

# Southernness, Disability and the Construction of the “Other” in Italian Cinema: Desire, Masculinities, Disfigurations and Medicalisations

MARCELLO MESSINA  
*Universidade Federal da Paraíba*

Examining the convergence of disability and Southernness in the construction of images of Otherness within Italian cinema involves primarily a critical grasp of the strictly normative regimes that define standard Italianness in terms of able-bodied, Northern-sounding and Northern-looking characters that are often (more or less explicitly) set against some sort of “deviant” bodies, that are, in turn, relegated to marginal, gregarious or deliberately prominent, if grotesque, roles. In this context, gender, race, regional identity and disability are among the fundamental axes of social demarcation that determine, from time to time, the ratio of “standardness” vs. “Otherness” through which any given character may be signified by the audience.

Here I am not suggesting the existence of a systematic nexus between disability and Southernness in the production of this Otherness. Rather, I seek to work on a limited number of case studies, with the awareness that by no means they exhaust the complexity of Italian visual regimes. In other words, disability and Southernness do often converge in order to construct characters that are understandable as Others, but this cannot be a general, universal rule – and even if it could, the four movies that are used as case studies would not be sufficient to draw a valid theoretical conclusion on this matter.

Likewise, I am not proposing an essentialist interpretation of *Northern vs. Southern*, also in view of the fact that, for example, the many Roman characters that populate Italian cinema might be represented, from time to time, as belonging more to one or the other category. Rather, I refer to the constant production and reproduction of a geopolitical caesura that is imbricated with representations of ethno-racial, cultural and social Otherness, and that identifies, from time to time, Southerners as inferior, inadequate, laughable, backwards, etc. (Pugliese 2008).

Identifying a productive conflation between disability and Southernness in producing this Otherness should not solely involve an additive exercise of juxtaposition of distinct social categories. On the contrary, it should rather involve a fully intersectional approach on the issue, avoiding the reproduction of “hegemonic discourses of identity politics” that would end up invisibilising the “experiences of the more marginal members of that specific social category and construct[ing] an homogenised ‘right way’ to be its member” (Yuval-Davis 195). Such an anti-essentialistic approach should also serve to identify any non-emancipatory drives that might motivate the appearance of disabled Southern characters in Italian films: a set of clichéd assumptions, toxic representations, merciless mockeries and cultural appropriations that permeates scripts, dialogues and acting and that is meant to prompt specific reactions in the audience.

In other words, most of the characters that I examine in this paper are played by comedians and are specifically meant to make us laugh. This is extremely important in view of the Bakhtinian notion of “ritual laughter” (Bakhtin), intended as a powerful and

ambivalent practice that has the function of forcing those who are laughed at to change. Ritual laughter operates within Italian cinema in terms of what Suvendrini Perera, borrowing an expression coined by Allen Feldman, calls “scopic regimes,” that is, “the regimens that prescribe modes of seeing and object visibility and that proscribe or render untenable other modes and objects of perception” (Feldman 30 in Perera 9). In other words, national Italian audiences are encouraged to laugh at these anomalous bodies while the whole set of regulatory actions and social representations that render these bodies anomalous is conveniently effaced. Anomalous bodies and normative regimes, eventually, interact in order to produce what Giorgio Cremonini describes as “spaesamento” (“displacement”), that is, a comedy dislocation that produces “aperture di senso” (“openings of meaning”) and “voragini scavate dal *non sense*” (“abysses dug by nonsense”) (Cremonini 27).

In more general terms, as revealed by John Dickie, Gabriella Gribaudo and Jane Schmeider among others, Southern Italy and Southern Italians are constantly represented as an internal Other within national culture and beyond. This Otherness is a prolific source of literary and cinematic representations, which in turn exploit confluences between the exotic and the familiar, the attractive and the repugnant, the heavenly and the hellish, etc (Benigno and Lupo). Joseph Pugliese shows how these multiple regimes of representations function to legitimise entire histories of racialised violence against Southerners (2008 1).

With regards to disability, activism and academic research have come up, in the last forty years, with a “social model of disability” that focusses on social oppression and rejects medical labels based on the concept of impairment. According to Colin Barnes and Geof Mercer:

The significance of disability theory and practice lies in its radical challenge to the medical or individual model of disability. The latter is based on the assumption that the individual is “disabled” by their impairment, whereas the social model of disability reverses this causal chain to explore how socially constructed barriers (for example, in the design of buildings, modes of transport and communication, and discriminatory attitudes) have “disabled” people with a perceived impairment (Barnes and Mercer 1).

