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**AN ERF RETROSPECTIVE:
PAPERS FROM THE ENGLISH RESEARCH FORUM
2004–2009**

**EDITED BY
ATTILA DÓSA**

**LANGUAGE EDITOR
TED BAILEY**

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THE EDITOR'S FOREWORD

In 2004 we launched a series of talks and events which came to be called the English Research Forum. Its main goals have been cementing the identity of the English Department at Miskolc and creating a framework for talking about research interests outside the classroom. Despite the difficulties that academics everywhere are all too familiar with, the Forum is still up and running, and it continues to meet three-four times each term.

Here at Miskolc this is a recently founded and modest English Department which functions in the shadow of other prominent institutions in the country and is encumbered in striving for research excellence by many factors. First, since the majority of our students go into business and industry, they demand mainly a reasonable founding in language skills (which they can complement with a choice of specialized courses in literature, linguistics, and culture), and so the numbers of our language classes have always gone well beyond the traditional amount carried by faculty at research universities. Second, educational policy both at the national level at, regrettably, *intra muros*, is cutting, one after the other, the lifelines necessary for development. One further reason may be that, physically speaking, we are located in a region that has been severely hit by economic crises and dislocation in the last few decades: it is a region where young talent is skimmed off by top institutions in the country and from where, after graduation, young people tend to migrate to the capital, if not abroad. However, residing in the periphery (both metaphorically and literally speaking) does not automatically entail an indifference to the international exchange of ideas related to the subject of English. The Forum's primary job has been, therefore, to organize events that raise student attention and, whenever it seemed possible, to bring in scholars of note.

This special issue of *Publicationes* wants to be a record of our activities in the Forum's first five years. In that time, over forty (both formal and informal) events were organized. Papers were delivered by staff and students on their research; readings were held in and outside the university; and speakers were invited from Finland, the Czech Republic, the United States, and all member countries of the UK except Wales.

The first talks were given by our Erasmus guest professors. Lawrence Normand (Middlesex, London) spoke about recent developments in Shakespeare studies in March 2004 and, in a related vein, Anthony Johnson (Oulu, Finland) gave three distinguished talks on imagology and English Renaissance studies in October 2004. In 2007 Helena Janasová and Andy Chernel—both from Zlín, the Czech Republic—followed suit.

The Forum was launched formally just before the Christmas break in December 2004 with a talk on Hungarian education by Colin Swatridge. He was then

putting the finishing touches on his book *A Country Full of Aliens: A Briton in Hungary*. Colin intended his book to be both a private memoir of his years spent at Miskolc as “a part-time full-time professor” (as he calls himself) and a public response to George Mikes’s hilarious *How to be an Alien*, which is a Hungarian’s take on being an émigré in Britain. The formal launch of his book was held next fall, in 2005, involving a round table discussion with a number of students.

The Forum was also designed to give space to student achievement in various ways. One such way has been inviting students who spent a term at foreign universities with an Erasmus scholarship to speak about their experiences and give useful advice to fellow students considering applying for a grant the following year. The first Erasmus talk was delivered by Szilvia König; she was followed by Richárd Baráth (both studied at Middlesex), and then by Linda Lakatos (also Middlesex) and Éva Podlovics (Oulu). Another such platform has been inviting students to deliver papers on their original research. In December 2005, Gabriella Varga spoke about her research on the Oscar-winning Miskolc-born British filmmaker Emerich Pressburger. Her work was instrumental in a longer process that led to unveiling a plaque on Pressburger’s birthplace in Miskolc and organizing a round table discussion on Pressburger’s heritage at the CINEFEST 2009, which is one of Hungary’s bigger film festivals. In spring next year, Gábor Varga, then preparing for a PhD in philosophy at Szeged University, gave a talk on the ethics of Garrett Hardin. In 2008, I invited Ildikó Kocsis, who had written an excellent thesis on Jane Austen, to give a talk on lies and falsity in *Pride and Prejudice*.

On 28 September 2007, Miskolc University first joined the European initiative—drafted in 2005—of holding an annual “Researchers’ Night” with the ambition of bringing academic research closer to the public. Although it is research into the natural and industrial sciences that consistently receives the most attention at our university, the arts faculty also organized events and attracted a number of young people. Likewise, the Forum also moved into town from the campus and, happily, our Research Forum Café Bar was held to a packed audience in a downtown beer cellar.

During the past years many of our colleagues earned their academic qualifications on various levels (PhD and “habilitation”). I like to believe that the Forum was instrumental in providing a platform for rehearsing their ideas in public and inviting commentaries by, evidently, a lay audience when such a degree of specialization is concerned. The first of such talks was given by Zoltán Töltéssy in March 2005, who, at the time of writing, is working on his PhD at Debrecen University. Further talks were given by Éva Braidwood-Varga in May 2005—she completed her PhD on Wordsworth at ELTE University, Budapest, shortly afterward—by Ted Bailey, who defended his thesis on religious slave narratives just months ago at Debrecen, and by Dezső Bánki, who received his “habilitation” in philosophy at ELTE.

The Forum has drawn heavily on guest speakers. Some of our guests have visited once, others are returning visitors. In the spring of 2006, the Forum was proud to present two self-appointed ambassadors: one of Irish, the other of Scottish culture and literature. Gerry Miller, one of our regular guests, gave highly popular talks on the historical and cultural roots of modern-day terrorism in Northern Ireland. A close friend of Seamus Heaney, Gerry brought a personal message to Miskolc students from the Nobel Prize winning Irish poet. Our other ambassador, from Scotland, Tom Hubbard, delivered a fascinating talk on the double-sided nature of Scottish culture, which he illustrated with slides and musical extracts. His talk was followed by a Scottish–Hungarian poetry reading, which featured poetry from the anthology *At the End of the Broken Bridge* beside Tom's own poems.

We have had notable guest speakers from the United States, including Carlos Morton (UCLA, Santa Barbara), who gave a talk on Chicano culture in front of a full auditorium in March 2007. It was also minority culture that was in the focus of Steven B. Várdy's speech, delivered in June 2008. Professor Várdy (Duquesne University, Pittsburgh) gave an overview of the historical roots of Hungarian emigration to the US. In the spring term of 2009, our department was proud to co-host with Debrecen University Margaret Manchester (Providence College, Rhode Island) as a Fulbright Scholar. (Margaret was born in Budapest and left Hungary with her parents as a young child.) She gave a summary of a team research into early New England Puritan history at the end of her actively spent teaching term on April 29, 2009. Only the next day, the Forum was pleased to welcome another notable US historian, Paul Shore (then of Saint Louis University, now a visiting fellow at Boston College). Of half Hungarian origin (his father's side of the family comes from Veszprém county), Dr. Shore specializes in research on the Central and Eastern European history of the Jesuit order. He gave a refreshingly PowerPoint-free, *ex tempore* lecture on the vices and virtues—mostly reveling in the vices—of Jesuit missionaries working in and around Upper Hungary in the eighteenth century.

The Forum has aimed to invite Hungarian scholars of note—though it is an aim that is seriously encumbered by the university's uncompromising financial system as well as by lack of resources, which makes it impossible to pay visiting speakers. To circumvent that obstacle, first I invited two scholars, Ákos Farkas and Aladár Sarbu, who both teach full-time at ELTE, and who at that time gave courses at our department as part-time lecturers. Dr. Farkas, Hungary's top authority on Anthony Burgess, delivered two talks on Burgess: one in the fall of 2005 and one in December 2007. This special issue features his new article on Huxley, his new focus of scholarly attention. Aladár Sarbu's talk was related to what has come to be described as the "crisis" of English in higher education, on which he has published articles in *Neohelicon*. Here, he features with an article on Walter Pater which, in

an earlier version, was first published in a *Festschrift* for Professor Pálffy at Debrecen University.

Though it is not officially part of the curriculum, our department does have its platforms for students interested in creative writing. One of these is the *Coffee Break*, an anthology of student writings published annually before it went online in the year 2000 and is now found at: <http://www.uni-miskolc.hu/~aitmag/main.html>. Students from local high schools are invited to partake in annual writing contests jointly organized by the *Coffee Break* and the Szinvapark shopping center. In November 2007, we staged a poetry reading by our students, some of whom have appeared in Irodalmi Rádió (for more information visit: <http://www.irodalmiradio.hu/portal/>), and have had work published in the anthology *IrodalMatt a magyarnak* (IR, 2007) and elsewhere. Besides scholarly writing, some of our faculty members have also tried their hands at various literary genres. Colin Swatridge, for instance, is writer of several novels apart from his book of non-fiction, *Aliens*. In December 2006, he gave a successful reading from his then most recent novel, *The Escapologist*, excerpted here. In March same year, Tom Hubbard and Zoltán Töltéssy's bilingual reading night was held—a by-product of that venture is the joint translation of two Áprily poems by Tom Hubbard and the present editor. These translations are reprinted with permission from Scotland's prime avant-garde journal, *Zed2O*. Gerry Miller, our regular guest, also gave a reading from his own poems as well as modern poetry from Northern Ireland during his annual visit in March 2007.

Tangentially related to the ERF, a literary translation workshop has also been started. It is engaged in several projects and bringing together interested students outside the classroom. Partly, we do commissioned work: the translation of Colin Swatridge's *Aliens* is currently in progress, while a joint translation of two Áprily poems (with Tom Hubbard) was published in *Zed2O*, and our translations of a selection of ten poems by Gerry Miller were presented at the HUSIS conference at Pécs in 2007. Other ongoing projects include translating a series of short stories by Scottish author G.M. Brown (represented here by Eszter Lévai's translation of "Andrina") and translating a selection of short stories by various Scottish writers: altogether five stories have been published in *Nagyvilág*, Hungary's chief journal of international literatures.

For their assistance in producing this ERF retrospective, I wish to thank the following: Dr. Zita Horváth, Editor-in-Chief, for giving me an opportunity to bring all the contributions under one roof in a special issue of *Publicationes*; Dr. Ted Bailey for being a meticulous and keen-eyed language advisor; and Dr. Dezső Bánki for acting as second reader of some of the articles.

Acknowledgements are also due to the following: Dr. Tamás Bényei and Dr. Péter Szaffkó, editors of *Happy Returns: Essays for Professor István Pálffy* (Debrecen UP, 1999), for giving permission to reprint, in a revised form, Professor

Aladár Sarbu's paper; Professor Duncan Glen's widow Mrs. Margaret Glen for giving permission to reprint "Scottish Muid" and "Northern Roses," originally published in issue 21 of *Zed2O* (2007); Mr. Gerry Miller for giving me permission to freely pick from his work published in *Awakening* (Oswica, 2004) and from his other poems; Professor Carlos Morton for giving permission to reprint two of his articles which were first published in *The Santa Barbara News-Press*; and Dr. Lawrence Normand for giving permission to reprint his article from the *Buddhist Studies Review* 24.1 (2007).

I am grateful to all contributors individually for taking this modest scholarly venture as seriously as they all did. Copyrights remain with the individual authors in all cases where applicable.

Finally, and as always, I reserve my deepest gratitude to Nora: without her steady intellectual support the Forum would not have lasted, and without her patience in bravely shouldering much of the workload that raising and managing a young family entails, not even this modest though very fond record of the Forum's first five years could have been produced.

* * *

For updates on ERF events with photos, please visit:
<http://resforum.blogspot.com/>

Attila Dósa

POSTSCRIPT

At the time when this special issue was about to go into print, our department suffered the loss of a dear colleague, Dr. Dezső Bánki. His article is now posthumously printed. It is my sad task as editor to dedicate this issue of *Publicationes* to his memory.

AD

SHANGRI-LA AND HISTORY IN 1930S ENGLAND

LAWRENCE NORMAND

Lawrence Normand is Principal Lecturer and Research Co-ordinator in English Literature at Middlesex University, London. He is co-author with Gareth Roberts of *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland: James VI's "Demonology" and the North Berwick Witches* (University of Exeter Press, 2000), and articles on Renaissance and twentieth-century drama and poetry. Dr. Normand gave a series of talks on Shakespeare between 23 and 25 March 2004 as part of his Erasmus visit to Miskolc. This article, which is part of his current research on Buddhism in twentieth-century English literature, is reprinted with permission from *Buddhist Studies Review* 24.1 (2007): 108-20.

INTRODUCTION

This paper addresses the question of how Buddhism continued to exist as an influence in British culture after the demise of Theosophy from around 1930. Within Theosophy's strange religio-historical system, Buddhism had occupied a privileged place, and indeed Theosophy had been a major transmitter of knowledge about Buddhism since its establishment in 1875. From 1930, however, Theosophy found itself weakened by splits and defections, and, more significantly, its message of individual spirituality and political quietism came to seem inadequate in the face of the highly politicized world in the 1930s and the rise of new religious and political organizations such as Moral Rearmament and the Communist Party (Washington 283).

What Philip Almond has called "an enormous upsurge in awareness of, and interest in, Buddhism in late Victorian England" (1) did not continue with comparable intensity into the first decades of the twentieth century when the methods of dissemination of Eastern religions were also gradually changing. The Buddhist Society (established 1906) was slowly creating a public presence for the religion through its organization and publications, though it remained small. In the early decades of the twentieth century, some influential modernist writers and artists drew on Eastern ideas and imagery in their efforts to renew their societies, including W.B. Yeats and Wassily Kandinsky, though their audiences were initially confined to cultural elites (Clarke 100-105). Buddhism and other Eastern belief-systems continued to have a significant and growing presence in early twentieth-century culture, and new methods of transmission developed that extended their reach beyond academic and artistic circles.

As J.J. Clarke has observed, the interaction between East and West in the twentieth century became more and more "a matter of complex interaction between cultures, involving a variety of interweaving agendas and ideological interests, rather than simply a matter of remote projection by one culture upon another" (100). A popular novel published in 1933, *Lost Horizon* by James Hilton (1900-1954), may stand as a case study of some of the complex ways in which East-West cultural interaction began to work in the twentieth century and of the kind of "ideological interests" that were involved in the process.

LOST HORIZON AND ORIENTALISM

Lost Horizon's importance as a disseminator of orientalism in Britain in the 1930s—and beyond—lies partly in its being a popular novel aimed at a wide readership and in showing the presence of Buddhism running through popular as well as elite culture. James Hilton, who took an English degree at Cambridge University and then worked as a journalist, wrote twenty-two novels between 1920 and 1953, including the enormously popular *Good-Bye Mr. Chips* (1934), and from 1935 was a highly successful Hollywood screenwriter. *Lost Horizon* tells the story of a Tibetan monastery, Shangri-La, and a group of Westerners who are kidnapped and taken there. Hilton gave the English language a new name, Shangri-La, for an imaginary utopia, and he created a myth that entered the culture. The novel has a Tibetan setting and appears to treat Buddhist themes, but its Shangri-La is no ordinary Tibetan monastery, for its personnel is mostly foreign, including European; it is full of the finest examples of Western, not Eastern, culture; and it seems to be little concerned with the actual religious beliefs or practices of the region. This seems to confirm Peter Bishop's comment that the novel was "one of the great mythologizings about Tibet [for it] gathered the threads of fantasy [about Tibet], shaped them, articulated them" (211). Donald S. Lopez goes further in seeing *Lost Horizon* as a typical Western version of Tibet "in which the West perceives some lack within itself and fantasizes that the answer, through a process of projection, is to be found somewhere in the East" (6). Such critiques are valuable in reminding us of the dominant orientalist way in which the idea of "Tibet" has been formed in the West through Western images and fantasies. And indeed Hilton drew on such cultural fantasies to characterize his Tibetan location.¹

However, Western images of the East are not fully accounted for by analyses that focus on Western representations as mere fantasies. Within texts shaped by Western stereotypes there may also be fragments of authentic knowledge, or traces of ideological counter-currents, sometimes resulting from the resistance of Asian material to European fantasies. Western images may be predominantly stereotypical or fantastic, but lodged within them may be signs of the actualities of Tibet and Buddhism, which thereby become communicable to Western readers. *Lost Horizon* is mostly composed from Western stereotypes and fantasies of Tibet, but it also reshapes them and extracts from them some more authentic elements. These may be fragmentary, distorted, or incomplete, but they show how knowledge of and—equally importantly—sympathy for Buddhism were carried into the culture.

Lost Horizon won the Hawthornden Prize in 1934, became a bestseller and the first book to be published in paperback (in 1939), and it has been in print almost continuously up to the present day, in some dozen editions. In 1937 Frank Capra directed a successful film version of the book, but it is the novel that is discussed here, even though the film sent some unforgettable images into circulation. I want to argue that the novel's images and ideas of the East, formed largely from Western materials, represent attempts to

¹ For discussions of Western views of Tibet, see Bishop 1989 and 1993, and Lopez. For a discussion of *Lost Horizon* in this context, see Bishop 1993 211, 216-18. The theoretical basis for much of Lopez's and Bishop's analyses can be found in Said 1978. Post-Saidian theories of East-West relations, which identify them as more reciprocal and two-way, can be found in Clarke and MacKenzie.

address problems of the West, specifically historical problems of the 1930s: namely, revulsion at the destruction wrought by the First World War, fear of another looming war, and, more generally, loss of faith in the future of the modern world.

Hilton had a rich array of oriental material to explore, including other novels and accounts of travelers, mountaineers, and ethnographers; and these versions of Asia were already shaped by Western ideologies to produce images of the East that reflected Western preoccupations. His novel was largely produced from such materials pre-shaped to suit Western readers who were already practiced at reading them. This is one reason why *Lost Horizon* made ready sense to large numbers of people and is why it can be called popular. But despite such familiar cultural processing, something of the distinctiveness of Buddhist values and ideas does emerge into the novel such that it becomes one of the carriers of a Buddhism—albeit a pastiche Buddhism—in the twentieth century.

Here is a brief outline of the story. A group of Westerners finds itself endangered by a native rebellion in a Far Eastern country in the early 1930s. The English consul, Conway, manages to escape along with three others in the last plane to leave the place. But as they are flying to safety they realize they are going in the wrong direction, towards and then over Tibet, but they are helpless to do anything. Eventually the plane runs out of fuel, and they crash high in the Kuen Lun mountains. All they can do is await their deaths. But then a procession appears through the snowstorm, and its leader, a Chinese named Chang, invites them to the nearby monastery of Shangri-La. Having no choice, the Westerners do as he suggests. Shangri-La is perched high above a lush mountain valley and turns out to be a place of extraordinary comfort and refinement, materially, aesthetically, and spiritually. The Westerners evince a range of attitudes to the place where they find themselves against their will, with Conway's subordinate in the diplomatic service, Mallinson, being particularly hostile and eager to leave. But departure is impossible, and gradually some of the Westerners find themselves attracted to the life of Shangri-La. Conway in particular is drawn to the place, which he discusses in conversation with Chang. To Chang's surprise, Conway is invited to meet the high lama, who, over several meetings, tells him the remarkable history of Shangri-La that began with the arrival at the Buddhist monastery of a French priest, Father Perrault, in the eighteenth century. Over the decades Perrault was joined by representatives of other European nationalities who decided to stay there, as well as a young Chinese princess. Conway eventually realizes that the high lama he is speaking to is none other than the Father Perrault who first arrived in the valley two centuries before. Conway faces a further shock when he is offered the position of high lama after the present one dies—which he promptly does there and then. Wishing to stay and accept the offer of becoming high lama, Conway nevertheless feels responsible for returning the others to the West. This conflict reaches its climax when Mallinson announces that he has fallen in love with the Chinese princess, and they plan to escape. Impelled by duty, and against his deeper feelings, Conway helps everyone escape. The story ends with Conway's desperate wish to return unfulfilled, and the last we hear of him he is trying to rediscover the whereabouts of Shangri-La. Conway's inability to return to Shangri-La constitutes it as a lost object of fantasy and creates a structure in which his—and by extension the reader's—desire for what Shangri-La symbolizes is forever unfulfilled. (The film, by contrast, has Conway return to Shangri-La.)

MOUNTAINS, SPIRITUALITY, BUDDHISM

The novel's popular appeal, that is its readability, lies partly in Hilton's deployment of a number of motifs that were already familiar in British culture about the East and Buddhism. Tibet illustrates the point, for the novel's Tibet owes little to the historical or social conditions of the early twentieth-century country, and more to well-worn Western discourses which turn it into something imaginary. The Victorians' fascination with Tibet resulted in many accounts of it, so that it was already lodged in Western culture as, among other things, a location of complex wisdom. It figured in Theosophy as the homeland of the Mahatmas, the great souls who maintained the spiritual secrets of occult religion. When Conan Doyle has to find a place for Sherlock Holmes to hide out, he sends him off to Tibet. H. Rider Haggard in *She* (1887) figures Central Asia and Tibet as places "where, if anywhere upon this earth wisdom is to be found" (4) and sets the sequel there, *Ayesha: The Return of She* (1905). Hilton's Tibet connects with these pre-existing ideas that make Shangri-La interpretable in terms of remoteness, secrecy, and wisdom. He had no need to invent this because it was already to hand. By reading *Lost Horizon* to discover these familiar motifs, it is possible to see how truisms about the East and Buddhism (which may, of course, contain truths) were put to use for Western readers.

For early twentieth-century Europeans, mountaineering was charged with spiritual significance, often in reaction to their sense of the exhausted state of post-war Europe. There was a connection in European minds among mountains, spirituality, and, in relation to climbing Everest, Buddhism. The Englishman Sir Francis Younghusband claimed that climbing Everest would "elevate the human spirit" and show that men "were getting the upper hand on the earth, and [...] acquiring a true mastery of their surroundings" (cited in Hansen 718). When European climbers approached Everest, they found Buddhist monasteries and abbots from whom they had to win permission to attempt a climb, and when they wrote up their exploits they also wrote about these monasteries. By thinking about Buddhism within this cultural complex, we can see how knowledge of Buddhism might be mediated as it came to the West. An anthropologist of the region, Sherry B. Ortner, has written that "the sahibs were fascinated by their visits to the monasteries—to Rumbu on the northern (Tibetan) route to Everest and later to Tengboche on the southern (Nepal) side." The head lama of Rumbu monastery, Zatul Rimpoche, "offered [...] warm hospitality, to foreign climbers" so that the "visit to Rumbu became a fixture of the early expeditions" (Ortner 149). The British climber J.B.L. Noel wrote about the ill-fated 1924 British expedition in his book *Through Tibet to Everest* (1927), where he describes witnessing Buddhist practices in the monastery, as well as his meeting with the head lama. Noel's attitude is notably respectful of the foreign religion, and he emphasizes both the lama's cultural strangeness as well as his penetrating spiritual power:

A figure sat with crossed knees in the Buddha posture. There were draperies of costly Chinese silks. The figure sat absolutely motionless and silent. Not a soul spoke a word, or even whispered in the room [...]. He looked at us, but did not speak or move. Rather he seemed to look over us, through us. There was something vastly observant and yet impersonal in his gaze. (145-6)

Noel is a sympathetic reporter, despite his public school values (his commitment to “sport” causes incomprehension among the Tibetans), and he writes from a recognizably twentieth-century position of cultural relativism that also informs Hilton’s novel. This marks both Noel and Hilton as exemplars of what Edward Said identifies as a twentieth-century modernist orientalism that responded with more sympathy to oriental peoples, experienced more self-doubt about supposed occidental superiority, and depicted East-West encounters in an ironic light.² Noel declares after the meeting with the high lama, “I felt absolutely hypnotized myself,” but he adds a remark from his companion that allows an ironic view of the scene: “Gee! that chap is either the holiest saint or the greatest actor on earth” (146).

It was through such books, which were not primarily concerned with Buddhism, that knowledge of, and attitudes to, Buddhism reached English-speaking readers. The cultural transmission and reception of Buddhism was often by such indirect routes—in this case, the account of a mountaineering expedition—which carried accounts of Buddhism as secondary or marginal meanings. Knowledge received in this way was likely to be unsystematic, filtered through the eyes of sometimes idiosyncratic writers, and often suffused with strong feeling. The ideological cluster of mountains, spirituality, and Buddhism, commonplace by the 1930s, conveys some of *Lost Horizon*’s understanding of Buddhism.

BUDDHISM IN CULTURAL MEMORY

The relation of Buddhism and religious toleration is an idea that emerges from a similar kind of cultural complex. It was through Theosophy that Buddhism became known to many Europeans and Americans around the turn of the twentieth century, and Theosophy encouraged toleration of religions generally on the grounds that they were different manifestations of a universal, hidden, ancient religion. A founder of the British Buddhist Society, Christmas Humphreys, wrote how he was drawn to Theosophy at Cambridge because of its “all-embracing platform” and “exposition of an Ancient Wisdom-Religion” of which “Buddhism is the noblest and least-defiled of the many branches of the undying parent tree” (18). For many middle-class people like Humphreys, there were links, probably because of Theosophy’s depiction of Buddhism, among Theosophy, religious toleration, and Buddhism. This complex too finds its way into Hilton’s novel, for religious toleration is one aspect of the book’s liberal, modern outlook. When Chang is confronted by one of the Westerners abducted to Shangri-La—Miss Brinklow, a lady Protestant missionary—about what the beliefs of the place are, he faces the challenge from what she calls “the true religion” by proffering instead the principle of moderation: “I should say that our prevalent belief is in moderation. We inculcate the virtue of avoiding excess of all kinds—even including, if you will pardon the paradox, excess of virtue itself” (73). It is the principle of moderation that produces the utopian social harmony among the inhabitants of the valley beneath the mo-

² Said 1994 227. Said identifies Joseph Conrad, E.M. Forster, André Malraux and T.E. Lawrence as among those twentieth-century writers who “take narrative from the triumphalist experience of imperialism into the extremes of self-consciousness, discontinuity, self-referentiality, and corrosive irony, whose formal patterns we have come to recognize as the hallmarks of modernist culture.”

nastery: “our people,” he adds, “are moderately sober, moderately chaste, and moderately honest” (73-4). Hilton’s liberal outlook emerges here as he uses “moderation” to be wittily subversive of the strict morality of nineteenth-century Puritan Christianity. Shangri-La itself includes different nationalities, Europeans, Chinese, and Tibetans, and, as Chang says, it has “various faiths and usages, but we are most of us moderately heretical about them” (74). In the valley there are Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist temples used by the people for worship, and again Chang points out a moral for the reader: “‘The jewel has facets,’ said the Chinese, ‘and it is possible that many religions are moderately true’” (105).

According to Philip Almond, to liberal Victorians who were not opposed to other religions (as Miss Brinklow is), Buddhism could appear in a positive light: it seemed to show “what was best in the flexible and tolerant religious mind of the time;” in addition, “Buddhist ethics was seen as superior to all, Christianity alone excepted;” and it was thought to be superior to Christianity in its “tolerance of other religions, and its non-violent methods of evangelization” (35-6, 112, 128). Hilton drew into his novel this constellation of influences from Theosophy and nineteenth-century views of Buddhism, and by dramatizing such discourses that were active in the culture he was able to make readily interpretable sense for his readers. So, for example, when on the way to Shangri-La Mallinson says they could all be murdered, and Conway answers suavely, “As a matter of fact, murder is the very last thing one would expect in a Buddhist monastery” (55), the sentence invokes Buddhism’s reputation, formed gradually in nineteenth-century Britain, for non-violence and religious toleration.

This study of *Lost Horizon* is seeking what might be called collective memory, or general cultural memory, of Buddhism rather than the novelist’s particular ideas. By reading *Lost Horizon* for familiar motifs of various sorts, it becomes possible to glimpse how Buddhism was working as an active cultural element in the inter-war years when it seems to sink from view. What we find are popular ideas of Buddhism that had become familiar and comprehensible as a result of the West’s cultural processing of the East: the cycle of writing, dissemination, and reception. Hilton researched for his novel in the British Museum; although it is not known precisely what he read, and he did not tell us, it is possible to speculate on the basis of the book’s content.³ My purpose is not to discover exactly what Hilton read in the British Museum among the multitude of books concerned with Asia and Buddhism, but to identify some prominent fragments of knowledge and salient motifs about Buddhism that he discovered as he delved into collective memory. What he discovered there—complexes of knowledge and feeling—took the particular shapes they did when he worked them into his book as the result of the historical pressures of 1930s Europe and America. As Maurice Halbwachs has argued, memory “is always situated in the present; memories do not take us into ‘the past,’ rather they bring ‘the past’ into the present” (cited in Storey 84).

³ Possible sources for *Lost Horizon*, as well as those mentioned above, are the life of William Martin Conway, Lord Conway (1856-1937), British mountaineer in Tibet, explorer, Slade professor fine arts at Cambridge University, and member of Parliament; the mythical Tibetan kingdom of Shambhala as mentioned in the Gesar of Ling epic in David-Neel and the Lama Yongden (1933); and the description of the monastery of Kum Bum in Huc (1852).

ORIENTALISM AS CRITIQUE

Like many writers before him, Hilton uses a version of the Orient in order to criticize life in the West, and what he selects as oriental is chosen for its power to critique specific features of Western life. Some aspects of his fictional Tibet appear in the novel precisely because they are not like Europe. Western competitiveness is criticized when the hero Conway gazes at the Kuen Lun mountains. He is pleased, he says, that their being less high than other ranges “might save them eternally from the climbing expeditions; [since] they offered a less tempting lure to the record-breaker” (42). He rejects “the Western ideal of superlatives” and exploitation of the natural world for record-breaking adventures, and values the mountains beyond Shangri-La for being “distant, inaccessible, as yet unhumanised” (42). On another occasion, Mallinson, the young Englishman, complains about the Tibetans being “‘typically Oriental: you can’t get them to do anything quickly and efficiently’” (81). But for Conway, we are told, “it did not appear that the Eastern races were abnormally dilatory, but rather that Englishmen and Americans charged about the world in a state of continual and rather preposterous fever-heat” (81). This criticism of modern life for its speeded-up nature, familiar from Wordsworth on, is another of the novel’s well-worn cultural *topoi* in which the Orient typically features as a pre-modern or anti-modern element.⁴ Moments like these confirm J.J. Clarke’s idea that in Western culture from the eighteenth century Eastern ideas, “though perceived as ‘other,’ [...] have been used in the West as an agency for self-criticism and self-renewal” (27). (They have often also been used, it should be added, to confirm so-called European superiority.) Contrasts of East and West are used repeatedly in the novel and become one of its structuring principles and one of the ways in which its action is to be interpreted. So even when events in Shangri-La are not explicitly contrasted with the West, there is an implicit contrast, and meaning comes from that contrast—which is usually to the West’s disadvantage.

The contrast is built into the hero himself, who is the epitome of the Englishman of the time, scholar, sportsman, man of action (even compared to the heroic Elizabethan soldier and poet, Sir Philip Sidney), who is the figure who encounters the East most deeply. Conway stands for us—European and American readers—and his encounter with Shangri-La shows what might be possible for us. Like an Aristotelian tragic hero, he stands for his community, suffering on our behalf to show us the possibilities and limits of our own experience. That experience goes beyond the usual disillusionment with the West. Conway is shown engaging with fragments of quasi-Buddhism that suggests the possibility of Westerners being transformed so as to have culturally alien spiritual experiences, or to find their ideology changing. The moments in the novel which show the protagonist’s transformations are part of its fascination for Western readers, for they show the East’s potential impact on the West through an exemplary Westerner. This takes Hilton beyond the limits of conventional orientalism in which the West merely imposes its fantasies on the East, for there are moments in *Lost Horizon* where the power to impress the other runs from East to West. Some of these moments show the emergence of specifically Buddhist experience.

⁴ See, for example, Makdisi 10: “Indeed, a certain fascination or even obsession with the pre- or anti-modern (Nature, the colonial realm, the Orient) occupied the very center of the British romantic critique of modernization.”

 BUDDHISM AND WESTERN MODERNITY

As the kidnapped Westerners climb up the high mountains towards the monastery, their breathing becomes difficult in the thin air. But Conway experiences this naturally as what might be called a fundamental Buddhist state of mindfulness and integration:

One had to breathe consciously and deliberately, which, though disconcerting at first, induced after a time an almost ecstatic tranquillity of mind. The whole body moved in a single rhythm of breathing, walking and thinking; the lungs, no longer discreet and automatic, were disciplined to harmony with mind and limb. (60)

In its union of body, mind, and environment, this seems to suggest the attainments (albeit unconscious) of Buddhist meditative practice. Conway, we are told, has “a mystical strain [...] in curious consort with scepticism” (60), and as he reaches Shangri-La he is ready for “the offer of new experience” (61), which includes the spiritual dimension he exhibits during the climb. It seems that Hilton was happy to highlight specifically Buddhist elements of what he found in his researches.

The word “quasi-Buddhist” is used to characterize Shangri-La’s religion because it is ostensibly a fusion of Buddhism and Christianity. In the book, it turns out that in 1719 a Capuchin monk was sent by Rome from Peking to discover if any Nestorian Christianity had survived in Tibet, when he discovered the decayed Buddhist monastery. The Capuchin took it over as a Christian monastery, but over time, as he studied Buddhist scriptures, he absorbed their doctrines. The monastery became a synthesis of the two religions, with the ideal of moderation governing its beliefs and way of life. In Shangri-La, Conway has a number of conversations with this very Capuchin monk, now the high lama and over two hundred years old, who recognizes in Conway a spiritual wisdom that leads to his being offered the position of high lama, an offer that Conway takes seriously. The high lama recognizes in Conway a set of qualities that have a distinct, if implicit, Buddhist tinge, which are the product not of Conway’s oriental studies or religious conviction but of his experience as a soldier in the First World War. The high lama says to Conway, “your wisdom has the ripeness of age. Surely some unusual thing has happened to you?” (170). Conway replies, “No more unusual than has happened to many others of my generation” (170), namely, fighting in the war. According to the high lama, Conway has “an odd quality [...] that I have never met in any of our visitors hitherto [...]. It is, if I had to put a single word to it, passionlessness.” Conway replies, “you can label me ‘1914-1918’ [...]. I used up most of my passions and energies during the years I’ve mentioned, and though I don’t talk much about it, the chief thing I’ve asked from the world since is to leave me alone” (150).

In the word “passionlessness,” the third Noble Truth of Buddhism seems to be echoed, that freedom comes from the cessation of demanding desire. Conway himself wonders if “the exhaustion of the passions is the beginning of wisdom” (171). What we seem to be seeing here is a cluster of signs that are implicitly “Buddhist.” Certainly the spiritual life Conway is offered in Shangri-La employs techniques and goals that seem Buddhist-inflected: the promised spiritual gains are “calmness and profundity, ripeness and wisdom,

and the clear enchantment of memory. And, most precious of all, [...] Time” (148). The monks, we are told, “devote themselves [...] to contemplation and to the pursuit of wisdom” (94), and the high lama “spends almost his entire life in clairvoyant meditation” (166). Conway, and by extension the reader, can interpret these signs within the twentieth-century discourse of a fuzzily outlined but distinct Buddhist spirituality associated with Tibet.

But Conway’s experience is not self-consciously Buddhist, since the hero has travelled along this spiritual path as a result of his wartime traumas, by way of the transformations wrought in him by the history of the West. West meets East through Conway, who represents the disillusionment of the post-war generation, sickened by the war and the modern world that emerged from it. The uniqueness of this historical experience is emphasized, as well as the uniqueness of the subjects produced by it. Conway is able to encounter the novel’s Eastern spirituality (mostly fantasized as it is) by virtue of the transformations wrought in him by the war, by which fortuitous historical development he has acquired a state of mind with remarkable affinities to some aspects of Buddhist mentality. The war left him emotionally exhausted, and it also left him with a typically modern sense of the emptiness and futility of life: after the war, he says, he feels “a sense of almighty boredom and fretfulness” (170).

Existential disillusionment goes further to include loss of faith in God and humanity: when he thinks about what has happened to his generation, he attributes it to “[t]he will of God or the lunacy of man—it seemed to him that you could take your choice [...]. Or, alternatively [...], the will of man and the lunacy of God” (40).

Western civilization is in the grip of a “world crisis” and is headed towards destruction. According to the American financier who is among the Westerners, “there was a reek of dissolution over all that recollected world [...]. The whole game was doubtless going to pieces” (121). The dilemma they face is that of Western modernity: the loss of traditional religious beliefs, a loathing of modern, competitive forms of life, and a sense of subjective emptiness. And the whole of Western civilization is heading towards another destructive war which will destroy it: the high lama describes what will happen and the part that Shangri-La will play in it:

[The storm] will be such a one, my son, as the world has not seen before. There will be no safety by arms, no help from authority, no answer in science. It will rage till every flower of culture is trampled, and all human things are levelled in a vast chaos [...]. But the Dark Ages that are to come will cover the whole world in a single pall; there will be neither escape nor sanctuary, save such as are too secret to be found out or too humble to be noticed. And Shangri-La may hope to be both of these. (189)

Shangri-La then is a product of Western history, and its purpose and meaning is to be found in fulfilling a Western historical destiny. That is why it contains the finest products of Western civilization—its musical instruments and music, its painting and books—and why the Westerners have been kidnapped and brought there. It faces West rather than East, and through the screen of a syncretistic “Eastern” religion the novel ad-

dresses a historical Western crisis—the double historical crisis of the existential despair of a generation involved in the First World War, and the sense that Western culture is heading towards barbarism and destruction. *Lost Horizon* is Buddhist in so far as selected and re-fracted Buddhist elements are employed in an attempt to address these immediate historical problems.

Eastern ideas also serve Western ends in relation to the idea of time. Western civilization's impasse springs partly from the shattering by the First World War of progressive time; and its impending disaster is imagined in terms of Christian time: the Apocalypse, the revelatory judgment on a period of time. Shangri-La offers an alternative to the catastrophe to come because it offers a solution to the problem of modern Western time. If it were simply pre-modern it would be just another candidate for Western colonialism and modernization, but as a utopia it has found a way of coming to terms with modernity: it has modern plumbing and other modern conveniences, and manages to import those features of the modern world that it wants to use. More significantly, it has overcome the temporality of the modern world with a temporality of its own that may owe something to the Buddhist notion of karma: it stretches historical time by virtue of its religious practices. The high lama lived for over two hundred years, and the pretty young Chinese princess turns out to be over one hundred. As human time becomes extendable, so too the time for human wisdom to accumulate is extended. Hilton does not use reincarnation or karma explicitly in his plot, but he presents historical time as stretchable through Shangri-La's religious regime, a judicious mixture of yoga and drug-taking, apparently, so that the monks' wisdom is a result of their long lives. As in Buddhism, time becomes an evolutionary medium, and in this way transcends the fluctuations of short-term history. Hilton was also no doubt thinking of Darwinian evolution, by way of George Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* of 1922, and this is where Darwinian evolution meets Buddhist karma, for both postulate that change takes place over generations of life. Hilton, though, presents the fantasy of evolution taking place within one extended lifetime, of a wisdom of lifetimes being reachable by a single individual. This alternative temporality to the West's represents another example of the book's addressing immediate cultural concerns by way of adapted Buddhist notions blended into familiar Western discourses.

CONCLUSION

This paper's initial question of where Buddhism was present in British culture of the 1930s finds one answer in the suggestion that knowledge about Buddhism and (perhaps more importantly) feelings about it were current in popular culture, though not necessarily in explicit forms. Hilton discovered in his Western sources pre-shaped notions and attitudes about the East that he could further shape into features of his novel that Western readers would readily recognize and interpret. These notions were put to the familiar orientalist function of critiquing the West, particularly Western modernity. What emerges is always mediated, again and again, through Western discourses. But he also found secreted in these often stereotyped accounts elements closer to genuine Tibet and Buddhism that he extracted and deployed. One of the things Hilton effected—wittingly or not—was to help to release into English-speaking culture some ideas around Buddhism that could be read positively,

shaping what his readers might think and feel about Buddhism, and so helping sustain Western collective memory of Buddhism in the 1930s and beyond.

In Hilton's *Lost Horizon*, we see a Westerner coming within a hairsbreadth of shifting his emotional, ideological, and spiritual sympathies from his British beliefs to those of a quasi-Buddhist East. This is a step forward from the nineteenth-century sense of the non-assimilable nature of Buddhism to the West and represents a fantasized future possibility. Conway does not commit himself to Shangri-La; rather, he ends up with a loss that is ambivalent, holding in place a craving for Shangri-La along with anxiety about what gaining it would mean. His ambivalence symbolizes the West's uncertainty about the value of the contemplative, passionless life associated with Buddhism and the losses that such a commitment would entail: losses of self, power, and national identity. One of the meanings mobilized by the myth of Shangri-La is that "Buddhism" becomes a thing to be searched for. The novel may be ambivalent, but Conway's move towards embracing an Eastern spirituality is a forerunner of what will come later in the twentieth century.

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BEN JONSON'S *VOLPONE* AND THE CORONATION OF PROSOPOPOEIA

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In the preface to his *Fables* (written much in the spirit of forerunners like Aesop and Babrius), the fifth-century Latin poet Avianus observed that, in his chosen genre "fiction, if gracefully conceived, is not out of place, and one is not oppressed by the necessity of adhering to the truth."¹ For the early Jacobean Jonson—who had spent much of 1605 being harassed for the topical (and potentially seditious) content of his part in collaborations on the comedy *Eastward Ho* as well as the tragedy *Sejanus*—the thought of using an animal fable as a means of distancing the audience from the dangerous particularities of his work was no doubt a congenial one. For this reason it is perhaps unsurprising (although it does not appear to have been noticed previously) that Avianus's comment on fiction is underlined in Jonson's own copy of the fabulist's work (sig. a2).² Or that such issues may have been very much in the dramatist's mind in the five weeks of 1605 during which, sustained

¹ See Avianus's *Fabulae* in the Loeb edition of *Latin Minor Poets*, trans. J. Wight Duff and Arnold M. Duff (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1961) 667-749 (esp. 681). Further references to this work (= Avianus) will be placed in the main body of the text.

² Jonson's copy of *Aviani AEsopicarum Fabularum Liber*, ed. Pulmannus (Antwerp, 1585) is housed in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, where it is bound up with Jonson's 1585 edition of Claudian's works. For a useful discussion of Jonson's Claudian, see David McPherson, "Ben Jonson's Library and Marginalia: An Annotated Catalogue," *Studies in Philology* 71.5 (1974): 1-100 [item 42].

by a substantial stock of Canary wine, Jonson apparently penned the whole of what was to turn out to be his first major comedy, *Volpone*.³

That this work is basically a beast fable is signified plainly enough by the transparency of its names (Barton 170-93). Within what is perhaps Jonson's best-known plot the protagonist, Volpone himself, is a Venetian *magnifico* who, true to the Italian meaning of his name, stereotypically behaves like a fox. Besides dressing in furs, Volpone makes a living out of that most proverbially fox-like of activities: deceit. Feigning an illness that brings him close to death—and aided in his deceptions by his servant Mosca (whose name, in Italian, connotes the idea of a “flesh fly”), the childless Volpone's basic strategy—which has captivated four hundred years of readers and viewers—is to egg on a series of aspiring heirs who present him with gifts in the hope of gaining his inheritance in the very near future. Appropriately enough, these scavengers (whose greed makes them fair game for the derision of the audience) are named after predatory birds. As readers will no doubt remember, there is Corvino (lit. “carrion crow”), the jealous skinflint who keeps his young wife, Celia, under lock and key but is prepared to prostitute her to Volpone's desires in exchange for his wealth. There is Corbaccio (lit. “raven”), the old man, hard of hearing, who cares for nothing more than his property but can nevertheless be persuaded to disinherit his own son (Bonario) in favor of Volpone when he thinks that he will thereby become the recipient of the latter's largesse.⁴ And there is Voltore (lit. “vulture”), the lawyer who does not demur from the manipulation of the law in pursuance of the same goals. Nor does the Jonsonian menagerie stop here. Developing the more English resonances of his terminological palette, the subplot revolves around the hawk-like gentleman, Peregrine, and his unlikely entrapment of the parrot-like butt of the play, Sir Pol(itique) Would-Bee, in a giant tortoise shell. Yet the allegory created through such a simple naming strategy is not without its subtleties. For instance, in a splendid exposition of the emblemism of the time, Ian Donaldson once pointed out that tortoises may have been taken by Jonson's contemporaries to signify the dual notions of policy and silence (both of which are conspicuously lacking in Sir Pol) (162-66). And in the light of the Avianus connection it may also be worthwhile remembering that another of the Latin poet's fables recounts the story of how the eagle (one of the peregrine falcon's relations) dropped an over-inflated tortoise from a great height as a warning to those whose aspirations rise too far above their station (Avianus 685-87).

³ Unless otherwise stated, all references to Jonson's works are from C.H. Herford, and Percy and Evelyn Simpson (eds), *Ben Jonson*, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-52) (hereafter referred to as H&S in the main body of the text according to volume and page number). *Volpone* (hereafter referred to as *Volp.* in the main body of the text) may be found in H&S V, 1-137. For accounts of the composition of the play, see *Volp.*, 24 [“Prologue” l. 16]; and H&S I, 188.

⁴ In this light, it is interesting to come across a passage marked with a manette in Jonson's fifteenth-century manuscript copy of Juvenal's second Satire—now housed in St John's College, Oxford (MS 192, fol. 6)—where Laronia has been holding forth on the injustice of hypocrites in command and turns to describe how men, similarly, are hypocritical in the judgments they pass on women: “Our censor absolves the raven and passes judgement on the pigeon!” (translation from the Loeb edition of *Juvenal and Persius*, by G.G. Ramsey [Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, Heinemann, 1979] 23, l. 63). For this is exactly what seems to happen to Celia and Bonario when they are condemned out of their father's mouths in the climax to Act IV.

To Renaissance English minds there was, of course, nothing exceptional about the employment of beast fables. Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale* and Caxton's "englyshing" of the story of *Reynard the Fox* were, after all, among the first vernacular fictions to come off the Early Modern printing press. And Edmund Spenser, one of the great avatars of poetry while Jonson was in his formative years, had produced a substantial beast fable—titled *Prosopopoeia: Or Mother Hubberds Tale* (1591)—which Jonson owned and appears to have known well.⁵ In Renaissance rhetoric the word *prosopopoeia* (literally "to make a face" in Greek) was regarded as a figure of personification. Hence Spenser's satirical allegory—in which an Ape, aided and abetted by a crafty Fox, steals a Lion's skin (along with a crown and scepter), and attempts to rule the animal kingdom—justifies its title through this means alone.⁶ Prosopopoeia was, in fact, a standard device of the morality play tradition (so close to Jonson's dramatic practice) in which abstractions were personified, and it is quite understandable (especially with Spenser in the back of his mind) that Jonson should have sought to nuance the idea by bestializing (and hence, in a sense, "de-personifying") most of the *dramatis personae* within his own play.⁷

As against the terms of classical prosopopoeia, however (exemplified by Quintilian through the figure "*Avarice is the mother of cruelty*"—499 [9. 3. 89]), the employment of animal rather than abstract names signals a domain-shift from the morality play towards the genre of moral fable, and accordingly serves to emphasize Jonson's allegory through an *absence* of human attributes rather than through tangible presence. Yet this transformation does not wholly obscure the personification of abstract qualities through naming. The suspicion that Jonson is sensitive to the etymological resonances echoing within these names would seem to be confirmed, for instance, in the inner morphemes of, say, the lawyer Voltore, whose behavior traces out, on the one hand, the complex inner play of the Latin *volo*—which intransitively connotes flight but transitively signifies desire—and, on the other hand, the Italian idea of *volta* as a "turn." Hence in the court scene which forms the climax to Act V, Voltore shamelessly changes tack when he learns that Volpone is not as dead as Mosca had been making him out to be. By the same token, the morphemes of Volpone's name may be seen as posing the question of how to place ("*ponere*") or trace out the imperatives of what lies behind ("*pone*") the will or desire: a question which seems to drive Vol-

⁵ For Jonson's reading of this poet, see the book-length study by J.A. Riddell and S. Stewart, *Jonson's Spenser: Evidence and Historical Criticism* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1995). For Spenser's poem, see *Spenser: Poetical Works*, eds. J.C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford UP, [1912] rpt. 1979) 494-508.

⁶ As the rhetorician Julius Caesar Scaliger puts it: "if intelligence is assigned to the non-intelligent or the half-intelligent such as animals, we have *prosopopoeia*" (*Poetices libri septem* (Lyons, 1561), III. xlviii—cited in Lee A. Sonnino, *A Handbook to Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968) 55.

⁷ Intriguingly, with respect to the possible intertextual relation of these two works, Spenser's Ape at one stage sets himself up as a "*Magnifico*" (l. 665)—styles himself "*Alla Turchesca*" (l. 677)—and, aided by the Fox (who plays a wide variety of roles), sets about inveigling gifts and money from aspiring courtiers. For the "perversion [...] of humanity" represented by Jonson's animal fable, see also Jonas A. Barish "The Double Plot in *Volpone*," *Ben Jonson: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Jonas A. Barish (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1963), 93-105; and Oliver Hennessey, "Jonson's Joyless Economy: Theorizing Motivation and Pleasure in *Volpone*," *English Literary Renaissance*, 38.1 (2008): 83-105.

pone's restless (and ultimately futile) search for satisfaction throughout the play. With respect to those readers for whom such readings of inner morphemes stretch the bounds of credibility, it may be worth remembering that Shakespeare's company (who gave *Volpone* its first airing in 1606) had played a similar game just a few years earlier when they staged the bard's most Jonsonian comedy, *Twelfth Night*: a work which seems to dramatize the complex interplay of music (viols), plants (violets, olives), love, and will (It. *voglia*) that is embedded in the names of the characters themselves (Viola, Olivia, Malvolio).⁸

At an altogether different level, prosopopoeiae served in the Renaissance as school exercises in which pupils ventriloquized the voices (or moral characters) of famous historical figures.⁹ In this sense (as Valentine Cunningham has recently demonstrated for the case of Hardy), the allusive names which pepper so many literary texts may be seen to have a wider resonance, as they are capable of bringing their own stories in to color the texts in which they make their guest appearances.¹⁰ And similarly—within the academic province which used to be known (in part, at least) as “source studies”—it is plain that the subtexts jostling within a work may occasionally take on significant roles as prosopopoeic partners to the texts that they inhabit. Unlike the case with most of Shakespeare's plays, for example, it is very hard in a reading of *Volpone* to fix on any small number of source texts which Jonson “worked up” into his own dramatic *oeuvre*.¹¹ Yet nevertheless, some of the clearer traces of his imaginative activities are fascinating. Certainly, the bizarre entertainment mounted for Volpone by his dwarf, eunuch, and hermaphrodite—celebrating the transmigration of the soul of Pythagoras into an ass—seems to take much of its imaginative leverage from Lucian's Greek stories of the transformation of the soul of Pythagoras into a cock (Levin 231-39) and of the transformation of a person into the body of a donkey: a tale which was famously retold by the Roman writer Apuleius in his *Golden Ass*. And in the light of these connections, a previously unremarked intertext for Sir Pol's tortoise shell also presents itself. For in his annotated Apuleius—now housed in the Bodleian Library, Oxford—Jonson appears to have underlined the passage (marking it with a little flower in the margin) in which one of the narrators, Aristomenes, recounts the tale of how, when a witch entered his room in the middle of the night and overturned the truckle-bed on which he was sleeping, he found himself underneath it like a tortoise (“*de Aristomene testudo factus*”).¹² What is suggestive about this is that, like Sir Politic Would-bee, the “tortoise shell” saves him, as from its safety he is able to peep out and witness the fate of his less fortunate companion (Socrates), who is murdered by the witch. Like Sir Pol, too, Aristomenes is noticed by his aggressor—who threatens to make an example of him for his over-curiosity, but lets

⁸ In this sense, the Renaissance device of *agnominatio*—creating meanings by playing round with the letters in a name—appears to become a significant element in prosopopoeia.

⁹ According to this definition, *Mother Hubbard's Tale* could also be a prosopopoeia because it is explicitly narrated in the voice of Mother Hubbard herself.

¹⁰ On this, see especially, Valentine Cunningham's rethinking of prosopopoeia in “*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*,” in *The Novel*, ed. Franco Moretti, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006) 548-58 (esp. 556-8).

¹¹ For the received opinion on Jonson's sources for the play, see esp. H&S II, 50-3; and IX, 678-82.

¹² See L. *Apuleii ... Opera omnia*, 2pts, ex officina Plantiniana, apud F. Raphelengium (Leyden: 1588), p. 7; McPherson (1974) [item 6]; and the Loeb edition of *Apuleius: The Golden Ass*, tr. W. Adlington (1566), rev. S. Gaselee (London: Heinemann, 1935) 21 [l. §12].

him go with his life. For a moment, perhaps, we may glimpse that peculiar strangeness, deriving from his profound re-thinking of the classical world, which helps to endow Jonson's drama with so much its richness of detail.

Although a deep source for the comic action of *Volpone* may be found in such texts, underpinned by the Latin plays of Terence and Plautus—alongside the Greek comedy of Aristophanes which, as Anne Barton has shown, may have helped suggest the patterning of the whole—more immediate models may also have been close at hand through the printed Italian comedy of the period (113-14). In this connection, Jonson's friendship with the Italian scholar John Florio may have been important. Florio (to whom Jonson gave an inscribed copy of *Volpone* in 1607), owned a substantial library of Italian literature to which Jonson certainly had access, and Jonson, as Barton has shown, ransacked Florio's Italian dictionary, *A Worlde of Wordes* (1598), not only for names in his earlier comedies (most notably every *Man Out of His Humour*) but also for *Volpone* itself.¹³ But beyond these felicities, the resonance of *Volpone* suggests a possible engagement with the Italian drama itself. In checking this out, one could do worse than compare elements of *Volpone* with those of *La Mandragola* (c. 1518), the best remembered comedy of the Florentine political philosopher and playwright, Niccolò Machiavelli. "NIC: MACHIAVEL"—as Sir Politique Would-Bee familiarly calls him in a passage which misrepresents the philosophy of his notorious guidebook for princes, *Il Principe* (*Volp.* 90 [IV. i. 25])—is, as Daniel Broughner demonstrated in the 1960s, a presiding figure over much of the pragmatic and cynical thought-world of the drama, while, as Harry Levin noted in 1943, there also appear to be a number of striking "coincidences" of resemblance between *Mandragola* and *Volpone*, especially with regard to the Corvino–Celia subplot (97, n. 14).

To open an Italian translation of *Volpone* side by side with *Mandragola* is to see how snugly Jonson's dramatic concerns—and even some aspects of his dramatic structuring—fit in with the Italian theatre of the sixteenth century. As in Machiavelli (who, like Jonson, drew much inspiration from Terence and Plautus), the location of the play is confined to a single city and its fictional duration to a single day. As in Machiavelli, in which much of the play is taken up by the attempt of a *magnifico* (Callimacho) to seduce a young beauty (Lucrezia) who is unworthily married to an ageing and parsimonious husband (Nicia), so *Volpone* is absorbed from the close of Act I onwards with the project of seducing Celia, the wife of the grasping merchant, Corvino. (Intriguingly, Nicia is referred to by Callimacho's servant as an "old buzzard" [*uccellaccio*] (*Mandragola* 91 [III. iv. 15]), while, at the end of the play, Nicia magnanimously gives Callimacho and Ligurio the keys to his house as they have no women at home and "live like beasts" [*stanno come bestie*] (*Mandragola* 189 [V. vi. 11]).)¹⁴ Both *magnificoes* first become intrigued by a verbal description of the women who are to become their objects of desire; both employ a parasite (Mosca in *Volpone*, Ligurio in *Mandragola*) to achieve their ends; both disguise themselves as medical practitioners in order (with complete success) to gain access to the beauties; both at some point empower others to impersonate them; and both manage to persuade the women's husbands to acquiesce willingly in the prostitution of their wives.

¹³ See esp. Barton 177-8 and 184-7; and H&S IX, 686-7.

¹⁴ In-text references here are to *La Mandragola di Niccolò Machiavelli*, ed. Roberto Ridolfi (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1965).

The main “problem” faced by each play with regard to the seduction theme is the wives themselves, as both regard “honour” to their husbands as being paramount and are uninterested in sex with others. What then becomes shocking in both plays is the extent to which the corruption of the community at large facilitates the progress of the magnificoes’ strategies. In the case of *Mandragola*, Lucrezia is eventually persuaded by the Church (represented by her confessor, Frà Timoteo), as well as her own mother and her own husband, to bed down (unwillingly enough at first) with Callimacho, and the play ends with a surge of male wish-fulfillment: Lucrezia finds that she enjoys the experience and wants it to be repeated; her husband and mother are happy because they believe that the event has “purged” Lucrezia into fertility (although Nicia is ignorant of the identity of the purger); and the Church is content because of the financial benefits it stands to accrue from all masculine parties involved. (Of Callimacho’s satisfaction nothing more need be said.)

Although much in the first four acts of *Volpone* suggests that some sort of generic prosopopeia is in action—that Jonson is “doing” Italian comedy and, perhaps, even (more specifically) *Mandragola*—Ben Jonson either does not dare or does not want to go as far as his Italian counterpart. Writing against an increasingly hostile Puritan influence among the City Fathers—and under the shadow of serious censure, imprisonment, or mutilation for stepping too far outside the limits of Jacobean acceptability—he spins his plot out like a yo-yo to the edge of the permissible, before hoisting it back toward a more tightly defined ethical center. So *Volpone* almost effortlessly achieves his bedroom scene with Celia, only to find that she is not complaisant to his wishes and is saved from his clutches by young Bonario, who is lurking nearby. (If, in terms of the play’s naming strategies, Celia [in Latin, *caelus* = “sky”] is the element in which Corvino lives and to which *Volpone* aspires; Bonario is, etymologically speaking, almost literally a breath of “fresh air” within the tainted moral world of the play.) So, too, the older generation of Venetians has connived so far with the web of corruption spun by *Volpone* and Mosca that their only way to save face is to abet the condemnation of Celia and Bonario on charges trumped up by the fox and the flesh-fly after the misfiring of their scheme.

If, therefore, *Volpone* had closed at the end of Act IV, it would have had much of the moral ambience of *La Mandragola*: *Volpone* and Mosca would have gone scot-free, and the virtue of the play’s two innocents would not have been rewarded. It is only after this resolution to the plot has been conceded that in Act V—a sort of addendum to the magnifico’s “master-peece” (*Volp.* 109 [V. ii. 13])—an overeager attempt on *Volpone*’s part to kick-start the already completed action, coupled with a fatal falling out between the master and his parasite, forces *Volpone* to unmask himself (in the process bringing down everyone who has become imbricated in his edifice of deceit), and the play crashes to a halt on a series of poetic justices.

Here the closure (as well as the language) of fable returns with a vengeance. Celia is sent back to her father with her dowry trebled (mothers apparently having no place in this almost obscenely patriarchal drama); Bonario is granted his father’s lands; Corvino is paraded around Venice in Ass’s ears before being placed in the stocks; Corbaccio is sent off to a monastery; Voltore is disbarred from the legal profession; Mosca is sent to work for the rest of his days as a galley slave; and *Volpone*, having had his possessions confiscated and donated to the hospital of the genuine “*Incurabili*” (*Volp.* 135 [V. xii. 120]), is sent to prison to lie in chains until he really does become sick and lame. “This,” as *Volpone* laments in

his last words before he is led away, “is call'd mortifying of a FOXE” (*Volp.* 135 [V. xii. 125]). Because it is a more self-consciously “moral” play than *Mandragola*, then, *Volpone* is necessarily darker. It might also be worth remembering, however, that the title on the early frontispieces of the printed volume of *Mandragola* (1515-18 and 1522) was *Comedia di Callimacho: & di Lucretia*: the heroine's name (as well as some aspects of her situation) recalling the grim classical story of the rape of Lucretia by Tarquinius Superbus. It is a tale which Machiavelli would have found recounted by Livy in Book I of his massive history of Rome—the *Ab Urbe Condita*—as well as Ovid in his *Fasti*,¹⁵ and which Jonson knew not only from these sources but also from Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* (not to mention the young Shakespeare, whose long narrative poem of 1594, *The Rape of Lucrece*, had captured the subject with a vitreous brilliance). Yet, although in the throes of infatuation Machiavelli's Callimacho declares that he will not stop at anything “beast-like, violent, or nefarious” [*bestiale, crudele, nefando*] (*Mandragola* 74 [I. iii. 22]) to alleviate his situation, he is thinking in this context of his own suicide rather than of any forced violation of his beloved. Indeed, Callimacho later tells Ligurio that he did not even begin to enjoy the consummation of his love with Lucrezia until she had reciprocated her feelings for him (181-3 [V. iv. 15 ff.]).

Within Jonson's play the case is very different. Because, however, *Volpone*'s corruptions are presented gently in Act I, his deceptions at first appear to be amusing rather than criminal. And because, from the outset, Corvino appears as selfish, grasping, and immoral—banking with a cold-blooded intensity on what he stands to gain from *Volpone*'s death (*Volp.* 41 [I. v. 4])—the ethical dimension of *Volpone*'s attraction to Celia is somewhat eclipsed by the prospect that their liaison will enact some sort of poetic justice on the husband. This feeling—which is also one of the main forces energizing Machiavelli's play—is, if anything, intensified in Act II when Corvino physically beats *Volpone* (who has been entertaining the audience as well as Celia in his role as the Mountebank Scotto of Mantua) and threatens his wife, before agreeing to prostitute her in the hope of plenty. By Act III, having established himself as a violent man and abusive husband, Corvino starts to take on the linguistic trappings of Tarquinius Superbus.¹⁶ When, like Lucretia, Celia hangs upon her husband's honor, Corvino casts the notion aside (*Volp.* 78 [III. vii. 38 ff.]). And where Tarquinius eventually gains Lucretia's submission by threatening not only to kill but also to discredit her by leaving her violated body next to that of a slave (claiming that he has slain both because he caught them *in flagrante*), so Corvino—in what may stand as one of the most unpleasant scenes of verbal violation in any Early Modern English comedy—browbeats his wife into acquiescence by threatening to cut her face from the mouth to the ears like a filleted fish, and to

¹⁵ See the Loeb editions of *Livy*, trans. B.O. Foster (London: Heinemann, 1961), vol. I, 196-208 [I. chs 57-60]; and *Ovid's Fasti*, tr. J.G. Frazer (London: Heinemann, 1931) 111 [II. 725 ff.].

