"Nicks of time" in the Italian Translation and Staging of Caryl Churchill's *Cloud Nine / Settimo cielo*

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Abstract: This contribution aims at exploring the multiple border crossings enacted by theatre translation as it happens through time and, simultaneously, makes time *happen* in the overlapping of distinct moments: of writing, of translating, and of performing. The Italian staging of Caryl Churchill's *Cloud Nine*, *Settimo cielo*, produced by the independent theatre company Bluemotion and premiered in Rome at Teatro India in February 2018, enacts the disruption of linear time through its relationship with the play's already challenging timeline. The passing of time is a central theme in its conception and design: as the director, Giorgina Pi, has stated, her choices were informed by the need to look at *Cloud Nine* from the vantage point of the present, foregrounding this staging as a sort of "third act", following the first, set in 1879 Africa and the second, in 1979 London, which was also the time of the first performance of the play. This production emphasizes *Cloud Nine*'s apparently outdated rebelliousness, avoiding any cultural reference beyond 1979. Through a detailed analysis of the *mise-en-scene*, I argue that the staging of a translation of a piece, especially when each event is separated from the other by several decades as in this case study, creates what Elizabeth Grosz would call a "nick of time", allowing the audience to become aware of the passing of time and, in the same movement, of the persistent urgency of the issues confronted by the play itself.

This contribution aims at exploring the multiple border crossings enacted by theatre translation as it happens through time and, simultaneously, makes time *happen* in the overlapping of distinct moments: of writing, of translating, and of performing. The imperfect superimposition of these moments destabilizes the model of linear time

generally embedded in both translation and theatre studies, assuming the derivation of each one of these acts from the other, the translation from the original and the performance from the play-text. On the contrary, here I intend to argue that the staging of a translation of a piece, especially when each event is separated from the other by several decades as in this case study, creates a short circuit or what Elizabeth Grosz would call a "nick of time", an interruption in the timeline:

> [Time] is a kind of evanescence that appears only at those moments when our expectations are (positively or negatively) surprised. We can think it only when we are jarred out of our immersion in its continuity, when something untimely disrupts our expectations. (Grosz: 5)

The Italian staging of Caryl Churchill's *Cloud Nine*, *Settimo cielo*, produced by the independent theatre company Bluemotion and premiered in Rome at Teatro India in February 2018, enacts this disruption through its relationship with the play's already challenging time line.[1] The passing of time is a central theme in its conception and design: as the director, Giorgina Pi, has stated, her choices were informed by the need to look at *Cloud Nine* from the vantage point of the present, foregrounding this staging a sort of "third act" of the play, following the first set in 1879 Africa and the second in 1979 London (see Teatro di Roma).[2] The last part of this article will focus on the ways this production both enacts and disrupts a linear conception of time thanks to its pastiche of visual and musical references; but before addressing the issues raised by Bluemotion's production, it is necessary to contextualize it in the wider landscape of Churchill's reception and translations in Italy.

Although this was the first time this play (one of Churchill's most prominent works) was produced in Italy, *Cloud Nine* was actually one of the first of Churchill's plays to be translated into Italian. The translation was published in 1990 in a small volume, a pioneering venture featuring this play, translated by Riccardo Duranti, alongside *Top Girls* translated by Margaret Rose, which had been staged two years earlier under Marina Bianchi's direction (Churchill 1990). Before 1990 Churchill was relatively unknown in Italy, despite having received an

OBIE and an Olivier Award for *Serious Money* that very year. These early translations managed to raise some interest in her work; yet *Settimo cielo* was never staged.

Around 2012, the research and translation project "Non normale, non rassicurante", has led by Paola Bono, started to foster what is now a more regular and more systematic study of Churchill in Italy. The project is named after an early essay by Churchill, published in a monographic issue of *The Twentieth Century*, which only included contributions from playwrights under 25. Here, at the very beginning of her career, the writer expressed her creative vision for a theatre that is "not ordinary, not safe":

> Playwrights don't give answers, they ask questions. We need to find new questions, which may help us to answer the old ones or make them unimportant, and this means new subjects and new form. (Churchill 1960: 446)

Following this insight, the project's first purpose has been to translate Churchill's complete works into Italian: so far, five volumes have been published and a sixth is currently in production. However, the project also aims to promote and support stagings of Churchill's work in Italy. This had led to a number of workshops and dramatic readings of Churchill's plays alongside full-blown productions: Bluemotion produced, in addition to *Settimo cielo*, *Caffettiera blu* (*Blue Kettle*), *Non non non non non abbastanza ossigeno* (*Not not not not not enough Oxygen*) and *Porci e cani* (*Pigs and Dogs*).[3]

