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"QUE SERA SERA": THE ENGLISH ROOTS OF A PSEUDO-SPANISH PROVERB

Abstract: "Que sera sera" has become a proverb in English, meaning "What will be will be": an expression of cheerful fatalism. Today it appears in spellings that resemble those of Spanish (usually), Italian (less often), or French (occasionally), but it is ungrammatical in all three of these languages, based on an erroneous merger of the English "free relative" *what* ('that which') with the interrogative *what*. From its first documentation (in 15th-century England) and its adoption as an English heraldic motto (beginning in the 16th century), through its use by English-speaking authors in the speech and thoughts of fictional characters (especially in the 19th and early 20th centuries), and up to its appearance in Doris Day's 1956 hit song "Que Sera Sera (What Will Be Will Be)"—the proverb has appeared almost entirely in English-language contexts. Corpus searches show that the phrase has virtually no history in Spain or Italy: neither among proverbs nor in running prose. A possible origin in Middle French is suggested, but evidence of its grammaticality in that language is inconclusive. Some writers, misled by its form, cite it as evidence of a fatalistic attitude in Mediterranean cultures.

Keywords: corpus linguistics, fatalism, free relative pronoun, heraldry, mistranslation, mottoes, proverbs, pseudo-Italian, pseudo-Spanish, "que sera sera"

1. Introduction: An English proverb in Romance words.

The phrase "Que sera sera" (rarely with accent marks in English), translated as "What(ever) will be will be," has been adopted by many English-speakers as an expression of cheerful fatalism. Rather than connoting despair, it typically offers relief from worry about future events beyond human control. Although its most frequent spelling today has the appearance of being Spanish, it is ungrammatical in Spanish, has no history in Spain, and virtually never appears in a Spanish context. Prior to the 1950s, it appeared more often with an Italian spelling—"Che sarà sarà" (but rarely with accent marks)—yet, similarly, it is ungrammatical in Italian and has no history in Italy. Prior to the 1950s it is documented only by Eng-

lish-speaking writers and used almost entirely in English-language contexts. Even the few instances of the saying that seem at first to be in a Spanish or Italian context often turn out to be in works translated from English or written in those languages by authors whose first language was English (e.g. Teshe 1873 [manuscript dated 1582], Howell 1659, Armstrong 1988, Blonsky and Desnoes 2000, and Grogan 2006).

All evidence indicates that the saying originated in England. It first appears—with the unique, French-like spelling of "quy serra serra"—in an English manuscript of the 15th century, with a somewhat enigmatic function (Sec. 5.1). In the 16th century it was adopted as the heraldic motto of an aristocratic English family (Sec. 5.3), with the Italian spelling that was to be its predominant form for 400 years. Alongside that *emblematic* use, it begins to take on an *expressive* function in the speech and thoughts of fictional characters, as a manifestation of an individual's fatalistic attitude toward a specific situation—occasionally in the 17th century, and later with increasing frequency, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries. In some of its instances, the saying appears with a translation or paraphrase; but in others—even some of the earliest ones—it appears on its own, suggesting that the reader may have been expected to understand it without semantic assistance.

The saying owes its present popularity to its use in the title and lyrics of a popular song, written by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans for Alfred Hitchcock's 1956 movie *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, and first sung by Doris Day (Sec. 5.6). Livingston had recently seen and heard an Italian version of the saying in another Hollywood film, and he and Evans decided to respell it in Spanish for their song. Soon after the success of Doris Day's version in English, the song was rewritten to be sung in many other languages, and in some of those languages, as well as in English, the phrase has been adopted by some speakers into their active vocabulary.

The present-day Internet provides rich resources for researching the history of the saying. Light can be shed on its popularity and various uses by means of searches in online linguistic corpora of Spanish, Italian, and English, designed for the purpose. In addition, the corpus of the *Google Books* project includes more than 15 million digitized books in many languages, many of which—especially the older ones—can be accessed and searched online, either in snippets or as whole text. A subset of this corpus, chosen for the *Google*

Books Ngram Viewer, lends itself for quantitative judgments about the varying frequencies of words and phrases through five centuries of history. The *Ngram Viewer* is based on a body of five million books, comprising more than 500 billion words, including 361 billion in English and 45 billion each in French and Spanish (Michel et al. 2011). In addition to these formal resources, anonymous bloggers, while not credentialed to speak with authority, can sometimes provide useful insights inadvertently through their usage or their thoughts about usage. And finally, some questions can be answered by searching the Internet at large, as a vast, unintentional linguistic corpus.

2. Variations of form.

Throughout its history, the saying appears in a variety of spellings resembling Spanish ("Que será será"), Italian ("Che sarà sarà"), French ("Qui sera sera"), or mixtures of Spanish and Italian. A few authors maintain the "correct" accent marks (acute for Spanish, grave for Italian), and a few others mix Italian accents with Spanish spelling or vice versa, but most authors omit the accent marks entirely. In order to background these differences when referring to the saying generically, I will lump the variants together under the abbreviation "KSS." The most frequent spelling of the saying today is "que sera sera," and that is the form of its main entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary* online. In speaking of the "Spanish," "Italian," or "French" versions of the saying, I refer only to their form (with *Que*, *Che*, or *Qui* respectively); I do not mean to imply that they come from Spain, Italy, or France—on the contrary, the concrete evidence of their early use is all from England (although I will speculate about a possible French origin in Sec. 3.3).

The form "**Che** s**e**rà s**e**rà" may look like a hybrid variant based on Italian *che* and Spanish *será*, but the Spanish-looking "serà" is more likely an archaic Italian form of the verb.[1] This form of the saying appears in sources ranging from the 16th to the 19th century, including Whetstone (1585), Marlowe (1604), and "Through Devious Ways" (1870). Meanwhile a true hybrid, "Què sara sara" (Spanish *qué* with Italian grave accent, and Italian *sarà* minus its accent), does appear, uniquely, in an English book published in the early 17th century.[2]

The form "**Qui** sera sera"—which is ungrammatical in Modern French, but conceivably permissible in Old and Middle French (see

Sec. 3.3)—appears sporadically, first in the unique variant "quy serra serra" of the saying's first documentation (Sec. 5.1), and later in books from the 19th to the 21st century. It appears both as a motto (in dozens of books on heraldry, including J. Burke 1839, J. B. Burke 1884, Elven 1851, and Fairbairn 1911 and 1968) and as a proverb in running text, expressed by both fictional characters and nonfiction authors (e.g. Sutcliffe 1896: 57; Lewin 1902/03: 89; Krishna 2000: 112; and Russell 2010: 41).

Indifference to these variations of form is prevalent among writers. In fact, many authors spell the saying in the Italian way even when writing specifically about the Doris Day song (which of course Livingston and Evans codified in Spanish). Some 20 instances of this latter juxtaposition can be found online at *Google Books* by searching simultaneously for "Che sara sara" and "Doris Day." Authors include the noted philosophers Quine and Žižek, novelist Chinua Achebe, and the disk jockey Dick Clark, as in examples (1) through (4):

> (1) The question of future truths is a matter of verbal convenience and is as innocuous as Doris Day's tautological fatalism "**Che sarà sarà**." (Quine 1995: 199).
> (2) ...none other than the notorious "**Che sara, sara**" sung by Doris Day...." (Žižek 2001: 118)
> (3) Clara did not reply. Instead she started humming "***Che sarà sarà***" (Achebe 1960: 15)
> (4) The top ten was rounded out with such standard fare as "Lisbon Antigua" by Nelson Riddle, "Wayward Wind" by Gogi Grant, "Poor People of Paris" by Les Baxter, "Whatever Will Be, Will Be (**Che Sarà Sarà**)" by Doris Day,.... (Uslan, Clark, and Solomon 1981: 20)

Quantitative judgments about the relative frequencies of the different forms can only be given as rough approximations, due to a number of complicating factors arising from the nature of the available corpora.[3] But given that caveat, the varying popularity of the forms can be summarized as follows:

Among the 16th- and 17th-century sources, both the Spanish and the Italian spellings are found, but both are so few that there is no statistical basis on which to claim that one is more frequent than the other. In the 18th century the Spanish spelling seems to fall out of

use, leaving only instances of the Italian form, mostly in the heraldic context.

The *Google Books Ngram Viewer* can be requested to show a graph of the relative frequencies of the Spanish and Italian spellings over time. Figure 1 is based on such a graph for "Che sara sara" and "Que sera sera." Since the *Viewer* is case-sensitive, only the capitalized instances are counted on this graph. The form must occur 40 or more times in a year to register above zero on the graph. For this graph, the range of "smoothing" was set at the relatively high value of 20 years, in order to filter out the "noise" of yearly fluctuation and accentuate the long-term trends. Arranged in this way, the graph shows that the Italian spelling reached its peak in the last two decades of the 19th century and that, beginning in the 1930s, its decline is mirrored by the rise of the Spanish spelling. Around 1950, the Italian spelling ceases its decline and assumes a somewhat constant frequency up to the present, while the Spanish spelling surpasses the Italian with a steadily increasing frequency. There is nothing to indicate anything like a "coup de grace" administered by Doris Day (1956) to the Italian spelling.

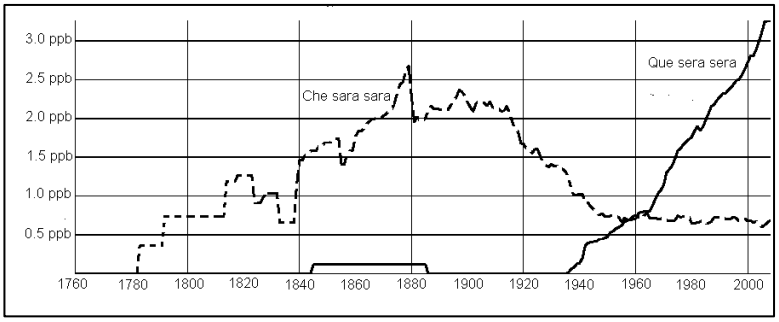

Figure 1: Comparative frequencies of "Che sara sara" (Italian spelling) and "Que sera sera" (Spanish spelling), 1760-2008. Graph adapted from *Google Books Ngram Viewer*; "ppb" = "parts per billion."[4]

In the Italian spelling, the proportion of standard "s**a**rà" to the archaic "s**e**rà" continues to be about 2 to 1.

The French spelling ("Qui sera sera") never registers on the English-language *Ngram Viewer* (1500-2008); this means that its numbers never reach 40 in any given year, *in the corpus of books*

published in English. A search in *Google Books* nevertheless reveals 396 instances. I estimate that some 50% of these are in the (grammatically correct) French context of "**ce** qui sera sera"; about 33% are in heraldic reference books; some 12% are due to errors, either typographical or of an optical scanning device; and perhaps 5% appear in an English running text (mostly dialog in novels). Meanwhile, the *Google Books: American English* corpus (Davies 2011-) yields *no* tokens of "qui sera sera"—which is not surprising, given (1) that books in French are excluded, and (2) that the topic of heraldry is much less popular in the U.S. than in the U.K.

3. Grammatical issues.

The first clue that KSS may not be of Spanish, Italian, or French origin is its lack of grammaticality in those languages. It is clearly ungrammatical in Spanish, Italian, and Modern French, while its possible grammaticality in Old or Middle French, in my view, has yet to be confirmed. The English pronoun *what* has two functions, one interrogative and the other non-interrogative (the "free relative pronoun," paraphrased by "that which" or "the thing that"). Thus it is not surprising that English-speaking learners of other languages, having acquired the interrogative early in their learning experience, frequently make the error of using the same form for the free relative pronoun.[5] But Spanish, Italian, and Modern French (as well as medieval French usually) each use two different forms for the two functions of English *what*. In these languages the interrogative is a single word (Spanish *qué*, Italian *che*, and French *que*), while the free relative is a two-word expression—Spanish *lo que*; Italian *ciò che*, *quello che*, or *quel che*, interchangeably; and French *ce qui* for the subject of a clause, or *ce que* for the direct object.