¹⁶ “To make dead men speak,” as Jonson's mentor John Hoskins noted in his *Direccions for Speech and Style* (London, 1599) 48, is one of the functions of prosopopoeia (cit. Sonnino 1968, 55). In this way, as Cunningham has shown, prosopopoeia can promote the vicarious life of allusions in a new text.

buy some slaue,
Whom I will kill, and binde thee to him aliue;
And at my windore, hang you forth: deuising
Some monstrous crime, which I, in capitall letters,
Will eate into thy flesh with *aqua-fortis*,
And burning cor'siues, on this stubborne breast.
(*Volp.* 80 [III. vii. 100-105])

Even at this moment (after which Volpone is left alone with Celia), the possibility of a “positive” Mandragolan solution is still open within the play. Whether or not he has sex with Celia, the sprightly Volpone, who jumps from his bed to greet her, has the potential to liberate her from her plight.

At first it appears that he might actually do so. In a rhetorical *tour de force*, Volpone—now in “the true heau’n” of “loue” (*Volp.* 81 [III. vii. 140]): (a word which seldom intrudes into the textual surface of the play)—reveals his contempt for Corvino’s “earth-fed” mind and, in an attempt to win her attentions, boasts about the roles he has played in the past, including the part of Hadrian’s favorite, Antinous, in an entertainment for Henry Valois (who really was entertained at Venice in 1574) (*Volp.* 82 [III. vii. 159-64]). To crown it all, Volpone then breaks role again by wooing Celia in a song which has been remembered by posterity as perhaps the finest translation in the English language of the celebrated Latin poem, “*Vivamus, mea Lesbia,*” by Catullus (c. 84-64 BC):

Come, my CELIA, let us proue,
While we can, the sports of loue;
Time will not be ours, for euer,
He, at length, our good will seuer;
Spend not then his gifts in vaine.
Sunnes, that set, may rise againe:
But if, once, we lose this light,
'Tis with us perpetuall night.
(*Volp.* 82 [III. ii. 166-73])

Out of context, this offers one of the classic expressions of hot-blooded vigor, youth, and love: take your opportunities while you can; grasp the moment; seize the day (Lat. “*carpe diem*”). But in the play, sung by a Volpone who is smeared with oils to make him appear sick, it becomes grotesque. By this time, Volpone’s body language is already predatory—“CEL. Sir! VOLP. Nay, fly me not” (*Volp.* 81 [III. vii. 154])—and he is beginning to chase her round the room. Rather, then, than unmasking himself like Callimacho to reveal some essentially “real” and beneficent character behind the facade, the transition to music merely highlights Volpone’s lack of a centered, or grounded, personality. The masks hide an infinite regress of other masks: performative selves which, on account of that very fact, have no interest in listening or sympathizing with Celia’s plight, let alone of helping her.

This hollowness of Jonson’s protagonist may help explain why the rest of the scene is so unnerving to watch. As he attempts to corner Celia, Volpone proposes a sto-

mach-churning catalogue of roles (mainly taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*), in which they could indulge while they are making love. She could play Europa to his Jove (in which case they would be enacting the story of a rape). She could be Erycine (Venus), to his Mars (in which case it would be a story of adultery with violent consequences). Or, having "weary'd all the fables of the gods" (*Volp.* 84 [III. vii. 225]), Celia could adopt more "moderne" forms of exoticism: appearing in racially coded scripts as French, Tuscan, Spanish, Persian, Negro, or Russian; and in socially differentiated parts as anything from the wife of a Shah or the mistress of a Sultan to an "art-full" courtesan (*Volp.* [III. vii. 226-32]). (We may remember here that the Lesbia in Catullus' poetry also ends up by being cast in this latter role.)

As an inducement for Celia to fall in with his wishes, Volpone, like some larger-than-life game show host, offers her what she least desires: worldly rewards of a mind-numbing tawdriness. In doing so, Jonson creates an oddly deflated mood through the use of over-inflated rhetoric. It is an effect which is heightened by Volpone's cultural philistinism: what could be thought of as a consistent devaluing (devalorization) or conspicuous waste of every potentially brilliant object that is on offer. Where he promises pearls, it is in order that Celia may dissolve and drink them. Where he proffers a jewel, it is a "carbuncle" so large that it could "put out both the eyes of our St Mark,"¹⁷ or a diamond that "would have bought" Caligula's wife, Lollia Paulina, which Celia is implored to wear and then lose (*Volp.* 83 [III. vii. 193-8]). In his important book on *Shakespeare, Jonson and the Myth of Venice*, David McPherson has shown how Jonson furnishes the Venetian setting of *Volpone* not only with convincing local detail but also with an image world deriving from that of Imperial Rome—particularly that of Caligula and Nero (*Shakespeare* 95-103). The inclusion here of Lollia Paulina—a wife who, the first-century historian and gossip Suetonius tells us in the *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* (chapter 25), was taken up on hearsay, married, and later discarded by the Emperor Caligula—is a good example of the way in which even the apparently glittering detail of the naming serves in the long run to undermine the grandeur to which Volpone's rhetoric gestures so visibly.¹⁸

In sum, this brief essay has considered the figure of prosopopoeia on a five-fold level: as a means of importing animal effects into characterization; through the morphemic embedding of abstract elements in a name; as a channel for generic ventriloquism (a device which has the potential to revitalize some areas of "source studies"); as a means of providing historically or mythologically allusive characters with a means of a vicarious life through their presence in the text; and as a way of enlivening discourse. And we have seen that these effects are particularly noticeable in Volpone's own persona, which dissolves into the multiplicity of identities that he ventriloquizes while his fantasy lovers, similarly, are continually remodeled into anything but themselves. For an audience watching, Volpone—perhaps the crowning figure in Jonson's prosopopoeic pantheon—is characterized by a mesmerizing flexibility and creativity which is immensely entertaining to watch. But for

¹⁷ Apparently a massive carbuncle was set in the coronation cap of the Doge (see H&S IX, 719).

¹⁸ It was Aristotle who took the lead in emphasizing the pragmatic importance of prosopopoeia for promoting vividness in a text: see the Loeb edition of Aristotle: *The 'Art' of Rhetoric*, tr. J. H. Freese (London: Heinemann, 1959), Book III. xi. 1-4.

Jonson, whose belief system seems to have been well-grounded in essentialistic assumptions about the nature of being and the need to „centre” oneself,¹⁹ both ethically and morally, Volpone’s disappearance behind his masks must have been deeply threatening.²⁰ In his later years Jonson noted in his commonplace-book, *Discoveries*, that:

I have considered, our whole life is like a Play: wherein every man, forgetfull of himselfe, is in travaile with expression of another. Nay, wee so insist in imitating others, as wee cannot (when it is necessary) returne to our selves: like Children, that imitate the vices of Stammerers so long, till at last they become such; and make the habit to another nature, as it is never forgotten. (H&S VIII, 597 [ll. 1093-9].)

What, from such a perspective, could have seemed more nightmarish than the prosopopoeic imagination of Volpone?

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¹⁹ For this aspect of Jonson’s thinking see, for example, Richard S. Peterson, *Imitation and Praise in the Poems of Ben Jonson* (New Haven, Conn., 1981), p. 70 ff.

²⁰ Even after he has been exposed and sentenced, he returns in a revamped role as the actor playing “Volpone”—like an intransigent vice in a horror movie—to deliver the Epilogue (*Volp.* 136). He simply will not go away!

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WHAT IS CRITICAL THINKING?

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Critical thinking is as old as philosophy. It is not the same as philosophy inasmuch as its objectives are more modest. It has to do with understanding and with wisdom; but it seeks to ensure understanding and to foster wisdom in the very specific context of argument. It might be argument about anything under the sun—the subject of the argument is immaterial. If we take argument to be an attempt on the part of an author to persuade an audience to a way of thinking, we might further accept that much communication, whether spoken or written or broadcast, is argumentative. Advertisers, comment columns in newspapers, letters to the editor of these newspapers, government white papers, party manifestoes: all of these present arguments and all make claims that support a conclusion of some sort, more or less persuasively, more or less well.

“SLOW FOG,” written up in lights and capitals on a motorway gantry, is an argument: the claim is made that there is fog, and the conclusion is drawn that drivers should drive slowly. Few would deny that it is a fair conclusion; the extent to which the claim supports the conclusion will depend upon whether there is indeed fog ahead—it may be that there has been, and that the official responsible for switching the gantry signals on and off has failed to notice that the fog has lifted.

“SMOKING KILLS” is an argument of sorts, but it lacks a conclusion; the conclusion is implicit and it is that, inasmuch as smoking kills, you ought not to smoke. We know that it is a generalization—we know people who smoke and who appear to survive the ordeal—but we accept that it is a warranted generalization in the circumstances of deaths from smoking-induced cancer and of the public cost of these deaths.

“May I have your attention? In order to reduce the number of security alerts, please keep your luggage with you at all times” is an argument, heard once every twenty minutes or so at Manchester Airport. Is it a strong argument? Does the claim (that if you keep your luggage with you at all times there will be fewer security alerts) support the conclusion (that therefore you should keep your luggage with you at all times)? It does from airport security’s point of view, but will passengers be motivated to keep their luggage with them at all times *in order to reduce the number of security alerts*, or will they keep their luggage with them at all times in order to ensure that it is not stolen? I was not altogether persuaded by the argument on the fifth hearing.

We are bombarded by arguments daily, though we may or may not recognize them as such. It is the business of Critical Thinking to raise awareness of when it is that arguments are being used; of what the conclusion of the argument might be; of whether or not the claims that are made support the conclusion; and of whether the argument is weak or strong, unconvincing or persuasive—and why. Critical Thinking (though I give it capital initial letters and though I “teach” it in more than one university in Hungary) is not a subject, as such. It is rather a bringing to consciousness of what should be instinct in all subjects of the curriculum, but is not. Because it is not, and because argument is to be found in all subjects, perhaps it does need to be given a place on the timetable, briefly, concentratedly, so that its lessons are not overlooked.

Critical Thinking has had such a place in many American colleges and universities ever since the time of the educational philosopher and pragmatist John Dewey. It has a place in university departments of philosophy in England and Scotland, and, more recently, it has found a place at the upper end of secondary schools in England, in particular as a subsidiary, one-year course in the twelfth or thirteenth year of schooling. It is valued (by admissions tutors in universities, for example) as an indicator of a candidate’s ability to process perhaps dense prose and to analyze it for meaning and effect. A course in Critical Thinking ought not only to enable students to assess the arguments of other people; it ought also to enable students to construct persuasive arguments of their own.

What makes Critical Thinking, at its best, something more than a set of skills—tools to be applied rather mechanically—is that criticism is not about lie-detecting; it is not about one-upmanship; and it is certainly not about “right” answers. Critical thinkers ought not to consider themselves to be referees, calling “fallacy!”, and spotting rights and wrongs; their business is to judge why an argument might be weak or strong. Persuasiveness is a matter of degree. Criticism means judgment, and Critical Thinking involves the exercise of judgment. What can it possibly be more worthwhile for education to foster than a capacity to exercise judgment?

What might a Critical Thinking course contain?

In general: we make assumptions when we present an argument; we can scarcely avoid doing so. When the government requires of cigarette manufacturers that they print “SMOKING KILLS” on their packets, it is on the assumption that smokers do not actively seek to die. It is a reasonable assumption, and it is one that that does not need to be made explicit.

An assumption is an acceptance that there is some shared experience or understanding between author and audience. When a *Guardian* journalist observes that “the incidence of protectionism demonstrates that the WTO is not doing its job,” that journalist is assuming that readers will know what the WTO is and what the job is that it should be doing.¹ On the whole, (*Guardian* readers being, in general, reasonably worldly-wise), this is a warranted assumption. An assumption, though, is a missing premise in the argument, and in order to assess the strength of the argument overall, it is necessary to identify this premise at the outset. If it is a warranted assumption (that is, author and audience do indeed share understanding and possibly a point of view) the argument is not weakened on this account. If the assumption is unwarranted, the argument may fall at the first fence. It is not

¹ The *Guardian* quotation concerning protectionism and the WTO is fictional.

always easy to identify an author's assumptions, but it is always worthwhile to bring as many of them out into the open as possible.

An argument is a series of claims (or premises or reasons). One of these claims may be crucial, to the extent that the argument stands or falls by it. An author might, for instance, claim that "whaling should be banned because all civilized nations agree that whales are mammals with large brains that deserve our protection." The counter-claim might be made that Japan is a civilized country and that, for the Japanese, eating whale-meat is a part of their culture. This counter-claim may be said to weaken the argument. The Conservative press in Britain turned to the case of a 12-year-old boy who had just become a father as an example of "broken Britain." It might equally have been said that a single case of a happily married 42-year old with three grandchildren is an example of a Britain in rude health. An example can generally be opposed by a counter-example that might rob the original of its force. When I assign students to write an essay, I ask them to consider at least one valid counter-argument before they launch into an argument of their own. It is necessary that students be aware of what the received opinion is on a subject and of what the basis for it might be before they attempt to demolish it with claims that they consider to be better-founded.

A good argument will be one that is clear: meanings are clear; there is no room for ambiguity; and definitions are made explicit or are deployed in conventional ways. An argument will only persuade if the author has made it clear what is meant by words used: "hemoglobin" may have one fixed and unambiguous meaning, but words like "natural," "liberal," and "moral" do not. Vagueness is a common enemy of good argument. It may almost go without saying that it is necessary, too, to be sure of one's facts. An argument will often stand or fall according to the accuracy or doubtfulness of the facts that are adduced in evidence to support claims. The writer who claimed that "Thomas Malthus learned much from, and was influenced by, the work of Charles Darwin" weakened his argument (that one should be sure of one's facts) by getting Malthus and Darwin the wrong way round (Fisher 53). Being sure of one's evidence is rarely as crassly simple as in this case—but whatever other strengths an argument may have, if it makes claims that are based on flimsy or inaccurate evidence, it will fail.

There is one further general point that might be made before looking at specific ways in which students might be guided to detect weaknesses in argument and be prevented from falling into the same traps themselves, and that relates to argument based on principle. How does one evaluate an ethical argument—and many an argument is based on one or another, perhaps deeply held, value—other than by answering it by reference to an alternative value or principle? How does one judge, for instance, the claim that: "Doctors ought not to accept gifts from their patients?" It sounds very much like a principle of which Hippocrates might have approved, yet, in Hungary, at least, it is a principle observed as much in the breach as in the observance. To the question "Why not?" the claimant might answer: "Because the treatment that a doctor gives ought not to depend, or be thought to depend, upon payment of any sort." If the question "Why not?" is asked again, the claimant might need to make clear the consequences of alternative courses of action, the costs and benefits of such alternatives, and the likely outcomes of a generalization from the preferred alternative. Principles, that is, need to be unpicked like any other claim. One value may or may not trump another (a group's right to attend a protest rally, for example, might be trumped by

the need for public order), but the practical consequences of upholding a claim need to be assessed if values or principles are not to be appealed to as if they were unanswerable—as if they were sufficient to bring an argument to an end on their own.

Students will generally be presented with arguments in a Critical Thinking course that are deemed to have something wrong with them; few arguments are without flaw in any event. There is, in the first place, the issue of credibility: of any argument one will ask “Who is the author?” and “Is he or she qualified to make recommendations or issue orders or propose solutions?” In other words, whence comes his or her authority to argue thus? There is no virtue in a rooted skepticism, since we must trust some arguments—a refusal to trust any at all is to be in denial—but it is advisable to tread warily. If the author is reputable, we will read or listen with a preparedness to believe; if the author is unknown, we examine the evidence presented with more care. We are the more confident when an author argues in the area of his expertise: when David Beckham talks about football, it is plausible that what he says is of value; when he advertises a male fragrance, we are right to suspect a vested interest.

None of us is as objective as we might like to think: we all come at the world from a certain angle. It is a part of the critical thinker’s business to measure that angle where possible. When Tony Blair wrote, in 2004:

We are locked in a historic struggle in Iraq. On its outcome hangs more than the fate of the Iraqi people. Were we to fail, which we shall not, it is more than the power of America that would be defeated. The hope of freedom and religious tolerance in Iraq would be snuffed out. Dictators would rejoice; fanatics and terrorists would be triumphant. Every nascent strand of moderate Arab opinion, knowing full well that the future should not belong to fundamentalist religion, would be set back in bitter disappointment.

He might well have been right, but he had a historic decision to defend—a decision by which he knew history would judge him, but by which the public in Britain had already judged him to have misled them. He was no longer the authority whom we looked to for an unbiased opinion on the conflict in Iraq. Perhaps no serving politician is without bias of a disqualifying sort *ex officio*, and perhaps we will judge journalists by the paper for which they write—the journalistic company that they keep. Teachers ought to be free from such obvious bias, at least, but if they are not, the least that they can do is to make their biases explicit, and students should be encouraged to do the same. It is as important to identify a bias as it is to identify an assumption, and for the same reason.

A biased author will often give himself away by misrepresenting the case that he is seeking to refute. He will, that is, set up a “straw man” (a dummy made of straw set up for target practice): he will caricature whatever it is that he inveighs against the more easily to pour scorn upon it. He may reduce it to the absurd, as Bishop Wilberforce did at the Oxford Debate in 1860, convened to discuss Darwin’s theory of natural selection:

Mr. Darwin tells us that we are descended from the apes. Would Mr. T. H. Huxley care to tell us whether he is descended from the apes on his grandfather's side, or on his grandmother's side?²

Wilberforce had comprehensively misunderstood the theory. His conclusion was implicit: "Mr. Darwin insults us in like manner as he insults his forebears." Wilberforce set up a straw ape and laid himself open to the target practice that T.H. Huxley so relished.

It is typical of the undisciplined author that he over-generalizes. There is nothing wrong with generalization: without generalization there would be no science—certainly there would be no social science. Even history would be impaired. It is the hasty author who over-generalizes, perhaps resorting to anecdote: "We're far too tender-hearted when it comes to discipline at school. A good beating never did me any harm!" There are obvious dangers in generalizing from a sample of one, but a bigger sample rarely warrants an over-generalization. Several hundred men might dream of driving a Ferrari, but it would be foolish to assert that "All men dream of driving a Ferrari" on this basis. It is often an inappropriate qualifier ("all," "never," "few") that weakens an argument. A basic understanding of statistics is a worthwhile part of a course in Critical Thinking in view of the abuse to which they are often subject.

Finally—and here a course in Critical Thinking comes closest to what might have been meant by Rhetoric—there are many ploys, appeals of one sort or another, to which students might be sensitized to advantage, they are so common. There is the appeal to novelty ("This is the modern way to make coffee"); the appeal to popularity ("Everybody is tuning in to Radio Five Live"); and the appeal to authority ("Wasn't it Churchill who advocated a United States of Europe?"). Not all such appeals are specious, of course, and they may be telling—but, once again, what is important is that students are aware of when an appeal is being made, and why novelty, for example, may or may not be a virtue in itself. In particular, they should be aware of when an appeal is being made to our emotions by the use of emotive language, as in the famous anti-immigration speech given by the classical scholar and politician Enoch Powell, in Birmingham, in 1968: "Like the Roman, I seem to see the river Tiber foaming with much blood." His declamations cost him his job and the trust of most voters. When the neutral statement: "The antibiotic was tested on live

² We do not seem to have the exact words that Samuel Wilberforce used, in 1860, but it is generally agreed that Darwin was not present and that Wilberforce addressed his question to T. H. Huxley. Here's a quotation from the reminiscences of a witness present at the famous debate, though: "Then the Bishop rose, and in a light scoffing tone, florid and he assured us there was nothing in the idea of evolution; rock-pigeons were what rock-pigeons had always been. Then, turning to his antagonist with a smiling insolence, he begged to know, was it through his grandfather or his grandmother that he claimed his descent from a monkey? On this Mr. Huxley slowly and deliberately arose. A slight tall figure stern and pale, very quiet and very grave, he stood before us, and spoke those tremendous words—words which no one seems sure of now, nor I think, could remember just after they were spoken, for their meaning took away our breath, though it left us in no doubt as to what it was. He was not ashamed to have a monkey for his ancestor; but he would be ashamed to be connected with a man who used great gifts to obscure the truth. No one doubted his meaning and the effect was tremendous." (Sidgwick 433-34)

tissue,” is converted into the emotive: “Caged rabbits were tortured to market this drug,” our critical antennae ought to warn us that we are being manipulated.

If the above argument has been conducted with anything like the clarity that I hoped for, the conclusion should be, if not inescapable, then compelling. It is that all students, at some time in their school or university career, should take a course in Critical Thinking that combines most if not all of the elements above, as well as others that it would be tedious to itemize further. I have mentioned that it is taught in an increasing number of upper secondary schools in England where it leads to an examination whose successful outcome may be the basis for the offer of a university place. I have taught Critical Thinking to second- and third-year students at Miskolc, and to classes of Erasmus students from countries elsewhere in Central Europe, and I have taught it to fifth-year and PhD students at the University of Szeged. There is not one course in Critical Thinking: there are very many possible courses with any number of emphases. I have said nothing above, for example, about deductive logic and the fallacies that may be said to accrue from the misapplication of logical rules. I have not done so (in spite of the intriguing notion that Hungarians may think more deductively than most) because we seldom appeal to logic when we argue. We appeal to shared experience or common sense. Critical Thinking draws on all that we do when we use our common sense, in a systematic way.

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SOME IDEAS CONCERNING CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS

ZOLTÁN TÖLTÉSSY

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to investigate the nature of metaphor. Although many examples are taken from literature, I do not intend to deal with literary metaphors; instead, I would like to analyze metaphors from a linguistic point of view. The linguistic point of view is consistently applied. Linguistic principles are observed, and aesthetic and literary viewpoints are ignored in this analysis. In the first part, I look back to find the cultural background of the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. In the second part, I examine how time can be interpreted in terms of space. A parallel is drawn between examples taken from everyday speech and a literary work. I hypothesize that understanding literature and metaphorical expressions is based on understanding everyday metaphorical linguistic expressions.

A LITERARY EXAMPLE

JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| John Anderson my jo,* John, | joy |
| When we were first acquent, | |
| Your locks were like the raven, | |
| Your bonie* brow was brent;* | pleasing; smooth |
| But now your brow is beld,* John, | bald |
| Your locks are like the snow; | |
| But blessings on your frosty pow,* | head |
| John Anderson my jo, John. | |
| John Anderson my jo, John, | |
| We clamb* the hill thegither;** | *climbed, **together |
| And mony* a canty** day, John, | *many, **merry |
| We've had wi' ane anither: | |
| Now we maun* totter down, John, | must |
| And hand in hand we'll go, | |
| And sleep thegither at the foot, | |
| John Anderson, my jo. | |

In Burns's poem there are similes ("Your locks were like the raven," "Your locks are like the snow"), metaphors ("sleep" stands for death or rest in a grave and "jo" is identified with John's person), and there is some intimacy in how a woman speaks about her love. But there is something more in this poem. A whole life is related in sixteen lines. How is it possible to squeeze love, marriage, life and death (even afterlife, i.e., "sleep") into a short poem?

HUMAN LIFE IS A JOURNEY

When Robert Burns wrote his poem, there were many fictitious travelogues in which writers presented the protagonist's life:

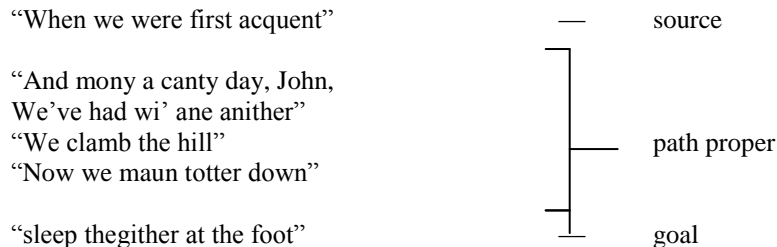
(1) The myth of a hero's journey reveals significant aspects of our fundamental ability to conceptualize our lives via metaphor. A journey is a movement from here to there, from Point A to Point B, and as a metaphor for life of the two points are obviously life and death. Metaphorical journeys have the day's journey at their core, the amount of space we can cover under the cycle of the sun. (Gibbs 1994:188)

In the classic travel books of the 18th century, it is obvious that the hero's life can be identified with his adventures. Each day, each week is the definite time, and each house or settlement is the specific place of an incident connected to the hero's life.

An historical aspect of the metaphor "human life is a journey" is explored and explained by Raymond W. Gibbs:

(2) People have always experienced a significant part of their everyday lives from early childhood in term of source—path—goal image schemas. These recurring bodily experiences are abstracted to form part of the foundation for higher-order reasoning. This abstraction is one reason why journey metaphors are seen so frequently in the way people think about their mundane lives [...]. (Gibbs 1994:191-2)

Now let us see the cognitive aspect of the metaphor "human life is a journey." In Burns's poem, the only specific place is "the hill." It is specific in the sense that this is the only place that can be identified in the physical world. This is the metaphorical linguistic expression that is based on the image schema path consisting of the constituent parts *source/starting point—path—goal/endpoint*.



George Lakoff and Mark Johnson first proposed the existence of an “abstract” metaphor which can account for the interpretation of travelogues, lyric poems, and expressions used in everyday life. They claim that metaphor is a property of concepts rather than of language. Its function is to understand concepts rather than linguistic expressions (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

The metaphorical process consists in that there is some relationship between concept A and concept B. It means that there is a set of systematic links between them, i.e., the constituent conceptual elements of concept B—the vehicle named traditionally in stylistics—are mapped onto the constituent conceptual elements of concept A—the tenor named traditionally in stylistics (Kövecses 2002:6). A parallel can be drawn between the stages of a journey and the stages of life. The stages in the two sets can be linked systematically. In other words, “[t]his suggests that conceptual metaphors are not simply the mapping of one complex propositional structure onto another (e.g., arguments are war). Instead, the propositional structures themselves are metaphorical” (Gibbs 1994:151). Gerard Steen sums up that “metaphor has become the thing to be expected in cognition instead of the thing to be avoided in language” (1994:4).

So henceforth it is necessary to distinguish conceptual metaphors graphically from metaphors meant by stylists: LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

THE INVARIANCE PRINCIPLE

As Gibbs points out, the propositional structures themselves are metaphorical. An example can be mentioned, and it is consistent with the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

The logical structure of the image–schema path is as follows: if you are going from A to C, and now you are at point B which is intermediate, then you have been at all points between A and B, and not at any points between B and C.

Let us take an everyday example: if X is travelling by train from London to Marseilles, and the train is just pulling up at Paris, then X has already run through the Channel Tunnel but has not been to Avignon. See the pictorial representation in Figure 1.

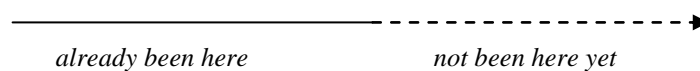


Figure 1 (from Lakoff 1993:214)

The form of the inference is the same in both cases. The path infers a consequence of the cognitive topology of paths. This holds true for any path image-schemata. Thus there is a linguistic-and-inferential generalization to be stated. It can be stated by the metaphor that linear scales are paths, on condition that metaphors preserve the cognitive topology, the image-schematic structure, of the source domain (Lakoff 1993:214).

It is true of the other side of the coin. Lakoff hypothesizes the following as the Invariance Principle:

(3) Metaphorical mappings preserve the cognitive topology (that is, the image-schema structure) of the source domain, in a way consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain. (Lakoff 1993:215)

The Invariance Principle guarantees that, as for path image-schemata, sources will be mapped on sources, paths proper on paths proper, and endpoints on endpoints. The conclusion can be drawn that the image-schematic structure of the target domain cannot be violated. Cases in which the starting point of a path in the source domain is mapped on the endpoint of the path in the target domain cannot be found. This simply does not happen.

TIME IS INTERPRETED IN TERMS OF SPACE

Time is conceptualized in terms of space in English: TIME AS SPACE (Radden 2003). The details are worked out by Lakoff (1993:216-17).

From an ontological point of view, time is understood in terms of entities, locations, and motion. Mapping can be noticed as follows:

- (4)(a) Occasions are things.
- (4)(b) The passing of time is motion.
- (4)(c) Future points are in front of the observer. (*I can't face the future. Troubles lie ahead. I look forward to seeing you* (Radden 2003).)
- (4)(d) Past events are behind the observer. (*That's all behind us now. That was way back in 1900. Look back in anger* (Radden 2003).)
- (4)(e) One thing is moving, the other is stationary; the stationary entity is the deictic center.

Two cases can be differentiated:

Case 1: TIME PASSING IS MOTION OF AN OBJECT.

- (5)(a) The observer is fixed. Points of time are entities moving with respect to the observer.
- (5)(b) Times are oriented with their fronts in their direction of motion.
- (5)(c) The entailment is that the time passing the observer is the present time. Time has a speed relative to the observer.

Examples taken from everyday speech:

- (6)(a) *The time will come when...*
- (6)(b) *The time for action has arrived.*
- (6)(c) *In the weeks following next Tuesday...*

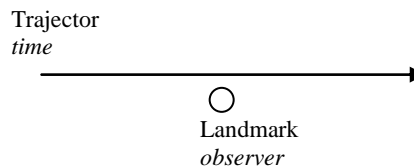


Figure 2 TIME PASSING IS MOTION OF AN OBJECT

The common feature is in that words like *come*, *arrive*, *follow* are used in a temporal sense. If we look at Burns's poem, we can find an example that can be added to the list above:

"And mony a canty day, John, / We've had."

Case 2: TIME PASSING IS MOTION OVER A LANDSCAPE.

(7)(a) Times are fixed locations. The observer is moving with respect to time.

(7)(b) Entailment: Time has extension and can be measured. An extended time, like a spatial area, may be conceived of as a bounded region.

Examples of everyday style:

(8)(a) *His stay in Russia extended over many years.*

(8)(b) *He passed the time happily.*

(8)(c) *We are getting close to Christmas.*

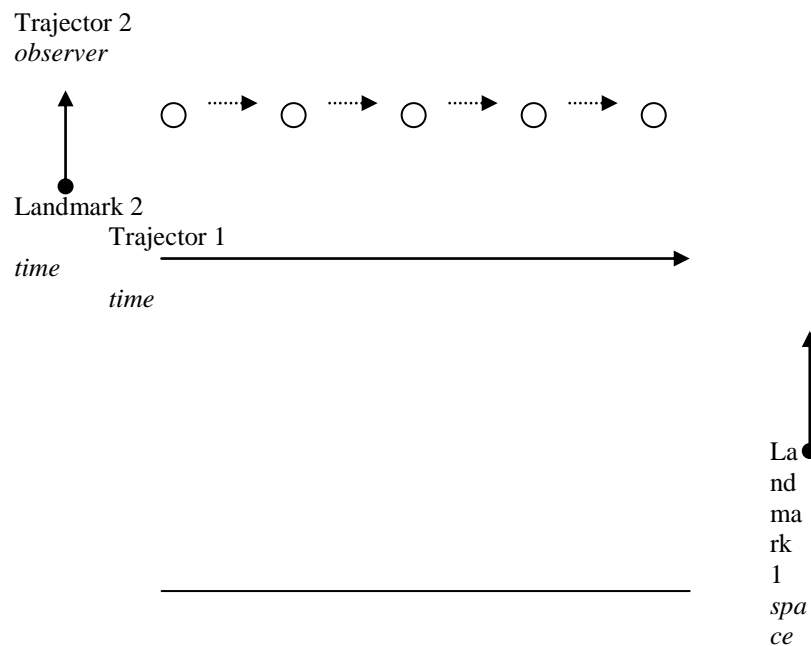


Figure 3 TIME PASSING IS MOTION OVER A LANDSCAPE

The words that are especially used in such contexts are *over*, *pass*, *close to*, *down the road*. Examples can be found in Burns' verse: "We clamb the hill," "Now we maun totter down."

A NET OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS

What other conceptual metaphors underlie Burns's poem? Conceptual metaphors that may expound the theory of the cognitive aspect of metaphor are compiled in the books referred to.

- (9) BEING HAPPY IS LIKE BEING HIGH UP (Kövecses 2002:28) (Kövecses 2003:24) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:15)
- (9)(a) *I'm feeling up.*
- (9)(b) *That boosted my spirits.*
- (9)(c) *My spirits rose.*
- (9)(d) "We clamb the hill"
- (10) HUMAN LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Kövecses 2002:9) (Kövecses 2003:103-4)
- (11) SADNESS IS LIKE BEING DOWN (Kövecses 2003:25) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:15)
- (11)(a) *I'm feeling down.*
- (11)(b) *I fell into a depression.*
- (11)(c) *My spirits sank.*
- (11)(d) "Now we maun totter down"
- (12) HEALTHY IS UP (Kövecses 2002:36) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:15)
- (12)(a) He is at the *peak* of health.
- (12)(b) He is in *top* shape.
- (12)(c) As to his health, he's way *up* there.
- (12)(d) "We clamb the hill"
- (13) SICK IS DOWN (Kövecses 2002:36) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:15)
- (13)(a) *He dropped dead.*
- (13)(b) *He came down with the flu.*
- (13)(c) *His health is declining.*
- (13)(d) "Now we maun totter down"
- (14) THE LIFE OF HUMAN BEINGS IS A DAY (Kövecses 2002:9)
- (15) LOVE IS A UNITY (Kövecses 2002:46)
- (16) LOVE IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:44)
- (17) LIFE IS A VOYAGE IN SPACE (Kövecses 2002:49)

Some other conceptual metaphors can be added to the above list:

- (18) EXPERIENCES ARE LIKE DIFFERENT PARTS OF A JOURNEY
- (19) HELPING PEOPLE IS LIKE SUPPORTING THEM PHYSICALLY
- (20) BEING HEALTHY IS FULL COLOUR
- (20)(a) "Your locks were like the raven"
- (21) BEING SICK IS PALE/LIGHT COLOUR
- (21)(a) "frosty pow"
- (22) THE LIFE OF HUMAN BEINGS IS A YEAR

So while the basic conceptual metaphors are HUMAN LIFE IS A JOURNEY, LOVE IS A JOURNEY, there are some others that make up a whole net of concepts. The concepts are not mutually exclusive; therefore, they

are sometimes organized in hierarchical structures where ‘lower’ mappings in the hierarchy inherit the structure of the ‘higher’ mappings (G. Lakoff 1993). Consider one example of a hierarchy with three levels (ibid.):

Level 1: The event structure metaphor

Level 2: PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS JOURNEY

Level 3: LOVE IS A JOURNEY [...]

(Gibbs 1994:152)

Conceptual metaphors can be classified not only within a hierarchy but can also make up a list, e.g., LIFE IS JOURNEY can be connected to LIFE IS A DAY; LOVE IS A JOURNEY can be juxtaposed to LOVE IS A UNITY. Different metaphors can be used in parallel. In Burns’s poem, their poetic effect accumulates.

CONCLUSIONS

Although this essay focused on one of Burns’s poems, I consistently analyzed his text and everyday linguistic examples in parallel. Comparing and contrasting examples, I can draw two conclusions. First, linguistic principles hold true for literature as well. As an entailment of the first, secondly, literary metaphors are deeply embedded in language and cognition. So, literary metaphors are metaphorical linguistic expressions which can be subsumed under conceptual metaphors, and this way they can be made clear.

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CONSTRUCTION GRAMMAR: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

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Construction grammar is one of the more recent semantics-based theories of grammar, as opposed to syntax-centered generative theories initiated by Chomsky. Construction grammar is related to a very powerful, influential, and inspiring semantics-based grammatical theory called cognitive grammar.

Let us look at some basic principles shared between cognitive and construction grammars (Lakoff 1987; Langacker 1991, 1999; Goldberg 1992, 1995), which I am going to illustrate as relevant with examples related to the English ditransitive (or double object) construction and also point out the occasional dividing lines between the two.

A. There is no clear division between the grammar (structures) and the lexicon (meaningful words to plug into structures), rather there is a continuum between them. As Lakoff (1987:465) puts it: "...just about all other theories assume that there is a clear division between the grammar and the lexicon, with the grammar providing structures and the lexicon providing meaningful words to plug into grammatical structures. We will see that such a clear division is problematic, and that there is more likely a continuum between the grammar and the lexicon."

B. The meaning of a grammatical construction cannot be directly computed from the meanings of its parts but is only motivated by them (holistic approach). "[O]ther theories of grammar assume some form of atomism, namely, that the meaning of a grammatical construction is a computable function of the meanings of its parts. We will argue instead that grammatical constructions in general are *holistic*, that is, that the meaning of the whole construction is motivated by the meanings of the parts, but is not computable from them." (ibid.)

C. Syntactic categories and grammatical relations have a radial structure: there is a prototypical center that is predictable on semantic grounds, and there are non-central members which are not predictable on a semantic basis but which are semantically or pragmatically motivated (ibid.). To give an example of this, in the case of the English dative or ditransitive or two object construction, the prototype is *give*: The family gave him a gold watch for his birthday. It describes a situation in which three obligatory participants (the referents of the expressions underlined) are involved and physical transfer of an object implies transfer of property. A non-central member of this construction is, e.g., *tell*: He told her the good news about his promotion. Again, it describes a situation with three obligatory

participants and also reveals the central role of metaphorical extension in language (i.e., that we understand and experience one thing in terms of another). The metaphor that licenses the participation of *tell* in the construction is the IDEAS ARE OBJECTS metaphor, according to which ideas can be packed, sent in the communication channel, received, unpacked, and owned:

- (1) *He got the ideas across to Jo.*
Jo received the information from Sam.

Another non-central member is represented by *bake*: *His wife baked him a chocolate cake for his birthday.* It describes a situation with two obligatory participants, the referents of the underlined expressions. The metaphor that licenses the participation of *bake* in the construction is ACTS THAT ARE PERFORMED FOR THE BENEFIT OF A PERSON ARE OBJECTS WHICH ARE GIVEN TO THAT PERSON.

D. The same objectively existing situation can be given a different construal (cognitive representation) by the conceptualiser (generally the speaker), which has crucial consequences for grammatical structure as it determines the assignment of functional roles:

- (2) a) *The family gave Jack a gold watch for his birthday.*
 b) *The family gave a gold watch to Jack for his birthday.*

In the case of (2)a), the focus is on the transferred object that is given to Jack and the state arising from the transfer is highlighted (when he comes into the possession of the watch)—in this sense, the proximity of the NPs *Jack* and *a gold watch* is iconic.

In the case of (2)b), the focus is on the recipient *Jack*, and the path on which the gold watch moves is put into the foreground and thus its route is highlighted.

In generative grammar, a) and b) are semantically equivalent, and it is assumed that one is derived from the other with the help of a movement. This raises the question which is the first version generated in the mind (D-structure) and which is secondary. In order to give an answer, researchers turned to first language acquisition. Data, however, testified (Gropen et al., 1989) that the double object and the prepositional constructions appear roughly at the same time in children's speech, with neither of them preceding the other, thus they provide no evidence for the postulated asymmetry.

On the other hand, in cognitive grammar, a) and b) are held to be semantically different, and according to construction grammar, a) and b) are semantically identical but pragmatically different. This reveals a dividing-point between cognitive and construction grammars: cognitive grammar does not accept the division of semantics and pragmatics on the grounds that language does not exist independently of context, which means that cognitive grammar has no belief in the possibility of investigating the ideal speaker's competence. Construction grammar separates semantics and pragmatics (and thus separates the propositional content of utterances from their thematic meaning).

E. Knowledge is organized in our mind in the form of idealized cognitive models (describing a situation, its participants, and the relationships that hold between them), the structured form of which is the scenario, consisting of a sequence of events with components provided by kinesthetic image schemas (notions such as source-path-goal, container-

content, center-periphery, linkage, force, balance, etc., originating from and grounded in our everyday bodily experience and playing an essential role in structuring our mental world):

The scenario for the ditransitive construction is:

1. A volitional human agent transfers a concrete or abstract entity to a human recipient.
2. The transfer is successful as it is iconically implied by the juxtaposition of the verb and the NP denoting the human recipient.
3. The recipient has the object in his possession or at his disposal.

(3) ? *She gave him the hat, but he didn't take it.*

In view of the scenario above, this utterance is infelicitous (which is indicated by the question mark) because in spite of the ditransitive construction in it, it implies an unsuccessful transfer.

The scenario for the prepositional construction is:

1. An animate (human) agent volitionally transfers a concrete object (landmark) to an animate recipient on a path.
2. The purpose of the transfer is that the recipient will possess or utilize the object.
3. There is an expectation that the object will get to the recipient.
4. It is possible that the object will not be transferred to the recipient because there may be "obstacles" on the path.

(4) *She gave the hat to him, but he didn't take it.*

In contrast to (3), this utterance is felicitous on the basis of item 4 in the scenario.

F. Metaphor is a fundamental aspect of our mental activities. Cognitive domains are metaphorically structured: a target domain is structured and understood with reference to another, more basic source domain. (See also C above.)

In the case of the English ditransitive, the source domain is the caused-motion construction, whereas the target domain is the transfer-caused-motion construction as is illustrated by the following utterances describing physical movement resulting in the referent of the subject coming into or losing possession.

(5) *They took his house away from him.*

He lost his house.

Suddenly several thousand dollars came into his possession.

G. Constructions are independent entities in grammar: if one construction is conventionalized, it becomes a pattern that might be extended to other elements of vocabulary. Simple clause constructions are associated directly with semantic structures which reflect scenes basic to human experience. The ditransitive construction came into being in connection with verbs like *give* (three-place predicate) and attracted other classes of verbs on the

basis of semantic motivation. The transfer of objects from human to human is a basic experience: human society is based on it.

H. The polysemy of lexical items and constructions is an essential feature of language (otherwise, the finite human brain would not be able to describe the infinite world). In the ditransitive construction, there appear verbs which refer to the transfer of concrete physical objects, but also messages (*Fax me your answer*) or artistic experiences (*Sing me a love song*) and the transfer itself may be actual or intended.

I. The lexical item contains the grammatical environments in which it may occur.

Generative theories have a problem in accounting for the appearance of verbs representing two-place predicates (*Jill baked Jack a cake.*) in the ditransitive structure. In order to give an explanation for this and comply, at the same time, with the Projection Principle, they have to postulate unlikely verb senses such as *X bakes Z intending Y to have it*, which would appear only in this structure.

For this problem, construction grammar offers a more plausible solution: the ditransitive construction is associated with agent, patient, and recipient roles, and verbs of creation like *bake* are associated with the construction itself.

To sum up, while several basic principles are shared by cognitive and construction grammars (continuum between grammar and lexicon, a holistic approach, the radial structure of syntactic categories, the idea of cognitive construal, the existence of idealized cognitive models, the fundamental role of metaphor in language, polysemy of lexical items and constructions), a basic difference is that whereas cognitive grammar does not subscribe to the division of semantics and pragmatics, construction grammar separates these two levels in the investigation of linguistic facts.

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**„FIDDLERS AND PAINTERS AND SUCHLIKE IRRELIGIOUS FOLK“?:
CALVINISM, MUSIC AND THE VISUAL ARTS IN SCOTLAND
AT THE TURN OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

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During my first professional visit to Hungary in the spring of 1996, I was amused to discover that Scottish life and culture had not gone entirely unnoticed by at least two major figures of the Hungarian *fin-de-siècle*. I am not referring to the more recent *fin-de-siècle* but to the more stylish one before that: the years leading up to 1900 and a little beyond.

In the course of a short story which appears in a translated collection published by Corvina of Budapest, Endre Ady makes a rather cheeky reference to the puritanical virtues to be found in the Scottish hills (Ady 136). (In revenge, I have since made versions of Ady’s poems in the Scots language.) Moreover, I learned from Judit Szabadi’s book on the painter József Rippl-Rónai—who incidentally produced a powerful portrait of Ady—that he (Rippl-Rónai) was close to a Scottish painter called James Pitcairn-Knowles. I had no idea of this man’s work until I was called back to Budapest in 2004 to give a lecture, at the Ernst Museum, to accompany an exhibition of the work of both painters.

Rippl-Rónai and Pitcairn-Knowles had collaborated with the Belgian Symbolist writer Georges Rodenbach (1855-1898) on a joint literary-visual arts publication. Normally, an image illustrates a text, but here the images by the two artists were to be illustrated verbally by Rodenbach. Now it is in this context that I found yet another Hungarian being cheeky about the Scots; this is how Rippl-Rónai contrasts his contributions to the project with those of Pitcairn-Knowles:

My drawings will be in color, reproduced by lithography (from stone slabs); those of my Scottish friend will be cut in wood... His pictures are sad, mine are cheerful; his remind me of death, mine inspire pleasure in life; his are evocative of winter, mine of summer. (From Rippl-Rónai’s memoirs, qtd. in Szabadi 17)

During my various working visits to Hungary I have enjoyed much pleurably idle chatter comparing the tendency of Scots and Hungarians towards gloom and pessimism, and this has led us into all sorts of generalizations that, like most generalizations, have more than a little truth about them. However, I would like to suggest that we ought to question certain assumptions, held by Scots and non-Scots alike, that the former have been, and continue to be, in the grip of something called Calvinism—this ogre which terrorizes us, and supposedly drains the life out of us. It seems to me that this attitude, curiously enough, serves to reinforce the dread doctrine of predestination, and allows us to perpetuate self-fulfilling stereotypes.

I would suggest to you that we Scots have used Calvinism as an excuse for many of our failings. If we do not blame the English, we blame Calvinism for our reluctance to recognize and enhance our existing contributions to the cultural and scientific well-being of our fellow-citizens on this earth. Undoubtedly, Calvinism has had adverse effects on the Scottish psyche, if there is one. If we consider ourselves to be mere worms under an all-powerful and all-determining God, we are hardly going to have the confidence to assert ourselves. The doctrine which divides mankind into the Saved and the Damned must encourage a Manichaeian, dogmatic, sectarian mentality, and can only reinforce our tendency to be a richly diverse but yet sadly fragmented country, in cultural terms.

I don't think this mentality has been better satirized than in an anonymous scrap of verse which may or may not have been composed by a Scot:

We are the precious chosen few:
 Let all the rest be damned.
 There's only room for one or two:
 We can't have Heaven crammed.
 (Cohen 309)

Calvinism as it developed as a cultural force as distinct from a theological system—that is to say, Calvinism as a web of behavior and customs in this world—seems to have got itself into a terrible tangle concerning free will versus predestination, justification by faith or even justification by an austere ethic of good works. If you have been predestined to salvation, you belong to God's Elect, and it is only too easy to justify certain sinful acts—even murder—if by these acts you consider yourself to be carrying out the will of God. This is the totalitarian rationale of ends justifying means and is at the heart of James Hogg's Scottish novel of 1824, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. The Orkney-born poet Edwin Muir (1887-1959), who translated Kafka, demonstrated similarities between Calvinism and Bolshevism-in-practice; as a British Council lecturer in Central Europe during the 1930s and 1940s he witnessed—and this was rare for a Scot at the time—the rise of totalitarian régimes. In 1948 the Stalinist putsch in Czechoslovakia made Muir's position impossible, especially at the Charles University, where academic freedom was fading fast.

Returning to the nineteenth century, we can trace a line of descent from Hogg's text to that most celebrated proto-Symbolist and Calvinist-inflected novella by Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886). In this text, the sinner can justify himself by means of science—that accelerating force (and obsession) of

the late nineteenth century. Dr. Jekyll can retain his pious, respectable position in Victorian bourgeois society while creating a separate identity for his internal demons. By means of a drug he can be transformed into the evil little Mr. Hyde. He seems to be saying to himself: that is not me as Dr. Jekyll who commits these unspeakable acts, it is someone else, Mr. Hyde, and as Dr. Jekyll I can proceed with impunity. But of course it cannot work out like that. The devil Mr. Hyde must inevitably stake his claim against Jekyll, who has effectively entered a Faustian pact.

This work from the 1880s is ostensibly set in London, but Stevenson was drawing on his youthful memories of Edinburgh, with its solid bourgeois mansions within a minute’s walk of the labyrinthine slums. The city itself was an embodiment of Jekyll-and-Hyde duality. Stevenson sought his own personal liberation from middle-class Presbyterian Edinburgh, and in his youth attempted to find it in the pubs and brothels of the city. Guilt, though, would drive him back to his stern if loving father. We are at the point where Calvin meets Freud—and even Jung, for *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a parable of the deliberate fragmentation of the personality, a rejection of the wholeness which one would have thought to be the proper course for a professional healer such as Jekyll. Jung would maintain that a denial of one’s “shadow self” stands in the way of the integration of the total personality.

We arrive at a divided Scotland, with divided Scots. It has been said that if Freud had known anything about Scotland and its obsessive-compulsive neuroses, he would have left Vienna immediately and taken on the whole of Scotland as his collective patient. Standing at the bar some years back, I suggested to the Irish poet Liam Ó Muirthile that if there were a Nobel Prize for Guilt, it would always be won by a Scot. Liam replied that the Irish would offer a strong challenge, and referred to his own Catholic upbringing. It may be, then, that features we ascribe exclusively to Calvinism may actually be shared by other Christian traditions. Think of Stephen Dedalus, in Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1915), as he quakes under the hell-fire sermon of one of the priests at Clongowes College.

So: is there an alternative to these horrors? Have Scots at all successfully ventured in the other direction: against fatal division, enabling themselves to incorporate the “shadow self” into a creative synthesis? To answer this, we might care to investigate some of the actual benefits that Calvinism can offer. In fact, we must be careful not to make too close an identification of Calvin himself with an extreme “Calvinist” and Puritan ideology. As a good Frenchman, he enjoyed his glass of wine. He would not have denied that the gifts of God, if sensuously but moderately enjoyed, could bring us nearer to Him. Calvin was not a Puritan; Puritanism was very much a later development.

When we talk of “Calvinism” in Scotland, for the most part we are talking of a cultural, attitudinal, behavioral inheritance, rather than a theological construct to which people consciously adhere. Few people in Scotland today, or even over the past century and more, would say to you, “I am a Calvinist” with a capital C. In practice, Calvinism has not always been oppressive. Often it has been immensely liberating. Calvin maintained that if the law of God conflicted with the law of the State, believers had the right to defy an oppressive government. There was a strong radical streak which contradicted the tendency elsewhere for church ministers to inform their congregations that they were lowly people who must obey their God-appointed masters in the “big houses” and in the corridors of

state. The great struggles for land reform and ecclesiastical democracy in the nineteenth century were fuelled by such radicalism. Moreover, a religion centered on the Bible required believers who were literate, and so Scottish Protestantism became a force for universal schooling, the basis for what became known as “democratic intellect” as opposed to the privileged elitism of Oxford and Cambridge. Thirdly, Calvinism in Scotland may have frowned on the theatre, but its mythology of devils, witches, warlocks, bogles, sin and damnation has empowered the Scottish imagination to such a degree that we can honestly say that, without Calvinism, the arts in Scotland would have been immeasurably more insipid. Robert Louis Stevenson owed an artistic debt not only to Dostoyevsky—he was reading *Crime and Punishment* around the time he wrote *Jekyll and Hyde*—but also to his nurse Alison Cunningham, a Fife woman who was a staunch Calvinist. Alison told him lurid stories of the Protestant martyrs who had sought refuge in the Pentland Hills, where they were rounded up and taken to Edinburgh’s Grassmarket to be publicly hanged. This all gave him nightmares, and indeed it was a nightmare that released much of the creative energy for the making of *Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Consider, too, the cadences of the King James Bible, as well as the eloquence of pulpit preachers, and how they are echoed in the work of writers who have come from the Calvinist tradition. Far from claiming this as a Scottish monopoly, I would point to New England and to two American greats such as Hawthorne and Melville, writers much admired by Stevenson. (I will indulge in a bit of chauvinism, though, by pointing out that a direct ancestor of Melville was a Fife man: the Reverend Thomas Melville was the minister of Scoonie Kirk in present-day Leven.)

I would propose, then, that both Scots and observers of the Scots ought to stop regarding Calvinism as the bogeyman on which everything negative can be blamed. Instead, I will attempt to show that Scottish visual art and music, at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, are at their strongest when they display a synthesis—or, better, a tension—between puritan restraint and sensual energy.

In one of his major long poems, “On a Raised Beach,” the poet Hugh MacDiarmid (1892–1978) writes that the contemplation of the rocks of the Shetland Islands is “austerely intoxicating” (428). That is a quintessentially Scottish oxymoron. There is a great love of contrast, of contradiction, in Scottish culture. As an earlier Scottish poet, John Davidson (1857–1909), observed, “If one has a healthy mind it is wholesome to go from extreme to extreme, just as a hardy Russian plunges out of a boiling bath into the snow” (71). (So we’re talking of oxymorons that also belong “quintessentially” elsewhere—see Stevenson and Dostoyevsky, above.)

“Austerely intoxicating” would describe much Scottish music of the turn of the nineteenth century. Take, for example, the compositions of Sir Alexander Mackenzie (1847–1935). His *Quartet for Piano, Violin, Viola and Cello*, published in Leipzig, was written in 1873, at the time when young Robert Louis Stevenson was skipping classes at Edinburgh University in his earnest attempts to become a bad boy. Mackenzie came from a musical family. He tells us in his memoirs that the family would play music on a Sunday; in nineteenth-century Scotland you were not supposed to do anything on a Sunday except worship God. A policeman came to the door, but after some words with Mackenzie’s father he left in good spirits—or rather the good spirits were in him. (Purser *passim*, as with future references in this paper to musical examples.)

Mackenzie, as well as other Scottish composers of the time, composed some of the most erotic music that has ever been written; yet, unlike so much late-Romantic European music in the wake of Wagner and *Tristan*, Mackenzie’s music is never too much of a good thing, never cloying, never *stickily* sensual. Indeed, his sensuality is the stronger for the counterforce of Scottish Victorian restraint. (Scottish Dionysus tempered by Scottish Apollo, to put it in the Nietzschean terms with which John Davidson would have been familiar.)

Mackenzie wrote a *Britannia* overture based on Britannia ruling the waves. It is surprisingly unbombastic. The Hungarian-born conductor Hans Richter remarked that when the tuba makes an entry, he had a mental picture of a whale surging through Britannia’s waves. Yet another Hungarian being cheeky about a Scottish artist, but one suspects that Mackenzie would have been amused rather than offended. A more important Mackenzie work, though, is his oratorio *The Rose of Sharon* (1884). What might be one’s initial reaction to the composer going to the Old Testament for inspiration? A predictable source for a pious Scotsman, one would think. But Mackenzie was not interested in theology. His Old Testament inspiration is the Song of Solomon. In *The Rose of Sharon*—especially in part three of the work, “The Awakening of the Sulamite”—Mackenzie evokes the atmosphere of a perfumed garden, one lover inviting the other into this very earthly paradise, all languorous seduction and shedding of garments.

William Wallace lived from 1860 to 1940. No, this is not the William Wallace only too familiar from Mel Gibson’s unintentionally amusing parody in *Braveheart*, but a medical man who specialized in ophthalmology before turning his career in the direction of music: from care of the eye to care of the ear. Wallace introduced a Hungarian invention—the symphonic poem—to Scotland. This form was invented by Liszt, and applies to an orchestral work which follows a broadly narrative program. Wallace’s symphonic poem, *The Passing of Beatrice*, dates from 1892. As the title suggests, it is inspired by Dante’s *Paradiso*. Liszt’s *Dante Symphony* has only two movements, “Inferno” and “Purgatorio,” so it has been said that Wallace’s piece completes the Liszt. Dante ought to remind us that Calvinism possesses no monopoly on the fear of Hell, but Wallace’s *Paradiso* is infused with the opposite of any “Calvinist” joylessness; it is a sensuous yet at the same time a transcendently chaste celebration of human love passing into the Empyrean.

The last musical example—and I cannot stress strongly enough my indebtedness to John Purser’s *Scotland’s Music* radio series—comes from Hamish McCunn (1868-1916). He was a native of Greenock on the Clyde Estuary, west of Glasgow, and the son of a shipyard owner. He is more obviously patriotic than Mackenzie or Wallace, though it must be said that Mackenzie was a pioneeringly national composer, and his markedly Scottish Piano Concerto was publicly performed by Paderewski. As for McCunn, he is not the Scottish Wagner as some have claimed, but rather the Scottish Dvořák. During his overture *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood*—premiered in 1887 when the composer was only nineteen—you can hear the “Scotch snap,” a rhythmic phenomenon much deployed by Dvořák himself. In the twentieth century, there were calls by MacDiarmid and others for Scottish music to follow the lead of Bartók and Kodály, that is to proceed on the basis of a more systematic and scientific absorption of folk music. So if McCunn is our McDvořák, we had to wait well into the twentieth century for our McBartók, but we were lucky to acquire a plethora of such, in the persons of Francis George Scott (1880-1958), Erik Chisholm (1904-1965) and Ronald Stevenson (b. 1928). They were all associated with the first

or later phases of the Scottish Revival, though their work remains little known in our proudly philistine land.

Finally, let us address ourselves to the austere intoxications of the painting, design, and architecture of the period. The painter William McTaggart (1835-1910) grew up in Argyll, a dramatically coastal region in the west of Scotland. His early love of painting was discouraged by his local Free Presbyterian Church minister, who declared that “Art is vanity, even wickedness [...]. See its connection with the Church of Rome which has dragged Italy down to a land of fiddlers and painters and suchlike irreligious folk” (qtd. in Patrick 2). McTaggart is still wrongly labeled the first Scottish Impressionist, but he developed his style independently of Monet and his French contemporaries of the 1870s. There is much more movement, more drama in McTaggart than in the relatively quieter, more sedate work of the French Impressionists. There are usually human figures in a McTaggart canvas, and they relate intimately to the natural environment. Above all, there is the powerfully elemental meeting of land and sea. His masterpiece, *The Storm* (1890), exemplifies the dark intensity of the Scottish imagination. It could serve as a visual counterpart to many fictions by Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, at those points where there is a desperate escape by sea, as in *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) or *Catriona* (1893). McTaggart’s *The Sailing of the Emigrant Ship* of 1895 provides dramatic comment on the plight of Scotland’s dispossessed.

Symbolism and Art Nouveau (Jugendstil, Secessionism) offer challenges to the sobrieties—and pieties—of Calvinism. A protégé of the polymath and impresario Patrick Geddes, John Duncan (1866-1945) shows how a Scottish Symbolist may deal with the traditional iconography of a Celtic country; one image in particular is sited permanently in a place associated with religious intolerance. A fountain can be seen at the spot, on Edinburgh Castle’s esplanade, where witches were burned. It bears Duncan’s relief of two heads, seemingly those of Adam and Eve; as two heads, though, they may suggest a divided psyche *à la manière écossaise*. There is also a snake, reinforcing the representation of the first couple, and who could be either the fiend in Paradise, or the Celtic serpent of wisdom, or even both. Symbolism cannot answer all that for certain. It does far better than that: it suggests.

A pupil of John Duncan, and like him a native of Dundee, was George Dutch Davidson (1879-1901), whose haunting self-portrait, while unique, evokes a Scottish Edward Munch. For me, this is *the* image of Scottish Symbolism and ought to be used as the cover of a paperback edition of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. It is very much a step in the direction from a Calvinist to a Freudian psychology.

The Scottish Colorists were a group of artists who do not constitute a “School” as such, but they knew each other and shared many aesthetic ideals, not least an admiration for Cézanne and a desire to paint in that artist’s part of the world, the south of France. There, and in Paris, there prevailed a hedonistic ambience absent in Scotland and also a quality of light and color unavailable to them in the mists of home. So, of their number, Samuel Peploe (1871-1935) evoked the landscape of Cassis, on the coast near Marseille, and Francis Cadell—a Scot of French ancestry—ventured further east with his 1910 shimmerings of St. Mark’s Square, Venice. John Duncan Fergusson’s (1874-1961) *The Blue Beads*, also from 1910, reveals him as the most sensual, indeed the most sexual, of the Colorists in both style and content.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928), a figure as much European as he was Scottish, attracted the attention of design and architectural circles in Vienna, Turin (Torino) and Budapest at a time when he was being ignored (or, at best, undervalued) in his native Glasgow. In 1914 he left Glasgow for good, having had enough of being dismissed as an alcoholic crank. It must be stressed, though, that there were those in Glasgow who actively championed his work and they deserve our infinite gratitude for commissioning the masterpieces which can still be seen in the city. His masterpiece of masterpieces is the Glasgow School of Art, whose new building he was called to design in 1896. This work marks the beginning of European modernism. It draws on the so-called vernacular style: that is, the plain style of the architecture of Scottish castles—“Scottish baronial.” The building’s counterpoint of geometric discipline to flowing Art Nouveau or Jugendstil was the kind of thing to appeal to the Vienna Secession. However, that counterpoint is significant in a more specifically Scottish sense, in the terms discussed throughout this paper: the synthesis of, the tension between, puritan restraint and sensual energy—austere intoxication. (I have not been entirely joking when on occasion I’ve called the building “Jekyll and Hyde in glass, wrought iron and stone.”)

One might note also the influence of Japanese architecture on Mackintosh, as part of a general tendency in Europe and North America, at this time, to delight in the visual language of the East. Minimalism, in the manner of a pared-down austerity, is associated with Japanese style. Mackintosh’s furniture, especially his chairs, can be regarded as admirably elegant sculpture rather than as ideal for personal comfort. The skeptical practicality of Scots, rather than any life-denying religion, has caused many of them to question Mackintosh’s apparent preference for form over function. Here are the words of a very down-to-earth Glaswegian, in a short story by Neil Munro (1866-1930), a popular writer during our period: Erchie works as a waiter and has visited one of the new tea-rooms whose interior has been designed by Mackintosh: “The chairs is no’ like ony ither chairs ever I clapped eyes on, but ye could guess they were chairs; and a’ roond the place there’s a lump o’ looking-glass wi’ purple leeks pented [painted] on it every noo and then” (101-102).

One might well experience some netherward discomfort after sitting on a Mackintosh chair, and yet doubt that the man himself ever intended any Calvinistic-masochistic mortification of the flesh.

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GENRE AND THE SELF: IDENTITY IN HARRIET WILSON'S *OUR NIG*

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The changes in thinking wrought by postmodernism have influenced not only the way we view the world around us but also how we think about ourselves. The idea of a unified identity, as well as Romantic notions of a fractured self, have evolved in the postmodern era into a sense of the individual as a purely social construct. Michel Foucault, for instance, sees the modern individual as defined essentially by various social discourses, while Gloria Anzaldúa uses the metaphors of *la mestiza* and the borderlands to describe how individuals and cultures form their consciousness. For Anzaldúa, the individual “has a plural identity” and “operates in a pluralistic mode” (2213), and those who are conscious of belonging to many different groups, such as Native American homosexuals or Chicana lesbians, are more fully conscious of how this process functions. In other words, the individual is not a stable entity based on a single identity, but rather a pastiche, a product of diverse and constantly changing selves.

