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Introduction

This fall brings the fourth issue of *EAPSU ONLINE*, a peer-reviewed journal published by the English Association of Pennsylvania State Universities, an organization of the fourteen state-owned universities of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. The member universities include Bloomsburg, California, Cheyney, Clarion, East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, Indiana, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock, and West Chester. Each year the organization hosts a conference at which we publish the proceedings. In 2003 we recognized the need to produce a higher quality venue for both critical and creative works, based on the eclectic mission of our annual conference—to bring together teacher scholars who share a passion for their disciplines and for teaching.

With *EAPSU ONLINE* the organization literally went world-wide. Over the years we have published work from around the globe, every piece going through a double-blind submission process. Readers volunteer, as well, from everywhere, and so our submissions are more diverse than most journal pieces. This fourth issue is no exception. Where else could you find a poem about working in a factory alongside an article about drum poetry in Africa or an article about Israeli female novelists next to a short story set in rural America?

This issue leads off with an article by Herbert Klein called “Narration (Im)Possible: Epistemology and the Search for Identity in Samuel Beckett’s Fiction,” in which the author explores the Cartesian dilemma of narrative (words and their meanings) in Beckett’s prose works. Updating Booth’s “unreliable narrator,” Klein argues that Beckett’s novels provide “meta-narrative of the development of modern epistemology and its implications for the question of identity.” Mobolanle (Bola) Ebunluwa Sotunsa’s piece on Yoruba Drum Music and its connections to popular music in Nigeria argues that the connection between the two can help preserve the indigenous art form in danger of losing its relevance.

William Boggs, a long-time faculty member and poet at Slippery Rock University, presents three never-before published poems that he says he’s hesitated to share before: “Shingle Song” about work in the factory, “Repentance” about regret and violence, and “When My Wife Cut Her Hair,” a poem about loss and love. They are followed by Jamie Johnson’s

article on animal ontology in D. H. Lawrence. Her premise that Lawrence's existential animals exist on a different level from symbolic animals (such as Melville's whale) allows readers to experience the fiction with the Heideggerian notion of being as the author explores "Lawrence's treatment of the literary animal which in terms of that which we share with the animal, a being-in-the-world."

Catherine Zobel Dent's story "Perdurability" introduces readers to a narrator who uses lists to give her world meaning, a world that is changing despite her strong desire to hold it together. Set in rural Maryland, Dent's characters seem like people you know, possibly in your own family. Dvir Abramovich's article on second-generation Holocaust survivor novels puts the thesis in the title, "The After-effects of the Shoah as Represented in the Writings of Second-Generation Israeli Female Novelists." Taking us through three novels of identity and conflict, Abramovich essentially reviews these stories of protagonists coming to grips with their parents' tragedies and their own responses to them.

Antonio Sanna applies Foucault's principles of power and knowledge to "The Turn of the Screw" and the relationship of the governess to the children and the ghosts in his essay. Sanna offers a new reading of the story that does not necessarily contradict what other critics have said about the reality or not of the ghosts in the story. Following are three poems by Christiaan Sabatelli, whose poetry feels old and new at the same time.

We round out this rather brief issue with Jennifer Wolford Watson's essay on the poetry of H.D. and Charles Andrew's piece on drama Watson explores H.D.'s "elasticity of language" as she plays with masculine and feminine forms. She claims that H.D.'s modernism blurs the boundaries between genderized ways of using language. Lastly, Charles Andrews explores two plays, Albee's *Tiny Alice* and Eliot's *The Cocktail Party*, in light of post-WWII discussions of faith.

As editor of this journal and former president of the organization, I must confess that I was a little disappointed this year with the number of submissions. Although we only accept usually one-third to one-half of our submissions, we had a small pool this year. I encourage anyone reading this now to see the submission guidelines and timeline at the end of the

journal and submit your work. Or encourage colleagues to submit their essays, stories, or poems. We welcome anything of quality not previously published, and we especially encourage pieces that fit our mission in the PA State System of Higher Education as teacher scholars; articles about pedagogy and about bridging scholarship and teaching are encouraged. And while we continue to open up our online space to anyone, we also seek more submissions from our faculty within the PASSHE.

Thanks for visiting, and we hope you enjoy what you see.

Narration (Im)Possible: Epistemology and the Search for Identity in Samuel Beckett's Fiction

Herbert Klein, Freie Universität Berlin

Samuel Beckett's fictional works are now generally recognized to be at least as important as the dramas on which his reputation was first founded. The reason for the novels (and other prose works) having been overshadowed so long by the plays is probably to be found in their constituting a new and radical undertaking which questions fundamental assumptions about narrative. Beckett's novels are concerned with the possibilities of narrative when epistemological certainty is gone. For Beckett this situation is closely connected with Descartes, the consequences of whose basic philosophical assumptions he explores. Beckett sees in Descartes's philosophy the origin of modern humanity's difficulty of finding a place in the world.¹ The central problem of Descartes's philosophy for Beckett is the attempt to replace sensory experience with mathematical certainty. Not only is the subject's connection with the world severed in this way, but there is also no possible way of establishing an identity, since the "I" has to be defined within and in contradistinction to the world. Without this connection there is no possible point of reference, no certainty. Descartes had of course seen this problem and had recourse to the belief in a benevolent god, but Beckett asks what happens if there is no such being—if the thinking mind is all there is. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that the "I" has nothing but language to construct itself and its world. As Anthony Paul Kerby argues, the self is not a metaphysical substance, but rather it is constituted pragmatically through language (Kerby

¹ Already during his time at Trinity College, Dublin, Beckett had studied Descartes intensively (cf. Deirdre Bair, *Samuel Beckett. A Biography*, London, 1980, 53) and his first published work, the poem "Whoroscope," is concerned with the life and theory of the philosopher (cf. Samuel Beckett, "Whoroscope," *Poems in English*, London, 1961, 9-12). The poem was written in a few hours and won the first prize in a lyrical competition in 1930.

125). Even the famous *cogito* is only possible as verbal expression, only thinkable through language. Words are the bridge between the mind and the world, and if this bridge breaks down, there is no possible connection left. The arbitrariness of the linguistic sign as shown by Ferdinand de Saussure and Fritz Mauthner had therefore given a new turn to philosophical speculations about language of which Beckett was well aware.¹ The consequences of this situation are explored in his pentalogy, which comprises the novels *Murphy*, *Watt*, *Molloy*, *Malone Dies* and *The Unnamable*. They constitute successive stages in the attempt to come to terms with the consequences of the Cartesian dilemma that consists in reconnecting the subject and the object, the mind and the material world, once the two have been severed through the *cogito*. If the thinking mind is the only reliable fact, then how is anything else to be ascertained? And is it possible for this mind to go beyond the mere assertion of the *cogito*? Can it make any factual statements about itself? These are, of course, not just philosophical questions, but also ones which radically question the possibilities of narrative, because the premise of narration is that there is something to be talked about and someone to do the talking. Both may, of course, be quite fictive, but they become "real" through language, which is able to build a world without referent, completely made up of words. The hitch is that this not only applies to narratives but to "real" life as well: if we can only construct the world and ourselves through language, then possibly our world (and our selves) might be equally fictive or even fictitious. The resultant problem for narration is that both the narrator and the narrative become not only "unreliable" in W.C. Booth's classic phrase, but that their existence as such becomes

¹ James Joyce had suggested that Beckett should read Fritz Mauthner's *Beiträge zu einer Kritik der Sprache* (1901-1902). Cf. Linda Ben-Zvi, "Fritz Mauthner for Company," *Journal of Beckett Studies*, 9 (1984), 65-88, and "Samuel Beckett, Fritz Mauthner, and the Limits of Language," *PMLA*, 95/2 (1980), 183-200. An analysis of Beckett's notes with regard to Mauthner can be found in John Pilling, "From a (W)horoscope to *Murphy*," *The Ideal Core of the Onion. Reading Beckett Archives*, ed. John Pilling and Mary Bryden, 1992, 1-20.

tenuous. Reliability is only possible with reference to something that can be ascertained, but when no such point of reference exists, the concept itself becomes senseless. Even a fictive narrative has to be "about" something, because it uses words and words are referential symbols. The narrator, too, constitutes him- or herself through language: if there is no (referential) language, then there is no narrator and, consequently, no audience. After all, this is what constitutes a narrative: "In narrative, there has to be a teller of the story and an audience to hear it, even if the audience should be only the self considered as addressee" (Hinchman xv-xvi). Even communication with oneself and about oneself is not possible anymore if no referent exists. Language not only becomes senseless, but there is literally nothing to talk about.

Samuel Beckett explores the Cartesian dilemma and its consequences for narrative in the sequence of novels from *Murphy* to *The Unnamable* through its successive stages, giving it a precise historical exposition from the severance of mind and matter to the dissolution of the "I." These novels can therefore be regarded as a continuous meta-narrative of the development of modern epistemology and its implications for the question of identity.

The Cartesian severance of mind and matter can be clearly seen in *Murphy*, where the eponymous protagonist does not only flee all human contacts but tries to leave behind the world altogether by tying himself to his rocking chair.¹ Only when he thus deprives himself of bodily interaction with the external world can he fully indulge in his mental universe (*Murphy* 6). The pleasures of the mind are mainly connected with mathematics, especially geometry and logic, but he also uses algebra to master the vicissitudes of daily

¹ Marculescu sees *Murphy* as based on Geulincx' occasionalism, rather than directly on Descartes. Although there is some justification for this view, the fact still remains that Geulincx derived his system from Descartes. Cf. Ileana Marculescu, "Beckett and the Temptation of Solipsism: 'Esse est aut percipere aut percipi'," *Journal of Beckett Studies*, 11 & 12 (1989), 55.

life and to divest himself of all subjectivity (6, 31, 36, 57). It is the exercise of ingenuity as such, not any practical application that provides pleasure for Murphy (Miller 71-72). He sees his mind as a closed system, but this does not constitute any restriction, since it contains the whole universe. For Murphy, however, this does not mean that the physical world does not exist, but rather that it only becomes real through the workings of the mind. The mind thus has priority, although this does not imply any value judgment, because mind and matter are incommensurable (64).

Murphy is told by an objective narrator, one might even say a scientific observer. This point of view implies an epistemological difficulty, since such an observer by definition looks from the outside, whereas this one here knows Murphy's mind and reports his thoughts. Such an "omniscient narrator" reflects a stage in narrative history where it seems still possible to acquire knowledge not only of the world, but also of the mind and to communicate this knowledge to an audience. This context implies the possibility of human interaction and exchange, something that is increasingly questioned by the later narratives. Here it is justified, however, by the ties that still hold Murphy to society: he has dealings with various people and even some sort of girlfriend. He may be said to constitute a naïve epistemological phase in which the Cartesian dilemma has not yet been fully recognised. Murphy still believes in the body, but sees it as an encumbrance he wants to get rid of. He thus constitutes the beginning of the bodily decline of Beckett's protagonists that will lead to ever increasing immobility and isolation, culminating in the bodiless cogitations of the Unnamable.

Whereas Murphy had still attempted to overcome his bodily human frailties, which expressed themselves in certain predilections and affections—even in something resembling sexuality—Watt hardly possesses any human traits at all. Even his exterior

makes it difficult to identify him as a human being: he resembles a tied up parcel and moves in an extraordinary way (*Watt* 28-29). Watt has already reached the stage that Murphy desired: he has divested himself of subjective preferences and makes no autonomous decisions; instead he attempts to use objective criteria based on outward appearance (70). Watt does not try to understand anything; rather he contents himself with formal descriptions that allow him to categorize what he perceives and thereby to dissociate himself from the physical world (74-75).

Watt believes that by giving a name to something, this something needs no more explaining. To Watt, relations between things are relations between words. In this way, Watt can remove himself safely from the world of matter, thereby resembling the positivists who think that it is enough to describe the observed phenomena. This, however, only works, if at all, as long as one believes that language can refer to things. The linguistic predicament described in the work of de Saussure and—more importantly for Beckett—of Mauthner, completely shatters the belief in such reference.

In Mr. Knott's house, therefore, Watt finds that language has lost its referential power: even a simple word like "pot" seems to have nothing to do with the thing it designates (78-79). Watt, moreover, finds that the same applies to himself: he cannot find words to refer to himself anymore (79). Since to Watt language and thinking are identical, his world is made up of words and the relations between them, so that this breakdown causes him utter consternation and distress. His desperate attempts to elicit some sort of meaning from words leads him to treat them as objects and to manipulate them in various formalistic ways in order to make them seem new and thereby to restore their referential power (Kenner 97). At first, he reverses their syntactic order, then the letters within the words, the sentences within a paragraph, the words in a sentence and their letters, the

words in a sentence and in a paragraph, and finally everything together at once (Pearce 44-49). Typically, Watt uses a formalistic method that runs through all possible combinations without applying any criteria of evaluation. It is pure rationality used for its own sake and applied without reason. The impasse that Watt encounters has its origin in the impossibility of using language as a means of connecting the mind and the material world—one could also say the impossibility of narrative, at least of a narrative that purports to be objective.

Beckett moves on to explore the possibilities of subjective narrative in *Molloy* through the device of using two contrasting inside perspectives. In *Molloy* two first-person narrators apparently tell two different stories, but possibly they tell the same story (or two closely related stories) from different angles: Molloy tells the story of his life, and Moran tells the story of how he tried to find Molloy. The connecting link between the stories is Moran's quest for Molloy, because a number of similarities exist between the worlds they encounter and a basic resemblance in their narrative situations (Combs 176).

Molloy begins his narrative lying prone on his bed, isolated in a room where he occasionally receives food from an unseen hand. Once a week, his jottings are taken away. Like Descartes philosophising, he lies in his bed, thinking. It is the classic situation of consciousness existing in almost complete isolation from the world. Molloy attempts to reconstruct the way he has ended up in this room and thereby to make sure of his own identity, but neither he nor the reader can prove or disprove this construction: it may be based on memory, but it might as well be pure fiction, or a mixture of both. Although Molloy moves through the physical world in his attempted reconstruction of his former life, he hardly takes any notice of it and does not want to be noticed by others. He believes he

remembers an intended visit to his mother with whom he had “communicated” through knocking on her head, although without any success.¹ Now, however, he cannot remember why he wanted to see her nor whether he went to the right town. This situation is indicative of his general disorientation that extends also to his benefactress Lousse, of whose name and sex he is quite unsure (*Molloy* 56-58). The only thing he is interested in is himself and especially his bodily functions, which he observes meticulously in order to “quantify” them:

Three hundred and fifteen farts in nineteen hours, or an average of over sixteen farts an hour. After all, it's not excessive. Four farts every fifteen minutes. It's nothing. Not even one fart every four minutes. It's unbelievable. Damn it, I hardly fart at all, I should never have mentioned it. Extraordinary how mathematics help you to know yourself. (30)

In this way, Molloy creates a transient sense of identity which he tries to maintain against the chaos of sense impressions. He also attempts to solve formal problems the way Murphy and Watt did. Molloy sucks stones in a methodical order (69-74). But neither of these strategies works, and, like Watt, Molloy loses the referential function of language (31). This, of course, is the ultimate catastrophe, because words are the only things with which he has to construct his world. This linguistic breakdown is paralleled by his bodily breakdown: whereas at the beginning of his narrative Molloy had been able to move about with his bicycle, he eventually has to pull himself along the ground with the help of his crutches and ends up in bed unable to move. But even there, where he exists almost

¹ Zurbrugg suggests that this might be a parodic allusion to Proust. Cf. Nicholas Zurbrugg, *Beckett und Proust*, Gerrards Cross, Bucks, and Totowa, NJ, 1988, 262.

completely cut off from the material world and lives in his thoughts, he cannot escape his body, which keeps reminding him of his physical existence.

Moran, on the other hand, seems to be the exact opposite of Molloy: he is professionally interested in other people; he observes them and spies on them. Moran seems to belong to the world of observable fact, whereas Molloy very much doubts his sensory perceptions. Moran, therefore, defines himself mainly through his outward appurtenances and he is ostensibly writing a report. Among his former "patients" are Murphy and Watt, which suggests the possibility that he is the narrator of their stories or holds an analogous position (138). He believes that he also knows Molloy, but he is not quite sure (112-13). On occasion he refers to him as "Mollose," which indicates the precarious relationship between language and the world, of which Moran is quite aware. He knows that his ideas probably have little to do with any objective reality, but he also knows that this is true for all subjective conceptions (115-16).

Moran thus appears to be not only conscious of the difficulties of the relationship between mind and matter, but he also tries to find his identity through grappling with these difficulties. When talking about himself, he uses both the first and the third person, which seems to indicate the ability to reflect about himself and to see himself from a distance (Miller 92). He recognizes the fact that language remains the only means of constructing a world and of reflecting about it. The apparent differences soon become blurred to Molloy when it turns out that Moran neither knows what Molloy looks like nor where he should seek him (134-35). Nevertheless, he starts looking for him, i.e., he attempts to interact with the material world. In the process of doing this, he progressively decays in body and mind. This condition, however, gives him no reason for complaint, but rather allows him hope to reach a stage where his bodily functions will be completely annihilated (140-41). For him

his failure consists not so much in not having been able to find Molloy, but rather in the unavoidable increase in personal identity that he has gained through his confrontation with physical reality (171-72). This increase in identity seems to differentiate Moran clearly from Molloy, but, on the other hand, he has become progressively like him in outward appearance. It is possible to see this convergence as an indication that Molloy and Moran are one and the same person and that "Moran" just constitutes an earlier phase in Molloy's life. In this case, Moran has actually "found" Molloy and thus fulfilled his mission, but this conclusion is not imperative: it might be more fruitful to see Molloy and Moran as contrasting doubles who start from opposite epistemological positions but reach the same destination in the end. Although Moran insists on the facticity of his report, this assertion is refuted by the ending of the novel, which diametrically contradicts its beginning. It thus becomes clear that everything in it has been constructed through language and that there is no way to link language to the material world. A world and a self may be constructed through language, but they can as easily be deconstructed. The "I" creates the world and is, in turn, created in this process: the two are mutually interdependent.

Moran's attempt to find Molloy can thus be seen as a search for the self: the assumption of the identity of Molloy marking the distance that turns the "I" into the "me," i.e., objectifies it in order to make it comprehensible through language. In this sense, Moran is the creator of Molloy, but he still fails to reach his goal. As the contradictory beginning and ending imply, there is no possible end to this process; the "me" will always elude the "I." The reader's uncertainty as to whether Moran and Molloy are the same person, of course, implicates him or her in the same epistemological quandary as the protagonists. So one might agree with Lawrence Miller's conclusion: "An attempt to reconcile the two narratives reveals, finally, not the buried identity of Molloy and Moran

and the correspondence of their efforts, but rather the reader's incompatible needs for connections and confirmations" (Miller 103), or, one might add, the reader's need to connect mind and matter and thereby to find factual certainty. Since Moran has shown that this connection is not possible through observation, the next novel, *Malone Dies*, reduces the world of experience as far as possible and situates the quest purely in the mind. The search for the self here takes place through memory, a memory that cannot be checked by fact, not only because of Malone's bed-ridden situation, but even more because there is no such thing as "checking facts" as *Molloy* has demonstrated.

Possibly, Malone is yet another variation of Moran/Molloy, not only because Moran on occasion refers to Molloy as "Mollone," but also because some of Molloy's personal belongings are found in Malone's pockets (Begam 143-44). Malone's bodily decay has gone even further than Molloy's: he is almost completely incapacitated and therefore quite unable to move, let alone write. Cut off from the world, not being able to communicate, Malone is reduced to pure thought. Like Descartes, he lets go of all certainties and attempts to define the relationship between the "I" and the world. The situation of telling himself his presumed memories brings with it a certain distance from these memories: the past self, the "me," seemingly becomes objectified and therefore comprehensible. Malone casts himself in the role of authorial narrator who apparently just invents stories, but he also keeps on reflecting his own situation. He goes to considerable lengths to give his protagonist Saposcat (later Macmann) conventional attributes and to place him within a social setting; however, this continually leads him to incongruities and contradictions that force him to take back things he had said earlier or to discontinue narrative threads. When these difficulties become too great, he changes his story. It becomes clear that Malone needs these fictions in order to create his identity: his existence is based on narratives

whose only criterion of "truth" is their appearing to be without contradictions. It is not important whether there are any "real" memories there, only whether they contribute to the goal of creating and maintaining his identity. When he runs out of fictions, Malone cannot go on existing and consequently dissolves—at least he discards the identity of "Malone," which might then be replaced by another fiction. This is the theme of *The Unnamable*.

Malone Dies had shown that the act of attempting to create the "me" as an independent object through language is doomed to failure. There is no way of establishing a link between the "I" and the world through the means of language, and therefore no way of defining the self objectively; nevertheless, the "I" has to keep on talking in order to exist. It is not so important what is said, therefore, but rather that something is said at all. Since this approach is somewhat unsatisfactory, the narrator of *The Unnamable* engages the problem of identity from another angle: instead of creating fictions and pretending they are memories, he starts from scratch. He is like a new-born consciousness, a *tabula rasa* (or Descartes pretending he does not know anything), knowing nothing, but immediately starting to ask questions: "Where now? Who now? When now? Unquestioning. I, say I. Unbelieving. Questions, hypotheses, call them that. Keep going, going on, call that going, call that on. [...] I seem to speak, it is not I, about me, it is not about me" (7).

The Unnamable's scepticism is similar to Descartes's, but he fails to reach his certainty (Cohn 172). The reason for this failure is the indeterminateness of language that does not allow any definite statements. His only certainty consists in knowing that he cannot speak of a definable subject ("I"), but neither can he speak of a definable object ("me"). Nevertheless, he has to speak of both: he knows that this is futile, but there is no other way (8). The narrative "I" has to talk about things without being able to know

whether things exist, and if they do, there is no way of knowing what they are like: it is language that creates them, because only through words can things be conceived—naming is creating. By creating the world in this way, the “I” also creates itself. It is the classical Cartesian *cogito* that assumes its existence without knowing how it came into being, but which apparently has a physical location. It believes this location to be big and circular and itself to be at its center. It assumes that this place and itself came into existence at the same time and for the same purpose: "I shall say therefore that our beginnings coincide, that this place was made for me, and I for it, at the same instant" (12). It is quite alone and yet it creates company through fleeting visions. From these it deduces the existence of a material world and asks questions about the relationship between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*: "Where there are people, it is said, there are things. Does this mean that when you admit the former you must also admit the latter?" (8) The people the Unnamable imagines are Molloy, Murphy, and also Mercier and Camier (8,9,13).¹ They all seem to be earlier or alternative versions of the Unnamable who is now reduced to the condition of pure consciousness. He seems to have existed before, perhaps in other lives and other worlds, for he has memories of things and people. It may be, however, that everything but himself is of a different kind: "I alone am man and all the rest divine" (16). This is clearly reminiscent of Descartes, but the Unnamable goes even further by asking what it means to say "I." In order to be able to say "I" there must be some sort of identity, and therefore the Unnamable tests various kinds. First he attempts to define himself as Basil, whom he later calls Mahood. But both are just elements in a chain of predecessors whom he calls "vice-existers" (31). He then attempts to do without any identity, only to acknowledge the

¹ Cf. also *Mercier und Camier* in which Watt appears at one point and affirms to have known Camier from childhood. Mercier, on the other hand, affirms that he once met Murphy who resembled Watt, "only less battered of course" (Samuel Beckett, *Mercier and Camier*, London, 1988, 111). The Unnamable in his turn confuses Watt with Worm: "Worm, I nearly said Watt, ... (*Unnamable*, 56).

impossibility of this task and to revert to the identity of Mahood and later Worm, because it is impossible not to assume an identity of some kind. On the other hand, it seems not to be possible to subsume the "I" under just one identity, because the "I" is always another (56). The problem is that there always has to be an outside observer or at least a meta-level of consciousness, as the Unnamable realizes in accordance with Berkeley's *esse est percipi* (63). Identity needs a perceiving consciousness, and therefore yet another "I" is introduced into Worm's story, which leads to an infinite regress as Hume had recognised (94). So the Unnamable constitutes himself in the non-space of the attempt of defining himself: "... perhaps that's what I am, the thing that divides the world in two, on the one side the outside, on the other the inside, that can be as thin as foil, I'm neither one side nor the other, I'm in the middle, I'm the partition, ..., on the one hand the mind, on the other the world, I don't belong to either" (100). Categories like the narrator and the narrated do not apply here anymore: the narrator constitutes himself as narrated—and therefore as existing—through his narration.¹ This dynamic process depends less on the content than on the form it takes: the fact that there is an "I" trying to constitute itself is more important than the way in which this is done.