3.1. Ungrammatical in Spanish.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* online, in its etymological discussion of "que sera sera," recognizes the grammatical anomaly of the phrase, as follows: "In Spanish, the phrase *que será será* is ungrammatical, rare, and recent (1988 or earlier), and therefore probably borrowed [from] English."[6]

In Spanish, the interrogative "what" is *¿qué?*, while the free relative "what" (= "that which") is *lo que*, as in (5) and (6) respectively:

(5) ¿**Qué** dijo? — **What** did he/she say?
(6) No puedo creer **lo que** dijo. — *I can't believe* ***what*** *he/she said*.

Matthews (2007: 147) and Radford (2004: 233) call a clause such as "what he said" a "free relative clause," highlighting its freedom from connection with any explicit antecedent, and I have adopted this term, along with "free relative pronoun" for the non-interrogative "what" of Spanish *lo que*. However, there seems to be no consensus among grammarians on a single, standard term for this construction, and some discuss it only through specific examples, without naming it.[7] This is the case with four Spanish reference grammars in English: Ramsey (1894/1956: 123-124—p. 161 of the online, 1894 ed.); DeBruyne (1995: 192); Butt and Benjamin (2000: 507); and Batchelor and San José (2010: 324). In addition, two of the four—DeBruyne, and Batchelor and San José—are careless about the distinction between two kinds of *lo que* in Spanish: the free relative pronoun (with *no* antecedent), which concerns us here, and the relative pronoun with *clausal* antecedent—also called a "sentential antecedent" (Crystal 2008: 411)—which does not. The former can be translated as "what," "that which," or "the thing that," while the latter is translated simply as "which." The relative *lo que* with clausal antecedent can be replaced by *lo cual*, while the free relative *lo que* cannot. DeBruyne, however, groups together the following two examples—here numbered (7) and (8), free and clausal respectively—under one heading, "Lo que/lo cual," as if these were interchangeable:

(7) Recuerda **lo que** te dije ayer. — *Remember* ***what*** *I told you yesterday*.
(8) Sostenía que el hombre es pariente del mono, **lo que** regocijaba a doña Bernarda. — *He claimed that man is a relative of the monkey,* ***which*** *delighted Doña Bernarda*. (DeBruyne 1995: 192)

Meanwhile, Batchelor and San José also confuse the two categories of Spanish *lo que*, as follows:

> **Lo que** is used as a relative pronoun when it refers to an idea or a statement that is expressed by the previous clause [i.e. the clausal antecedent]. Its closest equivalent in English is *that which* [true only for the free relative],

> although this does not always fit the Spanish [a veiled allusion to the existence of the two categories]. It has the same value as **lo cual** [true only for the clausal relative]. (Batchelor and San José 2010: 324)

This explanation is followed by three examples—two clausal and one free—lumped together with no comment on the distinction. No clarity is gained by this additional comment:

> **Lo que** is also used when it follows a neuter pronoun, or a noun used without article (or even with), or with the indefinite article. The meaning falls halfway between reference to a group of words or an idea and specific nouns. (Batchelor and San José 2010: 325)

Given that even grammarians tend to marginalize the free relative pronoun in these ways—having no unanimous term for it (and some having no term at all for it), occasionally merging it with other categories or omitting it altogether from outlines of grammar—it is not surprising that adult learners of Italian or Spanish might mistranslate it. How, then, do Spanish-speakers today deal with the ungrammaticality of KSS? Evidence from my informal queries to native speakers, as well as from the punctuation used in some of the online lyrics of Spanish versions of the Livingston and Evans song (e.g. Portal de Marieli, n.d.), suggests that it is heard as an interrogative (with the second word echoed, merely to fill the musical rhythm). The question "¿Qué será?" can mean "What will it be?" or "What is going to happen?"[8] Additionally, some present-day Spanish-speakers use KSS as a noun phrase ("un qué será será") to mean something like "riddle" or "guessing game," evidently akin to the Anglo-American parlor games Twenty Questions or Botticelli (see the example at "ForosChatestrella.com" 2006).

3.2. Ungrammatical in Italian.

Italian, much like Spanish, expresses the nonhuman ('what', not 'who') free relative pronoun with a compound (i.e. two-word) construction. One grammar presents it as follows:

> The neuter relative pronouns, **quello che**, **quel che**, **ciò che**, are used to replace a general or abstract idea rather than a specific antecedent. They are similar to the English *what* and *that which*. All three of them are interchangeable.

> **Ciò che** dici non è vero. **What** you say is not true.
> **Quel che** ti consiglio è di studiare. ***What** I suggest to you is to study*.
> Non capisco **quello che** dice. I don't understand **what** he/she says. (Germano and Schmitt 2007: 234)

Of these three expressions, *quel che* is the most frequent in Italian proverbs.

In fact, the ungrammaticality of "Che sarà sarà" is emphatically condemned by the Italian author of a 19th-century Italian grammar for English-speakers (published in Britain), in a section on pitfalls for learners:

> It is not, however, surprising to find a wrong *Italian motto*, in a country [Britain] where a multiplicity of volumes, professedly treating of the Italian grammar, and colloquial style, daily appear, containing the most absurd rules, and despicable barbarisms, which meet, nevertheless, with the warmest reception, even by the reviewers. As to incorrect Italian Mottos, even the English Peerage contains one. We read under the arms of a Most Noble Duke [i.e. the Duke of Bedford],
>
> CHE SARA SARA.
>
> The Italian adage, however, says so
>
> SARA QUEL CHE SARA.
>
> and it might have easily been corrected by attending an Opera Buffa, (*Gli Zíngari in Fiéra*), performed at the King's Theatre (London) some years ago, where the music of the *Finale*, at the end of the first act, turned chiefly upon this proverb *Sarà quel che sarà*. (Galignani 1823: 219-220)

Although this latter form, "Sarà quel che sarà," does not appear in Italian collections of sayings, its "correctness" is confirmed by the online *Corpus di Italiano Scritto* (*CORIS*, n.d.), in which it occurs 14 times, while the tally for "Che sarà sarà" as an indigenous Italian saying remains at zero (see Sec. 4.3).[9]

One (American) collection of quotations points out the same grammatical error in "Che sarà sarà," and offers virtually the same "correct" form as a replacement: "N.B. The Italian is not correct: it should be, '*sarà qual* [sic] *che sarà*'" (*A New Dictionary…,* 1860: 77).

In recent times, KSS (Italian spelling) has become so well established in the minds of some English-speakers as an Italian saying that it appears in chapter titles (but nowhere else) in teach-yourself textbooks of Italian for English-speakers. Thus Chapter 19 in Euvino (2004: n.p.) is titled "**Che Sarà Sarà**: Communicating in the Futuro"; Lymbery (2005: 232) titles her Chapter 7 "Progetti e previsioni—**che sarà sarà**: Plans and predictions—what will be will be"; and Picarazzi (2006: 113) titles Chapter 10 "**Che Sarà Sarà**: Looking Ahead with the Future Tense." According to their respective titles, Picarazzi's book is intended for "dummies," and Euvino's is for "idiots."[10]

On the other hand, we occasionally find instances in which Italian-speakers, in the post-Doris Day era, treat KSS as a foreignism, preserving its Spanish spelling in spite of its phonetic similarity to words in Italian (see Sec. 4.3). The Italian version of the Doris Day song, attributed to "Elgos" and "Pinchi" (1956),[11] does not bother to transliterate the words from Livingston and Evans's Spanish into Italian (except for reorienting the accent marks from acute to grave): "**Que serà, serà** / e ciò che succederà / nessuno saper potrà / **Que serà, serà** / e nessun lo sa" ("Wikitesti.com," n.d.). As noted below (Sec. 5.7), at least twelve books with KSS in their titles have been published since 1970. Of these, the one that is in Italian and was published in Florence uses the Spanish spelling (Preti 1970).

3.3. Grammatical in medieval French?

The first documentation of KSS (Sec. 5.1), in the 1470s, with its French-like spelling, gives a tantalizing hint that the saying might have originated in Middle French—but I have found no data in support of that hypothesis. Collections of medieval French proverbs (Morawski 1925, Hassell 1982, Schulze-Busacker 1985—see Sec. 4.1) yield just one example of *qui* as an inanimate free relative pronoun, namely (9) (the translation is mine):

(9) **Ki** ne norit n'asavore. [**What** doesn't nourish doesn't taste pleasant.] (Morawski 1925: 74)[12]

A second example appears in the Old French dictionary of Godefroy (1889), under the heading "*Qui* sans antécédent." Godefroy, without explicitly labeling them as such, gives four examples in context where *qui* is animate ('he who'), and one in which it is

inanimate ('that which'). The latter example is as follows (with my translation):

> Je ne cuis home en trestot cest regné,
> Mien esciant, james en vostre aé,
> Qui vos osast, outre vo volenté,
> Dire ne fere *qui* vos deust pezer.
> [*I believe that there is, in all your kingdom, nobody, in my opinion, who dared, during your life, to say or do anything that could give offense to you*.][13]

Another dictionary of Old French (Hindley, Langley, and Levy 2000: 1) implies the possibility of an inanimate free relative *qui* in its third entry for *cui* (to which the reader is directed from *qui*). That entry gives the grammatical function of the word as "*pro-n[oun] abs[olute]*," and gives English translations both animate ("he who, whoever, those who") and inanimate ("that which, what"). But this dictionary does not provide examples in context.

Meanwhile, the testimony of grammarians is inconclusive. F. F. Roget's only example of the inanimate free relative pronoun ("The Neuter *que*") is a compound form with *que*: "Ceu *que* comandeit nos est," rendered in Modern French as "Ce *qui* nous est commandé" ("That which we are commanded [to do]") (Roget 1887: 183).

Foulet (1961) devotes six pages to relative pronouns; but *free* relative pronouns, rather than being treated as a discrete category, are accounted for only by allusion, with the observation that the relative *que* is used in the "locution" *ce que*. (In Modern French, the inanimate free relative is *ce que* when acting as the direct object of its clause, and *ce qui* when the subject.) In Foulet, examples of the *simple* free relative *que* appear only incidentally in a passing reference to the fossilized modern expressions "coûte que [object] coûte" ("regardless of cost") and "advienne que [subject] pourra" ("come what may")—with no comment on the suppression of *ce*, and no reference to *ce qui* or its possible reduction to *qui* (Foulet 1961: 6-183).

Einhorn interprets the example "Or escoutez que ge ferai" ("Now listen to what I will do") as an omission of "the antecedent *ce* ... before the neuter pronoun *que*" (Einhorn 1974: 76). However, I see "que ge ferai" as an indirect interrogative, given its dependence on the information-handling verb "listen to" ("listen to [the answer to the question] what will I do"). In any event, for Einhorn,

the only *qui* without antecedent is animate: 'he who', 'whoever' (Einhorn 1974: 77 and 79).

Marchello-Nizia (1979: 159) cites (curiously, under an introduction that describes relatives with a *clausal* antecedent, rather than *no* antecedent) an example that some may view as an inanimate free relative *qui*: "Je vous diray *qui* bon me semble" ("I will tell you what seems good to me"). But, like Einhorn's example, above, I consider this instance and others like it—appearing only with information-handling verbs ('to write', 'to know', 'to tell')—to be indirect interrogatives ("I will tell you [the answer to the question] what seems good to me"). The occasional role of *qui* as an inanimate *interrogative* in Old French is not in doubt.

Jensen discusses the free relative *qui* at length and with clarity, giving many examples, with English translations—but in all cases, the implied antecedent is animate: 'he who', 'whoever' (Jensen 1990: 219-221). There is no *qui* for free relative 'what'.

Ménard (1994: 79), in his section (63) on relative *qui* without an antecedent, likewise gives only examples referring to persons, not things.