Pastiche is also a term applicable to Harriet E. Wilson's use of genre in her novel *Our Nig; Or, Sketches from the Life of a Free Black* (1859). At the time of its rediscovery in 1982, critics such as Henry Louis Gates, Jr. noted not only how the supposedly fictional account of the protagonist's life melds into the autobiographical details of the author's life, but also how Wilson borrows from the traditions of the sentimental novel and of the slave narrative in creating her novel. Since then scholars have sought details of the author's life in order to ascertain the degree to which the text is autobiographical, and critics have also discerned other genres at work in the text as well. This blending of literary fiction with autobiography is significant, for the various genres constitute the building blocks with which Wilson interprets the incidents in her own life and then fashions a pluralized identity for her protagonist. The following exploration of how Wilson interweaves various genres reveals her novel to be a pastiche, an attempt to locate her protagonist, Wilson/Frado, within the social and literary discourses of mid-nineteenth century America. Additionally, her balancing act between adherence to genre and the details of her own life when discussing religious beliefs—or the lack thereof—sheds light on one of the problematic aspects of the slave narrative genre, the question of editorial intrusion.

Although all the details in the novel cannot be confirmed at this distance in time, the general veracity of the story is no longer in doubt. If the parallels between events in Frado's life and the descriptions of Wilson's life in the three appended testimonial letters suggest to readers that protagonist, narrator, and author were one and the same, then Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s discovery of her son's death certificate has—as Gates notes in his introduction to the 1983 edition—“proved sufficient to demonstrate his mother's racial identity and authorship of *Our Nig*” (xiii). Additionally, Barbara A. White has turned up information that identifies the ‘Bellmont’ family of the novel as a prominent family in Milford, New Hampshire, with “strong abolitionist connections” (34). White's findings suggest that the family contained enough sadistic personalities that Wilson “probably did not need fictional models” from contemporary sentimental novels to create her characters (31); nonetheless, White shows that Wilson merged two real figures into one fictional character and provided a new chronology for events such as weddings, birthdays, and school experiences for aesthetic reasons. This reshaping of real events suggests that Wilson was attempting to redefine her own life story and thus take control over her life. That the shape conformed more closely to the patterns of the sentimental novel comes as no surprise; the genre was one of the most popular in nineteenth-century America.

As identified by Nina Baym, the heroine in women's sentimental fiction is often an orphaned child who ends up in the care of exploitative or abusive guardians and must endure hardships in a foster home until she comes of age. A small group of sympathizers crystallizes in the background, but these supporters are not always able to rescue the heroine from her plight (37). While Wilson apparently did not need to invent the proverbial wicked stepmother of many Grimm's fairy tales in order to—as Bruno Bettelheim points out—project a child's hostility toward the real mother (66-69), the exact attitude of others in the family toward her remains undocumented. It is possible, however, that in addition to modifying the details of Aunt Abby's life (White 43), Wilson is also consciously grouping her with the son James as a spiritual advisor to the protagonist, Frado. In thus reconfiguring the characters of her adolescence according to groupings characteristic of the sentimental novel, Wilson is constructing for Frado the identity of a character in such a novel.

Of course, not all the particulars of *Our Nig* fit into the patterns of the sentimental genre. As Gates points out, Frado's failure to find happiness in marriage marks a deviation from the overall pattern of nineteenth-century women's literature (xlvi). Cynthia Davis goes even farther and asserts that the text does not belong to the sentimental genre and that only the appended letters have “reframe[d] *Our Nig* as a sentimental novel and tragic romance” (403). Davis's hypothesis is that *Our Nig* is a response to the dominant nineteenth-century discourse that sexualized black women's bodies, but while this approach does illuminate the text in new ways, it does not suffice to remove the novel from the sentimental category. Certainly the repeated beatings and depictions of pain make us aware of the “black woman [...] as a body in pain” (399) and not as a sexualized body, yet it is precisely the tactic of not sexualizing the female body that *Our Nig* shares with the sentimental novel. Barbara Welter points out that nineteenth-century American writing was obsessed with the “Cult of True Womanhood,” which portrayed the ideal woman as white, domestic, and—except for procreation—essentially chaste (21). As Helen Carby notes, however, “figurations of black women existed in an antithetical relationship with the values embodied in the cult of true womanhood, an absence of the qualities of piety and purity being a

crucial signifier" (32), yet this does not mean that Wilson could not adapt as much of the ideal for her protagonist as was feasible. In *Our Nig*, Frado's premarriage courtship is described with oblique references to her beauty—"thin, ruby lips; [...] her sparkling eyes" (126)—but none to overt physical passion, and her infatuation with James never goes beyond the stage of adolescent crush; in short, sensuality always stays within the bounds defined by the sentimental standards of the era.

The physical cruelty evident in *Our Nig*, which is even more graphic in its depiction than Emily Brontë dared in *Wuthering Heights* (1847), brings the novel closer to the realm of the slave narrative. In fact, among the many generic conventions he lists, James Olney mentions "details of first observed whippings and numerous subsequent whippings, with women frequently the victims" as a chief hallmark of the slave narrative (153). The physicality of the beatings marks the intersection of the sentimental and slave narrative genres; it is here where both genres try to enlist the sympathies of their audiences, the former fictionalized and intended to evoke self-pity in the reader, the latter based on reality and aimed at awakening empathy for others. In Wilson's novel the two genres move in different directions, the sentimental defining much of the language in the text—"Lonely Mag Smith! See her as she walks with downcast eyes and heavy heart" (1)—as well as the character groupings, while some of the formal and a few of the thematic elements are borrowed from the slave narrative.

Wilson's decision to employ elements of these two genres can be attributed to their popularity as well as to her self-professed desire to support herself and her invalid son financially. The two genres would have been both a conscious literary model and a recipe for increasing sales, which unfortunately never occurred. Equally important for Wilson, however, is that the two genres help establish her credentials as an author. As Jill Jones argues, "by tapping into the inherent and particular authority of both the slave narrative and the sentimental novel, Wilson constructs the necessary illusion of authority for most of *Our Nig*" (38-39). While Jones ably demonstrates how Wilson "maneuvers[s] between authenticity of first-person non-fiction and the sentimental third-person voice" (40), it is also worth noting some of the particular hallmarks of the slave narrative that Wilson employs since these show her not just building credibility but fashioning a persona as well. It is an identity based not only on gender—via the sentimental novel—but also on race.

Many of the elements Wilson borrows from the slave narrative are, of course, those specifically designed to establish the author's identity and hence the validity of the text. Wilson includes such traditional elements of the slave narrative as testimonial letters by whites prefaced or appended to the texts and a passage in the preface in which the author claims, if anything, "the tale [...] understates the horror of slavery" (Olney 152). While slavery does not technically describe Frado's condition in the free North, the extended title—*Showing that Slavery's Shadow Falls Even There*—obviously intends to have the reader make the connection between the protagonist and the social and political issue of slavery. The parentless young girl of the sentimental novel becomes, when shifting the generic prism, the exploited and debased young African American of the slave narrative. The reference to race is made explicit in another self-authorizing strategy from the slave narrative, "the claim, as an integral part of the title, [that the text is] 'Written by Himself'" (Olney 152). Wilson's use of the possessive pronoun with the racial epithet, ironically offset by quotation marks, gives her access to the authority of the slave narrative, while

simultaneously both showing an awareness of how her white Northern audience views her and subtly accusing them of racism as she hides behind “a deliberately constructed self-derisive humility” (Tate 113). Her manipulation of slave narrative conventions thus allows her to create a self that is outside the persona of the powerless sentimental heroine; in her racialized pseudonym, she is both oppressed and defiant at the same time.

Race strongly influences the pastiche of genres that Wilson has constructed, limiting how far she can use the white women’s sentimental novel and encouraging her to adapt the slave narrative of her race. Identifying other genres at work in *Our Nig*, however, demonstrates that Wilson is also exploring other aspects of her protagonist’s personality. Julia Stern, for example, sees *Our Nig* as a primarily gothic novel in which Wilson is chiefly examining the mother-daughter relationship, with herself alternately on both sides. Stern persuasively argues that the depictions of violence and terror mask a rage in Wilson and turn the novel into a showplace that “pit[s] Gothic antinurture against sentimental maternity” (442). Alternatively, Elizabeth West emphasizes Frado’s spiritual life in interpreting the novel as a conversion narrative. For West, Frado’s failed conversion experience is caused by her inability to resolve the contradictions between nineteenth-century discourses on religion and race, which suggest that there is a heaven for whites but not necessarily for blacks. West claims that “[i]n the construction of her own self-image, Frado does not escape the influence of racial signifiers—in her mind the primary source of her troubles is her non-whiteness” (5); this internalization of predominant social attitudes, however, leads Frado to reject “Christianity as an institution that sanctions racist ideals” (21).

While West clearly demonstrates the elements of the conversion narrative that can be found in *Our Nig*, it remains that only roughly forty of the novel’s one hundred-thirty pages deal with Frado’s religious yearnings—hardly enough to label the entire novel a conversion narrative. Indeed, many of the elements found in the description of Frado’s spiritual life are equally characteristic of the slave narrative. The similarities do not contradict West’s conclusion regarding why Frado rejects Christianity, rather they suggest that Wilson’s collage of genres relies more on the slave than the conversion narrative. It is in the attempt to interweave the religious aspects of the slave narrative into her novel that Wilson introduces a contradiction into the text, one which underscores the problem of authorship in this antebellum genre.

The similarities in the treatment of religion in the slave narrative and *Our Nig* include Frado’s initial attraction to religion as an escape from work and Mrs. Belmont’s anger over Frado’s later deepening interest in the Bible. Additionally, Wilson does not fail to present the typical contrast found in slave narratives between a white hypocritically professing religion and a black displaying a simpler, purer religious urge. She juxtaposes the bereavement of Mrs. Belmont over her son with Frado’s genuine mourning: the former is described as a person “who donned the weeds from custom; kept close her crape veil for so many Sabbaths, and abated nothing of her characteristic harshness” (100), while the young black woman “moved about the house like an automaton. Every duty performed—but an abstraction from all, which shewed her thoughts busied elsewhere” (97). The dichotomy between outer appearance of piety and the inner feeling of religiousness is expressed through the emphasis on clothes for the one and the behavior of the other.

But the failure to follow through with the theme of religion marks a deviation from the pattern in slave narratives such as Harriet Jacobs’s, who remains trusting in God

throughout her seven-year imprisonment and later efforts to reunite with her children. Why spend so much time discussing the topic and then—contrary to generic conventions of both the slave narrative and the sentimental novel—drop it? West is certainly right that this represents a critique of Christianity, but the intention may not be deliberate; instead, it is possible that Wilson is simply shifting between genres, moving from the slave narrative to a more straightforward autobiography. Perhaps Wilson/Frado really did go through just such an experience and rejected the idea for the reasons she stated; after discussing the topic with the generic conventions at her disposal, she was free to drop the theme and alter the slave narrative patterns. Further evidence of this comes in the final two brief references to religion at the close of the book.

Much has been made of the narrative weaknesses in the novel and the blurring of distinctions among author, narrator, and protagonist: how the text shifts from first- to third-person narration after the first few chapters, then rushes to a close in the final chapters while the narrative voice switches inexplicably back to first-person, and how the events of the narrative collapse into the details of the author's life that are revealed in the appended letters. An obvious answer for this lack of control lies with the author's inexperience as a writer; yet signs of her grasping for a narrative strategy are often overlooked. How, for example, can a reader account for the reemergence of Frado as a devout Christian on the final two pages if not as a tactical ploy to catch the reader's sympathy? Henry Louis Gates, Jr. suggests that Wilson was merely emphasizing the appearance of Christianity in order to appeal to the community around her in the narrative, citing the remark about her "devout and Christian exterior" (xliv) with which Wilson concludes chapter 11. Certainly this is in keeping with the inner-outer dichotomy Wilson employed earlier in contrasting Mrs. Bellmont's and Frado's piety. Looking ahead a few pages, however, Wilson uses the appearance of Christianity to make a direct appeal to a different audience, the one reading the novel. Here, where, as Gates notes, "the protagonist, the author, and the novel's narrator all merge explicitly into one voice to launch the text's advertisement for itself, for its status as 'worthy' fiction that should be purchased" (xlvii), Frado's piety reappears embedded in the terminology of the slave narrative. "Nothing turns her from her steadfast purpose of elevating herself. Reposing on God, she has thus far journeyed securely. Still an invalid, she asks your sympathy, gentle reader. Refuse not, because some part of her history is unknown, save by the Omniscient God. Enough has been unrolled to demand your sympathy and aid" (Wilson 130).

The closing passage displays not just a shift from narrating events to directly addressing the reader, but also a return to a number of generic conventions. The idea of raising oneself through education and religion is a vital part of the slave narratives and a belief familiar to the Northern white audiences who read these narratives. Through the concept of self-elevation, white audiences could establish a link, stretching back to Benjamin Franklin and beyond, between their beliefs and aspirations and those of the black slaves in the South. Much of the effectiveness of Frederick Douglass's narrative comes from his employment of the self-made man image, and here Wilson turns to it as well. In the very next sentence Wilson uses the same strategy and quickly makes reference to her own professedly strong religious beliefs—inviting the reader to forget what she has written earlier about turning her back on Christianity—before requesting the readers' support. The contradiction for the reader can only be overcome by ignoring what appeared twenty-five pages earlier, or by

accepting those earlier incidents as a reflection of her true beliefs and the posture in the conclusion as just that, posturing for the audience.

The somewhat odd closing sentence makes it clear that Wilson in the end returned to the generic conventions of the slave narrative. The close of many slave narratives includes a plea for sympathy for the black slaves still living in the South and often a request for financial support for abolitionist societies struggling to end the peculiar institution (Olney 153). Wilson's request, however, is purely personal. The request for sympathy is superfluous—be the character fictional or autobiographical—for the sentence makes it clear that the text has already made the request. But the demand for financial aid—in other words, for the reader to buy the book—is curiously placed at the end of the text. If the reader has gotten this far, it may logically be assumed that the book has already been purchased, or never will be. Even by nineteenth-century advertising standards, this is a clumsy location to try to sell a book. Wilson's decision to do so must have been influenced by reference back to the literary conventions of the slave narrative and sentimental novels she was playing off of.

The tension thus created by attempting to balance apparently autobiographical elements—a failed religious conversion—with generic conventions from the slave narrative—the reference to her piety—effectively destabilizes the text and leaves the reader aware of an aesthetic failure by Wilson as a writer. Conversely, however, it also points toward a problem with the slave narratives. Does a similar tension exist in these texts, covered up only by the more skillful editing work carried out by white abolitionists who functioned as editors? How autobiographical are all the accounts of Christian piety in these narratives? And if the editors took liberties with the topic of the narrator's spiritual life, did they take liberties elsewhere as well?

Absolute certainty in these matters is well-nigh impossible at this distance in time, and certainly it would be wrong to challenge the religious feelings of all black slaves. The relevance of Christian theology to the black slaves' situation is obvious, and narratives such as Sojourner Truth's demonstrate how deeply religious sentiment could go and how conscious many slaves were of the political implications of their spiritual beliefs. Nonetheless, the authors and editors of the slave narratives were also well aware of their audience and the effect that the theme of religion could have upon these readers. Frederick Douglass, for example, felt compelled to add an appendix to his 1845 narrative in order to clarify that it was not Christianity he was attacking but the misuse of it by slaveholders.

Such a reading of *Our Nig* and its use of religion presupposes Wilson as an inexperienced writer and precludes Elizabeth Breau's interpretation of the novel as largely satiric. Her assertion that *Our Nig* is "a multi-layered text that combines aspects of two genres with a satire that undercuts many of the conventions of both" (464) is accurate up to a point; what subverts generic conventions, however, is not satire. While the title certainly implies satire, the shifts in voice and changes in tempo of narrative development point more toward an author searching both for style and herself. It is slips, not satire, that subvert.

Our Nig should not be read, however, as a smorgasbord of styles, for there are genres it could drift into but does not. A. Robert Lee, for example, terms Wilson's work as "a novel of New England mulattoism and domestic service" (15), which certainly describes two aspects of the novel, but Frado never develops along the lines of the generic tragic mulatta. As Debra J. Rosenthal points out, "tragic mulattas are tragic because they cannot be saved from themselves and inevitably die by novel's end" (508), and this is certainly not

true of Frado. Through the act of writing, both protagonist and author assert their will to live and defy the stereotype of the tragic mulatta.

What *Our Nig* leaves us with is a pastiched personality. Reacting to nineteenth-century discourses on women's roles, religion, slavery, and race, Wilson has Frado play out the sentimental role of the orphaned and oppressed sentimental heroine, the gothic roles of the mother/daughter relationship, and the slave narrative role of the racialized self. In slipping between roles, she produces a self that, like Anzaldúa's *mestiza*, is a composite of many different identities. Establishing an identity, like establishing a genre, involves shifting, blending, and reblending that in the end leaves one with a new creation that is neither coherent nor what one necessarily thinks it is. Indeed, Eric Gardner's discovery that much of Wilson's nineteenth-century audience probably understood her novel as a moralizing tale for young children (238) reminds us that, despite all the roles we try to play, others may view us from a completely different angle. In the end, had *Our Nig* not vanished into literary obscurity until the late twentieth century, Wilson's blending of genres—autobiography, sentimental novel, slave narrative, and gothic—could even have marked the beginning of a new novelistic genre in African American literature.

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THE LURE OF LACEDAEMON: A NOTE ON PATER AND MODERNISM

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REJECTIONS

This essay is part of an intended longer study which purports to review the whole extent of Pater's contribution to English Modernism. As the years pass, that contribution looms larger and larger. Paradoxically, few of those who had taken significant doses of inspiration and an equally significant number of ideas from Pater were later ready to acknowledge their debt. T. S. Eliot, in "Arnold and Pater" (1930), a bad-tempered combination of hostility and condescension, practically writes him off as a critic. "His view of art, as expressed in *The Renaissance*, impressed itself upon a number of writers in the 'nineties, and propagated some confusion between life and art which is not wholly irresponsible for some untidy lives" (SE 392). Such a dismissal of Pater is part of a pattern which, by Eliot's time, had become fully established. The denials and denunciations, typically by writers who owed so much to him, started quite early. Some of the most enduring achievements of Henry James—*The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), the novels of the major phase: *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904)—are unthinkable without the Aesthetic Movement so closely associated with Pater. True, these novels offer a devastating critique of that movement, but James was at least as strongly attracted to as he was repelled by Aestheticism. Gilbert Osmond and Madame Merle; Aunt Maud; those pleasure-seekers of fashionable Paris society, Chad Newsome and Little Bilham; Adam and Maggie Verver, all display the amoral tendencies inherent in the ideology of that movement. Yet Ralph Touchett, Milly Theale, Lambert Strether and Maria Gostrey, who ostensibly personify the moral standards that Victorian society professed but failed to observe, are also cast in the Paterian mould. In their relations with people and things, their love of

the beautiful is no less conspicuous than their adherence to the moral law. Not infrequently—and unnoticed by themselves—their aesthetic sensibility stands in the way of ethical considerations. Osmond’s impenetrable duplicitousness, his propensity to look upon people as things, as *objets d’art*—qualities most useful in his entrapment of Isabel—find a powerful “objective correlative” in his Florentine villa, which has a front with “heavy lids, but no eyes,” and an interior which is like a private museum (*PL* 209-10, 224). But then Ralph Touchett, who, to all intents and purposes, epitomizes the moral seriousness so flagrantly ignored by Osmond, also experiences an aesthetic thrill in trying to shape Isabel’s life, as is aptly demonstrated by the metaphor he employs when at one stage he reviews his evolving relationship with his cousin: “He surveyed the edifice from the outside, and admired it greatly; he looked in at the windows, and received an impression of proportions equally fair. But he felt that he saw it only by glimpses, and that he had not yet stood under the roof” (*PL* 59). The incongruity of the traits that go into the character of Ralph—the sense and cult of the beautiful, the moral seriousness *as well as* the acquisitiveness—seems less surprising if we bear in mind that, along with the highly respectable company I have just named, he is the creation of an author who in a few years time, in “The Art of Fiction,” would solemnly declare that the novel is first and foremost “a personal, a direct impression of life,” and would define experience as an “immense sensibility,” or “the atmosphere of the mind” (*SLC* 54-56)—terms that echo Pater’s controversial “Conclusion” to *The Renaissance*. A similar duality is observable in Yeats: Michael Robartes, who owes his literary inception and birth to “Rosa Alchemica” (1896), Yeats’s most “Pateresque” story, in “The Phases of the Moon” (1918) is embarrassed rather than delighted by the connection: “He [that is, Yeats] wrote of me in that *extravagant* style / He had learnt from Pater” (*AV* 60, emphasis added). And despite the immense debt she owed to Pater in “Modern Fiction” (1919)—to mention only the most obvious case—Virginia Woolf was no more grateful. What Fanny Wilmot, the reflexive consciousness of “Moments of Being: ‘Slater’s Pins Have No Points’” (1926), recalls about Julius Craye—Walter Pater in disguise—is that “there was something odd about” that character (*CSF* 216). Arthur Symons, an outstanding minor poet and critic of English Decadence and Symbolism, who once maintained friendly ties with Pater and in his poetry gave veritable object lessons in Pater’s sensationalist aesthetics, felt no less inclined to prevaricate. Pater was not a great but only a “rare artist,” although, Symons added, he was also “so much more interesting, to many, than the very greatest” (*R* xi).

As his title indicates, Eliot posits a fundamental identity between Arnold and Pater. He feels justified in doing so because to him the latter is part of the process which led to profound changes in English attitudes to religion and art. He describes this process as the “dissolution of thought and sensibility,” “the isolation of art, philosophy, religion, ethics and literature,” and deeply regrets it (*SE* 392-93). The date of his essay is significant: it is the year of the publication of the complete *Ash Wednesday* (1930), which was preceded by Eliot’s conversion to Anglo-Catholicism in 1927 and by the publication of *For Lancelot Andrewes* in 1928, which may in part, but only in part, account for the summary dismissal of Pater. What Eliot finds particularly objectionable is that with Arnold “literature, or Culture, tended to usurp the place of Religion” (*SE* 385), or that for Pater “religion was a matter of feeling, and metaphysics not much more” (*SE* 390). But although he lumps the two writers together because of their resemblance and occasional spiritual kinship, Arnold in-

curs less of his ire, which may well be due to the fact that Arnold no longer posed a threat or a challenge. “We go to him for refreshment and for the companionship of a kindred point of view to our own, but not as disciples” (SE 383); “Arnold is rather a friend than a leader. He was a champion of ‘ideas’ most of whose ideas we no longer take seriously” (SE 384). Unexpectedly after so much condescension, Eliot finishes his essay with something like an accolade when, as a parting gesture, he sums up Pater’s significance in words which Pater himself had used about Coleridge: he represents “that inexhaustible discontent, languor, and home-sickness [...] the chords of which ring all through our modern literature” (SE 393). But there is no inconsistency in the apparent change of tone, unexpected as the last words may be to us. For Eliot, in 1930, “discontent,” “languor,” “home-sickness” and “modern” had a definitely negative ring about them.

ROMANTIC OR MODERN?

Changes in the nineteenth-century English mind can of course be described in ways very different from Eliot’s, which does not necessarily mean a refutation of the facts on which he rests his case, but only the adoption of a different line of reasoning and a different form of discourse. In our case, the discourse and the reasoning are those of literary history, in whose stricter terms Pater personifies the transition from Romanticism to Modernism or, with a slight shift of the accent, stands as an iconic figure of Modernism as well as an anticipation of Postmodernism. Literary history has its own set of values; less philosophically speaking, it has its own likes and dislikes which, like everything under the sun, are subject to change. Owing to the revisionist spirit and the new methodologies of recent decades, the modern element in Pater—so obnoxious to Eliot—has received a good deal of sympathetic attention. That there is a shift of emphasis is indicated by the very titles of representative books. It was still a matter of course for Graham Hough to include Pater in his *The Last Romantics* (1949), along with Ruskin, Rossetti and Morris. Almost half a century later, in his *The Sensible Spirit: Walter Pater and the Modernist Paradigm* (1986), F. C. McGrath, presents Pater as a pivotal figure in the rise of Modernism and makes a convincing case for that position by a detailed analysis of Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916). A similar repositioning is performed by Kenneth Daley, whose *The Rescue of Romanticism: Walter Pater and John Ruskin* (2001) highlights the subversiveness and precocious modernity of Pater’s treatment of Romantic ideas (esp. 124-32). It is only fitting that recent publications should include *Aestheticism and Deconstruction: Pater, Derrida, and de Man* (1991) by Jonathan Loesberg, whose objective, among others, is the construction of some kind of bridge, with assistance from Pater, between Deconstruction and New Historicism. Loesberg is not on entirely new ground: his deconstructionist rereading of *The Renaissance* was anticipated in the mid-seventies by J. Hillis Miller, who, emboldened by the basically autotelic nature of *l’art pour l’art* aesthetics, called Pater “a precursor of what is most vital in contemporary criticism” (qtd. in Freedman 30). Paradoxically, what caused most trouble once, Pater’s aestheticism, is now the measure by which the absurdity of any cult of the beautiful in fiction after the cataclysm of World War Two is demonstrated (Rosenfeld 360-64).

Expressive as these new approaches are of the shifts of focus in the study of Pater, they do not really signal radical revaluations; they are just that: shifts of focus. For these critics, Pater is a star firmly in the Modernist-Postmodernist constellation, where, unnoticed, he has always been. Preceding the explosion in theory by decades, Hough was mainly concerned with the transition from Romanticism to Modernism. McGrath, while taking note of the Romantic side, is understandably more interested in Pater's part in the evolution of the Modernist consciousness, and in doing so he also looks ahead:

To the extent that he acknowledges and at times contemplates the terrifying silence of infinite space, [Pater] anticipates the post-Modern temper epitomized by Beckett; but to the extent that he tries to assert against the void the highest products of an integrated human organism, the "fruit of quickened, multiplied consciousness," he anticipates the Modernist temper epitomized by Yeats, Eliot, or Joyce. (20)

And then Loesberg, somewhat contrary to the implications of its title, sets out to prove not that deconstruction is inherent in aestheticism, but only that deconstruction only restores what had once been discovered by aestheticism (3-4). As a corollary to this, the idea of non-linear time, that Derridean hobby-horse, has also been found latent in Pater (Miller in *Fellows XIII*)—witness his analysis of the Shield of Achilles in "The Beginnings of Greek Sculpture" (1880) (*GS* 193-203), while his (far from original) doctrine in "Wordsworth" (1874) that a life of contemplation, as opposed to a life of action, "is the principle of all the higher morality" (*TNT* 428) has also been accorded new uses recently as the key to resolving "the problem of unity with ourselves" (Mao 432).

The impetus behind such shifts of emphasis comes from Pater himself. While his achievement in imaginative writing and style has little appeal today, the interest in his theoretical and critical writings—notwithstanding, or perhaps because of, the absence of a system—is as keen as ever. At the outset, his *oeuvre* held out the promise of a radical break with established thinking, but it had never completely fulfilled that promise, which explains why the indelible imprint Pater left on literature is traceable mainly to the writings of that early phase. Paradoxically, the butt of Eliot's criticism is not the aspiring young man of the sixties and early seventies, but the more sedate philosopher who had renounced his youthful heresies and was seeking some kind of spiritual and intellectual accommodation with the established order, embracing values and professing ideas perfectly compatible with Eliot's own brand of conservatism. The same applies to the method he employed in the pursuit of that aim in *Marius the Epicurean* (1885), another book that failed to get Eliot's approval. "T. S. Eliot thought the book incoherent, 'a number of fresh starts,'" Denis Donoghue writes, "forgetting that his own poetry exhibited the same method and made a virtue of it" (192). The fact that the eponymous hero of that novel is so deeply affected by the poetry in early Christian, that is, Roman Catholic, ritual, and that, as a result, he succumbs to the new religion in all but name, offers close analogies with Eliot's own position in *Four Quartets* (published as a whole in 1943): that, ideally, poetry should point the way to God. Had Eliot considered Pater in greater depth, he could not have dismissed him as lightly as he did.

The real challenge for any student of Pater is to trace his changing view of the acquisition and nature of knowledge; of order or the absence of order in reality; and, in-

separable from all this, of art and beauty. This is beyond the scope of my essay; let me, therefore, content myself with the reiteration of what I have just said: that Pater has left no coherent philosophical system and is riddled with contradictions. I must also note that his contradictions and inconsistencies are not the residue of some spectacular intellectual development, however tempting such an assumption might be. What happened was what happens to most people: as he grew older, the latent conservative tendencies of his mind became more accentuated. Occasionally, experience gave him new insights, but his writings do not add up to an unbroken curve of intellectual development in which each constituent piece represents some advance on the preceding one. For this reason, I will adopt a tri-directional thematic approach in (re)assessing Pater's significance, with *epistemology*, *religion/faith* and *art* providing the avenues.

EPISTEMOLOGY

As F. C. McGrath notes, the intellectual foundations for Modernist art were laid by Hume and Kant, who “effectively shifted the focus of philosophy from issues of substance and ontology [...] to issues of function and epistemology” (8). Looking for Pater's philosophical forebears, we cannot ignore Schelling and Hegel either. When it comes to acknowledging debts and obligations, however, Pater is as much of a “Hellenist” in philosophy as he is in his imaginative creations and his art criticism; in other words, he constructs the conceptual frame for his apparently novel ideas with the help of Greek philosophy: of Heraclitus, of the Cyrenaic Aristippus and, inexplicably at a superficial first sight, of Plato. Apparently, he has little use for the Greeks in some of his seminal early essays—in “Coleridge” (1865), in “Aesthetic Poetry” and the „Conclusion” to *The Renaissance* (1873), the latter two originally forming one longer piece of writing, “Poems by William Morris” (1868).

It would be unfair to suggest, as has been done, that after 1873 Pater had nothing new to say, yet the fact of the matter is that his most important ideas had all taken shape by that date. Central among them is the principle of relativism:

Modern thought is distinguished from ancient by its cultivation of the “relative” spirit in place of the “absolute.” Ancient philosophy sought to arrest every object in an eternal outline, to fix thought in a necessary formula, and the varieties of life in a classification by “kinds,” or *genera*. To the modern spirit nothing is, or can be rightly known, except relatively and under conditions. The philosophical conception of the relative has been developed in modern times through the influence of the sciences of observation. (“Coleridge,” *TMT* 431)

Relativism described in such general terms may have seemed just a matter of philosophical speculation. The sensationalism inherent in its preference for “the world of form, colour, and passion” and the rejection of “vague scholastic abstraction” were innocuous propositions in themselves. Relativism became a challenge to Victorian orthodoxies when, in no negligible degree through the agency of Pater, it penetrated the domain of truth and morality, that is, when its implications were spelt out in unmistakable terms. “The

faculty for truth,” Pater continues, is “a power of distinguishing and fixing delicate and fugitive detail”; more precisely, as things exist in a complex web of relations, truth is “the truth of these relations that experience gives us, not the truth of eternal outlines ascertained once for all, but a world of fine gradations and subtly linked conditions, shifting intricately as we ourselves change” (*TMT* 431-32). By the same token, as “[t]he moral world is ever in contact with the physical,” “the relative spirit has invaded moral philosophy from the ground of the inductive sciences” (*TMT* 432). As DeLaura puts it, “Pater at once announces a new frontier in the advancement of the modern spirit. He redefines Arnold’s ‘modern spirit’ as the ‘relative spirit,’ and what it is relativizing is, precisely, *morality*” (192-93). For my part, I would add that in order to relativize morality, the relative spirit first had to relativize truth.

Underlying the epistemology that Pater is advocating when he redefines *truth* in the spirit of “the sciences of observation” (that is, the natural sciences) is the acknowledgment of the ubiquitousness of change. The Coleridge essay makes this quite explicit, but it is the “Conclusion” that gives it the provocative prominence that, along with its distressing implications, earned Pater such a bad name. “The whole physical life,” runs the opening statement of the essay, is “but a combination of natural elements” or, rather, as old combinations are constantly replaced by new ones, the physical life is “a perpetual motion of them.” Motion and change are the all-pervading principles of life, and anything suggestive of permanence is a construct of the mind: “[t]hat perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours, [...] a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it” (*TMT* 217-18). But the mind itself is in a constant state of change (“if we begin with the inward world of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid”), so reflection can only succeed in reducing experience to “a group of impressions,” those of the percipient individual, with no possibility for verification, “each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world” (*TMT* 218). Sensationalism as an aspect of the “relative spirit” is narrowed in these passages to impressionism, which in turn reveals itself to be a form of solipsism and, in the final analysis, of epistemological scepticism.

None of these interlocking terms, which in fact denote different aspects of the same thing, had positive connotations to the Victorians, but they were still safely within the realm of speculation. Pater crossed the boundary line between thought and life and strayed into forbidden territory when he completed the course of reasoning that he had embarked upon in “Coleridge.” Although he makes no explicit pronouncements to the effect that in a life in which the only certainty is the certainty of fleeting, transient impressions, the God of Christianity is an abstraction at best, an absurdity at worst, that idea is inherent in his arguments. Such being the case, established views of the end of life just will not do, either. Emboldened by the courage of his convictions in this instance, Pater does not mince his words: given the contingent nature of reality, we are wise only if we live for the sake of living. The memorable programmatic statement: “[n]ot the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end,” is no more and no less than the endorsement of life as sensation. Ideally, we should strive to have a “quicken sense of life,” attainable through some great passion, which, in turn, will produce “a quickened, multiplied consciousness.” In sorting out the activities in which we may have a passionate involvement, Pater arrives at another programmatic formulation: the passion that gives “the highest quality to our moments as they pass” is “the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake”

(*TMT* 219-20). It must be noted that the wording quoted is that of the final text of the 1893 edition; in previous editions the sentence had not “love of art for its own sake,” but “*love of art for art’s sake*” (emphasis added).

I am aware that in discussing how Pater relativized truth and morality I skirted the problem of religion, and that with this manifesto of *l’art pour l’art* I have moved into Pater’s theory of art. There is, however, still a good deal to be said about his epistemology. Without the “Conclusion,” *The Renaissance* would not be the book it is. The individual essays on Pico della Mirandola, Botticelli, Leonardo, and others, with all due acknowledgment of their respective merits, would seem pretty harmless affairs, were it not for the aura they retrospectively gain from that controversial piece of writing. It was not by accident that Pater decided to omit it in the second edition of the book in 1877 (*TMT* 217) and that he restored it only in the 1888 edition “with some slight changes” such as the substitution of “abstract theory” for “abstract morality” in one particularly offensive passage (Donoghue 66-67). Neither is it an accident that for more than a decade he had published no sustained, book-length piece of prose, and when *Marius the Epicurean* came out he dressed his ideas in a new garb but did not significantly modify them. The new clothes in which the old ideas are wrapped are the philosophy of Heraclitus and Aristippus:

[F]or Marius, under the guidance of that old master of decorous living [that is, Aristippus], those eternal doubts as to the *criteria* of truth reduced themselves to a scepticism which developed the opposition between things as they are and our impressions and thoughts concerning them—a possibility, if an outward world does really exist, of some faultiness of our apprehension of it—the doctrine, in short, of what is termed “the subjectivity of knowledge.” (*M* 112)

The wisdom this scepticism teaches Marius is not unlike the wisdom of the “Conclusion”: “[*I*]ife as the end of life,” and “the desirableness of refining all the instruments of inward and outward intuition [...] till one’s whole nature became one complex medium of reception” (*M* 115, emphasis in the original).

On the evidence of this book, there seems to be little real development in Pater’s philosophy and a far too noticeable ebbing away of youthful enthusiasms. For all that, the seriousness with which Marius conducts his philosophic quest, his tentative reconciliation at the end of the story with the idea of some kind of Hellenized Christian God (thus the intimation that the “absolute” may not be pure abstraction), besides lending the book a charm and an appeal that few intellectual or spiritual autobiographies have, leave a lot of important questions unresolved and thus heighten the expectations with which we approach *Plato and Platonism* (1893). How will Pater the relativist and sensationalist come to terms with the Greek philosopher who believed in the primacy of the idea, and to whom the physical world was mere shadow? That coming to terms is performed with disarming ease. With Plato, as with a number of other people before, he takes all the liberties necessary to turn the Greek thinker into a version of Walter Pater. Not that he denies that the pivotal elements in that system of thought are *the Absolute, the One, permanence* and—witness the doctrine of the ideas—*abstraction*. The doctrine of the ideas, however, admits the notion of *the Many* into Platonism, Pater argues. “[F]or Plato the true Being, the Absolute, the One,

does become delightfully multiple, as the world of ideas” (*PP* 46). The multiplicity of ideas mirrors the multiplicity of experience; the ideas are inaccessible to the senses, but the imperfect copies we have of them in things of this world are not. Plato’s view of the way in which we acquire knowledge, his dialectic, is presented by Pater as an anticipation of his own epistemological premises. It is through “person dealing with person [...] or intelligence with intelligence” that we approach truth, yet

to the very last falsehood will lurk, if not about truth itself, about this or that assent to it. The receiver may add the falsities of his own nature to the truth he receives. The proposition which embodies it very imperfectly, may not look to him in those dark chambers of his individuality, of himself, into which none but he can ever get, to test the matter, what it looks to me, or to you. [...] Place, then, must be left to the last in any legitimate dialectic process for possible after-thoughts [...]. (*PP* 189-90)

“Plato inclines his reader to think,” Pater writes by way of preparing the ground for the above generalization,

that truth, precisely because it resembles some high kind of relationship of persons to persons, depends a good deal on the receiver; and must be, in that degree, elusive, provisional, contingent, a matter of various approximation, and of an “economy,” as is said; that it is partly a subjective attitude of mind:—that philosophic truth consists in the philosophic temper. (*PP* 187)

The Platonic dialogue is the “objectification” of this attitude: the disputants, teacher and learner, are “fellow travellers” in their search for truth, engaged, in the spirit of sincerity and freedom, in a co-operative effort to achieve their common objective. The dialogues never end conclusively as there always remains something to be added. If the participants finish their dispute at all, they do so only because time has run out (*PP* 190). Pater thus finds plenty of justification, if not for his scepticism, then for his relativism and solipsism. He also finds in Plato a sufficient amount of material for at least a partial endorsement of his own sensationalism. Plato, he believes, is not to be identified with his master, Socrates, who detested matter and the body, in conformity with what Pater, anachronistically, regards as the “Manichean” or “Puritan” strain in his philosophy. The aim of education is, for Plato, the unity of the body, “in its utmost fairness,” with “the fair soul.” The austerities of Socrates “correct the sensuous richness of [Plato’s] genius, but could not suppress it,” and he carried “into the world of intellectual vision, of θεωρία, all the associations of the actual world,” whereby Platonism has contributed largely [...] towards the vindication of the dignity of the body” (*PP* 145-46).

FAITH, RELIGION, AND THE QUESTION OF IDEALISM

By steering clear of the snags that might have caused complications in my review of Pater’s epistemology, I have deliberately made it appear plain sailing for the uninitiated reader. The

issues involved become less transparent if we do not avoid those snags but try to sail among them, as we should, to see the full historical significance of Pater. As I have stated before, his philosophy, whatever that term may mean in the context, challenged traditional Christian orthodoxies concerning the nature of existence or the attainability of truth. But it posed a challenge, indeed a threat, to Christian morality as well. Pater, of course, did not act in isolation: the discoveries of the natural sciences—biology and geology in the first place—and the concomitant revival of rationalism had shaken traditional Christian doctrine about God, creation, and man to its very foundations (DeLaura 174-75). Then there was Arnold, who, under similar pressures, had already done a fair amount of theoretical groundwork. But Pater was more radical than Arnold: sensationalism and scepticism do not necessarily deny transcendence, but they do not necessarily accommodate it either, and in his epistemological speculations Pater drifted dangerously close to acknowledging the primacy of matter, as is amply shown by the “Conclusion” and *Marius* (“the individual is to himself the measure of all things”—*M* 110). Scandalous as such ideas may have appeared, they were as nothing to the principal heresy, the relativizing of morality. What “Coleridge” and the “Conclusion” (in its original wording) had to propose on this, we have already seen. “Winckelmann,” which in its inception preceded the latter and was also included in *The Renaissance*, is, in a sense, the most audaciously outspoken of the early writings: without any ceremony, it brings morality under the sway of nature. “The chief factor in the thoughts of the modern mind concerning itself,” the essay contends, “is the intricacy, the universality of natural law, *even in the moral order*” (*TMT* 215, emphasis added). Strangely enough, Pater left this sentence unaltered in later editions, although potentially it might have given as much offence to Victorian sensibilities as the passages in the “Conclusion” that he thought it prudent to tamper with. If the prospect of a world without God was frightening, that of a world without morality was even more so. Donoghue cites a letter that John Wordsworth, a colleague at Brasenose College (Fellow as well as chaplain and tutor) wrote to Pater in April 1873:

After a perusal of the book I cannot disguise from myself that the concluding pages adequately sum up the philosophy of the whole; and that philosophy is an assertion, that no fixed principles either of religion or morality can be regarded as certain, that the only thing worth living for is momentary enjoyment and that probably and certainly the soul dissolves at death into elements which are destined never to reunite. (55-56)

George Eliot, herself an agnostic, called the book “poisonous” (Donoghue 58). In reaction to it that Leslie Stephen, another agnostic, thought it timely to reassert the importance of the moral quality of art, hence his famous “Art and Morality” (1875) (Meisel 2-3). As a matter of interest it may be mentioned that, owing to Stephen’s paternal anxieties, the young Virginia Woolf had very limited access to Pater in her father’s library, which contained only the relatively innocuous *Imaginary Portraits* (1887) and *Plato and Platonism* (Meisel 16-17).

The reception of an author’s work is one thing, although a most important one. How he himself reacts to that reception need not bother us much unless a consideration of it produces clues to the work which we would not find elsewhere. Pater’s reaction to the

storm raging about him may occasionally provide us with such clues. I have already called attention to instances of prudence and retraction on his part, exemplified by the chequered history of the "Conclusion." He always kept the dubious virtues of prudence and retraction within easy reach, to exercise them when the need arose. Consequently, there is in Pater's philosophical inquiries a wave-like pattern of bold propositions and placatory counter-propositions. For Marius, the death of the soul becomes a fact when his friend Flavian dies—a distressing discovery. In time it will, however, be balanced by the inner harmony that the Emperor Marcus Aurelius almost succeeds in achieving when, seeking solace and peace of mind, he reads "some select passages of Plato, which bear upon the harmony of the reason, in all its forms, with itself." The question Aurelius asks is: "Could there be *Cosmos*, that wonderful, reasonable order, in him, and nothing but disorder in the world without?" As his answer is in the positive, "there would be [...] no more quite hopeless death" for Aurelius (*M* 194). Marius, who is present at the time, notices "the wonderful expression of peace, of quiet pleasure" on the face of the Emperor. Not accidentally, he will also attain this state of mind when, before his own death, he obtains first-hand experience of Christianity—the kind of Christianity that incorporates the Greek ideal, "the best in paganism," in that it assumes the essential unity of body and soul, in conformity with the overtly Hellenizing tendencies of the book. The novel thus performs an act of self-correction: the last stage of the intellectual and spiritual development of the hero obliterates, or at least undercuts, the scepticism of the earlier ones. The same cautious balancing act characterizes *Plato and Platonism*. That "redemption of matter," "of the world of sense," "the vindication of the dignity of the human body" that Pater attributes to his favorite Greek philosopher, will, he insists, be cherished through the centuries not only "by art, by all right education," but—to avoid the impression that he means anything heretical—also "by the creeds and worship of the Christian Church" (*PP* 146).

His scepticism, thus, causes Pater as much discomfort as did his Christian faith, and he cannot wholly commit himself to either. The state in which he would feel fully comfortable is idealized Greek antiquity, where the unity of body and soul, man and man, man and nature, so tragically missing from modern life, was, he believed, a reality. His periodic returns to God, his postulation of a close kinship between early Christianity and Greek paganism, between the Renaissance and early Christianity, express his desire for compromise in the face of mounting hostility. In other words, despite the many memorable cases of outspokenness which make him so fascinating to us today, he did not always have the courage of his convictions and made amends, hence the dualism of his work. This, however, is not the whole story: his inconsistencies spring not only from anxieties bred by social or cultural—that is, external—pressures.

Before I come round to the question of what other pressures there were, a few more remarks about the moral implications of Pater's philosophy are necessary. On second thoughts, and in the light of the whole *oeuvre*, George Eliot's or Leslie Stephen's irritation at what they believed was Pater's tendency to relativize, at best to trivialize, morality rests on less certain foundations than at first it seemed. *Marius* and *Imaginary Portraits* abound in beautifully quotable sentences to the effect that in a fundamentally contingent reality hedonism—even though of the elevated, aesthetic variety—is not the only, not even the most commendable, attitude. "[T]he only principle, perhaps, to which we may always safely trust is a ready sympathy with the pain one actually sees," Marius concludes after

much exposure to irredeemable human suffering, and the spirit in which he does so has nothing to do with moral relativism (*M* 274). Yet, sincere as such meditations are, they play a comparatively minor part in the evolution of his mind, and cannot really offset the charge of moral relativism. Even “Sebastian van Storck” (1886), in *Imaginary Portraits*, a story expressly concerned with morality, fails in this respect. It ends with an unexpected display of sympathy and self-sacrifice, yet that very moral act is just tagged onto, and not fused with, the action. Still, both instances, along with a host of possible others, provide evidence that Pater was trying to temper his hedonism and what was inherent in hedonism: individualism, and not necessarily for practical prudential reasons, but—as I am going to show—out of genuine convictions. For clues enabling us to resolve the matter we have to consider his aesthetic theory as well.

ART: THE LIMITATIONS AND THE MEANING OF L’ART POUR L’ART

Pater’s sensationalism, his position that all we know of the world is reducible to a bunch of unreliable impressions, had far reaching consequences for his aesthetics. But the consequences of the half-hearted nature of that sensationalism were equally significant. For a brief while, at the very start of his career, he approached works of art as sensuous phenomena, sources of *impressions*, distinguished from other objects of sense-perception by the greater intensity of the experience they yield. In “Aesthetic Poetry” William Morris wins his approval because “[d]esire [in his poems] [...] is towards the body of nature for its own sake, not because a soul is divined through it” (*TMT* 525). The hymnic words in the “Conclusion” about the “desire of beauty,” “the love of art for its own sake” (“the love of art for art’s sake”) as the passion best able to heighten the quality of life, do not even remotely suggest that there is a spiritual dimension to beauty. But *The Renaissance*, besides the controversial last essay, is introduced by a “Preface” of a somewhat later date (1873), and this already betrays a marked departure from sensationalism. Echoing Arnold, Pater lays down at the outset that the true critic, who is also the aesthetic critic, should “see the object as in itself it really is,” which is only a different way of saying that he should “know [his] own impression as it really is” (*TMT* 71), and which is perfectly compatible with his earlier sensationalist premises. But then, in making it also the aim of criticism to ask the question “In whom did the stir, the genius, the sentiment of the period find itself?” (*TMT* 73), he is back where the Romantics were: “desire here is towards the body of nature” not at all “for its own sake,” but “because a soul is divined through it.” Clearly, there is a new orientation in the “Preface,” a shift from pure sensationalism to Romantic idealism, with Hegel as Pater’s spiritual mentor.

The distance between the idea of beauty in the essay that closes *The Renaissance* and the one that opens it is not “rupture” caused by some sudden cataclysmic intellectual event. The popular “Leonardo da Vinci” (1869), chronologically almost half-way between the two, shows the same Romantic disposition as the “Preface.” The analysis of *La Gioconda*—in addition to describing Mona Lisa in terms more appropriate for that favourite subject of Decadence, the *femme fatale*—has plenty of interest as an example of the tenacity of older concepts of art and criticism. “Set it [the portrait] for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be trou-

bled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed!” (*TMT* 150). The context leaves no doubt that beauty as the reflection of the soul—the physical as the manifestation of the spiritual—is a positive quality. Having almost reached the outer edges of philosophical materialism in his epistemology, Pater swung back to pure idealism. From the vision of a world where God did not exist and morality was a matter of convenience, he quickly passed on to the vision of a universe ruled by order inherently divine. Now, in constructing his aesthetic theory, he recoils from sensationalist extremes in the same manner. The swing back is not final: the pendulum will continue to move in both directions throughout his career. Conventional wisdom tells us that because his thought is full of contradictions of this kind, he deserves our disapprobation. But there is another, more generous as well as more pragmatic way: while we do not play down the seriousness of his failures, we judge him by his achievement: by the powerful brush-strokes he left on the canvas of modernity. And then we shall see him for what he really is: a seminal influence on the best of English literature for at least half a century. To accomplish that objective, however, we have to consider more of what he had to say on art.

One of the added benefits, I promised, of the study of Pater’s aesthetics would be a better understanding of his stance, or stances, on life and art, art and morality. The ineffectual pieties of *Marius* or “Sebastian van Storck” that I have cited are no help in rectifying the less-than-fair judgments one occasionally encounters even today. Neither does “Style” (1888), one of his best known essays, make much difference: the distinction he draws here between good (aesthetically satisfying) art and great art (not merely good, but “devoted to [...] the increase of human happiness”) (*TMT* 413) is trite. *Plato and Platonism* is, however, an altogether different affair in this respect, too. Admittedly, as in discussing Plato’s metaphysics, in interpreting his aesthetics Pater converts the Greek philosopher into an early version of himself (here is a choice bit: Plato “anticipates the modern notion that art as such has no end but its own perfection, ‘art for art’s sake’”) (*PP* 168). For all that, or perhaps because of that, his comments on Plato’s aesthetics (not necessarily those that we find in the last chapter, which he nominally appointed for the purpose) have a special relevance to the issue under review. Considering the passage about beauty in *Phaedrus*, he notes that

while visible beauty is the clearest, the most certain thing, in the world (lovers will always tell you so) real with the reality of something hot or cold in one’s hand, it also comes nearest of all things, so Plato assures us, to its eternal pattern or prototype. For some reason, the eternal idea of beauty had left visible copies of itself, shadows, antitypes, out of all proportion, in their truthfulness and adequacy, to any copy, left here with us, of Justice, for instance, or Equality, or the Perfect State. (*PP* 171)

I cite the passage as evidence of the unique position that—according to Walter Pater—Plato attributed to Beauty, and also as evidence of the same in Pater, as indeed he himself makes it quite clear when he argues that the “reality of beauty” has a special function to fulfil in the world of men:

The loveliness of virtue as a harmony, the winning aspect of those “images” of the absolute and unseen Temperance, Bravery, Justice, shed around us in the visible world for eyes that can see, the claim of the virtues as a visible representation by human persons and their acts of the eternal qualities of “the eternal,” after all far out-weigh, as he [that is, Plato] thinks, the claim of their mere utility. (*PP* 268)

What these lines emphasize—and what Pater fully shares—is that in the practical application of the Platonic idea of Beauty there is “some close connexion between what may be called the aesthetic qualities of the world about us and the formation of moral character, between aesthetics and ethics.” (*PP* 269)

Connecting aesthetics and ethics has special significance not so much for Plato as for Pater (I am still assuming the close affinity of the two thinkers). That significance becomes obvious when the question of *mimesis* is raised, which, according to the book, takes place not only in the work of art (when we are on the stage as actors), but also in our actual experience of art (when we are spectators). Now, if we are surrounded by things of beauty; furthermore, if beauty is an inalienable part of morality, the aesthetic experience is also a positive moral experience, thus art is a powerful social force. In practical terms: if the *sine qua non* of imitation by means of art is the creation of beauty, in other words, of harmony; if the aesthetic experience is imitation—the imitation of the harmony we find in art, harmony being defined as “the subordination of the parts to the whole,” then art is a moral and social agent because it cultivates in us the qualities which produce harmony in human life: co-operation, discipline, and love of order.

This reading of Plato’s aesthetics by Pater makes two things clear. First, that *l’art pour l’art* does in no way advocate a separation of art from morality; and that what it advocates is that art should respect its own laws and no alien ones. Second, that if art succeeds in preserving its autonomy and integrity, it will, by its very nature, become an aid to morality.

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Plato and Platonism tells a cautionary tale intended for the Victorians. Of all the Platonic dialogues he has time for, it is *The Republic* that Pater holds in highest esteem. He reads it as an anti-individualist manifesto, glorifying collectivist, authoritarian Lacedaemon (Sparta), the model of society for Plato that Athens, that hotbed of individualism, should adopt to avoid disintegration. The book, using its ostensible subject as the occasion, suggests that humanity stands a better chance of survival by following the Apollonian ideal than it does by obeying the Dionysian impulse. The pendulum does indeed swing, to the very end of Pater’s career, between contrary attractions of the new and the old. Yet in this book, the last to be published in his lifetime, it seems to have come to a halt at the conservative pole, which suggests that after so much wavering Pater finally arrived at some kind of resolution. Eliot, among other things, ignored this as well, and we may only wonder why, as it is exactly the kind of conservative turn that he himself had performed a few years before he wrote his essay on Arnold and Pater. The tenor of much of his writing after *For Lancelot Andrewes* is that modern societies are sliding into anarchy, which can be averted

only if man's disruptive tendencies are checked by external controls—a state of affairs only an authoritarian and hierarchical society can bring about and enforce. Walter Pater had had the same experience and the same vision more than three decades before. Why that vision failed to appeal to Eliot may be the subject of another essay.

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IN-BETWEENNESS AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION IN DOUGLAS DUNN'S POETRY

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This paper examines the ways in which Douglas Dunn combines the love lyric, the landscape lyric, and historical references in constructing a narrower identity for North-East Fife and a broader identity for Scotland in *Northlight* (1988, henceforth: *N*). In particular, I will consider theories of “in-betweenness” and definitions of “nation” in relation to Dunn's work. I will argue that by exploring the spaces between different dimensions and different apprehensions of time, Dunn constructs his regional and national identity via launching an open-ended dialogue with landscape and history.

In the poems published in *Barbarians* (1979) and *St Kilda's Parliament* (1981) Dunn's articulation of a republican sentiment has come to be seen, in retrospect, as an essential contribution to the 1970s and 80s public debate about whether Scotland should continue to remain part of the UK. Though in 1979 a referendum was held where a narrow majority voted in favor of a Scottish assembly, the number of “Yes” votes failed to reach the 40% limit of the electorate required by Westminster. It is now a widely shared view that after the failure of a political declaration of independence a “unilateral declaration of independence” took place in the creative arts. Dunn's work of the early eighties has been chiefly read in the context of this imaginative self-expression, though he did not even live in Scotland at that time. He had been resident in Hull, England, for the best part of two decades apart from relatively short periods spent in France and the USA—but after the death of his first wife he relocated to Scotland, and in 1984 he settled down with a new partner in Tayport, North-East Fife. Though he has moved homes since then, he has stayed in North-East Fife, to which he has developed a profound and lasting affiliation. 1984 was also the year when some of the poems later collected in *Northlight* first appeared in print. The book is a private record of his new love relationship and a public statement of his recovered bond with the native soil, for which the “lyric hills” of Fife (*N* 1), views of the Firth of Tay and its two bridges, and the view of Dundee and, beyond that, the hills of Angus provide the principal setting. Though attempts at identity constructions for the self in the context of a redefined solidarity with the wider community are at the forefront in *Northlight*, the two forms dominantly applied in this collection—the love poem and the landscape poem—demand a fundamentally different approach from those that have been applied to discuss Dunn's political engagement in the two earlier volumes named above.

In the opening poem, “At Falkland Palace,” Dunn explores the gap between linear and cyclic views of time. In his own comment, it is a poem about “being in a particular place at an affirmative moment in a relationship” (“Writing” 94). Symbolically, that “particular place” is a historic location: in the sixteenth century Kings James IV and James V rebuilt Falkland Palace, which had belonged to the Stuart family since the end of the fourteenth century, into a fine renaissance palace. Concerning the poem’s background, Dunn admits the importance of historical imagination in a gently ironic way: “in the compositional fantasy found and enjoyed in writing the poem, I was, momentarily, a fake Stewart grandee of the late sixteenth century when Scotland was still itself, and [...] this Caledonian hidalgo found himself in Falkland Palace with his lady, in 1982” (“Writing” 94). As he also notes, the poem is “about returning to Scotland” (“Writing” 94), and in this act of solidarity his historical imagination has a crucial part to play. Even the stanza form he applies has unambiguous historical echoes: it reverberates the tempo of the fourteen-line stanzas used in Alexander Montgomerie’s famous poem “The Cherry and the Slae,” and so it points to a period—the sixteenth century—which saw both the flourishing of this particular Stuart palace and generally the Scottish nation under Stuart rule. Dunn’s diction is resonant with the modes of expression of medieval spring songs in the first half, and chivalric poetry in the latter half of this energetic, and both stylistically and technically accomplished poem:

Everything’s birth begins
 On the moment of the May’s
 Creaturely origins
 —I’ll live for these good days
 Love leads me to
 In gardened places such as this
 Of the flower and the apple-promise,
 Lark-sung, finch-wonderful;
 Edenic circumstance, not fall,
 Walking with you.
 [...]
 These native liberties propose
 Our lives, rose by unbudding rose,
 A song-crazed laverock
 Whose melodies unlock
 Audible sky.
 Dynastic stonework flakes,
 Weathers and fails, withdraws
 From shapely time and shakes
 A gargoyle’s severed claws
 At visitors.
 Here wrinkled time’s abolished house
 Perpetuates a posthumous
 Nation, monarchy’s urn
 In which the Stewarts mourn

What once was theirs.
 In a country like this
 Our ghosts outnumber us:
 [...]

 And history bemoans
 What history postpones,
 The true event.
 (N 1-2)

If the inspiration behind and the setting of the poem is explicitly historical, then its images foreground a celebration of new life in the natural environment. The speaker lauds the “apple-promise” and the “song-crazed laverock” in the month of May in particular, and in general he praises the harmony found in the awakening nature: “Edenic circumstance, not fall.” By contrasting the liveliness of spring with the attractive but deteriorating Stuart palace (“Dynastic stonework flakes”), Dunn clashes two different notions of temporality. A cyclic view based on the annual change of seasons, which supplies the basis of metaphoric apprehensions of time from ancient myths to the Christian calendar, is juxtaposed with a linear view, which is measured with chronometers and is recorded in history books. “At Falkland Palace” suggests that while nature rejuvenates every year, in history there is no such regeneration—or if there is at all, it at least cannot be observed in the present time and at the present place—and that golden age gives way to decline: that once glorious palace of the Stuarts (note Dunn’s deliberately archaic spelling of the dynasty’s name in the quoted passage) is now “monarchy’s urn” and becomes the symbol of the “posthumous / Nation” of the Scots. Sceptically enough, the poem does not suggest a hope of rebirth in terms of the larger community; there is only a constant deferral of action: “history bemoans / What history postpones.” The reader is almost made to feel that no relief can be found, except in a retreat to the private realm of love and marriage and a relaxed enjoyment of nature, which is one of the functions of the pastoral. That, however, does not entail a call for turning one’s back on society, and neither would it be entirely accurate to translate it as Dunn’s overall disappointment with the public function of poetry.¹ Instead of refusing to deal with historical predicaments, in *Northlight* he chooses only to approach them from a different and, at first, seemingly paradoxical direction. Rather than inventing a self in direct relation to his smaller and larger communities, he approaches place and history via lyrical forms—the love lyric and the landscape poem:

In the hollows of home
 I find life, love and ground
 And intimate welcome:
 With you, and these, I’m bound
 To history.
 (N 2)

¹ See, for instance: “I won’t disfigure loveliness I see / With an avoidance of its politics” (“Here and There”—N 25).

In a vast but fragmented, imaginary journey across time and geography recorded in his earlier volume *Europa's Lover* (first published in 1982), Dunn presented the reader with a multiplicity of “Swiss seconds” (*Europa's* 218), as if those were the broken glass of a once grand narrative of history—but in *Northlight* he retrieves a single moment which allows us to view past, present, and future in one great sweep. He first reaches that moment in “The People Before”:

Preliminary moonlight on the Firth
 Casts in-betweenness on the time and light—
 Not now, not then, not day, not night,
 But moonlight's childhood, waterworn;
 And, in one moment, all death, all birth,
 All dying and being reborn.
 (N 8)

While the poem clearly inherits the idea of the infinite cycle of death and birth from *Europa's* monologue, more problematic is what Dunn means by “in-betweenness.” Cairns Craig argues that it is a hermeneutic position in which Dunn “explores [the] in-betweenness of existence, the ‘in-betweenness’ that is the space between known and completed forms and the unknowable significance of the present” (“Northlight” 62). While Craig's identification of in-betweenness as a hermeneutic position from which Dunn launches dialogues with history and landscape is used as a point of departure in the present paper, the following words of caution should be added. On the one hand, it is implausible that for Dunn any form can be “completed”—at least that is what is revealed throughout *Northlight* and most of his other collections, especially *Europa's Lover*. On the other hand, as it may be also clear from the way he underlines the importance of a constant reinterpretation of history in, for example, Sean O'Brien's interview (26), it is also improbable that in Dunn's opinion “forms” can be “known.” Craig's insistence on finite and knowable categories is all the more surprising, since Dunn's skepticism on this point is rather explicitly worded in *Northlight*.² Therefore, Craig's observation will be used here with the modification that Dunn does not take “in-betweenness” for granted; rather, he regards it as a privileged moment which has to be earned, and in which the possibility of comprehending the significance of time, history, and the land may emerge—without trying to pretend that any of these can be “known and completed.”