It is highly problematical for the protagonists of Beckett's novels to gain knowledge of their world and of themselves. They try to make sense of the things that happen to them or at least to find an explanation, but they always encounter inconsistencies and contradictions that force them to abandon their theories and evolve new ones. They aim to create a narrative in which the "I" finds a place in the world, even at the cost of annihilating this world or the self. Their greatest difficulty is the double-bind situation of needing to establish an identity in order to make sense of the world and then not being able to do this,

¹ Begam suggests replacing the terms "narrator" and "narrated" by "locutor" and "dislocation" to show that the speaker has no fixed identity. Cf. Begam 159.

because they would have to define this identity in relation to the world. This process of creation and eradication has no end as Beckett explains in his essay on Proust: "[T]he individual is a succession of individuals, the world being a projection of the individual's consciousness The creation of the world did not take place once and for all time, but takes place every day" (19). This projection of consciousness through the continual creation of the self and the world is accomplished through the means of language, which, however, is insufficient for this purpose since it has lost its referential function. Beckett locates the beginning of this dilemma in the work of Descartes, which privileges abstract thought over sensory experience—a condition which is mirrored in the increasing bodily decay and retreat from the world of Beckett's protagonists. Their corporeal annihilation is the correlative to their ever-increasing concentration on the "I", its first and last connection with the world (Artuk 183). In this sense these figures are indeed "the casualties of Cartesianism ... withering as the severance of self from world takes its effect" (Davies 45).

Beckett's novels not only radically explore the Cartesian dilemma and its consequences, but also pose fundamental questions about the nature of narrative. In what relation does the narrator stand to the narrated world? Can narrative make reference to something outside itself? Is there something outside narrative at all? Beckett's answer to the last question seems to be that there is not: the world comes into existence through narrative—or rather, worlds come into existence through narratives. Because no reality exists outside narrative, there are as many worlds as there are narratives—and, of course, also as many narrators. There is no master narrative, but rather a plurality of voices, ever changing, ever interacting anew with the narrated world. But this also means that only through telling stories can we define ourselves and make sense of the world—for a time.

These novels then are voyages of self-discovery, but they never reach their end: as soon as a "me" is discovered, it has to be discarded because it belongs to a past that has already been superseded (Thomas 392). The "I" is always a step ahead and makes a new attempt at understanding necessary, so that any assertion is followed immediately by a retraction, modification, or refutation (Artuk 173). The "I" is a fiction that is continually in the making. Beckett shows that the Cartesian *cogito* is not the final and unsurpassable foundation of epistemology, but rather the origin of a never ceasing fictionalisation of the "I" and the world. Both come into existence through narrative, they are linguistic phenomena, and are therefore subject to the restrictions of language. But this is no great limitation: there are endless possibilities of narrating the "I", the world, and the relationship between them.

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Yoruba Drum Poetry and Popular Music

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“Change is a product of time and as long as science and technology remains the pivot on which the world’s development revolves, more technological advancement is to be expected” (Daramola 2001:101). Art, like life, is dynamic; however, a static art is a potentially decadent one. An examination of the current trends in Yoruba drum poetry becomes necessary in the light of the fear of extinction expressed by notable scholars some decades ago. Apart from flourishing as an indigenous art, *Yoruba* talking drum poetry has also developed within the arena of contemporary popular arts. As a popular art, however, it is defined and conditioned by a different context of performance. For this reason, its praxis and practice have undergone change.

Karin Barber in “Popular Arts in Africa” (1987:23) describes popular arts as “the large class of new unofficial art forms which are syncretic, concerned with social change and associated with masses.” Of all popular arts, popular music is the most protean and adaptable. It is also the only one that has made a noticeable impact on popular audience outside Africa. It is not surprising; therefore, that *Yoruba* drum poetry is easily integrated into popular music, as they are twin arts. In the opinion of Ademola Adegbite (1995:2), popular music is the modern commercially successful music available to the public through major commercial record companies.

The study of popular arts was not recognized in many African societies as an academic discipline until recently when cultural critics like Karin Barber began to call attention to the significance of such arts. For decades, ethnomusicologists refused to study popular music because of the assumed contamination of authentic indigenous traditional

sounds with the infusion of western rhythms, melodies and technologies. Nevertheless, the disdain for popular arts, and popular music, in particular, by scholars has diminished greatly as they have begun to take cognizance of them. In spite of the increase in the study of *Yoruba* popular music however, seldom attention, if at all, is given to drum poetry. We believe that without an investigation of the stylistic utility and intra- textual functions of drum poetry in the popular music in which it occurs, the study remains incomplete.

An outstanding feature of Nigerian popular music is the use of both western, European, musical instruments and indigenous traditional musical instruments as accompaniments to song texts sung in indigenous languages which are sometimes spiced with “localized” varieties of the English language. In their music, Yoruba popular musicians fully explore the literary resources of the talking drum. Apart from its musical functions, the talking drum is used to produce poetry that is harmonized with the musical performance, thereby enhancing its aesthetic value.

A recent development in popular music is the ‘Mr. Machine’ syndrome. According to Yomi Daramola, (2001:1) “Mr. Machine’ is a medium in which series of musical sounds can be manipulated and generated to produce a required instrumental accompaniment to songs for the purpose of producing music. Among instruments in the Mr. Machine phenomenon is the electronic organ/piano, the drum machines, electronic drums, and digital synthesizers, among others. A single person is required to manipulate the self-sounding musical instruments, which appears as if a musical band of many artistes is performing.

Despite the irresistible magnetism of the drum machine which has captured drum rhythms of different descriptions, it has been practically impossible to codify talking drum poetry into “Mr. Machine” *Yoruba* drum poetry, till date, continues to be a spontaneous

artistic performance. Even in the face of rapid technological advancement, the possibility of codifying drum poetry like the existing various drum rhythms into a machine in the light of its flexibility is very remote. Since drum poetry texts are created to suit the intentions of the artistes, the possible range of texts is as infinite as the possible utterances in a given language. The spontaneity and, or freshness of drum poetry performance thus ensures its apparent vitality and continuity as a performing art.

Yoruba contemporary popular music can be categorized into various types with their associated sub-varieties. These include highlife, *juju*, *owambe-juju* (a variant of *juju* music), *apala*, *fuji*, and *sakara*, among others. Since it is not all popular musicians who synthesize drum poetry into their musical performance, we shall concentrate only on those who have ventured into the practice.

High-life musicians like Victor Olaiya, Roy Chicago, Adeolu Adesanya, Bobby Benson and Dele Ojo have experimented with drum poetry in their music.

I.K.Dairo who brought *juju* to the attention of the international audience has also spiced his musical performance with drum poetry.

Practitioners of *Owambe* *juju* such as Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey, Dele Abiodun and Shina Peters are well known for the drum poetry excursions in their musical performances.

Similarly, in *Sakara* music by Yusuf Olatunji, *Apala* music by Haruna Ishola, S. Aka and Kasunmu Adio as well as *fuji* music by Ayinde Barrister, Ayinla Kollington and Wasiu Ayinde among others, drum poetry is an intergral part of the musical performance.

Lagbaja's brand of Afro high-life is very notable for the profuse use of the talking drum poetry. It is also unique in that as a quasi or pseudo masquerade, he performs dances to the drum poetry in a strictly indigenous mode. Lagbaja's purpose is to 'sell' African rhythms abroad, in other words, his intention is to internationalize African culture and music, though

he does this within the milieu of popular music. No wonder, in “*Koko Below*” a popular tract, we find a non African dancing to the *bata* drum. In our analysis we shall further explore Lagbaja’s innovative use of drum poetry in his music.

The structure, function, style and performance of drum poetry in contemporary popular music differ from the indigenous setting. Unlike the indigenous drum poetry performance where the talking drummer is the main artiste, in popular music, the talking drummer is only a lieutenant. The implication of the subordinate role of the talking drummer in contemporary popular music is that, in most cases, drum poetry performance is shorn of some embellishments, which lends fullness to the indigenous art. It is often reduced to a minimal performance of short texts sandwiched between segments of the musical performance. In contemporary popular music, drum poetry functions as a stylistic device or an interesting interlude in the musical performance.

A common practice in Sunny Ade’s music is the use of drum poetry to introduce the songs. For example in” *Eniti Oluwa da lejo*” in “*The Merciful God*” the music is introduced with the following drum text:

<p><i>Baba ni baba n je</i> <i>O ba takiiti</i></p> <p><i>Ko f’ori sole</i> <i>Baba ni baba n je</i></p>	<p>A father remains a father` if you like you may (in protest) summersault and hit your head on a concrete A father remains a father</p>
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A quick reflection on the song text, which follows, reveals a thematic relationship between the drum and the song text. An excerpt from the song says:

<p><i>Eni t’Oluwa da lejo</i> <i>To l’ohun o gba</i> <i>To n f’apa Ja’nu</i></p> <p><i>Ka wo bi to ma Gbejo lo</i></p>	<p>He whom God judges Yet challenges the verdict and chooses to raise a hell in protest Let’s watch and see where else he’ll lodge his complaints</p>
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* * * * *

Won ba gbo bi aja
Ki won kan bi agbo
Oba ti s'eyi na
Ohun t'Oluwa tise
Eda kan lo le yi pada.....

Though they bark like dog
 And lock horns like rams
 The king has taken his decision
 What the Lord has done
 No creature can change

It is apparent that the thematic concern of both the drum poetry and the song text is the inalterability of a (divine) superior's action despite the obvious and expressed displeasure of some disgruntled individuals. In addition to advancing the thematic interest of the music, drum poetry contributes additional aesthetic value to the musical performance because of its acoustic appeal, which lies in the quality of the drum sounds. In the examples below there is the use of percussion interlude in which all other instruments are suspended as the talking drum performs poetry text. In Ayinla Kollington's track titled "Tadi reke," the drum poetry below is used as a percussion interlude in the musical performance.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. <i>A wi wi wi: won la'won o gbo</i></p> <p><i>A fo fo fo: won la'won o gba</i></p> <p><i>A gbe'lu sile; a tun f'enu wi</i></p> <p><i>Ohun ti won se lo'n fu won l'ara</i></p> | <p>We talk and talk and talk
they claim not to hear</p> <p>We speak and speak and speak
they reject our plea</p> <p>We drop the drum and
speak with the mouth</p> <p>It is what they've done
that makes them feel uneasy</p> |
| <p>5. <i>Iwa ti won hu; lo'n ba won leru</i></p> <p><i>Amuni si wi amuni si so</i></p> <p><i>Amuni t'o okele bo,mu ni baba won</i></p> | <p>It is their actions that
makes them afraid</p> <p>Those who make one err in
speech; those who make one err in
words</p> <p>Those who cause one to put a
ball of food in the wrong track that is
what their fathers are.</p> |

The appeal of this performance lies especially in the utterance balancing of the poetry lines. Similarly, prosody is employed for a rhythmic effect and the caesural pauses within each line also serve to enrich the entire poetic performance. In lines one and 2 there is utterance

balancing. Caesural pauses also occur in each of the lines. The regular placing of the caesura in the drum text is reminiscent of the metrical requirement in Greek, Latin, old English and Middle English verse, which were oral in nature. This reveals that Greek or Latin, Anglo-Saxon or African; certain features characterize oral poetry regardless of its racial origin.

The message in the first two lines is about some stubborn and incorrigible individuals who refuse to heed appeals or warnings. In order to drive the message home, in line 3, the coded drum message is dropped while explanations are made verbally. Unfortunately, to no avail. Apparently, it is the subject action (whatever it may have been), which make them impregnable to the pleadings and warnings. As a result of their unyielding stance, the incorrigible sets of people are regarded as stumbling blocks. Stubbornness is said to be their trademark; as such, “those who cause one to put a ball of food in the wrong track; that is what their fathers are.”

In another song titled “Abdul Saniyu Sagaya” Ayinla Kollington incorporated the following drum text:

<i>Tiwa yato si ti won: Tiwa yato si ti won</i>	ours differ form theirs: ours differ form theirs
Gbingbin l’a gb’ ogede: <i>lilo la lo’reke</i>	<i>we plant plantain, sugarcane is cultivated</i>
<i>Ti wa yato si ti won</i>	ours differ form theirs

The song into which the above text is built is a praise song, which accentuates the importance of Abdul Saniyu Sagaya. In the characteristic style of short drum texts, the first line is uttered twice and forms the last line. The first utterance serves as an introduction, drawing attention to the second utterance. Here, by stating that “ours differs from theirs” the artist draws attention to the botanical factors that differentiate the cultivation of

sugarcane and plantain in order to underscore the differences between the talents, abilities and perhaps, the destinies of Abdul Saniyu Sangaya and his detractors.

Sugarcane is cultivated through direct planting of a matured stem. When harvested, it is cut down and that marks the end of its life cycle. Another sugarcane can only be cultivated if a matured stem is planted. In contrast, plantain is cultivated through vegetative reproduction. A plantain tree sprouts young suckers which grow into other plantain trees. This fact explains why plantain grows in clusters when not separated. It is extremely difficult to destroy a plantain tree once it matures because its suckers will grow into other trees. In *Yoruba* culture, plantain is regarded as “*onile*” that is a land owner because of its capacity for self reproduction. This is what gave rise to another proverb:

<i>Bina ba ku, a f'eru boju</i>	if fire dies out, it is replaced with its ashes
<i>B'ogede ba ku, a fo mo e ropo</i>	if plantain tree dies, it replaces itself with its children (suckers)

The contrast drawn between plantain and sugarcane in the drum text is most telling. Abdul Saniyu Sagaya is symbolized by the plantain. He is a “landowner” who cannot be easily destroyed, while his detractors are represented as ‘sugarcane’ which has no natural capacity for self reproduction. They are therefore, aliens.

Another style of drum poetry in contemporary popular music is the simultaneous performance of drum poetry and song texts with other musical accompaniments. Here, we have two levels of dialogue where the song text forms level A, while the drum text becomes level B. The drum performs a different, though thematically related text simultaneously with the music. For instance, in the song titled “*Omi ya'le*” Ayinla Kollington’s talking drummer interweaves the music throughout the performance with the constant repetition of the drum rhythm:

Iyemoja'gbo

Iyemoja hear

Iyemoja
Jowo ma se ba wa ja

Iyemoja
we intreat, do not war with us

Iyemoja gbo

Iyemoja hear

The drum synchronizes perfectly with the music as both are performed simultaneously. The thematic relationship of the song and drum texts is quite obvious. While the song text is concerned with the flooding of Ogunpa river and its devastating effects, the drum poetry invokes and intreats the river goddess –“Iyemoja” whose wrath, is believed, had caused the flood because the people refused to offer sacrifices to the goddess.

In a song titled ‘*Pagidari Igi da!*’ by Sunny Ade, the drummer punctuates the music with the drum text “*E ro’wo fi se ‘le aye*” meaning “You’ll have money to enjoy life.” The subject matter of the poem is the ridiculous condition of men who condone their wives adulterous practices because of poverty. Such men even follow their wives to their lovers’ houses. As level A of the dialogue (i.e. the song text) progresses, level B (drum poetry) offers prayers that the audience will have enough money to live comfortably. By implication, the poverty, which leads to such abominations, will not be the audience’s lot.

“What God has joined together” a song about marriage by Ebenezer Obey also illustrates aptly the use of drum poetry as a second level of dialogue in contemporary popular music. The talking drummer integrates the following drum texts without any interruption in the music:

Omo ni yo fi bi ,
Omo ni yo fi bi
Igbeyawo to l’arinrin
Omo ni yo fi bi

she will produce children
she will produce children
such an interesting marriage ceremony
children will be produced

* * *

omo tuntun, omo tuntun
enikan kii r’omo tuntun,
ko ma yo

* * *

a new born babe, a new born babe,
no one see a new babe and refuses
to rejoice

<p><i>omo tuntun</i></p> <p>* * * * *</p> <p><i>Ta lo le paada?</i></p> <p><i>Ta lo le paada?</i></p> <p><i>Ire gbogbo t’Olorun ti se</i></p> <p><i>Ta lo le pada?</i></p> <p>* * *</p> <p><i>T’oko t’aya e maa ja</i></p> <p><i>Omo ni’gbehin adun iyawo</i></p> <p><i>Were l’Olorun o se</i></p> <p>* * *</p> <p><i>Olorun ma je n p’ofo</i></p> <p><i>Omo l’ere aye</i></p>	<p>a new born babe</p> <p>* * * * *</p> <p>Who can change it?</p> <p>Who can change it?</p> <p>all the good things that God has done</p> <p>Who can change it?</p> <p>* * *</p> <p>husband and wife do not quarrel</p> <p>children are the ultimate joy of marriage</p> <p>God will do it effortlessly.</p> <p>* * *</p> <p>God do not make me loose`</p> <p>children are the reward of life.</p>
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Drum poetry performed simultaneously with the song as level B of dialogue is usually very short consisting of about two to four lines. These are repeated several times in symphony with the entire musical performance.

Moreover, Level B of dialogue (drum text) is intended to further the thematic purpose of the song text (level A). In the above example, several drum texts are interwoven into the music. Each of the drum text is related to the overall theme of successful marriage as the drummer points out that children are the natural fruit of marriage. In the second text, the drummer adds that no person in a normal situation will not rejoice at the birth of a child. In addition, the drummer affirms the doubtless success of the marriage, since the marriage is of God, no one can alter it or cause divorce.

Furthermore, the drummer offers advice to the couple to refrain from quarrelling as God will give them children, who are regarded, in indigenous African culture, as the ultimate joy of marriage.

The last drum text in the performance expantiates on the centrality of children in a marriage: A childless individual in the *Yoruba* worldview, no matter his attainments, is regarded as a failure, if he has no children to bury and succeed him after death. This

explains the popular prayer in the drum text. It is the *Yoruba's* high estimation of the value of children in a marriage that forms a part of the reason why polygamy is encouraged as the society often assumes that the woman is at fault where there is bareness.

Furthermore, many popular musicians derive their songs from the drum poetry texts which are used to introduce the music. The drum text is thereafter adapted into a song through various compositional techniques from Sonny Ade's '*Peregede*'. The following drum text is adapted into a song:

<i>Odoodun la n r'orogbo</i>	we see the bitter kola annually
<i>Odoodun l'a n r'ahusa</i>	we see the wall nut annually
<i>Ododun l'an r'omo obi l'ori ate</i>	we see new kolanuts annually on the traders items
<i>Odun o le jo</i>	a year cannot be fully complete
<i>Ko 'mo obi ma gori igba</i>	without new kolanuts on the trader's items

The various types of nuts mentioned: the kolanut, the bitter kola (or white kola) and the walnuts are annual crops. In the past, when calendars were unavailable, Africans ascertain time mainly in seasons. The appearance, of these annual crops indicated a change in season as such, a season is not complete if such crops have not been harvested and sold. In addition, the three nuts mentioned especially the kolanut tree, do not require the farmer to trim and re-cultivate it before it produces fruits annually. After a harvest, the tree flowers during the dry season and begin to produce fruits again during its season with little, if any, incentive. The self-reliant nature of the nuts ensures their unobstructed availability seasonally.

Furthermore these nuts have significance as sacrificial items of some *Yoruba* deities. Without kolanuts and the bitter kola, the annual festivals cannot hold, hence, the year remains incomplete without the appearance of these items.

From the above analysis, we may infer that the intimate mating between drum poetry and music has contributed significantly to the compelling magnetism of Yoruba popular music for many of the music lovers.

As noted earlier, one of the most recent popular musicians to foreground talking drum poetry in his performance is Lagbaja. Lagbaja, which can be translated as 'Anybody' or 'Somebody', is a pseudo name, which the artist adopts to conceal his actual identity from the public. Lagbaja equally disguises his physical appearance through his quasi masquerade mode of dressing. His queer dress mode includes wearing masks which leaves only his eyes bare such that people cannot recognize him. Lagbaja's aim is that even within the context of contemporary popular music, African indigenous cultures and arts can be popularized and internationalized. This accounts for his peculiar mode of dressing which symbolizes the fusion of the indigenous and the contemporary. In addition, Lagbaja's profuse use of the talking drums (especially the bata drums), serves to promote in no small measure, the African indigenous aspects of his performance.

Frequently, Lagbaja deliberately and purposefully calls attention to the use of talking drum in his performance by asking "*Ki lo wi oni bata yi?*" that is, "What did you say on the drums, *bata* drummer?" The drum text is then vocalized. At other times he showers praises on the bata drummers after a brief performance of drum poetry by saying "*O kare onibata yi,*" that is, "Well done, *bata* drummer."

In a popular tract, '*Surulere*' Lagbaja's bata drummer states through the beats of the drum:

O'muti gbagbe ise
O d'akeregbe

The drunkard forgets his sorrows
He covers his head with the palmwine
gourd

O d'akeregbe

He covers his head with the the
palmwine gourd

O d'akeregbe bo'ri

He covers his head with the palmwine
Gourd

The drum text in this performance is quite appropriate within the context of the musical performance and it is equally picturesque. Lagbaja further adds a dramatic dimension to the performance by showing a drunken man who acts so clumsily when been aroused from sleep on a main road. The message of the performance is further reinforced through the song text:

Surulere oo Patience pays
E ma je ka gba gbe'ra o nevertheless, do not let us forget to be alert

The musical performance is meant to sensitize the Nigerian populace to the intricacies of past governments, so that they can intelligently appraise the present democratic government. The drum text therefore aids the thematic and dramatic intents of the musical performance.

Lagbaja continues his innovative use of bata talking drum in "*Konko Below.*" Here, the talking drum at the beginning, of the performance is used to produce sounds imitating 'Thunder.' The talking drum alternates with the voice in a dramatic performance:

Drum: *Parida Parida*
Voice: *Thunder aaa*
Drum: *Pado, Pado, Pado*
Voice: *Thunder aaaa*
 Pa de mi n''isale
 Le le le le
 Pade mi n'isale
Drum: *Parida*
Voice: *O ni bata yi o kare*

Although no intelligible verbal meaning can be attributed to the drum sounds in this performance, the association of *bata* drum with "thunder" is reminiscent of the indigenous association between *bata* and *Sango*, the god of thunder in the Yoruba belief system. In

many other musical performances such as “*A o m’erin j’oba*” (a folk song), “*Simple Yes or No*” and “*No Do Gragra*,” Lagbaja employs skillful use of the talking drum poetry. In all, talking drum poetry, especially on the bata drum, endows Lagbaja’s contemporary popular musical performances with a special quality which is strengthened by his pseudo-masquerade dress mode: These cultural idioms validate the African indigenous cultural intent of his performances.