Buridant (2000: 142), treating *ce* in his section on determiners, establishes the contrast between two types of "*ce que* phrases" (his term, in French): conjunctive and relative. In the conjunctive type, *ce que* corresponds to "the fact that" and does not concern us here, while the relative type is our inanimate free relative pronoun. Buridant (143) refers specifically to the possibility, in the relative *ce que* phrase, for *ce* not to be expressed; he includes one example in which *que* is the subject of its clause ("Que plaist a cels, a cez ennui"—"What's pleasing to these [people] is irritating to those"). Buridant also makes passing reference to the same modern fossilized "advienne que pourra" cited by Foulet. However, he does not mention *qui* as an alternative to *que* in this construction.[14]

Elsewhere, in his brief chapter "Le relatif-interrogatif-conjonctif en *qu-*" (2000: 547-549) Buridant returns to the matter of the "relatif autarcique" (which I translate as "autonomous relative"), the relative without explicit antecedent. Here he reproduces a table from Kunstmann (1990: 6) showing how the forms *qui*, *que*, and *quoi* are distributed with regard to three variables: (1) use with or without an explicit antecedent; (2) animate or inanimate status; and (3) the role as subject, direct object, or indirect object. Of the ten cells in the table, one is vacant, namely the one that interests us: the cell for the

inanimate free relative as subject—which leaves "Qui sera sera" grammatically unaccounted for in Old French. (Kunstmann [personal communication] explains that the empty cell reflects the rarity of the form, and specifically its absence from the corpus on which his study was based.)

For Joly (2004: 71), like the other grammars, free relative *qui* represents only an indeterminate *person*, not an inanimate concept.

In these eight grammars, then, one searches in vain for strong support for the grammaticality of "Qui sera sera" in Old or Middle French. This fact, together with the rarity of examples of inanimate free relative *qui* generally in Old French, as well as the absence specifically of any written record of French-speakers using a version of KSS, leads me to doubt the hypothesis of a French origin for the saying. I find it more likely that the phrase was coined by English-speakers who mistranslated "What will be will be" into other languages.

4. No Romance proverb.

Although it is difficult to prove a negative, my searches in authentic collections of traditional proverbs in French, Spanish, and Italian have produced no trace of KSS. And in running prose, on the few occasions when native writers in these languages cite the saying, they tend to treat it as a foreignism.

4.1. No French proverb.

KSS does not appear in collections of French proverbs, whether of the 18th century (Backer 10), of the 19th century (Le Roux de Lincy 1842), or medieval (Morawski 1925, Hassell 1982,[15] Schulze-Busacker 1985). The saying does appear in the writing of Victor Hugo, in the preface to his melodrama *Cromwell*, but his use of the Italian spelling, "Che sara sara," makes it clear that he does not consider it a French saying (Hugo 1827: 4). Spyropoulou-Leclenche, writing about the French lyrics of the Livingston and Evans song (copyrighted by E. Marnay in 1956), spells "será" with the Spanish accent, refers to our phrase as "l'expression espagnole," and describes it as "sufficiently comprehensible in French not to be translated"—making it clear that she also considers it not French (Spyropoulou-Leclenche 1998: 146). French singers (e.g. Jacqueline François, online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yRRpfd3QEs>) render the "Que" with the [e] vowel of Spanish, not the

schwa of French *que*, and they generally give the *r* of "sera" a Spanish-like apical flap, rather than the standard French uvular pronunciation.

4.2. No Spanish refrán.

Searches in 14 collections of Spanish sayings (*refranes*, *dichos*, etc.) find no trace of any aphorism such as KSS, nor indeed of any saying resembling it in the use of *que* as a free relative pronoun.[16] In contrast, most of these *refranero* reference collections contain dozens of sayings that begin with "Lo que," including several whose meaning is similar to that of KSS. Examples (10) through (12) below are from Rodríguez Marín (1930: 182), while (13) and (14) are from other sources (the translations are mine):

(10) **Lo que** ha de ser, Dios o el diablo lo han de traer; *or* **Lo que** ha de ser, será: Dios o el diablo lo acarreará.—***What** is to be, God or the devil will bring it about*.
(11) **Lo que** ha de ser, sea ya.—***What** is to be, let it be*.
(12) **Lo que** ha de ser, ya fué.—**What** is to be, has already been [determined].
(13) Dios sabe **lo que** será.—*God knows **what** will be*. (Maldonado 1966: 122).
(14) **Lo que** ha de ser, será, o el mundo se hundirá.—**What** is to be, will be; [the contrary is as unlikely as the end of the world]. ("Recopilación...," n.d.).

In fact, a near-equivalent of KSS (except for its use of *lo que*) appears in a 19th-century Spanish translation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Early in Act 4, Scene 1, where the English Juliet says "What must be shall be," the translation has Julieta saying "Lo que será será" (Shakespeare 1880: 82). The translator, Guillermo Macpherson y Hemas (b. Gibraltar, 1824 – d. Madrid, 1898), in spite of his Scottish surname, evidently has native Spanish-speaker credentials in the form of a Spanish mother and lifelong residence in Spain (according to his biography in the Spanish-language *Wikipedia*).

Although it may be tempting to explain the ungrammatical free relative *que* as poetic license or otherwise special language for an aphorism, the fact that no other saying in Spanish follows that pattern rules that notion out.

KSS with its simple *Que* is absent not only from the collections of *refranes*, but also from running prose in Spanish generally. I base

this statement on searches in online corpora, as well as the Internet generally. KSS does not occur, for example, in either of the two corpora maintained by the Spanish Royal Academy—the diachronic *CORDE* (Academia, n.d.-1), with some 250 million words, and the contemporary *CREA* (Academia, n.d.-2), with more than 160 million—nor in the 100-million-word, diachronic *Corpus del Español* (Davies, 2002-). Similarly there is no trace of KSS in any of the books in Spanish, published between 1500 and 2008, that have been digitized for the immense corpus of the online *Google Books Ngram Viewer*. Where KSS does appear in the *Google Books* corpus—more than 800 times—is in books in English. And on the Internet at large, one way to demonstrate the Englishness, and the non-Spanishness, of "Que será será" is simply to perform a Google search for the expression in a Spanish context such as "Bueno pues **que será será**" (zero hits) and compare this with a search for it in an English context such as "Oh well **que sera sera**" (tens of thousands of hits). Meanwhile an *authentic* Spanish expression in the same Spanish context, such as "Bueno pues **así es la vida**" ("Oh, well, such is life") also generates tens of thousands of hits.

4.3. No Italian proverb.

No saying like KSS (i.e. neither "Che sarà sarà" itself nor any other aphorism beginning with "Che..." as a simple free relative pronoun) appears in the 16 compilations of Italian proverbs *by Italian authors* that I have been able to examine. For full disclosure I must mention three initially apparent exceptions, which nevertheless turn out not to be free of English influence: (1) KSS does figure in one 17th-century collection of purported Italian proverbs by an *English* author (Howell 1659: 13 [image 362]),[18] (2) Author Bill Vivio, in his memoir (Vivio 2008: 123), claims that his parents—Italian-*Americans* born in Pittsburgh in the early 20th century—were saying "Que sera sera" [sic, Spanish spelling] long before Doris Day sang it. And (3) "Che sarà sarà" does appear in the online collection of proverbs compiled by Anthony Parente, a self-described "first generation Italian-*American*" [my italics] (Parente, n.d.). However, there are no data from Italy to confirm an Italian origin of KSS. The Italian sources do offer dozens of proverbs containing the *compound* (i.e. two-word) free relatives "Quel che..." and occasionally "Quello che...," as in examples (15) through (19). The translation of (18) is Torriano's; the other translations are mine:

(15) **Quel che** si fa all'oscuro apparisce al sole.—***What*** *goes on in the dark will come out in the light*. (Giusti and Capponi 1956: 76; Bellonzi 1968: 160)
(16) **Quel che** fu duro a patire, è dolce a ricordare.—***What*** *was hard to suffer is sweet to remember*. (Giusti and Capponi 1956: 246; Bellonzi 1968: 7)
() **Quel che** non ammazza, ingrassa.—***What*** *doesn't kill you makes you nice and fat*. (Giusti and Capponi 1956: 313; Bellonzi 1968: 30)
(18) **Quello che** non và in suole, và in tomaia.—***That which*** *goeth not into the soles, goeth into the upper leather*. (Torriano 1649: 87).
(19) **Quello che** si fa il primo dell'anno si fa tutto l'anno.—***What*** *you do on New Year's Day, you'll do all year long*. ("Wikiquote," n.d.).

The online *Corpus di Italiano Scritto* (*CORIS*, n.d.) has just three instances of KSS. Two of these, (20) and (21) below, are in texts translated from non-Italian sources; and two of them, (21) and (22), use the Spanish spelling. The co-authors of (20), Blonsky and Desnoes, are American and Cuban respectively. Their article is accompanied by the statement "Traduzzione di Margherita Zizi," which leads me to suspect that its first version was written in English, Blonsky's native language.[19] Example (21) is translated from a novel originally published in English, and I quote the corresponding sentence from its English source (the other translations are mine). And in the third example, (22), KSS appears in an authentic Italian context, but the use of the Spanish spelling, albeit with Italian grave accents, suggests that the author does not consider KSS an Italian saying.

(20) Oggi la distinzione tra finzione e realtà è diventata irrilevante, priva di interesse. **Che sarà sarà**, come canticchiava Doris Day. (*Today the distinction between fiction and reality has become irrelevant, uninteresting*. ***What will be will be****, as Doris Day sang*.) (Blonsky and Desnoes 2000: n.p.)
(21) "Credo che potremmo sospendere l'uso degli anticoncezionali e vedere quel che succede", suggerii. "Ah", fece Jenny con l'aria di chi la sa lunga "Il vecchio metodo **Que sera, sera** di pianificazione famigliare" (Grogan 2006:

129). (*"I guess we could just go back off birth control again and see what happens," I suggested. "Ah," Jenny said knowingly. "The old* ***Que sera, sera*** *school of family planning"* [Grogan 2005: 111]) .

(22) ... è sempre utile la conclusione di Altan, fra i lavoratori della vecchia classe, quella operaia: "E allora concedimi l'ultimo slow e poi **que serà serà**". (*... it's always helpful to remember Altan's conclusion, among the workers of the old working class: "So give me the last slowdown [labor tactic] and then,* ***whatever happens happens****.")* (Berselli 2007).

5. History.

The early historical record of KSS is sparse, and not very orderly. The saying appears in writing for the first known time—with the unique, French-like spelling "quy serra serra"—as part of a poem in an English manuscript of the 1470s. The earliest Spanish version, cast in a brass coat of arms that adorns a village church in Surrey, is dated 1559. And the Italian spelling was first recorded in 1582 (but perhaps adopted 30 years earlier) as the heraldic motto of a newly created English earl; and soon after that it reappears in a play by Christopher Marlowe.

Over the next three and a half centuries—its spelling more often Italian than Spanish, and rarely French—the saying grows in its expressive function in the speech and thoughts of fictional characters, while it continues also to be cited in its role as a heraldic emblem.

Finally, beginning in the mid-1950s, the saying is widely disseminated by the cinema and other mass media, mainly through the song made popular by Doris Day. As a result (judging by the frequency of its appearances in published texts), it undergoes a great increase in popularity as a saying in English, independent of its roots in motto and song.