Craig further elaborates the same concept in his later critical work, tracing it through the work of paradigmatically “peripheral” writers such as W.B. Yeats, Seamus Heaney, Tom Leonard, James Kelman, Dunn, Liz Lochhead (peripheral by way of her

² For example, see “The People Before”:

Make what you can of it, for no one knows
 What story's told by winter-misted hills
 Or how a river flows
 Against the tide in white scribbles.
 (N 8)

female voice), Edwin Morgan, and Sorley MacLean, and applying it in his discussion of Scottish national identities. Craig concludes on the following consequential point:

The condition of "being between" is not the degeneration of a culture but the essential means of its generation. The upsurge in regionalism in British poetry in the past thirty years may be a mirror-image of the vernacularisation of Englishes throughout the world but it is a mistake to see that mirror-image of the centre and the periphery as something new: all cultures exist not in themselves—in the autonomy and the autotelic trajectory of their own narratives—but in the relations between themselves and others. Culture is not an organism, nor a totality, nor a unity: it is the site of a dialogue, it is a dialectic, a dialect. It is being between. (*Out of History* 205-206)

This is a more nuanced take and will prove more useful in the present context, because in arguing for the deferral of categorical definitions in the identity construction of the former peripheries of the British Empire, Craig puts forward a non-finite image of a multicultural and multidialectal Scotland. While Craig's distinction of "self" and "other" and his installation of a dialogic relationship between them clearly establishes a bridge with Bakhtin's dialogic theory (then very popular among Scottish scholars), Homi K. Bhabha's *Nation and Narration* (also hugely influential on the 1990s debate about Scottishness) obviously affected his attempts at definition to a major degree. Bhabha stresses the problematic nature of defining the concept of "nation":

The "locality" of national culture is neither unified nor unitary in relation to itself, nor must it be seen simply as "other" in relation to what is outside or beyond it. The boundary is Janus-faced and the problem of outside/ inside must always itself be a process of hybridity. (4)

At the root of the dislocation of nationality there is what Bhabha calls "conceptual indeterminacy" (2) or, in other words, an infinite postponement of signification, which in turn leads to a potentially endless negotiation of meanings in "*in-between* spaces," such as "between cultures and nations, theories and texts, the political, the poetic and the painterly, the past and the present" (4).

Both Craig's and Bhabha's attempts at defining large-scale communities are bound up with identity, culture, and temporality and, as such, they together set up a practical framework in which to discuss Dunn's take on the "locality" of nation and history. While in Dunn's work "in-betweenness" is a fleeting moment of special insight, it is also a representative point in time: a moment that reflects on what is permanent in the changing selfhood of the community. It is a fixed but momentary perspective in an infinite, open-ended, and ever-changing negotiation with spatial, temporal, and cultural dimensions of both small and large communities: family, neighborhood, and village on the one hand, and tribe, kingdom, region, and nation on the other hand. In Dunn's imaginative historical survey most of these categories emerge at various stages, but the present paper is concerned with Dunn's identity construction for his region and the metonymical extension of this

identity to the widest and most inclusive—and, indeed, most elusive—of the above categories, “nation.”

In essays and interviews Dunn has more than once referred to the nineteenth-century French thinker Ernest Renan’s definition of “nation”: “a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future” (19). This definition may be widely known among scholars—though what may bring us even closer to working out a definition of Dunn’s national sentiment is not the dictum itself but the context in which it is supposed to be understood. Renan wrote:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form. (19)

It is indicative of the abiding relevance of Renan’s definition that his essay features as the first chapter in Bhabha’s *Nation and Narration*. But equally relevant and more specific to the present context is that another key text of nineties critical debates about Scottish identity, Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, also considerably draws on Renan when it interprets the nation as “a deep, horizontal comradeship” (7). Anderson adds that nations are “imagined” or “invented” as long as “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members [...], yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (6). What is shared in both Renan’s and Anderson’s terms is that the identity of a community is a fictitious or imagined product, and its existence depends on public consent. “Solidarity”—or, in Anderson’s words, “comradeship”—acts as the major force of continuity in the life of a nation by linking past heritage with future aspirations, and as such, it always belongs to the present time, in which it is continually adjusted, revised, and reinterpreted. There is an endless negotiation of their identities and there is an on-going dialogue between the different (spatial and temporal) dimensions of larger communities. In this dialogue both the subject and the nature of solidarity is likely to be transformed inasmuch as national culture and history is neither fixed (as argued by Craig) nor unitary (as described by Bhabha). As a result, there is both an infinite quest of meaning and an infinite constitution of the meaning of that solidarity—or in other words, there is both a constantly repeated series of attempts at and a constant deferral of finalizing the identities of large-scale communities such as nations.

In *Northlight* Dunn is concerned with outlining the subject of that solidarity by occupying a space which is in-between different forms of temporality. If in “At Falkland Palace” he explores the hiatus between linearity and a cyclic view of time to establish a hermeneutic perspective, in “Memory and Imagination” he tries to create imaginative access to the single representative moment between the unfinished past and the unborn future in constructing an identity for North-East Fife in time:

Who cares what year it is
 When what you see
 Turns parish, river and chronology
 Into the inside-out of Caledonia's
 Cognitive acres stripped of time and laws?
 (N 67-68)

But the lyrical self comes to the understanding that this hermeneutic identity is far from being finite—it transforms, expands, or develops with the change of times while, at the same time, retaining a part or ingredient that is essential to its self-identity:

Works that were made two thousand years ago
 Portray their age
 But do not cease to grow
 In modified enchantment, like a tree's
 Lifetime of lifetimes of its species.
 (N 66)

As a consequence, the constitution of cohesive semantic systems necessarily—and desirably—remains an infinite process, and Dunn maintains the open-endedness of this dialogue by remaking and reinventing—and reliving—history rather than merely preserving and recording it:

[...] wind and water's rituals
 Invent and reinvent
 Somnambulistic thoughts,
 Chimeras, ecstasy, delirium,
 The visionary and its sacrament.
 (N 65)

The other chief outcome is that these and other poems in the book—for example, "Daylight"—imply that in Dunn's intuition poetic imagination has the potential to secure continuity in that endless process in order to defy the temporal fragmentation of collective consciousness:

Wordless symposia, in tongues
 Informed beyond mere rights and wrongs;
 Luminous discourse, shade by shade,
 Its meaning light-and-water-made
 Or turned by wind and by what happens
 Into a foliated sense—
 A mind could catch at them, and try
 To understand that dot of sky
 Balanced on Buddon's easternmost
 Outreach of military coast [...]
 (N 11)

To counter fragmentation and create a fixed perspective for developing a hermeneutic dialogue across time, the poet is made into a representative subjectivity. The presence of the lyrical first person singular is an intellectual and spiritual rather than a physical presence in the landscape. In some of the landscape poems—for instance in “Daylight,” again—the self merely exists as a point of view:

The big white arms of dawn are cool
 In their embrace, and merciful
 First blue dispels the estuary’s
 Possessive, tenemented greys.
 (N 11)

Moreover, since geography and topography are also due to change across historical times, the land supplies more than just an actual and physically perceptible view in the present moment. The same poem cited above suggests that the eyes of the poet can see more than what the naked eye can see:

The gleam on Buddon Ness protects
 Survival where sunlight reacts
 With sand and private history,
 With window-coloured dawn and sea.
 Enormous world, this little place
 Observes its vulnerable trace
 On time, topography and globe [...]
 (N 11)

If the first person singular functions as a partly fictitious visual perspective, it also becomes both the voice and the memory of the people who lived before him and who populate the land now. In several poems of the collection, the memory of this representative subjectivity reaches back to the time of Pictish ancestors who once populated parts of the territory known today as Lowland Scotland, including North-East Fife, which Dunn terms “Pictish Coast” in the poem called “75°” (N 18). Partly due to the fact that (though in all probability they formed a literate society) practically no record remains of their written culture, the Picts have been regarded as a somewhat mysterious people, which adds to the uncertainty—and even elusiveness—of the historical dimension in Dunn’s hermeneutic quest. Moreover, the lack of evidence of their ancient speech form serves as an interesting parallel with today’s linguistic situation in Scotland, where the majority of the people speak English (with a Scottish accent) but the land’s indigenous tongue (Scots) is not the country’s official language at present and, as such, is practically invisible in official records (even though it is not inaudible in the Scottish Parliament).

Language is an important issue, one that cannot be avoided in modern as well as historical discussions of Scottish identity. In addition to the hermeneutic explanations outlined above, Craig has also suggested a linguistic account of “in-betweenness.” In his opinion, Dunn’s poems refer to a recess “where the world hovers between the incomplete present and the fulfilled languages of the past, or between the languages of the landscape

and the as yet unexpressed experience of the individual who inhabits them" ("Northlight" 62). Although it remains a point of debate in exactly what sense a language can be "ful-filled," from a diachronic viewpoint it is not impossible to make out a case for Craig's argument. For instance, in "Going to Aberlemno" a language once spoken in the territory now called "Scotland" is set in relation to the (politically) "incomplete present," that is, Scotland's unarticulated political existence in the 1980s:

Through astral solitude
 A Pictish dialect,
 Above a bridged Firth, cries
 For lyric nationhood.
 And horsemen, in a stone disguise,
 Ride through the Pictish wood.
 (N 13)

But it is equally essential to see that for Dunn language belongs to the domain of subjectivity first of all. Just as a dialect of the past can be overheard in "astral solitude," and nationality can be viewed in subjective terms ("lyric nationhood"), he insists on the privacy of the language of poetry when it is articulated in the present moment: "Innermost dialect / Describes Fife's lyric hills" (N 1). Moreover, it is also important to emphasize that the poet's "in-betweenness" is not merely a linguistic position but, probably more importantly, also a very private, even perhaps clandestine, moment in which the various dimensions of life intersect—times, places, and forms of existence and non-existence. See the poem called "Daylight":

I've seen a star poised on the tip
 Of a still leaf, pure partnership
 Here makes with there and everywhere
 Between life, death and forever.
 Last night in Tayport, leaf and star
 —Still, very still—melted together
 In life's delight and woke to this
 Lucidity and genesis [...]
 (N 12)

Certainly, language is more than simply a means of everyday communication: it is also what could be termed a "language of the landscape," that is, both the vehicle and the resulting record of the self's imaginative verbal interaction with and across time and space. The title of "Memory and Imagination"—a key poem in *Northlight*—refers to the unity of historical consciousness and poetic imagination in the context of Dunn's lyrical / public self-definition. Dunn's use of the word "memory" implies a sense of collective memory, which reaches back to the community's mythological and legendary—that is, imagined—origins: the Pictish and, especially, the subsequent Celtic times when "saints [...] navigate on stones" (N 67). If in his earlier *Elegies* (1985) Dunn identified Scotland with the mythological goddess of love, Aphrodite, in "Memory and Imagination" he associates the

narrower region of Tayside with another mythological woman, Artemis, a nature-goddess whose important attribute is virginity. This is just one step away from the rhetorical question Dunn formulates in a later volume: “Is it in love that nationhood begins...?” (*Dante’s* 63)

The other word in the title, “imagination,” reveals that Dunn’s attitude to history is also of a highly aesthetic nature:

Metre’s continuum
 Articulates
 An artless view of water, sky and slates.
 Rhythmical memory,
 Archival drum.
 (N 65)

The parallel presence of the memory of prehistoric drum beat and the rhythm of poetry in the present time suggests that art pervades Dunn’s vision of the whole of human existence, attending us through time in an “aesthetic universe” (N 68). The poet’s representative subjectivity can rise above the particulars of life to a higher imaginative level with the help of art, as is objectified in the poem’s all-inclusive perspective: not only are we invited to survey the quotidian “Over the roofs, past chimneypots / Toward the river’s tidal pulse” (N 65), but as Dunn describes in another poem (“Here and There”), we may also move “on a curve / That’s capable of upwards into grace” (N 29). It is the imaginative—or, in the present case, a quasi-spiritual—dimension of art that makes history (pervaded and remodeled in poetry) the subject of Dunn’s wide-ranging overview. Memory and imagination can meet in any branch of the arts, as long as the artist has the ability to conceive the in-betweenness of the single moment in which the incompleteness of past and future encounter and inform the self in the here and now:

Transfigured fact and elevated dream
 Perpetuate their metrical verbatim
 Into the metronomic clock
 Where here
 Meets there
 And now meets then,
 That hard frontier
 Where pencil, paint, wood, stone
 And numbered rhyme
 Converse with music on the edge of time.
 (N 68-69)

Even the physical shape of this poem suggests temporal continuity. In the same way as poetry forms an imaginative bridge between past and present, the narrow lines scrolling down six pages evoke a sense of spanning across space, while the alternation of the shorter and longer lines bring to mind the concept of time by forming an hourglass shape, as in the quotation above. Moreover, the periodic indentation of the shorter lines as

opposed to the left alignment of the longer lines visually summons up the swing of the metronome (also mentioned explicitly in the cited passage), which we use to mark out and divide the stretch of time in which a musical composition creates an aesthetic effect. Poetry, like music, takes place in time when read aloud (as well as in space, on the page), so it is particularly suitable to express and reflect temporal continuity. The guardian of this continuity is the subjectivity of the poet who stands at the crossroads of temporal and spatial dimensions like a sentinel. It is the sentinel poet's imagination that establishes links between the past and the future of a community by providing it with an identity in the always happening present tense:

A sense, a memory
In all dimensions of the sentient,
Sight, sound, touch, taste and smell,
Imagination's immortelle.
(N 70)

Dunn's historical sensibility merges with a committed attentiveness to spirituality, and like his interest in the past, this spiritual concern, too, becomes affiliated with a specific place. Probably the most striking feature of the book is how its geography is confined to the relatively small and well-defined region of North-East Fife and Tayside. In an essay he describes the places featured in *Northlight*:

The countryside suits my eye and imagination. [...] I don't expect to see unicorns, but on the low hills, silhouetted ridges, in a countryside full of corners and a quick exchange of prospects, it is easy to imagine a glimpse of something mysterious as it peeps shyly from its timeless world and into this one. North Fife particularly invites you to accept its lore. ("Pride of Fife" 44)

If we accept R.P. Draper's division between different kinds of regional poetry depending on whether they are dedicated to a landscape or a community (9), then Dunn's treatment of landscape can be seen as providing for a broader dialogue with everything a land may signify or stand for, including, though seldom directly, its residents. The following extract from another short essay by Dunn may be illuminating of his approach:

Place is more than a stretch and reach as far as the eye can see. Like the way we think about time, place bleeds away from the artificial boundaries of property and administrative tradition. It is self, character, and the bias of mind, imagination and awareness it encourages, the tempo and the run of the grain of identity; it is love, house, hereditary connections, a glimpse of *res publica*, inhabitants, and a *representative of nation and humanity*. ("*Northlight*" 3; second emphasis added)

In the volumes following *Northlight* Dunn's attention turns to the pastoral setting of this typically agricultural region, though at this point it is the view of the estuary—and

especially the light effects over it—that acts as the major catalyst, which he has also emphasized elsewhere. “Where I live faces north-east and I work by the light of its geography and latitude,” he wrote on the book’s inspiration (“*Northlight*” 3). The cover image shows the engraving of an old lighthouse off Tayport which does not operate any more, but in Dunn’s imagination it “survives as a [...] sentinel, a guardian” (“*Northlight*” 4)—and functions as a correlative for the poet’s self, one might add. “Light” is a keyword that occurs in more than a third of the poems in various compounds, such as: “candlelight,” “daylight,” “moonlight,” “northlight,” “roselight,” “waterlight,” “winterlight,” and “worldlight.” Certainly, the book’s title alludes to the preference of painters and artists (such as Dunn’s first wife and also his second partner, whom he married in 1985) for a “north light,” that is, a room lit by a window facing north. For Dunn, as for some visual artists, light is both the principal inspiration and the medium that teases out meaning—in another approach, “light” is both the major catalyst and the chief metaphor of the lyrical moment that provides an otherwise neutral natural environment with subjectivity in these poems.

Descriptions of the incorporeal quality of light lend a lyrical and spiritual—and sometimes even sublime—atmosphere to most poems, and it is partly for this reason that lyricism deeply infuses Dunn’s representations of the “lyric” and “enigmatic” hills of Fife (*N* 1, 15). However, he can discreetly counteract such panoramic generalizations by returning to Andrew Young’s “botanical sensibility,” which delights in the small-scale poetics of “leaf and bloom,” and which Dunn has encouraged especially in competition with the design of Hugh MacDiarmid’s geological poetry that was for so long the dominant paradigm in the Scottish landscape poetry of the twentieth century (“*Predicament*” 273). Dunn’s dialogue with the “summer’s agents” in the six-poem sequence “75” (*N* 16) comes probably the closest to the poetics of “botanical sensibility”.³

Planthouses force Italian heat
On melon, pepper, peach and vine
And horticultural conceit
Perfects a Scottish aubergine.
(*N* 20)

Furthermore, rather than a reasoning, typically late-MacDiarmidian type of verse that creates a distance between the lyrical first person singular and the subject matter, in his nature poetry Dunn chooses to walk the “paths of inner wanderlust” (*N* 18) in revealing the hidden significance of and expressing his loyalty to the North-East Fife landscape.

In an attempt to be “faithful to what it depicts” (*N* 18), Dunn projects the inwardness of his lyricism onto the northern weather in “75.” But, predictably from the positions he occupied vis-à-vis various communities in his earlier books, here he is prone to maintain this newly-found version of *Innerlichkeit* in relation to the land in the first place rather than to its inhabitants:

³ Just as pertinent examples as that can be collected, though, from several other poems, such as “The People Before”: “A sparrow lifts its startled featherweight / And peals tumble in a cruel slapstick” (*N* 7).

Summer is fragrant this far north.
By night, on Inverdovat's hill,
Visit the gods of wood and Firth
By paths of inner wanderlust
Here on the summer's Pictish Coast
Where half-forgotten festivals
Quicken the half-remembering pulse.
(N 18)

Citing what Dunn has said about the relationship between the self and the environment in Ted Hughes's and Charles Tomlison's landscape poems can be illustrative of his own method in *Northlight*. He has argued that in Hughes and Tomlison "there's an experience of landscape without a predicament of self" and that the poet "in a sense becomes the landscape or a personless purveyor of narrative and description," and has noted that this is an exemplary quality in both technical and ethical terms (Zawacki 17).

If Dunn approaches regional and national identities by the indirect way of developing a lyrical affiliation with the local landscape, then history and landscape also meet and merge in the lyrical poems of *Northlight*. "Fife has a spirit of its own, one that rolls through time and events with an obscure but powerful significance," Dunn has said ("Predicament" 273). Its significance cannot be attained through an analytical mode of understanding but only by way of lyrical reflection and an empathetic identification with the natural environment. The poems discussed above suggest that the comprehension of, and a deeply rooted identification with, the history and the natural environment of a particular area is essential for developing solidarity with one's neighbors and fellow citizens, and, in Renan's terms, for engendering "the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form." The hermeneutic dialogue with the possible signification of one's narrower home, thus, leads to the formation of national identities by way of a metonymical extension of that meaning.

It is possible, then, to make another connection between Dunn's identity construction in *Northlight* and Anderson's hypothesis about the making of national consciousness, according to which "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact [...] are imagined" (6). However, Dunn's concept of temporality opens a metaphysical window in Anderson's understanding of the nation as being the exclusive result of secular imagination. In contrast with earlier notions of simultaneity along a Christian chronology marked out by Creation and Judgment Day at its opposite ends, as Anderson says, our view of nationality relies on a more recent apprehension of time in which simultaneity is "transverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfilment, but by temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar" (24). In *Northlight*, Dunn exploits the in-between position between this synthetic time calculated against the concurrence of other secular events (which is the site of historiography, the focus of his other chief interest elsewhere) and a more archaic and authentic apprehension of time in which familiar places and the past may inform us about the significance of the present. In his later work he makes references to the irony latently present in artificially marked chronology in poems such as "Turn Over a New Leaf" in *Dante's Drum-kit* (6-7). Although attentiveness to temporal and spatial intersections is an obvious resource of that book's

lyricism, the metaphoric apprehension of time in relation to the landscape is tangibly pregnant in *Northlight*, as Dunn's description in prose of his own attitude to landscape and environment also reveals:

Perhaps the best library for a poet is the one that exists outdoors. It is consulted with all five senses as you read the book of place and try to understand its signs and visible dialects, its hundreds of names. *When you do this, you find yourself alive in more time than the one marked on your wristwatch*, which is just a device for calculating forgetfulness. (N 3; emphasis added)

The metaphysical perspective on time in Dunn's lyricism allows a more liberated and more complex view of temporality where national identity is concerned than the calendrical simultaneity described in Anderson. Anderson borrows the idea of "homogeneous, empty time" from Walter Benjamin, who distinguishes it from a "Messianic time," in which the simultaneity of past and future occurs in the present tense. Benjamin suggests:

[h]istoricism contends itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history. But no fact that is a *causa* is for that very reason historical. [...] A historian who takes this as his point of departure stops telling the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary. Instead, he grasps the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one. Thus he establishes a conception of the present as the "time of the now," which is shot through with chips of Messianic time. (263)

As pointed out, Dunn ascribes a similar prominence to the present moment, which is pregnant with the incompleteness of the past and the promise of the future, in poems such as "The People Before" and "Memory and Imagination." In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson provides another definition (from Auerbach) for what Benjamin means by "Messianic time": "the here and now is no longer a mere link in an earthly chain of events, it is *simultaneously* something which has always been, and will be fulfilled in the future; and strictly, in the eyes of God, is something eternal, something omnitemporal, something already consummated in the realm of fragmentary earthly event" (24). Common between this theological standpoint and Dunn's lyricism is that they represent the present moment as *both* itself *and* something else. But, certainly, we cannot talk of religious motivation in this instance of Dunn's transgressing secular apprehensions of time. Moreover, he does not attribute a teleological purpose to history, which is otherwise a fundamental assumption in Christian views of temporal linearity. The logical consequence of the potentially metaphysical, and thus open-ended, representative quality of the present for Dunn's identity construction of the nation is that nationality becomes the subject of an endless semantic negotiation. He has been criticized for what seems to be on the surface the idealization of close-knit rural communities and for paying less attention to the social make-up of those communities, and it is a fact that vanishing ways of life have assumed an elegiac constitution in a number of his poems and some of his short stories. But the above proposed

interpretation of "in-betweenness" in *Northlight* as a hermeneutic position that enables both the identity construction of the present tense and its constant deferral to an indefinite future should be instructive of his ideological openness to a pluralist and future-oriented society.⁴

In summary, by achieving a synthesis of the nature lyric and local history, Dunn potentially secures the diachronic continuity of the identity of North-East Fife (the landscape as well as its inhabitants), while in poems such as "At Falkland Palace" and "Memory and Imagination" he metonymically extends this local identity to include perceptions of Scottishness. The identity construction of North-East Fife takes place in in-between spaces, in which the sentient poet has an opportunity to invoke the spirit of the place from local history, mythology, and place names. These in-between spaces function as imaginative bridges between historical eras and languages, and so they ensure a chronological and spatial identity in the continually changing selfhood of the community both on a small scale and on a large scale, but without aiming at essentialism. In-betweenness also has a temporal dimension: it is a lyrical moment which functions as a hermeneutic perspective with signification between systems of thought, languages, historical eras, and perceptions of time. While it is a fixed entity in the fluidity of the interpretive process amid the ever-changing times and our ever-changing perspectives on history, landscape, and language, it is also a special moment of insight in which the various dimensions of life intersect: time and landscape; existence and non-existence; ancestors and descendants; family and neighborhood; and region and nation. Dunn supports traditional interpretations of the concept of "nation," such as the one proposed by Renan, who says that the feeling of solidarity plays probably the most important part in what constitutes a nation. Dunn's emotionally motivated perception of nationality (the feeling of solidarity with a place and a people) strongly underwrites his attitude of an essentially lyrical poet. He makes an attempt to provide the place with a historically situated identity in timeless or aesthetic terms when in an imaginative sense he explores the hiatus between linear (calendrical) and cyclic (metaphorical and Christian) representations of temporality. While this hermeneutic standpoint anticipates an infinitely changing and kaleidoscopic identity, Dunn's botanical sensibility and his deeply felt fidelity to the local landscape and the natural environment provide for a fixed entity in the fluidity of the interpretive process. At the same time, *Northlight* gives a clear proof that it is only the unfinished moment (which is representative of something beyond itself) that may turn into a productive site of "in-betweenness," that is, into an interpretive position in which the lyrical self may launch an open-ended dialogue with the landscape and what it embraces: its past, its future, its spirit, and its people.

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⁴ It is elucidating to read Dunn's words from this angle: "In my mind, the better community is in the future" (Haffenden 29).

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THE INCONSTANT BORDER

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Those of us who reside in Santa Barbara live on a kind of border, vacillating between Latin and Anglo America, the First World and the Third, English and Spanish, and Catholic and Protestant. This was once a Chumash fishing village that became a Spanish, then Mexican pueblo. After the Anglos came someone got the bright idea to promote the mission style of architecture and start an Old Spanish Days Fiesta. So the city has a distinctly Mexican feel about it. If you listen to the radio stations and languages, you will hear English and Spanish spoken here.

Santa Barbara is part of the frontier between Mexico from the United States, although sometimes the borderline runs north and south, separating the affluent coastal people from the "Inlanders."¹ Although the official border is 200 hundred miles away near San Diego, some consider it a mere fiction, an imaginary line drawn in the sand. Where does it end and where does it begin?

There are colonies of Californians living in Baja taking advantage of lower housing costs, just as there are colonies of people from Michoacan and Zacatecas living in California. When growers in the San Joaquin Valley need workers to pick its crops, Mixtecos from Oaxaca are here to do the dirty work. Likewise, American assembly plants are positioned in Tijuana and Mexicali to take advantage of cheap labor. Certainly, multinational corporations do not respect borders; just look at all the jobs going to India, Pakistan, and Central America.

California is so dependent upon Mexican labor the economy would nose dive if Mexican labor were to dry up, which was the premise of a 2004 film, "One Day Without a Mexican." What would happen to California if all the Mexicans were to disappear? One out of every three Californians is of Mexican or Latin American origin. And if you look at the

¹ "Inlanders" are people who live east of the coast, in the less affluent parts of California. Currently the highest rate of foreclosures due to the collapse of the housing market occur there.

makeup of students in Santa Barbara's primary schools, you realize that the future belongs to Latinos. Mexican author Carlos Fuentes jokingly calls it "genetic imperialism."²

We also share common problems. If the wastewater treatment plants in Tijuana break down, raw sewage washes up on the pristine beaches of San Diego. And when addicts in Oakland need a fix, smugglers in Sinaloa are willing to accommodate them. One hundred years ago people went back and forth from Mexico to the U.S. at will, and even though the border is more difficult to cross since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, smugglers find new and innovative ways to ferry people to the Promised Land. As long as there are jobs, they'll keep coming.

While Americans eat more Mexican cuisine and salsa has replaced ketchup as the national condiment, people in Mexico City flock to McDonalds and shop at Wal-Mart. American-style Halloween has become very popular in Guadalajara, while Mexican Day of the Dead celebrations have taken hold in San Francisco. The Mexican middle class puts their money in U.S. banks as a hedge against inflation of the peso, while American banks have lent billions to Mexico to finance the foreign debt.

So does this mean that California is going to become a part of Mexico again? That Spanish will become the dominant language and people in Santa Barbara will actually pronounce the street names correctly?

It would be very ironic. After all, Anglo immigration in the 19th century to the Mexican northwest was in many ways illegal. And the "illegal aliens" of that time day forcibly took half the national territory of Mexico to satisfy their thirst for Manifest Destiny.

So, it should come as no surprise that a century and a half later Mexicans are once again returning to California, to the cities their forefathers named after the angels and saints.

² "Genetic imperialism" refers to the high birth rate and increase of immigration from Latin America. Also, the white population has a much lower birth rate, thus California is rapidly becoming a majority Latino state like Texas and New Mexico.

CALIFORNIA BANKNOTES, THE FANTASY HERITAGE, AND GREASER LAWS

CARLOS MORTON

The origins of the cowboy or *vaquero* (from *vaca*) can be traced back to the Spanish and Mexican settlers of Texas and California. Both the longhorn and the mustang (*mesteño*) were introduced into the New World by Christopher Columbus on his second voyage. The cow fed the *conquistador* and the *caballo* helped subdue the Native Americans, although once they mastered the art of riding they also became formidable horsemen.

A roundup of wild stock was known as a *rodeo* and records show that in 1806 eight thousand horses were rounded up in the valleys around San Jose. Thousands of horses were “driven in the sea” at Santa Barbara in 1807, and the same thing was done in Monterey in 1810. According to Guadalupe Vallejo, a Spanish Grandee from Sonoma, “there were so many horses that young men would ride from one rancho to another for parties, and whoever found his horse tired would let him go and catch another.” “Only old people and invalids used the slow cart, or *carreta*.”¹

California became independent from Spain in 1821, and shortly thereafter its ports witnessed the arrival of trading ships from Britain and Boston. Hides and tallow were traded for manufactured goods, and the import duties helped the Mexican government run the far-flung province of Alta California. Cowhides, known as “California banknotes,” became the prevalent form of wealth among the *Californianos*.

In his memoirs, Guadalupe Vallejo used the term “Spanish Californians” to describe his family and painted an idyllic picture of the relationships between the aristocracy and their Indian and *mestizo* servants. “It seems to me that there never was a more peaceful or happy people on the face of the earth than the Spanish, Mexican, and Indian population of Alta California before the American conquest,” he wrote.²

In describing an outing to some warm springs, Vallejo recalled how the entire household “waked before sun rise to prepare for the wash-day expedition” to the *agua caliente* and how “We climbed in, under the green cloth of an old Mexican flag which was used as an awning, and the white-haired Indian *ganan*, who had driven the *carreta* since his boyhood, plodded beside with his long *garrocha* or ox-goad.”³

The myth of the halcyon days of Spanish California survives today in the Old Spanish Day’s Fiesta here in Santa Barbara. Carey McWilliams calls this the “fantasy heritage” in that many of the original settlers were *mestizos* and *mulatos* who came from the interior of Mexico looking to escape discrimination and find a better standard of living.⁴ An

¹ Guadalupe Vallejo, “Ranch and Mission Day in Alta California,” *Century Magazine* Vol. XLI (December 1890) pp. 183-92, 189.

² Vallejo, 183.

³ Guadalupe, 192.

⁴ Carey McWilliams, *North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States*. (New York: Greenwood P, 1968), 186.

example of this was the Pico family, listed as *mulattos* in a 1790 census, but who, over time, became white or *gente de razón*.

Beginning with Jedidiah Smith in 1826, Yankee trapper traders filtered into Alta California to become Mexican citizens and marry local girls, receive land grants, and merge into the California upper classes. Jacob Leese of Sonoma, Oliver Larkin of Monterey, William Dana of Santa Barbara, Abel Sterns of Los Angeles, and John Warner of San Diego fit this pattern. According to historian David J. Weber, these men who settled California in the 1820s and 1830s “lived comfortably in Mexican society and did not first favor annexing California to the United States.”⁵

Nonetheless, Yankee tourists learned from the *vaquero*. Difficulty in pronouncing the word BAH-CARE-OH changed the spelling to “buckaroo.” In the process of learning the ropes from his Mexican counterpart, the Anglo changed *riat* to “lariat” and *lazo* to “lasso.” *Chaparreras*, leather leggings used to protect the legs from the *chaparral*, became “chaps.” Likewise the Western saddle was adapted from the Mexican *vaquero*’s working saddle, as were the spurs, or *espuelas*.

Words such as *adobe*, *corral*, *patio*, *arroyo*, and *grande* began creeping into the cowboy’s “lingo” from *lengua* or tongue. This is an early form of Tex-Mex or “Spanglish” when a “gringo” (perhaps from “green go,”) would say “vamoose” (*vamos*; let’s go) “lasso” that “desperado” (*desesperado*; desperate one), take him to the “hoosegow” (*juzgado*; court) and put him in the “calaboose” (*calabozo*; jail).

The linguistically confused bumpkin would grow to like *chile con carne* and *jalapenos* and cook his “barbeque” (*barbacoa*; from the Caribe Indians) out on the range. The new settlers even adopted the style of dress like the ten-gallon hat, a direct copy of the *charro*’s (expert horseman) *tan galán* (very decorative) *sombrero*, which has nothing to do with liquid capacity.

It was not the *tejano* or *californiano* who adopted the leather moccasins and coonskin hats (both derived from the Native American). The Anglo settlers came to the Southwest and used adobe materials to build their homes, Mexican techniques of ranching and irrigation, as well as the cuisine and culture of the native peoples.

So it’s really ironic that by 1855 the California legislature passed laws prohibiting such Sunday amusements as bull, bear, and cock fights, clearly aimed at customs of the *Californianos*. The same legislature which refused to provide for the translation of laws into Spanish as required by the state constitution also passed an anti-vagrancy act aimed at the Spanish-speaking that was popularly known as the “Greaser Law.”

⁵ David Weber, *Foreigners in their Native Land: Historical Roots of the Mexican Americans*. (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 2003), 56.

UNCERTAINTY AND INDETERMINACY OF MEANING IN “LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI” BY JOHN KEATS

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Ever since its publication in 1820, Keats's “La belle dame sans merci” has haunted the imagination of a great number of readers and critics. One of the most salient features of the poem is its mysterious atmosphere, fostered, no doubt, by the sense of uncertainty and ambiguity which pervades almost all of its details. It is, indeed, small wonder that much of the critical effort spent on it over the past one hundred and ninety years has gone into attempts to find the key to the enigma it embodies. Some of these attempts involve conscious moves to dispel certain ambiguities, while others are premised on some comprehensive preconception or other as to the meaning of the whole. Far from being able to dissipate the mist, I shall be attempting, in the unduly concise remarks that follow, to identify certain linguistic features in the poem which are crucial points of uncertainty and indeterminacy of meaning, by bringing into focus a few details which have not received much critical attention.

In the first three stanzas, we are introduced implicitly to an unidentified questioner and explicitly to a person addressed, through a description given by the questioner of his impression of his interlocutor's appearance:

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering;
The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist and fever dew,
 And on thy cheek a fading rose
 Fast withereth, too.
 (Keats 160)

This opening description is rendered in highly suggestive, dense imagery. Although imagery always leaves some room for at least slightly different interpretations, the first three stanzas are a relatively straightforward part of the poem in comparison with what is to follow:

I met a lady in the meads,
 Full beautiful—a faery’s child,
 Her hair was long, her foot was light,
 And her eyes were wild.
 (Keats 161)

Here, of course, we cannot avoid wondering whether meeting a woman with long hair, light feet, and wild eyes in the meads bodes well or ill for a man. Much more importantly, there is an interesting narrative feature almost below the consciousness threshold of all but the most experienced reader in line 2, where the knight describes the lady he met as “a fairy’s child,” i.e., a creature with supernatural powers. This description forms part of a narrative of *past* events and, as it stands, does not tell us whether the knight was aware at the time that he was meeting a fairy, i.e., a creature with powers he was unlikely to be able to deal with, or, on the other hand, whether this piece of knowledge (or conjecture) is an inference of his arrived at in the light of later experience (including his interpretation of his own dream). To some extent, the idea of his initial ignorance seems to be confirmed by “latest dream” in line 3, stanza 9, as long as the phrase is understood as “the most belated,” i.e., too late to be of any avail to the man. This assumption leads us to the awkwardly bland suggestion that the knight might (or would) have avoided the lady if he had known what was in store for him, namely complete subjection to her. This does not seem a particularly exciting idea, but it should not be discarded from the outset, being clearly implied by one interpretation of the ambiguous narrative device.

By contrast, if we suppose that the knight was aware of meeting a fairy, and still there is something he regrets not having known beforehand, we are led to search for what that might be. One idea would be that he did not know *enough* about fairies, but this is not borne out by the rest of the poem. (It is not very revealing, either.) The idea that he *did* know just enough but hoped he would be able to control the development of the relationship is rather more promising. Finally, the idea that he was instantly spellbound, “blinded by desire,” as one might say with a somewhat hackneyed phrase, cannot be excluded either. Whether we can find a broader principle to lend some more profound meaning to the knight’s state of mind in entering the relationship or not, the indeterminacy of meaning is palpably there in the literal meaning of one of the building blocks of the narrative structure.

Stanza five:

I set her on my pacing steed,
 And nothing else saw all day long;
 For sidelong would she bend, and sing
 A faery’s song.
 (Keats 161)

Stanzas five, six, seven, and eight are all informed by the sense of indeterminacy of meaning which springs inevitably from actions and gestures which are open to several interpretations. What is reported is not words but sensual impressions—sight, sound, and touch—of which seeing and hearing the fairy emerge as the most powerful.

Stanza six:

I made a garland for her head,
 And bracelets, too, and fragrant zone;
 She look’d at me as she did love,
 And made sweet moan.
 (Keats 161)

The same holds for stanza six, but there is something additional that I have not seen in the critical literature I consulted. It is the extremely subtle suggestion of a direction underlying the knight’s approaches to the fairy daughter: there is a tendency in the parts of the woman’s body on which the knight’s gifts are meant to be placed, a direction from head via wrists to the waist, which imparts a sense of approaching a woman’s most intimate parts. There is another small detail here which has not been the focus of critical attention. As a matter of fact, “sweet” is the first collocation that springs to a native English speaker’s mind at hearing the word “fragrance.” Now, since the knight’s gift which advances closest to the irresistible focus of a man’s desire is a “fragrant zone” (i.e., a belt), the woman’s “sweet moan” forges a delicate link with the man’s gesture, which is rather difficult to explicate. It is as if the man’s hint were taken and reciprocated with what appears to be a promising response. Last but not least, if the word “as” is taken to mean “as if,” the phrase provides another case for the kind of indeterminacy I mentioned earlier in connection with stanza four, namely that the sense of doubt which is conveyed by the conditional might be recording a sense of doubt experienced at the time of these happenings, or a conclusion arrived at from the vantage point of the abrupt end of the relationship.

Stanza seven:

She found me roots of relish sweet,
 And honey wild and manna dew,
 And sure in language strange she said—
 “I love thee true.”
 (Keats 161)

Stanza seven is extremely rich in indeterminacy and suggestive power. To take indeterminacy first, the most ambiguous, almost paradoxical, phrase of the poem comes in lines 3 and 4. At this point the narrator expresses his certainty that the lady had told him she loved him truly, while being—on the testimony of the words—equally certain that she said so in a “strange” language. The word “strange” is ambiguous between “unusual or peculiar in *some way*” and “not the knight’s vernacular,” i.e., “foreign.” If one comes to think of it, certainty about what the words mean as uttered there and then is difficult to reconcile with certainty about their status as words of a foreign language, unless one assumes that the addressee is perfectly fluent in the particular foreign language concerned. The certainty that the language is foreign at least suggests the possibility of misinterpretation. Supposing that the knight was perfectly fluent in French (or any other foreign language) would be an utterly *ad hoc* supposition, poorly supported by the poem, if at all. By contrast, the idea of a “wishful” misinterpretation (i.e., misunderstanding) should not seem far-fetched even at this stage of the happenings reported, and even more so in light of the poem as a whole. Some measure of uncertainty about truthful interpretation is bound to linger even if “strange” is construed as meaning “unusual to the knight in some way” because if a language is “unusual” to someone, one’s ability to interpret it infallibly will also be uncertain to some extent at least.

One might object by saying that while the French description used by the pale figures in the dream seems to confirm the stronger reading of “strange” (i.e., foreign), the knight appears to have understood the description “la belle dame sans merci” in the dream. On second thought, however, this conjecture does not seem sufficiently supported. It is enough for the knight to take “la belle dame sans merci” to *refer* to the fairy *in some way* (possibly by similarity to the “language strange” she spoke to him earlier) and fully absorb the message of “hath thee in thrall,” whatever the identifying description might exactly mean. He does not have to be able to interpret French (or any other “foreign” language French may symbolize in the poem) impeccably in order to draw a sinister conclusion.

As if to make things more intricate, while considerable fragments of French are comprehensible to English speakers, as is English to French speakers, “I love thee true” (translating as “*Je t’aime vraiment*” or “*sincèrement*”) happens to be an exception. It is equally incontestable that at least “dame” and “merci” are likely to be understood by an English speaker of average ability. After careful consideration of the poem as a whole, the peculiar aura of partial affinity and partial strangeness between English and French can be seen to serve as a perfect medium for introducing a sense of uncertainty into the relationship of the protagonists, an uncertainty which grows most acute in lines 3 and 4 of this stanza, and leads to the unavoidable conclusion that the knight unwittingly identifies himself as an *unreliable narrator* of what happened between him and the attractive creature.

But that is not all that can be said about the stanza. When words rhyme, their meanings tend not only to acquire greater emphasis but also to come to interact with each other. If we are prepared to admit this much, we may become alert to a curious effect here, which has not received any critical attention. The rhyme between “dew” and “true” results in a subtle suggestion almost below the threshold of consciousness—which is probably why it has gone unnoticed—but which is poetically all the more effective. The upshot of the subtle interplay between the meanings of the two words is that the transitory nature of “dew” (melting away later in the day) is projected onto the meaning of “true” (love), as a result of which the chime of the words at the auditory and the semantic level becomes a

subtle prefiguring of an imminent end to the love affair. One's impression of the density of the stanza is further enhanced by the realization that in forging a link with heaven, the word "manna" invests the fairy not only with a sense of intimate acquaintance with nature's ways (enabling her to find sweet roots and wild honey) but also with overtones of a transcendent quality adumbrated by the Judeo-Christian religious origins of the word.

In fact, "manna" is a lexical element which poses a problem on account of the perplexing quantity of semantic information it potentially brings to bear. In the Judeo-Christian tradition manna is, first of all, the food provided for the Israelites in the desert by God in reply to one of their chronic murmurings (Exod. 16.4-36; Num. 11.6-9; Deut. 8.3). This "bread from heaven" appeared first in the second month after the Exodus as fine flakes on the ground. It was "like coriander seed, but white, and it tasted like wafers made with honey" (Exod. 16.31). Ground into flour, it made palatable loaves, and it helped sustain the people for 40 years.

The manna of the Exodus was certainly providential and may even have been miraculous with reference to the times at which and the quantity in which it was supplied. Basically, however, it is a natural product, widely found in the Middle East to this day. It is produced by excretion of certain scale insects and is similar to the honeydew of many types of plant lice; it falls to the ground as drops and there hardens into the grains described in the Bible.

That a deeply religious significance was seen in the providential supply of manna is already evident in the accounts in Exodus and Numbers and becomes more apparent in Deut. 8.3, in the midrash in Wis. 16.20-29, and in the New Testament. In 1 Cor. 10.1-6 manna is termed "spiritual food" and refers to Christ, together with water from the rock. In John 6.32-48 Jesus contrasts manna with the "true bread from heaven" given by His Father. He leads his audience from physical bread (the loaves multiplied for them) to divine teaching, and finally, to the sacrament of His flesh (6.51-56). Part of the background of this miracle was the rabbinic belief that the manna would reappear in the messianic era.

The wealth of information contained even in this brief recapitulation of the contexts in which the word acquires its significance confronts us with the awkward question of selection: which of these associations are we to favor in an interpretation of this crucial passage of "La belle dame"? Or had we better extract some sort of generalized concept of manna instead? Are we supposed to look after other occurrences of the word in Keats's oeuvre? Or even in his letters? The questions multiply and keep haunting us because even with an incomplete understanding of stanza seven, it is obvious that the fairy's offering of "heavenly" or "spiritual" or "God-sent" substance marks an important stage in the development of this curious relationship between a mortal man and an immortal woman. It is difficult to resist the conjecture that just as the "confession of true love" gives an uneasy hint of barriers in communication between the protagonists, the knight's response to the offering of transcendent manna may be seen as foreshadowing a breakdown in the relationship. Although the knight's response to the manna is not implied, let alone stated, there seems to be a very subtle implication in lines 1 and 2, to the effect that the simple and unquestioning manner in which the knight *lists* what she found for him seems to suggest that he is treating all three as on a par, of the same kind, i.e., as simply sweet food. Another subtle suggestion is made by the gradually ascending direction intimated by roots (in the ground), honey (in the trees, i.e., somewhat higher up) and manna, which, though lying on

the ground, clearly “points” higher upwards. Arguably, manna is ambiguous between a stuff that lies on the ground and is edible just as roots or honey, and something that retains its link with a higher spiritual realm, something that is a “miracle on earth” pointing heavenwards, and the subtle suggestion expressed by the simple “listing” of the lady’s pleasurable offerings might hint at some barrier of communication between the protagonists perceived by one of them while going unperceived by the other. It is no mere accident that this stanza has been seen by almost all critics as the first suggestion of failure and doom.

Stanza eight:

She took me to her elfin grot,
 And there she wept and sigh’d full sore.
 And there I shut her wild wild eyes—
 With kisses four.
 (Keats 161)

The sense of uncertainty which permeates this stanza comes from the fact that the reader is left without explicit clues as to the cause of the woman’s crying and weeping. There is strikingly little interpretation on the narrator’s part in this stanza: with the only exception of the qualifying “full sore,” the narrator merely records what is directly accessible to the human eye and ear. (I will just mention in passing that “full sore” is arguably ambiguous between a mere adverb of degree and an adverbial phrase which suggests being aggrieved by someone or something, perhaps a sense of disappointment.) At the same time, “elfin grot” is another example of the “narrative ambiguity” pointed out in previous stanzas: the reader has no clue for deciding whether or not the knight knew the grot was not just a beautiful woman’s dwelling place but a fairy’s.

Stanza nine:

And there she lullèd me asleep,
 And there I dream’d, ah, woe betide!
 The latest dream I ever dreamt
 On the cold hill side.
 (Keats 161)

As before with verbs describing actions, we are left in the dark about the exact nature of the act of “lulling asleep.” It is also here that the word “latest” (probably meaning “the most belated”) occurs, supporting the assumption that the knight was either initially not aware of meeting a fairy (as opposed to an exceptionally attractive mortal woman) or perhaps that, even if he did, he trusted he could control a relationship with an immortal creature to his satisfaction. Further food for thought is provided by the knight’s describing the place where he had his dream as “the cold hill side.” According to the story up to that point, he must have fallen asleep in what he had recognized as “her elfin grot.” The reader is thereby led to assume that he had a dream in the same place as where he was sleeping, i.e., in the elfin grot, and yet what we have at the end of the stanza is that he had his dream on the cold hill side. In other words, a careful, literal reading of the stanza leads to a strictly implied statement of identity between the elfin grot and the cold hill side. Obviously, Keats needed a

word to rhyme with "betide," but that does not prevent us from having to make sense of the words. There seems to be a shift in narrative point of view at this point: the earlier mode of narration (relying on words like "faery" and "elfin grot") did not seem to question the reality or validity of the supernatural attributes (what was in question was only whether it was reporting events as they happened or events as interpreted later), but now the sudden switch to "cold hill side" as opposed to "elfin grot" seems to introduce an undertone of doubt as to the very reality of the whole story, or at least of some of the attributes imputed earlier.

Stanzas ten, eleven, and twelve:

I saw pale kings and princes, too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all,
Who cried—"La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloom
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.
(Keats 162)

Stanzas ten and eleven, the knight's dream, have occasioned several rash interpretations. One kind of misguided response has been to account for the identity of the lady directly in terms of the female figure of *another* poem, namely Chartier's, as if one had no choice other than trying to disambiguate Keats's poem with reference to an "original," or as if there were a fundamental idea of *the* beautiful, merciless woman which united the poems at some unidentified deeper level. (A basic flaw in either approach is the obvious fact that—putting it crudely—her speaking French in the one is not the same thing as her speaking French in the other.) Another variant of the strategy of deriving the lady's identity from Chartier is to view her simply as a calculating temptress (which Chartier's figure *undoubtedly* is), who has ruined a great number of men by frustrating the desire she has aroused in them. Closely related to this interpretative strategy is the utterly arbitrary move of putting down the pale warriors and noblemen simply as the lady's *past lovers*. Although this possibility is not to be ruled out from the start, one must first reflect on the exact nature of the relationship between the two protagonists. Careful weighing of all one can learn about the relationship from the poem reveals that certain qualities (enthralment, dependence, expectations, tacit promises, etc.) are much more unambiguously conveyed than a consummation of the affair in a sexual act. One should not jump to the conclusion that the other men's anguished cries confirm their status as past lovers. Even their "starved lips" are not necessarily lips that have once tasted what they now desire. One may come to desire passionately what one has never had, and one may even die of such an unfulfilled longing. To mention

just one alternative, the knight's dream about men of great earthly power craving the sensuous delights attainable with a particular woman may be seen as an unconscious, or just dimly conscious, attempt on his part to *justify* what he considers his weakness in yielding to the lady's charms despite the sense of danger inherent in his recognizing her as a fairy (in one interpretation of the ambiguous narrative devices discussed above). One should be able to decisively discard this hypothesis (and any number of others that are plausible) before concluding *with any degree of certainty* that the lady has sexually seduced a number of kings, princes, and warriors, only to leave them alone whimsically with a desire never to be fulfilled again.

As far as the revelatory power of the dream is concerned, many critics have not quite avoided speaking as if they could be sure that the death-stricken male figures spelled out the ultimate truth about the lady or, more modestly, as if the knight himself were sure that his dream had revealed to him *the* key to his recent experiences. To be sure, we know that he deeply regrets something, but whether it is the discontinuation of the relationship he regrets or the fact that he had succumbed to the temptation at all remains unclear. To mention just one possibility, his final state of indecision may be seen as resulting from the antithetical pull of two dim forces which remain equally impenetrable to him. However strong the temptation is to extort a definite meaning out of the dream, any such attempt must first be subjected to testing in terms of the literal meanings of the words and their indisputable implications under strict abstinence from comprehensive preconceptions about the meaning of the whole.

The comments above hardly provide anything better than rudiments for a complete "bottom up" interpretation of the poem, i.e., one that is built on a firm groundwork constructed out of the results of an examination of what the words literally mean, as opposed to an untimely recourse to some unifying "top down" hypothesis, i.e., a hypothesis about the meaning of the *whole* which derives attributions of meaning to small details from a unifying vision, the adoption of which is no less arbitrary than that of another one of its kind. At worst, the "bottom up" approach might lead to the conclusion that the poem defies interpretation without some relatively arbitrary unifying idea. Perhaps "La belle dame sans merci" is, indeed, a poem in which atmosphere is more accessible than overall meaning. As long as we have only comprehensive interpretations premised on general assumptions with an equal claim to coherence but without sufficient attention to detail, the kind of close reading adumbrated in these all too brief remarks might be seen as doing the corrective job of showing them what they are to do to make their case stronger.

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CANON AND CANONICITY IN HUXLEY'S *POINT COUNTER POINT*

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CONTRA CANONEM

“There have been times,” speculated the British writer John Wain in 1972 about the not-so-brave new world of Aldous Huxley's presumable future, “[...] when I wondered if he was going to disappear altogether” (qtd. in Watt 27). Half a lifetime later, one might all too easily turn the question around and ask where Wain himself has gone with the phenomenal reputation he once enjoyed. However, it would be both frivolous and beside the point here to belabor the reasons why Wain's epoch-making novel *Hurry on Down* (1953) was out of print for more than thirty years prior to its being recently reissued, as an anniversary homage of sorts, by a quaint little publisher specializing in fifties and sixties British literary memorabilia, and what, in general, has become of the writer-critic who could so dismissively speak of yesteryear's great. It would be of dubious taste and doubtful relevance to dwell on how John Wain, that forgotten hero of a forgotten culture war, has disappeared without a trace from the undergraduate reading lists of all major British, American, and continental universities. After all, if the longevity of a critic's reputation as a creative writer was the sole criterion of assessing the validity of his or her judgments, then a vast body of insightful observations would be wholly lost to posterity (who would in turn be obliged to take the worst critical fallacies of the opinionated great for gospel truth as has only too often been the case with all the embarrassingly misguided evaluations handed down in their time by D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, Vladimir Nabokov, and others of their stature). Worst of all for Huxley's tenaciously sympathetic readers, the senior Angry Young Man of old

may just have had a point to make in that flippantly irreverent observation of his about the future obscurity of the one he saw as standing for all his obnoxious elders.¹

This is not to say that Wain's dismissive attitude to Huxley has been fully borne out by what has in fact happened to Huxley's posthumous reputation. No, unlike his self-assured detractor, Huxley has not disappeared at all. The major documents of his prolific career as an intriguing novelist, an exciting essayist, a rather indifferent poet, and an even more questionable dramatist are all readily and universally available in recent editions brought out by some of the most highly regarded Anglo-American publishing houses,² who rightly count books bearing Huxley's name among their steadiest sellers. Also, even as the writer of *Brave New World*, *The Doors of Perception*, and *Island* retains a sizeable cult-following among successive generations of the Birkenstock-wearing youth, the more intellectually respectable attractions of the Huxley-phenomenon continue to generate a large body of very serious scholarly articles, dissertations, and monographic studies of considerable academic interest. Surveying my own, far from exhaustive, bibliography, I have found that no less than fifteen book-length works of scholarly exegesis have been devoted to Huxley's work in this less than decade-long new millennium alone. It is more than remarkable that all this is happening thirty years or more after Bernard Bergonzi gave full academic endorsement to Wain's impressionistic dismissal when declaring, in 1973, that "the writing of more books about Huxley [...] would be a work of supererogation" (qtd. in Ferns 5). Duly acknowledging Bergonzi's well-earned academic prestige, one may perhaps add, without risking charges of *ad hominem* argumentation, that the long list of contributors to the ever-growing corpus of Huxley-criticism includes such luminaries of international English studies as a David Bradshaw, a Chris Baldick, or a Harold Bloom.

In spite of the impressive quantity and occasionally very high quality of recent Huxley criticism, it would be unwise to conclude that a comfortable and indisputable niche in the modern English literary canon has now been secured for the Huxley oeuvre. It is not only the notoriously dubious place to which terms such as "modern," "English," "literature," and, above all, "canon" have been relegated in the now prevailing critical idiom that must recommend caution. Neither is it the formidable prestige of Huxley's earlier detractors—Virginia Woolf, Ernest Hemingway, André Gide, David Daiches, and Frank Kermode come to mind alongside those mentioned above—that shake whatever complacency the enthusiast might feel about the overwhelmingly favorable reception of Huxley's achievement. It seems just as superfluous to demonstrate the historical relativity of celebrity opinions as it would be futile to make yet another doomed attempt at resolving the involuted theoretical problems besetting the large issues of literariness, modernism, and canonicity. Rather than the imponderables of theory or the status of Huxley's noble enemies, it is his trustiest friends' predictable attitude that must

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² E.g., Faber and Faber, HarperCollins, Norton, Penguin, and Vintage.

give one pause: the defensive position that even the most self-confident of Huxley's apologists almost instinctively occupy.

The routine procedure followed by virtually all who find Huxley's work worthy of their best exegetical-evaluative efforts can be easily summarized. The strategy invariably involves the same opening gambit: a dutiful survey of such standard reservations made by Huxley's critical adversaries as those concerning his novels' "bloodless characters," "meager plot-lines," "excessive philosophizing," the writer's "half-hearted and derivative experimentation," his "wordiness," his "didacticism," etc. The evidence thus acknowledged of Huxley's not being a "congenital novelist" is then followed by the equally unavoidable exercise in challenging and disproving whatever adverse criticism is deemed *really* important. This is then followed by a gesture of conciliatory dialectics, whereby the validity of all that is perceived as irrelevant to the agenda of the Huxley apologist is graciously acknowledged. Needless to say, the move concluding such exercises in critical validation is that of demonstrating how Huxley's entire oeuvre or—more frequently—a period, work, or group of works within that oeuvre displays qualities that outshine whatever regrettable weaknesses the writer's overall achievement may be seen to suffer from. Here are some typical examples of pre-emptive criticism coupled with apologetic vindication: Huxley, as we are often told, is not a true, instinctive artist of the Lawrence-type but a superbly intelligent satirist (see Meckier, *Satire* throughout). Also, while Huxley's experiments do not measure up to those of Joyce, et al., the comprehensive vision of his later fiction more than compensates for the absence of technical sophistication (see Ferns). Furthermore, Huxley, while fully conversant with the Joyce–Eliot tradition, really belongs to an alternative, continental canon of modernism: the one represented by Hermann Hesse and, mainly, Thomas Mann (see Firchow, *Reluctant* throughout).³ Finally, some of his critics commend Huxley's thirties-style social responsibility (Bradshaw and Baker throughout), or his role as a forerunner of the sixties counter-culture (Ferns), all of them downplaying the importance of his perceived shortcomings as a "pure artist."

It could be objected here that the rhetorical pattern of most laudatory Huxley criticism outlined above does not look very different from strategies of vindicating the canonic status of practically *any* writer applied by virtually *any* critic. It is to be noted, though, that the difference is that with Huxley, the defensive maneuver—moves aimed at surveying, bracketing, and denying any unfavorable criticism—tends to consume far more intellectual energy than whatever critical resources are expended on any offensive operations in which Huxley's positive values are asserted. Put another way, Huxley's friends tend to concentrate on belittling the failures rather than upstaging the successes of their "hero."

With Huxley's coevals or older contemporaries occupying a firmer position in the modernist canon, the ratio of timorous defense and unreserved laudation is usually inverted. In standard histories of English literature published in the past thirty years or so, there is incomparably less space and critical acumen devoted to setting forth arguments refuting or relativizing possible charges of deeply entrenched class snobbery, blatant racial or sexual prejudice, supercilious cultural elitism, gratuitous obfuscation, or dubious originality than to demonstra-

³ No wonder that the late Péter Egri, who devoted much of his considerable talents as an academic critic to proving how Thomas Mann excelled James Joyce as the exemplary, because constructive, modernist, found Huxley worthy of an elaborate essay appended to a short-story collection in Hungarian (see Egri).

tions of the richly rewarding experience of repeated readerly exposure to texts by Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and the other hallowed names of the modernist pantheon. With Huxley, the approach is almost always the opposite. There is, however, at least one refreshing exception to this rule. What is probably the only dissenting note heard outside the club of Huxley experts is struck by Peter Conrad in the modernism chapter of his *Cassell's History of English Literature*. Although he cannot apparently afford *entirely* to dispense with the usual caveat that Huxley “seems more technically conventional than Joyce” (629), this maverick tutor of Christ Church College is able to muster up the courage to state, and then to demonstrate in ample detail, that the writer of *Point Counter Point* (1929) “was in fact much more of an imaginatively agnostic modern” than the one who authored *Finnegans Wake* (629).

It would fall outside the scope of this piece to examine the full implications of Peter Conrad’s “preposterous” claims about Aldous Huxley’s having actually gone farther, in the Harold Bloomian sense of the word, than Joyce himself. Forgoing the gesture of all comparative evaluation, I will rather concentrate on Huxley alone, borrowing in the meantime the unselfconscious strategies of assertion from Joyce’s (or Woolf’s, or Lawrence’s, or Eliot’s) scholarly critics to claim for *Point Counter Point* the canonic status that I am convinced its originality of quasi-musical composition and suggestive imagery deployed to convey a consistently fractured, and indeed surprisingly *postmodern*, worldview deserve. In other words, I will not go out of my way to counter gloating prophesies of literary doom made by John Wain and others, desperately to argue how Huxley should *not* be forgotten. Instead, I propose to offer additional evidence to support the contention that on account of *Point Counter Point* alone he deserves being remembered, or better still, being reread.

INTER CANONES

The first reading of *Point Counter Point* will convince the novice to Huxley’s work that the author’s critics had every reason to describe this particular novel of the English novelist as his “most experimental” (Woodcock 156), “most ambitious” (Baker 99; Meckier, *Satire* 80) and his “most important” (Firchow, *Satirist* 93) contribution to twentieth-century fiction. True, not even the least sophisticated of the novel’s readers today will find anything extraordinary about the jump-cut and montage techniques Huxley appropriated from the emerging idiom of his era’s fast-developing art of cinematography. The juxtaposition of contrary or parallel plotlines highlighted in the title will be no less familiar to compulsive viewers of television serials now routinely exploiting the quasi-musical technique referred to in the novel’s title.⁴

Also, those with somewhat more refined literary tastes will be only too fast to trace the novel’s vaunted fugue-like structures to the Sirens episode of Joyce’s *Ulysses* or to

⁴ It can be argued, as my colleague Marcell Gellért has graciously suggested to me, that Huxley and his fellow modernists themselves must have had more respectable sources of inspiration to turn to than the then lowly art of cinematography. King Lear or Hamlet could equally well have supplied the writer of *Point Counter Point* with patterns of quasi-musical juxtaposition resulting from the alternation of inter-illuminating parallel plotlines as anything he may have seen in the picture theaters.

André Gide's *Les faux-monnayeurs*, a novel whose self-conscious metafictionality can be—and has in fact been, with clockwork regularity—invoked as a possible inspiration for related phenomena observable in Huxley's somewhat later fiction. It would be tempting to contest the skepticism implied in the former type of observations by rehearsing theories of how once-revolutionary innovations of avant-garde art and literature have a tendency to descend, in time, into the lowly media of popular entertainment, commercial jingles, tabloid headlines, and soap operas. One could also observe how little this unavoidable process of commercial popularization can do to compromise the prestige of the exalted original.⁵ It is similarly hard to resist temptations of reviewing, and possibly adding to, evidence shored up by researchers of the Huxley oeuvre of how some alternative sources and indeed a process of slow evolutionary “autogenesis” constitute a much likelier hypothesis than theories of deliberate multiple borrowings from the most obvious formalist sources when it comes to explaining the presence of innovative modes of composition or self-reflexive discourses in *Point Counter Point*.⁶ But as such indulgence in comparative apologetics has been ruled out in the foregoing, I will now focus on the novel itself to find what it is to which the novel owes its status as a most remarkable piece within and outside the “Huxley canon.”