In this context, it is important to note a largely common “media reluctance” (Finkelstein 1996 30-36) in addressing and endorsing such a fundamental theoretical model. Disabled people continue to be largely represented in terms of lack, personal tragedy, medical condition, etc.:

On the one hand we, disabled people, tend to see the achievement of our personal goals through active participation in the community. On the other hand “concerned” able-bodied people tend to see the goal as the institutionalisation of care (whether in residential home or in the community). In a way this contradiction between what disabled people perceive as desirable and what able-bodied people interpret as possible provides us with the battleground for the dramatic presentation of disability on television (Finkelstein 2016).

In this paper, I consider screen performances by the likes of Enzo Cannavale, Sergio Rubini, Dario Bandiera and Franco Trevisi in order to discuss the ways in which disability and Southernness are deliberately combined in order to signify anomaly, deviancy and “exotic” eccentricity for body-normative and ethnocentric audiences.

Importantly, in order to avoid easy metanarratives of progressive “improvement” or “worsening” with respect to how these films interact with each other in time, I have avoided adopting chronological criteria to set the order of my case studies. As a consequence, for instance, I unusually appear to take a backward leap from 2007 to 1984 in the transition from my first to my second case study, only to then proceed linearly to 1997 and then 2000 with my third and fourth case studies – this is not an unfortunate mistake, but rather a specific

compositional choice, which is meant to obey to a conceptual categorisation rather than a chronological one, and has perhaps the advantage of avoiding the illusion of evolutionary or involutory teleologies in the present work. From my personal standpoint, the pressure of these regimes of representations has not necessarily been alleviated or intensified over time.

## **Impaired virilities and hypermasculine desires**

In order to honour the intersectional approach announced above, it is fundamental to note that, problematically, all the characters analysed in this paper are men. I purposely intend this as a direct reference to the gendered representations of Southern Italians as members of “backwards,” patriarchal, hyper-chauvinistic communities, etc. Importantly, I will show how these gendered representations of Southern Italians operate to assign sexist desires to characters who, by virtue of the traditional stereotypes of disability, are deprived of any sexual agency (Wilde).

In one of the episodes of *Manuale d'amore 2* (“Manual of Love 2”), Sicilian actor Dario Bandiera acts as a comedy sidekick for male protagonist Riccardo Scamarcio, a Southerner himself (albeit not sounding markedly as such). Scamarcio (Nicola) and Bandiera (Dario) are interned in a rehabilitation hospital, due to lower limb injuries that led both of them on a wheelchair. As hospital roommates, the two build their friendship by playing wheelchair basketball and speculating on whether the full functionality of their respective limbs and sexual organs will ever come back. Here Bandiera’s character is purposely constructed around the trite cliché of the sexually obsessed, phallogentric Sicilian man (Van Watson) who keeps babbling on about his penis, here carefully referred to with the Sicilian word “minchia:” “Nicola, non mi funziona la minchia, mpare! È gravissima sta cosa!” (“Nicola, my cock doesn’t work! This is really bad!”). Bandiera’s “unsuccessful” attempts to “restore” his masculinity, which get to the point of illicitly inviting several escorts to the hospital room, are placed against Scamarcio’s “successful” erotic romance with a physiotherapist interpreted by Monica Bellucci. While Scamarcio progressively gets back on his legs, Bandiera’s hopes for rehabilitation are dashed by a doctor’s diagnosis: “le possibilità di tornare a camminare non sono molte” (“there are not many chances of regaining walking mobility”).

In her analysis of the representations of disabled masculinities in British soap operas, Alison Wilde identifies the meta-narrative “use of temporary impairments,” which normally end up with the “resolution of the story by a rewarding of the re-establishment of non-disabled identities, marking a return to the moral authority of the “normality” macro-narrative” (360). Drawing upon the work of Martin Norden, Wilde goes on to argue that “such storylines are resolved in a redemptive or punitive manner, but both trajectories strengthen the portrayal of disabled men as ‘castrated’ and they invariably involve women as agents of moral reform or objects of ‘diseased lusts’” (Wilde 360).

