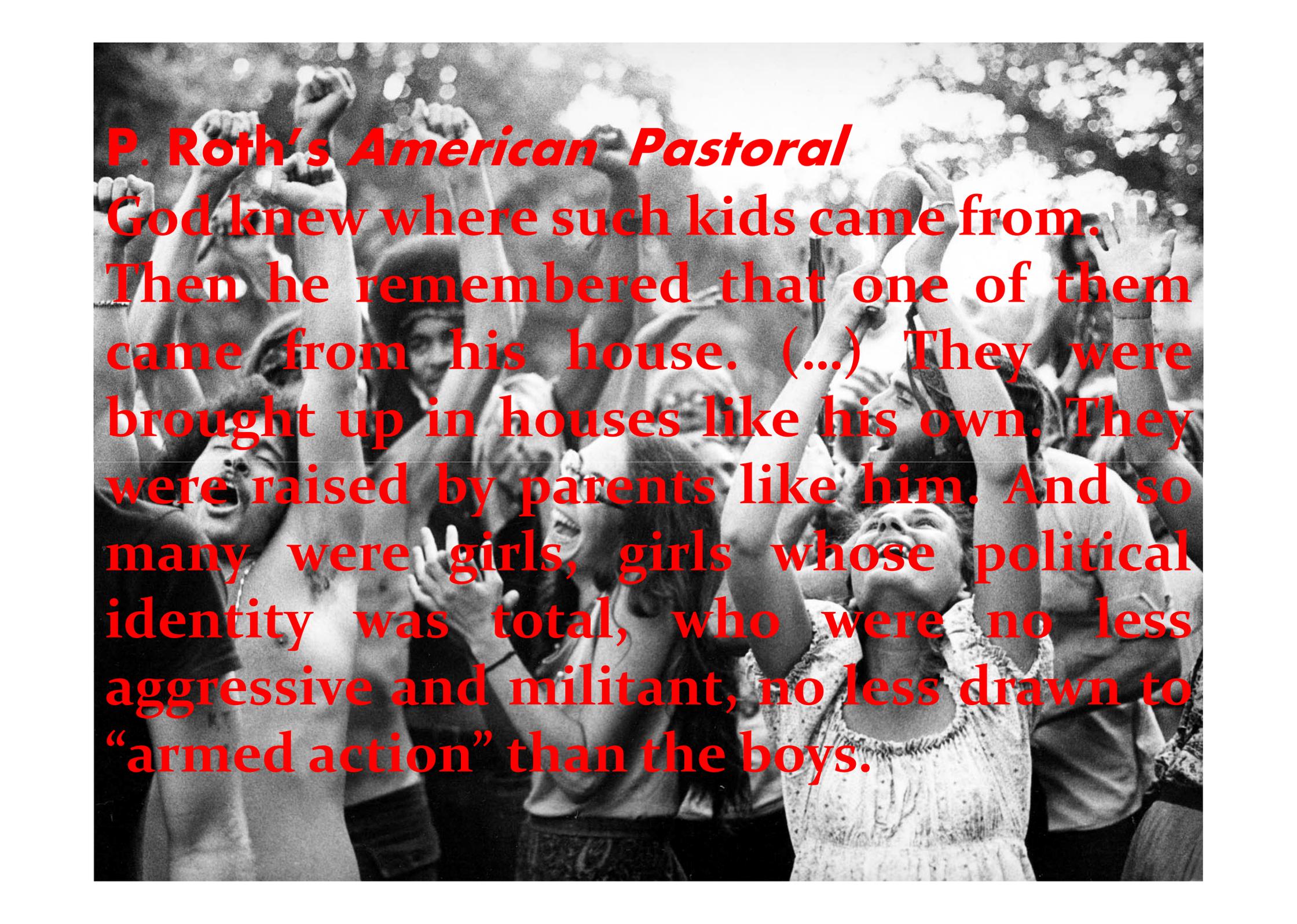
A changing family

Family types



The downfall of family

- free-floating couple
- adolescent subculture
- nest
- fissions and fusions
- post-modern family
- nuclear family
- women's liberation



P. Roth's *American Pastoral*

God knew where such kids came from. Then he remembered that one of them came from his house. (...) They were brought up in houses like his own. They were raised by parents like him. And so many were girls, girls whose political identity was total, who were no less aggressive and militant, no less drawn to "armed action" than the boys.