One look at the novel's title will reveal what is a commonplace of Huxley criticism, namely that the compositional technique of counterpoint in particular and the idea of music in general must be, in the words of Jerome Meckier, a major “structural principle and dominating metaphor” of *Point Counter Point* (*Satire* 24). The hint in the title is first substantiated by the emphatic presence of music in the second chapter, a grand opening preceded by the two-voice “overture” of chapter one. Having left, with Walter, a fugitive father-to-be bent on escaping what he has come to regard—to borrow Edmund's resounding words from *King Lear*—as the dull, stale, tired bed that he shares with his common-law wife Marjorie, the stifling atmosphere of the Bidlake-Carling ménage behind, we find ourselves in the midst of a glittering function of London's high society. The setting of chapter two, the novel's actual opening, is an imposing aristocratic residence in Pall Mall, where a private concert is hosted by the lord and lady of Tantamount House. To the fashionable guests gathered for the event, the masterly rendering of Bach's *Orchestral Suite in B Minor for Flute and Strings* serves as no more than yet another pretext to exchange the latest gossip while flaunting their spurious enthusiasm for the celebrated flutist Pongelioni's virtuoso performance. The narrator, however, exploits to the full the opportunity provided by the

⁵ A handy illustration could be Anthony Burgess's suggestion of how Gerard Manley Hopkins's idiosyncratic compounds crop up in cornflake advertisements, how echoes of Joycean word-play are heard in radio shows, and how the interior monologues of *Ulysses* have inspired the “think-tape” technique of television plays and documentaries (*Here Comes* 26). In connection with Huxley himself, P.E. Firchow notes how fictional simultaneity has, by now, “gained the honorable status of narrative cliché as the ‘meanwhile back at the ranch’ trope” (*Reluctant* 180).

⁶ J. Meckier relates the technique of counterpoint to Lawrence's *Women in Love*, which he finds to be a much more important inspiration behind the original “musicalisation” of *Point Counter Point* than anything Huxley may have learnt from André Gide (*Satire* 81, 88, 141). Firchow finds rudimentary forms of counterpoint appearing as early as in *Crome Yellow* (1921) and *Those Barren Leaves* (1925), the first predating *Ulysses* (1922) and the second appearing in the same year as Gide's *Les faux-monnayeurs* (see Firchow, *Satirist* 96).

musical party to weave some of the novel's central themes into the fabric of the participants' conversations and his own reflections. The conceptual motifs thus orchestrated here include the contrapuntal relationship of high art to daily life, pure science to power politics, character to destiny, love to aging, and aging to death, to mention but the most salient themes thus introduced. All these oppositions can then be summed up in the episode's resounding metaphors which contrast the amateur biologist Edward Tantamount's vision of the "universal concert of things" with the terrifying recognition suggested in the narration that the harmony underlying the "the human fugue [of] eighteen hundred million parts" may never be audible to terrestrial ears (*Point* 23; ch. 2).

Musicality in one form or another remains a commanding presence throughout the entire novel. Now it functions as an auditory reinforcement, now as a contrast to the major developments of the narrative and the ideas that the meager story carries as a subordinate vehicle. Further, music serves as the source of trans-medial inspiration for various art forms—mainly that of the novel—its notes finally to be sounded in an attempt to facilitate some of the characters' doomed efforts to communicate the incommunicable. That is, for example, how music—or classical music, to be more precise—becomes the main object of intellectual hypocrisy for the aristocratic and patrician philistines displaying themselves at the concert, as Walter's skeptical old father John Bidlake remarks with unsparing perspicuity. That, too, is how chords of the B-minor suite overheard by Lord Edward in his laboratory reverberate, as noted above, in the mind of the old dilettante with echoes of a Claude Bernardian, and possibly Pythagorean, if not Drydenian, music of the spheres that the starry-eyed scientist-manqué believes to harmonize "the total life of the universe." In a more overtly religious interpretation than whatever the old vivisectionist's pseudo-Darwinian transcendentalism would allow for, the idea of celestial music is desperately embraced as the tangible proof of a caring God's existence and, by implication, the promise of at least a meaningful damnation by Maurice Spandrell. This Baudelairean Satanist's conception of music's supernatural powers is wholly unacceptable to the earthy vitalism embodied in the character of the novel's other centrally positioned writer-figure, Mark Rampion. For the outspoken novelist-painter, whose character is obviously based on Huxley's friend D.H. Lawrence, the *Heilige Dankgesang* movement of Beethoven's celebrated *String Quartet No. 15 in A Minor* is just a symptom of a sickly, bodiless spirituality, in fact, "a hymn in praise of eunuchism" (*Point* 435; ch. 37).

Contrary to what may be suggested, among other key episodes, by the scene involving Rampion and the ill-fated Spandrell (the thought-tormented villain commits virtual suicide to the accompaniment of his favorite piece by Beethoven), it is not only the knaves and the fools of the novel who find in music a serviceable correlative to what they hold dearest. Music, or musical composition, turns out to be the last resort for the "non-congenital" novelist who, like Philip Quarles in *Point Counter Point* or the real-life model of this most transparently autobiographical character, finds himself lacking in every essential skill—that of telling a compulsive story or of drawing plausible, flesh-and-blood characters—making a born story-teller of the Dickens–Tolstoy category. As Philip sums up the compensatory formula of fictional musicalisation in his diary for later—or, as is the case with the novel he himself appears in, for earlier—use, the solution lies in abrupt transitions from one mood to another, in the frequent modulations of style, and in the statement and then the development through repetition and variation of theme, all transposed, as it were,

from sheet music to printed page. The self-revelatory passages in the novel's oft-cited twenty-second chapter describing the techniques and potentials of fiction thus musicalised are there, among other things, to alert us to the possibility that where we believe to have seen characters involved in the action of the story, we have in fact witnessed the modulation of various literary keys.

Such modulations, as we are to conclude from Philip's account, can perhaps be best observed in the "reduplication" of writer-figures. The novel's three otherwise very different men-of-letters all fail in their efforts to bridge the gap separating the life each is given to live from the artistic-philosophical credo he proclaims. A glaring example illustrating the discrepancy between words and deeds is the case of the holier-than-thou biographer of saints, Denis Burlap, a middle-aged bachelor whose favorite pursuit seems to be the corruption of virgins past their prime, one of whom he even drives into suicide. Meanwhile, the cold, overly intellectual, and rather shy Philip Quarles gives hardly more than ineffectual lip service to the ideal of the full, all-round personality of the "complete man" who should, *pace* D.H. Lawrence, do what he will. Even this most winsome of the three, the emphatically Lawrentian Mark Rampion, comes through as quite a bit of a "gas bag" with his unceasing harangues about one's obligations to the sacredness of one's innermost self of savage blood-instincts in the comfortable security of his cozy local club.

Another instance of Huxley implementing Philip Quarles's formula of quasi-musical modulation and variation "by reduplicating situations and characters" is when different characters of the novel representing a wide variety of types appear in identical or very similar episodes (*Point* 296; ch 23). For example, the theme of seduction associated with the figure of Burlap reappears in situations centering on the sanctimonious hagiographer's openly misogynous counterpart Spandrell, who engineers his sordid affairs to cause as much psychological damage as he possibly can. In like manner, the motif of carefully planned-out but eventually frustrated attempts at adultery is given the repetition-with-a-difference treatment of musical variation in parallel, and largely simultaneous, episodes involving the younger Quarleses—Philip and Elinor. Wife and husband both go well beyond merely playing with the idea of cheating on the other as they each take deliberate, if eventually ineffectual, steps to start an illicit affair. One of the couple, Philip, goes out to a party where he deploys all his wits and charms to win, in vain as it turns out, the favors of the physically most arousing but temperamentally ice-cold socialite Molly d'Exergillod. Meanwhile, the other Quarles, Elinor, meets her admirer Everard Webley and encourages, in an apparently coquettish but in reality rather half-hearted manner, the approaches of the proto-fascist leader modeled on the notorious Sir Oswald Mosley. While in each case it is the woman—Molly in the one, Elinor in the other—whose reluctance finally thwarts the ardent suitor's advances, the two members of the same couple appear in dissimilar parts in their amorous encounters: whereas Philip plays the part of active initiator, Elinor assumes the role of the passive agent in their respective affairs.

Of the two frustrated attempts, it is Elinor's involvement in a failed extramarital relationship that deserves more attention here. The bloodcurdling conclusion to the Webley-affair presents the reader with what is possibly the most remarkable literary equivalent of musical repetition that the novel has in store. What can be witnessed here is the inverted imitation of one melodic line or, as is the case in an experimental novel like *Point Counter Point*, one line of action or train of thought, by another. Exasperated with her husband's

utter emotional frigidity, Elinor eventually gives in to the chief British Freeman's entreaties, and acquiesces in the idea of a secret appointment, this time in her own, temporarily vacated, house. It is here that things take a horrid turn. As Elinor must hurriedly leave London to take her maternal place on the side of little Phil, who has fallen suddenly and very seriously ill, her unsuspecting beau is not only disappointed in his ardent expectations but falls into a trap set by two secret plotters against his life, Illidge and this embittered working-class scientist's sadistic-anarchistic abettor Spandrell. The coolly objective scientific terminology employed in the paragraph setting forth a detailed discussion of how the murdered leader's body will gradually decompose into its basic chemical constituents provides a distant but clearly recognizable echo to an earlier description of a strikingly similar nature in the novel. The overview of the successive phases in the pregnancy of the unhappy Marjorie Carling in chapter one relies on a very similar dehumanizing juxtaposition of a strictly bio-chemical approach with the worldview and diction of poetry and philosophy, as the contrast employed in the passage concluding the episode of Webley's rendezvous with death demonstrates. The two descriptions are worth quoting one after the other at some length on account of their combined (dis)harmonic effect. Here is the description of Marjorie and her future baby:

She looked ugly, tired and ill. Six months from now her baby would be born. Something that had been a single cell, a cluster of cells, a little sac of tissue, a kind of worm, a potential fish with gills, stirred in her womb and would one day become a man—a grown man, suffering and enjoying, loving and hating, thinking, remembering, imagining. And what had been a blob of jelly within her body would invent a god and worship; what had been a kind of fish would create and, having created, would become the battle-ground of disputing good and evil; what had blindly lived in her as a parasitic worm would look at the stars, would listen to music, would read poetry. A thing would grow into a person, a tiny lump of stuff would become a human body, a human mind. (*Point 2*; ch. 1)

And here, in an inversion of the original "voice" sounded with the not inconsiderable delay of thirty-two chapters, is what was once Everard Webley:

Behind the screen lay the body. [...] The hive was dead. But in the lingering warmth many of the component individuals still faintly lived; soon they also would have perished. And meanwhile, from the air, the invisible hosts of saprophytics had already begun their unresisted invasion. They would live among the dead cells, they would grow, and prodigiously multiply and in their growing and procreation all the chemical building of the body would be undone, all the intricacies and complications of its matter would be resolved, till by the time their work was finished a few pounds of carbon, a few quarts of water, some lime, a little phosphorus and sulphur, a pinch of iron and silicon, a handful of mixed salts—all scattered and recombined with the surrounding worlds would be all that remained of Everard Webley's ambition to rule and his love for Elinor, of his thoughts

about politics and his recollections of childhood, of his fencing and good horsemanship, [...] his incapacity to whistle a tune correctly, his unshakeable determinations and his knowledge of Russian. (*Point* 392-3; ch. 33)

It is of passing interest only that music plays very different parts in Webley's freshly concluded past and in Bidlake junior's as yet distant future, that in one, music is of less than marginal, in the other of central importance. Much more remarkable than that is the formal relationship that holds between our two bio-spiritual descriptions. When the two are set side by side as is done above, or even better, superimposed on one another as they may well be in the memory of the attentive reader, then something truly curious will take shape. What is little more than a palindrome-like repetition at first sight will come to look—or sound—like that favorite of mathematically minded music lovers: the first of the ten canons in *Musikalisches Opfer*, Bach's collection of sophisticated contrapuntal compositions elaborating, "in strict canon," on a simple musical theme provided by his son Carl Philip's patron, King Frederick II of Prussia.⁷ Yes, the result of the arrangement of the related quotations printed above is clearly reminiscent of the same melodic line played backward and forward simultaneously in what is known, since at least the *Musical Offering* as the *retrograde canon*.⁸

It could be objected to the idea of the trans-medial isomorphism suggested here that while Bach's *canon cancrizans* plays the king's theme backward and forward simultaneously, the inversion of the imperial theme of life and death in the Webley-episode follows its first sounding in the Marjory's-baby episode by several hundred pages. And yet, the suggested superimposition of the two may not be entirely gratuitous. The structural and metaphoric function of Bach's music in the novel—the B-minor suite in particular—has already been noted. Of more interest in this respect is the fact that *Point Counter Point* contains at least one instance of a clearly canon-like treatment of parallel "melody-lines" woven around the same theme. This instance is constituted in the sequence of events leading up to the point where Elinor is obliged to cancel, without warning, her appointment with Webley. What happens at the house in her native Gattenden is something that comes very close indeed to the second simplest form of imitative counterpoint in music, i.e., the canon. Here, as in the musical genre offering the closest analogy, two identical voices starting at different times and possibly each at a different pitch arrive at a clear ending after

⁷ An early account of how J.S. Bach accomplished, at the prompting and with the help of Frederick the Great, this feat of virtuoso composition is given by Nikolaus Forkel, the musician's first biographer (qtd. in Boyd 240). The anecdote is placed in a far broader context by D.R. Hofstadter. The phenomenally influential postmodern polymath uses *The Musical Offering* as a central metaphor to illustrate what he means by a "strange loop," the connecting link between the arts, higher mathematics and artificial intelligence, and even provides a literary analogy of the crab canon in a Lewis Carroll-style dialogue that is set out first forward and then backward making perfectly good sense either way. Huxley would have found it fascinating (see Hofstadter 199-203).

⁸ I thank Teodóra Wiesenmayer for the idea, among some other very sensible practical suggestions, that my insistence on the importance of the retrograde canon in *Point Counter Point* should be related to the work of J.S. Bach.

creating surprising harmonic twists in the composition.⁹ This effect of the musical canon is created in *Point Counter Point* by the drastic changes occurring in the medical condition of both Elinor's ailing father and her diseased son. The phases of excitement, depression, intolerable pain, unexpected improvement, and inevitable expiry in the unstoppable course that little Phil's meningitis takes are replicated with the mad consistence of a pathetically fallacious fate in the progression of his grandfather's terminal illness—the cancer of the intestine that is to end the life of Bidlake senior. Starting successively, the soprano melody of little Phil's meningitis and the counter-melody of Old Bidlake's cancer in bass-baritone achieve their mutual resolution in the simultaneous deaths of grandson and grandfather.

The nature, and more importantly the name, of Bidlake's illness cannot be easily overlooked when it comes to the issue of Huxley's peculiar brand of canon-style composition. The fact that the old painter suffers from an illness, progressive even in its temporary regression, whose name is of the same derivation as that of the medieval Latin term used to designate Bach's—and as I believe Huxley's—canon is in itself an indication that there may in fact be some underlying analogy between one character's fatal disease and the structural relationship between the lives and deaths of another two. The etymology binding *cancer* to *cancrizans* points to the same sideways or, as the popular misconception has it, backward crawling crustacean equipped with large and powerful claws with which it grabs its prey that lent its name to the crabwise-moving retrograde canon, also known as crab canon, on the one hand and the vaguely crab-shaped tumor, or cancer, retaining its malignant hold on its host to the end, on the other. No wonder that James Joyce, modern literature's *il miglior fabbro* in musical experimentation, uses the quaint coinage “bellycrab” in a reference to the cancer of the intestine in *Ulysses* (316.102; ch. 14).¹⁰ If the Joycean association based on the shared etymology interconnecting the various episodes brought together above appears to be fanciful, then there is yet another curious coincidence—if coincidence it is—to consider. John Bidlake's bitter realization that “the one thing fresh and active in his old body, the one thing exuberantly and increasingly alive was death” springs from a disturbing metaphor which is also related to cancer (*Point* 313; ch. 24). The image forcing itself upon Bidlake's tortured consciousness establishes yet another link, identical in its tenor to that of the Marjorie's-baby and Webley's-body sections, between living and dying. The ailing artist cannot help thinking of his mortal disease as “death in the form of a new life growing and growing in his belly, like an embryo in a womb” (*Point* 313).

Although cancer is far from being the only cause of death, decay, and decomposition in the novel, *tumor cancrizans*, to use an apt-looking pseudo-Latinism here, is certainly one of the governing metaphors in *Point Counter Point*. A vaguely proleptic episode occurring in chapter eleven has Walter Bidlake receive a letter from his daughter with a remark in it reminding the old painter of his long-dead son buried in California. As it will be remembered, the unnamed Bidlake offspring died of the disease that is, unbeknownst to

⁹ This rudimentary description of the musical canon relies on a definition in *The NPR Curious Listener's Guide to Classical Music*, an accessible introduction to the topic for the layperson (Smith 54).

¹⁰ See the interpretation offered for bellycrab by Gifford (411). Whether Joyce coined the term on the analogy of Old English kenning or the curious compound is another indication of the depth to which Joyce was indebted to the language once spoken by Leopold Bloom's ancestors—the Hungarian word *rák* refers both to the clawed crustacean and the disease—is an issue I will leave to the Joycean expert to decide.

his father at the time the melancholy recollection occurs to him, eventually to be the eldest Bidlake's own end. Another passage even closer to the novel's beginning, in that most important second chapter, presents the amateur vivisectionist Lord Edward speculating on the mysterious principles of creation. That aging, latter-day parody of Frankenstein assumes the inscrutable laws of nature to be underlying the fundamental difference between the orderly, in a sense music-like, self-reproduction of a healthy living organism—that of a newt as the case happens to be—and the haphazard proliferation of cancerous cells.

Music appears in conjunction with mortal disease for the last, most memorable, occasion when Rampion uses the image of the deadly tumor as the vehicle of a viciously forceful simile. In the very last chapter, the Lawrentian guru of Philip Quarles compares the effect of the abstract spirituality he believes to "emasculate" Beethoven's *Heilige Dankgesang*, and in general to devour the *élan vital* of the natural human instincts, to a malignant growth. "This damned soul," he bursts out, "this damned abstract soul—it's like a kind of cancer, eating up the real, human, natural reality, spreading and spreading at its expense" (*Point* 435; ch. 37; emphasis added). Considering the frequent recurrence of the cancer-metaphor as an emblem of biological, psychological, and social dissolution or even of cosmic entropy in the Huxley-canon, from *Point Counter Point* on through *Eyeless in Gaza* and, most emphatically, *Island*, one might even extend the musical analogy to include the overarching use of *leitmotif* in the Wagnerian sense of the word.¹¹

PER CANONEM

There is a great difference between the use of the *leitmotif* in the works of the German Romantic composer and those of the modern English novelist, needless to say. It is not only the farfetched analogy between Huxley and Wagner that may rightly seem doubtful—one should not press a point too hard—but, above all, the equally tenuous parallel between *Point Counter Point* and the other, especially the later, novels by Huxley. Although there certainly *are* some very important motifs recurring throughout Huxley's long career as a novelist, the four decades separating his earliest from his last novels would be too long a period for any unqualified consistency to persist even in the work of a far less versatile and agile mind than his. Whether the changes occurred gradually or cataclysmically (is it Darwinian evolution or Thomas Khun's revolution?), whether the career can be broken down into two, three, four, or more self-contained phases (each model has its scholarly proponent), whether there is a discernible pattern (a dominantly ascending or descending trajectory, say) or a haphazard movement dissipating its momentum in all possible directions (the most attractive proposition for the uncompromising poststructuralist) is another matter. What to me appears most clearly discernible is a general darkening of mood as one

¹¹ A closer, if not in any obvious sense musical, analogy could be found in the parallel use of the cancer metaphor in H.G. Wells's *Tono-Bungay*, a novel Huxley is documented to have read (see Meckier, *Modern Satirical* 353 n6). The "suppurating" oil deposits that attract the cancerously growing profit-hungry capital investment to the utopian republic of Pala in Huxley's *Island* reminds Meckier of "quap," that fast-spreading "cancerous [...] disease of matter" found on Mordet Island in Wells's novel (see Meckier, *Modern Satirical* 298). I thank Professor Aladár Sarbu for calling my attention to the Wells connection here.

proceeds from the light-hearted mockery of the earlier social comedies—informing *Crome Yellow* (1921) and *Antic Hay* (1923) but also felt in *Barren Leaves* (1925)—which declines into the more savage satires in Huxley’s dystopian masterpiece, *Brave New World* (1932), and to an almost heroic desperation regarding the social, if not indeed the human, condition expressed with the jarring tonalities of *Point Counter Point*.

How the metaphysical impasse reached by Huxley with this mid-career novel of his may or may not have been transcended with the equally exciting but conceptually much more focused experimentation of *Eyeless in Giza* (1936) or with the somewhat less inspiring mysticism and downright didacticism of the later novels is a question that I must leave unanswered here. What is certain is that the disappointed contemporary critics of *Point Counter Point*—with Huxley’s most desperately sympathetic readers among them—had some very good reasons to be upset. That Huxley’s wife was ravaged by the unmitigated pathos of little Phil’s death can be attributed to some very personal reasons. Maria Huxley had every right to feel outraged as a mother of a sickly child whose somewhat altered portrayal and vicarious killing in the novel was later described by Arnold Kettle as an instance of pathological masochism on the part of the novelist (see Murray 204; Kettle 168). The anxiety to which D.H. Lawrence gave voice in a letter to the writer of *Point Counter Point* was of an altogether different origin. Although Lawrence later vented his anger at the Rampion-portrait with his sardonic poem “I am in a Novel,” his very strong reservations voiced in the letter were motivated by much more than the offended vanity of one misrepresented in a *roman à clef*. Having struggled through all the gratuitous suffering, the violent or ethically inexplicable deaths, and the universal pointlessness represented in the novel, Lawrence could not help asking the vexing question: “*caro*, how are we going to live through the day?” (letter to Huxley qtd. in Watt 172)

Virginia Woolf may have overstated the case somewhat when concluding, in a diary entry on her responses to Huxley’s then latest work, that ideas will *never* coalesce in a novel, but she certainly got it right with respect to *Point Counter Point*. For all the clever counterpoint, the ingenious modulation and variation in local compositions played off in every direction, there does not emerge anything like the “sweet harmony” of the heavens memorably described by Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice* (see Shakespeare 250; V.i.57, 64-5). In Huxley’s musicalised novel of ideas, one will not even find the “music of ideas” heard by I.A. Richards in T.S. Eliot’s philosophical poetry (Richards qtd. in Russo 274). What we have in place of heterogeneous concepts combining, as they are supposed to do in the exemplary Eliot poem, into Richards’s “coherent whole of feeling and attitude” is the cacophony of somewhat mismatched voices in a fragmented crab canon. Here is how Miklós Kállay, a Hungarian contemporary of Richards’s and Huxley’s, sums up what in fact happens in the novel: “The various philosophical ideas, ethical precepts, political and social credos start off and progress, now chasing each other as though in a canon, now embracing in syncopated patterns, then again breaking up or confusing one another, precisely in the manner of contrapuntal melodies in a musical composition”(55).¹² And yet, we

¹² Mint az ellenpontozott melódiák a modern zenében, úgy indulnak és haladnak itt, hol kánonszerűen egymást kergetve, hol szinkopáson ölelkezve, hol egymást rontva és egymást kuszálva a különböző eszmeáramlatok, erkölcsi meggyőződések, ideológiák, politikai és társadalmi hitvallások. (The author’s translation.)

should not regret if eventually no harmony prevails, if the fugue, referred to in chapter two, of “eighteen hundred million parts”—above six thousand million by now—remains inaudible to the ears of those playing it. This should not prevent *Point Counter Point* from occupying, or if occupied retaining, its place in the literary canon of our post-humanist era—despite all the gloomy prophecies made by John Wain and other literary doomsayers. To the condition of celestial music it may vainly aspire, Huxley's musicalised fiction can still stir us *per canonem*.

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**HUNGARIAN VICTIMS OF THE STEEL MILLS
AND COAL MINES OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA:
AS REFLECTED IN THE ÉMIGRÉ POETRY OF THAT AGE¹**

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¹ Presented at the 39th National Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, New Orleans, November 15-18, 2007.

INTRODUCTION

At this very moment we are in the midst of commemorating some of the worst mine and blast-furnace disasters in Pennsylvania's history. These disasters occurred exactly one century ago, when hundreds of Hungarians and thousands of other eastern and southern European immigrants died under most horrible circumstances. They were victims of the rapid and uncontrolled industrial expansion in America, as well as victims of the simultaneous absence of protective laws that could have prevented these tragedies and of a social welfare system that could have cushioned the hardships that befell the families of the perished workers. At the same time, these immigrant Hungarians were also the victims of an empire—the Austro-Hungarian Empire ruled by the Habsburgs—that was unable to offer them a decent life, supported by decent wages. For this reason they were forced to emigrate and thus become the victims—but in the long run, also the beneficiaries—of an ever-expanding industrial society that was on its way to dominating the Western world.

Contemporary newspapers—including ethnic newspapers—are filled with descriptions of these horrible catastrophes. But they are also remembered and recorded in the poetry of that period. Much of this poetry is of modest aesthetic quality, written by those who wielded the pen not so much because of their poetic abilities (which were usually limited) but because they witnessed the misery of their fellow Hungarians. The best known of these poets were Gyula Rudnyánszky (1858-1913), László Pólya (1870-1950), György Kemény (1875-1952), György Szécskay (1880-1958), László Szabó (1880-1961), Árpád Tarnóczy (1884-1957), Károly Rácz-Rónay (1886-1927), and Pál Szarvas (1883-1938), who wrote under the pen name of "*Indián*." These writers generally made their living by serving their ethnic communities either as pastors and/or as journalists. Of these eight poets, the Pittsburgh-based György Szécskay and the Cleveland and Detroit-based György Kemény devoted more attention to the Hungarian victims of Pittsburgh blast furnaces and Western Pennsylvania coal mines than any of their other fellow poets. After portraying the social scene in which they lived and worked, we will quote some of their relevant poetry, which depicts well the wretched lives of these early-20th-century immigrants from Hungary, and thus from the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

THE IMMIGRANTS

In the period between 1880 and 1914 close to 25 million—mostly south-, central-, and east-European impoverished peasants and unskilled workers—emigrated to the United States from Italy, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Russia, Scandinavia, and the Balkans. Of these 25 million immigrants, about four million came from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and nearly two million from the Kingdom of Hungary, which was a partner in the Empire of the Habsburgs. Of the latter two million, about one-third (650,000) were Magyars, while the other two-thirds belonged to such nationalities as Slovaks, Rusyns, Croats, Romanians, and even some Germans.

These immigrants came to this "land of promise" with much hope for a better life. But initially they found only exploitation and the constant presence of death in the blast furnaces and coal mines of Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Naturally, most

of those who survived these initial years eventually “made it” in American society. After some very hard years they joined the ranks of the American working class. Some of their offspring went beyond the world of their immigrant parents by becoming professionals. This was a phenomenon that would have been difficult to attain in the very class-conscious society of their original homeland.

BLAST FURNACE EXPLOSION IN PITTSBURGH

The year 1907 was especially horrendous in the life of the Hungarian immigrants. It began with the explosion of a blast furnace at the Jones & Laughlin Steel Works in Pittsburgh, and it ended with an even more horrible explosion at the Darr Mine in Van Meter/Jacob’s Creek, Pennsylvania, about thirty miles southeast of the “Steel City.”

The explosion at the Jones & Laughlin Steel Works occurred on January 10, 1907, while the Darr Mine explosion took place on December 19 of the same year. In the first of these explosions about thirty-five or more Hungarian immigrants were killed by the molten steel, while in the second explosion over three-hundred miners, among them at least 131 Hungarians, were torn apart or suffocated in the two-mile deep mine shafts of the Darr Mine.

As reported by the *New York Times* the next day, at the Jones & Laughlin explosion “tons of molten metal were showered around the furnace for a radius of forty feet. Out of the force of thirty-five men who were at the furnace, three of them were killed [...], seven are in the hospitals fatally injured, and twenty-four others have not been accounted for.”² As it turned out, the latter were all “cremated in the molten metal.” As recalled by one of the fortunate nearby survivors: “Suddenly there was a terrific roar, and I immediately started to run. Molten metal was falling and streaming in all directions. I reached a place of safety not a minute too soon. I don’t know what happened to the other men. I did not see any of them after the explosion. If they did not run quickly they are buried under six feet of molten metal.”³

The investigation conducted immediately after the explosion ascertained that virtually all of the men died. “The bodies of twelve men have been recovered, from fifteen to twenty men are missing, it being generally believed that their bodies were consumed by the hot metal, and ten are in hospitals terribly burned. Four of them are expected to die. Deputy Coroner Laidley says [that] one foreigner became crazed by his injuries, and before he could be prevented, [he] leaped into a pot of molten metal and was incinerated.”⁴ Thus, in effect, according to this report, at least 31 to 36 men died in this explosion, and a dozen others, if they survived, were probably maimed for life.

Already two years before this major blast-furnace explosion, there were reports that in some Pittsburgh-area steel furnaces “those workers who suffer major injuries are

² *New York Times*, January 11, 1907. Quoted in “Division of Labour,” September 1, 2009 <http://divisionoflabour.com/archives/003413.php>

³ *New York Times*, January 11, 1907.

⁴ *New York Times*, January 11, 1907.

cast into the molten steel and thus are incinerated.”⁵ The majority of the people who read these reports did so with some degree of incredulity. But when these rumors were substantiated even by Joseph G. Armstrong (1867-1931), the Coroner of Allegheny County, who subsequently became the Mayor of Pittsburgh (1914-1918), even the incredulous had to believe it.

While the *New York Times* article does not mention anything about the nationality of the perished workers, Hungarian sources reveal that the majority of them were Hungarians. This is readily evident from the reports published in the Cleveland daily *Szabadság* [Liberty], some of which reports have been reprinted in a collection of relevant articles and studies edited by Albert Tezla.⁶ Based on these reports, it is evident that this powerful explosion took the lives of thirty-five to forty Hungarian immigrants. And this was only one of many such blast furnace explosions, which ended the lives of hundreds of immigrants almost every year. Naturally, these explosions also impacted upon the families of the deceased, who were never compensated for their losses. In fact, in most instances they were harshly dealt with by the coal and steel companies, who soon evicted them without mercy from their company-owned houses.

One should also recall that the suffering of the steel workers who were not killed immediately by the blast was so intense that it can hardly be verbalized. It is even difficult to describe the dead corpses, let alone the sufferings and looks of those who were in the process of dying. Many of the corpses were fragmented and incomplete, and they were also distorted by the heat of the liquid steel.

As articulated by one of the reporters of the Cleveland *Szabadság*, “it is impossible to describe even approximately the horrible looks of the corpses. Burned into charcoal, hard as stone, without any flesh, [and] body parts torn to pieces. One corpse consists only of a head and a waist, his other body parts having been consumed and never found. Not until the day of my death will I ever be able to forget the image of the burned and terrifying bodies of these poor Hungarians.”⁷ Another correspondent described the scene as follows: “The face was coal-black and hard as stone with no trace of skin. There were two burned-out hollows in place of eyes, and the nose was missing. The corpse spread an unpleasant burned odor into the low, dimly-lighted room.”⁸

These scenes were being repeated from year to year. Not until the coming of F. D. Roosevelt’s New Deal in the 1930s, did things change for the better. Starting with 1933,

⁵ See the article: “Elevenen megégetett magyarok” [Hungarians Who Were Burned Alive], in *Kivándorlási Értesítő* [Emigration Review], vol. 3, May 9, 1905. Reprinted in Albert Tezla, ed. *Valahol túl meseországban: Az amerikai magyarok, 1895-1920* [Somewhere in a Fairyland: Hungarian Americans, 1895-1920], 2 vols. (Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó, 1987), II, 20-25; hereafter, Tezla, *Valahol túl meseországban*. See also the shortened article: “Hungarians Burned Alive,” in Albert Tezla, *The Hazardous Quest. Hungarian Immigrants in the United States, 1895-1920*, trans. and ed. by Albert Tezla (Budapest: Corvina, 1993) 311-13; hereafter Tezla, *Hazardous Quest*.

⁶ *Szabadság* [Liberty], January 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, and 18, 1907. Reprinted in Tezla, *Valahol túl...*, II, 38-56. A few of these reports are also reproduced in the shorter English language version of this book, mentioned above: Tezla, *Hazardous Quest* 326-39.

⁷ *Szabadság*, January 14, 1907; quoted by Tezla, *Valahol túl*, II, 145.

⁸ Quoted in Tezla, *Hazardous Quest* 330.

protective laws were introduced, and a welfare system was established to help the women and children who were left behind.

EXPLOSION AT THE DARR MINE IN VAN METER/JACOB'S CREEK

Hungarians of the Pittsburgh region had hardly enough time to digest the extent of their tragedy at the explosion of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Works, when eleven months later an even greater tragedy befell them. It was the explosion at the Darr Mine in Van Meter/Jacob's Creek, where the number their countrymen who died exceeded about four times the losses they had sustained at the steel furnace explosion less than a year earlier. On December 19, 1907, barely eleven months after the Pittsburgh tragedy, the Darr Mine at Van Meter/Jacob's Creek exploded and killed over three-hundred miners. Nearly half of those who perished were Hungarians, among whom were a number of 12- to 14-year-old boys.

Rescue work was undertaken almost immediately, but because of the size and location of the explosion two miles into the mountain, this rescue consisted only of collecting and removing most (though not all) of the corpses and various body parts of the deceased miners. Eventually, 239 bodies were removed. But because of many unrelated body parts that were mixed together, it was impossible to count them all. Moreover, the lurking dangers in the gas-infested mine shafts prevented the rescue workers from searching all areas of the mine to find all the bodies of the killed miners. Consequently, many miners were never found, while others were brought up only in several pieces. Some seventy and eighty years after the tragedy, an old local miner still found some human remains in various sections of the mine he visited.

As was customary in those days, the inquest produced the expected results: the Pittsburgh Coal Company was totally exonerated from responsibility. In fact, all of the blame was laid squarely on the shoulders of the perished miners. And this conclusion was reached in spite of the fact that a few days before the explosion two men in leadership positions—Superintendent Archibald Black and Fire Boss David Vingrove—resigned and left the mine “on account of the gaseous nature of the mine [...]. They notified the officials [that] the mine was unsafe for men to work in,”⁹ but the officials took no action. The unscrupulous administrators were willing to risk the lives of hundreds of miners simply to increase their profits. After the explosion the only thing they were willing to do was to bury the dead—including those who could not be identified—at the company's expense.

Two years after this catastrophe the Hungarian American Federation, founded in 1906, erected a large slab stone in the local Olive Branch Cemetery with the following inscription:

⁹ “*Daily Reporter*,” December 20, 1907, Washington, PA. Quoted in “Darr Mine Disaster, December 19, 1907,” by Raymond A. Washalski, et. al., September 1, 2009 <http://patheoldminer.rootsweb.com/darr2.html>

“To the Memory of the Martyrs
The Darr Mine disaster, Dec. 19. 1907
Erected by the Hungarian-American Federation 1909.”¹⁰

This large slab was complemented in 1994 by an inscribed bronze plaque erected by the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission, which displays the following text:

DARR MINE DISASTER¹¹
On Dec. 19. 1907, an explosion killed 239 men and boys, many Hungarian
immigrants, in Darr coal mine near Van Meter. Some from the closed
Naomi mine, near Fayette City, which exploded on Dec. 1, killing
34. Over 300 miners died in Dec. 1907. The worst month
in U. S. coal mining history. In Olive Branch
Cemetery, 71 Darr miners, 49 unknown,
are buried in a common grave.

Having buried the bodies of the victims, life went back to normal. The Darr Mine continued to function and continued to produce coal right up to 1919, although in 1910 it was merged with the nearby Banning No. 3 Mine, and thus its name was removed from the maps of Western Pennsylvania. The victims were slowly forgotten, except in the writings of a few Hungarian American poets, who gave vent to their personal and ethnic sorrows, and to the bitter recriminations of the suffering wives and orphaned children.

THE BARDS OF HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN SUFFERINGS

From among the previously mentioned poets, György Kemény was the first to express this bitterness, and to describe the wretched life of the survivors, including not only family members but also those who had been maimed for life. He did this in his poem “Talyigás Kis Péter” [Péter Talyigás-Kis], which was first published in 1908 in a volume entitled *Száz vers. Magyar énekek az idegenben* [Hundred Poems. Hungarian Songs in a Foreign Land].¹² This poem deals with the tragedy of a coal miner who had lost one of his legs in a

¹⁰ “Remembering the Darr Mine Disaster: The American Hungarian Federation.” September 1, 2009 www.americanhungarianfederation.org/news_darrmine.htm

¹¹ “December 1907—Remembering the Darr Mine Disaster and the Deadliest Month in American Mining History.” Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. September 1, 2009 <<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/newsletter/default.asp?NewsletterArticleID=9807&SubjectID=>>; and Raymond A. Washalski, et. al. “Darr Mine Disaster, December 19, 1907,” <http://patheoldminer.rootsweb.com/darr2.html>

¹² György Kemény, *Száz vers: Magyar énekek az idegenben* [Hundred Poems. Hungarian Songs in a Foreign Land] (Cleveland, Ohio, 1908), 54. It is to be noted here that as a result of an error committed by Géza Hoffman in his book *Csonka munkásosztály* [Mutilated Working Class] published

mine accident soon after his arrival to America. He became a beggar, for he never had the courage to tell his wife about his misfortune. He continued to write to her—and lie to her—about his life of plenty in the “Land of Promise.”

TALYIGÁS KIS PÉTER

Talyigás Kis Péter egyszer csak elindult
Nagy Amerikába.
Jólelkű magyarok hamar beszerezték
A szenes bányába.
A második héten Talyigás Péternek
Ott maradt a lába.

Koldus lett belőle, gyámoltalan koldus,
Olyan világterhe.
Idegen országban, fiatal korában
Jaj, de meg van verve!
Bús sorsát megírni a feleségének
Ugyan hogy is merje?

Nem is írt felőle, nem is üzent róla
Szegény asszonyának.
Mankón támaszkodva kiállt a sarokra,
Ahol sokan járnak.
Így ette kenyerét Talyigás Kis Péter
Az aranyországnak.

Ha az asszonyának levelet írt néha,
A sorsát dicsérte:
„Jó módom van itten, nem dolgozom ingyen,
Mégfizetnek érte.”
És a könnye hullott dicsekvő koldusnak
Mindegyik levélre.

in 1911—wherein he mistakenly assigned this poem to György Szécskay—the authorship of this poem has been debated and confusing. Some began to attribute it to Szécskay. This was also true in the case of Ernő Rickert in his *Amerikai magyar költők* (*A Magyar Jövő Ifjúsági Irodalmi Rt.*, Budapest, 1920). But Kemény's above-cited work, which appeared in 1908 and contains this poem, makes it unquestionable that this poem was written by György Kemény.

PÉTER TALYIGÁS-KIS¹³

Peter Talyigás-Kis one day departed
 To America
 Generous Hungarians helped him to get a job
 In the coal mines.
 But already in the second week Péter Talyigás
 Lost his leg.

He became a helpless beggar
 A burden of the world.
 And while still young, in a foreign land.
 He is really damned for life!
 How could he tell his wife
 About his miserable fate?

He did not write, nor speak about it
 To his poor wife.
 He sat on the corner with his crutches
 Where many walked by.
 Thus did Péter Talyigás-Kis eat the bread
 Of the golden land of promise.

If he wrote occasionally to his wife
 He praised his good fortune:
 "I live in plenty, and don't work for nothing.
 They pay me well."
 Yet, the tears of this bragging beggar
 Were shed on all his letters.

György Szécskay, a Pittsburgh poet, soon joined Kemény with his poem "A levél"
 [The Letter],¹⁴ which reports in a matter-of-fact tone the death of a simple miner:

¹³ Translated by the authors of this study.

¹⁴ Reprinted in Rickert Ernő, ed., *Amerikai magyar költők* (Budapest: A Magyar Jövő Ifjúsági Irodalmi Rt., 1920) 90-91.

A LEVÉL

Kovács Mihály meghalt // Megölte a bányá.
Épp a szenet vájta
Serényen csákánya, // Mikor gyilkos szikla
Zuhant le reája.

Összetört a teste, // Piros, nagy cseppekben
Szivárgott ki vére,
Messze idegenben, // Idegen országnak
Fekete földjére.

Magyar földön, otthon, // Egy asszony csak várja,
Az ura, hogy mit ír.
Gondol-e még rája? // S ringatva gyermekét
Gyakorta sokat sír.

Messziről egy levél // Jön is valahára
S meg van írva rendben:
„Kő zuhant Mihályra, // Már el is temették
Messze idegenben.

THE LETTER¹⁵

Mihály Kovács is dead, // The mine killed him
Right when he diligently dug
Coal with his pick // The mine crushed down
Upon him.

His body was crushed, // In large red drops
His blood oozed forth
In a distant strange country, // In a foreign land,
Onto the black earth.

Back home on Hungarian soil // A wife is waiting
Curious what her husband writes.
Is he still thinking of her? // She rocks her child
While weeping often.

Finally from afar a letter // Arrives at last
Wherein her husbands fate is revealed.
“Rock plunged upon Mihály.// He is already buried
In a foreign land far away.”

¹⁵ Translated by Albert Tezla, *Hazardous Quest* 348; revised by the authors of this study.

In another of his relevant poems, “Téli hajnal a bányatelepen” [Winter Dawn on a Mining Place],¹⁶ Szécskay describes the misery of living in a remote mining place, similar to Van Meter and Jacob’s Creek, the site of the huge mine explosion in December of 1907.

TÉLI HAJNAL A BÁNYATELEPEN

Bús téli hajnalon száguldó szél zokog,
Fagyos, vak ablakon a tél bevigyorog.
S az öntudat didergő kínja int felém,
Hogy új nap fáradtság sorsom – az enyém.

[...]

Meghajszolt test! A létem rabszolgája, te,
Amely robotját kedvtelen szolgálja le,
Föl...! Föl: Elhagyni itt is éji vackodat,
Hadd lódítson tovább a fáradt gondolat.

Rivalg a bányakürt is már parancsolón,
S fények villannak máris az ablakon,
Melyek mögött is ott az utált ébredés,
Miben csak baj, megúnt teher a létezés.

Fanyar, imbolygó éji testszagok között
Verejtéktől nehéz ruhába öltözött
A bányász..., és új izzadásra készen áll,
S indul, mire a kürt másodszor is dudál.

És már megy is, szöges bakancs már kopog
A föld kemény fagyán, miként egy árva dob,
Jelezve a lét harcát, amely színtelen.
Óh, mert halál jele, ahol e harc pihen.
[...]

¹⁶ *Szécskay György harmadik könyve* [György Szécskay’s Third Book] (Pittsburgh: A Pittsburghi Magyar Társaskör Védnöksége, 1938) 95.

WINTER DAWN AT A MINING PLACE¹⁷

On a sorrowful winter dawn the wind weeps,
Winter looks in through the frozen, blind window.
The pain of my freezing conscience beckons me
That my fate is the pain of a new day.

[...]

Exhausted body! You slave of my existence
Who fulfills its robot obligations reluctantly.
Up...! And up! Leave your nightly den,
Let the tired thought carry you on.

The mine's horn has sounded off demandingly,
And already lights flicker through the windows,
Behind which there hides the detested waking,
Which makes existence into a detested disease.

Amidst tart and flickering body odors
He puts on his clothes made heavy by his sweat.
The miner is ready for new day of exhaustion,
And he starts amidst the second blow of the horn.

There he goes, as his spiked boots rap
On the frozen earth like a lonely drum,
Signaling the struggle for life, which is permanent.
The sign of death appears, where this struggle ends.
[...]

The same idea is expressed by Károly Rácz-Rónay in his lengthy ballad entitled "Megint a bánya" [Again the Mine],¹⁸ of which we quote here only a small initial segment:

¹⁷ Translated by the authors of this study.

¹⁸ Rickert 89-90.

MEGINT A BÁNYA

Megint a bánya! És megint a bánya!
 Irtózatossors, keserű kenyér!
 Nyitott sírjába életért leszállva,
 Nem tudjuk, a halál mely percben ér.
 Mondják is otthon az elköltözőnek:
 Testvér ne menj! Mert vissza sohse jönnek,
 Kik mennek a kőszén odúiba,
 Egy temető egész Amerika.

AGAIN THE MINE¹⁹

Again the mine! And the mine again!
 Horrible fate, bitter bread!
 Lowered into his grave to make a living,
 We don't know the moment Death will reach us.
 Back home they say to those departing:
 Brother, don't go! They never come back,
 Those who enter the hollows of the coal mines.
 To them, all of America is a graveyard.

György Kemény, who wrote the first significant poem about the Darr Mine tragedy of 1907, also authored the most influential ballad about the harsh life inside some of America's iron works. His "South Bend-i kőszőrűsök" [The Grinders of South Bend]²⁰ had such a frightening impact upon the immigrant workers that many of them left the South Bend grinding factory permanently. Moreover, the Verhovay Fraternal Association, the largest Hungarian fraternal society in America, refused to accept membership applications from anyone who continued to work in the South Bend factory. In this ballad, of which we are quoting two short segments, Kemény describes the lives of the Hungarian steel grinders of that city, who were slowly grinding themselves to death under the most inhuman conditions. While shaping the plowshares, they were burying their own souls into the steel. The completed plowshares never forget the misery of their makers. Upon going to work in the hands of farmers, they continued to recall repeatedly the misery and slow deaths of the grinders of South Bend.

¹⁹ Translated by Albert Tezla, *Hazardous Quest* 347; revised by the authors of this study.

²⁰ György Kemény, *Élet könyve—Book of Life, 1892-1942* (Detroit: Magyars in America, 1944) 157-58; and Rickert 85-87. The latter contains a very interesting note about the birth and impact of this ballad.

SOUTH BENDI KÖSZÖRŰSÖK

Szántóvető ekevasa
Csillog a napfényben,
Pacsirta zeng a magasban,
Napsugaras égen.
Szántóvető éles vasa
Mikor sorát írja:
Úgy tűnik fel olykor-olykor,
Mintha a vas sírna.

Nagy, fekete gyárban zuhog a kalapács,
Veszetten kattognak a rohanó gépek,
Véres verítékkal vonszolják a vasat
Megfeszített izmú, kormos képű népek.

[...]

Hatalmas köszörűk zúgnak, mint a sárkány,
Acélos ekevas csak úgy nyög alattuk.
Fojtó párázatban alakok mozognak,
De alig van egy kis emberi kép rajtuk.

Görnyedező háttal élezik a vasat,
Alig is felelnek már a magyar szóra.
Néma bűvöletben csak a vasat látják,
Mely tüzes szikrákban halál magvát szórja.

Jól megtermett ember fitymálgató daccal
Néz a lassan járó, de biztos halálba.
Mellette a másik nádként ingadozik.
Alig bírja szegényt megroggyanó lába.

Barátom megszólal: „Ez a szépszál ember
Nagyhamar olyan lesz, mint halvány szomszédja.
A fehér halálnak országa ez itten,
Hol a magyar ember csak szótalan préda.”

[...]

Tágas, téres rónaságon
Szántóvető ballag...
Barázdákba hasadozik
Előtte a parlag.
Miért sír az ekevasa?

Ne is kérdezd tőle!
 A South Bendi köszörűsök
 Lelke sír belőle.

THE GRINDERS OF SOUTH BEND²¹

The tiller's plowshare
 Glistens in the sun.
 The larks sing on high in the air,
 In the sundrenched sky
 When the plowman's sharp blade
 Plows its furrow.
 At times the blade
 Appears to be weeping.

In the murky factory hammer-blows descend,
 Busy machines clack ragingly
 Grim-faced men with bulging sinews
 Drag iron pieces, while drenched in bloody sweat.

[...]

Mighty grindstones whirl like dragons,
 Steel plowshares moan beneath them.
 Human forms move about in choking vapors,
 Betraying hardly any human features.

Backs bent, they sharpen the iron blades,
 Barely taking notice of Hungarian words.
 In moot bewitchment they only see the blades,
 Which sow death-seeds in their fiery sparks.

A brawny man looks scornfully defiant
 Upon the slow-moving, but certain death.
 Next to him, another worker wavers like a reed,
 Just barely held up by his staggering legs.

My friend speaks up: "This brawny fellow
 Will soon be like his staggering comrade.
 This is the land of the snow-white Death
 Where Hungarians are mere silent prey."

[...]

²¹ Translated by Albert Tezla, *Hazardous Quest* 255-57; revised by the authors of this study.

On wide and spacious plains
The plowman trudges along.
Furrows open up before him,
And so do the fallow lands.
Why weep the plowshares?
Don't you ever ask him.
Within those shares weep the souls
Of the South Bend grinders.

Kemény described the hard and exacting lives of the Hungarian immigrant workers in many of his other poems as well. Among them is his "Bluefieldi temetőn" [In the Cemetery of Bluefield],²² which describes the final resting place of those Hungarians who fell victim to the mines and blast furnaces of West Virginia.

BLUEFIELDI TEMETŐN

Bluefieldi temetőn sírgödröket ásnak
Hej, mennyi gödör kell sok szegény bányásznak,
Kiket haragjában megfojtott a bánya,
De magyarok voltak, hát senki sem bánja!

Kopasz dombok alatt, piszkos folyó mentén
Szórja lángcsóváit a vasgyár az égre.
Sűrű füstfelhővel beborítva minden.
Néha úgy tűnik föl, mintha a füst égne.

Zúg, morog, zakatol, dübörög rémesen,
Mintha a föld lelke ordítna belőle,
Hogy méhét meglopva, magzatát bedugták
Tüzes lángon sülő, vasolvasztó csöbe.

[...]

Nagyot durran egyszer, ágyúnál is jobban,
Mintha csak a vén föld kínjában köhögne.
Futnak az emberek, csengős kocsin jönnek,
S viszik a sok embert holtan vagy hörögve.
Elmúlik mihamar, tovább folyik minden,
Húzzák a munkások a rettentő jármot,
Mintha csak a halál nem is szedte volna
Rövid óra előtt a borzasztó vámot.

²² Kemény György, "Bluefieldi temetőn," in Rickert 84-85.

AT THE CEMETERY OF BLUEFIELD²³

A grave is being dug in the cemetery of Bluefield
 The poor miners need lots of such graves.
 They were suffocated by the mine, and because
 They were Hungarians, nobody cares.

Below the barren hills, along a dirty stream
 The factory spews its jet of flame toward the sky.
 Everything is covered with thick soot.
 At times it seems that the soot is burning.
 It rumbles, rattles and murmurs horribly,
 As if the soul of the very earth would cry out
 Believing its own child to have been stuck
 Into a sweltering tube, where it is being fried.

[...]

Suddenly an explosion, louder than a cannon,
 As if the earth would cough in its agony.
 Men are rushing forth, as do the ambulances,
 Collecting the corpses and the moaning dying.
 Suddenly, all is ended, and life resumes as before.
 The workers are dragging the horrible yoke,
 As if death would not even have appeared
 To take its share only an hour earlier.

We would like to end this brief exposé with a moving short poem written by György Szécskay, who bemoaned the passing of a simple day worker, who had fallen victim to his desire for a better life. Not even in death could they separate him from his shovel, which was his only possession and only permanent companion in life.

NAPSZÁMOS HALÁLÁRA
 (A pittsburghi tetemnézőben)

Tetemnéző hús márványasztalán
 Mogorva némán fekszik a halott.
 Arcán dacos leszámolás fagyva,
 Mít a haláltól – útra – ő kapott.

²³ Translated by the authors of this study.

Napszámban húzta az igát, míg élt,
S igában érte a végpillanat:
Lapátja, mit eldobni sem tudott,
Kihűlt, meredt kezében ott maradt.

Körülvéve a többi robotos,
Mikor a rögre holtan lebukott,
S kopott szerszám kezébe merevült,
Nyeléhez nyúlni egyik sem tudott.

Elhozta hát a hullaházba is,
Halálban is társa e lapát,
S a hulla itt is híven őrzi
Egyetlen megmaradt tulajdonát.

THE DEATH OF A DAY WORKER²⁴
(At the Pittsburgh Mortuary)

Upon the cold marble table of the mortuary
Lies silently the somber corpse.
His face depicts a frozen defiance
Given to him by death for his last journey.

While alive, he bore the yoke of a day worker,
And death also found him in that yoke.
His shovel, which he was unable to let go,
Remained in his cold and frozen hands.

Surrounded by his fellow laborers,
He fell upon the earth that he belabored.
The tattered shovel remained frozen in his hands,
And no one was able to remove it.

He brought it along to the mortuary,
For this shovel is his companion in death.
And the deceased guards it faithfully,
His only remaining possession in death.

²⁴ Translated by the authors of this study.

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE “VICTIMS OF AN EMPIRE”

Early 20th-century economic immigrants from the Austro–Hungarian Empire were to some degree victims of that empire, which had failed to provide for them the livelihood they would have needed to remain at home in the midst of their families, friends, and their customary way of life. Most of them started on their long journey to America only as “guest workers,” hoping to return to their homeland with sufficient funds to create an acceptable way of life for themselves and their families. Given the archaic economic, political, and social realities in their country, and the opportunities in the New World—in spite of the hardships they had to sustain during the initial years—if they survived these initial years, 75% of them stayed and transformed themselves into permanent settlers.

Naturally, they suffered from homesickness, and for this reason they all tried to recreate the atmosphere of their native villages in their new country. Most of them also wanted to be buried with Hungarian soil above their hearts. In the course of time, however, an increasing number of them forsook even this ritual. They did so to a large degree because they came to conclude that their old country refused to reciprocate their love and attachment.

As described in 1908 by a reporter of the socialist émigré newspaper *Népakarat* [People’s Will], “about the Hungarian soil which was placed on their bodies upon death, these people only knew that it produced crops for aristocrats, bishops, and the military cast, but not for the poor [...]. They emigrated to America to escape famine [...]. Many of them perished amidst horrible sufferings for the daily wage that the ‘sweet homeland’ was unable to provide for them [...]. Let the native soil therefore remain with those who even today make merry and engage in drunken revelry from the income this soil produces. That handful of [Hungarian] soil would only remind the immigrants that even this fistful was given to them only after the American mines have collapsed on top of them, and the fire of the methane gas in the mines had burned them to death.”²⁵

There is much to be said for the above statement. And one is not far from the truth, when one concludes that these early-20th-century immigrants from the Austro–Hungarian Empire were in fact victims of that same empire. It is too bad that those states that took its place after World War I represented very little improvement over the defunct Austro–Hungarian Empire. At the same time, they increased the inter-ethnic rivalry and brought about the Balkanization of Central Europe.

²⁵ “Ne bánstuk a halottakat” [Let Us Not Bother the Dead], in *Népakarat*, 6. évf., 1908. február 18; also quoted in Tezla, *Valahol túl...* 129.

DISSIMULATION IN JANE AUSTEN'S *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*

ILDIKÓ KOCSIS

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper I am going to investigate the question whether Jane Austen shares Mary Wollstonecraft's or William Godwin's opinions about dissimulation, falsehood, and secrets in her most widely read novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. While there is no explicit reference to either Wollstonecraft's or Godwin's works in Austen's novels, it is plausible that she was familiar with their ideas. In all probability she read Jane West and Fanny Burney (Rogers lxx), both of whom cited Wollstonecraft in their works, and in one of her letters Austen makes a passing reference to Godwin. Giving an account of the visit of the Pickfords in Bath in a letter dated 21 May 1801 and addressed to Cassandra, she describes one of the men in the family as follows: "he is as raffish in his appearance as I would wish every disciple of Godwin to be" (*Letters* 61).

In her "'Professed Enemies of Politeness': Sincerity and the Problem of Gender in Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* and Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*," Jenny Davidson highlights the main differences between Godwin's and Wollstonecraft's opinion about politeness and insincerity. Davidson concludes that if Wollstonecraft argues that dissimulation is a female attribute first of all, in Godwin's opinion insincerity is primarily determined by class rather than gender relations, and adds that it might deepen class differences (599-600). Davidson argues that Wollstonecraft considers dissimulation "a specifically female problem" in her *Vindication* and emphasizes that modesty is the "embodiment of insincerity," and identifies femininity as "deceptiveness," calling for a "revolution in female manners" (599). Wollstonecraft describes two kinds of modesty: the first "elicits respect" from both men and women, while the other is false modesty, causing women to deceive both themselves and others; she calls attention to the difference between the two forms of modesty, wishing that women abandoned the latter (611-12). She also attacks the "female chastity" formed by conduct books and describes it as a "system of dissimulation," arguing that "chivalry," "modesty," and "gallantry" have transformed women into "disgusting hypocrites" (612). If Wollstonecraft identifies politeness as a tool particularly used to oppress women, in Godwin's opinion insincerity generally restrains social reform and political revolution, and he argues that "absolute freedom in the political sphere" can only be achieved if reserve completely ceases (600). Godwin argues that insincerity is as damaging as inequality, and emphasizes that both equality and sincerity are important to the well-being of mankind; he is also disgusted by all kinds of insincerity, including oaths used by the government to enforce "religious and political conformity"

(600-601). Godwin draws on Kant's opinion that we should always avoid lying, because it is our absolute obligation to tell the truth; but while in Kant's view a lie harms the other person, Godwin believes that a liar primarily harms himself (603).

Concealment of truth and consciously employed falsehood—attacked by both Wollstonecraft and Godwin but for different reasons—are central issues in *Pride and Prejudice*. Hiding and revealing secrets has an utmost importance in the development of the story, and makes a great impact on the fates of the characters. Such an important misunderstanding is caused by Darcy, who conceals Jane Bennet's presence in London from Bingley. Darcy says he has many reasons but first and foremost he is not sure about Jane's love for his friend. Darcy's doubt is caused again by concealment, namely, that Jane hides her own feelings from Bingley and others. Generally speaking, *Pride and Prejudice* is a novel of dissimulation, in which the concealment of truth causes the main conflicts. As the story unfolds, the secrets and lies are discovered, and the characters become aware that one should not always rely on their first impressions.

I

Wollstonecraft was interested mostly in the lives of upper-middle class women. She had experiences about the female gentility she criticized, as her family had connections with such families, and she even worked for genteel women. But the difference between Austen and Wollstonecraft is that while Wollstonecraft knew the genteel world as an outsider, Austen was a part of it, and she could observe the "rituals and ceremonies" of this class "as an insider, as a member and participant" (Roberts 157). Though at the time of writing her novels she was living in a relatively humble position, she was, indeed, born into an "atmosphere of respectability" (Roberts 157). She lived with her widowed mother and unmarried sister in a house where they were hosted by her brother, and she could get the best insight into genteel society when they visited her brother's family at his estate. All in all, Austen was in a better position than Wollstonecraft to observe "the finely nuanced social distinctions around her" (Copeland 115).

Austen's novel reveals that much depends on which social class someone belongs to and that people are not always like what they appear to be. A relevant character to demonstrate that is Mr. Collins, a caricature of the worldly clergyman, who turns out to be a sycophant and social climber: "His style, in conversation and in his letters, exposes him as a pretentious, hypocritical fool, who delights us by combining an extravagant sycophancy towards Lady Catherine with supreme self-importance" (Wilson 69). Collins thinks his task is to give moral lessons to young girls especially, and he reads from Fordyce's *Sermons to Young Women* for the Bennet girls while staying at Longbourn. Claudia L. Johnson cites Fordyce as saying that "'amiable reserve'" should be commended and "women's primary desire and duty is to please men, especially through the affectation of modesty [...]" (76). It is in a similar vein that after Lydia's elopement Collins advises Mr. Bennet "to throw off your unworthy child from your affection for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own heinous offence" (*PP* 282). This letter is that of a "Job's comforter," and it can be seen as a parody of the prodigal son's parable. On the surface, Collins

is giving consolation in hard times, but consolation disguises an expression of his *Schadenfreude* and the satisfaction felt over his not being involved in that shame.

Mr. Bennet's reply is very short, and he only writes back to Collins after Elizabeth confesses to him her feelings towards Darcy. The family problems having been solved, Mr. Bennet, supposedly, has no need to cover his judgment of Collins's character. He seems to write to Collins what he really thinks, asking him to "[c]onsole Lady Catherine as well as you can. But if I were you, I would stand by the nephew. He has more to give" (*PP* 362). Mr. Bennet, in general, is a character who appears to openly tell his opinion, especially when his intellectually shallow wife is concerned. In the case of Mr. Collins, however, he also chooses to employ dissimulation when he decides on not exposing the truth about Darcy settling Lydia's marriage. Though he is happy about marrying off three of his daughters, he might seem to be bearing in mind that Collins remains the lawful inheritor of the Bennet family estate.

At the beginning of the novel, there is another example for Mr. Bennet's dissimulation. After Collins's first visit, Mr. Bennet advises him to "[r]isk any thing rather than [Lady Catherine's] displeasure; and if you find it likely to be raised by your coming to us again, which I think exceedingly probable, stay quietly at home, and be satisfied that we shall take no offence" (*PP* 121). Of course, Mr. Bennet drops the hint that he does not wish Collins to visit them again. An apparently straightforward man, even Mr. Bennet is likely to employ indirect hints, which might also be seen as a form of dissimulation.

Though there are comparatively few examples of men concealing the truth from other men in *Pride and Prejudice*, these quite fundamentally influence the development of the story. Some of these lies are told by Mr. Darcy—a man apparently always telling his mind, even if he hurts others. Unlike Collins, he appears to be a stuffy, solemn, and proud man, but, like Collins, he believes that he is authorized to interfere with the private lives of other people. The first falsehood Darcy employs is aimed to separate Bingley from Miss Jane Bennet by assuring his friend about Jane's indifference towards him. At first, when Jane's feelings are not openly expressed, Darcy might reasonably distrust her love, but after Elizabeth gives him assurance about her sister's feelings, he knowingly conceals that information from Bingley. Darcy assumes some degree of responsibility when he confesses this to Elizabeth in a letter, but in his own opinion his actions are pardonable. Later, though, he does feel remorse for acting insincerely: "There is but one part of my conduct in the whole affair, on which I do not reflect with satisfaction, it is that I condescended to adopt the measures of art so far as to conceal from him your sister's being in town" (*PP* 194).

There is another key detail that Mr. Darcy hides from Bingley and that he later discloses to Elizabeth. Darcy wants to conceal his sister's, Miss Darcy's, meditated elopement with Wickham, because his future plan is to marry her off to Bingley. This plan and the assumption that Jane does not return Bingley's affections make Darcy decide on interfering. Carrying out his plan does not seem very difficult, as Bingley's nature is "'unaffectedly modest' and he is passive and acted upon, without ever acting himself" (Wilson 66).