Why did it take so long for the Italian language and stage to welcome Churchill's work? One of the reasons is discussed by translator and scholar Margaret Rose in the 2012 miscellany *Caryl Churchill: un teatro necessario* (one of the landmarks for Churchill's reception in Italy): the lack of a distinct women's theatre in Italy (Rose: 15).[4] This is especially true of Churchill's work from the 70s and 80s, which did not find an Italian scene that could make it its own; yet this has also allowed for an intermittent interest in Churchill's works by grassroots and politically engaged theatre companies: hence Marina Spreafico directed *A Mouthful of Birds* (1986) and *Blue Heart* (1997) in the late

1990s for the Teatro Arsenale in Milan; in the 2000s Massimiliano Marau and Valter Malosti directed *Far Away* (2000) and *A Number* (2002) respectively, and Annig Raimondi staged *Seven Jewish Children* (2009) in a double bill with *Far Away*; while Carlo Cecchi both directed and played in *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?* (2006) at the Elfo Puccini in Milan in 2012 (see Caretti: 8-10).

As one can register from this brief overview, for Churchill's new plays only a few years (with the exception of *A Mouthful of Birds*) elapsed between the English premiere and the Italian translation; however, these translations were never published, and older plays were completely ignored. In this sense, *Settimo cielo* differs from all previous Italian productions of Churchill's work, as it marks a significant time lapse between its moment in time, the 1990 Italian translation, and the 1979 original premiere. The production, as my discussion of it in the final part of this contribution shows, confronts this "delay" directly and consequently allows retracing the history of the political movements from the 70s and their legacy. This is especially true for issues related to gendered and racialized identities both on and off stage, which in the meantime have undergone a number of significant critical shifts.

One of the major upheavals in recent critical theory has definitely been Judith Butler's work on gender as performative, originally developed in a tight relationship with theatrical practices. The role of theatre in the elaboration of the performative can be traced to an essay published by Butler in 1988 in *Theatre Journal* and, two years later, in the collection *Performing Feminism*, one of the earliest to elaborate the contribution of feminist criticism to theatrical practices. Here Butler offers a speculation on the contiguities and differences between theatrical performance and the performative as a condition of social and psychological subjectivation, concluding that theatre offers a great opportunity to challenge hegemonic discourses, even if only temporarily and within the policed boundaries of the performing space (see Butler 1990).

Starting from Butler's groundbreaking work, the superimposition of the biological, sexual and social elements that make up the gendered subject has been thoroughly dismantled: *Cloud Nine* anticipates this issue (Bono: 70-71) and marks a crucial moment in the rethinking of the gendered body on stage via its use of cross-casting. According to stage directions Betty, the archetypal "angel of the house" from Victorian Britain, is played by a man, and her son Edward, who is decidedly too "feminine" for Victorian society (he loves playing with dolls), is played by a woman (Churchill 1985: 48). Yet what in 1979 was a groundbreaking practice exposing the violence that traditional gender roles can inflict on bodies, today may be (and has been by some critics) read as an exercise in essentialism. Gender cross-casting, as presented in the play, only works on the basis of a binary definition of the playing body as biologically male or female, a dichotomy that has now been put under scrutiny by that same queer theory that *Cloud Nine* foreshadowed: as Mary Luckhurst has argued: "The relation between biology, gender identity and sexual orientation is no longer assumed to be straightforward. […]. Sexuality and gender are far more fluid concepts than they were in the 1970s" (Luckhurst: 79).

In much the same way, having a white actor playing a black character comes across as a more problematic practice in the current climate, especially as Churchill's version of 1979 London lacks non-white characters. Churchill specifies that in the first act, set in colonial Africa, Joshua, the African servant, should be played by a white man, in order to expose parallels between oppression based on sexual and racial difference. In the opening scene, Betty declares to the audience: "I live for Clive. The whole aim of my life /Is to be what he looks for in a wife. /I am a man's creation as you can see, /And what men want is what I want to be"; similarly Joshua proclaims: "My skin is black but oh my soul is white./ I hate my tribe. My master is my light./ I only live for him. As you can see,/ What white men want is what I want to be" (Churchill 1985: 251). Yet, while Betty's character returns in the second act, this time played by a woman, and the play shows her somewhat tentative road to emancipation, Joshua's character is granted no such possibility.