5.1. The Trinity College manuscript.

KSS is first documented in a manuscript held by Cambridge University's Trinity College and thought to have been written, by an unknown author, shortly after the Battle of Barnet (1471). This battle was a decisive turning point in the Wars of the Roses, which established Edward IV on the English throne. One of several poems in

the manuscript, titled "Gaudete iusti in domino," commemorates the battle and celebrates the good fortune of Edward's subjects in having him as their king. The poem consists of four seven-line stanzas and a final couplet. Each stanza is bracketed by a curly brace (}) in red ink to its right, and to the right of that, as if a refrain, are the repeated words "Conuertimini ye comons and drede your kyng."[20] The final couplet is similarly straddled by a red bracket, but in this case the refrain is our saying (see Figure 2), as follows:

Homo proponit [man proposes]: oftymes in veyn
But deus disponit [God disposes] The boke [i.e. the Bible] telleth pleyn } quy serra serra

The saying appears without translation or paraphrase, as if readers were expected to understand it: Edward's victory was a result of God's will, and, this being inevitable, it happened. These words beyond the brackets are clearly not a marginal afterthought, but rather an integral, planned part of the manuscript, and are of equal antiquity with it.[21]

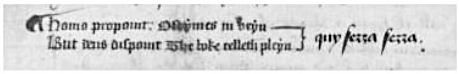

Figure 2: First documentation of KSS, in the unique, French-like spelling "quy serra serra." From the Trinity College manuscript (ca. 1471), with permission of the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge University.

The manuscript was edited and published in 1913 along with several others under the general title "Lydgatiana," referring to the Middle English poet John Lydgate. The editor, H. N. MacCracken, points out, however, that this particular poem was wrongly ascribed to Lydgate—who died ca. 1451, twenty years before the Battle of Barnet. I read no particular significance into the use of *y* for modern *i* in *quy* (assuming French *qui* as a model): that is the norm throughout the poem (*myght*, *wryte*, *thyng*, etc.). It is rare to find French *sera* 'will be' misspelled with double *r*, but such forms can be observed in both medieval and modern texts.[22]

5.2. The Thames Ditton brass.

The Spanish spelling of KSS first appears in a coat of arms on a monumental brass that dates from 1559, located in St. Nicholas Church, in the village of Thames Ditton, Surrey (U.K.). The brass, measuring 25 by 18 inches, dedicated to Erasmus Forde and his wife Julyan, is depicted and described in detail by Stephenson (1914: 67-71). The coat of arms bears the motto "Qve sera sera," and the dates of death for Erasmus and Julyan are given as 1533 and 1559 respectively (see Figure 3). Presuming the brass was cast soon after Julyan's death, this first documentation of the Spanish spelling is thus dated some 20 years prior to that of the Italian version.[23]

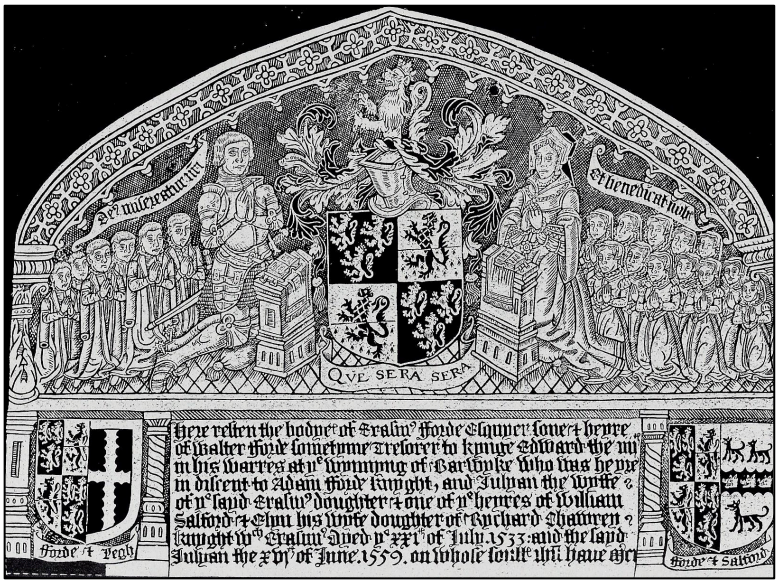

Figure 3: A rubbing of the Thames Ditton brass, first documentation of the Spanish spelling "Que sera sera," ca. 1559, from Stephenson (1918: 68). Reproduced courtesy of Surrey Archaeological Society. Colors reversed for legibility. The original image is on page 48 of the online PDF document.

5.3. The Earls of Bedford.

In the 16th century, England's upper classes were in the process of discovering the Italian Renaissance; Lewis Einstein (1902: 97-107) describes their enthusiasm for studying the Italian language. John Russell (ca. 1485-1555) was known for his proficiency in

Spanish and Italian, and in fact his service as an interpreter was what initially brought him to the attention of the first in the series of three English kings whom he served (Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Edward VI).[24] The title of Earl of Bedford was created for him in 1549, in recognition of "[h]is services against the insurgents in the western counties" (Cunningham 1853: 73).

There is disagreement as to whether it was John Russell or his son Francis, 2nd Earl of Bedford, who initially adopted KSS for the family motto. Einstein states (referring to John) that "the [yet to become] Earl of Bedford adopted *Che sarà sarà* for the motto of his house after the battle of Pavia [1525], at which he was present" (Einstein 1902: 98). And J. J. Foster asserts that "it was he [John Russell] who, according to the *Anecdotes of the House of Bedford* [i.e. E. Burke 97], changed the ancient war-cry of the Norman Rozels or Rousells, '*Diex aie*,' for '*Che sara sara*'" (Foster 1884: 69). But Gladys Scott Thomson suggests that the motto may not have been adopted until after John's death:

> It may have been the second earl [i.e. Francis] who adopted as motto *Che sara sara*. We know that his father used a posy, *Plus que jamais*, and that his favorite saying was reported to be, "Sans l'ayde de Dieu, le ne puis." We do not know if he ever used, "Che sara sara," but he may have done. It is not impossible that he originated it, for Italian mottoes became very popular in the sixteenth century, but its first known appearance seems to be on his tomb. It was certainly recognised as the family motto in the time of his son. (Scott Thomson 1930: 228)[25]

John Russell's language skills were "gained during some years of foreign travel" (Cunningham 1834: Vol. 2, p. 73); and yet it is possible that his knowledge of Spanish and Italian—while adequate for his duties as interpreter and diplomat—may not have extended to the niceties of the free relative pronoun.

On John Russell's death, his son, Francis (1527-1585), became the 2nd Earl of Bedford. It was common (though not required—see Clark 1829: 72) for a son to adopt his father's heraldic motto. Whether it was inherited from his father or newly coined, Francis's adoption of the motto is documented in two literary works that were dedicated to him: (1) one of odes by William Teshe to individual members of the Knights of the Garter (manuscript dated 1582, pub-

lished by Furnivall and Morfill 1873: 121); and (2) a 630-line versified biography, written by a servant of Francis Russell's, George Whetstone, on the occasion of his death (Whetstone 1585).

The three stanzas of the ode by Teshe (two in English and one in Italian, with my translation) are as follows:

Some sorte of men contynually forecast,
and doe dyvine of thinges which maye insue,
neuer respecting what is gone and past,
but what's to come, that deeme they wilbe true,
Though falce in fine; for why? by proofe we see,
che sara, sara, What shalbe, shalbe.

No fatall feare, or dread of destenye,
can daunte a mynd which euer is resolv'd.
Mans thought is fraile, his forecast vanitye,
which when I ofte within my mynde revolu'd,
I took my pen and writt this worde for me,
Che sara, sara, what shalbe, shalbe.

Per quant' a me non stimo dj Fortuna	As for me, I don't hold Lady Luck in high esteem
ch'ognj cose è al voler d'Iddio,	for all things are [subject] to the will of God.
non credo che Fortun' ha forz'alcuna:	*I don't think Fortune has any effect:*
mà **che sara sara**, ben dico Io,	*but **what will be will be**: so say I*
proui che vuol et egl'in fin dira	*try what you may, He will have the final say;*
fa tutto Iddio, **che sara sara**.	*everything is done by God, [and] **what will be will be.***

(Teshe 1873: 121)

This is the closest that early KSS comes to being embedded in an Italian context, but—as in every other case—it is a context created by an English-speaking writer.

In the poem by George Whetstone, Stanza 32 narrates Russell's choice of a family motto:

To show he bilt his acttions of the Lord,
Not as the most, on fortunes smiling cheare:

He chose ***Che sera, sera***, for his word.
Gods will shalbe, in heauen aboue and heare.
(Whetstone 1585)

With its date of 1585, it is the first *published* record of KSS.

Francis's great-grandson, William Russell, 5th *Earl* of Bedford, was created *Duke* of Bedford (sixth creation) in 1694 (*Wikipedia*, "Duke of Bedford"). His successors as Duke of Bedford kept the motto, and it appears on their coat of arms (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: "Che sara sara" (Italian spelling) on the coat of arms of the Dukes of Bedford. An interpretation of the blazon, from the Bedford Chapel, Chenies, Buckinghamshire, with permission of the Middlesex Heraldry Society. Online at <http://www.middlesexheraldry.org.uk/publications/monographs/chenies/cheniesBKM_images/cheniesBK M_Picture03.jpg>.

5.4. Christopher Marlowe.

The most famous of the early documentations of KSS appears in the play *Doctor Faustus*, written by Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) in the late 1580s.[26] A heraldic motto functions mainly as an emblem for a family; it is debatable to what extent its literal meaning has importance (see Sec. 6.1). Nevertheless, it is clear from Whetstone's poem (above) that he regards his master's motto as a sign of piety, of submission to God's will. By way of contrast, the same phrase is spoken by Marlowe's character in order to scorn it, in defiance of religious orthodoxy (Marlowe was accused of being an atheist). In Act 1, Scene 1, Doctor Faustus is weighing the theological doctrine of predestination:

> [Reads.]
> Stipendium peccati mors est
> The reward of sin is death: that's hard.
> [Reads.]
> Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas;
> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and
> there's no truth in us. Why, then, belike we must sin, and so
> consequently die:
> Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
> what doctrine call you this**, *Che sera, sera*,**
> What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!
>
> (Marlowe 1604/2008)

In this instance, Marlowe (through Faustus) is quoting the still-emblematic motto, but he gives it some semantic life by imputing meaning to it and arguing with it. Biographies of Marlowe (e.g. Honan 2005: 52) speak of his fondness for the (Latin) writers of ancient Rome, but they give no indication of his proficiency in Italian or specifically how he might have come to know the motto. There is no mention of Italian travel by Marlowe in the detailed chronology of Kuriyama (2002: xiii-xix). His archaic Italian spelling of "**s**erà" matches that of George Whetstone's poem for the Earl of Bedford.

5.5. Three and a Half Centuries of KSS.

From the early 17th century on, the Spanish spelling and—more frequently until the 1950s—the Italian spelling are both evident, serving both the heraldic and the expressive functions. In fact, the first purely expressive use of KSS appears (with the Spanish

spelling) soon after its citation in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. In the play *Cupid's Whirligig*, by Edward Sharpham, the character Nucome (or Nuecome) says, with no supportive paraphrase, "Well, since tis thus, hence foorth ile loue thee euer, for ***que sera, sera***, gainst what plots so euer" (Sharpham 1607, n.p.).

Additional instances of the Spanish spelling in the 17th century are found in the British government's *Calendar of State Papers* and on a gravestone dated 1677. In the *Calendar* entry for September 19, 1634, there is reported the situation of one Captain Hannibal Bonithon, residing in an English castle and contemplating the possibility that he may lose his right to continue living there. His presumed attitude of resignation is expressed with KSS in the Spanish spelling:

> St. Mawes' Castle. Capt. Hannibal Bonithon to Nicholas. Knows not what is intended of him there. Hears daily reports that the place will be given over his head; if it be, ***que sera, sera***, he will retire, and live private. (*Calendar of State Papers*, 1864: 211)[27]

I do not find another expressive use of Spanish KSS until the 19th century. Meanwhile, the gravestone, located in the parish of Wimbledon, county of Surrey, bears a coat of arms that is described in heraldic terminology as follows:

> On the ground are flat gravestones, with these inscriptions. Arms at top.—Argent, a fess gules, in chief, a lion passant gardant sable, all within a bordure engrailed ermine. Crests on a wreath, a lion's head, couped sable, collared Argent. Motto, "**Que sera sera.**" "Here lyeth Richard Betenson, [...] He departed this life in the 45th year of his age, 1677." (Bartlett 1865: 77)[28]

In the 18th century the motto appears in several books on the English aristocracy, always with the Italian spelling, and always as the motto of the Russell family: the Earls—and later, Dukes—of Bedford (e.g. Collins 35: Vol. 1, p. 119; Millan 49: 4 (fig. 10); Clark and Wormull 79: 7).