Apart from the use of drum poetry in popular music, there are some types of indigenous music in which the talking drum is the principal instrument. Such music adapts their song texts from drum poetry. In fact, most of the music is made up of drum poetry, which is first performed on the drum after which a chorus repeats the text vocally. Such indigenous music types include “*Dundun* and *Sekere Music* by Taatalo and Similarly, Ayanyemi (aka *Atoko wa gbowo ni ‘le*) has produced several volumes of drum poetry performances, on cassettes dealing with various subject matters like praise poetry and funeral texts.

Yoruba drum poetry as an art, then, remains relevant in the contemporary period, and its further study in the mass media, theatre, music and tourism industry could contribute to greater national development and pride in Nigeria.

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Motherlan Music.
- _____ ' . (2000) 'Shake body" *Lagbaja We and Me* - Lagos. Motherlan
Music.
- _____ . (2000) ' 'A o merin j'oba" *Lagbaja We and Me* - Lagos.
Motherlan Music.

_____ . (2000) ‘ ‘Simple yes or No” *Lagbaja We and Me* - Lagos. Motherlan Music.

_____ . (2000) ‘ ‘No do gragra” *Lagbaja We and Me* - Lagos. Motherlan Music.

Obey, Ebenezer . n.d “O Mase Oju ti Elegan” *Precious Gift* (Ebun Pataki)

_____ n.d “Odun de, Simi le Oluwa” *Precious Gift* (Ebun Pataki)

_____ n.d “What God has joined together” *Precious Gift* (Ebun Pataki)

Olatunji, Yusuf . (1995) “Badero Amole Ajisegiri” Yusuf Olatunji and His Group Vol. 2. Lagos: Premier Records Ltd.

Poems

William Boggs, Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania

Shingle Song

Fat Sammy, the foreman, wants me
to jack up production, turns up
the speed on the line machine.

In my head I'm singing
*In this dirty old part of the city
Where the sun refuses to shine,*
the mill's theme song.

The whole line sweats and groans,
moans and farts.
A little faster then,
says Fat Sammy, you can do it.

And my girl, when I daydream of her,
Not that long ago so young and pretty,
raised up on Erie's lower west side,
and

*We gotta get out of this place
If it's the last thing we ever do*

Someplace out in the warehouse,
Swede rams his forklift
into a wall while
we spit out uniformly defective
product until something breaks down,
and Fat Sammy goes nuts
thinking about his lost bonus.

Repentance

Once, in the locomotive
factory's brown smoke,
I backed down a man who tried
stealing from my toolbox,
bent him backwards over
a waist-high beam.

At the end of my reach,

my pneumatic grinder almost
touched his face,
a tool that chewed hardened steel
that close to his face.

The stain of his pissing himself
dried. No one bothered me,
Strength and balls
were the law
of the steel men,
and now I walk
with my cane,
back tortured
with stenosis
bad disks
and surgeries
that can't take
away the years,
that can't erase
the hardness
of one life or
the scars of the heart
that bleed and bleed.
Regret and repentance,
begging forgiveness
from empty walls.

When My Wife Cut Her Hair

A long time coming,
another trim,
the long blonde
strands of a bride
darkening,
maybe a little gray.
Her dresses
less styled,
more casual,
shoes flatter,
Birkenstocks
finally,
and now
the butch
cut
that moved out,
took women

as lovers,
became what she
always was,
the one
we didn't know.

D.H. Lawrence and Animal Ontology: A Heideggerean Reading of “The Fox” and *St. Mawr*

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D. H. Lawrence’s treatment of the literary animal places his texts among those demonstrating a significant shift in animal philosophy in literature, one which moves from anthropocentric to existential. Lawrence’s perception of animals coincides with his general perception of reality: a world in which subject and object are relationally bound. Similarly, Martin Heidegger avoids the terms “consciousness” and “subject” by arguing that *Dasein* is primarily an ontological being-in-the-world. Although Lawrence did not read Heidegger’s writings directly, he certainly read Nietzsche who was profoundly influenced by Heidegger’s ways of being. As we can see in Michael Bell’s study, *D.H. Lawrence: Language and Being*, applying Heidegger’s ontology to Lawrence’s literature generates a constructive reading; yet, in Bell’s comparative analysis, along with literary criticism to date, the animal is overlooked in terms of holding a phenomenological position.

A Brief Literary and Philosophical Context

To situate Lawrence and Heidegger in the historical context of the modern literary animal, I will briefly turn to major literary authors during the nineteenth-century who are known for their philosophical animal subject. Most notably, Melville’s *Moby-Dick* portrays an actual whale existing as a subject in the spatial and temporal world. Melville takes the important step of accepting animal existence as neither mythical nor scientific: a change more than likely due to the influence of Darwin (a theory also supporting relational being rather than the long-held view of the hierarchical human/animal binary). However, due to the nature of hunting, in this case, whaling, and Melville’s historical time period, the

nineteenth-century conflict of identity and recognition prevails: human characters at once identify with animals and also view them as a radical form of “other.” In the end, with all of Melville’s signs of a modern, more existential animal, Melville’s symbolic inclinations, as Lawrence Buell observes, overwhelm the text.¹ As is the case for many American and British romantic writers, the lives of animals is considered while observing them in person; yet, most nature writers recognize a form of the sublime “other” which has a mystical, rather than existential, link. Since the nineteenth century, however, our notions of “subjecthood” have undergone great redefinition in terms of race, class, and gender. With this progress, analyses of the modern literary animal have somehow failed to recognize a phenomenological account of the postcolonial and/or postmodern animal.

Readings conducted by Derrida and Wolfe, for example, lead us to the conclusion that animals can speak, but they cannot respond.² Because these readings end up further alienating humans from animals, this essay will not address the talking literary animal because once an animal speaks human language, as in much of children’s literature and

¹ See Lawrence Buell’s *The Environmental Imagination*.

His sensitivity to physical environments was acute, even when one might least expect it... *Moby-Dick* comes closer than any other novel of its day to making a nonhuman creature a plausible major character and to developing the theme of human ferocity against animal nature. Yet, Melville’s interest in whales was subordinate to his interest in whaling, and his interest in the material reality of both was constrained by his preoccupation with their social and cosmic symbolism. (4)

² I am referring to Derrida’s 2002 published a series of talks entitled, “The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)” in which the philosopher contemplates his cat’s gaze toward his nude body, linking his reaction of shame to Adam’s biblical naming of animals.

film, the talking animal immediately assumes a human identity. One might recall Lewis Carroll's famous talking animals, or, Gregory Samsa's metamorphosis into an insect. These texts ask the reader to place her/himself in the position of the animal that overwhelmingly assumes the nature of a human being. Rather, I will explore Lawrence's treatment of the literary animal which in terms of that which we share with the animal, a being-in-the-world.

These phenomenological accounts of the lived experience, I will argue, are those to which we must return in order to decipher the literary non-human animal. Recent publications such as the anthology *Animal Others: On Ethics, Ontology, and Animal Life* (1999) explore major phenomenologists with contemporary critical developments in mind. For the first time, texts like *Animal Others* offer "a volume where the tools of philosophy fashioned on the continent are used to explore the contours of our knowledge of, and encounters with, other than human animals" (Preface xiii). When the philosophical and critical communities redefine the subject, nineteenth and early twentieth century literary texts such as Lawrence, begin to show signs of a shift in the perception of animals and their possible "subjecthood," which continues to develop in modern and contemporary literature. As a modern author, we see Lawrence pushing the subject of the animal in that he considers animal being as a world in which animal perception exists literally: compared to Melville who examined literal animal life without addressing how the animal perceives his/her world.¹ In addition, Lawrence's human characters analytically and physically explore this "other" world of animal perception as one which is inseparable from the world in which humans exist. In this way, Lawrence's texts attempt a particularly non-linguistic phenomenological understanding of reality.

¹ By literal, I mean the animal is considered as a subject with a life of his/her own, and, subsequently, the animal does not speak a human language.

The majority of critical readings on Lawrence's animals are symbolically interpreted in terms of gender and class distinctions, which commonly include the complexities between "primitive" and modern lives. In these studies, animals appearing in Lawrence's texts exist solely for the purpose of representing nature or wildness. On one hand, symbolic readings are certainly valid, for one cannot deny Lawrence's use of instinctual wildness as that which is missing from modern culture. However, the animal in Lawrence requires an existential examination as well. Michael Bell¹ notes,

Lawrence always understood human feeling through the given individual's whole mode of existence in the world. His truly remarkable, and I believe unique, ability was to represent dramatically quite different states of being. His capacity to respond to the otherness of other forms of life, and to feel the moment by moment strangeness of his own existence, was the premise of his fictional worlds. (6)

Bell notes Lawrence's philosophical attitude: "There was, in other words, no sharp division between an inner world of feeling and an external world of nature" (Bell 3). Bell extends his argument to parallel Lawrence's worlds to Martin Heidegger's existential notions of "being-the-world."² Bell argues, "Heidegger's term 'world' is the philosophical equivalent of the

¹ The most comprehensive study on Lawrence and ontology is Michael Bell's *D.H. Lawrence: Language and Being* in which Bell argues that the author's language concerning narrative and theme connect in a way that shows his philosophical development from symbolic to ontological.

² Defining Heidegger's terms remains difficult, as the philosopher is known for his abstract language. For the most straight-forward interpretation of Heidegger's conception of "being-in-the-

constantly modulating and relational representation of 'external' existence in Lawrence's fiction. In the Heideggerean, as in the Lawrencean conception, there is no external world separable from human being in the world" (10).

While several of Lawrence's texts depict animal worlds, the short stories, "The Fox" and the novella, *St. Mawr* contain existential animals in that their ontological lives play an essential part in the story, just as any literary human character might.

"The Fox"

The scene that triggers and sustains the force in the story "The Fox" begins with March's intimate encounter with the animal. Because the fox previously killed chickens, March first meets him while standing guard one evening at the farm. Lawrence's description of March's state of being during these moments requires careful examination because, for Lawrence, the world in which each character exists at a particular moment in time determines the meaning of a scene. The following lines describe March's state before her first encounter with the fox:

. . . half watching, half musing Her eyes were keen and
observant, but her inner mind took no notice of what she saw. She

world," see Hubert Dreyfus's *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*. For the purposes of this study, in Heidegger's *Dasein*, translated as "being there," we see neither a subject nor an object of being but rather a being with an "openness" to the being of other beings. Heidegger's careful description of *Dasein* shows his rejection of the subject-object dualism. Thus Heidegger looks to being-in-the-world (an ontological project-"to be") rather than the Husserlian consciousness-of-the-world (an epistemological project-"to know").

was always lapsing into this odd, rapt state, her mouth rather screwed up. It was a question whether she was there, actually conscious present, or not. (88)

This passage notes not only March's conscious state but also her physical state: both show signs of distance and contemplation. In *Women in Love*, Ursula is portrayed similarly before encountering horses. Bell notes, "It is in this condition of conscious confusion, and with only partial access to her own feelings, that she encounters the horses" (86). Lawrence mirrors March's calm, yet alert state with an autumnal environment. The author notes subtle lighting against leaves, wood, grass, and additional surrounding wildlife in motion. March continues to exist in this environment as strangely both present and absent. She "looked at it all, saw it all, and did not see it" (88). Nearby, Banford calls to ducks in a pond and again, March "... heard Banford speaking to the fowls in the distance—and she did not hear. What was she thinking about? Heaven knows. Her consciousness was, as it were, held back." (88). March "sees," "hears," and "thinks"; yet, she is "held back" at the same time. March's world is described as one in which she is present with herself to a certain degree; yet, she is also present with the surrounding environment. Ralph Acampora, author of "Bodily Being and Animal World," encourages viewing a Heideggerean description of environment as "climate."¹ Thinking in terms of an ontological climate "incorporates awareness of weather and landscape," and it occurs in humans "internally" (Acampora 121). This view of "being-in-the-world" includes a consciousness of environment as historical in which the human mind realizes his/her place in evolution, a place comprising all other living organisms. An historical perception of this kind also works to de-center the human self, one of Lawrence's goals in contemplating identity and the "other." Existential

¹ Acampora is referring to an article written by Watsuji Tetsuro.

historicity returns one to the body, since “it is through the live body that we are most especially aware of climaticity” (Acampora 121). Thus, the environment does not necessarily belong to March, for in order for her to “be-with” the surrounding worlds, she must also to some degree, be absent. That is, for both environment and animals we must not forget the Hegelian terms of identity and recognition: exposure to difference, or something outside of the self, is what actually defines our identity. Culturally, we define the animal as that which is *not* human. Our mistake, as Lawrence’s scene between March and the fox reveals, is the problematic of processing difference as hierarchical.

Critics have come to identify such detailed states of being in Lawrence’s texts as “worlds.” Bell likens them to Heidegger’s existential “worlds”: “Lawrence and Heidegger share a meditative dimension in seeking to experience afresh, or for the first time, that which lies most obviously, as Heidegger put it, ‘to hand’. Much rests on this new discovery of the apparently obvious.” (8) For Heidegger, ‘at hand’ refers to that which is presently accessible to the engaged human being, or the human being that has access to other beings and the environment. One might further connect Lawrence’s ontological worlds to spatiality in Heidegger’s “being-in-the-world.” Heidegger differentiates between two types of spatial forms of being. One form of being, “being in” (without hyphenation) is comparable to thinking of an object directionally, for example, an object contained inside of, or next to, a box. The second kind of spatial being, “being-in” (hyphenated) refers not to an object, but to a relational being. When beings are relationally bound, they exist actively as part of each other’s world thus they are related in ways more spatially complex and fluid than fixed locations. The point here is to show that March’s abovementioned state is comparable to a spatial “being-in-the-world,” which invites an analysis of animal being as well as human being. By focusing on being and avoiding the language of consciousness,

Heidegger attempts to return to that which we are before conscious thought. In other words, for Heidegger, “Being” is that which we always already are.

Recent studies explore Heidegger’s writings in order to determine where animals might fit into his thinking of “being-in-the-world” and *Dasein*.¹ The problem is determining where the animal belongs on an ontological scale of being. In their articles on Heidegger and the animal, Andrea Kenkmann and William McNeill argue for an expansion of Heidegger’s concepts in order to include animal world(s). While Heidegger does not directly refer to animals in *Being and Time*, he discusses the difference between inanimate objects, animals and human beings in his lecture course, *Fundamental Ideas of the Metaphysic*, “Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik.” In his talk, Heidegger determines three kinds of worlds for objects, animals, and humans. “The stone is *worldless (weltlos)*; the animal is *poor in world (weltarm)*; humans are *world-forming (weltbildend)*: three ‘theses’ which Heidegger proposes in order to frame his inquiry into world” (McNeill 214). Kenkmann and McNeill interpret the animal’s “poor world” as somewhere between that of the human and stone world(s). That is, if animals have a poor world, they still *have* a world. If we follow Heidegger’s definition of “world,” animals hold some form of “accessibility” and “openness” for encountering other beings. McNeill concludes, “When we say that an animal *does not have* world, we mean that it does not have access to other beings *in the way that humans do*” (214). In the end, both McNeill and Kenkmann argue against a humanist interpretation

¹ For example, Andrea Kenkmann applies Heidegger’s talks on animals from one of his lectures, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik* to *Being and Time*. She does so because Heidegger does not directly apply his ideas in *Being and Time* to his talks on animal existence. One can assume that this application was not conducted by Heidegger himself or his contemporaries due to past cultural and scientific perception of animal being.

of Heidegger's being-in-the-world concerning animals. Thus, to apply Heidegger's conception of animal world to Lawrence's ontological worlds seems appropriate.

The following passage reveals March's previously described conscious and physical state, preparing for what one might call an "accessability" into the fox's non-human world.

She lowered her eyes, and suddenly saw the fox. He was looking up at her. Her chin was pressed down, and his eyes were looking up. They met her eyes. And he knew her. She was spellbound—she knew he knew her. So he looked into her eyes, and her soul failed her. He knew her, he was not daunted.

She struggled, confusedly she came to herself, and saw him making off, with slow leaps over some fallen boughs, slow, impudent jumps. Then he glanced over his shoulder, and ran smoothly away. She saw his brush held smooth like a feather, she saw his white buttocks twinkle. And he was gone, softly, soft as the wind. (88)

Submerged in her previously described meditative state, March "suddenly" realizes that the fox is a part of her present world. During such encounters, Lawrence marks a significant moment in the act of recognition between a human being and a non-human being. Not only is the fox near March in proximity, Lawrence repeats that when the fox's eyes meet hers, the fox "knew her" and "she knew he knew her." Lawrence emphasizes "seeing": March "lowered her eyes," the fox was "looking," "his eyes were looking," March and the fox's eyes "met," "he looked into her eyes," "she saw him making off," "he glanced" back at her, she then again "saw" him float away. The combination of an emphasis on the act of seeing and the previous description of her action and inaction leads to not a directed consciousness, but a phenomenological mind/body perception. "Seeing" here is an activity.

In the same way that touch functions on two levels such as doubly touching and being touched, seeing in this scene is a form of exchange. When Lawrence says the fox “knows” March and March “knows” that the fox “knows” her, I believe that Lawrence is differentiating between a traditional mind-body dualist knowing and an ontological knowing. Rather than “consciousness” as consciousness directed toward something, this perceptual event with March and the fox challenges the rational, objective knowledge commonly directed toward animals. Lawrence, unlike Melville, has no interest in biological, objective knowledge of the fox. In fact, Lawrence’s repetition of the fox’s knowledge directed toward March indicates a reversal in epistemological knowing. Conventionally, humans know animals, not vice-versa. This directional knowing which now becomes an engaged perception between two beings reflects a change in human perception of reality. As Steeves argues, “The truth of the matter is that the world does not appear *before* me” (8).

If we take a moment to consider traditional ways in which March “knows” the fox, Lawrence leads the reader back to problematic human-constructed identities. That is, false conceptions of the animal as “other” circle back to misconceptions of “the other” in terms of human gender. Lawrence’s male fox represents the soldier, Henry, who is a “hunter” and wishes to control March. In the same way that the fox hunts the chickens, Henry, as a male figure, preys upon March. Lawrence complicates this gender politics by March encountering the fox while herself in the position of a predator, for she holds a gun. Yet, notably, March does not kill the fox. When the opportunity arises, she is “spellbound,” she “struggles” from “confus[ion].” One might claim that March’s inability to shoot the fox is due to her feminine sympathy. However, March’s state when approaching the fox emphasizes an acute sense of their shared being, which is not sentimental. Because

Lawrence's text simultaneously complicates conceptions of the "other" in terms of both gender politics and the animal "other," we must read Lawrence as a modern author writing during an early twentieth-century cultural perception of the animal. The literary animal in Lawrence is arguably in transition here, situated between romantic notions and the contemporary literary animal seen much later in, for example, J. M. Coetzee.¹

Later in "The Fox," Henry hunts and kills the animal. March, as the protagonist, is the only character to connect with the fox. Banford and Henry lack such insight and are not described as entering such meditative states of being. This will occur again in *St. Mawr*, as only select characters are capable of sharing a world with animals. A common Lawrencean narrative style, the author tends to direct his reader to a single, preferred interpretation.

The final animal scene in the short story shows March in a Heideggerean world not unlike those previously portrayed. She is described as what Heidegger might call both *there* and *not there*, *present* and *absent*. Her actions when touching the dead fox include a sense of contemplation; yet, she lacks rational and social consciousness. Here, March directs her perception toward the fox. There is no engagement as there was when the fox was alive during their visual exchange. Therefore, the dynamic changes from one in which the fox as fearful is released from March's consciousness, an important factor in human perception of the animal "other," especially since Lawrence is also connecting Henry to the fox as a male dominant figure. When Henry kills the fox late one night, he proudly displays the dead animal to March: "He was holding it by the brush. March saw, in the middle of the darkness, just the reddish fleece and the white belly and the white underneath of the pointed chin, and the queer, dangling paws. She did not know what to say" ("The Fox" 123).

¹ Here I am thinking of texts such as "The Lives of Animals" and *Disgrace* in which the existential lives of animals is addressed from a current-day animal activists' perspective.

Of course, Henry expects March's praise, for, as a hero, he has outwitted the troublesome predator. Like a huntsman, Henry announces, "He's a beauty, ... He will make you a lovely fur" ("The Fox" 123). Outwardly disgusted by this comment, March responds that she would never wear a fur. The next morning she visits the animal body as it hangs "suspended upside down" ("The Fox" 124). When approaching the fox, March is described as silent with a "pale" face. Lawrence poetically repeats that she again notices the fox's belly: "White and soft as snow his belly: white and soft as snow" ("The Fox" 124). Next, March slowly and ceremoniously touches the fox. Because the fox is a "wild" animal, March's previous meeting could not reasonably include tactile engagement. Now that he is dead, March can "know" him through touch, a form of contact only attainable without fear.

She passed her hand softly down it. And his wonderful black-glinted brush was full and frictional, wonderful. She passed her hand down this also, and quivered. Time after time she took the full fur of that thick tail between her fingers, and passed her hand slowly downwards. Wonderful, sharp, thick, splendour of a tail. And he was dead! She pursed her lips, and her eyes went black and vacant. Then she took the head in her hand ...March stood there bemused, with the head of the fox in her hand. She was wondering, wondering, wondering, over his long, fine muzzle ...She felt she could not understand it. The beast was a strange beast to her, incomprehensible, out of her range. (124).

In this passage, one's immediate reading might entail associating the fox with Henry, in which case, one arrives at a sexual interpretation. Without fear, March gains sexual control as she strokes her hand along the fox's brush, "quivering." As I have argued thus far, while

such analogies exist in the text, Lawrence is not only using the fox as a tool for an anthropomorphic reading. Instead, Lawrence's psychological exploration of gender can reasonably return to the larger issue of identity. Thus, the reading of Henry as "other" and the fox as "other" both exist, only it would be naïve to assume that Lawrence means to express that March perceives and experiences being the same with Henry as she does the fox. Kenkmann reminds us, "When we deal with animals, we experience our own being differently from when we deal with other human beings or inanimate entities." (480)

Lawrence carefully provides March's conscious and unconscious bodily reactions. Her conscious reactions end in confusion. She is "bemused," "wondering," and tries to "understand" the fox's being; yet, the fox remains "incomprehensible, out of her range." However, touch brings confirmation of his coat as "wonderful," with clearly articulated descriptions: "full," "thick," "sharp," and "black." After touching the fox, suddenly, March leaves her bewildered state and returns to an attitude shared by those in her present company. Startled by her own actions, she says, "My word, what a strong smell he's got! Poo! It'll take some washing off one's hands. I don't know why I was so silly as to handle him.' And she looked at her right hand, that had passed down his belly and along his tail, and had even got a tiny streak of blood from one dark place in his fur" (125). March temporarily steps outside of the social perception of animals. Of course, March's states of being change as being is altered by time. One moment does not match the next; during one's being-in-the-world, one adjusts with one's horizon. A few lines after March's return to a normative perception of the animal, Lawrence informs the reader, "Later in the day she saw the fox's skin nailed flat on a board, as if crucified. It gave her an uneasy feeling" ("The Fox" 125).