Churchill comments on this significant omission in the preface (significantly) to the 1984 American edition of *Cloud Nine*: "there were no black members of the company and this led to the idea of Joshua being so alienated from himself and so much aspiring to be what white men want him to be that he is played by a white" (Churchill 1984: viii). One may note that this state of things has changed in the almost forty years that have intervened between *Cloud Nine*'s premiere and today: at least in Britain and the US, black actors are more present across theatre, television and cinema. Yet the current presence of black performers has not, according to Luckhurst, led to a rethinking of Churchill's play for the contemporary stage; on the contrary, she laments:

> *Cloud Nine* is long overdue for creative reinvention by directors who want to experiment with racial cross-casting. […] Depressingly, it still tends to be treated only as a canvas to investigate cross-sex casting and the inherent prejudices of continuing to ignore ethnic agendas, and the failure to produce new meanings cannot be overlooked. (Luckhurst: 81)

What Luckhurst laments here more generally is a process of "canonization" of Churchill's work (especially from the late 70s and early 80s) with the inevitable downplaying of its more radical and ground-breaking features. By uncritically adhering to the playwright's original directions, contemporary productions risk staging *Cloud Nine* as an unproblematic homage to a recognized authority of British playwriting instead of marking the interval between that time and ours and all that this entails, from the legal implementations of civil rights for marginalized subjectivities to the unfulfilled promise of more radical forms of freedom.

Translation may prove to be the space for the kind of "reinvention" Luckhurst calls for, as it enacts the text not only for a different language and audience but also quite often for a different time. As Homi Bhabha famously writes in *The Location of Culture*:

> The sign of translation continually tells, or "tolls" the different times and spaces between cultural authority and its performative practices. The "time" of translation consists in that *movement* of meaning, the principle

> and practice of a communication that […] puts the original in motion to decanonize it, giving it the movement of fragmentation, a wandering of errance, a kind of permanent exile. (Bhabha: 228)

Conversely, translation also embodies a process of "canonization", especially if we take into consideration the theories and practices of feminist translation. Amongst the many strategies identified in this field, two are of specific interest here: *recovery*, identified by Françoise Massardier-Kenney as the choice to translate writers who are little-known either in the source or in the target language (Massardier-Kenney 62); and *prefacing*, which is mentioned by Luise von Flotow as one of the ways in which the translator poses (and exposes) her/himself as a subject in a dialogue with the text, instead of disappearing in the movement between the two texts (Flotow 74).

Hence translation, and feminist translation in particular, points to "canonization", as it recognizes a text as something worth disseminating in another language and culture; yet it also operates a "decanonization" by displacing the text and requiring it, as in Churchill's original vision, to ask new questions for a different time and place. This shift also helps to put contemporary criticism developed in the Anglophone world into perspective: while, for example, Luckhurst assumes that cross-sex casting is now a non-problematic practice, this is far from true in Italy, where the so-called "teoria gender" (defined by the English loanword, sometimes with explicit reference to Butler's work) has been the subject of disparaging campaigns from the far right (see Zappino).

However, perhaps thanks to this particularly unwelcoming context, the exploration of gender representations and performances is currently experiencing an unprecedented momentum in Italian theatre. There is no exhaustive review of text and productions tackling gender performance in Italian theatre, yet one can mention at least: *Fa'afafine. Mi chiamo Alex e sono un dinosauro* (*My Name is Alex and I'm a Dinosaur*), written especially for an audience of children and young adults, which tells the story of a child whose sexuality does not conform to the heteronormative matrix; *MDLSX*, produced by Motus and writ-

ten and performed by Silvia Calderoni, about the coming of age of an intersexual character; the project *Don't Panic, BI PAN!* by Primavera Contu; and Liv Serracchiani's *Trilogia sull'identità* (Identity Trilogy). All these examples, together with others, show Italian theatre as a fertile space for performances staging gender identity and performativity, and of an audience equally interested in this kind of productions.

In this context, the first staging of *Settimo cielo* in Italy intersects the wider exploration of gender identity and performativity happening in contemporary, independent Italian theatre, while at the same time witnessing the relevance of Churchill's dramaturgy when interrogated from the "third act" of the present. The chronological distance between Churchill's time and ours is addressed in Giorgina Pi's design through a kaleidoscope of references, which, although integrated through visual and musical pastiche, never crosses the two lines set by the play's time frames: Victorian Africa in the first act, 1979 London in the second. And while this second setting originally represented the present of the audience in the original production, today its punk aesthetics looks deliberately dated in its juxtaposition of leather and lace, corsets and combat boots, and especially in the omnipresent use of the Union Jack and other British iconography from the punk era: thus first-act Edward wears a white t-shirt with an image of Queen Victoria in the style of the Sex Pistols' notorious *God Save the Queen* album cover, which appears in its original form (with Queen Elizabeth) on the t-shirt worn by second-act Edward.