Also in the 18th century we see a great increase in the use of KSS in running text to carry out the expressive function. One fictional character who uses KSS to convey an attitude labels it an "Italian Doctrine" (italics in original):

> I thank you dear *Morton*, says *Archy*, go and try to persuade my good Mother to believe the *Italian* Doctrine, ***Che sara sara***, or in plain *English* Proverb, you know, Cousin, that *Marriages are made in Heaven* (Kidgell 55: Vol. 1, p. 288).

Here KSS is accompanied by a proverb in English, perhaps as an indirect semantic aid. More cryptic is its appearance in the caption of a 1780 satirical engraving, the equivalent of an editorial cartoon, entitled "Chatham's Ghost, or a Peep into Futurity: Che Sara Sara" (Wells 80; accessible online). Tamara Hunt describes the picture as follows:

> George III sits on a throne, and the torn petitions from the county associations lie under his feet. The ghost of Lord Chatham shows him the result of neglecting the petitions of his people: in an inset picture, devils conduct the kings of France and Spain, followed by Lord North and other leaders of the British government, towards a pit inscribed "Chaos" (Hunt 2003: 47).

Perhaps the point of KSS in the caption is to imply that the punishment of a despot will eventually come to pass.

In the 19th century the Italian KSS continues to figure in reference works on heraldry (e.g. De la Motte 1803: 164; Lodge 1834: 51; and Mair 1873: 114). In addition to the surname Russell, Mair links it also with the name Chatford, and B. Burke (1880: 345) with the name De Clifford.[29]

Even in heraldic use, KSS in Spanish spelling is rare before the 19th century. But in 1829 (or perhaps as early as 1775[30]) it appears as the heraldic motto linked to the English surname Folkes, in a treatise on English heraldry by the engraver Hugh Clark (Clark 1829: 312). The prior use of the motto in Italian did not pose a problem for those who chose to adopt it in a Spanish version. Clark explains:

> The motto, *mot*, *word*, *expression*, *saying*, or *epigraph*, added or appropriated to arms, not being hereditary, may be taken, changed, varied, or relinquished, when and as often as the bearer thinks fit; and may, with impunity to the assumer, be the very same as is used by other families (Clark 1829: 72).

Another early heraldic appearance of the Spanish KSS is on a medal engraved in 1835 for the "Woodmen of Arden," a British archery club. The association owns a ceremonial bugle that is adorned with 42 commemorative medals. The engraving on Medal #29 is described in heraldic terminology as follows:

> *Escutcheon*, sable; a fess wavy or [i.e. gold color], between three wolfs' heads erased argent. "***Que sera sera***." *Reverse*, 50th year. STANLEY PIPE WOLFERSTAN, Aug. 12, 1835. (Woodmen of the Forest of Arden, 1885: 57)

Soon after this, "Que Sera Sera" appears, again with more emblematic than expressive function, on a gravestone in the "Tomb House" of St. Mary's Church in Watford (Hertfordshire, England) dated 1837 (Railroadiana 1839: 33). The watchful reader will note that the individual commemorated here, "Harriet, Wife of Richard Ford," shares her surname with Erasmus and Julyan "fforde," named on the Thames Ditton brass some 30 miles to the south and 300 years prior in time. None of my heraldic sources, however, link the name Ford(e) with "Que sera sera."

The "French" spelling, "Qui sera sera," also is occasionally recorded as a motto of several families, associated with the surname "Ffolkes" (J. Burke 1839: 405), also spelled "Folkes" (Elven 1851: n.p.); with the names "Wolferstan" (as on the bugle cited above—or Pipe-Wolverstan in Fairbairn 1968: 447) and "Edgell" (J. B. Burke 1884: p. 1,179; "Armorial Gold" [n.d.]); and with "Betenson," "Bettenson," "Betterson," "Bettinson," and "Bettison" (Fairbairn 1911: 49 and 1968: 51).

By the second quarter of the 19th century, the expressive use of the saying is well established, and it occurs casually in the dialog (or, often, in interior monologs) of novels. Authors evidently feel no need to translate or explain its meaning: "'*Che sara sara!*' said Alford, in a tone of vexation" (Pickering 1834: 194); "'Che sara sara!' muttered Catherine" (Mancur 1834: Vol. 1, p. 82); "'*Che sara, sara*,' thought poor Cunnington" (Hendriks 1847: Vol. 2, p. 59).

No doubt the standing of the saying, the belief in its authenticity, is enhanced by its appearance in reference books (in English) (e.g. Jones 1925; King 1958). One of these, in the United States, is the prestigious Webster's dictionary, which includes a section ("Proverbs and Phrases from the Italian and Spanish") containing the saying in its Italian spelling: "Che sarà, sarà," translated "What-

ever will be, will be" (Webster 1856: 459). This list of foreignisms was not prepared by the dictionary's originator, Noah Webster (1758-1843), but rather by his son, William, for an edition prior to 1856 (Webster 1856: iv). Meanwhile, *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (Merriam-Webster 1990) continues to include the Italian KSS in its list of "Foreign Words and Phrases."

5.6. Doris Day et al.

The popularity of the saying today is due almost entirely to its propagation by the song that was first heard in Alfred Hitchcock's film *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. The general history of the Livingston and Evans songwriting team is well documented (for example in Ewen 1987:256-259;[31] Severo 2001; Severo 2007; and "In Loving Memory..." 2001). Briefly, Jay Livingston (1915-2001) and Ray Evans (1915-2007)—billed as composer and lyricist, respectively—met while students at the University of Pennsylvania (both graduated in 1937). Their long collaboration produced many popular songs, many of which were written for movies and television. "Que Sera, Sera (Whatever Will Be Will Be)" won an Oscar, their third song to do so.[32]

The specific history of this song is recounted in the item on Ray Evans in the "Anecdotes" section of the online art newspaper *Artdaily.org* ("Anecdotes," n.d.), as well as by Sullivan (2006: 192-193). Evans summarized this history in a letter to me (Evans 1995), written in learner's Spanish, responding to my inquiry (in English). Director Alfred Hitchcock requested a song whose title would be in a foreign language, and which could be sung by a mother to her child. Livingston had recently seen *The Barefoot Contessa*, a 1954 film written and directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, in which an Italian family has the motto "che sara sara" carved in stone at their ancestral castle, as well as on the gravestone of the Contessa.[33] Livingston immediately copied down the slogan (in the darkness of the theater!) as an idea for a song title. On receiving Hitchcock's assignment of a song for his film, Livingston and Evans already knew what foreign phrase they would use for its title (Pomerance 2001; "Anecdotes," n.d.).

But who, between Evans and Livingston, decided to "translate" the phrase from Italian to Spanish, and why? And whose knowledge of Spanish was called on for the task? The account in "Anecdotes" says "They [referring to both Livingston and Evans] changed the

spelling to the Spanish 'Que Sera Sera' because there are so many Spanish-speaking people in the world." Evans, in his personal letter, explains as follows (my translation):

> Mi colega, Senor Livingston fué muy impresionada con la película y el anotó esta frase como un posible título por una canción; solamente el tradujo en Español porque este lenguage pareció mejor por una canción de éxito. (*My colleague Mr. Livingston was very impressed with the film, and he made a note of this phrase as a possible title for a song; only he translated [it] into Spanish because this language seemed better for a hit song*.) (Evans 1995).

I take Evans's "solamente" as a mistranslation of the English *conjunction* "only" (meaning 'with the qualification that'), rather than a statement that his partner acted alone ("only he") in altering the language of the saying. One obituary, with regard to this specific song, refers to "Ray Evans's lyrics (on which the composer *Livingston lent a hand*)" (my italics; "Ray Evans, lyricist," 2007). The coining of the title "Que Sera Sera" probably must be attributed to both partners as a collaborative decision.

The Spanish of Evans's letter shows that, in spite of grammatical errors, he had a communicating command of the language. In the letter, he explains that his interest in Spanish began when he was a university student, and that he continued to learn while he and Livingston were working as musicians aboard cruise ships in the Caribbean and Latin America. Presumably Livingston also learned some Spanish from that experience. Evans is modest in referring to his language skill, as he offers to answer my queries "en mi mal Español," and (knowing that I was a teacher of Spanish) he suggests that it might receive a grade of "d." He apologizes for continuing (at the age of 80!) to practice his Spanish "solamenta … veinte minutos cada manaña" ("*only 20 minutes each morning*"). All this is in keeping with the statement in his *New York Times* obituary, in which he is described as "a self-deprecating fellow" (Severo 2007). I draw attention to his proficiency level simply to show that he might not have been bothered by the reduction of compound *lo que* to simple *que*.

The Livingston and Evans song has been recorded by a variety of singers (and instrumentalists) in a variety of languages, and in a great variety of styles and tempos. Brief samples of 35 versions can

be heard online at MusicMe.com (n.d.), including renditions in Danish, English, French, Mandarin, Spanish, and Swedish. YouTube offers full-length versions in Japanese (Hayama 1996), Mandarin (Teng 2011), and other languages. In the search for "translated" versions, it is much easier to find the names of the performers than of those responsible for rewriting the lyrics.

5.7. Beyond English.

In the contemporary era, KSS is a popular theme for titles of books and periodical articles in a variety of languages. The WorldCat library catalog reveals the existence of 12 books with *Que Sera Sera* as (or in) their titles, published between 1970 and 2008: seven in English (published in the U.S., the U.K., Australia and New Zealand), two each in Spanish and Japanese, and one each in Italian and German. One of the books in English is about Doris Day's television career, while subject matter in the other books ranges among poetry, fiction, biography, child care, and parapsychology. Both of the titles in Spanish punctuate and accent KSS as a question. Additionally, the Italian spelling appears in the titles of two novels: one published in London (Snaith 1926) and the other in Austria (Schablhofer 2008/2011).

A search for the phrase "Que sera sera" at <http://books.google.com/> finds not only books with KSS in their titles, but also books with KSS among their *chapter* titles, as well as books that simply refer to KSS in passing. They include reminiscences about the music of the 1950s, novels in which characters rationalize the ironies of fate, and solemn discussion by philosophers, psychologists, and theologians about the fatalistic worldview represented in the saying. Books, both fiction and nonfiction, with KSS in their chapter titles include Yorke (1888: 71), Earman (1986: 18), Vivio (2008: 123), and others. Limitations of space prevent my listing here all the book, chapter, article, and poem titles that include one or another version of KSS, but many of these can be found through online searches in *Google Books* <http://books.google.com/>. This source is preferable to the general Google search engine, as the latter device tends to "correct" the spelling of search phrases to fit that of the Doris Day song.

Meanwhile, a search in Ebsco Host finds more than 40 periodical articles with KSS in their titles, dating from 1983 to 2011 and dealing with varied topics, some with an obvious connection to the

meaning of KSS (e.g. decision-making, free will), and others not so obvious (mass media, education, medicine, sports, video games, economics, and business).

Coincidentally, two movies made in 2002 assumed the title *Que Sera Sera*: a Norwegian short film directed by Geir Greni (Snurr Film AS, n.d.), and a Brazilian feature film directed by Murilo Salles (Young 2002). In Portuguese, the phrase is equally ungrammatical as in other Romance languages.