St. Mawr

Because *St. Mawr's* main animal character is a domestic horse rather than a "wild" fox, *St. Mawr* allows Lawrence to further explore engagement between human and animal characters. In "The Fox" the most intimate meetings entail reciprocated "seeing," with physical contact occurring only after the fox's death. *St. Mawr*, on the other hand, shows characters performing a reflective analysis of their present cultural philosophy of the animal. Margaret Norris describes the text as one in which, "... Lawrence does battle with the most fundamental premise of the Western humanistic tradition: that human being is superior to animal being because man thinks, speaks, and differentiates between good and evil" (297). Norris's article is unique in that it argues against an allegorical reading in which the horse is conventionally viewed as the "dark," "wild," "true" animal self of a human who wishes to escape "modern culture, technology, and enlightenment" (297). Instead, Norris turns to Lawrence's description of exploring a world "...where each creature attains, to its own fullness of being, its own *living self*" (297). Thus, she tackles one of the most commonly disputed controversies in animal ethics: how humans understand animal being without projecting a human perception onto what it is like to be an animal.¹ She firmly claims: "One can be an animal without *being* an animal, and it is precisely the wedge of difference between these two statements (and the ontological conditions they represent) that is the philosophical object of the novella" (Norris 297-8). In other words, humans possess the ability to imagine animal perception, or, at least, to imagine a perception that is not human-centered.

In *St. Mawr*, a woman protagonist, Lou, discovers that the world in which the horse resides is preferable to any human world known to her. Lou, as an elite American

¹ "What is it Like to be a Bat?" by Thomas Nagel.

intellectual, cynically criticizes the modern, materialistic lifestyle of her friends and family. Lou describes her superficial world as “far more bodiless” than St. Mawr’s (35). At social gatherings she found herself “talking to handsome young bare-faced unrealities, not men at all” (35). Lou restores a “wild,” “primitive,” “flame of life” through the horse and its caretakers, Pheonix, and Lewis. Lawrence connects working class caretakers to the animal; they are beings who share an insight into a vital form of life. Such nature versus culture representations mirror the classic romantic desire to escape an empty, industrial lifestyle and return to a natural, more authentic world. These are common Lawrencean themes; yet, what is striking about Lawrence’s human/animal, culture/nature, domestic/wild binaries is his treatment of fear coupled with the physical phenomenon of touch as it relates to the body.

Although Lou detects authenticity in the horse, Lawrence also emphasizes her intense fear of St. Mawr, which stems from bodily being. Lou recalls:

It was as if she had had a vision, as if the walls of her own world had suddenly melted away, leaving her in a great darkness, in the midst of which the large, brilliant eyes of that horse looked at her with demonish question [...] and his great body glowed red with power. What was it? [...] she had felt the eyes of that horse; great, glowing, fearsome eyes, arched with a question, and containing a white blade of light like a threat. What was his non-human question, and his uncanny threat? She didn’t know [...] It had looked at her as she had never been looked at before: terrible, gleaming, questioning eyes arching out of darkness, and backed by all the fire of that great ruddy body [...] That black fiery flow in the eyes of the horse was not

'attitude'. It was something much more terrifying, and real, the only thing that was real. Gushing from the darkness in menace and question, and blazing out in the splendid body of the horse. (23)

The horse's eyes cause a state not unlike that found during March's exchange with the fox; both characters are "spellbound" in a state of confusion. For March, this "non-human question" is also authentic. However, part of Lou's captivation with St. Mawr involves fear and the horse's "great" and "splendid" body. Lawrence clarifies that this fearful form of being is not to be confused with "attitude," which would limit the event as purely psychological. Admittedly, the horse's bodily energy represents traditional notions of power, strength, nobility, mystery and energy. But, just as we saw in the "The Fox," it would be unreasonable to dismiss Lawrence's clear philosophical interest in the topic of how human and non-human ontology complicates such common cultural representations.

Recent studies on human and non-human ontology argue that "Fear lives in the body" (Steeves 136). Fear, in both humans and non-humans, is dependent upon a "contextual horizon, and thus cannot be explained fully by biophysical states" (Steeves 136). According to Steeves, fear must be defined as a spatial being-in-the-world. He says,

. . . to say that fear resides in the body is not to say everything that can be said about fear. Fear is a mode of state-of-mind. The dog experienced through fear is not frightening; our relationship, our proximity, our way of being-with the dog is *as frightened*. Fear is spatial. Is it not proof enough we share an intersubjective world with animals that we can fear them? Where the dog sits snarling—Here for him, There for me—can quickly become Here for us both.

(Steeves 137)

A contextual horizon, then, is determined by experience, which is determined by time and space. Just as human worlds vary according to context such as environment, mood, and other human's environments and moods, so too do animal contexts vary accordingly.

In many of the scenes where characters are shown interacting with the horse, Lawrence remains focused on such "contextual horizons" described by Steeves. That is, Lawrence shows not only the characters' bodily reactions to the horse, but how the horse bodily reacts to each individual character. For instance, Lewis, the caretaker, is said to deeply respect St. Mawr. Lou's mother observes, "He rode his horse and watched the world from the vantage ground of St. Mawr [...] He seems to sink himself in the horse. When I speak to him, I'm not sure whether I'm speaking to a man or to a horse" (30-1). Also, Lewis suggests to Lou that a person must "meet" this "special" horse "half-way" in order to develop a relationship with him. Thus, when Lewis introduces Lou to St. Mawr, the horse reacts according to that which is projected toward him. Lewis approaches St. Mawr: "Loquacious even with the animals, he went softly forward and laid his hand on the horse's shoulder, soft and quiet as a fly settling. Lou saw the brilliant skin of the horse crinkle a little in apprehensive anticipation, like the shadow of the descending hand on a bright red-gold liquid. But then the animal relaxed again" (19). Lawrence provides a reason for the horse's "apprehensive anticipation," even with an empathetic caretaker such as Lewis. The caretaker informs Lou that St. Mawr's apprehension is due to being "a trifle raw somewhere. Touch this spot, and there's no answering for him." (20) Yet, rather than the horse's sensitivity originating in his instinctual wildness (as is the perception dominating the literary animal during the author's time), Lawrence turns to the world of the horse as a living subject. Lou inquires, "Where is he raw?" [...] She thought he might really have some physical sore. 'Why, that's hard to say, my Lady. If he was a human being, you'd say

something had gone wrong in his life" (20). The human and animal bodies react to each other as subjects with independent histories. Lawrence conveys that touch and the bodies do not exist as one might locate a point on a map; instead, the human and animal body work as a complex system, internally and externally. As Steeves confirms, "... Anyone who has lived in the world knows that all tactile experience cannot be reduced to bits of sense data . . ." (Steeves 137). Contextual horizons can include anything in one's spatial world such as one's mood, living others, weather, or physical objects. Lawrence's animals react to horizons just as human characters might. That is, St. Mawr eventually relaxes after Lewis's touch; whereas, when Rico is severely injured by being thrown from St. Mawr, the event is caused by Rico's negative perception and bodily treatment directed toward the horse. Rico "mounted with a swing, blind and rough. St Mawr reared" (43). When characters are killed or injured from riding him, rather than fault St. Mawr, the humans are deemed guilty of insensitive behavior.

Lawrence goes so far as to directly address the difference between animal and human existence in *St Mawr*. Consistent with his rejection of a rational modern intellect, Lawrence favors intuition found in the animal. This opposition between the rational and intuitive connects back to aforementioned issues of epistemological and ontological "knowing." When Lou approaches the topic of a rational human versus an intuitive animal, Lou's mother announces that man is valuable because he thinks. Lou replies:

It seems to me there's something else besides mind and cleverness, or niceness or cleanness. Perhaps it is the animal. Just think of St Mawr! I've thought so much about him. We call him an animal, but we never know what it means. He seems so far greater mystery to me than a clever man. He's a horse. Why can't one say in the same

way, of a man: *He's a man?* There seems no mystery in being a man.

But there's a terrible mystery in *St Mawr*. (55)

The mystery to which Lou here refers is not the animal nature of man but the literal "question of the animal." Although we define an animal by its name, our definition remains mysterious. The animal as mysterious then becomes "terrible" due to fear. Rather than fear animal being, Lou suggest acknowledging an authenticity found in the horse. Lou says, "But think, mother, if we could get our lives straight from the source, as the animals do, and still be ourselves." (57). By favoring those human characters with a capacity to attempt a new perception of reality, one that involves a phenomenological "being-with" animals, Lawrence's texts show human and animal characters bodily and perceptually interacting. Lou's bodily interaction and reflection of *St. Mawr* shows a refusal to accept the animal as inhabiting a non-human and therefore separate world. Lou's experiences with animals are authentic and "real" in that they are based in a shared, human-animal experience before cognition. Many phenomenologists argue that a directed perception causes a false sense of space. "Space tricks us; false philosophy tricks us. My hand reaching for yours seems to move away from me, though it never does: it is me. Your hand, your paw, seems to be There and, hence other. It is not: it, too, is me. We have met the animal's body, and he is us. There are no animal Others" (Steeves 8). This "appropriate" form of being with animals, as Steeves calls it, results in realizing that, "The animal is not other" (Steeves 7). "The Fox" and *St. Mawr* offer a perspective of the modern author that does not return us to human perception but instead exploits cultural perception of the animal as "other," and subsequently, provides careful descriptions of alternate, non-linguistic possibilities of human-animal encounters.

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Perdurability

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Catfish, perch, trout, rock, blue gill, walleye, striper, bass: when they came out of the water, they thrashed like my first cat did when Father ran her over on the tractor. I had to hold on tight or the rod would fly out of my hands, fish heavy and twitching, and Father would say, "Hold still, it won't hurt you." I never wanted to touch the fish hanging on its line. Fins or sad black whiskers might catch my leg, and I remember believing that if they did I would die. Someone took a photograph of me holding a catfish at the Eastern Shore farm, probably Mother who rode along on the Choptank River to take in sun. Father holds a bleached Panama hat, and I stand beside him, five or six, my face a study in lament. It's on the fridge beneath the picture from our Florida trip, the year Sister Paul died: my husband, the kids, and me, together on a small boat. Next to those pictures is one of my youngest son. He's five or six, head like mine, too large for his body, holding a catfish on a line. On his face, a wide smile.

Jay Rocky is a real Remington. Kitty and Corey don't look like me, but J.R. got the big head and long torso. Now he's almost grown, sleeping with his girlfriend. I know, because when he leaves to return to his apartment in College Park, I go in his room and find her clothes. Some habits don't change: I pretend they belong to my daughter. Holidays when Kitty is home, she'll come downstairs holding a barrette, or a brush, or a bra.

"Whose is this?"

For a second I have no idea. Then I remember putting it in her room, over her chair, in her drawer. "Does it belong to one of your friends?" I say, praying she'll agree. My daughter nods and disappears back to her room.

I never dreamed of sleeping with anyone before I married. The only person who ever kissed me was Father. Mother scolded him, "You spoil the child." Long before I met my husband, I went on one date. A large, shy boy invited me to Catholic University's Christmas Ball but didn't ask for a single dance. Afterward, my roommate Brenda kept me company. I cried and cuddled my twin cats. A decade later I still had never been kissed, and I was thirty years old. That's why the night before my wedding I lay in the hotel bed, nervous as death.

Spades, knock, discard, stock, group, sequence, hearts: terms easy to come by, good to push out other thoughts. Sister Paul lay in the twin bed across the room, a huge mound. She breathed so heavy I thought something must be wrong but she was just asleep. My legs clenched tight like wood joints. Sister Paul used to go with Father and Mother and me from Washington, D.C., down to the farm. We played double solitaire and gin rummy. I wanted to be a nun, plump and ordered and clear as cards, but her convent rejected me. Sister Paul and I had logged hours of cards, quiet and communal, all of which had led to now, the dawn before my wedding. I wiped my face on my pillow and pretended that warm down thing was a husband.

At seventy, Sister Paul was the person who'd pointed out the big catch. "He's a teacher," she said, "your future husband." Every spring, Saint Genevieve's in Hyattsville threw Merci Dance for the teachers and volunteers, and that's where Sister Paul and Father Osborn had planned to have us meet. It was always a fine affair except for the May when the church organist had a stroke while dancing. I'd cried about that for days. Mother told me, "Cut the self-pity." This year, a twang of sadness struck when Father Osborn remembered the dead woman in prayer. Sister bumped into someone on purpose, pulling me along like a door prize. "Ed Bailey, meet my sweet young friend," Sister said. We stood

at the punch bowl eating cubes of cheese. I wished I could disappear into Sister's large embrace, but she let go and waddled off toward Father Osborn.

"You're a math teacher?" I asked nervously. "I count Offertory."

He asked, "Do you like Duke Ellington?" My palms were wet. "I don't dance," he said, "but Duke's music sticks in your head—" and then the music crashed in the middle of its tune. People gasped and someone yelled, "Heart attack!" Ed Bailey didn't look at me, he just bolted up to the stage. I stood on a chair and saw him push away the crowd, bend down, and give mouth-to-mouth.

Trumpet, trombones, piano, guitar, clarinet, bass, drums: the ten-piece band reduced by one, we all looked on in shock. My face crumbled like a cake. I couldn't help but start to cry. Father Osborn called off the dance and Sister escorted me to the door. Next day, the math teacher called my apartment. The musician had died.

"At least I got to practice my CPR," Ed said. "You know, there's very little chance of success with resuscitation. That saxophonist, less than five percent." I was silent.

"Anyway, Father Osborn gave me tickets to see Duke Ellington. Do you want to go?"

That was the last Merci Dance. Next May in its place Ed and I got married. Mother had given Father what for, allowing a school teacher named Ed Bailey to wed a Remington. Posing at the altar, she kissed me on the cheek, and it felt like she had a marble in her mouth. It made me cry. Mother whispered, "Quit your faking." There is a photograph of us on the church lawn. Father's cheeks are puffed proud and Mother's are a drawn purse. My husband looks like a fishing pole. I am belly white. I was so exhausted after the wedding, we'd been to Niagara Falls and back before I awoke. Nine months later I had Kitty.

Ambrose, Jade, Rump, Finky, Bart, and Inga: they were my twin cats, three parakeets, and a spider monkey released from the University of Maryland science lab.

Inga's bad temper made her bite and hurl poop. Ed didn't believe in keeping animals in the house. Though I don't remember our honeymoon, during it I did manage to convince him that parakeets didn't shed or smell, and at our new house in the D.C. suburbs, we kept the birds. My old college roommate Brenda gave my other pets a good home. When my daughter was born, I named her in honor of the cats.

Mother sent a maid to help with the baby. Two days after they let me bring Kitty home, the maid slipped on a step and dropped her. My head blew wide open as I chuffed down the twenty-eight stairs. My daughter lay like something dead. I leaned forward, shaking, to touch her mouth. It emitted a cat-pitched howl.

All the way to Sibley Memorial that mewling continued, and I couldn't touch her, so Ed had to both drive and hold the baby. The hospital x-ray showed a crack in her skull. The doctor said, "Don't worry, everything will be okay." I cradled and pet my daughter and wanted to break that maid's neck. I was afraid Kitty would be brain damaged, but she spoke words before she could even sit up. By two, she could read. Ed was proud but I felt sad. What good were babies who grew up so fast? I got pregnant again and along came Corey. Kitty taught him everything she knew.

One day, my old roommate Brenda sat across the table from me. She said I looked tired. "I've been taking classes in massage," Brenda said. Kitty zoomed through the kitchen pulling Corey's hand. "Let me practice on you."

"No, I—"

"It'll take the sad out of your back."

When Brenda's fingers touched my shoulder, it was already too much. She asked, "That okay?" I stared at my hands. I tried to ask if she saw my kids but her hands were all thumbs pushing hard, and I couldn't speak. I felt my face tighten like rubber.

“That okay?” she asked again. Too much touching, I wanted to say. I wanted to twist away but instead held still.

“Kitty,” I finally shrieked. “Come here.”

“She’s just in the dining room,” Brenda said. “You need to relax.”

I mopped at my eyes. The next time Brenda offered a massage, I had an excuse. “Guess what, I’m pregnant,” I told her. “Nothing strenuous, the doctor said, no massage.” Nine months later, Jay Rocky was born.

Ed and I soon moved away from the suburbs to the Eastern Shore. Ed had always wanted to raise kids in the country. We looked into Colchester County, my parents’ riverfront farm. Mother said, “Mosquito breeding ground.” Anymore, she refused to step foot across the Bay, even to go boating with Father. Ed found a job in Barnbridge, the nearest small town. He negotiated with Father and bought two acres of the farm. Kitty said, “Third grade’s good for a new start.” Corey was thrilled to get an outdoor dog. I cradled J.R. and looked out the window: in every direction, endless country, river, or trees.

Corn, soybeans, vetch, ivy, hemlock, holly, beech. I was embarrassed to be sad about moving to the farm and only cried when J.R. and I were home alone. Ed drove to Barnbridge, taking Kitty and Corey and himself to school, and every day I cried up until fifteen minutes before they came back. Our first year in Colchester County, I was in the kitchen, weepy, whispering to the baby, “It’s not that Mommy doesn’t love you,” when our dog, a high-strung thing, came to the porch to bark. I wiped my tears and went to hush him. That’s when he lunged at a brown mound in the corn.

Setting J.R. down on the grass, I walked to the edge of the field and leaned over to see. Among the cornstalks was a river otter. Its back was bent in half. One of its legs was chewed away, fur mashed down in blood, and one eye leaked, split by dog claw. The other

eye seemed to be looking at me. I sucked in my breath. The otter's eye was milky, clouding. I knelt in the field, and that dead otter thrashed.

Something inside me went out. I scooped up the baby, kicked at the dog, ran across the lawn, and shut myself in my room. My gills felt broken: I lay on the bed and clutched J.R. to my chest. I telephoned my parents but couldn't speak when Mother answered the phone. I called my husband at school.

"What is it?" he asked.

A hook pinched my throat. "Everything is dying."

"I'll be right home."

Ed had to pick the lock on our bedroom door. He carried me out. I cried and dry-heaved to the car and slumped on the passenger door. He drove, holding J.R., into town. At the emergency room, the doctor gave me a shot and told Ed I'd be staying for a while.

I spent my first week asleep. Then it got so I could talk. The doctor asked, "What are you afraid of?" I thought of dead things twitching and felt my stomach turn.

"What?" the doctor asked.

"Everything is heavy. And then it gets taken away."

My husband, soft like a worn towel, visited. Mother offered to send him a maid, but Ed said no, he would figure it out. He telephoned Sister Paul at her retirement convent in Florida. Would she come up for a visit? Old as she was, Sister said yes. After she arrived, the children's letters to me were full of news.

"What do you mean by everything?" the doctor asked.

"Kitty's finishing third grade," I said.

Ed brought some bad news: Corey's dog had gone crazy. It had bitten a goat and killed a cat, and they'd had him put to sleep. Corey wrote, "It's okay Mom, come home." Kitty's letter said, "We miss you."

I told the doctor about these letters. I also told him of my lists: "Otter, heron, coon, redwings, oyster, muskrat, goose." He made notes and didn't say much. "What upsets you most?"

"Sad things happen."

The doctor agreed this was true. "Are you a good mother?" I thought about it a long while. I thought about my own mother. I thought about myself.

I got better enough to go home. It was a school night. My house smelled of detergent and bleach, and there were new pictures on the fridge. My daughter stood by the kitchen sink. "I have a book report to do," she said and disappeared up to her room.

"Kitty's a good girl," Sister Paul said.

Baby J.R., looking older, squeezed my arm. Corey announced he knew some card games such as double solitaire. I said, "Did Sister Paul teach you?" He nodded. He laid down cards and we played. Sister stayed one week longer before returning to her retirement. One day Ed arrived home from town with a pile of cats. "They're neutered," he said, shaking his head as if he didn't believe it. "I don't want them to multiply." Kitty squealed and took a black kitten up to her room. Corey said he'd stick to cards. J.R. grabbed a gray one by the tail, and we named it Catfish.

Raspberries, bay, crabs, kale, snowdrift, forsythia, eggs. My family and I celebrated the seasons, and despite the impermanence of everything, I learned good habits: how to raise chickens, watch school plays, plan picnics, pickle corn. My children did their own things. Kitty got an after-school job at a daycare. Corey studied card tricks. J.R. wanted to

be a fisherman. One day, we got word from the Florida convent that Sister Paul's health was poor, so Ed and I decided to drive down. Kitty asked for time off her job. Corey studied magic along the ride. J.R. refused to remove his wading boots, but entering Sister Paul's room, he clung to my skirt, Kitty and Corey close behind.

Sister was so heavy by then that she could no longer walk. When trying to talk, she wheezed. Black whiskers straggled out of her chin. My husband took the children outside to look for tree frogs and Spanish moss. "Tomorrow," Sister Paul gasped, "the caretaker will take you fishing."

I sat with her. Her breath mixed with the drip-drip of a courtyard fountain. Nun habits breezed through the cool halls. Outside, my children shouted and their voices flew through the open windows. "Look," I heard Kitty exclaim, "bulgy eyes." My husband called, "Come here, J.R., they won't hurt you," and J.R. answered, "No way." Corey said, "Ooh, that one's dead."

Sister heaved to me, "You're a good girl."

Her mouth wrinkled in pain. Blue irises swam in her face, squeezed tight by the black and white cloth, and she flopped out her arm. Her hand reached for me.

Kitty, Corey, Jay Rocky, Ed, Kitty, Corey, Jay Rocky, Ed: listing my family over and over for protection, I took Sister's hand. I held it away from my body, feeling five or six, my big head wanting Father to come back and take it away. I should have smoothed back her loose gray strands of hair, tucked them under the wimple. But it was all I could do to hold my pose.

"Daddy, let me hold it!"

It was J.R. My family trooped into the room, carrying tiny luminescent frogs. They stepped up to the bed. J.R. said, "Look how his feet suction so he can grip the trees." He cupped his frog for us to feel, and Sister released my hand.

I kissed her swollen forehead goodbye. Then we left and went outside.

The children released their frogs. Kitty and Corey reached up and ran their fingers through the hanging moss. J.R. circled the trees. Three blocks away, at the water's edge, the caretaker washed out his Boston Whaler. J.R. waved toward the inlet water and shouted, "Mommy, we're going out there tomorrow!" Ed asked the caretaker to take our picture. We clambered into the boat on its trailer. "Look like you're fishing on the ocean," the caretaker directed. "Say cheese."

Frogs, parakeets, monkey, dog, cats, husband, kids, born, growing, growing old and killed and living and leaving and dying, and: Ed clasped my hand and we posed. It was a bright day. We look vivid and breathless. The children grip the sides of the boat, their father, each other. Behind the parked boat the inlet water gleams. Above and before us the trees teem with frogs. There in the picture on my refrigerator, we smile, and everything is perdurable.

The After-effects of the Shoah as Represented in the Writings of Second-Generation Israeli Female Novelists

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Lili Perri Amitai's astonishingly assured first novel *Golem Bemaagal* (Golem in a Circle) looks at the ambivalent relationship between Miki Stav, a twentysomething Tel Avivian woman and her Holocaust survivor mother. Gradually, the story reveals the intensity of the pain of being a child of a Holocaust survivor as Miki tries to extricate herself from her mother's claustrophobic, fear-laden environment. Like others who have experienced the terrifying Nazi universe, her mother Sarah, to whom she refers to as Mrs. Stav, is obsessed and preoccupied with the Shoah. The nub of the story shows how this paranoia affected the way the second generation was raised and the children's battle to individuate and separate away from their parent's sheltering cocoon.¹ It has been argued that what makes this book extraordinarily powerful is its artfully drawn portrait of the main protagonist and the closely observed details of a survivor mother with all its subtle cadences of language and psychology. Also, the book's rawness, its painful truths about the survivor-child condition are done with an economy of plot that excludes any extraordinary flights of dramatic development (Regev 19). Nestled inside the basic story structure is a secret treasure house of reflections and feelings threaded within and not quarantined from the narrative.