The hierarchy between original and derivative is thus overturned, as we see in Victorian times a reworking of a cultural icon from the 70s whose original (itself a punk rewriting of the Queen as a recognizable visual element) appears later in the "correct" time frame. Similarly, the Nazi-like uniforms worn by Clive and Harry, the *pater familias* and the renegade explorer who represent the two faces of Victorian masculinity, point at a moment in time located in the interval between the two acts, and unexpectedly echo Joshua's quasi-leather costume. Joshua's "leather" version was implemented in the 2019 reprise of the show: in the 2018 production the character, played by Lorenzo Par-

rotto, sported punk gear with a white tank top and bleached hair; the 2019 version, played by Xhulio Petushi, wore a black leather waistcoat and collar. This choice echoes and expands Churchill's own troubling portrayal of the received master-slave hierarchy, with significant changes in stage action especially in the interactions between Joshua and Edward: while Churchill's dramaturgy makes explicit Joshua's dependence on the white man's gaze, Petushi's self-assured and often cocky attitude, enhanced by his looming presence over many of the other elements of the company, exposed the master's own reliance on the slave for his own existence.[5]

However, it is music that emerges as the preeminent way of compressing together different temporalities, as emerges in the three songs featured in the play. In particular, the production's choice for the opening of the play deserves some in-depth analysis, as it is a clear example of the cultural processes activated by translation and the "nicks of time" it engenders. Churchill's play opens with a song on music by explorer Anthony Wilkin (1902), as stated by the copyright note included in the 1979 edition (Churchill 1979). The lyrics celebrate the British Empire and its rule over its overseas territories:

> Come gather sons of England, come gather in your pride.
> Now meet the world united, now face it side by side;
> Ye who the earth's wide corners, from veldt to prairie, roam.
> From bush and jungle muster all who call old England home. (Churchill 1985: 251)

The published Italian translation opens with this song as well, choosing an appropriate metre (between twelve and fourteen syllables) in order to respect the four-accent rhythm of the source text (see Churchill 2016: 67). However, for an Italian audience it was necessary to convey the irony and disengagement in Churchill's use of imperial rhetoric without reducing its long-lasting appeal for present-day discourses on British exceptionalism.

In order to do so, the director superimposes the time-frame of the first act with that of the second, thus locating the gaze (and the ear) of the audience already in a different time, beyond the "Africa 1879"

looming in red light over the scene but also beyond the 1979 of the play's own chronological location. In what becomes a compressed time-travelling experience, the audience witnesses a character (who only later will be identified as Ellen from act I, played by Sylvia De Fanti) gain centre stage and sing *a cappella* the first stanza and refrain from *Rule Britannia*, composed by Thomas Augustine Arne with lyrics by James Thomson.[6] The production thus chose a song whose relationship with the imagery of the British Empire may be recognized by an Italian public; however, its use is not limited to immediate cultural connotation. Actually, the idea to use this song came to the director (as she stated in a private conversation with the writer) as she was watching Derek Jarman's 1978 film *Jubilee*, where Amyl Nitrate, dressed up as Britannia in plumed helm, trident and Union Jack, sings a punk version of the song. And it is this version of the widely known anthem that the production includes when, after Clive's introduction of the other characters, the second stanza from Wilkin's song is substituted by a reprise of Arne's hymn in Jarman's version. The staging hence immediately foregrounds the time lapse between the first and second act, with the quotation from Jarman disruptively intruding in the Victorian celebration of the twin institutions of family and Empire; yet it also, for those who can pick up the reference, locates in a different past the distinctly 1970s sound of electric guitar and punk vocals.

A similar procedure happens with the other two songs from the play: the second song from act I, "A Boy's Best Friend", was originally set to a tune by Joseph D. Skelly (1897); while the eponymous "Cloud Nine", from the second act, was set to original music by Andy Roberts (see Churchill 1979). Both songs are non-diegetic and enact an alienation effect that Churchill borrowed directly from Brecht's epic theatre and especially from his use of songs to interrupt and prevent any form of naturalism and empathic investment on the characters.[7] Here Giorgina Pi also opted for two well-known tunes, both from 1979: Elton John and Kiki Dee's "Don't Go Breaking My Heart", representing the more light-hearted and pop side of the decade, is used to set

the lyrics from "A Boy's Best Friend", while The Clash's punk anthem "Guns of Brixton" sustains the portrait of lives lived "on cloud nine".