Not only has the song been recorded by dozens of performers and rewritten in many languages, and its title transferred to other literary works, but also the KSS phrase has taken on new life as a title of other cultural artifacts, often to give them an air of carefree abandon. These are easily found on the Web: vacation rentals in Florida, Portugal and Western Australia; restaurants in Quebec, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Japan (two: in Shimoda and Ichikawa); a nightclub in Long Beach, California; a midwifery service in the state of Maine; and a sandwich shop in Bedford, Pennsylvania (Italianate version, as in the motto of the Earl of Bedford). And the song, reworded, has become an anthem for some soccer teams in Britain and Ireland. The *Que Sera Sera* was the first airplane to land at the South Pole, on October 31, 1956, just five months after the June 1 release of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*.

In Chekhov's play *The Seagull*, near the beginning of Act Two, where the character Arkadina says in Russian "Chemu byt', togo ne minovat'"—literally "What will be, there is no escaping"—the translator Stephen Mulrine finds the closest English equivalent to be "Que sera, sera" (Chekhov 1997: 23).

KSS—in both song and saying—is known in East Asia. One of the Japanese book titles (Otsuka 2002) incorporates in addition an authentic Spanish theme: *Ginza itchome no don kihote: Que sera sera* ("A [modern-day] Don Quixote in the Ginza district [of Tokyo]: Que sera sera"). A Japanese "J-pop" band called Aicle released a song in March 2010 entitled "Que Sera, Sera" and having those words, but nothing else, in common with the Doris Day song (Aicle 2010). "Que Sera, Sera" is also the title of a Korean television series, first aired in 2007, referenced at HanCinema.net (n.d.). A horse named "Che Sara Sara" won the Hong Kong Derby in 1996. And an Indonesian book on "health at a glance" tosses "Qui sera sera" into its discussion of panic attacks— though not without a

paraphrase in Indonesian, "apa yang harus terjadi, akan terjadi" (Krishna 2000: 112).

6. Commentary.

The English saying "Que sera sera" ("Che sara sara," etc.), in its historical development, presents a unique sequence of metamorphoses. From its initial use as an aristocratic motto, with mostly emblematic function, it emerges as a popular proverb, available to individuals to express their fatalistic attitude toward specific situations. And the foreignness of its constituent words, also perhaps initially emblematic—as a symbol of erudition, or at least of cosmopolitanism—is transformed by some observers into support for stereotypical thinking about fatalism in Mediterranean cultures.

6.1. A motto is not a proverb.

Having seen how KSS originated, we are now in a position to understand why, aside from its being ungrammatical, the search for it in collections of proverbs was a mission doomed to fail: heraldic mottoes and folk proverbs are as different as aristocrats and peasants. The language of proverbs—although often rhymed and/or telegraphic—is generally the vernacular of the common people, while most heraldic mottoes are composed in foreign languages. For example, in Mair's (1873) list of nearly 3,000 English mottoes, 79% are in Latin, 9% are in French, and only 10% are in English. (Mottoes in Italian and Spanish are rare, numbering seven and three, respectively, in this collection.)[34]

Proverbs treat a broad range of subjects: human relations, the natural world, the human body, religious concepts, human character, civic relations, etc. Heraldic mottoes, on the other hand—those whose meaning can be discerned—tend to concentrate on lofty character traits such as loyalty, piety, and courage. Simpson and Speake (2008: ix) classify proverbs in three types, depending on their abstractness: proverbs may be (1) abstract and literal (e.g. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder"); (2) concrete and figurative (e.g. "Don't put all your eggs in one basket"); or (3) concrete and literal (e.g. "Red sky at night, shepherd's delight; red sky in the morning, shepherd's warning"). Mottoes, in contrast, tend to be mostly of the abstract-and-literal kind—e.g. "Fortis et fidelis" ("Brave and faithful"). Occasionally they are concrete-and-figurative—e.g. "Noli irritare leones" ("Do not irritate lions," inten-

tionally punning on the surname Lyons)—but never concrete and literal.

While proverbs, figurative or not, are almost always subject to some semantic interpretation, it is not unusual for a motto to be cryptic, or, in the word of Lower (1845: 155), "enigmatical." Examples of this latter kind of motto include "Sic donec" (Latin, "Thus until"; surnames Egerton, Jopp); "Cause caused it" (in English; surname Elphinstone); and—according to Hogg (1848: 301), "a perfect riddle" —"Per il suo contrario" (Italian, "By the reverse of it"; surname Paget).[35]

Lower (1845: 155) places KSS in the "enigmatical" category, and Hogg (1848: 301) agrees, calling KSS one of "a number of family mottoes in which not much meaning, or at least no very pointed meaning, can be discerned." Of KSS in particular, Hogg says "This is a comfortable bit of fatalism, having no very great appropriateness, one would say, as a family motto" (Hogg 1848: 301). This shortage of meaning may be what the character Count Vincenzo Torlato-Favrini in *The Barefoot Contessa* meant in calling his family motto "unimaginative."

As we have observed, KSS is absent from collections of Italian and Spanish proverbs. In fact, there is no other saying with a parallel use of Spanish *que* or Italian *che* as a simple free relative pronoun, among sayings *of folk origin*. But among the *heraldic* sayings listed by Clark, we do find another free relative *che*: "Che Dio vuolo [sic, for *vuole*], Io voglio. *What God wills, I will*. L[ord] Dormer" (Clark 1829: 297).[36] Note that it is not a proverb from Italy, but rather a motto contrived for an English-speaking nobleman.

6.2. From emblematic to expressive.

Most of the early documentations of KSS are emblematic in function; that is, the literal meaning of the phrase is of lesser importance than its heraldic role as an identifier of an individual or family. (The very first recorded instance of the saying, in the Trinity College manuscript, is exceptional, fitting neither the emblematic nor the expressive category very well.) KSS as a heraldic motto, while its general fatalism is unanimously recognized, is variously described also as "unimaginative," "enigmatical," and having "not much meaning" and "no very great appropriateness." From this semantically lightweight beginning, KSS expands into an expressive function, whereby English-speakers can spontaneously utter, mut-

ter, or think it to themselves as a comforting device in the face of cruel fate. There was evidently a semantic niche in English waiting to be filled by it.

The following example, from fiction, bridges the gap between the emblematic and expressive functions by presenting the saying first in its role as a motto, immediately followed by one of the characters appropriating it to express his own feelings:

> They had reached the house, and Beatrice pointed to the motto over the door. "**Qui sera sera**," she said. And, as he bent down to kiss her hand, he also whispered "**Qui sera sera**," with a sense of complete satisfaction. (Sutcliffe 1896: 57)

A typical example of the expressive KSS with rich semantic support from its context appears in an autobiographical reminiscence by Holme Lee:

> Already it appeared that my rede was being spun for me, and that I had but to look on and submit. My childish impatience and wilfulness being gone, into their place had come, in lieu of higher trust, a certain passive humility; half fatalist perhaps. I said to myself, "***Che sarà, sarà***," and ceased struggling with the blind time that had overtaken me. (Lee 1860: 124)

Elsewhere, in an anonymous short story in *Catholic World* magazine, we find KSS again used as a verbal way to "cease struggling" with decisions about the future: "'If she is not at home,' I thought, 'that vow shall be registered and kept; if she is, *che sera sera*'" [italics in original] ("Through Devious Ways" 1870: 555). Here the writer evidently feels no need to translate the phrase, even though there is little in the context to elucidate it: it stands on its own for meaning. In this latter example, as well as the one from Lee (1860), above, KSS occurs in a character's private thoughts; and likewise in many other instances the expressive use of the saying is found in an interior monolog.

The fatalism of KSS is usually light-hearted, but it is sometimes portrayed with a darker side, as in this description from an autobiographical account: "He is peevish, despairing, has a presentiment that he shall die soon, and utters as his sole consolation the not very

consolatory Italian words, '*Che sarà sarà*'" (Mereweather 1859: 162).

In a novel by Elizabeth Gaskell, KSS is used as a noun phrase, evidently meaning "inevitability": "It was no use reasoning to them on the subject; so Mr. Browning [...], Mr. Sheepshanks [...], and Mr. Hall […] left off the attempt, feeling that the *Che sarà sarà* would prove more silencing to the murmurs than many arguments" (Gaskell 1864: 148).

Expressive KSS generally serves to relieve the speaker or hearer from worry about the future (it is, after all, formulated in the future tense). But occasionally it serves to relieve the tension of an expression of disapproval about past events, as in (23) and (24):

> (23) There are those who make their living out of the book-stalls by buying to sell again, a sordid use to make of the immortal thoughts of mankind, but ***qui sera sera***. (Lewin 1902/03: 89)
> (24) The USA was blamed for sending another rocket into space, but the cynical rest just shrugged their shoulders and thought "**Qui Sera Sera**", and left it at that! (Russell 2010: 41)

6.3. Ethnic stereotypes.

Throughout the history of KSS as an expressive device we find the saying used in a variety of contexts, including (1) those in which *no* allusion is made to Italian or Hispanic speakers or settings (the majority); (2) those that seem to imply some relation between the saying and a Romance-speaking character or setting; and (3) those that make an explicit connection between the fatalism of KSS and the Spanish- or Italian-speaking cultures. For the Russells (16th century) or the Folkeses (19th century), their respective decisions to couch their family mottoes in Romance languages may have been somewhat arbitrary, or perhaps based on the current prestige—in England—of Italy or Spain, respectively, in those two eras of history. And yet, in choosing those languages, they created for English-speakers a receptacle into which to project their beliefs about fatalism in Mediterranean cultures.

The link between ethnicity and fatalism is sometimes subtle, as when an English-speaking author simply puts KSS in the mouth of an Italian- or Spanish-speaking character, or juxtaposes the saying

with a Mediterranean setting. In the following example, an anonymous (Anglo-American) visitor to Venice asks

> [W]ho that has known that pleasure of all pleasures, the gliding down the Grand Canal of Venice in a gondola, […] has not paused before the *Ca' d'Oro*, and envied its possessor, before asking the possessor's name? —"*Sior! La Taglioni*,"[37] being the answer of the *Checco* or *Damiani* who sculls the traveller forwards. But "***che sara, sara***" ("Musical and Dramatic Gossip" 1859: 216c).

Here the phrase seems to function merely as a discourse marker, a sign of ending a topic with indifference, translatable as "Oh well"—but a marker couched in Italian words to resonate with the setting of the sketch.

In another example, the saying occurs, with Spanish spelling, in the speech of a Cuban character in a short story set in Tabasco, Mexico. The members of a survey team on an expedition to map a section of the Gulf Coast are contemplating camping overnight in a swampy area where a "fever fog" (a miasma) is beginning to form, and they are discussing it as a possible threat to their lives:

> The gallant Cuban shrugged his spare shoulders again, and setting his theodolite-stand down, deliberately rolled and lighted a fresh cigarette. "***Que sera sera***," he said, blowing the blue smoke from his nostrils. "We must all die when our time comes. What matters it, then, where or how?" (Leslie 1882: 17)

Although the expression is not translated here, its meaning is supported by the fatalistic tenor of the accompanying speech and the shoulder shrug.

In the 21st century, a recent history of World War II seems to use KSS to characterize the Italians, as a group, as fatalist: "The four battles of Monte Cassino were fought by [12 nationalities], although not by the Italians themselves, the majority of whom had by now largely adopted a ***che sara sara*** attitude to their national fate" (Roberts 2011: ii).

In other cases, the generalization to an entire nationality is more explicit. We have already seen (Sec. 5.5) how, as early as 1755, KSS is said to represent an "Italian doctrine." In recent times, the link from KSS to Latino fatalism is made straightforward in a dic-

tionary of cultural "code words" intended for U.S. travelers to Mexico, as it uses a misaccented version of KSS ("Qué Sera Sera!"—or, in the Table of Contents, "Qúe Sera Sera!") as the subtitle of the chapter "Mañana," which deals with the stereotype of relaxed attitudes toward time in Mexico (DeMente 1996: 182). And in the following example, from present-day nonfiction, our phrase has taken on such reality in the English-speaking world that it is now known as a "fatalistic Hispanic concept." The passage refers to a case study of a Filipino-American patient in a hospital who fails to request medication for pain. The author explains as follows:

> Filipinos may appear stoic because they believe pain is the will of God and thus God will give them the strength to bear it. Besides, one cannot change it. This attitude is reminiscent of the fatalistic Hispanic concept ***Qué será será.*** (Galanti 2008: 56).