The last thing that Darcy keeps secret from the Bennet family, but especially from Elizabeth and Mr. Bennet, is his role in Lydia and Wickham's marriage. First, it is told to the Bennets that Mr. Gardiner paid off Wickham's debts and arranged the marriage, but Lydia lets out the secret that Darcy attended the wedding ceremony. Elizabeth writes to her aunt, requesting her to reveal the truth. Mrs. Gardiner admits that it was Mr. Darcy who

tried to find the couple and persuade Lydia to go back to her family. It was also Darcy who paid off Wickham's debts and arranged the marriage. Though the whole family is involved in this secret, it is Mr. Bennet who gets to know the truth last. He spends several days in London, trying to track down his daughter, and after a few days he returns home. Though he appears to take responsibility for what happened to Lydia, in actual fact he is "aware of his limited capacity to face up to it properly" (Wilson 44). Darcy's chief reason to aid the Bennets is, of course, his love for Elizabeth. When Elizabeth confesses to her father that she too loves Darcy and is engaged to him, Mr. Bennet simply does not believe her; that's why she decides to disclose the truth about Darcy's part in Wickham and Lydia's marriage. Mr. Bennet's reaction is quite surprising: "I shall offer to pay him to-morrow; he will rant and storm about his love for you, and there will be an end of the matter" (*PP* 357). The real Mr. Bennet is not the likable, amusing, and straightforward character he appears to be at first. He is far from being overwhelmed by a sense of guilt over Lydia's shame and is happy to avoid financial responsibility. His intended offer to pay Mr. Darcy would be insincere, because he knows he does not command the economic means to do so. Darcy would know that too, and his anticipated "rant[ing] and storm[ing]" would be, in this context, just as disingenuous.

Clearly, dissimulation is not a problem occurring primarily among women, as Wollstonecraft suggests. On occasion, men also choose to conceal their real feelings and the real circumstances. The male characters examined above have all sorts of different reasons for not telling the truth: Collins tries to play the role of the charitable clergyman; Mr. Bennet wants to hide his opinion about Collins because his family's future depends on the latter; and Darcy thinks he is entitled to supervise his friend's love life. At this point, Godwin's view that dissimulation and insincerity are not a problem of gender but of class relations seems much more plausible. In the situations cited above, men employ falsehood and conceal the truth mainly because of social and economic differences: Collins uses his ecclesiastic authority to increase his social influence; Darcy wants to prevent Bingley's marriage partly because of the Bennets' relatively lower economic prestige and partly to find a moneyed husband for his sister; and Mr. Bennet is keen to maintain an appearance of social superiority without the matching financial background.

II

According to Edward Ahearn, we can speak about four leading social classes in Austen's period: the aristocracy (represented by Lady Catherine de Bourgh or Mr. Darcy); the gentry (including the Bennets); the "pseudogentry" or the "nonlanded," including lawyers, clergymen, and businessmen (such as Mr. Collins); and the commercial class—the Gardiners (399). In the eighteenth century, the position of women radically changed due to the expansion of capitalist industry. Women became isolated from public business and their role was confined to the private world of their home. The "middling-sort" of society also wanted to take part in the cultural life of its social superior, where women had never worked. This share in gentry culture is called gentility (Irvine 7-8).

Pride and Prejudice gives an insight into this genteel female life. Young women are taught from conduct books and their favorite activities are attending balls and visiting

neighbors. The most appropriate examples for this kind of women are Charlotte Bingley, and Lydia and Kitty Bennet. However, from the example of the heroine, Elizabeth Bennet, we can see that young women are not necessarily selfish or intellectually shallow.

Austen introduces Miss Bingley and Mrs. Hurst, who almost always spend time together, and are characterized as “very fine ladies; not deficient in good humour when they were pleased, nor in the power of being agreeable where they chose it; but proud and conceited” (*PP* 17). They are perfect examples of propertied women who enjoy “claiming social superiority by laughing at deviations from strict propriety” (Meyer Spacks 73). But they are the kind of ladies who do not express their real opinion in public in order to keep the appearance of politeness. They rather choose dissimulation, as they do with Jane Bennet. During her stay at Netherfield because of her cold, they appear to be worried about her health—but in her presence only. Later, when Jane is staying in London, Miss Bingley only visits her because she does not want to seem ill-mannered. Just as she keeps her real opinion of the Bennets secret, she also conceals the fact that their family fortune comes from trade. Miss Bingley wants to marry Mr. Darcy, and it is only when she recognizes Elizabeth as her potential rival that she tries to express her superiority over Elizabeth in Darcy's presence, criticizing Elizabeth behind her back in an unseemly fashion.

An example for aristocratic propertied women is Lady Catherine. She is a caricature of the aristocratic class and is someone who “likes to have the distinction of rank preserved” (*PP* 158). In one of the most notably characteristic episodes, she offers an opportunity for Elizabeth to practice the piano. Her proposal seems to be generous, but when she adds that in Mrs. Jenkinson's room “she would be in nobody's way” (*PP* 169), it sounds not only sarcastic but is also indicative of the supposedly pronounced social gap between her and the Bennet family.

The main difference between Miss Bingley and Lady Catherine is that while the former chooses dissimulation to hide her real opinion, Lady Catherine behaves straightforwardly. She emphasizes this aspect several times, for example, when she tells Elizabeth: “You know I always speak my mind” (*PP* 205). She can be described as a snob, “incapable of perceiving human merit when class inferiority is present” (Mellor 62). She thinks that she can do anything just because she has money and influence. “She upholds arranged marriages, superior breeding and unlimited snobbery” (Wilson 69). When she visits Elizabeth to make sure of Darcy's proposal, Lady Catherine continuously emphasizes her superiority, and she even tries to threaten her. But, with perhaps an ironic overtone, Elizabeth declares that “I do not pretend to possess equal frankness with your ladyship” (*PP* 335).

Elizabeth has a very special relationship with her sister Jane, but we cannot say that they are always sincere with each other. Jane has a simple nature, and, occasionally, she even seems to be naive. In Elizabeth's opinion, it is only Jane who can “take the good of every body's character and make it still better, and say nothing of the bad” (*PP* 17). That is why it is so hard for Jane to identify Miss Bingley's hidden intention to marry Darcy. Jane has a good opinion of her, and even after Miss Bingley's visit in London, she expresses her opinion very carefully: “If I weren't afraid of judging harshly...” (*PP* 146). But when Jane begins to recognize Caroline Bingley's real nature, she writes in a letter to Elizabeth: “there is a strong appearance of duplicity in all this” (*PP* 146).

However, in some cases Elizabeth chooses to hide information from Jane. She does that because she does not want Jane to prejudge Darcy, for instance, when she con-

ceals Darcy's interference into Jane and Bingley's relationship. Elizabeth explains the cause of her secrecy with the fact that "[s]he had been unwilling to mention Bingley; and the unsettled state of her own feelings had made her equally avoid the name of his friend" (*PP* 354).

There is one cardinal aspect of their lives that both girls keep secret from each other: their own feelings. Elizabeth confesses her love for Darcy only when they are engaged. After Bingley's move to London Jane also tries to conceal, and even suppress, her feelings toward him. She tries to persuade Elizabeth about the fact that she does not love him any more. Just as Elizabeth does not believe her, so does Jane not believe that her sister and Darcy are going to get married. Though they might conceal their true feelings from each other, they discuss almost everything else. They are both very worried about Lydia's elopement, for which they blame themselves, because in this case they concealed something together: they had known about Wickham's past, but they did not want to expose him.

Besides her sister Jane, Elizabeth has a friend who is very important to her: Charlotte Lucas. They both criticize genteel society, but there is one point in which they absolutely differ. Elizabeth could never imagine marrying a man whom she does not love. But Charlotte's opinion is that "it is better to know as little as possible of the defects of the person with whom you are to pass your life" (*PP* 24). She thinks that marriage is the "pleasantest preservative from want" and that it is the "only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune" (*PP* 24). Although Elizabeth is familiar with Charlotte's views on marriage (which were, in all probability, universally shared by young genteel women and their social environment), she cannot believe that Charlotte is going to marry Collins. While Elizabeth is convinced that the clergyman is a caricature and a fool, she believes that Charlotte is a clever and intelligent woman, and so she must be conscious of a future where she "will have to suppress all these qualities that constitute her identity and hypocritically pretend affection and respect for a husband she despises" (Wilson 70).

The letters exchanged between Elizabeth and Charlotte after the marriage reveal that their relationship changed a lot. In this relationship, Charlotte is the one who conceals the truth from Elizabeth. In her letters, she mentions only those things which she can praise. She writes about their house, the visits to Lady Catherine at Rosings, and the garden, but she is silent on her marriage. Elizabeth is intelligent enough to find out its reason, and when she visits them along with Charlotte's family, she can see it with her own eyes. Charlotte pretends to be happy, but in fact she feels lonely. If she is content with her life, it is not because of her husband. She has got everything she ever wanted: independence, a stable financial situation, a nice house, but she did not find true love. Elizabeth notices this, and it gives her the feeling that Charlotte is not honest with her. Charlotte does not dare to admit that her opinion about marriage was not right. They continue to write to each other regularly, but their correspondence is not as unreserved as it was (*PP* 144).

Elizabeth spends a lot of time with the Gardiners, who visit the Bennets regularly and also get involved in settling Lydia's elopement. There is one circumstance, though, that they are not aware of. Mrs. Gardiner is especially interested in what kind of relationship exists between Elizabeth and Darcy: "Elizabeth was longing to know what Mrs. Gardiner thought of him, and Mrs. Gardiner would have been highly gratified by her niece's beginning the subject" (*PP* 259). But Elizabeth conceals information before the Gardiners, and so she must find an excuse when she does not wish to visit Pemberley. She says she is "tired

of great houses" (*PP* 232), but the real reason is that she does not wish to meet Mr. Darcy.

The Gardiners have a large impact on the development of the story. Mr. Gardiner helps Mr. Bennet find Lydia in London, and he is said to be the person who arranged Lydia and Wickham's marriage. It is also kept secret that it was Darcy who saved Lydia from shame. While Lydia is chattering about their marriage, she reveals that Darcy, too, attended the wedding ceremony. So the secret is partly disclosed by Lydia, but it is Mrs. Gardiner who reveals the whole story and Darcy's role in it.

If Lydia cannot keep a secret, neither can Kitty. When the family is informed about Lydia's elopement, Kitty does not seem to be surprised, because she knew about the plans. The two girls are similar to their mother in not being always aware of what they are saying. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are occasions when Elizabeth decides to give a "little falsehood" (*PP* 339) to her mother.

Mrs. Reynolds, the housekeeper at Pemberley, appears only for a short time but has an impact on the outcome of the story. She has known Darcy since his childhood, and she tells Elizabeth and the Gardiners the true version about Darcy and Wickham's past. It is, surely, a turning-point in the novel, because the old lady's credibility assures Elizabeth about Darcy's integrity and trustworthiness.

At first sight, Austen's opinion of dissimulation and insincerity among women can be properly described in Godwin's terms again. The female characters here presented employ falsehood for different reasons. Dissimulation is particularly characteristic of Caroline Bingley, who is similar to Mr. Collins in pretending to be someone else than she really is. She hides her real opinions in order to seem kind and well-behaved. She is often insincere, and criticizes people who are in a lower social position behind their backs. She does that to emphasize her—real or perceived—social superiority, providing a very appropriate example for Godwin's ideas. Similarly, for Lady Catherine, the preservation of rank is of utmost importance, and she might be similar to Darcy, who thinks that it is his privilege to always tell the truth, even when it hurts people. We cannot properly speak about dissimulation in Jane and Elizabeth Bennet's case, though. Although they hide information from each other, they do that because they want to prevent causing grief and disappointment to each other. In their situation, acts of concealing the truth are supposed to signify on the plot level how much they care about each other.

III

In this part I examine how and why women hide things from men in the novel. The first case to describe is the marriage between Charlotte Lucas and Mr. Collins. Through this marriage, Charlotte expects to obtain financial security, while Collins tries to fulfill Lady Catherine's instructions to find an appropriate wife. They both conceal not only their real feelings but also their motivations. "Mr. Collins to be sure was neither sensible nor agreeable; his society was irksome, and his attachment to her imaginary" (*PP* 120)—though this opinion is not revealed directly by either Elizabeth or Charlotte, they both know that it is a reality.

Collins proposes to Charlotte Lucas after having been rejected by Elizabeth. He simply cannot believe that Elizabeth does not want to marry him, although she expresses her opinion quite clearly: "I am perfectly serious in my refusal,—you could not make *me* happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make *you* so" (*PP* 105). At this point Elizabeth does not care about good manners any more. While Collins's proposal to Elizabeth and the way he takes her refusal illustrates his self-conceit, his surprise is also quite understandable in that historical and social context. Several young women would have accepted his offer because of his potentially good financial situation as the lawful inheritor of the Longbourne estate and a privileged servant of Lady Catherine. Charlotte does, indeed, choose to marry him in order to gain independence and ensure her future.

Charlotte's example gives an insight into the marriage market of the age. The main goal of young genteel women was to find a rich man to marry in order to occupy a respected social position and to live in financial security. Right at the beginning of the novel, the narrator states that "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife" (*PP* 5). With Austen's typical irony, the sentence refers to young girls who want a future husband with a large fortune, and characterizes the aims of young women at that time (Van Ghent 301). Austen delicately criticized female genteel life along with its rituals and ceremonies. Though she had been part of this world once, when she was older she was able to regard it from an outsider's perspective. Her social position lent her an advantage "in describing the perturbations of love. She sat apart on her rocky tower, and watched the poor souls struggling in the waves beneath" (Simpson 294).

Austen authentically presents the pressures of the "marriage market" of the eighteenth century, because she looks at it from the women's point of view. A great problem was that competition among young girls could be very ruthless. Once they reached a certain age, they had less chance for finding an appropriate man in the marriage market. If Austen could live, for better or worse, without a husband, Charlotte Lucas begins to scale down her expectations in order to get married, only because living with her family after a certain age was a shame for a girl (cf. Roberts 161-73). As Austen writes in a letter dated 13 March 1816 to her niece, Fanny Knight: "Single women have a dreadful propensity for being poor, which is one very strong argument in favour of matrimony" (*Letters* xxxiv).

The marriage market was a kind of market where there were also brokers. A very good example is Mrs. Bennet, who has five daughters, and whose main goal is to find a rich husband for each. She is a very resolved marriage broker, and she does not hesitate even to use falsehood to reach her goals. When Jane is ill and stays at Netherfield, Mrs. Bennet exaggerates Jane's bad condition so as to get her to stay there as long as possible. On the other hand, Collins's proposal to Elizabeth illustrates Mrs. Bennet's unsettled opinion. After Collins's letter to the Bennet family, she says how much she hates the clergyman. However, after recognizing that with marrying off one of her daughters the family could be rescued from losing their estate, she encourages Collins to propose to Elizabeth.

Mrs. Bennet does not hesitate to give hints in other situations, such as when she criticizes Darcy's self-importance and pride. She is speaking about William Lucas, whom she describes as a real gentleman, and at that point she comments, while looking at Darcy, on "those persons who fancy themselves very important and never open their mouth" (*PP*

43). Though she does not mention his name, it is absolutely clear that this statement is being asserted to criticize Darcy. Money, therefore, does not seem to be the single most important factor in evaluating a potential husband's worth. Darcy, who has a large fortune, is described by Mrs. Bennet as "the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world" (PP 13), exactly because he refuses to recognize the Bennet girls as potential commodities for which he could—and *should*, in Mrs. Bennet's view—bid in the marriage market. At the end of the novel, her opinion changes about him. When Elizabeth speaks to her about their engagement, Darcy begins to appear a handsome and charming man in Mrs. Bennet's eyes. She recognizes that he is even richer than Bingley, and she immediately begins to speak about the luxury in which Elizabeth is going to live: "How rich and how great you will be! What pin-money, what jewels, what carriages you will have!" (PP 357)

Like her mother, Elizabeth also has a very negative opinion about Darcy in the first half of the novel. Partly, that is why she rejects his first proposal in very vehement terms: "I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry" (PP 188). She tells him plainly what she thinks of him: she describes him as a selfish, arrogant, and conceited man who never cares about other people's feelings.

Darcy falls in love with Elizabeth, because she is so different from the other girls. She is described as having "a lively, playful disposition" (PP 14), and she represents Austen's ideas about genteel manners. Elizabeth holds ceremonies and rituals in low regard, and she pays no attention to the skills and accomplishments taught to young women. Instead, she spends time with reading to broaden her mind, and her view on the accomplished woman is the same as that of Darcy, who also emphasizes the importance of extensive reading.

The reader learns that Elizabeth's love for Darcy develops gradually. As the story gets complicated, it becomes clear to Elizabeth that she must keep her feelings secret. On the one hand, she is not quite sure about her own feelings, and on the other hand, she fears that after rejecting him, Darcy's love for her is fading away. She decides to conceal her feelings from everyone—even from her family, including Jane. That is why it is so painful for her when Mr. Bennet invites her to laugh with him over the letter in which Collins suggests that Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy might soon get married. Her father does not know her feelings, and he says things which hurt Elizabeth. However, she cannot disclose the truth to her father at this point, because she is not sure about Darcy's feelings. Therefore, she must laugh when she would rather cry: "Her father has most cruelly mortified her, by what he said of Mr. Darcy's indifference" (PP 344).

Elizabeth's opinion about Darcy changes for different reasons. One is that she comes to understand Wickham's real character once his past is revealed to her. At the beginning, Elizabeth seems to show much interest in Wickham, because of his „handsome looks, good physique and conversational charm to manipulate everyone he comes in contact with" (Wilson 71). As Wickham's story about his past gradually turns out to be a lie, Elizabeth begins to recognize Darcy's real nature. These two men are in sharp contrast with each other, because Darcy has "all the goodness," while Wickham has only "all the appearance of it" (PP 217). The reason why Elizabeth does not hesitate to drop Wickham hints at the fact that she already knows the truth about his past is because she feels deceived and aggrieved. When they meet at a ball, Wickham wants to "engage her on the old subject of

his grievances,” but Elizabeth, knowing everything about his past, is “in no humour to indulge him” (PP 226).

Elizabeth’s opinion about Darcy changes in the opposite way when she begins to realize that he is not the proud and conceited man whom he seemed to be at first. In spite of her initial dislike of Darcy, she remains honest with him throughout. Later, when she discovers that her feelings toward him have changed, she reveals to him the “dreadful news” (PP 263) about Lydia’s elopement. She even confesses to Darcy that she knew about Wickham’s past, but she concealed it from her family in order to avoid Wickham’s humiliation. It is at this point that Elizabeth shares her most intimate secrets with Darcy. However, later on she regrets that “from the distress of the moment” (PP 294) she did not hide this information. Lydia and Wickham get married, and the “unfavourable beginning” should have been concealed “from all those who were not immediately on the spot” (PP 295).

Elizabeth and Darcy’s relationship provides an example for what Wollstonecraft thinks of the ideal marriage. In her *Vindication*, she argues that marriage should be based on “rational love” rather than “erotic passion or sexual desire” (Mellor 34). In other words, mutual understanding and respect between husband and wife should be the key to a happy marriage. We can find two more marriages in *Pride and Prejudice* which fit this description: those between Jane and Bingley, and Mrs. and Mr. Gardiner. Other marriages are based on either passing fancy (as in the case of Wickham and Lydia, and even Mr. and Mrs. Bennet) or financial considerations (Charlotte Lucas and Collins). Based on how these relationships are presented, the reader is likely to draw the conclusion that these latter types of marriage were common in the eighteenth century, and, as a result, married women were “typically pathetic and often unpleasant, as if resentful and defensive over their situation but without understanding why” (Roberts 166).

Though Elizabeth and Darcy’s marriage is based on love, mutual understanding, and intellectual equality, Austen emphasizes that a woman must show gratitude to her husband, due to her economically subordinated status. It has been observed that in Austen’s opinion Elizabeth should be grateful to Darcy for rescuing her from “the financial deprivations of spinsterhood” (Mellor 55). That can be the one of the reasons why she refrains from using her otherwise almost habitually ironic tone when she discusses Bingley’s nature with Darcy: “Elizabeth longed to observe that Mr. Bingley had been a most delightful friend; so easily guided that his worth was invaluable: but she checked herself. She remembered that he had yet to learn to be laughed at; and it was rather too early to begin” (PP 351). Elizabeth and Darcy are never going to be equal in marriage, because, financially speaking, Elizabeth will always remain dependent on him. On the last page of the novel, the reader is informed that Elizabeth often refuses to send money to Lydia, or to help place Wickham at the court, since she only has a small personal income. This might also account for what Georgiana Darcy learns about marriage via Elizabeth’s relationship with her brother: “By Elizabeth’s instructions she began to comprehend that a woman may take liberties with her husband, which a brother will not always allow in a sister more than ten years younger than himself” (PP 366-67). So, while Elizabeth, on occasion, might be free to “take liberties” with him, Darcy remains the unequivocal master of Pemberley, and should he wish to do so, he “still has the power not to allow either his sister or his wife to ‘take liberties’ with him” (Mellor 57).

In conclusion, because of the general fact that eighteenth-century marriages as described in Austen's novel were based on the woman's sacrifice of self, women often had to hide their feelings and opinions: first, to remain a desirable commodity on the marriage market, and later, not to jeopardize their economically dependent position beside their husbands. In the novel, Elizabeth's character represents a—however slight—deviation from the norm. Unlike most other female characters in the novel, she usually tells the truth in her relationship with her father and her future husband, while, more typical of contemporary female behavior, at certain times she prefers to hide her feelings and opinions. And though her admittance of Lydia's elopement in front of Darcy strengthens their long-term relationship, it must be less out of the ordinary when Elizabeth's preliminary expression of her anxieties felt over the possibility of that moral catastrophe is not at all taken seriously by a father who is otherwise uncommonly tolerant and supportive towards his daughter. The novel seems to suggest that duplicity is the norm in male-female relationships: Mrs. Bennet, for example, not long after having expressed her hate toward Collins, encourages him to marry one of her daughters. In an opposite case, her negative opinion of Darcy immediately fades away as she realizes that her daughter is going to join him in a financially advantageous marriage. It is similar to what Charlotte Lucas does to Collins when she pretends to love him in order to gain social position, and she sacrifices her happiness in order to ensure her future financial security.

IV

In this part, I examine in what ways and to what extent men act insincerely with women, also paying attention to the influence of social status on men's behavior.

The falsehood which has the greatest impact on the development of the story is told by Wickham. His lies about his and Darcy's common past determine the way everyone thinks about them both. As his lies are gradually uncovered, Darcy's real character is revealed to Elizabeth. When Darcy first meets Elizabeth at the Meryton ball, he expresses his contempt for the company first, and then he insults her by telling Bingley that "She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt me" (*PP* 13). Elizabeth overhears this remark, which establishes her negative opinion about him. Despite the negative opinion expressed openly about Elizabeth, Darcy appears to begin to feel something for her at that point. When she and her sister leave Netherfield after Jane's recovery from cold, he admits that "she attracted him more than he liked" (*PP* 59). But, first, he tries to suppress *and* hide his feelings because there is a social and financial gap between them. Things get more complicated with Wickham's appearance. He is described as a man who has "all the best part of beauty, a fine countenance, a good figure, and very pleasing address" (*PP* 71). He can easily manipulate everyone he comes into contact with—especially the young ladies, not excluding Elizabeth. When he gives her an account of his common past with Darcy, he refers to his feelings about Darcy as "a sense of very great ill usage, and most painful regrets at his being what he is" (*PP* 77). It not only strengthens Elizabeth's negative opinion of Darcy, but she also begins to feel sorry for Wickham.

The next piece of information which increases Elizabeth's dislike of Darcy is revealed by Colonel Fitzwilliam. As they are walking together, Fitzwilliam begins to speak

about Darcy, who “congratulated himself on having lately saved a friend from the inconveniences of a most imprudent marriage” (*PP* 181). Though Fitzwilliam does not name names, it is absolutely clear for Elizabeth that he is speaking about Jane and Bingley. When she asks him about Darcy’s reasons for his interference, Fitzwilliam tells her that “there were some very strong objections against the lady” (*PP* 181). In the novel, Fitzwilliam’s function is similar to that of Mrs. Reynolds, in that both appear for a short time in the story, although both have very important roles in its development. While Mrs. Reynolds intentionally ensures Elizabeth about Darcy’s being a good person, Colonel Fitzwilliam unintentionally does the opposite. Though unwittingly, he reveals to her a secret which hurts both her pride and her feelings.

Not long after this episode, Darcy proposes to Elizabeth. He confesses to her that “in vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you” (*PP* 185). In Wilson’s view, Darcy’s proposal is “flawed with misgivings he expresses about the sociopinional inferiority of her connections and by the honour he imagines he is conferring upon her” (35). Though his confession is meant to be honest, it insults Elizabeth’s social pride, while the proposal itself is made at the worst time possible.

After being rejected, Darcy writes a letter to Elizabeth in which he uncovers the motives behind everything he has done. His letter is especially detailed on two subjects: on the one hand, he admits his interference with Bingley and Jane—for which he also describes his reasons—and on the other hand, he discloses what is supposed to be accepted, on the plot level, as the real story of his common past with Wickham. His first reason for interference was the social position of Jane’s family. Second, he admits his assuring Bingley of Jane’s indifference, because he thought that Jane showed his friend no “symptom of peculiar regard” (*PP* 192), and so he could easily persuade Bingley not to return to Hertfordshire. Third, he admits that he concealed from Bingley Jane’s presence in London, of which he does not think with much satisfaction. Though he confesses everything he did to separate Jane and Bingley, he does not apologize. On the contrary, he argues that “perhaps this concealment, this disguise, was beneath me.—It is done, however, and it was done for the best” (*PP* 194). It is the fact that he does not feel remorse which makes Elizabeth angry. At the same time, on re-reading the letter, Elizabeth must gradually recognize the truth behind what Darcy says about her family. Similarly, when she recalls Charlotte’s opinion about Jane’s modesty—that she should express her feelings more openly—she has to acknowledge that Darcy could fairly interpret Jane’s modesty as indifference.

The other main topic in Darcy’s letter concerns Wickham’s past, and he refers to Colonel Fitzwilliam as someone who can confirm his words. In Susan Morgan’s interpretation, Wickham’s character was created to show Elizabeth’s central moral weakness: she sees the world as a game, and she cannot imagine “that anything could be expected of her” (343). She is not presented to be as silly as Lydia or Kitty, and she believes Wickham only because “there was truth in his looks” (*PP* 85). In other words, he is “an embodiment of favourable but misleading impressions” (Wilson 70).

Darcy’s letter is the novel’s turning point for several reasons: the most important being, in the present context, that in the following episodes he and Elizabeth share their secrets with each other—at least to a degree. One example is when Darcy gives her an account of “Miss Darcy’s meditated elopement” (*PP* 257). This information was carefully

kept secret, especially from Bingley. Although it is not explicitly phrased, Elizabeth is clever enough to recognize that Darcy left it undisclosed in front of his friend because he was planning to marry off his sister to Bingley. Though Darcy does not speak about it openly, this plan was, surely, an important motivation behind his attempt at separating Jane from Bingley.

If Darcy is ready to disclose, at least partially, his secret about his sister's past, he just as readily assures Elizabeth of his secrecy when her family is in trouble. Elizabeth reveals Lydia's elopement with Wickham to Darcy, which she later regrets. But the link between the two situations (that is, Wickham's person) is the safest guarantee of the mutual trust between Darcy and Elizabeth: in both situations Wickham acts as the seducer who aims to endanger a family's reputation. First, Darcy is shocked by this information, and he takes his leave almost immediately. Elizabeth misreads the—undisclosed—motives behind Darcy's sudden departure, and she does not learn until later that he leaves instantly in order to make quick arrangements to mend the matter, for which he is ready to take the blame—though not in public. When, later, Mrs. Gardiner relates Darcy's part in Wickham and Lydia's marriage to Elizabeth, she recognizes both the reason of his instant leave and his generosity of heart. Darcy wants to keep his intervention secret, but after Lydia's slip of tongue, Mrs. Gardiner cannot conceal this information from Elizabeth. When, at the end of the novel, Elizabeth and Darcy are walking together, he confesses that he helped her family because of her. He also admits that he disclosed the truth to Bingley about his interference into his and Jane's relationship. At this point he thinks that what he did was "absurd and impertinent" (*PP* 351), and he seems to feel remorse for it.

According to Marilyn Butler, the two couples (Jane and Bingley, and Elizabeth and Darcy) are contrasted in how they think about the people around them. Both Darcy and Elizabeth are described as "satirical," which means that "they tend consistently to adopt a low opinion of others" (324). In this, they are the opposites of Bingley and Jane, who "are modest about themselves and charitable about others" (Butler 324). The same contrast exists between Bingley and Darcy, when they have different opinions about the people of Meryton, or when the arrogant Darcy is convinced about Elizabeth's love for him, while the modest Bingley is uncertain about Jane returning his feelings. Jane and Elizabeth can also be contrasted with each other: Elizabeth admires Jane for her capability to always think well of others, but in the individual cases she persists "in her own characteristically astringent view" (Butler 325).

Though, in the narrator's intention, Elizabeth and Darcy are destined for a happy marriage, her father seems to be worried about the future because he knows that she could live happily only when she esteems her husband. If Mrs. Bennet's concerns stop at finding a husband for her daughters, Mr. Bennet is much more worried about their marital future—at least about that of Elizabeth. When he adds, "My child, let me not have the grief of seeing *you* unable to respect your partner in life" (*PP* 356), he seems to be speaking about his own marriage. Surely, Mr. Bennet has come to the belief that marriage should be based on mutual respect, and the implied meaning of his warning is that instead of demanding Elizabeth's respect, Darcy must deserve it—this is exactly what happens at the end of the story, and Darcy grows into a "modern feudal patriarch," where "patriarchy depends on merit, not right" (Harris 12).

Another key episode in Elizabeth's life relates to Mr. Collins's marriage proposal. Although Elizabeth rejects him very vehemently and in unequivocal terms, Collins takes her response as a sign of feigned modesty and tells her it is "the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first proposal" (*PP* 105). Collins himself always feigns politeness and modesty in his social interactions: he often tells ladies compliments, and he chooses the words he uses with great care. He has been described as one who cannot make a distinction between those "desires and ambitions that can be appropriately spoken of and those that are better left concealed" (Herrle 242). These ambitions and desires appear in his talk, and he even seems to be proud of them. At the same time, he "cannot even project the appearance of sympathy or compassion" (Herrle 242). This is the fundamental aspect in which he differs from Wickham. Both have the aim to make a good impression on everyone they come into contact with, but especially on women: but while Wickham easily deceives others with his self-confidence and with his appearance of goodness, Collins can make a good impression on practically no one because of his pretended politeness, which can be straightforwardly recognized as obsequious pretentiousness.

To conclude this part, I should say that the characters and episodes I investigated show that telling lies or keeping things secret are characteristic not only of women but also of men. The lies described in this chapter are told for different reasons, but social status has an important role in most of these cases. It seems, then, that it is not gender alone that affects honesty, and social gap is at least as important a factor in passing on and withholding information.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper I tried to decide whether Austen goes along with Wollstonecraft's or Godwin's ideas on dissimulation and falsehood. It seems that the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* hide or change information for very different reasons. We can clearly establish, though, that dissimulation and insincerity are not characteristic of women only. Through the examples of Mr. Bennet, Collins, or Wickham we could see that men are not always what they appear and may not always mean what they say. Darcy, a seemingly honest gentleman, hides and alters information to separate his friend from a woman who stands in a lower position on the social ladder. It is absolutely similar to what Lady Catherine aims to carry out. Likewise, Miss Bingley looks down on Elizabeth and her family because of their inferior economic status; she represents in the novel the genteel woman who applies dissimulation in order to always appear polite and well-mannered. While, indisputably, Austen cannot be termed, in any sense, a Godwinist, she clearly shares some of Godwin's ideas on dissimulation and insincerity: socially and economically motivated dishonesty is characteristic of both sexes in *Pride and Prejudice*: both men and women tell lies and wish to appear to be someone else in order to preserve their superior position on the social ladder, while those on a lower rank also do not hesitate to be insincere in order to attain a higher position. At the same time, some of Wollstonecraft's ideas are also unmistakably visible in *Pride and Prejudice*. Austen thinks about ideal marriage and the role of women in society in much the same terms as Wollstonecraft and, more importantly, she criticizes the cult of "female chastity" as a powerful tool widely used in her age to diminish the degree and

influence of women's participation in public fields of life. However, Austen's ironic takes on false and true modesty—which may equally result in the deception of the self and the other—deserve a separate investigation.

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A WIFE'S LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE: GENDER, RELIGION, AND POLITICAL ORDER IN EARLY NEW ENGLAND

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THE FACTS OF THE CASE

During the winter of 1635–36, Roger Williams fled Massachusetts Bay Colony and made his way to what would become Providence, Rhode Island. There he set up a “shelter for persons distressed for Conscience.” Among those who accompanied him was one Joshua Verin, a roper by trade. Verin would later purchase the house lot abutting Williams’s property. Two years later, in an undated letter in early May, Williams wrote to John Winthrop asking for advice concerning “[...] one unruly person” whose speech, Williams believed, threatened “[...] no other than the Raping of the Fundamentall Liberties of the Country,” which he believed should be “dearer to us than our Right Eyes.”¹ Apparently a disagreement had broken out between the neighbors, because Williams later complained that Verin had refused to join him in prayer for at least a year and had further forbidden his wife, Jane, from joining in as well. When she disobeyed her husband, Verin had “[...] trodden her under foote tyrannically” to the point that Jane Verin’s neighbors feared “[...] with his furious blowes she went in danger of her life.”² As a consequence of this “brutish carriage,” on May 21, Providence Town Records indicate that Joshua Verin was disenfranchised for

¹ Glenn W. LaFantasie, ed. *The Correspondence of Roger Williams*. Volume I, 1629-1653. (Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, RI, 1988), (hereafter cited as *The Correspondence of Roger Williams*), 154. LaFantasie believes the unruly person refers to J. Verin, whose case would come before the town later in the month.

² Winthrop Papers, I, (Boston, Massachusetts Historical Society), 209; MHSC 4, VI, 245; Howard M. Chapin, *Documentary History of Rhode Island: Being the History of the Towns of Providence and Warwick to 1649 and of the Colony to 1647*. (Providence, 1916), 72.

“restraining [her] liberty of conscience.”³ Verin left Providence sometime before June 10, 1638,⁴ “hale[ing] his wife with ropes to Salem, where she must needs be troubled and troublesome as differences yet stand.”⁵ This appears to be the first time that a wife’s liberty of conscience, independent of her husband’s, was upheld in the English colonies.

QUESTIONS RAISED

Why did the people of Providence charge Joshua Verin with violating his wife’s liberty of conscience? Why not charge him with putting his wife in “danger of life”? What were the motivations of the “heads of households” that made the decision? Why did Joshua Verin come to Rhode Island? Did he follow Roger Williams because he was “distressed of conscience” and seeking refuge? If so, why did he not attend prayer services for almost a year? Or, did he follow his wife, Jane, and his mother-in-law, the Widow Reeve, to Rhode Island because they were female activists who had challenged the Church and Magistracy in Salem? What repercussions, if any, did this case have in Rhode Island and the other colonies? To what extent was this case influenced by the course of events involving Anne Hutchinson and the Antinomian Controversy in Massachusetts Bay Colony? Did this case have any influence on Roger Williams’s views on total religious freedom? Is there any connection between this case and the principles it represented, and the Massachusetts Body of Liberties of 1641 which made wife beating illegal for the first time in the English-speaking world? Finally, to what extent do events in Rhode Island reflect tensions in the trans-Atlantic world?

STRATEGIES ADOPTED

In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to reconstruct as much as possible the lives of Joshua and Jane Verin before they left England in 1634, before they arrived to Providence in 1636, and after they returned to Salem in 1638. Second, the origins, experiences, and beliefs of the residents of Providence who were either directly involved in the decision making (heads of household) or indirectly influenced the decision-makers both in Old and New England must also be explored. Third, the key Puritan ministers and theologians must be identified and their different positions within Puritanism regarding the position of women within Puritan patriarchy, the possibility of women being among the “elect” or “Visible Saints,” the issue of female prophesying, and changing attitudes regarding domestic abuse must be clarified. Fourth, the role of New England women in Puritan churches must be investigated to shed light on Jane Verin and her behavior. This essay will review preliminary results from investigations into the first three of the four questions listed above.

³ *Early Records of the Town of Providence*. Vol. I. (Snow & Farnham City Printers, Providence, 1892).

⁴ On June 10, 1638 Verin was not called neighbor in the record (indicating he had already departed), and Williams confirmed the land was laid out to newcomers. Chapin, 75-76.

⁵ Winthrop Papers, 2, 109; MHSC 4, VI, 245; Chapin, 72.

FINDINGS ON THE VERINS

Jane Verin, *not* Joshua, was the reason the Verins came to Providence. In her experiences, she was typical of other female dissenters, such as Anne Hutchinson, Mary Dyer, and others who were perceived to be a threat to the established social order in Massachusetts Bay and who would later suffer the consequences. Records indicate Joshua arrived in New England in June 1635 on the *James* with his parents and siblings.⁶ Joshua, his father, and his brother Hilliard were all landowners, members of the First Church of Salem, and held various positions of authority in Salem.⁷ While both Joshua and Jane were admitted to communion in the First Church of Salem, in the two years prior to their arrival in Providence, Jane refused to worship with the Congregation and later denied the churches of the Bay Colony were true churches because they had not separated from the Church of England.⁸ According to John Winthrop, Williams had been so influential and persuasive in Salem that “many there (especially of devout women) did embrace his opinions and separated from the Churches [...] he has drawn about twenty persons to his opinion [...] [they] went all together out of our jurisdiction and precinct, into an Iland, called Read-Iland [...] and there they live to this day [...] but in great strife and contention.”⁹ It is entirely possible that the Verins left Salem because they were about to face the consequences of *Jane's* challenges to the ministry. In fact, once in Providence, it was *Joshua* who refused to attend religious services. In his letter to John Winthrop, Roger Williams notes that Joshua Verin had “refused to heare the word with us (wch we molested him not for) this twelve month.”¹⁰ Jane continued her defiance of authority by disobeying her husband and attending prayer services with Roger Williams and other faithful, suffering a life-threatening beating as a consequence.

In defying Church authorities in Salem, and later defying her husband's authority in Providence, Jane Verin not only challenged Puritan notions about appropriate behavior for women, but her actions threatened to undermine the very basis of family and community structure.¹¹ At the same time, between 1640 and 1680, Puritans in Massachusetts Bay

⁶ Michael Tepper, ed., *Passengers to America: A Consolidation of Ship Passenger Lists from the New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Baltimore, 1978, p. 46. NOTE: Verin left from the town of Hampton, England.

⁷ Joshua was the son of Philip and Dorcas Verin. Both Philip and Joshua's brother Hilliard were freemen and members of the First Church of Salem. Each held a variety of appointed offices in Salem; Hilliard was clerk of the Salem Quarterly Court.

⁸ See Koehler, *Search for Power*, p. 217. Williams's followers at Salem were Jane Verin, Mary Oliver, Margery Reeves, and Margery Holliman. They “refused to worship with the congregation from 1635 to 1638 and the latter two women denied that the churches of the Bay colony were true churches.” See also Winthrop, *Journal* I, pp. 162 and 168, and Felt, *Annals of Salem* II, 573 and 576.

⁹ John Winthrop, *The Journal of John Winthrop 1630-1649*, Richard S. Dunn, James Savage & Laetitia Yeandle, eds., Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1996, pp.163–164.

¹⁰ *The Correspondence of Roger Williams*. I: 1629-1653, p. 156.

¹¹ See Jane Kamensky, “Talk Like a Man: Speech, Power, and Masculinity in Early New England,” *Gender and History*, 8 (April 1996): 22-47. Kamensky argues that gender was central to understanding a person's rightful place in Puritan society. She states that in their theology as well as in their social and spatial arrangements, New Englanders were “people of the word;” and by making

would enact the first laws anywhere in the world against “domestic tyranny,” especially spousal and child abuse.¹² Foster defines Puritanism as a continuing interaction among magistrates, ministers, and laity dedicated to creating a godly society by imposing their version of social and ecclesiastical discipline on their neighbor.¹³ In order to accomplish this, the Puritans set up a state church system. Civil power reinforced ecclesiastical authority. These structures of control were not well established in the Providence community, which was still in its infancy. In fact, Williams states that Joshua Verin had “openly in Towne meeting more than once professthe to hope for and long for a better Government then the Contry hath yet...”¹⁴

After his return to Salem, Joshua Verin received several grants of land¹⁵ and also served in a variety of capacities at the Church.¹⁶ Clearly, he and his family remained members in good standing in both the town and church community.¹⁷ In contrast, Jane continued to challenge the legitimacy of the Puritan hierarchy. Court records note that on October 4, 1638, she was “referd [*sic*] to Salem,”¹⁸ and on December 25, 1638, Jane Verin was presented in court at Salem for absence from religious worship,¹⁹ shortly *after* her husband received a substantial land grant. Church records indicate that Jane Verin was removed

sermons the centerpiece of ritual life, “Puritan thinkers demanded heightened respect for the voices of godly ministers, that is, for the voices of eminent men.” p. 27. Thus, when a woman like Jane Verin challenged the legitimacy of the First Church in Salem, she also challenged the authority of the male hierarchy that supported it.

¹² See Elizabeth Pleck, *Domestic Tyranny: The Making of American Social Policy Against Family Violence from Colonial Times to the Present*, Urbana-Champaign: U of Illinois P, 2004. In Chapter One, “Wicked Carriage,” Pleck argues that Puritans used both church and civil courts to intervene in cases of family violence, particularly because the family was the foundation upon which the religious commonwealth would be constructed and family violence was “‘wicked carriage’—assaultive and sinful behavior—that threatened the individual and community’s standing before God.” p. 17.

¹³ Charles L. Cohen, “The Post-Puritan Paradigm of Early American Religious History,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, Vol. LIV.4 (October 1997), p. 701.

¹⁴ *The Correspondence of Roger Williams*. Volume I, 1629-1653, p. 154.

¹⁵ *Town Records of Salem, Massachusetts*, Vol. I; 1634-1659, Essex Institute, Historical Collections, Second Series, Vol. I, Part I, (Salem, 1868). Town records indicate that Verin received a two-acre house lot on February 6, 1635. (p. 9) On August 29, 1638, he was granted a 10-acre lot, (p. 73) and on November 21, 1638, he received a 40-acre land grant. (p. 97) See also: Felt, *Annals of Salem*, Vol. I, 2nd edition, Boston, 1845. p. 170.

¹⁶ On July 6, 1644, Joshua Verin was assigned to check on church attendance and attentiveness. On December 3, 1677, the Church asked another member of the Verin family to speak with congregation members who were “under the Churches admonition for scandalous sin.” *The Records of the First Church in Salem*, p. 144.

¹⁷ Joshua Verin’s brother, Hilliard, served as clerk of Essex County. See Michael Tepper, ed., *Passengers to America: A Consolidation of Ship Passenger Lists from the New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Baltimore, 1978. p. 134.

¹⁸ John Noble, supervisor, *Records of the Court of Assistants of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay 1630-1692*, Boston, 1904. Quarter Court held at Boston on October 4, 1638, p. 79.

¹⁹ *Records of Quarterly Court*, Essex County, I, p.10.

from the First Church of Salem on January 7, 1640.²⁰ This seems to indicate that Jane Verin continued to act on her conscience.

Acting on one's conscience not only caused strife within the Verin marriage but also within the extended family. The divisions in the Verin family reflect the fissures that appeared in Massachusetts Bay colony. Joshua Verin clearly disagreed with his wife on the status of the New England churches relative to England as he remained a congregant; he ultimately resorted to beatings to discipline her. Joshua Verin's brother and sister-in-law probably sided with Jane in that they, too, challenged the authority of the First Church of Salem and later suffered admonishment, removal from the church,²¹ and physical punishment for their beliefs.²²

In addition to the teachings of Roger Williams, it is likely that Jane Verin was influenced by the preaching of Anne Hutchinson, a midwife and spiritual advisor to other women who had begun holding meetings in her home for the purpose of repeating and discussing the previous week's sermons. Women often made up a majority of worshipers in Puritan congregations.²³ She, along with others who came to be known as the Antinomians, challenged the magistracy of Massachusetts Bay Colony, many of whom she claimed were preaching a Covenant of Works, a doctrine contrary to Puritan teachings. According to John Winthrop, "the last and worst of all, which most suddenly diffused the venome of these opinions into the very veines and vitals of the People in the Country, was Mistrus Hutchinsons double weekly-lecture."

The Hutchinsons had followed the Reverend John Cotton to Massachusetts Bay Colony. They were members of the Alford congregation. In England, this congregation believed it should be responsible for choosing and paying for their minister. But in Massachusetts Bay, the Company leadership appointed all ministers and paid their salaries. The Alford faction tried to organize a separate church, but could not gain official recognition. As a result, they began to meet privately. The Hutchinsons' home was often used for private worship services; her brother-in-law, the Reverend John Wheelwright, often preached at their farm.²⁴

Winthrop claimed that fifty to sixty people (and sometimes as many as eighty) attended her talks, "seducing [...] almost all parts of the Country, round about."²⁵ Ultimate-

²⁰ Richard D. Pierce, ed., *The Records of the First Church in Salem, 1629-1736*, (Essex Institute, 1974), p. 10.

²¹ Records of the First Church of Salem indicate Jane, wife of Phillip Verin, was removed on May 2, 1640. *The Records of the First Church in Salem*, p. 9.

²² Between 1660 and 1663, Joshua's brother Philip and his wife, Joanna (Jane), were presented many times for nonattendance at public worship, and Philip was set by the heels in stocks in November 1663 for denying the country's power to force any to come to the public worship.

²³ Cohen argues that by 1660, women regularly composed two-thirds of church membership, a figure that held steady throughout the eighteenth century. p. 719. He agrees with Bonomi and Treckel that American religion had been "feminized" by the mid-seventeenth century, a fact that enabled women to "institutionalize a broader definition of church membership that enabled Puritan theology to continue functioning as the dominating ideology of New England's social order." p. 720.

²⁴ Carol Berkin, *First Generations: Women in Colonial America*, New York, 1996, pp. 37-40. See also Eve LaPlante, *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Woman who Defied the Puritans*, New York, 2004.

²⁵ David W. Hall, ed. *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636-1638: A Documentary History*. (Middle-

ly, the Puritan church state had to respond to twin challenges: the threat posed to the social order by the Antinomians and other dissenters, and the danger to the patriarchy posed by activist females who stepped outside the acceptable boundaries of gendered norms. Anne Hutchinson was found guilty not only of heresy, but of conduct unbecoming a women. According to Carol Berkin, Winthrop viewed Anne Hutchinson's dissent as a challenge to "family order, sexual morality, and the subordination of women to men."²⁶ The Puritan response to these threats was enforced conformity. Antinomians were admonished, disarmed, excommunicated, banished, and otherwise silenced. Women, too, were silenced and punished for failing to conform to Puritan expectations of female behavior that was passive and obedient.²⁷ Berkin concludes that the "Puritans did not resolve, except by fiat and force, such critical questions as how did sainthood disrupt the hierarchy of gender or of the family, and who determined the code of behavior for an individual saint."²⁸

It should also be noted that Anne Hutchinson, Mary Dyer, and Harding were Puritan women who were perceived to be more radical than their husbands. William Hutchinson joined the exiles, explaining he "was more nearly tied to his wife than to the church." According to Raymond R. Irwin's study of Antinomian exiles in Rhode Island,

the true radicals, and the ones who got the most attention from Puritan authorities, were often women whose much less extreme husbands became guilty by association with their spouses. More than that, these men were seen as failing to control their wives, and thereby as yielding to that weaker sex, an unacceptable state of affairs in a society where women were thought to be inclined to evil.²⁹

In short, the radical behavior of these women challenged Puritan assumptions about gender, masculinity, and the entire social order.

This same question caused dissention among Providence residents. While Williams and others were willing to tolerate Joshua Verin's refusal to attend religious services, when Verin tried to draw his wife, Jane, into the "same Ungodliness with him," Williams and some of the other heads of household voted to "discard him from our Civill Freedome."³⁰ William Arnold, for example, protested the town's vote to disenfranchise Joshua

town, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1968), 205-208.

²⁶ Berkin, *First Generations*, p. 39.

²⁷ Berkin concludes that Hutchinson and her supporters "hardened the government's determination to demand conformity, not only in doctrine, but in the social arrangements between the sexes. It established the principle that religious dissent, or error, and a woman's subordination were linked." She cites the trial and excommunication of Anne Eaton in 1641 for her position against infant baptism, the trial and condemnation of Sarah Keayne in 1646 for "irregular prophesying in mixed assembly," and the conviction of Joan Hogg in 1655 for "disorderly singing and idleness, and for saying she [was] commanded of Christ to do so," as evidence of the attempts by the ministry and magistracy to enforce gender conformity. pp. 39-41.

²⁸ Berkin, *First Generations*, p. 37.

²⁹ Raymond D. Irwin, "Cast Out from the 'City upon a Hill': Antinomian Exiles in Rhode Island, 1638-1650," *Rhode Island History* 52.1 (1994): 2-19; p. 7.

³⁰ *The Correspondence of Roger Williams*, I: 1629-1653, p. 156.

Verin, because as a Puritan male, Verin had a duty to discipline his wife. He argued that Verin had acted "out of conscience," and that the town's decision violated an earlier ordinance that specified "no man should be molested for his conscience."³¹ Unlike their Puritan counterparts in Massachusetts Bay, Roger Williams and his supporters endorsed complete liberty of conscience as the best means of ensuring law and order. Williams later wrote that "libertie alone is the key to a l[a]sting civil peace." There is no indication that religious conscience was conceived as anything but gender neutral.

FINDINGS ON THE PROVIDENCE COMMUNITY

Genealogical and historical registers, passenger lists, town and court records, the correspondence of Roger Williams and John Winthrop, and the compilations of early Massachusetts and Rhode Island history also shed light on the motivations of those who decided against Joshua Verin in 1638. As English Puritans newly arrived from England, many of the original proprietors and their families would have had experience with active female participation in Church affairs in both Old and New England. Because of the persecution by the Crown, English Puritans often met in conventicles (private meetings in the home). As members of congregations and as "Visible Saints," women signed church covenants, formed at least half of most congregations, bore either public or private witness to their faith, and sometimes preached in lay ministries.³²

Most of these practices continued in New England churches, although ministers disagreed on the level of female involvement in Church affairs and governance.³³ Records indicate that slightly more than one-third of the one hundred fifty persons signing the Co-

³¹ *The Correspondence of Roger Williams*, I: 1629-1653, Footnote 7, p. 156; Winthrop, *History*, I, pp. 340-41.

³² Marilyn J. Westerkamp, "Anne Hutchinson, Sectarian Mysticism, and the Puritan Order," *Church History* 59.4 pp. 482-96. Westerkamp cites Stephen Foster's study, "New England and the Challenge of Heresy, 1630-1660: The Puritan Crisis in Trans-Atlantic Perspective," in which he notes private meetings organized by the laity were common practice in England. When an established church suspended or deposed sympathetic ministers, private meetings often continued. Westerkamp also cites several studies that have concluded that not only was lay leadership known to English Puritans, but during these years, women as well as men were frequently observed in these leadership roles. Some preachers allowed women to attend congregational meetings but have not voice; while others allowed women to speak occasionally (e.g., to witness to their own conversion or to reprove a clear fault in the congregation). She also notes that some of the independent congregations that were formed allowed lay preaching. Many independent congregations of London allowed all lay members, including women to debate, vote, and preach. "Women were also known to have preached in Lincolnshire, Ely, Hertfordshire, Yorkshire, and Somerset. The author also notes that when George Fox established the Society of Friends, women were included in leadership and preaching roles, pp. 486-87.

³³ Gerald F. Moran, "'Sisters' in Christ: Women and the Church in Seventeenth-Century New England," *Women in American Religion*, Janet Wilson James, ed., (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980), p. 49. Moran studied women entering New England churches between 1630 and 1639. Fifty-two per cent of entrants in the First Church in Salem (organized 1629) and forty-seven per cent of entrants in the First Church in Boston (organized 1630) were women.

venant of the First Church of Boston on August 27, 1630, were women.³⁴ When members of the Church of Charlestown gathered on November 2, 1632, the first page of the covenant includes sixteen women among the thirty-five signatories.³⁵ The renewal of the Church covenant signed at Salem in 1637 promises that the signatories would “walke with our brethren & sisters in [...] Congregation, with all watchfulness & tenderness [...]” It was signed by 85 men and 79 women, including Dorcas Verin.³⁶ Women in Salem also made public professions of their faith experience as a condition of church membership. These recent types of female behavior would have been fresh in the minds of the heads of household who had to decide on the appropriateness of Joshua Verin’s discipline of his religiously active wife. This is significant given that among the original proprietors, Thomas Angell, Alice Daniell(s), Francis Weston, and Richard Waterman were members of the First Church of Salem prior to their arrival in Providence. There they experienced Puritan women being actively involved in both the public and private life of the congregation.

As mentioned earlier, some of the residents of Providence clearly believed that Verin was within his rights to discipline his wife, arguing that when they consented to liberty of conscience, they never “intended that it should extend to the breach of any ordinance of God, such as the subjection of wives to their husbands.”³⁷ To this objection, John Greene responded that “if they should restrain their wives, etc., all the women in the country would cry out of them.”³⁸ As a more orthodox Puritan male, Joshua Verin, in the absence of a church state, had to step in and exercise his “governorship” of his unruly wife.

FINDINGS ON THE ANTINOMIAN CRISIS

The Antinomian controversy, too, had a definite impact on the decision-makers during the Verin case. There was a direct family connection between Anne Hutchinson and Richard Scott, who was an original proprietor and married to her sister, Katherine. Scott arrived on the same ship, *Griffin*, in 1634 as the Hutchinson family. Roger Williams personally arranged for Ann Hutchinson and her followers to obtain a land grant in Portsmouth. They arrived in late March 1638, *before* the Verin case was heard. Hutchinson and other women, including Mary Dyer, continued to prophesy and preach after their arrival in Rhode Island. The wives of several of the original proprietors had been involved in troubles with their respective churches in Salem and Boston prior to their arrival in Providence.³⁹ Even if they were not Antinomians themselves, the original proprietors in Providence who had belonged to the First Church of Boston would probably have known William and May Oliver, Robert

³⁴ *Records of the First Church in Boston*, pp. 12-15.

³⁵ *Records of the First Church in Boston*, Footnote 4, p. 15.

³⁶ David Pulsifer, “Extracts from Records kept by the Rev. John Fiske, during his Ministry at Salem, Wenham, and Chelmsford,” *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute* (Vol. I, #2, May 1859), Salem, 1859, 37-39.

³⁷ Winthrop, *History*, I, 340-41.

³⁸ Winthrop, *History*, I, 340.

³⁹ These women were Jane Verin, the Widow Reeves (Jane’s mother), Margery Holliman (2nd wife of Ezekiel Holliman, Julia Marchant (wife of Stukely Wescott), and Margaret (wife of Francis Weston).

and Phillipa Harding, William and Mary Dyer, and Richard and Jane Hawkins. These families had been admonished by their churches in England and would in 1638 come to Portsmouth with the Antinomians after being banished from the church in New England. In fact, John Winthrop himself linked Mrs. Oliver's heresy before the ministers and magistrates in Massachusetts Bay and the Verin case.⁴⁰

FINDINGS ON ORIGINAL PROVIDENCE PROPRIETORS

All of the proprietors who decided to disenfranchise Joshua Verin were recent arrivals to New England. Given their experiences in Massachusetts Bay Colony, there was a predisposition to be sympathetic to a person's liberty of conscience. Roger Williams himself escaped to Rhode Island before he could be imprisoned for his challenges to both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in Massachusetts Bay; eight of the other heads of household were either admonished, excommunicated, or banished by their respective New England churches prior to their arrival in Providence.⁴¹ Thus they had firsthand experience of religious intolerance.

In addition, the Baptist and Quaker leanings of some of the original Proprietors predisposed them to support Jane Verin. In a journal entry dated 16 March 1638/9, Winthrop writes,

At Providence things grew still worse; for a sister of Mrs. Hutchinson, the wife of one Scott, being infected with Anabaptistry, and going last year to live at Providence, Mr. Williams was taken (or rather emboldened) by her to make open profession thereof, and accordingly was rebaptized by one Holyman, a poor man late of Salem. Then Mr. Williams rebaptized him and some ten more.⁴²

Eleven of the original proprietors would become founding members of the First Baptist Church in Providence.⁴³ The Baptists allowed women to preach to female assemblies. Three of the original proprietors, Thomas Harris, Richard Scott, and Francis Weston, would get into legal troubles because of their Quaker beliefs. The Quakers rejected inequality of

⁴⁰ See footnote p. 16 in Bartlett, *Colonial Records of Rhode Island*, Vol. I, 1636-63, Providence, 1856.

⁴¹ In *Documentary History of Rhode Island*, (Providence, 1916) Howard M. Chapin argues that the town permitted Verin full liberty to worship as he chose and took no action until his actions came under civil censure for civil disturbance and for violating the covenant of religious toleration. He concludes, "Verin persecuted his wife for her religious practices. The town did not persecute Verin for his religious practices, but punished him for his religious intolerance of others, particularly of his wife." p. 72.

⁴² Quoted in Chapin, *Documentary History of Rhode Island*, p. 94.

⁴³ Chad Brown, William Carpenter, Gregory Dexter, John Greene, Ezekiel Holliman, Thomas James, Thomas Olney, Sr., Richard Waterman, Stukely Wescott, William Wickenden, and Joshua Winsor.

men and women and accepted an active role for women in lay ministry and church governance. Roger Williams would later lament that the “weaker sex” are “too much inclin’d to Quakerism.”⁴⁴

Roger Williams clearly believed in a woman’s inferiority. He accepted an essentially subordinate role for women as one consigned by the Bible, arguing that even “though the Holy Scripture were silent, yet Reason and Experience tell us, that the Woman is the weaker Vessel, that she is more fitted to keep and order the House and Children, & [...] that the Lord hath given a covering of longer Hair to Women as a sign or teacher of covering Modesty and Bashfulness, Silence, and Retiredness; and therefore, [women are] not fitted for Manly Actions and Employments.”⁴⁵ He was equally staunch in his opposition to female prophesying, arguing that any woman who preached in public assemblies represented “open violence” against God’s way, a “business sober and modest Humanity abhor to think of.”⁴⁶ Despite these views, Williams would nonetheless support women’s full liberty of conscience. Even prior to Hutchinson’s official banishment, he arranged for her and her supporters to purchase land in what would come to be Portsmouth, Rhode Island, in March of 1638.⁴⁷ He supported Jane Verin’s right to liberty of conscience, even if it challenged her husband’s authority in May 1638. And it is clear that females did prophesy in Rhode Island after the Verin case. Edward Johnson, a critic of female religious activism, writes,

There were some of the female sexe who (deeming the Apostle Paul to be too strict in not permitting a roome [for women] to preach in the publique Congregation) taught notwithstanding [...] having their call to this office from an ardent desire of being famous [...] [and Hutchinson] the grand Mistress of them all [...] ordinarily prated every Sabbath day, till others, who thirsted after honour in the same way with her self, drew away her Auditors.⁴⁸

FISSURE WITHIN THE PURITAN CHURCH REGARDING WOMEN

In seventeenth-century England the status of married women was determined by *The Lawes and Resolutions of Womens Rights*, which put forward the doctrine of *feme couverte*, that is, that “after marriage, all will of the wife in judgement of the law is subject to the will of

⁴⁴ Benedict Arnold, son of William Arnold and a future governor of Rhode Island, would leave his gray horse to Quaker women to use in their preaching.

⁴⁵ Koehler, *Search for Power*, 306, and *George Fox Digg’d*, Appendix, p. 26.

⁴⁶ Koehler, *Search for Power*, 306, and *George Fox Digg’d*, p. 12.

⁴⁷ On February 19, 1638, two of Hutchinson’s supporters, John Coggeshall and William Aspinwall, wrote to Roger Williams regarding the availability of land. On March 7, 1638, nineteen men would form a civil compact and departed for Portsmouth, R.I., before Anne Hutchinson’s office banishment on March 22, 1638. Hutchinson herself left for Rhode Island 6 days later (March 28, 1638). *Records of Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England*, Providence, 1856, I, 52.

⁴⁸ Koehler, *Search for Power*, 324 and E. Johnson, *Wonder-working Providence*, p. 186.

the husband.”⁴⁹ The law, however, was unclear about the extent to which the will of the husband prevailed in the event of the wife's challenge to his authority. The editor of the seventeenth-century *The Lawes Resolution of Women's Rights* argued that under English law, “castigation” was permissible, but he was uncertain as to the limits beyond which a husband's reasonable right to correct his wife became unlawful and unreasonable. Blackstone's *Commentaries*, published 1765-1769, were also ambiguous on this issue. He emphasized a husband's right to chastise his wife, again within reasonable bounds.⁵⁰

The Puritan Divines, too, were divided on this issue. The “Homily of the State of Matrimony” (1563) argued that women should patiently suffer anything their husbands did, but that husbands should under no circumstances beat their wives—this being the “greatest shame that can be [...] to him that doeth the deed.”⁵¹ Puritan Divines such as William Gouge argued that a husband should correct his wife only verbally, since to beat her would be like beating himself. In contrast, William Whately argued that in extreme cases, physical punishment might be necessary, although he cautioned against it being undertaken in anger in that “it seemeth too impious in him to do it and too servile in her to suffer it.”⁵²

Paradoxically, Puritan families and communities were patriarchal and hierarchical, but Puritan marriages stressed reciprocity and partnership.⁵³ Marilyn J. Westerkamp has argued that English sectarian groups firmly asserted the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the individual, articulating a form of spiritual egalitarianism which Westerkamp deems “an equalizing faith irreconcilable with the hierarchy necessary to order seventeenth-century society.”⁵⁴ While the Puritan Divines agreed that women could experience the saving grace of God and thus attain church membership, they disagreed on the public role of women in Puritan congregations. In 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, St. Paul admonishes,

Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in church.