In both cases, the musical choice both emphasizes the message of the original text and sets in motion a complex reverberation with contemporary times. "A Boy's Best Friend" comes at a crucial time during the first act, when young Edward claims his role as man and master by crudely ordering Joshua to get the sewing box for his mother: "You fetch her sewing at once, do you hear me? You move when I speak to you, boy" (Churchill 1985: 278). However, as Betty embraces him to congratulate him on his newly acquired masculinity, Edward rejects her, and it is on this scene of discomfort and pain that the company breaks into a mother-praising song: "And wherever we may turn,/ This lesson we shall learn,/ A boy's best friend is his mother" (279). The cheerful and uplifting mood of Elton John's song contributes to the emotional friction between the ideal harmony of familial love and the actual pain traditional roles are inflicting on the characters on stage; a friction heightened by the subtle irony of using a song by an "out" gay performer who was, in the original song, playing the "man" (albeit admittedly a man afraid of having his heart broken) in a heterosexual love duet to channel Edward's impossibility to "play the man" according to the patriarchal system in which he is being raised.

The tension is further enhanced by stage action. Churchill does not include any indication in the play-text; this production chooses to amplify the emotional disconnection among the characters and between characters and audience by having the cast sing and dance while, centre stage, Edward (performed by Tania Garribba) violently and repeatedly crashes to the ground the doll which has been the subject of many a dialogue between him and his parents on the impropriety of boys playing with dolls. At the end of the song, which is played in its full, four-minute length, the doll is completely destroyed, arms and legs strewn on the floor, wisps of hair torn away. The audience can be drawn into the mood of the song, and experience the moment as funny and light-hearted, contributing effectively to Edward's marginalization and oppression; or they can focus their attention on Gar-

ribba's action, the repeated noise of the doll hitting the ground, and identify with the character's pain and socially unacceptable rage. In either or both cases, the scene comes across powerfully and effectively enhancing and actualizing Churchill's original writing.

A different dynamics between past and present is played out during "Cloud Nine", the song that breaks off narrative continuity in act II. The immediately preceding scene already hovers between realism and magic: in the park where the whole act is set Gerry, adult Edward's renegade lover, meets boy Edward, who repeats the same lines he had addressed to his (rather mature) lover Harry in act I. This ominous sense of previous scripts being replayed even in the more "liberated" context of the 1970s is resisted in the song, which describes new forms of kinships and affections : "The wife's lover's children and my lover's wife,/ Cooking in my kitchen, confusing my life./ And it's upside down when you reach Cloud Nine./ Upside down when you reach Cloud Nine" (312). Here live music replaces the recorded arrangement of Elton John's song from the previous example, with Cathy (Xhulio Petushi) playing guitar, adult Edward (Alessandro Riceci or Michele Baronio[8]) playing the drums, and middle-aged Betty (Sylvia De Fanti) singing and playing the bass guitar. The text, partially adapted from the 2016 printed translation to fit the metrics of the song, still celebrates the many ways in which different people can reach the blissful "cloud nine/settimo cielo"; however, The Clash's echo cannot but evoke the far less blissful guns, an element which runs subterraneously throughout the second act. As the scene opens, young mothers Lin and Victoria (the grown-up version of doll Victoria from act I) discuss whether it is good to let children have toy guns: in particular, Lin is proud of letting her daughter Cathy play with them as her own mother never let her (see Churchill 1985: 291) – a fitting counterpoint to the ban on dolls Edward suffers in act I.

Cathy is indeed obsessed by war games and, when informed that her uncle Bill was killed, she immediately asks: "Can I have his gun?" (304). In this production, Cathy is equipped with a bright pink machine gun, which she drops only to embrace the guitar: the inter-

changeability between the two echoes The Clash's dark salutation of armed responses to police violence in the rough neighbourhood of Brixton, which a few years after the release of this song (and of *Cloud Nine*'s premiere) was to be the theatre of the infamous 1981 Brixton riots, which saw young people from the local African-Caribbean community engage in violent clashes with the Metropolitan Police. The song's reggae-inflected rhythm pays homage to the black community in the area (where composer Paul Simonon had grown up), and the original lyrics include references to Caribbean historical figures such as Vincent "Ivanhoe" Martin, a Jamaican criminal whose life had recently been the subject of the 1972 film *The Harder They Come* (see Popoff: 98).