We might ask why a phrase that is ostensibly from another language was enlisted in English to express the idea that human will is helpless in the face of fate. Sociolinguist Jane H. Hill advances the theory that English-speakers incorporate words of Spanish into their speech as an indirect way of expressing their (generally negative, even "racist," according to Hill) stereotypes about Latinos. Thus, for example, young Anglo men in the American Southwest may invite one another for a beer by saying "Let's get together and crack a few cervezas"; Hill interprets this as follows:

> It probably means something like this […]: "On this occasion, we will be relaxed about alcohol, the way we believe that Mexicans are relaxed about alcohol, rather than careful and responsible and sober like White people." (Hill 2008: 42).

In a similar way, KSS may resonate, among some English-speakers, with the stereotype that Mediterranean, Romance-speaking people do not plan for the future, nor try to exert their will against fate. In this view, it would be seen as significant that English-speakers adopted *this* saying, KSS, rather than others such as "A Dios rogando y con el mazo dando" (roughly "God helps those who help themselves") or "El tiempo es oro" ("Time is money"), because these sayings do not fit the stereotype of the passive, stoic Latino.

7. Conclusion.

This investigation of the saying "Que sera sera" has found it to be, through almost all of its history, exclusively a phenomenon of the English-speaking world. Searches for sources in Romance languages failed to be fruitful and eventually led back to English. Only in the last 50 years, with its international propagation through the Doris Day song, has the phrase been adopted more widely.

The question of what meaning the phrase might have had for readers (and, by implication, for speakers) in the early stages of its history remains puzzling. In its first documentation ("quy serra serra" in the Trinity College manuscript), rather than being presented as an expression in need of explanation—as one might expect of a newly introduced phrase composed of foreign words—it seems paradoxically to function as an explanation itself, a paraphrase of other lines of poetry. Later, as a heraldic motto and occasional epitaph, its literal meaning is in the background, less important than its emblematic function of identifying individuals of the nobility and their families. With its appearance in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, the saying is introduced into the culture of, presumably, a broader segment of society, given the accessibility that the theater offers to its audience regardless of literacy. In that setting, it was supported with a translation (perhaps for the benefit of those hearing it for the first time) and labeled a "doctrine." Almost immediately after Marlowe's citation of the saying, we find KSS used, again on the stage, in the purely expressive function, spontaneously and without translation or other semantic support, in the speech of a character in *Cupid's Whirligig* (Sec. 5.5). Such uses of KSS, embedded in discourse, are rare at first, but in the 19th and 20th centuries they increase substantially, and today the popularity of the saying—at least in published writing, as reflected in the graphs of the *Google Books Ngram Viewer*—continues on an upward trajectory.

When the Earls of Bedford adopted their motto, its meaning, like that of many such mottoes, was considered by some to be enigmatic, and was even ridiculed by some critics. Nevertheless, Christopher Marlowe evidently "took the bait," imputed meaning to the motto, and grappled with it. Eventually its meaning became so real to English-speakers that they could not only utter it to express their own fatalism but also analyze it as an embodiment of a fatalistic worldview, and point to it as presumed evidence of an inherent

fatalism in the Italian- and Spanish-speaking cultures—where the saying had never existed.

Notes

[1]One instance of the saying with Italian *Che* and ***se**rà* (rather than modern standard ***sa**rà*) occurs in one of the earliest documentations of KSS, in Christopher Marlowe's play *Doctor Faustus*. Marlowe's editor Alexander Dyce (1798-1869) attaches a note to the Italian quotation, saying "Lest it should be thought that I am wrong in not altering the old spelling here, I may quote from Panizzi's very critical edition of the *Orlando Furioso*, 'La satisfazion ci *serà* pronta'" (Dyce 1850: Vol. 1, p. lxxii). In Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1516), there is indeed one instance of the "old spelling" ***se**rà* (as well as several of the modern ***sa**rà*), but in the even older works of Dante (1265-1321) the form is consistently ***sa**rà* (Soules, n.d.). The online *Corpus di Italiano Scritto* (*CORIS*, 2011), comprising 120 million words of text in contemporary Italian, contains no tokens of ***se**rà*. A search on the Web at large for "quello **se**rà molto" ('that will be very...')—with the verb in context to rule out the noun *sera* 'evening', since Web searches are accent-mark-insensitive—found two hits: in publications quoting documents written in 1458 and 1510 respectively. The first Italian grammar published in English (Thomas 1550) gives only ***sa**rà* for the future of *essere*.

[2]In the introductory pages of a book by John Deacon, Deacon and his work are praised by another author, "S. T.," who signs with a humble complimentary close in Latin, followed by his own initials and, cryptically, the KSS saying: "...and so (deare frends) adieu with all my heart. Laudum suarum praeco insufficiens [insufficient herald of his—i.e. Deacon's— fame], S. T. Què sara, sara." (Deacon 1616, [xxi]).

[3]There are three ways of accessing the *Google Books* corpus (each with its own advantages), which must be distinguished in spite of the similarity of their titles: (1) *Google Books* per se, at <http://books.google.com/>; (2) the *Google Books Ngram Viewer*, at <http://books.google.com/ngrams>; and (3) the *Google Books American English* corpus (Davies 2011-), at <http://googlebooks.byu.edu/>. And of course all three must be distinguished from a fourth resource, the Google search engine for the Web at large. The graphs of the *Google Books Ngram Viewer* register 0% if an expression occurs in fewer than 40 books (according to "Datasets," n.d.) or fewer than 40 times overall (according to "Info," n.d.) in a given year. Nevertheless, the researcher can specify any range of years (within the limits of 1500-2008), and if, in that period, *some* year registers a greater-than-zero percentage, then the graph offers the opportunity to identify (and sometimes see the text of) books from the "zero-percentage" years (i.e. years in which it appeared fewer than 40 times). These results are further complicated by the fact that each graph of the *Viewer* is based on a corpus of books in just *one language*, but a search in *Google Books* produces whatever matching sequences are found in *any* books of the *Google Books* project, regardless of language. This means, for example, that, while the *Ngram Viewer* (with English as the selected language) registers "no" instances of "Qui sera sera," a search in *Google Books* yields hundreds of hits, including both (1) "Qui sera sera" in books in English from years with fewer than 40 instances; and (2) instances in books published *in French* in which the sequence forms part of the (grammatically

correct) "**Ce** qui sera sera" (these searches are case-insensitive). Searches in the *Google Books Ngram Viewer* and in *Google Books* generally can be supplemented with searches in the *Google Books: American English* corpus (Davies 2011-), which filters out books in French, but also excludes books in English not published in the United States. And finally, the *Google Books* data are subject to scanner error, especially those published before the 19th century. Thus, for example, some instances counted as "Qui sera sera" turn out to be, on closer scrutiny, "Qué sera sera" with its accented *é* misread as a dotted *i*.

[4]The graphs of the *Ngram Viewer* express frequency in very small percentages. In order to make these figures easier to read, I shift the decimal point seven places to the right and restate them as "parts per billion" (ppb). For a "trigram" (three-word sequence) such as KSS, the percentages are derived by dividing the number of instances by the number of trigrams in all the texts. A text of *n* words contains *n* – 2 trigrams; thus the number of "ppb" is virtually equivalent to the number of instances per billion words of text.

[5]Burke (1892: 50) makes the same error "in reverse": he translates the stock initiator of storytelling in Spanish, "Érase que se era" (functionally equivalent to "Once upon a time"), as "What hath been, hath been," as if it were a past-tense counterpart of "Que será será." He evidently read the conjunction (complementizer) "que" as a free relative pronoun ('what'), misled by the interrogative *qué*.

[6]At the time of this writing, the *OED*'s (online) etymology states "Apparently [from] Italian *che sarà sarà* … (1659 or earlier)." The editors of the *OED* have confirmed (Katrin Thier, personal communication) that the 1988 source in Spanish and the 1659 source in Italian are, respectively, a book written by an author with an English name and published in the United States (Armstrong 1988: 99), and a book written by an English author and published in London (Howell 1659). The editors have assured me that the online *OED* will soon be updated to reflect the English influence on these two sources. The *OED* gives precedence to the Italian form and explains the forms with *que* as "altered partly after French *que* …, and partly (in later use) after Spanish *que*." No evidence is given for qualifying the Spanish influence as "in later use."

[7]Others call it a relative pronoun with "no antecedent" (FIDESCU, n.d.; Jespersen 1927: 58; Plann 1980: 1). Gili y Gaya (1969: 303) discusses only the related animate (i.e. human) pronoun in Spanish, *quien* (as in "**Quien** canta su mal espanta"—"**He who** sings drives his troubles away"), referring to an "antecedente callado" (tacit antecedent), and the Spanish Royal Academy's *Esbozo* (Academia 1973: 527) uses the same term. Alcina and Blecua (1975: 1,027-1,029) call the construction a relative pronoun with "implicit antecedent," construing the *lo* component as a "neuter article." Cennamo (1997: 198-199) uses the oxymoronic term "absolute relative." Other terms for it include relative pronoun with "internal antecedent" (Cunha and Cintra 2001: 346) and "condensed relative pronoun" (Sweet 1891: Vol. 1, p. 81). Quirk et al. (1985: 373 and 1,056) distinguish the construction as a "nominal [rather than adjectival] relative clause," as does, in effect, Joly (2004: 71—"la relative substantive"). The *Wikipedia* article "English relative clauses" calls these clauses "*free*, *fused* or *nominal*." Crystal (2008: 411) likewise describes them as "**nominal** or **free**," as well as "sometimes called **headless**."

[8]In 1971 the Puerto Rican singer José Feliciano released the song "Che sarà?" (in Italian), written for him by Jimmy Fontana (stage name of Enrico Sbriccoli).

Because of the similarity of titles, it is often confused with the Livingston and Evans song. Feliciano later released a version in Spanish.

[9]In 1983 the Italian singer Tiziana Rivale won the prize for best song at Italy's Sanremo Music Festival for her performance of "Sarà quel che sarà," a song written by Roberto Ferri and Maurizio Fabrizio (Anselmi 2009: 332). See a 2008 performance of it on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFm54GHv8ok>.

[10]Similarly, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Intermediate Spanish* (Hawson 2000: 139) offers the student "Que será, será" as a phrase equivalent to "Whatever will be will be."

[11]Elgos and Pinchi are the respective pseudonyms of Bruno Pallesi (1921-1987) and Giuseppe Perotti (1900-1971) (Italian-language *Wikipedia*, "Bruno Pallesi" and "Pinchi").

[12]I thank Prof. Barbara Vance of Indiana University and Prof. Pierre Kunstmann of the University of Ottawa for help in accessing and parsing premodern French proverbs. Morawski's source for this proverb is a 13th-century manuscript entitled *Incipiunt proverbia rusticorum mirabiliter versificata*, edited and published by J. Zacher in *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum*, 11 (1859): 115-144. Two variations on it are given by Le Roux de Lincy (1842: Vol. 2, p. 258): "Mal norrist qui n'asavoure" ("What doesn't taste pleasant nourishes poorly") and "Mal nourrit qui n'adoucit" ("What doesn't taste sweet nourishes poorly").

[13]Godefroy's source for these lines is the *Geste des Lorrains*, and specifically manuscript 3143 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, folio 27[a]. I thank Jean-Loup Ringenbach for pointing out the two published editions: Herbin 1992 (line 7264) and Stengel 1903 (line 7245).