Miki finds it an extremely difficult task becoming an individual. She is unable to disengage from her mother's overprotective love, echoing some of the problems many children of survivors face. It is clear that her efforts to form romantic relationships, love,

¹ For an excellent examination of this subject matter see; Helen Epstein. *Children of the Holocaust: Conversations with Sons and Daughters of Survivors*. (New York: G. P Putnam's, 1979).

and friendships are stifled because of her inability physically and psychologically to move away from her parents. Lamentably, her mother does not realize the importance of this process, possessing very little empathy for Miki's struggle to relinquish her role in her world. In fact, Miki's problems stem from a web of symptomatic conscious and unconscious inhibitions, simmering constantly under the surface. Consequently, Miki is sucked into her mother's Holocaust-themed dynamics, straitjacketed into a depressive worldview that in turn prevents her from gaining any perspicuity or reaching visible maturity.

The book's title refers to her crippled emotional state: "The thought that everyone finds each other and that I remain stuck in the circle made me think that something in me is screwed up...I never leave signs that remind people of me. Maybe that is the reason why I always remain stuck in the middle" (Perri Amitai 69, 80). As a matter of fact, though her friends view her as resilient and strong, she sees her cynical and sarcastic deportment as an handicap imparted by her mother. It should be emphasized that Holocaust researchers have found that in most survivor families girls were chosen as the "memorial candles," shouldering the bulk of the emotional problems within the family unit (Wardi 31).

From the opening pages, we are plunged into Miki's suffusive anxiousness, a mode of behavior that perceives everyday activities as precarious hazards. To be sure, Miki's domineering mother's desire to control her daughter's growth and environment has infected the young woman, for she possesses fostered excessive, unwarranted apprehensions. For example, moving into her grandmother's apartment, she opens the door cautiously, in the same manner as in her parent's household: "In the Stav's family house people don't walk—they float in an hysterical silence, usually close to the walls. That is why it was only natural that Ami and I would assume the nervousness that suffused the air (12). The mother lives in a state of impending inordinate danger, continuously preparing

for another Holocaust. Thus, for instance, she buys two items of each to store (Perri Amitai 19); on Miki's 17th birthday she buys her a gold and diamond ring, even though the young girl craves boots. The mother explains that such expensive rings can be traded over the fence of the ghetto for iron vitamins to strengthen the body. Similarly, she furnishes her house only with strong wood, ordered from a craftsman, believing that one buys cupboards like other furniture one does not replace. In her gloomy world, sturdy furniture is a valuable vessel, for it can be exchanged for bread or potatoes in case of another Holocaust. In a pivotal moment, we read that the mother has been opening savings accounts in different banks. Preparing for the inevitable catastrophe, she puts aside money to pay the gentile family that will adopt Miki a day before the outbreak of a new Holocaust .

To a large extent, as it been observed elsewhere, survivor children often had difficulty relating to their parents' permanent trauma because of the conspiracy of silence exaggerated in the home.¹ Here, it is Miki's father who accounts for his wife's emotional fragility and distress when he often admonishes Miki. As he says, her mother is entitled to a little understanding, that her prohibitive behavior is due to the savagery she endured over there, and that she is a good woman whose soul has been damaged. Along with his mother, Grandmother Hanna, he promises to one day describe the terrible thing that devastated her mother and made her excessively tense and prone to anxiety. Yet, the revelations about her mother are fragmentary at best; Miki only hears about how her parents met in Cyprus, or that a Ghetto is camp "Over There." Significantly, it is the actual survivor, the mother, who is disinclined to communicate to her daughter an account of her near-death

¹ Martin S. Bergmann and Milton E. Jucovy. eds. *Generations of the Holocaust*. (New York: Basic Books, 1982); Dina Wardi. *Memorial Candles*. (London & New York: Routledge, 1992); Paul Marcus and Alan Rosenberg. *Healing Their Wounds: Psychotherapy with Holocaust Survivors and Their Families*. (New York: Praeger, 1990).

experience, characteristic of Holocaust survivors. Once again, it is left to another principal to dwell on the past and excavate the Holocaust experience for the inquisitive child. It is the grandmother who discloses to Miki that her mother survived only because she worked for high-ranking Nazi officials, winning that position because of her ability to furnish those “pigs” with the feeling that it was a princess scrubbing and cleaning their abode.

The characteristic overprotectiveness, which typifies many survivor-child bonds, resurfaces here writ large (Wardi 1992). Mrs. Stav keeps her child out of harm’s way in a manner discernibly different from other non-survivor households. Miki is not allowed to explore her environment and do things other kids do. In grade one, Sarah keeps her busy for hours to prevent her friends from coming over to play. Often Miki, at her mother’s behest, stays at home reading library books borrowed by her mother, practicing classical pieces on the piano or participating in invented competitions with Roger Whittaker and Jim Reeves, while the girls play with dolls or at the playground (Perri Amitai: 21-22). Not surprisingly, Miki grows up with an enhanced sense of loneliness with regards to her classmates and peers. Often she remembers how in class parties none of the boys would ask her to dance, mocking her instead with derogatory exchanges while passing her by.

The mother’s overreaction to particular situations and overall distrust of the world is most obtrusive when Miki is struck ill with a simple cold. A cavalcade of doctors called up from the long list in Mrs. Stav’s phone book are heralded into the room only to be disbelieved by the worrying mother. One specific incident stands out in the enmeshed and stormy relationship. It concerns the purchase of a bicycle for the five-year old Miki, who sweeps away her mother’s fierce objections when she promises to only ride it in the corridor linking the lounge to the other room in the house. When an accident ensues, the frightened girl dares not cry, knowing the wound will only spark major mayhem and a

plethora of doctors. Not surprisingly, Miki notes, ever since she remains petrified of catching a cold or letting on she has been injured for fear of her mother's unnerving antics.

Furthermore, on so many occasions, the mother holds on so tight, terrified that Miki will get hurt, that her wanting to guarantee her daughter's safety is disquietingly disturbing. When she receives a new car, she tries to persuade Miki to allow her father to drive it, or when they cross the road she insists on holding her hand even though she is an adult and the light is green. A little later, a defining moment occurs in the enmeshed relationship: Gone for two days, Miki returns to her apartment to find the police have been called to investigate her disappearance. At the same time, her mother, again overreacting, is treated for a panic attack and subdued with medicine. At the same time, we learn that the mother rarely sleeps. Miki sees her stretched out on the couch in the lounge and says, "I tried to think when I did see her sleep, but I couldn't remember" (125). Earlier, Miki recalls that her grandmother time and again warned her tormented daughter that she needs to sleep to keep her normality.

Knowing the mother's tendency to be overly stressed, both Miki and her father refrain from expressing any anger, always careful not to let her see or hear anything that will stain the problem free environment she perceives and encourages. It is pointed out, that in addition to no one being allowed to scream in the house, any usual, normal manifestation of emotional difficulties such as crying stopped when Miki reached six. One of Miki's friends tells her, "You always look so sensitive, what can I say, so sensitive that if somebody will say anything you'll immediately burst out crying" (29). It is noteworthy that the motif of "not crying" runs throughout the book, shedding light on the excruciatingly sensitive issue of survivor children mastering their feelings, inhibiting their natural impulses as they are aware of the effect their conduct may have on their brittle parents.

Above all, the operating theme that informs the story is Miki's gut-wrenching battle to avoid being engulfed by the sense of powerlessness and distrust transferred onto her. She craves to stop calculating her moves, to cease and retard her desires so as to be in accordance with her mother's code of frustrating decorum. Towards the end, while sitting in a car with Yambi, a man she had recently met who declines her offer to join the family at a restaurant, she yearns to let loose with her feelings. Silently accepting his decision, she seethes with anger at her emotional impotency:

I placed one leg over another and hated the royal upbringing I received from the day I was born. How many times had I told them that I am not learning, that I am not an animal, and that I don't walk with royal flowers and that their manners are doing away with friends and that I want friends. But I am engraved with their stamps that I cannot erase. Stamps that prevent me from asking him to join me, to laugh with me at this family function, maybe to tell him that I wanted him to call so much, that I am happy to see him. But the educational treatment of the Stav family triumphed. (143)

Soon afterwards, Yambi visits Miki to explain his reluctance to sustain a romantic relationship. Hearing she is not his kind of girl results in a splendid, yet biting, self-diagnosis that lucidly conveys Miki general malaise:

I am the type of Lichtenshtein—locked in an institute of old people who suffer from a chronic disease- *my disease will be defined as chronic fear*...In Liechtenstein they will give me medication and help me get rid of reality...I will sell the flat and with the savings reserved for the Polish family that has to pick me up at the beginning of the Holocaust, I will be able to invite Margalit to Lichtenshtein...The medical staff will convey our warm regards and will

report on Miki's progress...Mrs Stav will not be happy with her daughter's progress. She invested all her life in that girl, and maybe she deserves this because she was too good- you are not allowed to be too good, because that's the thanks you receive in the end. (159)

The book culminates with the death of the mother, signalling an unequivocal chance for Miki to begin living a mentally healthy life and be capable of loving and enjoying the fruits of an intimate relationship. Equally clear, however, is the reality that Miki will not be free from the symptoms of an oppressive upbringing, of the sequelae that was passed and overflowed on to her. After all, despair, mistrust, keeping her emotions in check, and an inability to maintain a loving attitude dominates her life. Seeing her dead mother in the hospital, Miki is unable to erupt, trying to scream: "No voice came out I continued to scream without a sound. I ran to Mr. Stav, who now stood behind me, I pulled his hand so he will return my voice...I looked at the blanket and continued to scream without a voice because I couldn't be a hero anymore" (174-175). As she walks out of the hospital, she imagines her mother warning her about getting her shoes dirty in the puddle, figuring that since she has not called in a long time something must be wrong.

Within the cannon of second-generation Holocaust fiction, Nava Semel's oeuvre, in particular the collection of short stories *Kova Zehuhit* (A Glass Hat), is worthy of special study. Semel's collection of stories was the first Israeli work to give literary voice to the sons and daughters of the survivors, a poignant pipeline to the world of those unique relationships. Semel's symbiotic nexus to her parents is evidenced by the dedication, "To my mother who survived and to my father who accompanied" (Semel 5). In an introduction to Semel's book, Nurit Govrin proffers an explanation for the book's title as a metaphor for the enduring burden projected upon the children of survivors:

This glass hat, its touch is cold. It is transparent and insulated, burdensome and not isolated, vulnerable and may break into pieces at any moment. More than it protects it exposes and bears great danger. It concentrates the sunrays and amplifies the heat underneath so much so it can cause fire. The glass hat recalls the glass bell in which divers go down to the depths of the ocean to watch what is happening there without being injured. Yet, as opposed to the glass bell the hat cannot provide similar protection. As well, it hints at the glass cage where the war criminal Eichmann was placed during his trial in Jerusalem. (9-10)

In common with other texts “bearing witness,” the theme of a survivor’s daughter who struggles with the intense pain of her mother’s memory is explored at many levels. Semel replays the difficulty of the children living with survivor parents, presenting their anxieties as childhood fragments from a broken home movie. Sooner or later, each tale meditates on the dark underside of the individual to whom a particular pathology has been bequeathed. One of Semel’s fundamental concerns is that the second generation must, in order to attain insight into their parents’ Holocaust trauma, understand the essence of the extreme horror the victims experienced. Semel believes that this process will permit survivor children to enter the world of their parents, assume their trauma within their current lives and feel the pain of their own personal Holocaust. She suggests that this is a necessary development, enabling the second generation to deal with the trauma. Semel elucidates the process:

I see writing as my quest along the axis of time, like those young Israelis who try to mark dates. I do not do it out of nostalgia, but from a deep need to seek the primeval components under our Israeli shield that are still in

operation today. First, we had to trace them down, then admit that they exist, and not run away from their consequences. Writing about the scar of the Holocaust is my rebellion against the rigid model of the neo Israeli, supposedly untainted by the past. We are coming to terms with that inner drum that echoed in the Israeli psyche all those years, but we pushed it aside and refused really to listen. (Timan 23)

This theme is very much in evidence in Semel's *A Private Holocaust*. The central figure is Dafna, a young Kibbutz woman in London trying to break into show business. The daughter of Holocaust survivors, her parents' past has become a central psychic event in her life. Like other contemporary protagonists, she is forced to confront the dilemma of understanding her bereaved parents on the one hand, and achieving autonomy on the other. The nightmare of Europe is resurrected in the context of her childhood, through her father partly, but especially through her mother. Her father would tell bedtime stories, never reading from the book, but inventing his own Holocaust-derived tales. After the scene in which Bambi's mother is burned in the forest, Dafna asks him if it hurts when one is burnt. He responds, "It hurts very much, but at first you choke from the smoke and don't a feel a thing" (41).

Dafna's mother was married and had two children who, along with their father, were murdered in the chaos of Europe. Dafna symbolizes for the mother the family that had perished. Her mother imposes the identity of the children on the living daughter. Dafna cannot jettison the yoke imposed on her; she is unable to liberate herself and separate from her mother's "Holocaust cape" (Wardi 27-35). Aware of her role in the family, Dafna feels antagonistic emotions:

How she deceived her. She would tell her every birthday: You are the eldest, you are my only one. She was after all a *substitute* for the others. Why didn't she tell her: You are my only one that remained. I gave birth to you so God forbid I will not forget the ones before. (Semel 60)

Still, this resentment is accompanied by an idealization of her mother. In an incident bearing a striking resemblance to one in the *Summer of Aviya*, when her mother arrives at a rehearsal for a *Shavuot* play, a flood of nervous feelings wells up in Dafna and she is unable to recite her lines. She manages only to mumble a few incomprehensible words.

The prevailing pattern of the survivor parents' reluctance to talk about the destruction of their identities is repeated here. Haunted by history and deprived of knowing what had marked her from an early age as a memorial candle, Dafna indirectly discovers some old photographs of her mother and her murdered brother and sister. Dafna's interior thoughts reverberate, "These are your dead siblings. They were born before you were" (47).

The common features of post-traumatic syndrome, such as anxiety, reactive depression, and brooding absorption in the past characterize the mother's behavior. Semel paints a portrait of a mother possessed by a death-in-life burden, having endured the destruction of her personality in the unspeakable horror of the camps. She denies Dafna a normal expression of parental love. In addition never to holding or hugging her child, she lives as if savoring the opportunity to carry the weight of the dead on her shoulders, always walking as if behind her daughter stands the shadows of her murdered children, generating the sense that to be loved one needs to be dead. Dafna recollects her mother's reaction to moments of happiness, such as her father dancing with the young girls of the Kibbutz:

“[M]other twists her face and a line of contempt broadens across her face. How dare people be happy? A family is a kind of hump connected to the shoulders” (48).

The mother’s overprotectiveness takes the form of encouraging Dafna’s excessive dependence on her, willing her to stay in the kibbutz. It is evident that Dafna’s sojourn in London is an act of rebellion, the first time she fulfils her own desires rather than those of the mother—trying to “break the chain,” as she puts it. Nevertheless, the mother makes it difficult. Dafna receives a letter from her father saying that the mother is ill and pleading with her to return at once. She believes her mother’s illness is self-induced to exploit her feelings of guilt. She phones the airline several times and repeatedly hangs up at the last moment. Her decision to remain in England affirms Dafna’s earlier rout against the overwhelming depression that dominates her environment, denying the relevance of Holocaust history to her, and to her generation’s life:

Leave me out of all this. Why do you keep dealing with the Holocaust? We lock the ceremonies away for one day in the year. It has been, it is finished, we are another generation, and we are the new children. Don’t lumber us with your fur of fears. We are new. Shem, Cham and Yefet. Throwing covers over their father’s nakedness. All these things happened in a place far away. That period stuck only to the pages of the books. It does not touch me. I seek to find myself, I am after a new girl. (47-48)

Travelling to an audition, Dafna stumbles upon a robbery in progress and is taken hostage by the bandit. The kidnapping triggers a doppelganger effect—while enduring the violence and rape, she becomes the mother who survived the Nazi camps. The narration shuttles between description of the daughter’s capture and her mother’s savage

persecution. At times the reader is unsure who is being tormented. Significantly, the entire episode is encoded with terms referencing the systematic dehumanization and extermination her mother had witnessed. When the felon pushes her, it is as if she is an obstinate cargo animal (51-52). Mumbling in English, she remembers how her mother used to rebuke her with her broken Polish (54). In the car, she notices her captor's sports shoes, an image she associates with the boots of Joseph Mengele, clanking along the camp's stones, whose selection her mother escaped and whose face she will remember for eternity. Later, as Dafna is allowed outside her hijacker's car to urinate, she takes off her pants and envisions her mother naked, dissolving the margins of time and space: "They take off their clothes. Mother stands and the secret of her organs is revealed. No coverings for the soul, no covering for her box. She places her hand over her nakedness. The master of dogs checks her body" (58). Themes of exposure and nakedness abound in religious and secular Hebrew Holocaust fiction as a symbolic analogue to the victim's experience in the Shoah (Gila Ramras-Rauch 5).

The sound of a train in the English countryside evokes a train transporting Jews to Auschwitz, where they are forced to send postcards to their relatives, assuring them they are well. Dafna believes that when she and her captor stop, they will be at the gates of Auschwitz. She is unsure when his dirty hand grabbed her, now or 39 years ago. Once released, Dafna crawls to the nearest house in the English village and bangs on the door. At that moment, the mother's actions following her release fold into the daughter's narrative. The emphasis here, again, is in the simultaneous participation and sharing of the daughter in imagery from the mother's past. The daughter's identification with the mother reaches its crescendo in the scenes leading to and after Dafna's rape, where the two women become one. At first, she remembers her mother's disgust when she cut her hair severely

short, her turning away and screaming, “It’s repulsive. You look just like me. Then” (Semel 62). Lying battered on the floor of a deserted cottage, bleeding from his blows, a significant breach occurs. The daughter appropriates her mother’s Holocaust experience as an integral component of her being and identity and now comprehends the realities of the “unlived life” through her present suffering. Being taken prisoner provides Dafna compelling access to the mother’s life, allowing the daughter to enter and actualize her world. The entire episode employs quintessential Nazi terminology to delineate Dafna’s imprisonment, framing a narrative that articulates and evokes the reality of traumatic shock within a post-Holocaust society. Ultimately, the experience leads the daughter to empathize with her mother’s degradation and despair, to adopt her mother’s experiences as her own in the ultimate form of inherited pain and identification. By having this modern day drama unfold against the background of the Holocaust, Semel reveals how the deep residue of the Holocaust is powerfully present in the lives of young Israelis.

Essentially, *A Private Holocaust* embodies through rhetorical strategies the psychological research of the postgenocide generation. It has been noted that in their dreams and fantasies, the second generation share a group memory of the actual cruelties suffered by their parents, tracing a psychic imprint, filling a blank space from secondary knowledge about the experience and remembering events not lived through (H. Barocas and C. Barocas 331). By becoming a participant and co-owner of the traumatic event, a movement towards real understanding emerges, as the daughter feels the injury of the survivor that had been impossible. While she still does not wholly accept her mother’s utter lack of optimism and affection, a space has been created for a process of healing between the two, for the daughter has now opened the way for re-assessment of her mother’s neuroses and psychological scarring. The two opposing worlds have united within a single

psyche. Like her mother, she has been starved, debased and beaten. It is only in this way that she can forgive her mother:

This is how she sits, her closed mother, burrowing inside her secrets, inside the end of her shame. *You are free of any guilt*, and I did not know. The Children will never return. But I am a new girl, the reincarnation of the dead girl, from the pictures, my half sister. I will never replace them, because there is no relief for the skin that has been cut. The mother's body kept walking, but the fetuses landed and returned, planted inside her bitter tidings...Her mother did not perform the *Kriah* over her children. Even the release of the mourning was not allowed...The sorrow sank inside of her as pregnancy past its term. She did not repeat their names, even in a dream. She was not allowed to long for them. They urged her to forget, to quickly produce copies of her kids. And in the same way that she failed in her second marriage, she perhaps failed with her copied daughter. (Semel 67)

As she flies back to Israel, wearing one of the sweaters her mother knitted for her that she has never worn before, Dafna recognizes the inescapable connection to her mother's history:

That invisible cord has been woven inside of her. Now she knows, the first children of her mother have been gathered inside her. A cloud that formed many years before her birth will not disintegrate easily. Maybe every man experiences the epiphany of a personal Holocaust. (69)

The motif of an adolescent girl's wrenching relationship with her survivor-mother comes to the fore in Gila Almagor's *The Summer of Aviya* (1991). Seen through the eyes

of the 10-year-old eponymous heroine, it traces one summer during which she undergoes a journey of disenchantment and discovery as she is taken from a children's home to live with her unstable mother. Almagor, a child of Holocaust survivors, is dealing with her own dark past, using the heroine as her surrogate. *The Summer of Aviya* is a deeply poignant memoir about confronting pain, about being caught in between an irretrievable past and a problematic future.

Compelling multiple common threads exist with the other Holocaust works discussed here, demonstrating a sustained thematic matrix in the canon. For example, we read of an unpredictable swing in mood and behavior that leads to a violent cutting of the hair. Upon their return home, Henya, Aviya's mother, heads straight to the bathroom. She has not uttered a word during the long walk from the bus station, despite seeing her daughter only once for a whole year. She returns with a basin of soapy water, which she places on a chair. The scene's acute similarity to *Excision*, a short story Savyon Liebrecht, another second generation female author, is of such specificity that the reader cannot help but notice and suspect that they are being nudged towards conclusions that have to do with the survivor obsession with lice. Earlier, she had accused the counselor of allowing her daughter be infected with lice: "Lice on my daughter? What is this place, a concentration camp?"(18). Now, she lapses into one of her horrifying memories and without a warning Aviya is bent over:

Before I knew what was happening I caught a strong whiff of kerosene. I tried turning my head away, but my mother kept a tight grip on it and forced it back over the basin. As I was trying to hold my nose to shut out the nauseating smell I saw locks of hair drifting down into the basin. They floated on the water and I realised that they were mine. My mother was

cutting off my hair and there was nothing I could do about it! She dragged me into the bathroom and rinsed my head with running water. “That’s the last of the lice,” she kept saying, “No child of mine will have lice. Oh, I know what lice are, I do.” (21-22)

Aviya is crushed by the loss of her hair:

Above the sink in the bathroom was a mirror with cracked sides and black specks all over it. I stood on tiptoe to see how much hair my mother had cut off. She had cut it all without mercy! I was bald! All that was left of me was an ugly face without a frame. “How could you do this to me? How?” I shouted, bursting into awful sobs.” (22)

Typically, these fits reach a crescendo, for as we learn, those who have gone through the fire continually stand at the threshold of a breakdown. Certainly, mental disintegration is a common bond among the narratives. Here, it is dramatized as the story draws to a close. Before that moment, Henya begins turning off the lights in the house, preferring to sit in darkness, eyes glazed, sinking into a prolonged silence. Then, on a Saturday afternoon, she flies into a violent rage. Sending a glass of water flying across the room, she begins to scream at Aviya, stamping on the medicinal pills rolling across the floor, until she is subdued by an injection administered by the local doctor. The book’s coda sees Henya taken back to the hospital. It seems, the author avers, that Henya’s illness and her menacing history cannot be forgotten. As one well knows, one cannot so easily escape the past.