⁴⁹ Anne Laurence, *Women in England, 1500-1760, A Social History*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 227.

⁵⁰ Susan Dwyer Amussen, “‘Being Stirred to Much Unquietness’: Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England,” *Journal of Women's History*, 6.2 (Summer 1994), p. 71.

⁵¹ Quoted in Amussen, “Being Stirred to Much Unquietness,” pp. 71-72.

⁵² Quoted in Amussen, “Being Stirred to Much Unquietness,” p. 72. Amussen concludes that “the most generous interpretations of seventeenth-century patriarchal power never gave a husband more than a limited right to correct his wife's behavior through physical force. Such correction was to be used only for serious issues and was distinguished from beating, administered in anger for trivial faults.” p. 72.

⁵³ See John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New Haven, 1970) and Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750*, (New York, 1982) for an analysis of Puritan family dynamics and everyday life in the early colonial era.

⁵⁴ Marilyn J. Westerkamp, “Anne Hutchinson, Sectarian Mysticism, and the Puritan Order,” *Church History* 59.4 (December 1990), p. 488.

But St. Paul also encourages women to read the Bible and notes that women have a teaching function. Further, St. Paul insists that women were to share equally in the benefits of Christian belief and life.

According to Ann M. Little, “marriage created manhood in early New England.”⁵⁵ Some defended Verin for having exerted his God-given authority over his wife; perhaps this is the reason the residents of Providence did not censure Joshua Verin for his brutish carriage toward his wife. They clearly believed, however, that he had overstepped the boundaries of acceptable behavior and were willing to take actions to restore peace and harmony in the community by taking away his civil freedoms.

In 1646, the Reverend Thomas Edwards published in London the third edition of *The First and Second Part of Gangraena: or A Catalogue and Discovery of Many of the Errors, Heresies, Blasphemies, and Pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of this Time*. The Epistle Dedicatory indicates his purpose was to explain the increase in unrest in English churches and to investigate complaints about “all sorts of illiterate mechanick Preachers, yea of Women and Boy Preachers.”⁵⁶ Many of the errors contained in his catalog focused on women who appeared to be actively involved in their congregations, particularly reports of women who prophesied and preached, not only to female assemblies,⁵⁷ but also to male audiences.⁵⁸ This edition of the catalog chronicled errors “within these four years last past,” indicating that female religious activism had continued in England. This religious activism was not confined to preaching and prophesying, but also included reports that some “honest understanding men” had accepted that “[...] ’tis lawfull for wives to give without their husbands consents something out of their husbands estates, for the maintenance of the Church and Ministers whereunto they belong.”⁵⁹ It is clear that the gendered norms of seventeenth-century English society were being challenged by religious women in both Old and New England.

Prophesying, an emotional and authoritative form of speech, also became a point of dispute for the Puritan ministry in New England. While all “Spirit” mystics of Puritanism believed that God lead people to salvation through the Holy Scripture, preaching, and providence, many also believed in the “possibility of a mystical, ecstatic union with God.”⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Ann M. Little, “‘Shee Would Bump His Moudly Britch’: Authority, Masculinity, and the Harried Husbands of New Haven Colony, 1638-1670,” in *Lethal Imagination: Violence and Brutality in American History*, Michael A. Bellesiles, ed., (New York, 1999), p. 45. She argues that in Puritan society duties and privileges were assigned to people according to their gender. “Men freed themselves of their fathers’ authority by assuming governorship over—and responsibility for—wives, and eventually over their children, servants, and slaves.” p. 45.

⁵⁶ Rev. Thomas Edwards, *The First and Second Part of Gangraena: or A Catalogue and Discovery of Many of the Errors, Heresies, Blasphemies, and Pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of this Time*, (hereafter cited as *Gangraena*) 3rd ed, London, 1646, p. 1.

⁵⁷ *Gangraena*: in Part II, Edwards details the actions of a woman in Brasted and other neighboring towns, claiming “[she] doth meet other women, and after she hath preached, she takes the Bible and chuses [*sic*] a Text, some Verses in a Chapter, and sometimes a whole chapter, and expounds and applies to her auditors.” p. 87.

⁵⁸ *Gangraena*: in the Appendix, Edwards documents the actions of a women preacher by the name of Mrs. Attaway who was discovered preaching to “4 or 5 men.” (Appendix, pp. 113-14).

⁵⁹ *Gangraena*, Part I, pp. 31-32.

⁶⁰ Marilyn J. Westerkamp, “Puritan Patriarchy and the Problem of Revelation,” *Journal of Interdis-*

Anne Hutchinson, for example, is quoted as saying, "It is said, I will poure my spirit upon you Daughters, and they shall prophesie, & if God give mee a gift of Prophecy, I may use it..."⁶¹ John Winthrop later commented that the people "grew into so reverent an esteeme of her godlinesse, and spirituall gifts, as they looked at her as a Prophetesse, raised up of God for some great worke now at hand."⁶² In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, both Catholics and Protestants believed that devotion to God's will superseded obedience to a husband's authority. In fact, women were allowed to join churches separate from husbands' place of worship.⁶³ "If God commanded a Protestant woman to prophesy, she was required to do so, 'yea though the Husband should forbid her.'"⁶⁴ There is no evidence to support the idea that Jane Verin was called to prophesy; but certainly the facts support the contention that she was willing to challenge both the ministry in Massachusetts Bay and her husband's authority in following her religious conscience. Winthrop's journal notes that some of the Providence residents who voted to disenfranchise Joshua Verin believed that "if Verin would not suffer his wife to have her liberty, the church should dispose her to some other man, who would use her better."⁶⁵ Roger Williams letter to Winthrop asserts that Jane was willing "to stay and live with him or else where, where she many not offend, etc."⁶⁶ Except in the case of her religious conscience, she was evidently ready to continue to submit to his authority.

CONNECTIONS TO THE RHODE ISLAND CHARTER OF 1663

The commitment to complete liberty of conscience in Rhode Island is widely attributed to Roger Williams and John Clarke. Williams states quite clearly that his purpose in establishing a new community at Providence was to create a shelter for persons "distressed of Conscience."⁶⁷ He believed that "inforced uniformity is the greatest occasion of civill Warre [...] of the hypocrisie and destruction of millions of souls. The permission of other consciences and worships than the state professeth, only can [...] procure a firme and lasting peace."⁶⁸ He clearly rejected the Massachusetts Bay notion of enforced orthodoxy, calling persecution for the cause of conscience a "bloody tenet," that was "lamentably contrary to

ciplinary History, XXIII.3 (Winter 1993), p. 577.

⁶¹ Marilyn J. Westerkamp, "Puritan Patriarchy and the Problem of Revelation," p. 583.

⁶² Westerkamp, "Puritan Patriarchy and the Problem of Revelation," p. 583.

⁶³ Elaine Forman Crane, *Ebb Tide in New England: Women, Seaports, and Social Change 1630-1800* (Boston, 1998), p. 86.

⁶⁴ Elaine Forman Crane, *Ebb Tide in New England: Women, Seaports, and Social Change 1630-1800* (Boston, 1998), p. 56.

⁶⁵ *Journal of John Winthrop*, p. 277.

⁶⁶ Quoted in *Documentary History of Rhode Island*, p. 71.

⁶⁷ *Documentary History of Rhode Island*, p. 11.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Theodore Dwight Bozeman, "Religious Liberty and the Problem of Order in Early Rhode Island," *New England Quarterly*, 45.1 (March 1972): p. 62.

the doctrine of Christ Jesus the Prince of Peace.”⁶⁹ He had come to believe that “Forc’t Whorshpp stincks in Gods Nostrills.”⁷⁰

John Clark, too, shared these beliefs. He had arrived in Boston in 1637 and immediately became embroiled in the Antinomian controversy. For “peace sake” he moved to Acquidneck with the help of Roger Williams (“who for matter of conscience had not long before been exiled from the former jurisdiction”).⁷¹ In *Ill Newes from New-England*, John Clark challenges the magistracy in Massachusetts Bay Colony, particularly the way in which the colony attempted to enforce religious orthodoxy by persecuting persons of conscience. He describes his arrest and persecution by Massachusetts Bay magistrates during his visit there in 1651, noting that “the spirit by which they are led, would order the whole world.”⁷² He also lists laws from the Bay colony, which according to Clark, prove “that the Authority there established cannot permit men [...] freely to enjoy their understandings and consciences, nor yet to live [...] unless the can doe as they doe, or say as they say [...] or else say nothing.”⁷³ Clark challenges what he calls “the use of the civil sword” to enforce a religious order, arguing that it leads only to hypocrisy. The Massachusetts Bay colony had sentenced Baptists to banishment. Further, their beliefs, particularly about visible baptism, were considered blasphemous, a capital transgression punishable by death. He concludes by reiterating his opposition to religious intolerance:

But by outward force to seek to constrain, or restrain an others conscience in the worship of God, & doth presuppose one man to have dominion over another mans conscience, and is but to force servants, and worshippers upon the Lord [...] and is the ready way to make men dissemblers and hypocrites...⁷⁴

While in the Verin Case, Williams had upheld a women’s right to liberty of conscience, the 1663 Charter formally extends that liberty to all persons. In a letter to the Town of Warwick on New Year’s Day, 1665, Williams reflects on the success of John Clark’s mission to England to secure a charter from the King Charles II. He notes that the royal grant and charter bestows upon Rhode Islanders, “inestimable Jewells,” primary among

⁶⁹ Roger Williams, *The Bloody Tenent, of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience*, in *The Complete Writings of Roger Williams*, Vol. III, (Providence, 1867; reprint New York, 1963): p. 425. See also James P. Byrd Jr., *The Challenges of Roger Williams: Religious Liberty, Violent Persecution and the Bible*, Macon, Georgia, 2002. Byrd analyzes the Biblical sources of Williams’s conceptions of religious liberty and toleration.

⁷⁰ *The Bloody Tenent, of Persecution*, p. 470.

⁷¹ John Clarke, *Ill Newes from New-England: or A Narrative of New Englands Persecution Wherin is Declared that while old England is becoming new, New-England is become Old*. London: 1652, Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Vol. I, 4th edition, Boston, 1852. (hereafter cited as *Ill Newes from New-England*). pp. 23-24.

⁷² *Ill Newes from New-England*, pp. 27-61. Clark was accused of preaching and baptizing on the Lord’s Day in a conventicler and having professed against the institution of the Church. He was imprisoned and ordered to be fined or whipped. Friends paid his fine.

⁷³ *Ill Newes from New-England*, p. 65.

⁷⁴ *Ill Newes from New-England*, p. 103.

them being peace and liberty.⁷⁵ The Charter includes the provision that “noe person within the sayd colonye [...] shall be any wise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question for any differences in opinione in matters of religion.” As long as citizens behaved in a peaceable and orderly fashion, they could “freely and fully have and enjoye his and their owne judgments and consciences.”⁷⁶ Given Williams’ willingness to support Jane Verin’s liberty of conscience in 1638, it is no accident that the Charter of 1663 uses gender neutral language in codifying that liberty for all Rhode Islanders to enjoy. In the letter, Williams acknowledges with gratitude John Clarke’s respect for the peace and liberty of others as having been a determining factor in the royal decision to grant the charter, but he also goes on to express his belief that the “waight wch turn’d the scale with him was the truth of God [...] a just Libertie to all Mens Spirits in Spirituall matters together with the peace and prosperitie of the whole Colony.”⁷⁷

In *Fierce Communion: Family and Community in Early America*, Helena Wall concludes that “Colonial society began by deferring to the needs of the community and ended by deferring to the rights of the individual.”⁷⁸ In the case of Rhode Island and the problem of liberty of conscience, this is clearly true. Although the Verin case set no precedent for subsequent cases involving women’s rights in Rhode Island, it must be examined within the full context of events both in Old and New England. Very early in its development, the Verin Case forced Williams and other residents to confront the very issues which were perceived to be undermining the quiet and calm of England and the Massachusetts Bay colony, namely, the right to dissent with the Church of England, the issue of liberty of conscience, the differing positions of Puritanism on the issue of domestic violence, the place of women in Puritan social and religious life, and the role of civil government in responding to these developments.

AFTERWARD

Joshua Verin left New England and arrived in Barbados by September 1663. He appears on the register of St. James parish, Barbados, in December 1679. At the time he owned ten acres and eleven slaves. On October 7, 1694, he married Agnes Simpson at St. Michael’s in Barbados and died on March 15, 1695. As a landholder and member of the local congregation, Verin had clearly been accepted by the new congregational community there. Jane Verin, the cause of much unrest in the Verin family, disappears from the historical record after 1640.

⁷⁵ *Correspondence of Roger Williams*, I 1629-1653, pp. 534-41.

⁷⁶ Charter, 8 July 1663, *Records of Rhode Island*, II, 10.

⁷⁷ *Correspondence of Roger Williams*, I 1629-1653, p. 536.

⁷⁸ Helena M. Wall. *Fierce Communion: Family and Community in Early America* (Cambridge, MA, 1990), p. vii.

**MISSION MOSTLY ACCOMPLISHED:
NARRATIVES OF JESUIT SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
IN HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA, 1640-1772¹**

PAUL SHORE

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Among the many entries appearing in the *Catalogus Studiosorum* of the Jesuit university in Kassa, which was founded in 1657 and which continued with a few interruptions under the direction of the Jesuits until 1773, four stand out. On 28 August 1724, Adalbertus Fabiani, a *Principista*, or student in one of the lower classes of the school, was killed by a “guardian of the plums” (*occisus a custode prunorum*) over an undisclosed sum of money.² In July of 1740, a few months before the commencement of the War of Austrian Succession, Andreas Cetto left the *Grammatista* class (also one of the lower classes) to join the Imperial army as a drummer boy.³ At about perhaps the same time Antonius Lerman, who in 1739-1740 had been a second-year theology student, died while attending plague victims in Nagyvárad.⁴ Finally, next to the name of Joannes Geger, who appears in the *Catalogus* for the 1723-1724 academic year as a first-year theology student (as an *externus* or non-Jesuit) is a notation written in a second hand that he had left the priesthood and married. Next to this notation is a single word in a third hand: “mortuus” (dead).⁵

Four different students, four different fates: the recording of these data suggests some of the successes, challenges, and failures that the Society of Jesus encountered in Royal Hungary and Transylvania during the more than two centuries it was active in the region. The worldwide Jesuit enterprise sought, during the first period of its history, between its creation in 1540 and its suppression in 1773, to convert, educate, influence, and to some degree control the populations which it came in contact with. Jesuits also

¹ I would like to acknowledge the staffs of the library of the Benedictine Archabbey of Pannonhalma and the City Archives of Kassa, Slovakia, for their assistance in the preparation of this essay.

² *Catalogus Studiosorum Almae et Episcopalis Academiae Cassoviensis Societatis Iesv ab anno MDCLXXXIII*, Archiv 216, folio 94r, Mesta Košice (AMK hereafter).

³ *Catalogus Studiosorum*, 216, folio 134v, AMK.

⁴ *Catalogus Studiosorum*, 216, folio 131v, AMK.

⁵ *Catalogus Studiosorum*, 216, folio 92r *et passim*, AMK.

endeavored to foster and perpetuate their institutional culture, and to promote the values of that culture in the broader society through various means.⁶ In doing so, the Jesuits by the mid-17th century had become the single most significant cultural and educational force in the world.⁷

In Royal Hungary, where the Society arrived in 1561, Jesuits faced especially daunting obstacles to their program. This was not merely because Calvinism and, to a lesser degree, Lutheranism were deeply engrained in the culture of the towns where Jesuits attempted to establish schools and programs of conversion. The connection between the Society and the House of Austria also provoked suspicion among the independent burghers and aristocrats of the region, while peasants in some districts had to be forcibly brought back to the Catholic fold. Moreover, the Jesuits' undeniable complicity in the "Bloody Assizes" of Eperjes in 1687 guaranteed that the hostility of a significant segment of the population would far exceed the usual inter-confessional enmity and instead crystallize into a hatred of the Society as an instrument of oppression, torture, and enslavement. The legendary cruelty of Father Nicolaus Kelio in the interrogation of prisoners became part of the collective memory of the Calvinist community of the region.⁸ To the southeast in Transylvania, Jesuits faced similar resistance from Calvinists, plus the challenges of supporting a Greek-Catholic or Uniate Church in the face of opposition from Orthodox believers.⁹

Add to this mix the lurking horror of the plague,¹⁰ periodic incursions by Turkish and Tartar forces, the regular threats of famine, flood, drought, diseases decimating livestock populations, the inevitable fires,¹¹ and even the occasional earthquake,¹² and there were innumerable chances for tragedy and setbacks to the Jesuit program.¹³ Yet the

⁶ See also Howard Louthan, *Converting Bohemia: Force and Persuasion in Catholic Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 159-160; 211-12.

⁷ Specifically, John Bossy locates "the height of Jesuit influence in the Empire between 1560 [a strikingly early date] and 1630." John Bossy, *Peace in the Post-Reformation* (Cambridge / New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 63.

⁸ Jan Kvačala, *Dejiny reformace na Slovensku [Podelová kniha Hurbanovej ev. Literárnej spoločnosti na rok 1935 číslo 33]* (V Lipt. Sv. Mikuláši: Nákladom spolku Trnocius. Tlačené v knihtačiarňi Bratrov Ráuzsovcov, 1935), 240.

⁹ Paul Shore, *Jesuits and the Politics of Religious Pluralism in Eighteenth-century Transylvania* (Aldershot; Rome: Ashgate; Institutum Historicum S. I., 2007), 27-54.

¹⁰ Plague struck Hungary and Transylvania 17 times between 1640 and 1711. Ágoston Gábor and Oborni Teréz, "17. század" in Szák Gyula (ed.), *A magyar újkor története* (Budapest: Pannonica, 2007), 75-139; here 100.

¹¹ *Historia Collegii Homonna-Vnghvariensis*, folio 48r; *Historia Residentiae Eperiensienis Soc'is Jesv ab Anno 1673 ad Annum 1756 inclusivè*, Ms. I, Ab 90, folio 42v, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Könyvtára (ELTEK hereafter).

¹² Gyenis András, "Régi jezsuita rendházak," <http://mek.oszk.hu/00000/00014/00014.htm> (accessed 2 April 2009).

¹³ The last Mongol invasion of Hungary occurred as late as 1717, when hundreds of prisoners were seized and held for ransom. Fogarassy Zoltán, "Az utolsó tatárjárás Magyarországon," *Szabolcs-Szatmár-Beregi Szemle* 42, 1 (2007), 304-19; here 304. The entire Hungarian landscape was devastated in the seventeenth century. Royal Hungary had received savage treatment from its Habsburg rulers even before wars of "liberation" began in earnest after 1683. Robert John Weston

Tridentine, triumphalist ideology of the Counter-Reformation Society compelled Jesuit writers to compose a narrative in which virtue inexorably overcame depravity and indiscipline, the Church was victorious over her enemies, and Jesuits, by emulating their predecessors, perpetuated the transnational institutional culture of their Society.¹⁴ These narratives reveal both internal tensions as well as tensions among different narratives.

I

Several persistent themes may be identified in the narratives of Jesuit activity in the Habsburg East, a place of shifting frontiers and porous borders, all of which lay within the huge Austrian Province of the Society. These themes include: retribution, a complex and situationally derived set of definitions of success, the struggle for self-denial, and converging patterns of recorded Jesuit responses to both good and bad circumstances.

Given the Christian message of forgiveness, the emphasis on retribution in the Society's documents may be the most surprising to us today, but it has a long pedigree going back to the Old Testament. Jesuit polemics, homiletics, drama, and "official" record keeping such as *Diaria* and *Annuae* all report divine retribution for sacrilegious or impious acts.¹⁵ An anonymous Jesuit writing from Kolozsvár in Transylvania in the mid-17th century describes a Protestant preacher who dies shortly after debating a Jesuit, and a foolish peasant blinded after tossing a stone at a crucifix.¹⁶ But some of the most lurid accounts of retribution are reserved for men who left or were dismissed from the Society, or who never completed Jesuit training. The tone of some of these accounts stands in opposition to the attitude of the Society's Founder, St. Ignatius of Loyola, who took a relatively lenient and realistic view of the dismissal of future Jesuits in training.

Not so forgiving was János Nádasí, one of the most prolific and influential of Hungary's seventeenth-century Jesuits and confessor to Eleonora, the widow of Emperor

Evans, *Austria, Hungary and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe c. 1683-1867* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 11.

¹⁴ Recent scholarship has applied discourse analysis to definitions such as "superstition" employed by Jesuits and others in the religious competition in the Habsburg East. See Maria Crăciun, "Superstition and religious differences in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Transylvania" in Eszter Andor and István György Tóth (eds.), *Frontiers of Faith: Religious Exchange and the Constitution of Religious Identities 1400-1750* (Budapest: Central European University / European Science Foundation, 2001), 213-31; here 217.

¹⁵ Punishment for bad behavior colors religious discourse throughout Hungary and Transylvania during this period. Graeme Murdock, "Death, Prophecy and Judgment in Transylvania," in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (eds.), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge / New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 206-22, here 220.

¹⁶ Paul Shore, "Fragmentum annuarum Collegii Societatis Iesu Claudiopolitani: The Account of a Jesuit Mission in Transylvania, 1659-1662," *Renaissance and Reformation Review* 8.1 (2006), 76-96; here 86. Since the document in which these miraculous events were recorded was not intended for circulation, even within the Society, we may suppose that the Jesuit writer believed implicitly in the account he was composing.

Ferdinand III.¹⁷ Nádasí's unpublished manuscript, entitled *Tristes annuae Desertorum* ["The Misfortunes of Those who Deserted"], makes it clear what could happen to a man who turned away from the Society. Here are a few of Nádasí's more lurid examples. Lucas Komenski, a Jesuit brother in Nagyszombat, then only a short distance from the Ottoman frontier, spoke disrespectfully to other brothers (he called them "cobblers") and to novices alike, and was dismissed from the Society. The errant former Jesuit was then rumored to have taken up with a deserter from the Franciscans, and while leading a vagabond's life he was robbed of his money, his clothes, and his weapons, wounded in the head and left to die.¹⁸ Another Jesuit dropout died suddenly in Kassa while writing letters critical of the Society.¹⁹ Georgius Miller, in Pozsony in 1655 to attend the coronation of Leopold I, suffered arguably the most ignominious fate of all. Miller was present at a presumably wine-fueled conversation about the relative merits of Hungarians and Austrians (Miller was Austrian) which grew heated and degenerated into a brawl, whereupon Miller drew his sword and wounded several *famuli* or servants. Enraged Hungarian nobles pursued him, and although Miller found temporary refuge in a local aristocrat's house, he was soon back on the streets where his adversaries cornered and killed him. Eyewitnesses reported that Miller was not even able to cry out the words "Jesu Maria," the standard exit line of Catholic martyrs of the day.²⁰ Miller's swordplay may mean that he had already left the Society when his fatal encounter occurred (although another Jesuit made good use of his sword—but more about him in a moment).

The stories of these erring ex-Jesuits or almost-Jesuits are intended to convey more than condemnation of those who leave the Society. They also describe retribution for indiscipline, self-indulgence, worldliness, and the "wrong kind" of sensuality (which may also be inferred in the descriptions in the Kassa *Catalogus* of former clergy who are reported to have "died in marriage": after all, eventually all of the university's former students died!)²¹ While the Society demanded extreme mobility, physical effort often to the point of exhaustion, and initiative tempered by obedience, restraint and self-control were also key elements of Jesuit culture. Preoccupation with the potential loss of self-control suffuses the writings of Baroque Jesuits, and in part explains the need to identify the consequences of indiscipline. This indiscipline contrasts with the successful self-discipline described in Jesuit hagiographies, such as those devoted to the Bohemian St. Joannes Nepomucene, who refused to break the seal of confession and was then killed.²² Moralizing

¹⁷ Johann Nepomuk Stoeger, *Scriptores Provinciae Austriae Societatis Jesu*. (Vienna: Typis Congregationis Mechitharisticae, 1855), 239-40; Wix Györgyné, *Régi Magyarorsági Szerzők. I. A kezdetektől 1700-ig*, ed. and intro. P. Vásárhelyi Judit (Budapest: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 2007), 562.

¹⁸ Joannes Nádasí, *Tristes annuae Desertorum*, 118.F 2, 330-31, Pannonhalmi Főapátsági Könyvtár (PFK hereafter).

¹⁹ Nádasí, *Tristes annuae*, 118. F2, 266, PFK.

²⁰ Nádasí, *Tristes annuae*, 118. F2, 382-383, PFK.

²¹ Nádasí mentions a Transylvanian noble who left the Jesuit novitiate in 1633 and married. A thief broke into his house had stabbed him to death with a lance. Nádasí, *Tristes annuae*, 118. F2, 344-345, PFK.

²² Paul Shore, "The Several Lives of St. John Nepomuk," in J. Chorpenning (ed.), *He Spared Himself in Nothing": Essays on the Life and Thought of John N. Neumann, C. Ss. R., Fourth*

school dramas and emblematics also stressed this theme—think of the hardworking bees and industrious blacksmiths found in some of these images.²³ Thus while an unmistakable flavor of *schadenfreude* lingers in some of the Jesuit accounts of retribution falling upon blasphemers and the like, the Jesuit exaltation of self-discipline also derived from the concrete fact that many of the Society's startling successes were the result of just such self-discipline.

II

The Society of Jesus, from its inception, contrasted itself from both the older contemplative orders and with orders that cultivated their identity through collective ritual, such as the daily chanting of the Holy Office.²⁴ Contemporaries sometimes looked askance at what seemed to be the Jesuits' lack of demonstrated collective piety, but the absence of such rituals in the Society's life also meant that a sense of solidarity and relation to the physical world would have to be found elsewhere. The Society addressed these human needs, perhaps unintentionally, through its work in the world, and these activities inevitably brought its members contact with those who would live all their lives in the wider secular world. Among these were the majority of the students in Jesuit schools, which brings us to Andreas Cetto, the drummer boy. We cannot know what motivated the Jesuit record keeper to note that this young student left the Kassa academy to seek a very dangerous and possibly lethal path as an unarmed member of an Imperial regiment. We can begin to contextualize the shift in setting from the potentially sacred and generally safe and patterned world of the Jesuit school to the profane, chaotic, and deadly environment of the battlefield. And we can speculate as to what such a departure might have meant to the Kassa Jesuit community. Historians of the Jesuits, addressing the relation of the Society to the physical and material, have tended to focus on the plastic arts, on architecture, and, to a lesser degree, on play production and the printing of books. Less well known or understood is the relationship between Jesuits and the pre-industrial world of artisans, craftsmen, and laborers. In fact, the Society's communities across Europe were staffed with Jesuit brothers or *coadjutores temporales*, who filled the roles of pharmacist, stone mason, printer, carpenter, barber, silversmith, architect, musical instrument builder, tailor, bookkeeper, and many others.²⁵

Bishop of Philadelphia, on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of his Canonization (Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University Press, 2003), 3-24.

²³ Staud Géza, *1561-1773* 3 vols. (Budapest: Magyar ö, 1988); Yasmin Annabel Haskell, *Loyola's Bees: Ideology and Industry in Jesuit Latin Didactic Poetry* (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2003); *Imago Primi Saeculi Societatis Iesu a Provincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata...* (Antwerp: Plantin, 1640).

²⁴ John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA / London: Harvard University Press, 1993), 135-36.

²⁵ P. J. Shore, "The Unknown Brethren of Cluj: Jesuit *coadjutores temporales* in the Heart of Transylvania, 1690-1773," *Historical Yearbook* 5 (2008), 3-12.

In the earliest days of the Society, brothers had been forbidden to be taught to read and write. Over time this regulation was gradually ignored and then dropped, and many Hungarian brothers in the course of their careers performed both numerate and literate and more physically applied tasks that kept Jesuit communities functioning.²⁶ While Jesuit priests earned a deserved reputation as intellectuals who scorned messy sciences such as medicine and preferred to study the distant stars, Jesuit brothers profoundly influenced the climate of their communities, and, by association, the atmosphere of the schools associated with them. They did this both through their roles as workers in the material world and through their piety, which, as their obituary notices (composed by Jesuit priests) illustrate, was often highly visible within their community. This connection to practical work and applied skill was reinforced by close connections between Jesuits and non-Jesuit craftsmen and professionals. An enigmatic entry in the *Diarium* of the Kassa residence for 5 August 1702 reports that the community sent “our doctor” to an officer who had been wounded in a duel with another soldier.²⁷ Records for the Kassa Jesuit community list no “medicus” among its personnel, so the exact relationship between doctor and community in this case must remain a mystery. A similar hint of close association with the medical profession is found in the *Diarium* of the Kassa community for 9 May 1673 where the redoubtable Father Franciscus Topos (who ten years later would die a prisoner of Imre Thököly’s troops) is grouped with the residence’s apothecary and an unnamed “chirurgus” who was apparently not a Jesuit.²⁸

While Jesuit brothers went about the business of executing their crafts, students in Jesuit schools frequently moved into similar craft occupations. Joannes Lenkes, a *Grammatista* in Kassa in 1731-1732, became a wagon driver; his classmate, Josephus de Stegner, became a soldier.²⁹ Joannes Linter, in the *Principista* class of 1724-1725, eventually left school to become a surgeon or chirurgus (a craft also pursued by Jesuit brothers),³⁰ while Joannes Pigay became an “artifex.”³¹ For many the Jesuit educational program was a “drop-in, drop-out” experience never intended to lead to higher studies, a fact that must have been readily apparent to the fathers as they taught, and which they apparently did not consider a symptom of failure of either their students or themselves. Jesuit teachers would have argued that the self-discipline and morality gained in their schools benefited everyone.

But is it still a leap from the secular world of crafts, professions, and trades to the theatre of war—until we remember the many ways and activities in which the Jesuits of the Austrian Province and the Imperial armies intersected. The most conspicuous of these were

²⁶ Jesuit *coadjutores temporales* possessed varied and highly developed skills. Brother Paulus Benyo, who served in Eperjes, spoke four languages. *Historia Residentiae Eperiensiensis ad annum 1771*, Ms. I, Ab 91, folio 11r. Domincus Strassinger (1636-1694), a Jesuit brother who worked in half a dozen locations, was noted for his skill in Latin. *Elogia Defunctorum VII*, Ms. I, Ab 143, 130, ELTEK.

²⁷ *Diarium Collegii Cassoviensis*, Ms. I, Ab 86, folio 252v, ELTEK.

²⁸ *Historia Residentiae Eperiensiensis*, Ms. I, Ab 90, folio 33v, ELTEK.

²⁹ *Catalogus Studiosorum*, 216, folio 112v, AMK.

³⁰ *Catalogus Studiosorum*, 216, folio 96v, AMK.

³¹ *Catalogus Studiosorum*, 216, folio 166r, AMK.

the *missiones castrenses*, in which Jesuits served as military chaplains.³² One of the most famous of these was Lucas Kolich, who was present at the siege of Buda in 1686, where he braved danger to administer last rites to the dying.³³ Another connection between the military and the Society was in the backgrounds of some of the Jesuit brothers who had followed the profession of arms before entering the Society.³⁴ Ignatius himself had been a soldier before receiving the wound at Pamplona that set him on the course to sainthood, and although the often repeated characterization of the Society as “military” in its organization is only at best partially accurate, in fact individual Jesuits could demonstrate a distinctly militant approach to adversity and could successfully combine martial arts with more literary pursuits.

Ladislaus Paulus Baranyi, who played a major role in the creation of the Greek Catholic Church in Transylvania, exemplifies this melding of the Jesuit mission and martial skill. Baranyi was also a widely read author of devotional texts who traveled the backwoods of the Habsburg East in layman’s clothes and under an alias. One day, returning from giving the viaticum to a remotely situated Catholic, Baranyi was passing through the forest “with only one servant” (does this suggest that some Jesuits often traveled with several servants?) when he was set upon by “heretic (probably Calvinist) noblemen.” In response to their own threatening swords, Baranyi *drew his own sword* (did he usually carry a sword?), cut at his assailants, and they ran away.³⁵ This episode might be contrasted with the less self-disciplined and certainly less successful experience of Georgius Miller. On another occasion the intrepid Baranyi “rescued the inhabitants of an entire district” from a Tartar attack. The success of a particular Jesuit might therefore be defined on occasion by his demonstrated capacity for resistance, resourcefulness, and, when circumstances absolutely required it, martial skill. Jesuit obituary notices abound with stories of how Jesuits endured through times of danger (*periculum* is a constantly reiterated theme) and survive to go on to other accomplishments. To cite only one instance, Martinus Cseles, one of the pioneering historians of Medieval Hungarian history, was captured and carted from place to place by Rákóczi’s soldiers for more than a year but was eventually freed and returned to his scholarly and teaching pursuits.³⁶ Thus success might also be understood as the training of young men to conduct their lives with these same tools, along with the more polished skills of eloquence and good manners. Jesuits traveling incognito might also

³² Juhász István, “Nyugati missziós törekvések a románoknál,” in Deér József and Gáldi László (eds), *Magyarok és románok* 2 vols. [=A Magyar Történettudományi Intézet Évkönyve] (Budapest: Athanaeum Irodalmi és Nyomdai Rt. Nyomdája, 1973), 251-336, here 314.

adatbank.transindex.ro/html/alcim_pdf3488pdf (accessed 26 March 2009).

³³ Matthias Tanner, *Societas Jesu Apostolorum Imitatrix* (Pragae: Typis Universitatis Carolo Ferdinandae, 1694), 940.

³⁴ Michael Klein (?-1679), a *coadjutor temporalis*, had been a soldier before entering the Society, although Satan placed obstacles in his path that caused him to fall into temptation and “prius saeculi delitias.” After penance, Klein was readmitted to the Society. *Elogia Defunctorum VIII*, Ms. I, Ab 144, 489b, ELTEK.

³⁵ Velics László, *Vázlatok a magyar jezsuiták múltjából*, Vol. 3: 1690-1773. (Budapest: A Szent István Társulat Kiadása, 1914), 9.

³⁶ Stoeger, *Scriptores*, 50.

disguise themselves as soldiers.³⁷ Viewed in this light, the departure of Andreas Cetto to the army would not have seemed so abnormal, since it might possibly lead to exposure to valor and victory.

On the other hand, what might seem to us as defeat could be recast in Jesuit narratives as success, through analogizing with other events or by the retelling of the story that placed emphasis on the depravity of the Society's opponents. In the spring of 1708 Joannes Pergauer was returning from Moldavia when in the Transylvanian town of Sibiu he was attacked by bandits and shot four times. While being transported on a cart he died, a mobile Jesuit to the very end. The account of Pergauer's death given in the *Litterae Annuae* of the Austrian Province for 1711—the previous two years had been filled with many disruptions in communication owing to the Rákóczi rebellion—characterize his assailants as wild and savage men, while Pergauer's wounds are described in terms reminiscent of Christ's.³⁸ The Jesuit's sacrifice is to be celebrated more than mourned, since the purpose of the Jesuit's life is to be a witness to the faith, and martyrdom is the ultimate act of witness. One of the most influential Jesuit publications of the late 17th century, Matthias Tanner's *Societas Jesu usque ad sanguinis et vitae profusionem*, was entirely devoted to the martyrdom of Jesuits and lavishly illustrated with scenes of their deaths, and thereby provided guideposts for the future composition of Jesuit sacrifice.³⁹ Deaths such as Pergauer's were thus not only acts of witness, they were also expressions of *aemulatio* of Jesuits who had gone before, and the retelling of each of their stories moved towards a point of convergence at which the essential virtues of the Society were confirmed and glorified. Less deadly but nonetheless harrowing experiences—such as that of Ladislaus Vlesnowski, who worked deep inside Ottoman territory in Andocs until he was shot in the foot by “criminals” and then somehow made his way to a nobleman's court where he distinguished himself as a preacher—added to the converging corpus of Jesuit lore with its themes of service, suffering, mobility, and eventual success.⁴⁰ Considering that vocations for the Austrian Province remained steady right up until 1773, these narratives of Jesuit sacrifice do not seem to have dissuaded potential Jesuits, and may have even inspired some young men to join the Society.

Returning to our students in Kassa, let us consider Antonius Lerman, the secular priest who died nursing plague victims, probably during the terrible year of plague of 1739. The entry recording Lerman's death is another piece of evidence of how Jesuits regarded success. Even though Lerman was not “one of Ours,” as the Society's records described Jesuits, the decisions that he made leading to his death as a *victima charitatis* show that not only had the Society managed to convey its basic values to one of its *externi* students, but

³⁷ An *articulus* of 1655, writing of the Jesuits, notes “[...] vestibis militaribus aut aliorum hominum latitant [...]” Péter Bod, *Historia Hungarorum Ecclesiastica* 3 vols. C Rauwenhoff and J. J. Prins eds. (Lugduni Batavorum: J. Brill, 1888-1890), tomus II, liber II, 321.

³⁸ Nicolaus Nilles, *Symbolae ad illustrandam historiam ecclesiae orientalis in terris coronae S. Stephani* (Innsbruck: F. Rauch, 1885), 384.

³⁹ Matthias Tanner, *Societas Jesu ad sanguinis et vitae profusionem militans...* (Prague: Typis Universitatis Carolo-Ferdinandae 1675).

⁴⁰ *Catalogus Defunctorum IV*, Ms. I, Ab 140, 137, ELTEK; Ladislaus Lukács, *Catalog personarum et officiorum Provinciae Austriae S. I.*, vol. 2 [= *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*] (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1982), 787.

that this student had found the fortitude to carry out these values in life and in death. In his death Lerman emulated countless Jesuits, priests and brothers, who had also been *victimae charitatis*. Lerman not only gave his life in service to others, he also engaged directly with the physical manifestation of God's will, since for Counter-Reformation Jesuits the ultimate cause of diseases, especially the plague, was God.⁴¹

The interrelation of God's will with the experience of success and setback is found throughout Jesuit records, sometimes in a tone of a slight bewilderment as to the ways of the Almighty. But Jesuits generally tried to keep a stiff upper lip. The yearly report from Eperjes for 1736 ran through a short list of *damna* or misfortunes, and then concluded with the words, "But since all these things come from the thrice best and greatest God, let the glory be to him."⁴² While God was the ultimate source of all things, He did not always get the immediate credit for catastrophe: when a fire broke out on the roof of the Jesuit church in Kassa on a June day in 1701, and spread rapidly, destroying fifty burghers' houses, the writer of the community's *Diarium* observed, "The common opinion is that the fire was started by a *malevolus*" (a person of ill will).⁴³ These slightly smaller misfortunes presented big challenges to Jesuit writers. While a spectacular martyrdom or even the extinction of an entire Jesuit missionary project, such as occurred in Japan in the late 16th century, could be woven into the larger story of the Society emerging triumphant through times of severe testing, the daily and drawn out hardships of a mission post located in a none too prosperous corner of Europe resisted incorporation into a heroic narrative, and instead invited subjective and emotionally tinged responses.⁴⁴ These difficulties were often accompanied by the inevitably disappointing actions by a few of the students of Jesuit schools.

The death of young Adalbertus Fabiani in an obscure quarrel over money is such an instance of failure and disappointment. A less extreme example of an undoubtedly disappointing outcome is the case of Michael Hamiel, a student among the *Minores* in 1734-1735, who was expelled from the Kassa school for thievery ("ejectus ob furta[m]").⁴⁵ Kassa University records also report the death of a student at another student's hands during the 1672-1673 academic year, a case which the university rector sought to have tried

⁴¹ It should be noted that while this assertion can be made with certainty for the seventeenth century, it is at least possible that by the 1730s some Jesuits in Western Europe might have begun to move away from this absolutist position. For Jesuits of the Austrian Province, however, we may be quite certain that they saw all disease as God's doing. A variation on this theme occurs in the obituary notice of Franciscus Janesco, a scholastic in Kassa who died in 1772, which states that "it pleased the Most Holy Mother [of God] to summon him to his reward." *Annuae Collegii Cassoviensis Societatis Iesv, 1735-1772*, Ms. I, Ab 89, folio 169r, ELTEK.

⁴² *Historia Residentiae Eperiensienis*, Ms. I, Ab 90, folio 65v, ELTEK.

⁴³ *Diarium Collegii Cassoviensis*, Ms. I, Ab 86, vol. 2, folios 208v-209r, ELTEK. See also Wick Béla, *A jezsuita rend története Kassán* (Bratislava-Pozsony: Concordia Könyvnyomda és kiadóvállalat, 1931), 18.

⁴⁴ The decision of the Austrian commander in Belgrade to use a Catholic church as a granary prompted Ignatius Perizhoff to write in 1689 to the Primate of Hungary, "God does not have a home in Belgrade." Quoted in Mijo Korade, Mira Aleksić and Jerko Matoš, *Jesuits and Croatian Culture* [=Most / The Bridge, a journal of Croatian Literature, vol. 15], Anita Peti trans. (Zagreb: Društvo Hrvatskih književnika, 1992), 103.

⁴⁵ *Catalogus Studiosorum*, 216, folio 120r, AMK.

in academic court.⁴⁶ The anonymous author of the *Historia* of the Eperjes residence expressed more personal feelings, possibly tinged with a non-Hungarian's negative views of Hungarians, regarding students when he described the situation in 1704, when the Rákóczi rebellion was at its height. Several of the middle-level classes had been cancelled since "the students seem to prefer the gunpowder of their homeland over academics. And as for the few who remain in school, they are disgusting to the Muses."⁴⁷ Crises of this nature posed the greatest challenges to the Jesuit imperative to create a triumphalist and edifying narrative, since they not only pointed to a failure of the educational program of the *Ratio Studiorum* of 1599 to inculcate the proper morals in students, but in the first three cases mentioned, also raised the possibility of *scandalum*, an anathema to Jesuits. Two of the great preoccupations of 17th-century Jesuits were *scandalum* and *pacem cum externis*;⁴⁸ the latter could be cultivated through longstanding contacts and negotiations that might calm even adversaries, but the latter might strike unexpectedly, and from within, furnishing fuel for the Society's enemies, who never ceased to produce literature accusing the Jesuits of everything from regicide to the seduction of widows and innocent girls.⁴⁹

In fact, persisting anxiety about *scandalum* and insecurity about possible failure formed the inverse of Jesuit triumphalism; the tension between these two polar opposites created an environment in which the cultivation of *indifferentia* might prove very helpful.⁵⁰ *Indifferentia* could protect a Jesuit from the dangers of vanity in the face of success (although the Society's critics charged that Jesuits were still quite susceptible to this vice). *Indifferentia* and the capacity to remain *immobiliter* also helped Jesuits cope with the frustrating lack of success of their schools, which might have nothing to do with the capacities of students. Plague in 1735 forced the closing of Jesuit schools in Kolozsvár; three years later the disease returned, perhaps reintroduced by the presence of an infected corpse.⁵¹ In 1645, the Nagyszombat University was struggling to recover from the ravages of war. The composer of the *Matricula* of the University noted "[...] it was very hard to begin the academic year. Peace is declared, but it is only the shadow of peace. We returned to the Muses, but the start of the school year had to be deferred until January."⁵²

And Jesuits could recognize the value of *indifferentia* when they encountered in it others; Paulus Beke, traveling in Moldavia in the 1640s, wrote approvingly of the hermits

⁴⁶ O. R. Halaga, "Z dejin košickéj university," *Historický časopis* 4 (1956) 521-535; here 529-30.

⁴⁷ *Historia Residentiae Eperiensienis*, Ms. I, Ab 90, folio 21r, ELTEK.

⁴⁸ Letter of Vitus Sachta, S. I., Olomouc, 10 July 1606. *Historia Soc. 137*, folio 182r Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (ARSI hereafter).

⁴⁹ For an analysis of the most significant of these anti-Jesuit publications, see Sabina Pavone, *The Wily Jesuits and the Monita Secreta: The Forged Secret Instructions of the Jesuits: Myth and Reality*, John Murphy, SJ, trans. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2005).

⁵⁰ The Jesuit curriculum of the *Ratio Studiorum* included attention devoted to *indifferentia* through the *Paradoxa* of Cicero. Timothy J. Reiss, "Revising Descartes: On Subject and Community" in Patrick Coleman, Jayne Lewis, and Jill Kowalik (eds.), *Representations of the Self from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Cambridge / New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 16-38; here 30.

⁵¹ *Historia S. J. Claudiopoli*, 2039 FMI/1608 folio 245v; folio 230r, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár.

⁵² Quoted in Mészáros István, "A nagyszombati jezsuita gimnázium és egyetem 17. századi anyakönyve," *Regnum: Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok. Essays in Church History in Hungary* 14, 1-4 (2002), 97-106; here 105.

there who avoided the conflicts between the Latin and Greek Christians.⁵³ These men seldom showed their faces, avoided meat, and grew lean through fasting. This retiring asceticism was something quite different from the better known exhibitionist self-mortification promoted by the Society in the form of flagellant processions and exposure to cold. But it resonated with a strain of inward-directed self-discipline and distancing from the distractions of the world also practiced by the baroque Society.

Self-discipline was both a means towards success and a demonstration of that success. Father Baranyi's long service in the Habsburg East was in part the result of an iron will wedded to an iron constitution. The story of his successful defense against multiple attackers became another chapter in the lore of a Society that had been founded by a Basque nobleman originally wishing to be a knight errant in the service of the Virgin. Far less swashbuckling but still worthy of mention in his obituary was the fortitude of Jesuit brother Laurentius Petrisch, who like a number of other Jesuits, was tempted by a woman described as a "Siren" but remained a steadfast "Ulysses" in the face of temptation.⁵⁴ (Two points to consider here. One, how do we know this story? It must have been initially recounted by Petrisch himself. And two, what does it say about the culture of the Jesuits that this particular episode and others like it would merit inclusion in obituary notices?) Self-discipline of the sort demonstrated by Petrisch addressed both the anxiety over *scandalum* and provided a model for Jesuits who found themselves in delicate situations with women.⁵⁵ Let us consider one more example from archival sources to illustrate this point. The setting is Eperjes, in 1696. A widow has been tormented by nightly infestations of an "incubus", a demon seeking to have sexual intercourse with her, and in this case taking the form of her deceased husband. With the help of a Jesuit priest the woman is freed from the demon, although she has to perform a public penance (implying she had failed to resist the demon?).⁵⁶

The following year another woman, a recent convert from Unitarianism, is similarly delivered from nocturnal demonic harassment in the same town.⁵⁷ Setting aside the unanswerable question of what each of these women may have actually been experiencing, we must consider that Eperjes was a small community of at most three thousand inhabitants, a place of face to face relationships, tightly twined kinship connections and probably incessant gossip. The news of these exorcisms would have traveled rapidly through the town, where many Protestants continued to regard the Jesuits

⁵³ Since Beke was once chained up in a barn as a result of a dispute with a local Moldavian official, he knew something about conflict between Latin and Greek Christians. Benda Kálmán, *Moldvai Csángó-Magyar Okmánytár 1467-1706* (Budapest: Magyarságkutató Intézet, 1999), 507.

⁵⁴ *Elogia Defunctorum IV*, Ms. I, Ab 140, 320, ELTEK.

⁵⁵ *Scandalum* could take other forms as well. The suicide in 1628 of the well known Jesuit traveler Nicolas Trigault was covered up by Jesuit officials. Dame Olwen Hufton, personal communication, 12 February 2009.

⁵⁶ *Historia Residentiae Eperiensienis*, Ms. I, Ab 90, folio 6r, ELTEK. Demons were active on many sexual fronts. In seventeenth-century Transylvania, one was reported to have boasted how he had gotten a Calvinist pastor to fornicate with his own daughter. Tóth István György, "The Missionary and the Devil: Ways of Conversion in Catholic Missions in Hungary" in Andor and Tóth (eds.), *Frontiers of Faith*, 79-87; here 86.

⁵⁷ *Historia Residentiae Eperiensienis*, Ms. I, Ab 90, folio 7r, ELTEK.

with contempt or hatred. Even devout Catholics might be easily persuaded that a Jesuit was transgressing by lingering about a woman's bed.⁵⁸ Discretion, conspicuous rectitude, and evident self-discipline were called for every step of the way, as they were in innumerable other situations, such as the conversion of a Roma woman who had previously been a Muslim (the *Historia* mentions that she abandoned the "green garment under which she concealed her sex"),⁵⁹ the presenting of a candle that had been blessed to a Muslim midwife in Transylvania,⁶⁰ or the reforming of a woman who had spent twenty years of sin among the Tartars.⁶¹ Each of these acts was not only an act of Christian charity; it was a performance of Jesuit virtue—a specifically masculine virtue, as there were no female Jesuits. This virtue was echoed the narratives of Jesuit school dramas and other performances which sought to redeem the Society's reputation from the thieves, would-be alchemists, dropouts, brawlers, and murder victims who had also been counted among their communities.⁶²

III

The Jesuits of the Habsburg East are identifiable as individuals, but time and time again the bureaucratic imperatives of the Society caused their individual stories to converge into a synthesized narrative which reflected not only the collective experience of Jesuits in the eastern Austrian Province but also the broader story of the Society, which saw its role as embracing the entire world and its goals no less than the salvation of entire peoples.

But the narratives of success and failure generated by Jesuits in the Habsburg East are also notable for what they do not address. Scientific investigations, descriptions of local cultures, and linguistic studies, all mainstays of Jesuit writings of the period, do not form an important part of this corpus.⁶³ The practical demands of extending and solidifying the position of the Roman Church took precedence over everything else. The east included a frontier between two worlds of literacy, but not one that challenged Jesuits intellectually,

⁵⁸ Lyndal Roper sees a "sexual logic" in exorcisms performed during this period by Catholic priests, since possessed women's behavior might also be perceived as excessively masculine. Admission of sexual experience with nocturnal demon might also fall under this category. Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religions in Early Modern Europe* (London / New York: Routledge: 1994), 190-91.

⁵⁹ *Historia Residentiae Eperiensis*, Ms. I, Ab, 90, folio 12v, ELTEK.

⁶⁰ *Litterae annuae Provinciae Austriae 1662, Austria 142*, folio 186r, ARSI.

⁶¹ *Historia Residentiae Eperiensis*, Ms. I, Ab 90, folio 16v, ELTEK.

⁶² Nadasi implicitly acknowledges the impact these "failed" Jesuits had on the culture of the Society when he mentions such rogues as Christophorus Seeman, who after his dismissal from the Jesuits dabbled in alchemy, denied he had ever been a priest, and connived to marry a young noblewoman. Nadasi, *Tristes annuae*, 118. F2, 347-48, PFK. Other internal scandals are only hinted at, as when in 1756 four "candidati Theologiae," all of whom were "Reverendi Domini" were dismissed from the Kassa University. *Catalogus Studiosorum*, 216, folio 152v, AMK.

⁶³ The eastern reaches of the Austrian Province of the Jesuits did serve as a point of departure for Jesuits journeying eastward, Joannes Grueber (1623-1680) being the most famous of these. C. Wessels, *Early Jesuit Travelers in Central Asia 1603-1721* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1924), 338; *Elogia Defunctorum IX*, Ms. I, Ab 145, 504, ELTEK.

and the engagement of Jesuits with Eastern Rite Christianity is likewise devoid of a significantly spiritual element.⁶⁴

The historian's task of teasing out the personal narratives of Jesuits from the converging historical records of the Society is made more complex by the histories of the Jesuits that were written following the re-establishment of the Society in 1814 and the commencement of the second period of its history. Much of the historical literature produced in the late-19th and early-20th centuries on the Society's earlier enterprises in Hungary was composed by Jesuits and their sympathizers working in an environment where the role of the Society was much smaller and its vision more circumscribed than it had been before 1773.⁶⁵ These writers frequently viewed the accomplishments of the earlier Society through the lens of later events, which included the radical reforms of Joseph II and the anti-clericalism of the French Revolution, and they chose to see its opponents as at best wrongheaded and the Jesuits themselves as victims of persecution (which on occasion they undoubtedly were).

At the same time some Protestant historians, now freed from the civil disabilities under which they had suffered through much of the eighteenth century, returned to the theme of Jesuit as persecutor and plotter (also a valid assessment on occasion, and one receiving fresh impetus from the anti-Jesuit lectures of Jules Michelet and the novels of Eugène Sue)⁶⁶ when writing the histories of their own churches. The development of competing national historical narratives in the last 150 years likewise has led to conflicts over who can claim the heritage of various Jesuits. Questions have arisen that had never been part of the original Jesuit or anti-Jesuit narratives. Was the Jesuit historian Samuel Timon a Hungarian or Slovak? How many Romanians attended the Jesuit university in Kolozsvár?

The recasting of what may be considered the "third" Society of Jesus in the mid-20th century in a more socially activist and ecumenical vein has encouraged Jesuit scholars to view these events from a fresh perspective, one more attuned to interactions between cultures and without an overwhelming Eurocentric bias, and has fostered an environment where non-Catholic scholars feel very welcome participating in dialogue with Jesuits about their past. We must now strive to glimpse the interplay between the individual careers of Jesuits and the larger ideology that both drew these men into the Society and then reshaped their identities. What remains most elusive is a grasp of what individual Jesuits understood themselves to be doing, since they kept their records in a language that was not their native tongue (and of which not all Jesuits had a strong command), and in doing so followed established formulae and epistolary modes that could obscure their own motives and feelings.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Tóth István György, *Literacy and Written Culture in Early Modern Central Europe* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2000), 207.

⁶⁵ Szabó Adorján, *A kassai jezsuiták viszontagságai a Rákóczi-korban* (Kassa: Nyomatott a "Szent Erzsébet"-nyomda Részvénytársaságnál, 1909-1981 [?]), 7.

⁶⁶ Geoffrey Cubitt, *The Jesuit Myth: Conspiracy Theory and Politics in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁶⁷ For example, Ines G. Županov notes that Ignatius of Loyola identified four epistolary writing modes, geo-ethnographic, dialogic, polemical, theatrical, and self-expressive, each of which would shape the organization and content of Jesuit writings. Ines G. Županov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit*

The evidence we do have suggests that the Jesuits of the Habsburg East had complex and at times seemingly conflicted responses to their successes and failures. Circumstances others might have characterized as obstacles appeared in Jesuit chronicles as, if not proofs of success, at least demonstrations of Jesuit virtues.⁶⁸ Armed with the self-discipline and intellectual categories learned in their formation and inculcated with an ideology that exalted the House of Austria as the champion of the Church, Jesuits were still capable of erecting a triumphal arch in Kolozsvár to Francis II Rákóczi, the Habsburgs' archrival, of expressing fear in the face of danger, and of penning letters filled with subjective sorrow and loneliness.⁶⁹ Future investigators of the Jesuit experience in this region must remain mindful of the tension between the architectonic academic and theological systems which defined the Society's mission and the equally real individual, human experiences of Jesuits that collectively formed the execution of that mission, for it is at the human level that Jesuits of Hungary made their most lasting impact.

Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century South India (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 32. Jesuit literacy and inter-Jesuit correspondence may also be contrasted with the broader culture of the Habsburg Counter-Reformation which frequently placed less stress on books and reading and more on the arts. Karl Vocelka, "Enlightenment and the Habsburg Monarchy: History of a Belated and Short-Lived Phenomenon," in Ole Peter Grell and Roy Porter (eds.), *Tolerance in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 196-211; here 197.

⁶⁸ Thus the story of a woman denouncing Jesuits during the 1683 siege of Vienna could be retold to confirm the constancy of the Jesuit preacher Fridericus Jellensiz. *Elogia Defunctorum VIII*, Ms. I, Ab 144, 440 ELTEK.

⁶⁹ Szirtes Zsófia, "Herkules és Diadalkapu: Illusztráció a Rákóczi-szabadságharchoz egy erdélyi kéziratban," *Művészettörténeti Értesítő. A Magyar Régészeti és Művészettörténet Társulat Folyóirata* 57.2 (2008), 303-12. As Rákóczi's troops approached Túrócz, an anonymous Jesuit wrote, "Eramus tota die et nocte, in vigiliis cum maximo timore [...]" *Diarium Residentiae S. J. Thuroszienis ab 1704*, 17 November 1709, Ms. I, Ab 111, folio 125r, ELTEK. Three years earlier in Sárospatak, facing the same army, a Jesuit wrote, "timor undiq." *Historia Residentiae Patakiensis S. J.* Ms. I. Ab 96, folio 86r, ELTEK. In 1650, Father Gregorius Ramasi reported from "Szatensis," "Nam inprimis residentia sit desolatissima, vinea neglecta, praedium vacuum et ruinosum [...]" *Informatio de Statu Transylvaniae et Spe Conversionis Austria 20, Missio Hungarica 1607-1633 et Transylvanica 1570-1650*, folio 360r, ARSI.

TWO POEMS BY ÁPRILY IN SCOTS

TOM HUBBARD and ATTILA DÓSA

Tom Hubbard's most recent collection of poems is *Peacocks and Squirrels* (Akros, 2007), and his first novel, *Marie B.*, on the Ukrainian–French painter Marie Bashkirtseff (1858–1884), was published by Ravenscraig Press in 2008; Dr. Emília Szaffner, the editor of *Epona*, is preparing a Hungarian translation. With Zoltán Töltéssy, he read from his own poems as well as from the Scottish–Hungarian bilingual anthology *At the End of the Broken Bridge: 25 Hungarian Poems 1978–2002* (Carcenet, 2005) on 27 March 2006 at the Research Forum.

Lajos Áprily (1887–1967) was a major twentieth-century Hungarian poet and translator. He translated a range of foreign writers, including Robert Burns. The following translations of two poems by Áprily (*Skót hangulat; Északi rózsák*) were first published in Duncan Glen's poetry magazine *Zed2O* no. 21 (March 2007), and are reprinted here with his widow's kind permission. They are dedicated to the memory of Duncan Glen.

SCOTTISH MUID

Haar on the watter, haar in the parks,
River and white haar o the north.
—O wha has hushed wi her ain milk
This lown earth?

There's tides that swurl ayont aa sicht
Ablow the black craig o the ness.
The drookit sheep hae couried down,
Dovin on the weet gress.

There's unco dreamin in this airt,
Whaur the birks greet throu the souch:
The echo o an auld-warld ballant
In ilka castle-neuk.

And the daurk fisher's boat
Growes ti a ghaist-ship on the seas:
And faddoms deep, Sir Patrick Spens
Lies in a dwam o young leddies.

The sea-maws stoiter i the lift,
 Blinly they faa ti the grey earth.
 Belike I'm dreamin nou myself,
 That here I'm daunerin i the north.

And at Sanct-Aundraes, bi the haar
 Raither nor bi the müne convoyit,
 There walks in sleep thon braw Scots queen,
 Her doo's-neck splattert ower wi bluid.

NORTHERN ROSES

It was no dream: colours and fragrances,
 Not eastern spell, but north's reality.
 It was late autumn, and yet the roses
 Bloomed in St Andrews, above the sea.

"The Gulf Stream," said my professorial friend,
 "Is known to visit these our Scottish shores.
 Fresh lawns and sumptuous flower-beds, end to end,
 Reach inland from the East Sands to The Scores."

But my own land is trembling with the blight,
 The coming of the European Frost:
 Oh that the Gulf could hold us, cure us quite,
 Before we shrivel up and sink almost,

So we'd ignite a colour or two, going down,
 And even greet the winter florally,
 Just like those gardens in that snod wee town,
 St Andrews, there above the northern sea.

(*snod*: comfortable, neat, well-ordered)

THREE POEMS

EMESE LÉNÁRT

Emese Lénárt was born in 1975 in Hungary. She started writing at the age of 12 and has been continuing to do so ever since. She lived almost a decade in Vancouver, BC (Canada), and returned to Hungary in 2002. A few years later she started to read English Language and Literature, and Translation Studies at the University of Miskolc, where she graduated in 2008. She published short story translations in the journal *Nagyvilág* and some of her poems were published in the anthologies *Irodal-MATT a magyarok* (Irodalmi Rádió, 2007) and *Kortárs hangon* (University of Miskolc–Eszterházy College, 2007). She is currently working as a translator and interpreter. She gave a reading of her poems in the Forum on 26 November 2007.

THOUGHTS AND ECHOES

It's been a while since I've last been dreaming
and it scares me
a connection seems to be broken
the spirit is lost
trying to find the reconnection
with a world claimed nonexistent
Where is the protection to shield me
from the vulgarities and fakeness
pouring in unwanted
all the lies and disfigured knowledge
disturbing the order of All
The distorted images that pass for wisdom
in these parts
seem to rule the minds of thousands
It is all so limited and still
so many of them think themselves gods
Not knowing, not understanding, not thinking
but repeating practices coming of old
with new technologies
without ever searching just what was the cause
Fear and no control, are we losing it
chaos and no order, are we losing it
noise and neons, too much of both
I think we are losing it
pollution, depression, stress and loneliness
make headlines
flashing confusing useless images
on screens

to kill thinking and to kill the mind
 to make us march
 obeying little zombies
 across life and across time
 following false heroes
 getting famous on innocent blood
 Oh no times are not changing
 and we are not changing with them
 it is all the same
 all the same
 all done in a quickening pace
 fast forced march into the abyss

Oh Pangloss you idiot

A KIFOSZTOTT

Vasárnap déli harangszókor
 míg asztalnál együtt ül a család
 vidéki kongó váróteremnek
 a magányosság festi falát
 Koszfoltos kőkockákon állnak
 lakkot rég nem látott padok
 tűzcsap alatt, szemetes mellett
 süt be a Nap koszos ablakokon
 s lézengenek csomagjaikkal méla utasok

Mindenki jegyet vált valahová.

Ötven esztendő még nem szállt el felette
 kötélfülű szatyrát ölelte
 kötött kék sapkáját fejébe húzta,
 s szakálla alatt néha mormogva
 ette zörgő nejlonból kopár kenyerét
 végigfekve a fénytelen padon
 és az arra haladó kalauznőnek
 régi ismerősként köszönt oda
 majd oldalra fordult kemény nyoszolyáján
 és ebédje végeztével álomba merült

Mindenki utazik valahová.

Cserélődnek az emberek.
 Az üvegajtón cédula figyelmeztet
 hogy a váró minden éjjel zárva van
 éjfélről reggel ötig.
 A leghidegebb idők múlnak a leglassabban
 a folyó felől fújó szélben fogvacogó órák
 érlelik a magány céltalan
 hideg hajnali szürkességét.
 Egy újabb napot a várótermi padokon.