Bandiera’s marked Sicilian chatter contrasts with Scamarcio’s “standard” elocution as much as his long-term impairment contrasts with Scamarcio’s quick recuperation: here it is important to unearth the ways in which, in the context of the association between wheelchair users and sexual impotence, the “diseased lusts” of the phallogentric Sicilian character are punished with the retention of both his mobility impairment and his “castration.” Scamarcio’s able-bodied functionality, on the contrary, is redeemed precisely by the healing action (in both a physiotherapeutic and a sexual sense) of his doctor/lover, a woman whose agency of “moral reform” contrasts with the “filthy” actions of Bandiera’s escorts. After catching

Bandiera with an escort, Scamarcio cries: “sei una bestia, Dario, ma chi cazzo è questa?” (“you’re a monster, Dario, who the fuck is this one?”).

In more general terms, these characters tend to be defined by an unresolvable gap between hypermasculine desires of exploitation directed at female bodies and somewhat impaired virilities. Now, while the clinical association between spinal injuries and erectile dysfunction might partially explain the disproportionate phallogentric logic of the aforementioned episode of *Manuale d’amore 2*, At times, Italian films may offer toxic representations of male disabled characters as “castrated” – even when spinal injuries are not involved. A brief sequence in *Il ragazzo di campagna* (“The Country Boy”) features the participation of Neapolitan comedian Enzo Cannavale, who acts as a comedy partner to protagonist Renato Pozzetto (Artemio). Cannavale interprets a blind old man with a “brutto carattere” (“bad temper”), who plays any sort of tricks against his mobility assistant Pozzetto/Artemio. The Pozzetto-Cannavale interaction reaches a climax when the blind man asks his assistant to walk him to the nearest adults-only cinema to watch a porn movie. In the projection hall, Cannavale asks Pozzetto to describe him the details of the film: “Che succede? Che fanno?” (“What is going on? What are they doing?”). Pozzetto replies by clumsily trying to describe the erotic action, and soon the other members of the audience start getting annoyed with the loud chatter and react angrily against Pozzetto, scolding him and hitting him with a rolled newspaper, up until the moment when a man picks him up by the collar and threatens him:

[Pozzetto] “Non ha capito, non lo vede che è cieco?” [Audience man]: “Beh, se è cieco non è il posto suo qui dentro!” [Pozzetto]: “Vabbè, allora qual è il posto per un cieco, scusi eh?” [Audience man]: “Guarda che ti dò un pugno sul naso!”

([Pozzetto]: “You don’t understand, can’t you see that he is blind?” [Audience man]: “Well, if he’s blind, then this is not the right place for him!” [Pozzetto] “Well, then excuse me, what is the right place for a blind man?” [Audience man] “Careful, otherwise I’ll punch you in the face!”).

After this last exchange, Pozzetto decides to quit his mobility assistant job and leaves Cannavale in the cinema hall, alone and unable to walk back home. Despite having been able to orientate himself alone during the whole sketch, as he was even showing directions to Pozzetto, Cannavale now wonders how he will get back home: “E io come torno a casa?” (“And now, how do I get back home?”).

The comic effect of the whole sequence is produced precisely by the deliberate violation of some fundamental assumptions connected with the various social demarcations involved in the sketch: the blind man’s high orientation and mobility skills – something that is far from uncommon – are implicitly presented as a contradiction, as much as the fact that he wants to watch a film despite being visually impaired. The fact that this is a pornographic movie also points to the implicit status of “castrated disabled man” that is assigned to Cannavale: as voiced by the audience member who threatened Pozzetto, he should not be there, not only as he is unable to see, but because he is accordingly considered unable to extract pleasure from the audiovisual depiction of sexual intercourse.

The proud defiance of these clichés undertaken by Cannavale’s character is in turn trapped within the *stooge vs. comic foil* structure of the whole sketch. Now, the contrast between Cannavale’s bizarre behaviour and Pozzetto’s “straight man” responses needs to be framed within a series of binary oppositions - in this sense, it is extremely important to note how the dichotomies *blind vs. able-bodied* and *castrated vs. sexually active* coincide with the *Neapolitan vs. Milanese* dialectics that inscribes the interaction between the two characters. In other words, Cannavale’s marked Neapolitan accent and the way it clashes with the

Milanese talk of Pozzetto function to predict or reinforce his bizarre behaviour, associated in turn with blindness.<sup>1</sup>

Blindness, Southernness and the bizarre behaviour of the comic foil within the acting duo are also extremely relevant to Joystick, the character played by Sergio Rubini in Gabriele Salvatores's *Nirvana*, which will be analysed in the following section.