Thomas S. Eliot

Desert, and water

Desert , and water



Voices of the past

“A desert is a place without expectation.”

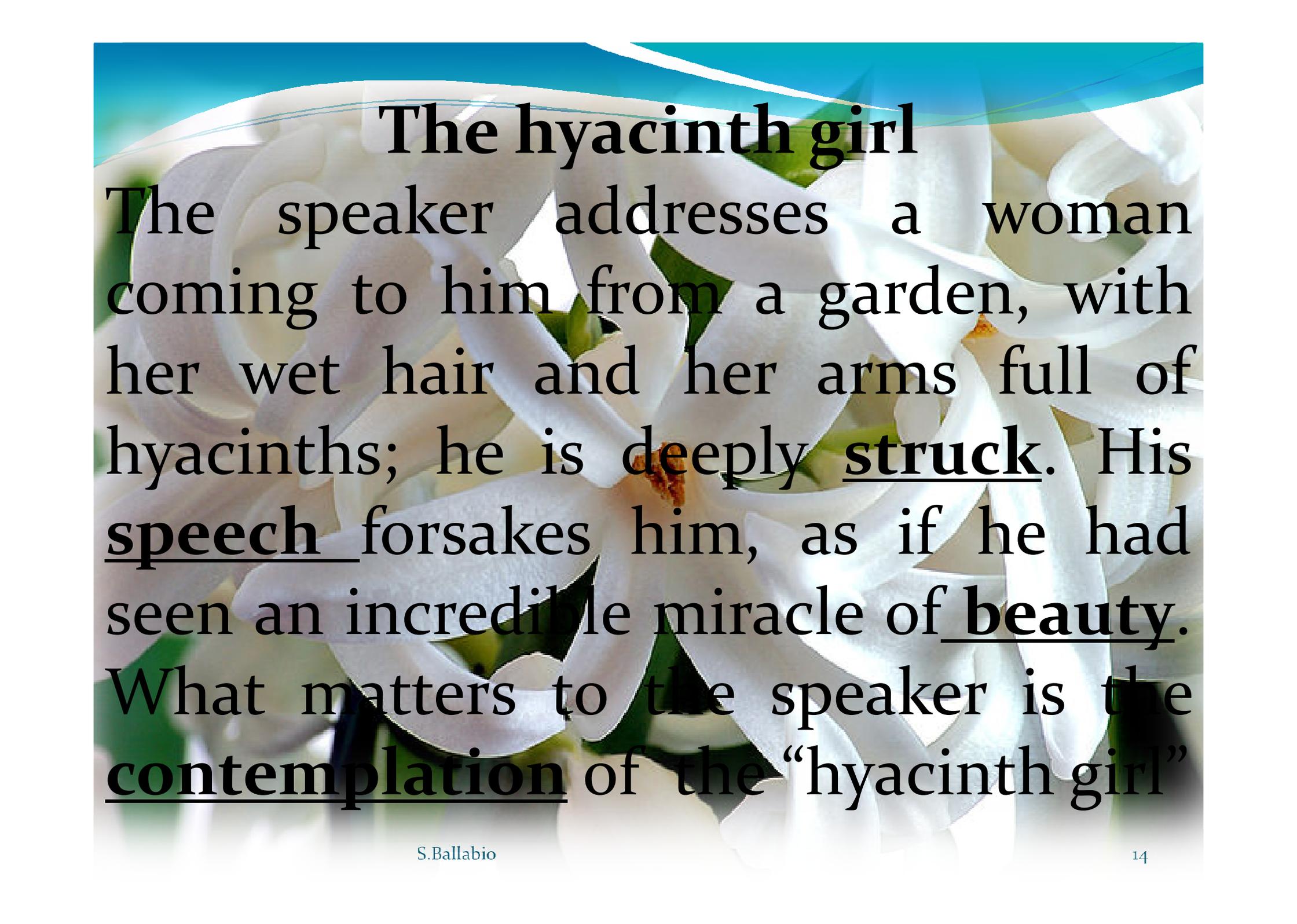
Nadine Gordimer (1923-), South-African writer

“Let the rain kiss you. Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops. Let the rain sing you a lullaby.”