[14]Morawski (1925: 12-13 and 64-65) lists (and cross-references) proverbs in "Ce que..." and "Que..." in equal numbers (10 each), with the pronoun acting as a direct object in most, but not all, cases. It is not possible to make a similar comparison of "Ce qui..." and "Qui..." for two reasons: (1) because inanimates occur much more frequently as direct objects than as subjects, while the forms with *qui* are reserved for the subject function (Morawski [p. 13] gives only two proverbs in "Ce qui..."); and (2) because "Qui..." in the vast majority of proverbs (more than 400 in Morawski) is animate: "He who...," "The person who...."

[15]Hassell (1982: 31) does include a synonymous proverb: "Ce qui doit advenir advient" ("That which must come about comes about").

[16]The following collections of Spanish *refranes* contain no KSS nor any other simple free relative *que*: Canellada and Pallares (2001); Cantera and Sevilla (1998); Carbonell Basset (2002); Combet (1971); Díez Barrio (1987); Junceda (2006); "Recopilación..." (n.d.); Rodríguez Marín (1930); Sáinz de Robles (1950); Sbarbi y Osuna (1943); Sevilla Muñoz et al. (1998); Sintes Pros (1961); Soto Posada (1997); Suñé Benages (1941). I am grateful to Richard Heyer of the Instituto Cervantes (New York) for his help in verifying the absence of KSS from Spanish *refrán* collections in that library.

[17]None of the following collections of Italian proverbs include KSS, nor any other simple free relative *che*: "About.com" (n.d.); Bellonzi (1968); Bolelli (1989); Cibotto (1975); Ferrando and Ferrando (1977); Franceschi (1908/1982); Gianeri (1976); Giusti (1908); Giusti and Capponi (1956); Martello (1981); Mondadori (1977); Paravicino (1666); Raimondi (1975); "Scribd.com" (n.d.); Spallicci (1975); Torriano (1649); Torriano (1666). Franceschi (1908/1982) does contain three turns

of phrase that begin with "Che," but none of them is a declarative sentence with *Che* as a free relative. In one (p. 31), "Che io non lo sia" ('Let me not be [thus]'), *Che* is the complementizer introducing a subjunctive with optative force. In another (p. 249), the *Che* is interrogative. And in the third case (p. 307), "Che mena la moglie a ogni festa" ('Who takes his wife to all parties'), the expression is just a relative clause. A sentence fragment. Meanwhile the English author Charles Merbury, in his collection of Italian proverbs (Merbury 1581/1946), offers four that begin with "Che," but again, in none of these cases is it a free relative. In one of them (p. 8) the *Che* is interrogative, while those on pp. 7, 10, and 19 are truncated literary quotations (from Ariosto, Antonio Vignali, and Petrarch, respectively) in whose original form the clause in question was subordinated by the conjunction (complementizer) *che*. I thank the blogger "√2" of the online Wordreference Language Forums for pointing out these literary sources. Their literary nature is ironic, in light of the title that Merbury gave his work, with its implication of anthropological fieldwork: "Popular proverbs, collected in different places in Italy, and most of them from the very mouths of the Italians themselves." His editor Charles Speroni (Merbury 1946: 68 and 79) discusses this title, calling it "misleading" and "unjustifiable."

[18]Each section of Howell is paginated separately; page 13 of the Italian section is in image 362 of the online facsimile version. Also in the 17th century, an Italian compiler of proverbs cites an *English* version (only) of our saying as partial explanation of another, Italian proverb about lawyers (italics in original): "Lite d'*Avvocato*, lite che non muor mai. *An* Advocates *sute, is a sute which never dies*." The note commenting on this saying is "*For what must be must be*" (Torriano 1666: 18). If this Italian paremiologist had known a genuinely Italian version to exist, here would have been an opportunity for him to cite it, but he did not do so.

[19]I am grateful to Corradina Fratini for e-mailing me a complete copy of the article, which I was not able to find online.

[20]Reading *conuertimini* as a Latin passive imperative plural, and *drede* as "dread" in its archaic sense of "stand in awe of, treat with reverence" (rather than "fear"), the refrain could be paraphrased "Be converted, you commoners, and revere your king." The irony of pretending to address commoners in Latin is echoed by the untranslated KSS in apparent French.

[21]I am grateful to Sandy Paul, of the Trinity College Library, for e-mailing me a color photocopy of the manuscript page. The image is online at <http://mypage.siu.edu/lhartman/kss/trinity.jpg>. Prior to the edition by MacCracken, the manuscript was catalogued and described by M. R. James (1901: Vol. 2, p. 90), who quotes the lines in question. It is also described in the online *Index of Middle English Verse* at <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/host/imev/record.php?recID=1497> (accessed 2012/9/6).

[22]The French verb *être* 'to be' builds its future-tense forms on the suppletive stem *ser-*. Contemporary forms misspelled with double *r* can be found by means of Web searches. These forms can be separated from homographic forms of *serrer* 'to squeeze, to grasp' by including a context such as *demain* 'tomorrow' in the search (*serra* can be the simple past tense of *serrer*, meaning 'squeezed', but probably not in combination with 'tomorrow'). Among future forms of *être* on today's Web at large, those with double *r* make up between 1% and 2% of the total. Medieval instances of 'will be' based on *serr-* can be found in Rotelande 1924 (12th-century) and Giacchetti 1989 (manuscripts dated 1449 and ca. 1520).

[23]I am grateful to Lorna Mackintosh, Administrator, St. Nicholas Church, for e-mailing me several photographs of the brass. One photo (online at <http://mypage.siu.edu/lhartman/kss/brass_1.jpg>) shows the entire plate. In another (at <http://mypage.siu.edu/lhartman/kss/brass_2.jpg>), the motto "QVE SERA SERA" can be seen near the top of the image. In another (at <http://mypage.siu.edu/lhartman/kss/brass_3.jpg>), the date "1533"can be seen in the second-to-last line of text, near the left side. And in another (at <http://mypage.siu.edu/lhartman/kss/brass_4.jpg>), the date "1559" can be seen in the last line of text, slightly to the right of center. The brass is also described in Aubrey (1719: Vol. 1, p. 234), as well as in a travelogue by Charles Dickens, Jr. (1894: 243), son of the novelist, who erroneously gives Julyan Forde's date of death as "1539."

[24]John Russell happened to be present and was able to mediate communications in 1506 when a storm at sea brought the Archduke of Austria (who was, through marriage, King Philip I of Castile) and his wife ("Juana la Loca," Queen of Castile) ashore at the port of Weymouth on the south coast of England. The Spanish royal couple at first stayed (it is not clear whether they were considered guests or prisoners) at the home of Russell's cousin, Sir Thomas Trenchard, until they were invited to the court of Henry VII, where they recommended Russell to the English king. Russell stayed on at the court through the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, serving them in a variety of military and diplomatic missions (Cunningham 1853: 72-73; Furnivall and Morfill 1873: 121; Lodge 1835: Vol. 2, 6th portrait, p. 1; Ross 1848: 2). Foster (1884: 69) narrates the event in detail.

[25]Scott Thomson adds, in a footnote, "Lansdowne MSS. 858, dating between 1571 and 1586, gives it (f[olio] 47) as the Bedford motto."

[26]*Doctor Faustus*, although not published until 1604, eleven years after Marlowe's death, was first performed at least 12 years before that, and is said to have been written before 1590 (Stanford 1892: 235). This date is confirmed by a note scribbled by Marlowe's friend Thomas Nashe in the margin of a 1589 publication: "Faustus: **Che sara sara** deuinynitie adieu" (Kocher 1942: 46; Kocher records Nashe's spelling as the modern "s**a**ra," rather than Marlowe's archaic "s**e**ra"). Kocher suggests that the odd spelling of "divinity" may be Nashe's irreverent attempt to pun with "ninny."

[27]I am grateful to Paul Carlyle, National Archives of the United Kingdom, for confirming that "que sera, sera" was transcribed faithfully from the 1634 manuscript, not introduced by editor John Bruce in the 19th century.

[28]"Que sera sera" is likewise linked, in the 19th century, to the family name Betenson (but in County Kent) by Elven (1851: Vol. 2, p. 39), as well as to the names Folkes (Norfolk) and Bettison (Warwickshire) (Elven 1851: Vol. 2, pp. 181 and 538). These are essentially the same families said to use the "French" version, "**Qui** sera sera."

[29]Three reference works of the 19th century are particularly useful for tracing English family mottoes: Clark (1829) and Mair (1873), alphabetized by motto, and Elven (1851), by surname. In addition, some 9,000 mottoes, with translations and organized by family name, are available online through "Armorial Gold" (n.d.).

[30]The date of 1829 for this heraldic documentation of Spanish KSS comes from the *eleventh* edition of Clark (available through *Google Books*), which contains almost 1,100 mottoes. The first edition (1775) contained 400, and the second, third, and fourth editions (1776, 1777, and 1779) added some 200 each, so the total

reached about 1,000 in the 4th edition (1779), making it likely that "Que sera sera" was published by that date.

[31]In Ewen (1987: 257) the photos of the round-faced Jay Livingston and the long-faced Ray Evans are miscaptioned: their names are interchanged.

[32] Livingston and Evans's song was evidently one of three songs written in the 1950s with a title based on the KSS saying. The U.S. Copyright Office's *Catalog of Copyright Entries* (1950: 25) indicates that a copyright was issued in February 1950 for a song entitled "Che Sara, Sara" in the name of Renee P. Owen. And the *Catalog of Copyright Entries* (1955: 26) refers to a copyright issued in May 1955 to Norman Gimbel for a song entitled "Che Sera, Sera: What Will Be Will Be" (see also *Copyright Encyclopedia*, n.d.). It is evidently to this latter song that DeRosa (2001: 177) refers—but apparently without being aware of the English paraphrase included in its title—in stating that Livingston and Evans were obliged to differentiate their title from that of the 1955 song by expanding it from simply "Que Sera Sera" to "Que Sera Sera (Whatever Will Be Will Be)." DeRosa's note (2001: 314) explains that a letter from Paramount Pictures music director Roy Fjastad to production manager Frank Caffey, dated June 7, 1955, "indicates the existence of an Eddie Wolpin song titled 'Che Sera, Sera' on Mercury Records." Billboard magazine (September 17, 1955 <GB>, p. 50) published a thumbnail review of a record by big band vocalist Gloria Van (or Vann) whose Side 1 is "I Wanna Be There" and Side 2 is "Che Sara [sic] Sara." The label is Wing (a subsidiary of Mercury), and it is referred to in WorldCat <http://www.worldcat.org/title/che-sara-sara/oclc/082887333>, which names the songwriters as Barry Parker and Hal Hester; it is "held by 0 [zero] libraries worldwide." The puzzle remains unsolved as to the exact title of the 1955 song and whether it was written by Norman Gimbel, Eddie Wolpin, or Barry Parker and Hal Hester.

[33]On the gravestone also, the saying is spelled in all-lowercase letters, with ambiguously vertical accent marks. Count Vincenzo Torlato-Favrini (Rossano Brazzi) explains: "an ancient and unimaginative Italian proverb; it has been the motto of my house for more than 450 years."

[34]Clark (1829) lists some 1,100 mottoes, of which 74% are in Latin, 14% in French, and 8% in English; this list contains seven mottoes in Italian and four in Spanish. Georges (2012) examines 206 mottoes used in Wales and finds 55% of them in Latin, 15% in French, 23% in Welsh, and 7% in English.

[35]An 18th-century humorist with the pseudonym Orator Reynard published a book of heraldic mottoes, all in English translation, with mocking, sardonic responses to them based on their incomprehensibility and/or their vanity. His relatively mild response to the Duke of Bedford's "What will be, will be" is "Indeed!—There need no ghost come from the grave to tell us that, my Lord" (Reynard 1782: 20).

[36]Both grammar errors—the free relative pronoun and the first verb ending—are corrected in the version given by Elven (1851: 147), under the surname Dormer: "**Cio che** Dio vuol**e** io voglio." Lodge (1890: 204) (mis)spells the first word "Chio."

[37]Marie Taglioni (1804-1884), Italian/Swedish ballerina.

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