## **Disfigured bodies and fierce medicalisations**

In his analysis of the discursive construction of Brazilian North-Eastern subjects, Durval Muniz de Albuquerque Júnior notes how their bodies are constantly represented in the act of undergoing some process of decomposition, putrefaction and/or dissolution that connects their dying bodies with the alleged dying materiality of their region:

A vida, nesta região, parece estar sempre em perigo e ela própria parece participar desse processo de decomposição. Os corpos, realizando a profecia cristã, parecem todos voltar ao pó da terra, a ela misturando seu líquido corrosivo que a faz estéril. A morte dos homens parece brotar da própria morte da terra. A região, nestes discursos, parece ter sua forma, seu organismo mutilado e depauperado. Tudo parece se precipitar à volta destes sujeitos, que emitem seu discurso literário como canto fúnebre de um povo, de um tempo, de um espaço (Albuquerque Júnior 95-96).

(In this region, life seems to be always in danger, as it seems to participate itself in this decomposition process. The bodies, fulfilling the Christian prophecy, seem to all return to the dust of the earth, mixing it with their corrosive liquids that make it sterile. The death of the people seems to sprout from the death of the land. The region, in these discourses, seems to have its shape and organism mutilated and impoverished. Everything seems to precipitate around these subjects, who emit their literary discourses as the funeral lament of a people, a time and a space.)

Academic comparisons between the Brazilian North-East and the Italian South are not uncommon,<sup>2</sup> and in fact Albuquerque Júnior's above passage could definitely be used to describe some of the representations of Southern Italians as well. Images of death and decomposition that in turn are associated with magical rituals, superstition, ignorance, etc. are quite common in the cinematic and literary representations of Southern Italy.<sup>3</sup> Often, grotesque and anomalous bodies are used in order to characterise Southerners.<sup>4</sup> However, not only does the visualisation of these bodies as anomalous and grotesque function to set Northern Italianness as a norm over Southernness: it always already establishes, by contraposition, what Judith Butler would refer to as "the domain of intelligible bodies" (XI).

Gabriele Salvatores's films *Nirvana* and *Denti* ("Teeth") indulge in visualising the deliberate disfiguration of the body of a Southern character, in both cases played by Apulian actor Sergio Rubini. In *Nirvana*, Rubini interprets Joystick, a computer hacker characterised by his "parlata pugliese assai ostentata" ("extremely marked Apulian accent"), and by the fact that he has sold his eyes on the black market and has replaced them with keratoprosthesis digital cameras. Importantly, Joystick's camera-eyes are a cheap and obsolescent black-and-white model which, as the film progresses, gradually develops more and more technical problems. Oscillating between a "cyborg incarnatio[n] of the posthuman era that mandates the hybridization between organic and technological, metal and flesh" (Tabanelli 36), and a mischievous layabout who steals the protagonist's money since, as he admits in the film, "non ci h[a] più un soldo e st[a] diventando completamente cieco" ("[is] completely broke and [is] getting totally blind"), Joystick's character is constructed around the usual representations of Southern Italians as amoral (cf. Banfield), lazy, inclined to dishonest behaviour (Cf. Lombroso; Niceforo), etc.

In their work on “somatechnics,” a neologism based on the idea “that material corporeality (*soma*) is inextricably conjoined with the techniques and technologies (*technics*) through which bodies are formed and transformed” (Pugliese and Stryker 1), Joseph Pugliese and Susan Stryker propose to read race and whiteness as produced precisely at the encounter between bodies and “bodily artifacts, sites, or practices” (5). Now, Joystick/Rubini’s racialised Southern body, always already enmeshed with the derogatory characteristics that are associated with Southernness, is also indissoluble from his obsolescent, gradually deteriorating prosthetic eyes – authentic “somatechnic metonyms” (Pugliese, “Compulsory Visibility”) of a racialised “Otherness” – , and from the circumstances by which his impairment was produced as the result of financial ineptitude and extreme life choices. If Dario Bandiera in *Manuale d’amore 2* is punished with the persistence of his mobility impairment, Joystick/Rubini is narrated as having already punished himself by selling his own eyes.