Aviya shares with other children of survivors a vivid imagination, revealed during a trip to the home of the young ballet teacher Maya Abramson. After delivering the laundry done by Henya, Aviya is asked to describe a picture of a swan Lake hanging above a piano.

While the other girls disappoint Maya with their prosaic answers, Aviya spins a forlorn story of a woman who seeks death by jumping into a magic lake. The woman is transformed into a swan by her lover who saves her from harm's way and promises her that she will become beautiful and happy again. The teacher is moved by the tale, yet pays no attention to the girl who becomes enamored with her. Also, when the new neighbors Mr. Gantz and his family arrive, Aviya's imagination again takes hold. She is soon convinced that Gantz is her long-lost father who she is told had died in the war. Before long, she gives herself a past name, Maxi, illustrating a child's obsession with recreating the past rather than living in the present.

In line with other survivor-children featured here, Aviya tries to understand what had happened to her grief-stricken mother, damaged by the loss of her family in the death camps. The ghosts of the past loom large. Henya suffers inwardly, living in a world of her own, often staring into space and fighting not to go under. Constantly noticing her mother's tattooed arm, Aviya is denied access to this world. Her mother is too immersed in her own trauma to shed light on the mystery. Aviya yearns to solve or to chronicle her wretched history. Instead, Aviya must rely on others to relate her mother's biography—of her bravery during the war and how she managed to smuggle explosives used to blow a train. From her Aunt Alice she learns that her mother was captured by the Nazis along with a group of partisans and tortured. It is true that this "hell on earth" has become part of Henya's existential being, as she often plums into her own reality: "My mother never noticed when she was being talked about or made fun of. She lived in a world of her own, as if she were with us but not one of us. Sometimes her beautiful eyes, which were very big and dark, turned glassy and she stared off into space as if she saw things there"(37). Yet, despite all, so in awe is Aviya of the mother figure that when Henya arrives during a

Hanukkah play, the mere sight renders the young girl speechless and unable to perform on stage. Almagor empathically reminds us of the survivors' children burning desire to know of what traumatized their parents and how large a role this plays in their lives:

Though it was scary it also made me curious, because I wanted to know what she was looking at. Once when those big eyes of her went out of focus again, I got up the courage to ask. "Mama?" I said. "Mama!" I shook her as though waking up from a dream and asked her to tell me what she was seeing, but she just muttered something that I couldn't and added, "It's nothing, it's nothing." That was all I could get out of her. (37)

Another innovative work about the second generation and how it is ineluctably tied to the past is Dorit Peleg's *Una* (1988). Like other "bearing witness" works, it tackles the dilemma of finding the right registers that will meaningfully connect with and encoded past trauma. In the face of the harmful effects caused by Holocaust silence, the healing "work of mourning" of the second generation exhibits those lacerating, yet suppressed, genocidal traumas and seeks to reverse the destructive and displacing effect of the former response. It ferrets out the suffocatingly intense psychological burden of the Holocaust that cripples the collective and individual identity of young Israelis and underpins the reality of the nameless horrors that exist even after fifty years. Above all, it is about the relationship of the Sabra generation (native born Israelis) to the Holocaust, its memorialization and the working through of the psychic trauma hovering over their present lives. It explores the second-generation's painful search for an avenue through which they can bear witness to and repair the wounded self that carries the indelible imprint of a terror previously ignored or suppressed.

Una daringly treats the Holocaust not from an external historical perspective, as one would expect. Rather, it is rooted in the metaphorical, propelled by the heroine's interior journey of broken frames, as she separates herself from the "here" and "now" and spiritually travels to foreign sites of scorched earth in search of relief. In that regard, Peleg chose to situate her literary engagement with the Holocaust in the psychological realm to remind us of the psychic difficulties of writing about the Holocaust. In place of mimetic Holocaust historiography, Peleg dramatizes emotional conflict, a battle that is waged exclusively within the title character's soul and that pulls the reader into the midst of a personal Holocaust. The employment of a psychiatrist as a medium for the heroine to air her grievances and come to grips with loss and suffering looms large over the course of the narrative, accentuating the psychological nature and structure of the tale as well as Peleg's desire to work along the lower levels of consciousness in pouring forth the young woman's torrent of agony.

In an interview with Rachel Sahar, the native-born Israeli admitted that all through her youth she continuously tried to ignore the inescapable truth that in one way or another, the Shoah had stamped itself indelibly on her psyche:

For many years I did not deal with the Holocaust. My father never said a word about the camps. I was restless. I called this adventurism and went on trips around the world. A by-product of the travels was the recognition that there was anti-Semitism. At a certain stage I understood that in the main this was a journey inwards. And there inside, I was surprised to discover the Holocaust.

(23-24)

Moreover, Peleg discovered that her soul had been preserving "inherited destinations" as she calls them. When viewing Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*, she accurately identifies sites

plucked out of the imagination. She also finds that fear and discord were passed on to her as a legacy: "I'm talking about a struggle to escape emotion, hurt, exposure and a yearning for human contact. This bi-polarity contains also the desire to move away from the pain and the past and the desire to completely feel it" (Timan 23). At one point, she says, "I was sentenced to adapt the Holocaust" (23).

In not avoiding the pain of the past or participating in the process of collective repression, Peleg reminds the Israelis of the function of memory. Importantly, the book is dedicated to Peleg's father, himself a Holocaust survivor, echoing Nava Semel's dedication to her parents who endured the camps, and further reinforcing the author's belief that although she was not seared by the Nazi fire, she must imaginatively and unequivocally affirm the event's bestiality. Much of the text's strength is due principally in its ability to strikingly illustrate how the present generation is dramatically affected by the Shoah though they did not personally witness its death cycle.

The main plot concerns the attempted Holocaust evasion of Una, a woman in her early thirties who runs a successful travel agency in New York. Living with her boyfriend, Adam, on the thirty-fourth floor in Manhattan, her life is a well-made tapestry of bourgeois comforts. At first it seems as if she is the typical career woman, dynamic and content with her life. She dwells within a safe space, at a distance from the European catastrophe. Yet, the threads of her tranquil existence begin to unravel when she is pursued by the phantasmagorical figure of Ana, a 12-year-old girl whose existence is geyed in the Shoah. Incredulously, their lives weave in and out through each other to form a tortuous synthesis, as the chimerical creation begins to dominate Una's dreams and ultimately assumes a corporeal form. Before long, the Holocaust girl, who in a succession of wild dreams haunts Una's mind, begins to get under the woman's skin, shattering her complacency towards the

events of the past and making her feel the possibility of another life, far removed from her own. The Holocaust girl is able to draw Una into her chaotic, sub-world without warning, opening a doorway to a predatory Holocaust landscape. Una craves no affinity and vigorously tries to negate this landscape, disaffirming any connection to the Shoah past, and she refuses to admit a nexus with the darkness that coerces her to engage the memories of the European catastrophe.

This attitude is consistent with Gilead Morahg's assessment that the novel is about the heritage of denial steadfastly embraced by the second and third generation, a heritage that resists any encroachment of Holocaust memory onto their present lives. Despite the agency of a psychiatrist, it should be clear that the girl "is not a suppressed biographical memory, but rather a fantastic cultural presence. Her simultaneous existence in the world of the Holocaust and in contemporary Manhattan embodies the persistence of the Holocaust past in the modern present" (Morahg 165). Morahg claims that the

struggle between Una and the girl...is an anatomy of the involuntary emergence of communal memory and the struggle to come to terms with it...It forces the realization that the Holocaust then and there is still very much part of the contemporary now and here, and that the self will remain deformed and incomplete until it affirms its present affinity with the traumas of the communal past. (156)

Una denies the relevance of the Holocaust to her life, yet, despite herself, grudgingly acknowledges the presence of the past in response to the phantom's vision of a great mass of victims being marched toward a death camp. Although Una claims no connection to them—to have no empathy for them—they have indeed disturbed her peace so that she

prays they would disappear “just so they wouldn’t be here . . . so undeniably present . . . and with them their plague, their tragedy, the curse that they bear” (Peleg 74-75).

Just as Una wants distance from the Holocaust confrontation, the Holocaust girl is also shown to have sought separation from the victims of Auschwitz. She watches a selection “from the outside, from behind the double fence . . .” (189) and keeps her distance. She continues, however, to watch a woman whose courageous support of a fellow prisoner impressed her: “Just watching her day after day through the fence, walking, eating, carrying heavy rocks from the limestone quarry . . . and maybe one day I will cross the fence and go in and touch her hand” (193). The girl’s tension (between the desire for community with her own kind in the camp and the contrary desire for survival) links her to Una and to the second-generation Israeli dilemma between Holocaust silence and acknowledgment. Her eventual entry to the camp, sanctioned by the woman she has been watching, foreshadows Una’s acceptance of the past.

In essence, the Holocaust girl becomes the space for a battle between dual warring personalities. Slowly, we witness a kind of dreamscape scenario, underscored by the ever-present girl who is determined to plunge Una into her own consciousness, who wants the contemporary female to enter her fictional Holocaust space and reality, and who craves to invade Una’s seemingly wholesome life.

The novel is hallmarked by the motif of integration and disintegration, whereby one’s roots are exposed and then uprooted, aided by the evident constant movement that dapples the nucleus narrative: the Holocaust girl who wanders through the forests and towns of Europe, the endless march of the Jews to Auschwitz, Una’s journey to the United States, and the conflicting dual motion encased within her soul that terrifyingly threatens to disintegrate her psyche. Una’s persistent refusal to admit the Holocaust into her universe is

expressed by the odd fact that although she runs a travel company she never avails herself of the opportunity of free travel. The rejection of a physical voyage corresponds to the psychological refusal to join the Holocaust girl on her journey through "Planet Auschwitz."

Formally, the novel is related through various, subtly interlocking viewpoints, fusing poetry and prose with often difficult but provocative images that are laced with technical innovations. Peleg juggles a complex assemblage of narrative drives in her attempt to tackle her subject matter with indirect and alternative modes. One of Peleg's prevalent themes is the recognition that presenting the unimaginable through invention and reconstruction is necessary in second-generation Holocaust texts.

At heart, the novel presents the recto and verso of characters divided between two oppositional and clashing worlds that in today's cultural milieu are destined never to meet. And therein lies the rub. In the main, *Una* is about the uneasy relationship between the postwar generation and the survivors, and about the intractable trope of spiritual separation on which the contemporary generation insists. As Gershon Shaked correctly asserts, texts such as Peleg's

reveal the weakness of the "native" Israelis, who cannot cope with the Holocaust and its survivors. They attempt to correct, as it were, in their writings and fictions the distortions and the harm wrought by members of their generation orally and in reality. Their fiction must be seen as a kind of testimony by guilty *sabras*, who as the children of a historical group whose best sons were murdered or destroyed spiritually, are attempting to repent.

(280)

Nonetheless, in the end, the two personalities meld into one, as the split self is increasingly effaced and Una discovers that she can overcome her fears of integrating with the terrors of

the past. Una becomes an imaginative witness to the atrocities, demolishing the comfortable patina that she has constructed around her. The binary oppositions of young/old, past/present, the glamorous woman/ the unclean orphan are dissolved, as the two personas learn to co-exist. In the final analysis, the expedition into the past that Una undertakes through the figure of the Holocaust girl allows her a liberating understanding and reconciliation that will enable her to deal with her afflicted neuroses. By mentally exploring her own crippled identity she is able to resolve the bequest of unresolved neuroses that have emerged in her psyche to raid her private serenity and contend with this enduring scar that one cannot erase.

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“The Turn of the Screw”: Applying Foucault’s Concept of Power/Knowledge to Henry James’ Tale

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In “The Turn of the Screw” by Henry James, the governess’s descriptions and narrations about the encounters with the ghosts are never certified by the other characters of the narrative. Readers and critics continually wonder, as much as the governess does, whether the ghosts actually appear or if they are the result of her hallucinations. This point has divided critics for over a century. They have been arguing oppositely in favor of or against what have been called “the hallucinationist and non-hallucinationist tendencies” (Cornell 3). The possibility of different readings of the text is then evidently manifest, epitomized by the main character’s attitude towards reality and her interpretation and analysis of it. In seeking to understand reality—in essence to gain power over it—the governess calls up Foucault’s ideas related to power and knowledge in an ironic examination of the concepts.

The testimony of the governess comes to be questioned by both the other characters of the tale (specifically, Mrs. Grose) and the reader, who finds him/herself inbetween the objective interpretation of the fictional events and the subjective perspective of the narrator. The governess, after seeing the ghost of Quint (the house’s previous valet), decides to know everything about the previous history of Bly and the relationship between Quint and Miss Jessel (the previous governess) as well as between these two and the children Miles and Flora. Nevertheless, it seems that she constructs her own version of reality and will not accept any other interpretation of it. Indeed, the governess’s quest for knowledge works mainly through the questioning of the people surrounding her: the people living in the village nearby, Mrs. Grose and the two children.

What apparently worries and troubles her most of all is the possibility that the children know of the ghosts' presence and cherish a diabolical communion with them. The children's knowledge torments the governess. We could even argue that she is jealous of the knowledge supposedly possessed by Miles and Flora when she affirms, "They *know* – it's too monstrous: they know, they know! ... Flora *saw*! ... Not a word – that is the horror. She kept it to herself" ("The Turn of the Screw" 59). The governess's experience of horror derives from the fact that Flora and Miles do not share their knowledge of the ghosts with her. If we agree with the critic Edward Lobb thinking that the governess's "conscious desire to protect the children masks a subconscious desire to control them" (68), we could add that she wants an epistemological control over them. After seeing the ghosts, she initially wants to prevent the children from knowing. Subsequently, she wants to know more than they do, and embarks on an epistemological enterprise. We could say that she is partly interested in re-establishing the epistemological distinction usually existing between children and adults. She indeed states: "what it was least possible to get rid of was the cruel idea that, whatever I had seen, Miles and Flora saw *more*" ("Turn" 103). The idea that the children see and know more than her is "cruel"; it troubles her. After all, her very role prescribes transmitting them knowledge through teaching and through the maternal responsibility she has been delegated with (Bell 92). In facing a situation for which she is not prepared (the ghostly apparitions), she has been taken out of her proper domain. She wants, therefore, to reassert such a domain, but this is difficult for her.

The governess's method of acquiring knowledge is built upon the interpretation of the children's silence. She watches their actions and translates them within her own reality. She also does not trust appearances and comes to reinterpret everything she faces according to a sort of logic of inversion (Bent 74). She then reasons according to a system

of binary oppositions. In this way, everything represents its contrary to her eyes. The children's angelic beauty becomes deceptive and indicative of an inner corruption and malevolence; the ghosts' silence becomes eloquent; Mrs. Grose's preference not to talk becomes an imperative for the governess to press her with more questions. Once she acquires new information about Bly's past or about the ghosts, the governess exults and is filled with power and courage. When presumably discovering that Quint's ghost is actually coming to visit Miles and not her, she says: "the flash of this knowledge—for it was knowledge in the midst of dread—produced in me the most extraordinary effect, starting ... a sudden vibration of duty and courage" (41). Furthermore, when confronting Mrs. Grose with this newly acquired knowledge, the governess affirms: "a portentous clearness now possessed me. ... 'I know, I know, I know!' My exultation grew" (49). The governess's interest in knowledge and her desperate will to know is also consistent with the definitions of the Gothic at large given by Noël Carroll and by Eugenia DeLamotte. These critics respectively affirm that the theme of knowledge is constitutive of the genre (Carroll 127) and that it is both the acts of knowing and not-knowing which cause terror and tension in a character of a Gothic narrative (DeLamotte 87). On the one hand, the knowledge of Quint's presence in the ground of Bly and the supposition that he is interested in little Miles scares the governess. She, indeed, specifies that "it was knowledge in the midst of fear." On the other hand, however, not-knowing who Quint is a source of preoccupation for the governess and forces her to embark on a quest for knowledge about the identity of the stranger and his intentions. Similarly, after seeing and identifying Miss Jessel by the lake, the governess is addressed by Mrs. Grose who asks her, "You mean you're afraid of seeing her again?" (61). She replies, "Oh, no; that's nothing—now! ... It's of *not* seeing her" (61). Although seeing her predecessor is a source of terror for the governess, she needs to see

and know the occurrences of Bly. In an equivalence of the terms “see” and “know,” not-knowing is as much a source of pain and terror for the governess as knowing.

In fact, what mainly pains the governess is ignorance. On the one hand, we should consider the fact that the children’s uncle, the Master of Bly, explicitly asked her not to contact him. He does not want to know what is occurring at Bly: he has chosen and professes ignorance on that subject. When thinking of him, the governess says, “I only asked that he should *know*; and the only way to be sure he knew would be to see it ... in his handsome face” (31). She wants to share her knowledge of the occurrences at Bly with the Harley Street gentleman, to whom she is clearly attracted, but he does not reciprocate the feelings. On the other hand, the governess continually tries to convince Mrs. Grose of the reality of the apparitions. She is certainly not pleased when Mrs. Grose, referring to the affair between Quint and Miss Jessel, affirms, “I know nothing. I wanted not to know. I was glad enough I didn’t” (64). In the governess’s words, moreover, Mrs. Grose “wished ... to sink the whole subject” (65). The adults surrounding the governess, therefore, cultivate ignorance: they are willingly and gladly avoiding to be informed about the past and present happenings of Bly. The theme of knowledge is utilized by the governess also for the description of Quint. The characteristic initially defining him is that he is “an *unknown* man,” (32) “a person of whom I was in ignorance” (33). She then realizes that “my office seemed to require that there should be no such ignorance and no such person” (33-34). What the governess attributes to her office is the acquirement of knowledge, the lack of ignorance. After her conversation with Mrs. Grose on the past of Bly and on Quint and Miss Jessel’s actions, the governess declares to be “still haunted with the shadow of something she had not told me” (53). She utilizes words such as “haunted” and “shadow” which are usually referred to ghostly apparitions and the feelings of fear and horror they bring about.

However, she is referring to her partial ignorance of the subject she is dealing with. The feelings of fear and horror are thus linked to the lack of knowledge, according to her words.

Therefore, what the governess is focused upon is the obtainment of knowledge and truth. Knowledge is repeatedly asserted in an intransitive sense, as if it were a state of mind (Schleifer 27). When referring to the relationship between the two ghosts and the children, the governess affirms “they *know* – it’s too monstrous: they know, they know!” (“Turn” 59). There is no object to the verb “to know”: knowledge is indeed a condition on the part of the children. It is something to be possessed, we could say, an object Miles and Flora have, but which the governess is striving to obtain. She acts as a detective: she accumulates clues of the ghost’s presence and tries to prove its existence to herself as well as to the rest of the world. She records “her progress from suspicion to detection to conviction” (Haralson 135). In this way, she follows the phases and stages typical of the search for truth and analysis of reality conducted by a detective. However, unlike the fictional detective, and similarly to many other fictional ghost-seers, the governess is divided “between the instinctive faith in the evidence of one’s sight and the troubling knowledge that vision is often deceptive and unreliable” (Smajic 1109). She actually bases her knowledge of the ghostly visitants on the sense of sight. This could be noticed especially by the fact that the verb “to see” is the most utilized by her in reference to the ghosts throughout the narrative. Sometimes, seeing a ghost is described by her as a sufficient proof for the affirmation of its existence. She explicitly compares the acts of knowing and seeing when saying “I don’t know what I *don’t* see!” (133). When Mrs. Grose asks her “tell me how you know” that Miss Jessel is haunting Flora, she replies, “Know? By seeing her! By the way she looked” (60). There is a continuous alternation between the two verbs in this phrase and the governess seems to explicitly affirm their identity. Seeing Miss Jessel is all the evidence she needs in order to know the

ghost's identity. In the same respect, not-seeing a ghost means for her that it is simply not present. In fact, when looking for Quint in the garden, she thinks: "he was there or was not there: not there if I didn't see him" (41). The ghost's existence is not disputed since she saw him previously.

According to Michel Foucault, formulated in his works and clarified in his later interviews, knowledge is not an effect of power, but power and knowledge are continually intertwined. Power is what permits the creation of a discourse, rather than what denies or represses it. Power works primarily on the micropolitical level, in the daily experiences of the people. However, no single person owns it: it percolates through events, groups and institutions, circulating as omnipresent through all kinds of social relations and being directly immanent in them (Danaher, Schirato and Webb 73). Indeed, Foucault affirms that "the individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, ... it is the element of its articulation" ("Two Lectures" 98). He also claims that

each individual has at his disposal a certain power, and for that very reason can also act as the vehicle for transmitting a wider power ... the individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces.

("Questions on Geography" 72-73)

We could agree that the governess is the vehicle of late-Victorian dominant patriarchal ideology, of a wider power which worked over and through contemporary individuals. She is the tutor of the two children, the person who teaches and instructs them on the world. In this way, she has at her disposal a certain power, and her position assures the command over the children. It is prescribed in her role to transmit a knowledge she herself selects. She applies the teachings she herself received as a "parson's daughter" ("Turn" 75); that is,

she transmits Miles and Flora the teachings and precepts of the Victorian age. This is one of the few bits of information offered to the reader about the governess's past: it concerns her father's job and a hint to his "eccentric nature" ("Turn" 99). If we think of the governess's behavior as enforcing the sexual prudery and strictures of the Victorian age on the children (and particularly those of the end of the century, when the tale was published), we could say that she enforces on them the rules to which she herself has submitted. If we think of the children as actually enjoying the continued community of sexual affections with Quint and Miss Jessel through the ghosts' apparitions, the governess is attempting to enforce the power of nineteenth-century patriarchy over the desires of Miles and Flora by preventing them from a possible (homo)sexual bond with the ghosts. She reenacts over Miles and Flora the power which has been enacted on her, the submission to the masculine element in the family, to patriarchy.

Moreover, according to Foucault, it is the exercise of power which brings about the production of knowledge, as much as knowledge itself contributes to the establishment of the effects of power, in a sort of constant integration of the two ("Prison Talk" 52). In Foucault's view, knowledge and power are not separated. The forms that knowledge can take are therefore structurally determined also by the practices of power. The final form knowledge assumes if referred to a precise historical moment is that of a truth which seems to belong to the whole of society rather than to the single individual. Thus, if we consider individuals as both the vehicles and the effects of power as much as both creators and victims of knowledge, we could argue that, in James's tale, the children are the victims of the knowledge created by the governess. Since the reader is not definitely able to establish the existence of the ghosts, we could say that their presence is merely a knowledge constructed by her, but not necessarily correspondent to the substantiation of facts. Flora

becomes terribly ill because of the governess's pressing questions regarding Miss Jessel, whereas Miles dies because of the woman's final inquisition and passionate embrace.

In the same respect, we could affirm that the ghosts of Quint and Miss Jessel are actually present, but the two children are unaware of their presence. The governess would then be the only character of the tale which possesses a knowledge that the other characters refuse to believe. In this respect, too, Miles and Flora are the victims of the governess's knowledge as much as of the power she exercises. Considering their young age, they cannot easily rebel against an adult who has been sent to Bly with the charge of helping them in their growth, of teaching them, of *governing* them. She is, after all, a stranger entrusted with being their superior. She has been given such a power by the children's uncle, the momentary hereditary and administrator of the children's own goods; their superior according to the law. The governess herself recognizes her own superiority over the children in several occasions. When playing a game with Flora by the lake, she affirms that she usually agrees with the child to play the role of a stronger and more powerful character than the one interpreted by Flora. She, indeed, describes it as "my superior, exalted stamp." ("Turn" 55) In another occasion, the governess admits: "I had said in my talk with Mrs Grose on that horrid scene of Flora's by the lake ... that it would from that moment distress me much more to lose my power than to keep it. I had then expressed what was vividly on my mind ... I greatly preferred, as a safeguard, the fullness of my own exposure." ("Turn" 101) This is an explicit admission on the governess' part of her interest in power: she affirms to have clearly expressed her thoughts on the subject. She also decides to take the epistemological search of the ghosts fully over her shoulders as a safeguard over her own power over the children.

