Università degli Studi di Pisa
Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere

Tesi di laurea

Lively Landscapes of Literature

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Introduction

General outlook: purpose and boundaries of the work.

The present work is aimed to contribute to the discovery – indeed it is still a discovery for the Italian public – and to the appreciation of a skilled contemporary writer: the British and several times awarded Penelope Lively.

When elaborating the plan of the work, at the very beginning of my researches, I thought that I should try to present the most complete account of Lively and her production. However, I had to face the fact that it was practically impossible to tackle each of her works.

In consideration of the great amount of novels – and not only, as we will see – written by Lively, I had to narrow my field of work. So in the first place I decided to focus on her adult production, excluding the juvenile and the short stories one. In the second place, I decided to concentrate only on some of her novels; those that could better support my analysis.

The first chapter deals with Lively's life and works. The Weltanshauung which guides her operating, the acknowledgements she received. It is a rather descriptive chapter which lays the foundation for the ensuing parts.
The second chapter is an exploration of some critic issue regarding writers classification and more in particular how Mrs. Lively can be classified. Although she does not believe in categorization, we will look at the main labels that have been attached to her name providing some personal consideration.

The richness and vastness of her production will be shown in the fourth chapter. There you will find a review of the main threads which run through her works. Whereas the subsequent chapter will tackle the subject of her stylistic features and narrative technique. A small section will be dedicated to her personal creative process.

Finally, chapter five will attempt a linguistic analysis of one of her novels, *City of the Mind*. A rather complex text that was particularly suited for a corpus-based study and that concentrate on the characterization of the city in the work.

In September I had the chance and the luck to meet Mrs. Lively in her London house and to interview her. The transcription of our interview is included in the Appendix, which also hosts the list of occurrences for the word *city* germane to the analysis of chapter five.

An introduction to the bibliographical situation of the studies and the works upon Lively and the customary bibliography ends my work. Due the relative low knowledge of Lively’s novels in our country I thought that it could be useful to briefly summarize her editorial situation.
**List of abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>According to Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>City of the Mind</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Cleopatra's sister</td>
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<td>HW</td>
<td>Heat Wave</td>
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<td>MIU</td>
<td>Making It Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Moon Tiger</td>
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<tr>
<td>OJ</td>
<td>Oleander, Jacaranda</td>
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<td>PH</td>
<td>Perfect Happiness</td>
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<td>RL</td>
<td>The Road to Lichfield</td>
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<td>SW</td>
<td>Spiderweb</td>
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<td>TP</td>
<td>The Photograph</td>
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<tr>
<td>TT</td>
<td>Treasures of Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWK</td>
<td>The Whispering Knights</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Making **Making It Up**  
unpublished talk, courtesy of Mrs. Penelope Lively.

Writer **The Writer as Reader**  
unpublished talk, courtesy of Mrs. Penelope Lively.
Chronology

1933 Penelope Low, daughter of Roger Vincent and Vera Maud (née Reckitt, now Greer) Low, born 17 March in Cairo, Egypt.
1945 Parents divorce. Moves to London to live with paternal grandmother.
1946-1949 Attends boarding school in Stratford, on the coast of Sussex.
1951 Enters St. Anne's College, Oxford.
1954 Receives B.A. degree in history from Oxford.
1954-1957 Works as a research assistant at St. Antony's College, Oxford.
1957 Marries Jack Lively, an Oxford research fellow in politics.
1958 Daughter, Josephine, born.
1961 Son, Adam, born.
1971 The Whispering Knights; The Wild Hunt Of Hagworthy.
1972 The Driftway.
1974 The House in Norham Gardens.
1975 Going Back; Boy Without A Name.
1976 A Stitch in Time (awarded with Whitbread Award); The Stained Glass Window; Fanny's Sister; The Presence of the Past: An Introduction to Landscape History.
1977  *The Road to Lichfield.*

1978  *The Voyage of Qv66; Fanny and the Monsters; Nothing Missing but the Samovar, And Other Stories* (wins Southern Arts Literature Prize).

1979  *Treasures of Time* (wins Arts Council National Book Award).

1980  *Fanny and the Battle of Potter's Piece; Judgement Day.*

1981  *The Revenge of Samuel Stokes.*

1982  *Next to Nature, Art.*

1983  *Fanny and the Monsters (Three Fanny Stories); Perfect Happiness.* Introduction to Ivy Compton-Burnett: *Manservant and Maidservant*, Oxford University Press.

1984  *Uninvited Ghosts and Other Stories; Dragon Trouble;* Introduction to Ivy Compton-Burnett: *A Father and his Fate*, Oxford University Press; *Corruption, and Other Stories; According to Mark* (shortlisted for Booker Prize).


1987  Debbie and the Little Devil; A House Inside Out; *Moon Tiger* (wins Booker Prize).


1989  *Passing On.* Lively receives the Order of the British Empire.

1991  *City of The Mind.*

1992  *Judy and the Martian.*

1993  *Princess by Mistake;* Introduction to Lewis Carroll: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Everyman; *Cleopatra's Sister.*

1994  *The Cat, the Crow and the Banyan Tree; Oleander, Jacaranda: A Childhood Perceived.*
1995 *Good Night, Sleep Tight; Two Bears and Joe; Staying With Grandpa; A Martian Comes to Stay; The Disastrous Dog.*

1996 *Lost Dog and Other Stories; Introduction to Willa Cather: My Antonia, Dent; Introduction to The Mythical Quest: in search of adventure, romance & enlightenment,* British Library; *Heat Wave; Egypt: antiquities from above [essay].*

1997 *Beyond the Blue Mountains; Ghostly Guests; re-telling of Goldilocks and the Three Bears; introduction to Henry James: What Maisie Knew,* Everyman.

1998 *One, Two, Three . . . Jump; Spiderweb.* Her husband, Jack Lively, dies.


2001 *A House Unlocked; In Search of a Homeland: the story of the Aeneid; New Writing 10; foreword to Hal Bishop: Rachel Reckitt: where everything that meets the eye, a retrospective,* Somerset County Museum Service. Lively receives the Commander of British Empire.


2003 *The Photograph.*

How literature shapes, and is shaped by, our awareness of nature and how this awareness, or the lack of it, intersects with our behaviour is central to the research and writing of Cambridge academic Dr Robert Macfarlane, who has made a substantial contribution to placing nature writing centre stage of recent environmental discussions in this country. His research is located within the lively interdisciplinary field known as cultural environmentalism, which considers the ways in which not only literature but also sculpture, dance, film and music might influence ecological awareness and environmental activism. The experiences of reading, or the physical effects of being in the landscape