Furthermore, the way in which Joystick/Rubini’s social identity is constantly oscillating between the condition of “disabled” and that of “cyborg” implies the violent reinstatement of concepts such as “illness” and “medication” (Uemura). Now, it is precisely on an operating chair, in the studio of camera-eye specialist Dr Rauschenberg, that the somatechnic visualisation of Joystick/Rubini’s grotesque body reaches its most repugnant peak, as the doctor cuts and stitches flesh and electronic components on his face, causing him to scream in pain. As claimed by Roberta Tabanelli, “the ‘eye’ is definitely a crucial element in Salvatores’s film”(42). More specifically, I argue, Salvatores’s camera-eye seems to take a special pleasure in visualising the medicalised torment of Sergio Rubini’s Southern and somewhat “anomalous” body, to the point that his next film, *Denti*, is apparently based (among other things) on the exponential multiplication of the Dr Rauschenberg scene in *Nirvana*, whereby the intervention on digital eyes is replaced by a series of increasingly grotesque dental visits.

Antonio, *Denti*’s protagonist, is interpreted again by Rubini and, very importantly, is not disabled. Entirely set in Naples, *Denti* narrates Antonio’s vicissitudes with various dentists, in the attempt to obtain proper medication and recuperation after his current partner broke his “abnormally oversized” upper incisors during an episode of domestic violence. A gradual escalation of operating chairs, bleeding mouths, rundown dental practices and violent interventions, the film also features a series of other toxic stereotypes, mostly (though not exclusively) connected with Southern characters: a sexually obsessed uncle that collects female pubic hair, and Antonio himself, devoured by jealousy, both constructed around the most clichéd tropes of Southern Italian masculinity (Minicuci); an ex-wife who is as violent as Antonio’s current partner, in line with what Lara Palombo identifies as the common “racio-gendered vision of southern Italian women as lawless, immoral, vindictive, violent and murderess” (194); finally, and most notably, Beluga (Franco Trevisi), a deaf dentist from Antonio’s childhood who had slaughtered his younger wife out of jealousy and then killed himself. This last character is a paradigmatic example of the trite stereotype of the “evil cripple” (Dahl). During a drunken hallucination, Antonio/Rubini imagines a dialogue with this character from his past, where Beluga declares:

Era da tanto tempo che ti volevo parlare, ma tu non puoi capire cosa vuol dire non avere le parole per esprimere tutto: tutto il sentimento e tutto l’amore che uno ha dentro. Lei era bella, ti ricordi? Tutti gli uomini la guardavano, ma a me questo mi piaceva perché mi faceva sentire... mi faceva sentire normale, uno come tutti gli altri. L’ho uccisa così era completamente mia.

(I’ve been looking forward to talking to you for a long time, as you can’t understand what it means to lack the words to express everything: all the feelings and love that one has inside.

She was beautiful, do you remember her? All men stared at her, but I liked that as it made me feel... it made me feel normal, like everyone else. I killed her, so that she would be totally mine).

This passage condenses some of the most entrenched stigmas about deaf people:<sup>5</sup> firstly, they are mistakenly represented as lacking language skills<sup>6</sup> (“...what it means to lack the words to express everything”); secondly, they are portrayed as being obsessed with conforming with “normal” people<sup>7</sup> (“it made me feel normal, like everyone else”); thirdly, they are imagined as unpredictable individuals, capable of any sort of disproportionately atrocious action in order to satisfy some obscure desire<sup>8</sup> (“I killed her, so that she would be totally mine”). Regarding this last point, the bloodbath that inscribes Bodega’s role in *Denti* is coextensive with the general sense of putrefaction, decay and (self-)destruction that is associated to Southern “anomalous” bodies and/or disabled identities both in *Denti* and in *Nirvana*.