The governess' actions could be seen, then, as exemplary of the interpretation of the Foucauldian concepts of knowledge and power given by Geoff Danaher. Danaher argues that "knowledge ... authorizes and legitimates the exercising of power." (26) In fact, it is the knowledge of the ghosts (whether actually present or merely fancied by her) which seems to authorize the governess to investigate on Quint's and Miss Jessel's previous lives as well as to legitimate her own will to protect the children. She feels legitimately entitled to use her position of governess, the power attributed to her by the distant uncle, in order to question the village's inhabitants about Quint's aspect as much as to question Mrs. Grose on the death of Miss Jessel. In fact, the governess affirms to have been in the village near Bly and have questioned its inhabitants in order to know where the man she had seen on the tower came from. When replying to Mrs. Grose on the identity of such a man she says that he is "nobody [from the village] ... I didn't tell you, but I made sure." ("Turn" 44) It thus seems possible that in this occasion she could have obtained much information on the valet's aspect. We could argue that the governess already secretly knows about Quint's identity and of his death and justifies in this way her own hallucination. She uses the knowledge obtained through the questioning of the villagers in order to justify her creation of the villain ghost. It is such knowledge of Quint as obtained by the villagers which authorizes and legitimates the exercising of her power as *governess*.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that there is a substantial difference in the knowledge as advocated by the governess and Mrs. Grose. The former mainly bases her knowledge of the ghosts as well as of the children's knowledge of them on her sense of sight, on the way in which the occurrences appear to her eyes. Mrs. Grose, instead, bases her knowledge of the ghosts on the governess' words and, specifically, on what Flora tells her when feverish. When Mrs. Grose admits to believe the governess's words, the

following conversation takes place: “‘You mean that, since yesterday, you have seen -?’ ... ‘I’ve heard -!’ ‘Heard?’ ‘From that child – horrors!’” (“Turn” 146) Mrs. Grose’s knowledge is based on what she hears from the other characters: she comes to believe in the existence of the ghosts without having effectively seen them. It is sufficient for her to trust what she hears. The governess, on the other hand, trusts what she sees and bases her assumptions on the silence of the ghosts and the children. We could argue that this passage also represents Mrs. Grose’s submission to the power/knowledge possessed by the governess. By accepting the truth of the ghosts’ existence, Mrs. Grose is, in fact, recognizing the validity of the governess’ words and argument. She is accepting the governess’ authority on such a subject, though not having witnessed the ghostly apparitions herself. In this way, she is recognizing the validity of the governess’ position, her power. Mrs. Grose accepts the governess’ will to protect Miles and decides to leave her alone with the male child – decision which reveals to be fatal for the little gentleman.

In his analysis of Foucault’s work, May argues that “knowledge is one of the stakes in the struggle by various forces for domination. ... And knowledge changes ... because there is a shift of forces which has resulted in a new appropriation of knowledge and, thus, a new set of interpretations which are now called truth.” (75-76) The first time the governess sees the ghost of Miss Jessel by the lake, she maintains that Flora deliberately turned her back on it in order to hide her own knowledge of such a presence (57). Such a new appropriation of knowledge on the part of the governess brings about a shift of forces. Indeed, she feels sad and discouraged in respect to the supposedly deceitful attitude of the children and their will to keep her in ignorance. She is often shown as weaker than the children and easily bursting into tears (48). She feels powerless against the communion between Miles and Flora and the ghosts. What the governess thinks of as the new truth she has acquired is the

falsity and corruption of the children. Such knowledge has been obtained not by admission on the part of Miles and Flora themselves, but only through a new set of interpretations of the scene she has witnessed by the lake. Subsequently, the governess decides to struggle for domination of the children in respect to the alleged possession of the ghosts. This is the reason why knowledge is one of the stakes in her proclamation of authority over Miles and Flora, in her fight against the various forces represented by Quint and Miss Jessel. Such a fight is the epitome of power, according to May when arguing that “power is a relationship of forces” (86-87). The concept of power is present in “The Turn of the Screw” in the relationship of the forces which contend for the dominion over the children as well as in the governess’ struggles for the obtainment of the knowledge the other characters have of the reality of facts and of the past of Bly.

Nevertheless, we could also interpret the governess’ actions as dictated by her love for and fascination with British aristocracy, the social class superior to her own (Cousineau 47). Her attempts to be noted and loved by the children’s uncle would then be a calculated attempt to climb the nineteenth-century social ladder and become the mistress of Bly. This could be referred again to Foucault’s concept of power/knowledge through its interpretation by Richard A. Lynch, who argues that power “is the effect of interactions between unequal positions in the social landscape” (65). The governess, indeed, is socially inferior to the children; her position occupies an uncertain status between nineteenth-century bourgeois and the working classes (Bell 92). The dynamics of power exemplified by her behaviour and conduct would then be the result of such an unequal position existing between her and the two children as much as their uncle and Quint. Such difference of class is furthermore existent between the governess and Miss Jessel, who betrayed her social position by having an illicit affair with Quint. Lynch also maintains that “power

relations are ... productive – they create and delimit the possible forms that the other social relations can take” (67). It is through the exercise of the power bestowed on her by the children’s uncle that the governess discriminates the reality of nineteenth-century social classes and attributes each character its place in the social ladder. In fact, when seeing Quint’s ghost for the first time, she is almost disgusted by the fact that he is dressed in the landlord’s clothes. She reports that Quint does not wear a gentleman’s hat, which renders him an imperfect imitation of the master of Bly. When talking about him, the governess completes Mrs. Grose’s phrase “But if he’s not a gentleman -” by saying “What *is* he? He’s a horror” (44). The term “horror” could have been used by her with consciousness of strict class distinctions. According to this reading, the governess hates and is disgusted by whoever does not respect class boundaries. In fact, Quint has violated the limits of his position by seducing Miss Jessel and acting freely with Miles. Similarly, the governess judges her predecessor with even greater severity. She, indeed, defines Miss Jessel as “a horror of horrors” (61). Quint has captured the attentions of the people who belong to a higher social position than his own, whereas Miss Jessel has ruined her status of lady by having an affair with a man of the working class. This, together with the fact that the governess effectively represents the same social status of Miss Jessel, would explain the severity of her judgement on her predecessor. When controlling the children from afar with Mrs. Grose, the governess says: “Miles and Flora are steeped in their vision of the dead restored. [Miles]’s not reading to her, ... they’re talking of *them* – they’re talking horrors” (93). In her vision, the children are talking of the mischief accomplished by Miss Jessel and Quint, of their illicit relationship perhaps. She defines as “horrors” a conversation about two persons who transgressed the Victorian social hierarchy.

However, in a certain respect, the governess's judgment on Quint's actions could parallel her desire to have power over Bly: they both try to have control over the children, and particularly Miles, in order to behave freely. The governess's hostility towards Quint could be seen, therefore, as an unconscious hate towards her own enterprise of disregard of class positions. This agrees with the critic Bruce Robbins's view that the love of the governess "for the Master requires that at some future point she herself must repeat the ghosts' transgression and indulge a love prohibited by the social hierarchy" (239). In a certain way, the governess's could be seen indeed as a sort of feminist enterprise of conquest of power and privilege, of rivendication of women's rights. The representation of Quint as the master's double, as taking the same privileges and assuming the "prerogative to express the demonic side of maleness and class power in the Master" (Bell 106) could be seen as typifying the diffused patriarchal ideology of Victorian England. The governess's hate towards the previous valet of Bly would then be motivated by feminist consciousness; it leads to a fight against a representative of those who exploit and oppress women. She wants to have power over the house as well as over the two children. She wants to control them. In this respect, we could argue that her epistemological enterprise reflects the definition of the Foucauldian concept of power/knowledge offered by Walter Privitera. Privitera argues that, according to Foucault, power consists of a "network of micro-struggles ... includ[ing] confrontations within the family, at work, and between the sexes" (92). The epistemological research enacted by the governess is based on a series of interrogations made to Mrs. Grose and the children. According to the governess herself, the other characters resist the knowledge she claims to possess. Mrs. Grose, Miles and Flora do not answer her questions with a confirmation of the truth she is affirming. Thus, we could read all the passages in which the governess finds resistance to her point of view, to her

acquisition of knowledge, as micro-struggles, as confrontations. Her search for knowledge and her claims to an authoritative female voice are therefore entwined with power in the Foucauldian sense.

James's tale, therefore, represents the governess's quest for knowledge as continually intertwined with the idea of power as explained by Foucault. The governess embarks on a search for knowledge which is dictated by her will to control Miles and Flora, by her need to reestablish the power attributed to her by her position as governess. The children and Mrs. Grose, however, often resist her knowledge of the events occurring at Bly. This resistance results in a series of struggles on the governess's part to confirm her knowledge of reality. Nevertheless, her epistemological enterprise could be actually motivated by her will to achieve the power represented by a higher social status in the nineteenth-century hierarchy of classes. This reading of the narrative does not contrast with the various readings offered by the critics for over a century. My analysis of the governess's actions and words, in fact, demonstrates the presence of the Foucauldian concept of power/knowledge in Henry James's tale as consistent with the two main possible readings of the text dividing critics—readings which oppose the actual existence of the ghosts to their presence only in the governess's mind as hallucinations.

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Poems

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A Handful of Feathers

Icarus was a boy with a plan.
He knew how to get free
of the maze
and the minotaur
how to look down on the water
and see the sand beneath the Aegean
the way the clouds do, and he knew
that once he found the grace
left by birds in their wake
there was no turning back
to the solidness of the earth.
He was a dreamer too; he fell
in love with the sun even though he
knew that he would never reach
it with wings made of wax.
He must have thought that
if he flapped his arms a little faster
or a little harder
he could cool down the sun.

Maybe that was his plan all along,
flying until his wings melted,
so that he could fall into the only
other place that offers the chance
for flight,
so that his descent into the sea
would be uncontrollable,
so that there would be no hope
of stopping himself from his own fate.
Maybe in the end
he really wanted to give himself
over to the waves,
or maybe he was just a boy
with some wax,
a handful of feathers
and a love affair
with what he could not reach.

Tandy

She sits long hours by the pond, skipping
stones across the surface of the water,
watching the double skip and the zigzag
to the bottom.

She is sure she can see
the water rise from displacement, and keeps
an exact measure of her influence,
memorizing the slow swell of water.

She knows each place altered by this; boulders
now half-covered which once sunned on the banks,
the blades of grass slowly sinking under,
the Cyprus knees that drown away from sight.

Even when it rains she watches the pond.

She imagines some boy above, skipping
the rain, like stones, across her pond.

She keeps
a record of the pond's growth these days too,
records how much the boy has done, how much
ahead he jumps.

She plans, one day, to pass him.

The Untold Lie

Here the low hills are stippled red and yellow;
along the fence the Buttonbushes bluster,
their last berries between clumps of Fox Sedge.
In the left pocket of this tattered jacket
strands of corn-silk twist between my fingers.
They are woman's hair, when she follows you
into the woods and untames herself, soft and tragic.

Whatever I say of that night is a lie;
the fretting of the Pitch Pines, the shock of damp
as we sat in the Red Fescue. My breath came,
visible against the evening, in little sobs,
and she drew closer. The berry field blushed
somewhere nearby, and the scent clutched at us.
I did not want her, not then, not like that.

And now, I feel the hands of children clutching me,
their thin-legged bodies binding me to her.

I feel the cold pressing in on the Aster flowers,
see the River Oats turn copper. She is waiting.
Somewhere her hair wilts at her shoulder, and she longs
for the boy from that night, wants to be that girl again,
misses the choices we both gave up that night.

Embracing the Liminal Space: H.D.'s Androgynous Language in *Trilogy*

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As H.D. composed sections of *Trilogy* in the midst of World War II, bombs literally dropped outside her window covering her typewriter with debris. Consequently, her desire to create a sense of harmony through her poetics proves unsurprising. Because H.D. aligns war with hegemonic masculinity, she often invokes the goddess figure as a symbol of rebirth to offset the discord which has arisen out of a patriarchal society. However, H.D. summons the male deity as a figure of regeneration as well, implying that both the female and male deity play an equal role in rebirth. As she merges the two in her poem, feelings of new life spring forth. This illustrates a breaking down of the binaries that are often centered on ideas of masculinity and femininity and pit the two against each other. In combining the male and female deities, H.D. obliterates this binary structure and consequently creates a fluid gap between the two. It is in this liminal space that a more elastic language becomes possible, and indeed H.D.'s poetic words take on an androgynous quality as they oscillate between a more masculine and feminine style of writing. As her words simultaneously embrace a single identity within their individual context and then inflate to accept a multiplicity of meanings, they reflect ideas about masculinist and feminist writing respectively. Luce Irigaray states that while a more "masculine" style of writing may revolve around the fixity of words with a single reading, a "feminine" style is one which "*is constantly in the process of weaving itself, [. . .] embracing words and yet casting them off to avoid becoming fixed, immobilized*" (1470). H.D. is concerned with both the fixed definition of a word and also how a single word may be inflated to encompass a variety of meanings. It is within this androgynous, and decidedly modern, space that words may

contract and expand as they glide between a masculine and a feminine form. Thus, through the examination of H.D.'s use of phonetics and "etymological alchemy" in her amalgamation of the male and female deities, one may observe how she creates a sense of harmony through the elasticity of an androgynous language (Friedman 247).

In *Notes on Thought and Vision*, H.D. marks the poetic vision, and thus poetic language, as one that contains masculine and feminine elements. She states, "The majority of dream and of ordinary vision is vision of the womb," initially linking the poet's mind to certain feminine characteristics (21). However, along with the creativity of the womb, she notes that one must have the intense imagination of the mind, which proves to be the more important of the two. She notes, "Most of the so-called artists of today have lost the use of their brain. There is no way of arriving at the over-mind, except through the intellect" (21). Without the mind, an organ shared by both sexes, one cannot reach the level of poetic vision and language. As to the actual nature of the lyrical brain, it is significant that H.D. states, "We must be 'in love' before we can understand the mysteries of vision [. . .]. The minds of the two lovers merge, interact in sympathy of thought: The brain, inflamed and excited by this interchange of ideas takes on its character of over-mind" (22). Here, the mind fuses together like two lovers, symbolizing the union of the masculine and feminine. As Lisa Rado observes, H.D. "represents the over-mind, or transcendental imagination, in terms of a confrontation between rarified male and female elements" (65). It is from this figurative marriage that a profusion of poetics breaks forth. As the masculine and feminine merge, the binaries between the two are liquidated. This creates the expansive liminal space in the mind where language becomes malleable. The "inflamed and excited" brain is raised to a level where the language it produces is androgynous, or to a point where each word may oscillate freely between a masculine fixity and a feminine fluidity where it

maintains a plurality of readings. This is precisely the idea that H.D. plays with in *Trilogy* as she invokes the god and goddess with a poetic language whose pliable properties mirror the masculine and feminine bond.

H.D. discusses the elasticity and transformative properties of language itself in *Trilogy's* first book, *The Walls Do Not Fall*. Rather than forcing words to remain within the confines of a specific definition, H.D. allows them to retain both a singular meaning and take on a plurality of readings which represents the all-encompassing nature of the masculine and feminine union:

too little: I know, I feel
the meaning that words hide;

they are anagrams, cryptograms,
little boxes, conditioned

to hatch butterflies . . . (*WDNF* 53)

For the speaker, linguistic games may be played as the inherent elasticity of language lends itself to these tricks. An anagram allows any individual word to retain a precise meaning within a given context, but this word may then be deconstructed and rewritten to create a different message. Thus, it relies on both the masculine form of writing where the fixity of words is retained, and the feminine style where words spread out to maintain a variety of readings. In the case of a cryptogram, a secret contained within a word or phrase may only be revealed by yet another word. In other terms, a specific word with a certain definition may be implemented to unlock a variety of meanings harbored within other verbal cues, again reflecting Irigaray's idea of the masculine and feminine use of words. Indeed, words

are mutable and playful entities which, because of their contracting and expanding nature, create both a finite and infinite number of meanings. As Helen V. Emmitt correctly states, “H.D. does not try to overcome the duplicity of language; rather, she turns its lying duplicity into an affirming multiplicity” (133). H.D. appropriately employs the image of a butterfly hatching out of its cocoon to illuminate how the flexible nature of words gives birth to a variety of readings. In her connection between words and butterflies, H.D. may even have been referencing Woolf’s strikingly similar idea regarding the nature of language:

Perhaps the one reason why we have no great poet, novelist, or critic writing today is that we refuse words their liberty. We pin them down to one meaning, their useful meaning, the meaning which makes us catch the train, the meaning which makes us pass the examination. And when words are pinned down they fold their wings and die. (“Craftsmanship” 206)

Woolf too embraces the fluidity of language, comparing words to butterflies, and asserts, like H.D., that to deny words their freedom is to deny them life. It is through this all-encompassing language which retains both singular and multiple readings that H.D. invokes both male and female deities. She even states in *Tribute to Freud* that she saw her language as one which naturally retains a tendency to “break bounds,” these bounds potentially being the binaries constructed around ideas of masculinity and femininity (75). Thus, the shattering of these binaries generates the liminal space where a single word may become androgynous with its one and many meanings.

In her summoning of Osiris and Sirius, H.D. implements a more elastic language as she employs both anagrammatic and phonetic links between them. As the reader first peruses these lines, though, he or she is initially struck by the specific names H.D. summons:

For example:

Osiris equates O-sir-is or O-Sire-is

Osiris,

the star Sirius

relates resurrection myth

and resurrection reality

though the ages (*WDNF* 54)

The reader is first and foremost drawn to the mythological tales attached to these proper nouns which essentially serve as their definitions. This highlights what Irigaray identifies as the masculine dimension of words with their fixed meanings. H.D.'s naming of Osiris is highly significant as he is the Egyptian lord of creation and fertility, thus also linking him to the perpetual birth of the word as it may, and will, take on a variety of meanings ("Osiris, Killed by Set, Is Resurrected by Isis"). However, one could not be drawn to this possible linguistic tie, which will further be discussed, without his specific name and tale. This underscores the significance of the word with a concrete definition as it calls the image of resurrection and rebirth to the reader's mind.

H.D. also mentions Sirius which is the star aligned with the resurrection of Osiris and the flooding of the Nile ("Sirius"). Susan Gubar also helpfully states, "Sirius is the star representing Isis come to wake her brother [or husband] from death" (208). Isis, then, serves as a link between Osiris and Sirius and is also connected to a myth of rebirth. Indeed, she is the one who brings her husband back to life as she sews his limbs together. Again,

though, it is through the name of Sirius with its specific tale that one makes the connection to Isis who also retains a fixed definition of one who brings fertility. In summoning the names of Osiris and Sirius, H.D. evokes a sense of new life which also reflects the changeability of words. Furthermore, H.D. mirrors the fluid androgynous space which enables the mutability of words through the merging of the male and female deity. H.D. even ends this particular poem with a positive image of androgyny:

recover the secret of Isis,

which is: there was One

in the beginning, Creator,

Fosterer, Begetter, the Same-forever (55)

Here, H.D. deconstructs the masculine and feminine binaries in the combination of the male and female deity. As a result, the original "Creator" is reborn, and with this deity comes the infinitely fertile realm where words may take on a plurality of meanings. From the simple invocation of a god or goddess' name with a fixed definition or tale comes feelings of rebirth or possibility which will feed a language's need to grow. Indeed, before H.D. may dive into her phonetic games with "Osiris" and "Sirius," she must have a fixed platform from which to jump.

After H.D. highlights the masculine fixed word through the invocation of divine names, she implements linguistic tricks to verbally demonstrate the feminine expansiveness of language. Thus, it is in this liminal androgynous space which the union of the male and female god produce that words may contract and expand. Phonetically, Osiris and Sirius are linked as they share the sounds of "sire" and "is." H.D. makes this clear as she breaks up "Osiris" into phonemes just as his brother Set divides Osiris' body. Both acts are related

since Set's anger ultimately leads to Osiris' resurrection, while H.D.'s linguistic division of his name illuminates its connection to the Dog Star, a symbol of the land's fertility and Isis ("Sirius"). Her phonetic focus also demonstrates what Irigaray labels as the feminine ability of words to stretch and link to other seemingly dissimilar words, underscoring the fluidity of language. H.D. also pulls "Osiris" apart to create an anagrammatic connection with "Sirius" as "Osiris" may be rearranged to form a word visually similar to "Sirius." This represents the mutability of language whose wide boundaries mirror a more feminine style of poetics. H.D. also stretches the name "Osiris" and rearranges it into Sirius to demonstrate a state of androgyny. Because Sirius, as Gubar points out, is connected, if not synonymous, with Isis, the male Osiris momentarily changes into a female goddess. Thus, the gender switching god and the pliable language which illustrates this act both underscore the linguistic transformative state that lies between the feminine and masculine poles. Dianne Chisholm observes that H.D. "does not deconstruct the word into pictorial representations of the operations of nature but instead decodes its ancient mystery" (63). Indeed, the fertile androgynous space between the male and female deity lends words an elastic quality where they may retain both their original meaning and expand to embrace a variety of readings.

Similarly, in poem eight of *Tribute to the Angles*, H.D. invokes a variety of sacred figures through her mutable language. While not all of these figures are deities per se, they each retain a large amount of power within a religious context:

Now polish the crucible

and in the bowl distill

a word most bitter, *marah*,

a word bitterer still, *mar*,

sea, brine, breaker, seducer,

giver of life, giver of tears;

Now polish the crucible

and set the jet of flame

under, till *marah-mar*

are melted, fuse and join

and change and alter,

mer, mere, mère, mater, Maia, Mary,

Star of the Sea,

Mother. (TA 71)

H.D.'s reference to the Virgin Mary recalls her invocation of "Osiris" and "Sirius," as her naming of the Virgin causes the reader to recall her Biblical tale and role of "Mother" (TA 71). Again, the importance of a word or name with its fixed definition proves important as, in this case, it allows the reader to tie "Mary" with thoughts of rebirth. Although the Virgin Mary is not typically considered a goddess figure, she did essentially receive the status of one at the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD when the title "*theotokos*" was bestowed upon her (Baring and Cashford 550). Because "*theotokos*" literally means "bearer of God," Mary takes on the role of any primary cultural goddess as she gives birth to an actual deity and

not just to “God made flesh.” Therefore, H.D.’s conjuring of the name “Mary” forces the reader to remember her as one who will give new life, especially as Hermes Trismegistus merges his alchemical powers with her name. This specific tale which is attached to her name positions this proper noun in the realm of the masculine style of writing as its single meaning links her to the Great Mother, or to one who gives life. It is from this single definition, though, that H.D. may connect a variety of other words to her name through etymological and phonetic ties to demonstrate the feminine possibilities of language. While one could argue that Mary Magdalene is also summoned in the invocation of “Mary” since H.D. later connects Mary Magdalene to a variety of female deities, H.D. has yet to introduce Mary Magdalene in this context. Consequently, it appears that she is primarily referring to the Virgin Mother and her particular tale. H.D. does not stop at the potential Biblical goddess figure, though. Indeed, “Star of the Sea” refers to Venus as she was born of the sea, and was considered to be the brightest star in the morning and evening. Thus, through Venus’ singular mythological story, the reader easily links the Roman goddess to this phrase and to her tale of love and fertility. Both Mary and Venus are called to the reader’s mind with their similar definitions of ones who stand for new life. It is not until Hermes Trismegistus performs his verbal alchemy, though, that these proper nouns are linked with other significant words, allowing each word to expand its meaning with its connection to others.