Hence, the choice of "Guns of Brixton" for the play's title song obliquely addresses the issue of the lack of racial diversity in Churchill's 1979 London; more generally, it foreshadows the collapse of the play's utopian drive towards the idyllic, pansexual and polyamorous "cloud nine" under the pressure of Thatcherian repression. Margaret Thatcher's portrayal by Andy Warhol looms large on the ice cream van appearing on stage shortly after the song: from it both Maud and Clive from the first act emerge, each licking an ice cream, to pressure Betty into the angel-of-the-house mould she has escaped by divorcing her husband and lifting her mother's ban on masturbation. You cannot have the ice cream and eat it too, they seem to say; nonetheless, differently from the popular cake, ice cream melts away as time passes, so one may as well eat it while it is there, as Betty does with the one her mother offers her. Because the promise of happiness and freedom the characters from the play embody at the end of the play is fatally short-lived: as the audience witnesses the birth of the queer family including Edward, Victoria, Lin, the two children (Cathy and Victoria's son Tommy) and maybe even Betty and Gerry, it is also keenly aware that this form of queer kinship has been discarded in favour of homonormativity[9] and a recrudescence of movements in support of the "natural" (i.e. heteronormative) family worldwide.

Against the contemporary landscape as regards civil rights, the kinship established at the end of *Cloud Nine* seems to arrive not from the past but from the future, from that Chthulucene Donna Haraway has recently envisioned as the era which will see the end of the current Anthropocene and of its outdated production and social models. Giorgina Pi's production enacts this time lapse by emphasizing *Cloud Nine*'s apparently outdated rebelliousness, avoiding any cultural reference beyond 1979: this allows the audience to become aware of the passing of time and, in the same movement, of the persistent urgency of the issues confronted by the characters in the play. In this way, this staging produces a fertile "nick of time", which means at the same time an assessment of past civil rights movements and a projection towards the fights to come: as The Clash sing: "When they kick at your front door/ How you gonna come?".

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1 Bluemotion's production of *Settimo cielo* was based on Riccardo Duranti's translation discussed later in this contribution. It featured Alessandro Riceci/Michele Baronio (Betty I/Edward II), Marco Cavalcoli (Harry/Martin), Sylvia De Fanti (Ellen/Mrs Saunders/Betty II), Tania Garribba (Edward I/Victoria), Aurora Peres (Maud/Lin), Lorenzo Parrotto/Xhulio Petushi (Joshua/Cathy), and Marco Spiga (Clive/Gerry); costume design by Gianluca Falaschi, music by Collettivo Angelo Mai, lighting by Andrea Gallo. The production saw a first run on February 14-25 2018 at Teatro India in Rome; it has since been reprised in March 19-31, 2019 at Teatro India and toured other Italian cities (among them Milan, Bologna and Ravenna) until May 2019. Differences in casting and staging between the 2018 and 2019 run, when relevant, will be pointed out in the analysis of the production.

2 Acts I and II of the play are separated by one hundred years; yet for the characters, a colonial family moving from Africa to London, only twenty-five years have elapsed.

3 For Bluemotion's production of the Italian translation of *Pigs and Dogs* see Guarracino.

4 The only attempt at creating a practice for the theatre in Italy can be traced to the Teatro della Maddalena, active in Rome between 1972 and 1987 and founded by activists including writer Dacia Maraini (Silvi).

[5] In a private conversation, the director shared her insight to work with Petushi on his own Albanian lineage for this character, using the colonial relationship between Italy and Albania and the experience of Albanian immigration to Italy to substantiate the character for an Italian audience. Incidentally, Albanian mass migration to Italy dates back to the 1990s, roughly at the same time as *Cloud Nine*'s translation into Italian.

[6] The song was originally included in the masque *Alfred* (1740); for its role in the British imperial imagery see Armitage 173-174.

[7] For Brecht's influence of British theatre and on Churchill in particular see Reinelt.

[8] Riceci played Betty in act I and Edward in act II in the 2018 run and during the 2019 tour; Baronio replaced Riceci to great acclaim in the 2019 run at Teatro India.

[9] "Homonormativity" generally refers to the normalization of gay and lesbian rights movements in the 1990s (see Bolen).