Langston Hughes (1902-1967), American poet

“What makes the desert beautiful is that somewhere it hides a well.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery (1900-1944), French writer



The hyacinth girl

The speaker addresses a woman coming to him from a garden, with her wet hair and her arms full of hyacinths; he is deeply struck. His speech forsakes him, as if he had seen an incredible miracle of beauty. What matters to the speaker is the contemplation of the “hyacinth girl”

Or, the objective correlative

The “hyacinth girl” is symbolically the flower that the garden has bred, and the man desires her so much that he becomes dumb and looks at her as if she were “the heart of light, the silence”. Desire and fulfillment come together in an intense but fleeting experience of beauty and love.



Charles Dickens

Troubled childhood





Focusing on theme

Dickens' crusade against evil

- Victorian age ?
- Dickens' stand?

- An age of reform and ideology
- The revolt of the weak against the strong

The "insolence of office"

Dickens' creative gift

- Text 1: *Please, sir, I want more*
- Text 2 : *Oliver becomes a thief*
- Text 3: *Sad and happy memories*

Critical thinking

- ❖ At the end of the novel Oliver finds friends, wealth and the love and acceptance he has been longing for all his life. Dick dies in the workhouse, and Mr Chitling and the Artful Dodger are not redeemed from their life of criminality. Not all children can be saved. Is this fair?
- ❖ Which is the worst evil Oliver has been through?
- ❖ Is the law enough to protect children, or is Dickens' insistence on individual responsibility still valid?



***The theme-centred
approach***
**A modest proposal
in pills**



The theme-centred approach

The past rules the present, but the past only lives in the present



The theme-centred approach

What for?

- **“My “ own inner self**
- **Appreciation – reading for pleasure**
- **Critical thinking**
- **Linguistic competence**

The theme-centred approach

What ?

- **The literary work *as* and *in* culture**
- **The literary *tradition*, or *canon***



The theme-centred approach

How?

- **Action-oriented approach and task-based methodology**
- **Varieties of text typologies**

Bibliography:

S. BALLABIO, A. BRUNETTI, P. LYNCH

ROOTS

PRINCIPATO, EUROPASS, 2012

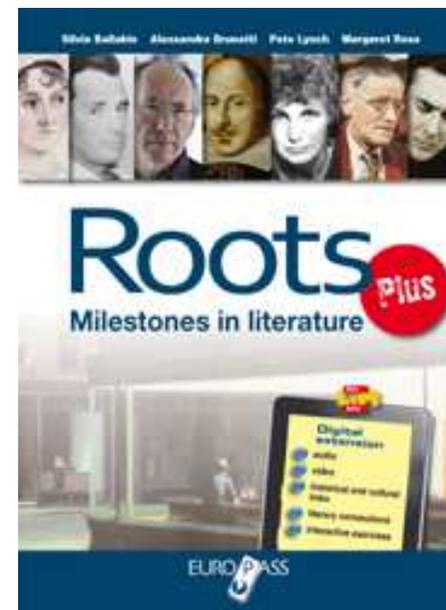
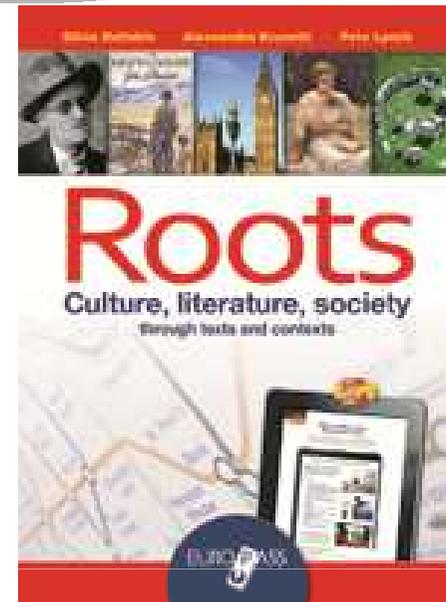
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PRINCIPATO, EUROPASS, 2013



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S.Ballabio

**Insegnare
una lingua straniera
oggi**
percorsi
e proposte
per un'iniziativa
comune



Meet-the-author

Tomorrow

from 10.00 to 11.00 a.m.,

at Principato stand