## Final remarks

In this article, I have explored the conflation of Southernness and disability in the representation of some specific characters that emerge as “Others” in Italian films. Precisely as these representations are in turn imbricated with racio-gendered images of Southern Italy as an endemically “backwards,” virulently patriarchal region, in this particular work I have focussed on male characters and on the tension between the hypermasculine desires assigned to them and the condition of “castrated” individuals connected to their portrayal as disabled men. Later, while still considering male characters with similar desires and tensions, I shifted my focus to the construction of their disfigured bodies and on quasi-sadistic visualisation of brutal medical interventions on their very same bodies. I have then analysed two films by Gabriele Salvatores, namely, *Nirvana* and *Denti*, both marked by the painful treatment of characters played by Sergio Rubini on operating chairs. In both films, as I have noted, the trajectories of these characters rely on narrative mechanisms that have to do with decay, degradation, decomposition, putrefaction, etc.: these tropes are, again, connected with common representations of Southernness and with common representations of disability. In *Denti*, as discussed above, this mechanism reaches its atrocious climax with Bodega’s efferate, jealousy-driven murder of his wife Fiorenza. Common clichés on Southernness, disability and masculinity converge in this character, whose final imaginary dialogue with protagonist Antonio uncovers a whole lot of other toxic representations about deafness.

Importantly, a discussion of the disparate commercial, cultural and social significances associated to these films has not been at the forefront of my analysis. Certainly, Salvatores’s movies are intended for audiences that are substantially different (i.e., belonging to more educated, high-income backgrounds) from those of *Manuale d’amore 2*, while *Il ragazzo di campagna* is arguably a much more popular and influential comedy classic. Moreover, there are also differences in the specific artistic/cultural ambitions of each of these films. Nevertheless, these important discrepancies do not seem to predict substantial differences in the North-centric and ableist treatment of the characters.

This work also lacks a complete discussion of the potential disobediences inherent to some of these performances, which would be useful in order to assess the extent to which the construction of these disabled Southern characters may defy the very essence of Italy as an ableist, North-centric nation. However, I have partly discussed in these terms the character played by Enzo Cannavale in *Il ragazzo di campagna*. Surely, subversive elements of identitarian affirmation, that might even defy the clichéd representations that inscribe these

characters from their very construction, may be identifiable in the other case studies analysed in this article.

The analyses of some well-known screen performances by the likes of Massimo Troisi, Lino Banfi, Maurizio Micheli, etc. were not included in this article. Furthermore, the portrayal of the female characters, interpreted by actresses such as Dria Paola in *La cieca di Sorrento* (“The Blind Woman of Sorrento”), or Sara Rapisarda in *Giovannino*, deserves extremely important discussions. All these case-studies provide a sizeable corpus for future investigations.

Incidentally, it is fundamental to note how, in the context of the case studies analysed in this article and indicated for future studies, none of the actors interpreting disabled characters is in fact disabled. Certainly, the impact of this repeated cultural appropriation towards the aggravation of the already problematic representations discussed so far is extremely significant.

This last point certainly helps bring up once again, and finally, the issue of national representation: disability often conflates with Southernness in order to signify Otherness in front of an audience that is constantly imagined as Northern and able-bodied. While the fragilities of such a model of “scopic regime” are evident – and will be discussed in future work about the disobedience of (some of) these characters — toxic stereotypes of both Southernness and disability may apparently (and despicably) thrive in Italian visual culture.

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<sup>1</sup> Again, the conflation of disability and Southernness in Cannavale’s character is not systematic and does not constitute a strict rule in Italian cinema. For example, in Neri Parenti’s *Infelici e contenti*, the same Pozzetto plays a wheelchair user alongside Ezio Greggio as a blind man: both are Northerners and disabled, one is sexually active and the other one is sexually frustrated, and the whole dynamics of the comedy couple deals with Otherness without resorting to a representation of Southern identity.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. for example Galvão; also Capogreco and Messina.

<sup>3</sup> For examples of academic works that rely uncritically on these tropes, cf. Palumbo Mosca; also cf. Catanese.

<sup>4</sup> A paradigmatic example of this grotesque portrayal is the chicken coop scene in Franco Brusati’s film *Pane e cioccolata*, set in Switzerland, where some Southern Italian immigrants clandestinely live and work in a chicken coop, with their bodies covered in feathers, and constricted into non-upright postures due to the limited height of the ceiling.

<sup>5</sup> By inserting a case-study on deafness in this paper, I implicitly acknowledge the complexity of the debate on deafness as being part of, or as being distinct from, disability. For an exhaustive illustration of the debate, cf. Skelton and Valentine.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. for example Mousley and Chaudoir.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. for example O’Connell.

<sup>8</sup> On the way this particular view of deaf people is entrenched in religion, cf. Lawrence.

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