Indeed, Hermes Trismegistus must be invoked before the female deities are merged into one goddess through a malleable language which also links them to a multiplicity of other words (*TA* 71). Trismegistus, a Pagan Gnostic aligned with alchemy, is also identified with the Greek god Hermes (Barnstone 177). Trismegistus’ connection with this god proves quite significant since this deity was considered the “creator and orderer of the universe”

(177). Even if one was unfamiliar with the figure of Hermes Trismegistus, his first name alone should be enough for one to make the immediate connection between the alchemist and the Greek god. Consequently, the reading of his name conjures a single myth of fertility, again highlighting the importance of a single definition for a name or word. Both the Greek god and Trismegistus are automatically linked by the reader to the idea of fertility and rebirth just as the goddess figures are. Furthermore, it is through this summoned Gnostic alchemist that the goddesses are unified. Friedman states, "The 'jewel' in the crucible is both the poet's mother and the sea as 'mother' of all life. Amniotic fluid cradles the beginning of individual birth, and seawater, too bitter to drink, created the biochemistry needed for all evolution" (247-48). While Friedman's point is both interesting and useful as it is the feminine word which evolves into one with a multiplicity of readings, she wrongly cuts out the role of Hermes Trismegistus, or the masculine component. It is he who must begin with the single words "*marah*," "*mar*," "*Mary*," etc., and essentially serves as the catalyst for that transformation. Moreover, the Greek god Hermes was also thought to be the inventor of writing, and it is Trismegistus' verbal alchemy in conjunction with the names of the female deities which illustrates the pliability of H.D.'s words (Barnstone 177). Indeed, he must begin with words and their singular definitions before he can link them all together.

H.D. explores a variety of words which she connects to the goddess figures with their etymological roots and phonetic links through Hermes Trismegistus. In turn, H.D. demonstrates how an elastic language may broaden from a more masculine style which condones the fixity of words. In breaking down the binaries which appear to pit the masculine and feminine against each other, H.D. illuminates the limitless liminal space which is stretched wide between these two spheres. H.D. calls Hermes Trismegistus to heat the word "*marah*," which is Hebrew for bitter, into the Spanish word for sea, and phonetic

match, “mar” (Barnstone 187). While the speaker states that “*marah*” becomes bitterer in its transformation into “*mar*,” it is the sea which produces new life. This again highlights the significance of the single meaning of words, yet the phonetic link with the “m” and “ar” sound between the two words allows “*marah*” to transform into the more positive “*mar*.” H.D. does not stop here as “*marah-mar*,” now visually bound by a hyphen, rapidly morphs into a variety of words which are both phonetically and etymologically connected.

“*[M]arah-mar*” suddenly becomes “mer, mere, mère, mater, Maia, Mary” (TA 71). “Mar,” “mer,” and “mere” are all etymologically linked, and thus all pertain to the same thing: water. “Mer” is French for “sea” while “mere” is a small lake or marsh (Barnstone 187). Similarly, “mère” and “mater” are connected etymologically, and as a result they both translate to “mother.” Significantly, “mer,” “mere,” and “mère” are phonetically linked, while “mère” and “mater” are etymologically connected. Consequently, “mère” is the binding word in this list as it falls into both groups, pulling all of the words together. The result of this is clear. The images of water flow into the general terms for mother, and from this bond specific goddesses arise: Maia, and the Virgin Mary. It may also be of some note that “mer” is the root word for “Mary.” Here, it seems quite obvious that both the individual readings of words in terms of their basic definitions prove important as one must first grasp their meanings before one can see the symbolism in their transformation. Indeed, H.D. transforms words of a potentially negative nature into those of life and regeneration. As she links these words together through an elastic language which glides between the masculine and feminine use of words, her “etymological alchemy distills the cultural accumulations of negative meaning into the word’s ‘root,’ or pure essence” (Friedman 248). As Albert Gelpi correctly asserts, “feelings of separateness g[i]ve way to a sense of organic wholeness” (11). One should make clear that while H.D. melts and

transforms these words into the single “Mother,” her demonstration of how words are linked and may expand and contract in their connections reflects the liminal space between the masculine and feminine bond.

While the disruption of masculine and feminine binaries provides a fluid space for H.D.’s androgynous language, it also serves a practical purpose for her. Indeed, H.D.’s poetry evokes a feeling of harmony which both the poet and her contemporaries sought in the midst of World War II. It seems that in her writing of *Trilogy* and exploration of an elastic language, H.D. attempts to provide a view of possible peace for her readers. In *Notes on Thought and Vision*, she states, “There is already enough beauty in the world of art [. . .] to remake the world” (26). Through these words she implies that art may have a significant impact on the world in terms of healing some of its struggles and repairing its fragmentation. In *The Walls Do Not Fall*, H.D. illuminates the importance of the poet in this light:

we are the keepers of the secret,
the carriers, the spinners

of the rare intangible thread
that binds all humanity (24)

The secret that the poet, or specifically H.D., carries is the importance of harmony in the world. Indeed, as H.D. breaks down the masculine and feminine binaries to create a unified space between the two, she reflects the need for peace and balance in a war-torn world. The poet spins this truth out using the thread of an elastic language which one expands and contracts to connect “all humanity” in a state of tranquility.

H.D. even directly states that the word may conquer the sword and the violence it inflicts:

forever; remember, O Sword,
you are the younger brother, the latter-born

your Triumph, however exultant,
must one day be over,

in the beginning
was the Word. (WDFN 17)

Not only does H.D. prophesize that the word will ultimately defeat the sword, she also states that the sword itself will always prove inferior as it is the word's younger sibling. Furthermore, because words are "healers, helpers" to H.D., their specific nature runs counter to that of the sword which exists only to inflict injury (34). Thus, H.D.'s fluid poetics gives life as it demonstrates the unity she seeks in its androgynous characteristics.

Friedman agrees that H.D.'s verbal alchemy "serves as metaphor for cultural purification as well as for linguistic restoration" (Friedman 249). It alternately spreads out to embrace all things and contracts to lend a sense of closeness and intimacy.

Through her malleable androgynous language, H.D. evokes feelings of harmony as she combines the male and female deities in her poetry. The movement of her words from the masculine realm to the feminine one naturally reflects the amalgamation of Osiris and Isis as well as Mary and Hermes Trismegistus. Furthermore, as H.D. breaks down the binaries based on gender, it is clear that she desires to dismantle the boundaries between countries that are at war. Just as she finds the common denominator of fertility and rebirth

between the male and female god, H.D. is implicitly calling nations at war to do the same. She desires these countries to drop their antagonistic feelings which serve as the rigid borders that prevent peace. Just as her language easily flows from a masculine state to a more feminine one, H.D. calls those involved in World War II to follow suite; to let go of their restricting nationalistic ideas and thus allow their borders to become more fluid, more elastic. Indeed, it is a lesson one would do well to remember.

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Living in the Shadow: Between the Idea and the Reality in Edward Albee's *Tiny Alice* and T. S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party*

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In a playwriting career that has caused much consternation, Edward Albee's *Tiny Alice* drew especially vitriolic reviews.¹ Philip Roth famously proclaimed, "*Tiny Alice* is so unconvincing, so remote, so obviously a sham—so much the kind of play that makes you want to rise from your seat and shout, 'Baloney'" (qtd. in MacFarquhar 74).² Partly this has to do with timing; in 1962, Albee achieved both critical and popular success on Broadway with *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, and, after adapting a Carson McCullers novel,³ *Tiny Alice* was his 1964 follow-up. Any work coming on the heels of great success strains under the often insurmountable weight of expectation. *Virginia Woolf* inspired praise of Albee as the savior of the American theater, and one critic called him "the most distinguished playwright in the history of the American theatre" -- considerable weight indeed.⁴

Albee himself dismissed the confusion over *Tiny Alice* as the meddling of critics whose need for simplistic interpretation disrupted the purely theatrical experience of the first audiences. He has said, "I keep remembering that the preview audiences, before the

¹ A version of this essay was given at the 29th Comparative Drama Conference in Los Angeles, CA. My thanks go to Verna Foster for her encouragement of this piece in its early stages, and to Patrick Query and Timothy J. Peebles for assistance and insight in successive drafts and conversation.

² Roth's ire, however, seems almost kind compared with the reaction of one preview audience which set off stink bombs during the performance (Croall 429).

³ *The Ballad of the Sad Cafe* (1963)

⁴ This anonymous quotation may be found on the back cover of the 1966 Pocket Books edition of the text.

critics went to *Tiny Alice*, didn't have anywhere near the amount of trouble understanding what the play was about; that didn't happen until the critics *told* them that it was too difficult to understand" (56). And yet, even John Gielgud, who originated the lead role, confessed to accepting the part based upon only reading the first two acts, and to never fully comprehending the play's ending. Gielgud complained that the final monologue was too long and possibly blasphemous, and that audiences would "all be charging out getting their snow boots" (Croall 428). Director Alan Schneider recalled that "Gielgud wanted to withdraw [from the play] almost daily, and was sustained mainly by post-rehearsal brandy and [co-star] Irene [Worth]'s good-natured joshing" (428).

Scholarship on *Tiny Alice* has traveled even further, perhaps, from Albee's belief that the mere experience of the play unencumbered by critical apparatuses is the surest route to clarity. A number of academic critics have pointed to the play's reliance on prior sources to better understand its peculiarities. Most consistently mentioned and most illuminating is T. S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* from 1949. Christopher Bigsby suggests that Eliot's concern with the metaphysical was a foundation and an inspiration for Albee:

Not for nothing does the search for God begin with the word, and, perverse though the suggestion may seem, Albee's drama, no less than T.S. Eliot's, can be seen as religious in the sense that ... it was concerned with accounting for the mechanisms whereby we compensate for a sense of abandonment, adjust to an awareness of death and accommodate to a fear of contingency...[Albee's] is a world whose order has decayed. God is dead.

(135)

Obviously, Albee is no evangelist.¹

Every critic who has noted the influence of Eliot on Albee draws the same basic conclusion: Eliot's religiosity allows for redemption while Albee's agnosticism permits only an abyss. My reading of these plays emphasizes not a distinction between Christian orthodoxy and agnosticism, but rather Eliot's modernist exploration of a realm between the empirical and non-empirical. With this emphasis, we might see Eliot's verse drama as more explorative than has typically been seen, more willing to interrogate Christian mythology (or at least its mysteries), and we might also see Albee offering meaning that is more than abyssal. Though Eliot and Albee are from different generations, use different formal approaches (loosely characterized as verse drama and absurdist theatre), and have differing worldviews (the Orthodox and the agnostic), their plays resolve at a similar place, which, following Eliot, is the place we might call "the Shadow." Ultimately, I would like to suggest that this notion of Shadow-space provided Eliot and Albee resources for dealing with contingencies following World War Two.

Eliot's notion of the Shadow pervades his art, but its most pertinent usage is in *The Hollow Men* from 1925. This poem describes the plight of men without agency or meaning: "Shape without form, shade without colour,/ Paralysed force, gesture without motion" (1967: 56). Typically read as a bleak portrait of modern life, the paradoxes here create incomprehensibility rather than alterity. Like the speaker, we become paralyzed when we attempt to puzzle out the meaning of a *motionless gesture*, et cetera. And yet, I read the final section of the poem as containing a slight glimmer of hope for those hollow ones in

¹ Albee was raised in the Episcopal Church but left at age six, citing disturbance over the crucifixion. However, he has said, "I've always been interested in Jesus Christ. About the only substantial and good Marxist I know about" (134).

“the dead land” (1967: 57). Several strophes in this final section are separated by italicized lines--“*For Thine is the Kingdom*”--suggesting the form of a litany (58). The question remains whether this section parodies liturgical worship or endorses it. But regardless of possible irony, Christian ritual imposes order in the dead land, allowing the possibility for meaning even if salvation remains oblique.

The crucial strophe for my reading of *The Cocktail Party* and *Tiny Alice* comes in the midst of this litany when the speaker intones:

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the Shadow [58]

We are positioned between a binary (idea and reality) and synonyms (motion and act). Instead of paralysis, Eliot’s paradoxes might open new cognitive space—a realm not quite real and not quite ideal: the realm of the Shadow.

I have come to believe that literary modernism was a continual attempt to access something like Eliot’s Shadow-space. The break with nineteenth-century realist literature was not clean; Joyce’s (over)abundance of textual data simultaneously makes *Ulysses* seem more real than realism and more mythical through its exaggerated emphasis on daily trivialities. Modernists were not merely concerned with representation (the “idea”) nor experience (the “reality”) but with a complex interaction between the two that formed a space somewhere between this binary.

The Cocktail Party came nearly twenty-five years after *The Hollow Men*, yet Eliot's preoccupation with the Shadow remains prominent. The play is structured around two parties, separated by several years, in the London flat of Edward and Lavinia Chamberlayne. In the first act we discover that Lavinia has left Edward shortly before a party attended by Aunt Julia, their friend Peter Quilpe, and, among others, a mysterious Uninvited Guest. Their marital troubles have particular roots in Edward's infidelity with Celia Coplestone, but Edward describes the problem in abstract terms: "Lavinia always had the ambition/ To establish herself in two worlds at once -- / But she herself had to be the link between them" (314). Lavinia may be an attempted link between the idea and the reality, but she remains, at the beginning of the play, an ersatz Shadow.

Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, the mysterious Uninvited Guest, eventually guides the Chamberlaynes to renewed commitment and Celia to foreign missions. Typically, these resolutions are seen as forms of Christian redemption, where life acquires new meaning and wholeness through sacrifice.¹ However, this reading assumes Eliot's whole-hearted approval of Celia and the Chamberlaynes' lives.

In the third and final act, another party begins in the home of the Chamberlaynes, and we discover that Celia met a grisly death serving natives in Kinkanja. The two years between acts two and three have brought reconciliation for Edward and Lavinia. Apparently, Reilly's guidance was successful, but Lavinia remains shocked by his reaction to the news of Celia's death. He regards this fact with complacency that verges on

¹ See for instance Carol H. Smith on two possible forms of Christian redemption in *The Cocktail Party* (Brooker 146-48). Also, see Raymond Williams's "Tragic Resignation and Sacrifice" in *Critical Quarterly* 5 (1963): 5-19.

satisfaction, and Lavinia demands a response. Somewhat ironic for a verse drama, Reilly asks if he may speak poetry. He recites:

For know there are two worlds of life and death:

One that which thou beholdest; but the other

Is underneath the grave, where do inhabit

The shadows of all forms that think and live (Eliot 383)

Reilly explains that Celia lived as one of those forms, a shadow whose death was foreseen, who lived happily in the knowledge that life was preparation for certain death.

This death seems not to carry with it any promised resurrection, and the other characters struggle with guilt for their complicity in Celia's demise. Reilly assures them that her death was foreseen and therefore no blame can be assigned. Resurrection is figured not as some function of afterlife or cosmic telos, but in Edward's realization that "every moment is a fresh beginning" (387). Rather than some form of transformation, life involves cyclical renewal, just like the recurring cocktail parties.¹ Lavinia utters the final line: "It's begun" (387). Like the final "Yes" of *Ulysses*, this line would appear to be a sign of hope. Yet in a play so focused on suffering and illusions, what has begun only potentially brings redemption. Being in the Shadow brings pain along with possibility.

In *Tiny Alice*, the Shadow looms over Julian, a Catholic lay brother sent by his Cardinal to the mysterious house of Alice, a would-be patron. The central crisis of the play occurs with Julian's need to face the difference between God and his *belief* in God. Albee never quite lets us know which of these two, the thing or man's idea of the thing, is illusory. At the center of the mansion is a scale model of itself, a replica so perfect that it seems to

¹ For an elaboration of the modernist view of cyclical history, see Louise Blakeney Williams, *Modernism and the Ideology of History : Literature, Politics, and the Past* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2002).

contain miniature versions of the human inhabitants: Lawyer, Butler, Julian, and Miss Alice.¹ The negotiation for transference of funds turns into a negotiation for Julian's soul, with the devious Lawyer, servile Butler, and enigmatic Alice exerting their various wills on his decision.

Critics have noted the similar functions of the characters in *The Cocktail Party* and *Tiny Alice*. Alex, Julia, and Reilly are Guardians for Eliot's party-goers, shaping destinies and protecting social values. Lawyer, Butler, and the Cardinal similarly affect Julian's life, but the tone differs. Eliot's Guardians guide their wards through bumbling comic turns like Julia's "lost umbrella" shtick. Albee's Guardians attack Julian with mind games akin to George and Martha's in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* The Butler dampens Julian's enthusiasm over the fact that "Butler" is both the man's name and occupation:

Julian: How extraordinary!

Butler: No, not really. Appropriate: Butler...butler. If my name were
Carpenter, and I were a butler...or if I *were* a carpenter, and my
name were Butler...

Julian: But *still*...

Butler: ...it would not be so appropriate. And think: if I were a woman,
and had become a chambermaid, say, and my name were Butler...

Julian: ...you would be in for some rather tiresome exchanges.

Butler: None more than this.

¹ Throughout the play, the mansion's inhabitants debate their relationship to the model, and we must keep wondering whether the "full size" mansion is really an oversized model of the "model." Albee never allows us to be completely sure what is real and what is abstraction, which positions us somewhere between the two.

Julian: Aha. (Albee 29)

Here is another instance of Albee's disrupting the separation between "idea" and "reality," which in this case involves deconstructing the general/specific binary. The occupational category "butler" is blurred with the particular name "Butler" so that we may never be sure whether the man is being called by name or by function in any given utterance. Most of Julian's interactions with these Guardian figures involve some kind of shame. Stripping his beliefs seems to require purgation through awkwardness and embarrassment.

Julian's infamous final soliloquy has caused more perplexity than perhaps anything in the play. In his final minutes, he mingles cries to God with clichéd prayers, screams of forsakenness, stories of his youth, and descriptions of physical pain. Most prominently, this speech expresses profound doubt. A sing-song prayer—"But to live again, be born once more, sure in the sight of..."—turns into a shout: "THERE IS NO ONE!" (181). Most critics read the play's ending as a rejection of religious illusions in the material reality of death. Ruby Cohn writes, "whereas Eliot builds his comedy toward Christian martyrdom, Albee subverts such martyrdom as illusion" (11).

Reading Julian's end as a loss of faith, however, does not take doubt far enough. Not only does Julian doubt his religious belief; he also doubts his *disbelief*. Julian's deity acquires greater ambiguity the closer he comes to death. He shouts: "I DO NOT UNDERSTAND, O LORD, MY GOD, WHAT THOU WILT HAVE OF ME! [...] ALICE!?" Then, laughing softly: "Oh, Alice, why hast *thou* forsaken me?" And, after looking at the model: "Hast thou? Alice? *Hast* thou forsaken me" (181). God and Alice are conflated because they fill similar needs for Julian; both are *ideas* that shape his reality. What we have in this moment is not simply faith in God replaced by unbelief. His doubt penetrates even the potentially stable ground of atheism.

The difference between Eliot and Albee's visions cannot be characterized solely in terms of Christian faith. Edward and Lavinia may find some kind of redemption in their renewed marital fidelity, but the play ends with their preparing for one more cocktail party. The shallow and mundane dominate their lives more than any metaphysical salvation. Celia is often regarded as the character whose path leads to Christian spirituality. In his review, William Carlos Williams offered what has become the standard reading of the play: "There are two ways out—and it was very kind of Mr. Eliot to have provided them—the way of the Chamberlaynes and Celia's way" (qtd. in Grant, 601). I posit, however, that neither path fully permits a "way out." If the Chamberlaynes are immersed in reality, then Celia seems lost to abstraction. Her crucifixion by natives over an anthill in Kinkanja is such an extreme death, so far removed from the play's diegesis, that it becomes symbolic. Albee, on the other hand, presents an on-stage death which vacillates between metaphysical dilemma and physical distress. We cannot quite be sure whether Julian meets God, denies God, or discovers that there is no God to meet or deny. He seemingly assumes all three positions, rendering his death something in between abstraction and reality. All we may be sure of is Albee's stage direction about a "great shadow, or darkening [that] fills the stage...the shadow of a great presence filling the room" (183).

The end of the Second World War marks a significant change in social discourse. Martin Esslin offers a concise description of Albee's (and Eliot's) world: "The decline of religious faith was masked until the end of the Second World War by the substitute religions of faith in progress, nationalism, and various totalitarian fallacies. All this was shattered by the war" (23). Esslin describes the loss of meta-narratives in postmodernity, a condition that potentially leaves subjects isolated and meaningless.

Eliot and Albee's works respond to this condition by dramatizing alienation and the search for meaning. Irene Worth¹ commented that Albee's radio play *Listening* (1976), in which she played a leading role, corresponded with Eliot's worldview:

In a sense, it is the realization of something T. S. Eliot said to me when I was in *The Cocktail Party* and I made the mistake of asking him what the play was about. Eliot said that, for him, the horror of life at that time was the absolute breakdown in the ability of people to reach one another. We make noises, he said, and think we're talking. We look at one another, and think we're seeing. And we're wrong. (Albee 123)

Worth's "mistake" generated an explanation of the world as Eliot saw it, a world similar to that envisioned by Albee.

In their post-World War Two contexts, Eliot and Albee display a similar concern with meaning in community. Eliot had tried to make his art increasingly wide reaching, perhaps hoping that community could be established through aesthetic forms. The difference in style between the fragmentary and obtuse *Sweeney Agonistes*, his earliest attempt at drama, and the significantly more demotic play *The Cocktail Party* exhibits a need to speak to some larger group of people.² The characters at the end of *The Cocktail Party* hope that the idea of Celia conveyed by the Guardians will inform their lived experience, rendering them somewhere between the idea and the reality. Perhaps a community can exist in the

¹ Worth provides another link between these dramatists; she originated the roles of Celia Coplestone and Miss Alice (for which she won a Tony Award).

² *The Cocktail Party* did in fact achieve the sort of success Eliot had hoped for, with a successful Broadway run and a Tony Award for best play in 1950.

Shadow despite “the absolute breakdown in the ability of people to reach one another” (123).

Eliot’s belief in meaning derived from the non-empirical has been contrasted with Albee’s postmodern rejection of ultimate meaning despite our incessant searching. But I believe Albee seeks community no less than Eliot. Elizabeth Klaver suggests that Albee shares Thomas Pynchon’s worldview and that Julian becomes a kind of postmodern detective like Oedipa Maas, caught in a web of interpretation that refuses to make sense. She argues:

Forced to continually reassess language and action, the reader of *Tiny Alice* finds her own dilemma encoded into the very fabric of the text. The determination of a solution finally appears as an impossible task for those inside the play and for those outside. When it collapses distinctions between the reader’s problematic and the character’s, the play uncomfortably interferes with our attitudes toward reality. (181)

This uncomfortable interference with reality may be what those first reviewers found so troubling. And yet, that may be where community begins, in our implication in the play’s diegesis and our imagined connections between characters and the non-diegetic world. The disruption of our sense of the real indicates the greatest point of convergence between Eliot and Albee’s texts. In the shift from late to post modernism, Eliot and Albee meet somewhere between recourse to abstraction and materialism as exclusive sources of meaning, somewhere between the idea and the reality, in the Shadow.

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