Mindenki tartozik valahová.

Mindenki tartozik valahová?

DUALISM / KETTŐSSÉG

I don't have to close my eyes
 Nem kell lehunynom a szemem
 to see your everlasting beauty
 hogy lássam gyermekkorom kedves helyeit
 of blues and greens and golden whites
 a színesedő szürke várost
 unceasingly haunting my mind
 a szél szárnyán hordott szeméttel.
 I don't have to close my eyes
 Nem kell lehunynom a szemem
 to watch the rocks at low tide
 hogy lássam a kiégett mezőkön
 covered with silky green
 a napsütötte arcok hosszú sorát
 baring your edge of the Pacific
 menetelve át az időn.
 I don't have to close my eyes
 Nem kell lehunynom a szemem
 to see your coastal mountain line
 hogy lássam a hulló falevelek
 the sky with its everfresh breath
 puha földetérését; s messze tekintsek
 of lush landscapes and sweet forests
 egyenes törzsű bükkfák között
 I hear the seagulls crying over
 a barlangszájig, ahol sáros ruhás
 your starlit waters
 alakok osztják meg

and the lights on Lions Gate
dobox sörük, míg
and of Cypress Bowl
a karbidfény kört von köréjük;
pearls or diamonds in the skies above.
és a tűz mellett a múltba nézünk.
I don't have to close my eyes
Nem kell lehunynom a szemem
to see the land that gave me home
hogy lássam eltűnő arcok kedves sorát
seals bark in the night, and among
méla, merengő magány fojtó szürkességét
your firs my spirit remains—never alone.
s a pusztánjáró szél szomorú szavát.

ANDRINA

GEORGE MACKAY BROWN

Eszter Lévai was born in 1985 in Szikszó and graduated from Miskolc University in 2009 in English and Hungarian majors. Her special interests are photography, handicrafts, psychology, and foreign languages.

George Mackay Brown (1921-1996) was a major Scottish poet and novelist. Born in Stromess, Orkney, in his writing he described the history and traditions of the Orkney Isles and the lives of the people who have inhabited the islands in the last centuries. His works include: *The Storm* (1954), *Loaves and Fishes* (1959), *The Year of the Whale* (1965), *A Time to Keep* (1969), *Fishermen with Ploughs* (1971), *The Sun's Net* (1976), *Andrina* (1983)—where the following short story is translated from—and *Winter Tales* (1995).

Télvíz idején minden este, pontosan sötétedés előtt meglátogat engem Andrina. Meggyújtja a lámpát, felszítja a pislákoló tüzet, és gondoskodik róla, hogy legyen elég víz a mosdótá-lamban. Ha megfáztam (ami ritkán fordul elő, mert szívós, öreg tengerész vagyok), zsörtölődik egy kicsit, tőzeget rak a tűzre, forróvizes palackot készít, és régi, vastag pulóvert borít a vállamra.

Az áldott jó Andrina! Amint kilép az ajtón, már le is dobom a pulóvert magamról, és whiskyből, forró vízből meg cukorból puncsot keverek. Elolvasok pár fejezetet Conradtól, és már éjfél is elmúlt, mire visszamászom az ágyamba – a forróvizes palack pedig rég kihűlt.

Tavaly február vége felé mégis szörnyen megfáztam – úgy, mint még tán soha. Reggel arra ébredtem, hogy ráz a hideg. Levegő után kapkodtam, mint a partra vetett hal, és ide-oda vánszorogtam a tűzhely és a konyhaszekrény között, miközben reggelit készítettem. (Nem mintha lett volna étvágyam.) Úgy éreztem, kő rekedt a mellkasomban, és nem kapok levegőt.

Leerőltettem pár íztelen falatot a torkomon, és ittam egy csésze borzalmas, meleg teát. Ezek után nem maradt más hátra, mint hogy visszabújjak az ágyba a könyvemmel. De az olvasás sem okozott örömet – a fejem fájt, és tompán lüktetett.

„Nos – gondoltam –, Andrina öt-hat órán belül megjön. Nem sokat tehet majd értem. Ez a megfázás vagy nátha vagy az ördög tudja, micsoda majd elmúlik magától. Mégis felvidítana, ha láthatnám.”

* * * * *

Aznap este nem jött el Andrina. Az első árnyakkal vártam: ahogy lassan felemeli a reteszt, halkan üdvözlő, kedvesen megdorgál a rendetlenség miatt, amit rögtön észrevesz, mihelyt felgyulladt a lámpa... Én pedig abban a különös hangulatban voltam, ami a láz gyakori kísérője: szinte nem is vettem tudomást a külvilágról. Ha kigyulladt volna a ház, azt gon-

doltam volna: „Nocsak! Tűz van?“, és mentettem volna az irhámát, de egy pillanatra sem ijedtem volna meg.

Ugyanígy abba is belenyugodtam, mikor az ablakon beragyogtak az első csillagok, hogy valami miatt mégsem tudott eljönni Andrina. Újra elnyomott az álom.

Később felébredtem. Szürke fény szűrődött be az ablakon. Torkom kiszáradt, arcom égett, a fejem pedig jobban lüktetett, mint valaha. Kikeltem az ágyból, és a lábamba belehasított a kőpadló hidege. Ittam egy pohár vizet, majd visszamásztam a takarók alá. Utána legalább öt percen át vacogott a fogam – ilyesmivel azelőtt legfeljebb csak olvasmányaimban találkoztam.

Megint aludtam egy kicsit, és éppen akkor ébredtem fel, mikor a téli nap rövid időre ólomüveg színűvé varázsolta a tengert és az eget. Ismét eljött Andrina látogatásainak szokásos ideje. Volt pár dolog, amit megtehetne értem: hozhatna aszpirint, három-négy forróvizet palackot tehetne mellém az ágyba, kikeverhetné a világ legerősebb puncsát. Néhány kedves szava olyan lett volna, mint a ködkürt hangja a reményvesztett tengerésznek. De nem jött.

A harmadik délután sem jött el Andrina.

Vacogva ébredtem, akár egy szellem a barlangban. Fekete éjszaka volt. Szél füttyült a kéményben. Időről időre esőcseppek verődtek az ablaküveghez. Életem leghosszabb éjszakája volt. Újra átéltem múltam pár unalmas és hitvány részletét. Egy bizonyos epizód újra és újra megismétlődött, mintha a rozsdás tű megakadt volna a régi, kopott gramofonlemezen. A múlt szégyenletes képei végül foszladozni kezdtek, majd álommá olvadtak. A szeretet halott volt, de sok szellem új életre kelt.

Mikor felébredtem, négy napja először emberi hangot hallottam. Stanley, a postás beszélt a Bighouse-ék kutyájához.

– Nicsak, mi ez a láрма kora reggel? Csak egy méteráru-katalógust hoztam Minnie-nek! Jó kutya, szólj Minnie-nek, hogy megjött a posta... Te vagy az, Minnie? Már azt hittem, a jó öreg Ben mindjárt darabokra tép! Igen, Minnie, igazán szép reggelünk van...

Sohasem szerettem ezt a postást – alázatoskodik mindenkivel, aki szerinte számít a szigeten –, de aznap reggel a fény követeként jött az ablakom alá. Kopogtatás nélkül nyitott be az ajtón (én kevésbé vagyok fontos személy).

– Messziről jött posta, kapitány – mondta. Letette a levelet az ajtó melletti székre.

Szavakat próbáltam formálni az ajkaimmal: – Nem vagyok valami jól. Tudna esetleg... – Ha el is hagyta szó a számat, legfeljebb suttogás lehetett, vagy még annyi sem.

Stanley a kialudt tűzre és a csukott ablakra pillantott.

– Pfüj, de áporodott szag van idebent, kapitány! – mondta. – Ki kellene szellőztetni... – Már ment is, és betette maga mögött az ajtót. (Mint később kiderült, persze nem szólt sem Andrinának, sem az orvosnak odalent a faluban.)

Mielőtt megint elszunyókáltam, elképzelttem Scott kapitányt, amint utolsó szavait papírra veti antarktisi sátrában.

* * * * *

Egy-két nap múlva természetesen már kutya bajom sem volt; egy ilyen vén tengeri medve nem adja fel egykönnyen.

Elhagyatottnak éreztem magam – mintha elárultak volna, vagy szándékosan belém rúgtak volna, mikor már a földön voltam. Szinte az önsajnálathatárán álltam. Miért hagyott magamra Andrina e nehéz időkben?

Aztán diadalmaskodott a józan ész. „Torvald, te vén szélhámos – mondtam magamnak. – Mit várhatsz el egy csinos, huszonéves lánytól? Semmit! Nézd erről az oldaláról – egész télen kitüntetett a figyelmességével és a kedvességével. Lámpást gyújtott életed sötét időszakában – az aratóünnep óta, amikor túl sok whiskyt ittál, és ő támogatott haza, és te elvesztetted az eszméleted, és ő fektetett az ágyba... Nos, valami okból az utóbbi napokban nem tudott eljönni. De ma megfejtem az okát.”

Legfőbb ideje volt, hogy lemenjek a faluba. A konyhaszekrényben egy darabka kenyér és egy késhegynyi vaj vagy lekvár sem maradt. A bolt egyben postahivatal is volt, és kétheti nyugdíjat is fel kellett vennem. Beigértem magamnak egy-két korsót is a kocsmában, hogy a betegségnek még az írmagját is kiöblítsem magamból.

Mialatt a kétmérföldes úton cammogtam, döbbentem rá, hogy voltaképpen nem is tudok semmit Andrináról. Én sohasem kérdeztem, ő pedig sohasem mesélt. Vajon ki az apja? Vannak-e testvérei? Még az sem került soha szóba, hogy a sziget mely részén lakik. Elég volt annyi, hogy minden este, nem sokkal naplemente után eljött, csöndesen sürgött-forgott, és elidőzött egy darabig; és békességet hagyott maga után – hogy úgy éreztem, mintha a nyitott ajtón és ablakon keresztül friss nyári szél söpörte volna tisztára a házat.

Egész télen egy kérdést sem tett fel az életemről Andrina – sem a jó, sem a rossz, sem az izgalmas dolgokról, melyek megestek velem. Természetesen én elmeséltem neki ezt-azt. Az öregek szeretik feleleveníteni és megszépíteni múltjukat, hogy életük néhány hétköznapi eseménye a lehető legjobb fényben tündököljön. Én is vakmerő, vad és bátor fickóként tüntettem fel magamat, akit Hongkongtól San Franciscóig minden kikötőben ismertek és félttek – csak azért, hogy izgalmasabbá tegyem fiatalkorom epizódjait. Meséimben valahol Cook és Hook kapitány között foglaltam helyet.

És a lány imádta hallgatni képzelet és valóság e vegyületét; lámpám kanóciát sejtelmesen lecsavarta, a parazsat pedig tűzvirágokká szította...

Volt azonban egy történetet, amit nem mondtam végig. Ez életem olyan szakasza, mely még mindig fáj, ahányszor csak rá gondolok – ami ritkán történik meg, ugyanis azok az idők lakat alatt állnak, a kulcs pedig az Atlanti-óceán fenekén van. Ám, ahogyan utaltam rá, a történet végig kísértett múltkori betegségem alatt.

Emlékszem, a nálam töltött utolsó estéjén elejtettem néhány félig szégyenkező, félig dicsekvő utalást Andrinának. Ám mielőtt befejeztem volna – mintha csak előre látta és elszenvetde volna a végét –, hirtelen szenvtelen pillantást vetett rám, hideg csókot lehelt az arcomra, és kiment az ajtón. Amint utóbb kiderült, utoljára.

Fáj vagy sem, itt és most elmesélem. Nektek mondom el, nem Andrinának – nektek csupán faragatlan, vidékies mese lesz, mely az ártatlanság és a szívtelenség elegyéről szól.

* * * * *

Ötven évvel ezelőtt találkozott a szigeten egy fiú és egy lány. Tulajdonképpen egész életükben ismerték egymást, hiszen együtt ültek az iskolapadban – ám egy kora nyári napon ez a fiú az egyik tanyáról és ez a lány egy másik, távoli tanyáról más szemmel nézett egymásra.

A földesúr pajtájában tartott szentivánéji tánc után együtt sétáltak le a dombról a félhomály bűvöletében – az évnek ebben a szakában éjjel sincs teljesen sötét –, és épp akkor értek le a sziklákhöz és a homokhoz és a tengerhez, amikor a nap felkelőben volt. Egy vagy két órát időztek ott önkívületben a ragyogó, susogó hullámok mellett. Messze északkeleten pedig a tájra árasztotta sugarait a nap.

Egyetlen, rövid nyár fényében úszó mese ez. A fiút és a lányt láthatóan egymás szívverése éltette. Szüleik tanyája mérföldekre volt egymástól, ők mégis alkalmat találtak rá, hogy szinte minden nap találkozzanak: a kereszteződésnél, a boltban, a domboldalon. Ám ezek a közönséges helyszínek túlságosan is szem előtt voltak, így útjuk titokban mindig a tengerpartra vezetett – éj éj után, ahol madarak vijjogtak a barlangnál, a hullámok mellett. Ott senki sem zavarhatta meg a kezek és ajkak félénk érintéseit, és a szavakat, melyek butaságnak tündek ugyan, de a fiú ajkán néha édes, rejtélyes zenévé változtak: „Sigrid”.

Amikor a nyári idill véget ért, a fiúnak az Aberdeeni Egyetemre kellett mennie, hogy megtanulja, hogyan tegyen szert anyagi biztonságra és társadalmi rangra némi kis szórakozás mellett – olyan kiváltság volt ez, melyben szántóvető őseinek sohasem lehetett része.

Sigrid számára nem állt nyitva hasonló lehetőség – a párhordas családi földhöz, a tőzegvágáshoz, vajköpüléshez és sajtkészítéshez volt kötve. De csak rövid időre. A helye majd a fiatalember mellett lesz, akivel lélegzetét is megosztotta, és akivel egy ütemre vert szíve, mikor az majd megszerzi tanári diplomáját. Nap mint nap a ragyogó, hívogató víz mellett sétáltak.

De egy este a barlangnál, a nyár vége felé, amikor a kukorica fényesedni kezdett, a lány valami fontosat szeretett volna elmondani a fiúnak – egy tétova és veszélyes titkot. És a nyári varázs egyszerre megtört. A fiú a fejét rázta, és elfordult. Ismét a lányra nézett, mintha szajha lenne, aki megcsalta őt. A lány kinyújtotta felé karját, ajkai remegtek. A fiú ellökte őt magától és elfordult. Felszaladt a tengerpart ösvényen az országútra, és a betakarításra váró mezők hamar elnyelték alakját a lány szeme elől.

És a lány magára maradt a barlang szájánál hatalmas, keserves titkának súlya alatt.

A fiatalember végül nem ment semmiféle egyetemre. Még aznap a hamnavoe-i hivatalba ment, és haladéktalan kivándorlási engedélyért folyamodott Kanadába vagy Ausztráliába vagy Dél-Afrikába – mindegy hová.

Ekkor a történet még bonyolultabb, még kegyetlenebb és még szánalmasabb fordulatot vett. A lány egy hónap múlva követte a fiút tengerentúli rejtekébe, de mire odaért, a fiú ismét továbbállt. A fiú egy távoli kikötő felé tartó hajóra jelentkezett matróznak: legalábbis ezt mondták a lánynak, aki még elveszettebbnek érezte magát, mint valaha.

A következő ötven évben a hazátlanság volt a fiú élete: a föld körül hajózott egyetlen biztos pont nélkül. Közben szorgosan tanulmányozta a hajózási kézikönyveket, míg végül elsötiszt nem lett, majd pedig annál is magasabb posztra került. A sivár évek teherként súlyosodtak vállára. Eljön az idő, mikor az ember megöszül, s mikor a régi, megszokott szakértelem és készség elveszíti zamatát. Ez történt a tengerésszel is, aki egyszer

csak hazafelé, a szigete felé vette az irányt, s remélte, hogy az ötven tél begyógyította a régi sebet.

* * * * *

És így is volt, vagy legalábbis látszólag. Kevesen emlékeztek rá, azok is homályosan. Senki sem említette a lány nevét, aki eltűnt a szigetről, és most olyan idős lehet, mint ő – és maga sem ejtette ki soha a nevet. A lány szüleinek a tanyája romokban hevert – kőhalom a domb oldalában. Egy nap elment oda, és hűvösen pillantott a romokra. A ház végében nem időzött a kedves szellem az alkonyi hívó szóra várva – „Sigrid”...

* * * * *

Felvettem a nyugdíjamat, és megtöltöttem a kosaram élelmiszerrel a falusi boltban. Tina Stewart, a postáskisasszony mindent és mindenkit ismer; átlátja a kapcsolatok változó, szövevényes hálóját a szigeten. Fondorlattal próbáltam megközelíteni. Milyen újdonság vagy különös dolog történt a szigeten? Megbetegedett-e bárki is különös hirtelenséggel? Nem kellett-e bárkinek is – mondjuk egy fiatal lánynak – elhagynia a szigetet valamilyen okból? Miss Stewart alaposan végigmért szigorú tekintetével. Nem, mondta, a sziget sosem volt nyugodtabb. Senki sem érkezett vagy távozott.

– Csak maga, Torvald kapitány, csak maga esett ágynak, úgy hallottam. Jobban kellene magára vigyáznia, hiszen teljesen egyedül van ott fenn. Kissé még mindig szürke az arca... – Elnézését kértem, hogy az idejét raboltam. Említett valaki nekem egy nevet – Andrina – valamivel kapcsolatban. Nem fontos. Meg tudná-e nekem mégis mondani Miss Stewart, hogy melyik farmról vagy tanyáról származik ez az Andrina?

Tina hosszasan nézett rám, azután megrázta a fejét. Senkit sem hívnak így a szigeten – legyen az nő, lány vagy gyerek –, és soha nem is hívtak, ebben bizonyos volt.

Remegő ujjakkal kifizettem a leveleket, majd távoztam.

Úgy éreztem, szükségem van egy italra. A pultnál állt Isaac Irving, a földesúr. Két halász ült a kocsmá túlsó végében, sörüket itták és dominóztak a kandalló mellett.

A harmadik whisky után így szóltam:

– Nézze, Isaac, feltételezem, az egész sziget tudja, hogy Andrina, az a lány, egész télen feljárt hozzám, és mosott, takarított meg főzött rám. Már egy hete, vagy kicsit több is tán, hogy nem láttam. Meg tudná mondani, mi történt vele? – (Attól féltem, azt kell majd hallanom, Andrina beleszeretett valakibe, kis jótékonyágát és kedvességét elmosta a dagály, és esküvője napjáig visszavonultan él.)

Isaac úgy nézett rám, mintha meghibbantam volna.

– Egy fiatal hölgy! Egy fiatal hölgy a maga házában? Tán bejárónő? Nem is tudtam, hogy bejárónője van. Hány whiskyt ivott, mielőtt idejött, kapitány? – mondta, és a kandalló mellett vigyorgó halászokra kacsintott.

Megittam a negyedik whiskym, és felkeltem, hogy elinduljak.

– Sajnálom, kapitány – kiáltott utánam Isaac Irving. – Szerintem csak elképzelte az a nő, azt a hogyishívjakot, amikor lázas volt. Előfordul az ilyesmi. Amikor én voltam

beteg, csak vénasszonyokat és boszorkákat láttam. Maga aztán szerencsés, kapitány – egy ilyen kincs, mint Andrina!

Teljesen összezavarodtam. Isaac Irwing még Tina Stewartnál is jobban ismeri a szigetet és a rajta élő embereket. És ő jóindulatú ember, aki nem csinálna bolondot a magára maradt, téveszméktől gyötört öregemberből.

* * * * *

Hazafelé menet márciusi szellő fúj a szigeten. Az égbolt szinte egyik napról a másikra magasabb és kékebb lett. Az árokspart mentén nárciszok adtak hírt csendesen a tavasz érkezteről. Kisbárány táncolt a fűben – egyszerre mind a négy lábát a levegőbe vetette.

Az asztalon megtaláltam a levelet, amit három nappal ezelőtt hozott a postás. Ausztrál bélyegző volt rajta, és október végén adták fel.

„Amikor elmenekültél előlem, a fél világon át követtelek Selskayból, és végül itt állapodtam meg, Tasmániában. Tudtam, hogy fölösleges tovább utaznom. Hallgattam, mert annyira szerettelek, hogy nem akartam, te is úgy szenvedj, ahogyan én szenvedtem az évek során. Mindketten megöregedtünk. Talán ezt is hiába írom, mert lehet, hogy sohasem tértél vissza Selskay szigetére, vagy talán már por és hamu vagy. Ha még élsz és talán magányos vagy, amit most írok, esetleg felvidít, bár a vége szomorú, mint anyyi mindennek az életben. A gyermekedről – a gyermekünkről – nem is írok semmit, mert nem akartad elfogadni. De a gyermekünknek született egy leánya, és azt hiszem, ritkán látni ennyi bájt egy gyermekben. Köszönöm neked, hogy bizonyos értelemben, akaratlanul is, nekem adtad ezt a jószágot és fénysugarat öregkoromra. Lámpás lehetett volna a te öregségedben is, mert gyakran meséltem neki rólad és arról a régmúlt nyárról, amit együtt töltöttünk, és ami, legalább is számomra, oly csodálatos volt. De a végéről, amit te és mások olyan szégyenletesnek tartottatok, semmit sem mondtam el neki. Csak olyan dolgokról beszéltem, melyek édesek voltak ajkaim számára. És gyakran azt mondta: »Bárcsak ismerném a nagypapát! Nagyi, nem gondolod, hogy magányos? Biztosan boldog lenne, ha valaki készítené neki egy kanna teát, és begyűjtana a kályhába. Egyszer elmegyek Skóciába és bekopogok az ajtaján, bárhol is éljen, és majd én segítek neki. Nagyon szeretted, Nagyi? Biztosan jó ember az az öreg tengerész, ha szeretett téged. Egyszer meglátogatom! Meghallgatom majd tőle is a régi történeteket. Mindenekelőtt persze a szerelmes történetet – mert te sosem mesélsz róla...« Azért írom ezt a levelet, Bill, hogy közöljem veled, ez már sohasem történhet meg. A kisunokánk, Andrina a múlt héten, a tavasz első fuvallatakor váratlanul meghalt...”

Később, a kályha mellett ülve a világosságra és a tavaszra és a harmatra gondoltam, amit a kis látogató hozott elmúlt telem estéibe; és arra, ahogyan mindig az első árnyakkal és az első csillagokkal érkezett; de ott, ahol ő most van, új nap ragyogja be a földet és a tengert.

Lévai Eszter fordítása

FOUR IRISH–HUNGARIAN POEMS

GERRY MILLER

For thirty-five years Gerry Miller taught English Literature, and was Head of English Studies and Senior Master in one of the largest pre-university colleges in Northern Ireland. He is a founder member of the Northern Ireland Council of Christians and Jews, and a member of the executive of The Peace People (founded by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Mairead Corrigan Maguire). His publications include *Awakening* (Oswica, 2004), a collection of poems and images. “Budapest” and “Traveling North” are reprinted with the author’s permission. The translations were prepared in our Translation Workshop at Miskolc in 2007, and, together with some other Irish–Hungarian poems, were read by Gerry Miller at the first conference of the Hungarian Society of Irish Studies, held at Pécs University on 14-15 September 2007. He is a returning guest at the Research Forum, and has given annual talks on the cultural-historical background of the Troubles at our Forum since 2004.

THE TAP DANCERS

Tap tap tapping is sounding on the pavement
tapping and laughing is coming down our way
we hear laughing and tapping in the distance
with all the promise of a happiness day.

The tap tap tapping sound is coming closer
and also the sound of laughter starts to swell
the tap tap tapping is a marching drumbeat
and is drawing our attention like a spell.

Suddenly three young men appear together
with one who’s leading the rhythm of their walk
they saunter in a sort of dance formation
they’re always tapping and laughing as they talk.

First we see the faces and then the bodies
captivating all the passers with the sound
everybody steps aside to let them by
with their white canes tapping smartly on the ground.

One of these three young men is fully sighted
and is telling to the others what they pass
one who is blind from birth is tapping strongly
and the one who’s newly-blind is learning fast.

Tap tap tapping passes along the pavement
as they take a learning curve so very steep
with their walking and tapping always laughing
but when he's home again I wonder—*does he weep?*

BUDAPEST

From prehistoric early morning mists
To midnight's futuristic lights
Pulsating silent Danube flows
Through history's, city's, people's days and nights.

Descending from surrounding hills and plains
Seven wandering tribes conclude nomadic ways
And in a beaker's blood a contract make—
A Carpathian Plain of Paradise.

Kaleidoscope of princes and palaces
Heroes and horses, castles and kings,
Byzantine, Asiatic, Jewish, Christian and Muslim,
Arpad and Stephen—an awesome confusion of things...

Two million people piled high, snaked long,
Ten thousand tenemented palaces unfold,
With lines and cables, metros, trams and trains
Interleaved with lives untold.

A seething mass of movement, innumerable individuals,
Anonymous and indistinguishable
Dividing into human elements—then coming to life
Through personal encounter.

BUDAPEST

A földtörténet pirkadatakor már itt
csobogott a csöndes Duna,
s a jövő fényei pulzálnak most színén,
tükröznek történelmet, várost s arcokat.

A marton leereszkedett s lepihent
hét vándorló törzs – vége a nomád életnek!
Kehelybe vért fogtak, s szerződtek:
a nagy alföld legyen Kánaán!

Urak és szolgák, lovak és lovasok,
királyok és királyi népek forrataga,
görög és római, kun, zsidó és böszörmény,
pogány Árpád és szent István – micsoda, micsoda kavardás!

Most kétmillió ember, bolyokba csődülve és kígyózó sorokban;
ezer meg ezer bérház – csövek, drótok, vezetékek
feltárva-kitárva; metró, vonat, villamos
sínek hálójában: dzsumbujba veszett életek.

Zajgó, mozgó áradat,
névtelen, arctalan, aztán
kiválik egy, vonásai
tisztulnak – rád ismerek.

Töltéssy Zoltán fordítása

TRAVELING NORTH

There is no end to the white fog
and freezing mists of winter time
which link the drifting snows and heavy skies
from late November until the middle of March.

Incredible incidents of nature
crack the ghostly shroud of frozen scenes
as a white hare struggles in slow loping movements
across our view, extending a mirage of action
in the eerily silent surroundings.

Storks' nests, abandoned temporarily,
survive the rigors of gale-force winds,
snow-storms and blizzards,
like sentries perched on high,
waiting for the end of bitter purgatory.

The dogs which guard the isolated houses
bark hoarse and feeble signals of our passing,
then muster up the strength to nourish their weak frames
with a few mouthfuls from their bowls of freezing scraps
before retreating to what comfort they can find
against the most sheltered gable wall.

The snowdrops of earlier years are distant memories
of new life which came and went, now lost in forgetfulness,
like lines of sparsely vegetated trees
pointing to dim and hazy paths,
leading uncertainly towards nothingness.

The long slow coldness numbs body, mind and soul,
reflecting nature's rote in human pain.
Patiently we await the end of this unliving
until the world from which we came revives again.

But there is no certainty that it will ever come.
Expectation is absent and hope an alien thought
as in the mind there is no end
to the white fog and freezing mists of winter time.

ÉSZAKNAK TARTVA

Mélyül-mélyül a tejfehér pára,
mindent átjár a zúzos köd,
hóföreteg szakad fellegtől terhes égből
télbe hajló novembertől friss márciusig.

A mezőt táblákba töri
embertelen fagy, szél, idő,
fehér bundás nyúl bukdácsol át
a háborgó hómezőn
– csak látomás – kísérteties a csönd.

Gólyafészek, üres gólyafészek
– cibálja jeges szél,
företeg és hófúvás forgatja –
kitart a magasban,
várja a jégverés végét.

Gazdátlan házat kutyák őriznek, jöttünkre
rekedten ugatnak, majd nyüszítnek,
s majd felbátorodva megindulnak,
kihült kocot falnak táljukból,
s majd megtorpannak, s meglapulnak
vackukon, a tűzfal tövében.

Új élet kél, bejárja útját tudatlan, régvolt
tavalyok hóvirágja távoli emlék, múltba vész,
mint lábaserdő fái; köztük párában
derengő ösvények, bizonytalan
ödöngnek a semmibe.

Dermedtségbe hanyatlik test, lélek s értelem,
belehasít húsunkba, fagyos fájdalom szagatja.
Türelemmel várjuk a léttelenség végét,
míg a világ, honnan kihulltunk, új erőre kap.

De kap-e, bizonyosan, valaha?
Várhatunk? Csak idegen ideában reménykedhetünk,
mivel elménkben már mélyül-mélyül a tejfehér pára,
mindent átjár a zúzos köd.

Töltéssy Zoltán fordítása

A BIG MAN

From the moment we met I admired the man—
cool and decisive and commanding respect
from all whom he met—
except his dog, which refused to respond
to any order he barked (not the dog but the man).

The first meal that we shared with two interpreters,
—although I often wondered how much
he actually understood without them—
was punctuated by many stories of
the tough life on a farm in the country
fifty years before.

The most vivid description I recall quite clearly
as he enjoyed watching me squirm
at the intricate details of a family occasion
when everyone gathered to watch
the ritual slaughter
of a pig that was almost a pet.

And others I will not mention at all.

The simple city boy under the spell of the country giant.

Years later when we met for the annual meal
I recounted the episodes of that first occasion
as I clearly remembered them all—
the pig that was almost a pet
and others I will not mention at all.

Some he remembered and others not—
at least he said that was so.
The pig story was true, others perhaps,
and one he denied to have happened.

Was the simple city boy under the spell of the giant once more?
Was the pálinka playing tricks on the mind?
Who was imagining the stories denied—
and rats I will not mention at all?

A NAGY EMBER

Találkozásunk pillanatától csodáltam ezt a férfit –
hűvös és határozott és tiszteletet követel
mindenkitől, akivel csak találkozik –
kivéve a kutyáját, mert ő nem hajlandó semmiféle
parancsra ugrani, bármit is ugat (nem az eb, hanem az ember).

Az első közös vacsoránkon két tolmács is volt
– bár gyakran töprengtem, mennyit
értett meg nélkülük is –
és sokat mesélt
a tanyasi élet nehézségeiről –
ötven évvel ezelőtt.

A történetre, melyet leginkább ecsetelt, világosan emlékszem,
miközben élvezte vergődésem:
családi esemény kusza részletei,
mindenki összegyűlt, hogy tanúja
legyen kedvencük, a malac
rituális lemészárlásának.

És a többiről már nem is beszélnek.

Az egyszerű városi fiú a vidéki óriás markában.

Évek múlva, mikor az esztendei vacsorára összeültünk,
felhoztam az első találkozás jeleneteit,
mivel világosan emlékeztem mindegyikre –
a malacra, a házikedvencre –
és a többiről már nem is beszélnek.

Valamire emlékezett, valamire nem –
legalábbis azt mondta.
A malacmese igaz volt, más történetek talán,
és egyről azt mondta, sosem történt meg.

Vajon az egyszerű városi fiú a vidéki óriás markába került újra?
Vagy csak a pálinka volt az?
Ki képzelgett letagadott történetekről?

És a patkányokról már nem is beszélnek.

Lénárt Emese fordítása

THE ESCAPOLOGIST

(Extract from a Novel)

COLIN SWATRIDGE

Colin Swatridge wrote poetry in the 1970s, which was published in small magazines. He wrote six novels in the 1980s, none of which was published—it was always more attractive to embark on the next novel than to peddle the last. One such was *The Escapologist*. This was born out of a fascination with the Titanic disaster and the person of Harry Houdini (Christophe in this account)—both are powerful metaphors. He is presently engaged in the writing of a narrative with a Hungarian background, *Something Beginning with T*.

I decided to climb up towards the stern, and then down to the third-class accommodation, to express solidarity, as it were, with the servants. I had not thought of interviewing anyone; but I felt I should have a readier sympathy with those escaping their past, than with those thinking to return to it. The third-class passengers had never had a lot to lose, yet—again paradoxically—they had most to lose. The future for the first-class passengers would have been more of the same; for those in steerage, the future would have been all the life they had to speak of. I hoped I should not find that they had been drinking as heavily as their betters.

Until now, it seemed, the third-class passengers had kept to their own decks, in the stern quarters of the ship. Whether this was because they were conditioned to remaining in their stations or because they had been ordered to do so, I wasn't sure (till I remembered what the steward had said about the threat of infection). But it was only now that I saw, as I climbed up through the connecting doors into the third-class accommodation, groups of them coming down, behind the third-class chief-steward. I doubt that they would have found their way along all the alleyways if they had not been guided, since they had been confined to the lower decks throughout the voyage. Only now were those who had fallen or been pushed down snakes all their lives being allowed to climb ladders that led nowhere. Most carried suitcases and heavy bags with them, in spite of instructions to the contrary; and many mothers, their faces drawn, carried babies, asleep or screaming. As I moved on up into the public rooms and stair-wells, I met more groups of passengers who had not secured the services of a steward. These rushed down a corridor with slung kitbags, then doubled back, and ran into another group, cursing and milling aimlessly, and getting in each other's way, until the chief steward returned. He rounded up as many of the stragglers as he could, shouting to them to follow him to the after well-deck, and so up into the second-class accommodation. I wondered what it was they were being taken to, now that there were no boats: whether the exercise was designed to prevent unrest; or whether the officers feared that an inquiry would hold them to account for the plight of steerage passengers denied access even to the possibility of rescue. I was not persuaded that any purpose was being served by taking so many bewildered people up on to a cold, already-overcrowded deck, so that someone's tardy concern for justice might be put on record—if

there was to be any record, besides this poor thing of mine. But just because I myself had lost hope, I knew, was no reason to take it away from others; so when a German on his own pleaded with me in fractured English to be shown the way to the boat-deck, I carried one of his bags for him, and led him up gladly enough. As we went by the way that I had come, we collected others—Irishmen, a pair of Orthodox Jews, and a motley bunch of Slavs and Eastern Europeans—bowed under all that they possessed. We slid down one alleyway after another until we came to the stairs to the second-class deck, and up by the library to the barber-shop, down the long corridor by the surgeon's office, and the private saloon for the maids and valets, and so to the first-class stairs up to an exit between funnels on to the boat-deck. We said nothing all the way up; but I was aware of gaspings and wonderment among the men who followed me at the magnificence of the carpets, and the panelling, and the sconces and framed woodcuts and other ornaments. They kept close to my heels all the way for fear that they'd be lost, until we reached the boat-deck door. Then they drew breath at the sudden cold, and blackness, and hesitated. One of the Irishmen turned to me and said:

“They tried to keep us down at first on our steerage deck. They didn't want us to come up to the first-class place at all. They put up ropes and locked the gates on us they did. When we tried to get up, an officer waved us back with a gun in his hand. One young Italian rushed the barrier, but the officer stopped him and said he'd fire. And I think he would. Where do we go from here, Mister? Is there a ship? I've heard tell there's a ship.”

I hardly knew what to say, but I said he'd be best climbing over the railings to the second-class deck-space, up astern. Numbers of people were clutching on to the deck-houses trying to save themselves from sliding and losing their footing on the icy boards. I saw more than one elderly passenger slip into the water that came up to meet any that fell. A lone steward was still dispensing life-preservers to those who understood their purpose; one seaman abaft of me busied himself arranging deckchairs, whilst another—equally systematically—threw them into the sea. As I turned to enter the labyrinth once more, one of the passengers following me pressed a Balkan silver coin into my hand.

If my shepherding had done any good at all, I supposed I could do more. But when I retraced my steps, I could find no-one to whom I could be of any further use. I had not seen other steerage-passengers venturing upwards and forwards, than those who had been shepherded by the third-class steward, and those that I had led up into the open air myself. I had imagined, in my second-class patronizing way, that all third-class passengers were mild and deferential, as submissive to this act of man as they had been to acts of God down the centuries. It was naïve of me, but I had taken Mr. Williams on Thursday (was it?) outside Queenstown, to mean that the Irish, at least, had been so cowed by the militia, by poverty, famine and other misfortunes, that any spark of rebellion in them had flickered and died. I had imagined that they would all be clutching rosaries, like Mr. Connors, and commending their souls to the Mother of God; that they would be packed like fish in their dormitories, opening and closing their mouths, uttering—barely muttering—not imprecations, or oaths, but acts of contrition. Those who did not speak English—Greeks, and Turks, and Poles, and others—even the hard-bitten ones, I had supposed, would await orders and stand in queues, and take their turn, as they had done at customs-posts, and emigration crush-barriers, and embarkation assembly-points. They had been treated like cattle, and so, I supposed, they would behave like cattle.

I have never seen cattle stampede; but I have heard that it happens—and that it takes only one or two crazed animals to infect others with their panic. I had not seen or heard it happen, but I learned only minutes later that it *had* happened: that a gang of third-class men had broken out of the accommodation reserved to them, and had headed a rush of easily-led men and their wives up and on to open decks, where they could see for themselves the empty davits that I had seen. This bursting out from below must have been coincident with my own pitiful attempt to do justice to the downtrodden—in misplaced pity for the underdog. It is no wonder that I imagined all steerage passengers were meek and obedient men and women: by the time I had stirred myself to abandon the comfort of the second-class apartments these were the only sort of passengers left to whom I could be of any use. I could never have been of any use to men who had taken what had passed for law into their own hands.

I need not have feared that the third-class passengers would be drunk, for the only two bars that I could see in these quarters were closed. I walked under bare light-bulbs, between bare tables, on broad uncarpeted floors; but if everything was simple, and unadorned, it was scrubbed as clean as any proud housewife might have wished.

I had just passed out of the bar when there was the most alarming crash, at once wooden, cacophonous, musical and metallic, in the games room that I was about to enter. I feared at first that it was a part of the ship's engine that had torn loose from its moorings—and that this was the beginning of the chaos of the end. But when I peered inside I saw at once a grand piano, wedged into a corner, its castors spinning, and its frame vibrating still, against the bulkhead. Certain of the keys had spilled out of their places, and the strings that had not snapped jangled madly among themselves as if competing to be loudest or longest.

As it had careered across the room, it had collided with heaped wooden benches, and reared up, breaking its front legs, and bending its pedals. It now stood at a crazy angle, its keyboard jammed against the bulkhead, its curving side splintered, and its pine body bared. It had not been a concert grand, but a solid working piano on which, for four days, a self-taught pianist would have banged out music-hall songs, and home-tutor versions of Hungarian Rhapsodies, and Bizet. It did not deserve an obsequious tribute—an elegy on the death of music; the wreckage of one undistinguished piano was of a piece with the end of all else. But there is a limit to the quantum of tragedy that a mind can grasp. For this reason—and not because I set this ruined instrument above desperate people—I stood and stared at the turning castors, and shattered lid, and thought the sight more pathetic than any other that I had seen. I had been shocked out of composure by the noise, too, so that I wanted some moments in which to recover, until the piano was silent. Had this accident happened at half past eleven, I should readily have accepted it as an explanation of the grinding noise that I had heard—even of the twisting of the cabin that I had felt. I should certainly have preferred it to talk of whales and ice-floes.

I supposed that what had seemed to me to be a noise that would turn heads and stop hearts, had been heard by everybody from the stern rail to the drowned engine-room; but when I passed out of the games room, through a lobby, into the canteen, a new and just as unexpected noise succeeded the piano's dying discords. The floor of the canteen was covered with linoleum, designed to look like parquet; the tables were long and sturdy, and more than a dozen chairs had been lined up on each side of them. These chairs were now for the most part on their sides, or stood at crazy angles, arms and legs locked, and jammed

under the tables, and in the corners of the room. The walls were white and bare, except that a large clock in a plain pine case hung above a side-table, stopped at twenty minutes to twelve. A strong smell of stew and onions lingered; and though they had been washed down, there were still circles of spilled beer on the deal table-tops. The noise came from a large group of worshippers, sitting, wailing, and fingering beads in the middle of the floor. They swayed in time to their half-sobbing, half-singing, raising their voices every so often as one or another of them led the group in improvised prayer. They might have been Irish Catholics, or Waldensians from the Piedmont. It hardly mattered when there was so little time before judgement. A German priest emerged from shadows where I fancied he had been listening to a countryman's confession, and shouted something like "Prepare to meet God!" in his own language. At this call, a number of men and women dressed in black who had been standing by the door, fell on their knees about the German priest, and raised their arms and faces and voices to the ceiling.

I was affected by the noise and the tears as any man must have been who thinks and feels. The sight of so many poor people struggling to remain upright on the grotesquely slanted floor, holding on to each other for physical and moral support, crying as openly and wildly as children, was pitiable. It did nothing to raise my onetime Church of England spirits, since this demonstration was as far from me in social space as my own childhood is far behind me in time. Yet I could no more have laughed at any of these weeping people than I could have mocked you—to whom I am writing still—my own mother. I could not dispute with them because I have no meaning for what is going on that I could put in place of theirs. I could not join in their prayers as I joined in the final hymn for Mr. Tallboys and Mr. Percival, because we all have our billets, and we stick to them. And I could not stay in the dining-room any longer, because I could not do any good there. There is no more good that anybody can do anywhere.

It was as I climbed back up out of the third-class apartments that I became aware of the noise of shouting and violence ahead. I use the word climbing advisedly, not merely of the companionways and stairs, but of all the floors and landings on every deck. There was not one horizontal plane left on the entire ship—or on what was left of that. Climbing stairs towards the immersed bows called for a delicate balancing on the leading edges of the treads; whilst in order to mount those that led up towards the stern, one had effectively to pull oneself up by the hand-rail, or risk slipping back and bruising shins on stairs set at what by now must be an angle of thirty, or thirty-five degrees. Not many people were going up or down the stairs now, either way. Even passing up the corridor by the library, I was constrained to steady myself every so often, by grasping the moulding of the panelled walls with my fingers, and by clutching at door-jambs, and fixed pier-tables from which the vases of flowers had long since tumbled, to smash and be strewn in remote corners. The carpet here did not have the thickness of pile of the carpeting in the lounges, and first-class saloons, to give one a good foothold. I planted my feet on each of the treads of the stairs up to the barber's shop, so that its right-angle engaged with the leading edge of my heel. I had made no more use of the barber's shop than of the tennis court. The man who pays another man to shave him in the morning is the same man who pays a third to lay his pyjamas out at night. The leather travelling-case given me by Ducie Street contains a very comprehensive and serviceable shaving-kit. My late colleagues and employers did not expect that I should

resort to the ship's barber to do what today's young men do for themselves without a second thought.

I then half slid, half ran down the same long corridor by the surgeon's office that I had descended with the third-class passengers twenty minutes or so previously. Again, I wondered what work the surgeon had been put to on this abbreviated voyage, until I remembered that Mr. Williams had spoken of the birth of twins in the third class; but then I doubted that that event called for the offices of a London surgeon. By the time I reached the private saloons for the valets and ladies' maids, the noise of some sort of rampage was unmistakable. The ladies' maids must have gone with their mistresses in the boats, I supposed, since—if they were not ladies in the social, or perhaps economic sense of that word, the sense in which their mistresses would have used that word of themselves, where they would not have used it of their servants—they were ladies in the eyes of the shipping company, and of custom. I certainly did not begrudge them their places; if it was mine to give, they would have the vote besides. But I should have wanted to ask a few schoolmaster's questions myself if I thought that the valets had been taken off, with the gentlemen whose morning suits they brushed, whose pyjamas they laid out at night—who paid the barber to shave them, when the King himself, and the Captain, go bearded. I hoped the schoolmaster was mistaken in his belief that the ship's owner, in his dapper court-shoes, with his hair brushed sleekly close to his head, had made good his escape. I am sure there are others on board more deserving.

The last hours have been filled with noises at whose cause I have had to guess. The noise now was of hauling and banging—of heavy objects colliding—and of raucous yells. It got louder and louder as I picked my way gingerly up the first-class stairs, at once curious and apprehensive. I kept my eyes on my feet as I climbed, transferring my weight from one to the other with care. Near the top, I almost trod on a white hand, palm uppermost, hanging from a white sleeve. I stopped and grabbed for the hand-rail to steady myself. There was a man's body, lying across the stairs, tucked into the angle of the topmost tread, in a white shirt, black evening-dress trousers, and a black bow-tie. If I did not shout out loud, I know I gasped, and very nearly lost my balance. I turned my head to see the man's face, and recognized the sunken cheeks and dark eyebrows of Mr. Williams, the lounge-bar steward. There was a hammer with a bloodied head, on his chest; and his face ran with gore, and bloody matter, from a deep wound just above his left ear. I shut my eyes and swallowed, so that I should not retch at the sight. There was nothing that I could do; Mr. Williams was beyond anyone's help. I could not bring myself to step over him—over the body—for some seconds; yet I could not keep my balance any longer where I was. I wondered in what foolish heroic act the steward had been brought down; what injury or damage he had tried to stop. I heard further sounds of jarring above my head. That we shall all have gone within a little more than an hour made the slaughter of this good man a still more gratuitous piece of barbarism than it might otherwise have been. Nothing that his assassin was doing can have added to his chances of escape, and survival; and nothing that the steward did to stop him can have lessened them. Where I was curious and apprehensive before, I was frankly terrified now. Mr. Williams had had rather pronounced views about Frenchmen and Americans; he might have made as many enemies as friends. The seaman who had tried to unlace my life-preserver might have recovered from his fall, and sought out Mr. Williams, to sort him out before nature took its own course. Anyone of a number of

underlings might have resented his sharp tongue; anyone of a number of passengers might have been surprised in some lawless act.

I left Mr. Williams where he was. I could have spent my last hour in the library—and perhaps I should have done. This record would then have come to an end on a civilised note. Had I sat at my bureau on my return from below, I should not have seen the steward's body; and I should not have seen what was happening on the boat-deck—though I might have heard it. I should not then have had quite as low an opinion of men as I do, howbeit my opinion matters little now, if it ever did. I should have forgotten myself in Emerson, or spent still longer scribbling portentous last words. Who knows what thoughts I might have had about life and death, as events concentrated my mind? As it is, I have not time for more than a bare record of what I saw on the boat-deck—and that will be more than enough.

To judge by the hammer that I had already stepped over, and the axes and mallets that I afterwards saw wielded, someone had broken into Mr. Cameron's tool-store and helped himself to all the heaviest, most destructive tools that he could find. As soon as I stepped over the brass threshold of the exit between the funnels, the cause of all the noise was plain: men from steerage had rushed the officers' quarters, and were sacking the still unsubmerged portions of the ship's superstructure that I took to include the bridge. I heard shots from berths and companionways that had once been up above, but that were now down below me. What the men were doing, and what they thought to do, I could only guess at. They cannot have supposed that they would do anything that had not already been done to prevent the ship from sinking, or to alert other ships to our plight. More likely perhaps was that they suspected that the officers had privileged access to life-boats, or other means of preserving themselves, that they might commandeer. Whether—if this was indeed what the third-class men suspected—there were good grounds for this suspicion, I have no means of knowing; but one does not have to have read one's *Lear* or one's *Measure for Measure* to know that there is one law for the rich, and another for the poor. I had wondered myself why I had seen so few officers with much in the way of gold braid on their sleeves and shoulders, before and since the life-boats were lowered, and the bows began to settle in the water. Stewards, cabin-staff, and ordinary seamen had borne most of the responsibility for clearing the lower decks, and filling the life-boats, and in other ways attending to passengers' needs. I had no doubt the officers were busy about things beyond my understanding; but it did occur to me that they owed it to us all to be seen to be busy, about public and immediate needs, in those parts of the ship where most passengers were now crowded. The presence of officers might still do something to stem panic, and even—who could tell?—to concert efforts to fashion, or to discover, whatever might serve as a life-raft, or buoy, so that some few more of us might be added to the tally of survivors. I had no ambition myself to float adrift in a packing case, or on a bed-frame, since I know I should succumb to the cold within minutes. That I die a little daily from the finger-tips, from November to March is the price I pay for thin blood, and spare build. But there must be scores—if not hundreds—of people, big enough and resilient enough to survive the cold, who might still be saved; and there must be hundreds of chairs and tables, and sofas, and tea-chests, and trunks, and bar-stools, and lengths of timber that would serve to cling to, or to sit on—even to stand upright on, perhaps—once the ship has gone down. Why were these items not being brought up? And why were the officers not supervising their being brought up? Where were the officers, and what were they doing? Where was the Captain, and the Com-

mander, and Lieutenant-Commander, and the lieutenants, and sub-lieutenants, and the Purser, and the Petty Officer? Where are they now? Are they writing in log-books, or checking inventories of passengers' valuables, or auditing each other's expenses claims, or salvaging ship's papers, or consulting company regulations, or reading maritime law? Or are they defending the bridge against emigrants past playing patience, bent on anarchy, and the maximum of noise?

As I stood, just inside the threshold, asking myself these thoughtless questions, an officer came clambering up towards me, clutching at makeshift handles with his right hand, and gripping an unholstered pistol in his left. As he came on, bareheaded though he was, with his collar broken open, and his jacket-arm torn, I could see that it was the tall, slim young Englishman who had superintended the lowering of the life-boats on the port side, who had threatened the Italian, and shouted at him: "Don't you understand plain English?" He had seemed to be in command of himself, and of everyone else, then. He had filled the boats, and had had them clear the ship in good order. Now, there was a wildness about him, and the smell of fear. I stood aside, in some fear myself, and caught an acrid whiff from the gun as he struggled past, and down (or up) the way that I had come. I could not tell whether he was chasing, or being chased; but I guessed it was the latter. There had been a struggle from which he had escaped—that much was plain. But there did not seem to be anybody after him. The noise of whatever was taking place continued forward, unabated. It seemed from the shouting, and muffled pistol-shots, as though the emigrants might have prevailed against the officers. I could only regret that the ship would go down with anarchists in charge—on the bridge, perhaps even at the helm—if I had more confidence in the good governance of those in uniform whose job it had been to sail a tight ship. As it was, we had all eaten well, and had slept well, and there had been orchids, and Médoc, and prayers, and ragtime; I am sure the qualified masseuse knew her business, and I had never doubted who was master in the second-class lounge-bar. The towels in my cabin had been kept spotless and warm; and the ink-well in the bureau in the second-class library had always been full. But we had stove in a fishing-boat, and loaded dry coal; we had exploded, and collided with ice—and now there is no place in a life-boat for me, because I am a second-class man. I am half inclined to agree with the angry schoolmaster that a troop of boy-scouts could have done things better.

There was a crashing noise behind me that might have been the tall, slim officer falling on the stairs, but that might have been much more. And there was more noise on all sides of me, out on the deck. I clung to the door-jamb, and watched as heavily-built men (they might have been crew-members or passengers, I could not tell in the darkness) clambered up from beyond the funnel forward of me, shouting, and swinging firemen's axes at their sides. They shouted at each other, and at nobody in particular, and raged about in a fury of activity, that must have been more satisfying to them than endless, time-passing games of cards on their blankets, down in the heat of steerage. They took their firemen's axes to the wooden seating that ran in parallel rows to port and starboard. This I should have thought a sensible course of action had they co-operated and divided the seats into units of a reasonable size—the length and breadth of a life-raft, for one person or more. Instead, they broke them up into pieces far too small to be serviceable for any conceivable purpose, as much—it seemed—to spite each other as to share the spoils justly. They shouted at each other as they struck the timbers, and in venom, destroyed the portion of the

seat on which their neighbour had been working. Whether any of these men managed to salvage a portion big enough to float on I rather doubt. Already, two of the men were exchanging blows beside a good length of seating that might have accommodated both of them. I had no wish to stay until they had taken axes to each other as I feared they might, and as to judge by subsequent howlings, I was convinced they did. I had as soon put a funnel between myself and those desperate men as I could.

I had got no farther away than this, when I observed that there was a fire up ahead, whose flames shot skywards almost to the height of the funnel itself. I made for this fire, almost as much for the warmth that it would lend, as out of curiosity about that it was that was burning. As I groped my way round raised hatches, and ventilators, I bumped into the seated figure of the junior wireless-operator. I could tell it was him, even in the semi-darkness, from his fair hair, and his slight, nervous way of holding himself. He was hunched and shivering, half-sitting, half-leaning on a large wooden chest from which I had seen deck-hands take games apparatus. Had I not bumped into him, I should not otherwise have imposed myself upon him, he was so obviously distressed. I was quite sure that, by this time, all but the stoical or the unimaginative must be distressed likewise; but there was something about this young man's quiet heaving that suggested he was wracked by more than self-pity. As I said "sorry," automatically, he raised a face to me that was a picture of anguish.

"Mister," he said. "They've done for Mr. Cooper. I know they have. They barged into the office when I was there, and overpowered us both."

I remembered that Mr. Cooper was the senior wireless-operator. The young man had said his name before. I asked him who 'they' were, though I suppose I knew.

"They were big men. I don't know where they came from. But they broke the door down with sledgehammers, and said they'd have a go at us next if we didn't show them how to work the signals and the phones. Mr. Cooper told them he'd been sending messages non-stop but if there were ships near enough to pick them up, they'd long since turned off their sets and gone to bed. The only replies we'd been getting for the last hour were ships too far away to do any good. But they've altered course anyway. When there's a mayday signal you've no choice. But they said we'd been sending business messages, and that we'd not told the truth.

"They wouldn't listen. Mr. Cooper told them time and time again it was no good. He said he'd tried everything, and the Captain himself had said there was nothing more to be done, except save ourselves. I'd only gone down there to get him to come up. But he would keep sending, in spite of what the Captain said. One of them hit him, and he went down. They told me to show them what to do, or I'd be next. I could hardly press the keys I was trembling so much, with these two standing right behind me. But I showed them what to do—there's really nothing to it. Then they shoved me off my chair, and started tapping away for all they were worth. There were the same signals as before, but garbled sort of. There was something jammed already. But they'd have thought there was something wrong whatever they'd heard. They wouldn't have understood. They banged the keys, and shouted into the phones as if they thought they'd hear voices. And when all they heard was static electricity, they got impatient, and they did things to the set that couldn't possibly do any good. They wrecked it, what was left of it.

"I think they killed Mr. Cooper. I should've stayed, only I knew they'd've started

on me. There was nothing to do. The set was all stove in...I got out while I could. Mr. Cooper was hunched up on the floor.”

The young man said something else that I couldn't catch. I comforted him as best I could, and said he'd done the right thing, no-one could have done more, and so on. I said I was sorry about Mr. Cooper. I didn't say he might as well have gone that way as any other. Then it struck me that I still wore my life-preserver, though I had never seriously considered that it would preserve my life. I gave the young man my brief-case to hold—I didn't want it to go careering down into the water just yet. I tugged at the laces that Mr. Williams had tied, with more understanding of the mechanism than I had had at first. I held it up in front of the wireless-operator, and told him to lift up his arms, and to raise his chin. He would have refused, but I wouldn't listen.

“I shan't use it,” I said. “I want you to have it. If they did...kill Mr. Cooper, there'll be no-one to say what messages there'd been, when there's an enquiry. You'll be needed. Mr. Marconi will depend on you; they all will. There's bound to be an enquiry. And there's no-one else can say what you can say...”

I wished I had let the wireless-operator into the secret of the burning coal, when we'd spoken in my cabin. I would have trusted him with the story, as I had been trusted myself; but this was not the time; and it all seemed less important now. There would be someone who could tell the truth: one of the seamen in the life-boats must know. I might have given the young man the facts even now—but I suspected that what might have seemed a significant event at the time had been overtaken by others of still greater significance. There were so many terrible truths, it was hard to choose between them.

The young man resisted for a time; but he could tell I was in earnest. He let me lace him into the life-preserver as a child might yield to his nurse's hands, buttoning up his bodice. I was amused to see that the young man was running his finger around the initials of my name, incised above the clasp on the brief-case.

“You've everything to live for,” I said. “No-one will think the worse of you for saving yourself.” I did not say to him: “You must not give up life; you are young,” because I am young myself.

I took back my brief-case, but I only left him when I was sure that he would do what he could for himself. He might have found it more difficult to leave me than I him. I let my hand rest on his head a second as I left him, and then withdrew it, feeling a little foolish that I had played the priest, treating the young man as if he was a mere boy, and I was sacrificing my life for him, from some saintly height, when it wasn't like that at all. I was angry with myself; but my anger was doubtless wasted along with everything else.

The flames rose from a rude building of deck-chairs. I drew near to it, attracted by the heat. The chairs had been flung into the angle between the deck and a raised metal platform, topped by a wooden grille. Even as one set of men—Irishmen from steerage by the sound of them—threw deck-chairs, one after the other from a tall stack, on to the fire, another group—seamen, passengers yelling in different languages, and broken English—were pitching them by twos and threes over the side. There were even seamen, red in the face with rage and exertion, seizing deck-chairs from the fire, even as the canvas caught alight, and hurling them, smoking, over the rail. The fire was so hot, I could smell the tar burning between the planks of the deck, and the paint peeling off the metal platform.

“Pity the poor devils in the sea,” one of the crewmen shouted. “They've nothing to

hold on to. The boats have all gone. Do you want them to drown?"

"What about the rest of us, stuck 'ere?" one of the Irishmen shouted back. "The telegraph's gone. There's no more rockets. Who's to know where we are?"

"She's going down! There's no ship to see your damn' fire!"

"There'll be ships soon enough You'll see!"

"Leave those! We need those!"

"If you burn that lot, there'll be nothing left to hold on to when she goes!"

"There's lots left. There's the crates yet!"

"We'll burn the decks if need be. If we can't be seen we're done for anyway."

It was a scene of utter confusion. If there was a side to be taken, I am not sure which it was. There would soon be a lot of people in the water; that was certain. The ship could not last much above thirty, forty, fifty minutes now—and already people were slipping into the sea forward, helpless to prevent themselves falling. They must have something to cling to, or to clamber on to, for the water must be paralysing. Though I was within yards of the fire—and dare not stand closer—I was rigid with cold. Yet if there were ships within less than an hour's steaming time of us, they must be informed about our position without delay. There must be no risk of their circling us, without so much as a moon to see us by. Wasted minutes would mean still more wasted lives, there was no doubt of that at all.

The confusion was worse confounded when the stack of deck-chairs from which the Irishmen were feeding the fire toppled over, and skittered down the deck, lodging, some of them, against bulkheads, and under the empty davits whilst others of them slid straight into the water that still crept up towards us, that would claim us all before long. One man was pinioned to the deck by the tumbling chairs, and I fear his arm might have been broken, or that he had been burned, or worse. His screaming was little attended to in the chaos of crashing seats, of men losing their balance and holding on to spars of wood that would not be held, and of burning brands and clothes alight. I was, happily, astern of the pile; had I not been, I should certainly have been knocked off my feet, as almost all the Irishmen below me were. There was no regaining one's footing on a plane that by now must have inclined at nearly forty degrees. The poor fools that had been feeding the flames a moment before, might now be thankful for deck-chairs to cling to that they had been so eager to burn. No-one now was so hopeful, or so far-sighted as to seek to re-kindle the fire from within the mess of smouldering deck-chairs. Sparks had flown up when the stack had toppled; now there was little more than a plume of smoke to bear witness of the last attempt that could be made to draw the world's attention to our whereabouts. Soon, we should have no whereabouts, and all that would bear witness to us would be the laden life-boats, empty deck-chairs, and hats. I was certain no-one could live in that water for more than the time it takes for a man to drown; but there were several people who thought otherwise, who grabbed at anything that might float, and who jumped, or let themselves drop into the sea, rather than hang on to the stern-rail, and unreasonable hope.

There was nothing more for me to see or do on deck. While there was still light and warmth in the library, that is where I wanted to be. I was just about to make my way here, clinging to hand-rails, and to my brief-case, all the way, when two burly men irrupted on to the deck from the double doors, sweating and swaying under the weight of what must have been Christophe's coffin—the coffin that I had seen him enter, whose lid I had seen nailed down, that Christophe had been cast off in, some twelve hours before. It did not

seem so long; and yet that had been another world. There were other men behind the couple who carried the coffin: all of them struggled for a footing, bent at the knees, arms outstretched to clutch at anything firm. Hours before, I should have said they were drunk. Now, it was how we were all having to get about, those of us fool enough to be on the move at all. I stood aside to let these men out on to the deck, there must have been five or six of them. They can't all have thought they'd fit on top of the coffin, or inside it.

One of the men asked the question I wanted to ask myself:

"What's happened to Christophe, anyway? Where is he now?"

"He'd know what to do," another said.

"'Aven't you 'eard? He jumped overboard..."

"He never. I keep telling you. He was pushed."

"Not then, I don't mean..."

"They 'ad it in for 'im, 'cause 'e was a Jew. An' 'e sejuiced one of their women..."

"No, 'e came back again. This is 'is coffin, innit? Afterwards, I'm talking about. He jumped over afterwards. He's escaped. He covers 'imself with something so he can stay in cold water for hours and hours..."

"He wouldn't go off on 'is own. He's somewhere, I know 'e is. He said we'd all be saved, don't you remember? Last night: he said we'd all be taken care of..."

"Get away! That was just 'is way of talking. He didn't mean..."

I didn't hear any more. Still more men came up—third-class men all of them, I think—groping, swearing, but determined, as if their minds were fixed on something. These men, too, were talking about Christophe: arguing heatedly, cursing the ship's officers, the absurd angularity of everything, and their fellows. One set up a shout as soon as he stepped out on the slope of the deck: "Christophe! Christophe!" he shouted over and over again. Others soon joined in, until the whole poop-deck seemed to be shouting: "Christophe!". The chant rang eerily in the freezing air. There was no echo somehow, as if the cold was a curtain that absorbed every call the moment it was uttered. Christophe's name hung for no longer than it took for everyone to shout it, and then there was silence, and then the shout rang out again, like a damped bell. The shout went up countless times: "Christophe! Christophe!", as if the people thought that if they shouted long and loudly enough Christophe must appear. It seemed that there was nothing they would not believe of the man. It gave them comfort, perhaps. They were all doing something together—something they could believe in. If a ship would not see us, now that the fire had gone out, at least, I thought, it would hear us; though what anyone would make of the noise I had no notion.

Somewhere in the back of my mind, I had harboured the thought that Christophe might still make use of his coffin. It had not occurred to me—it was not a serious proposition; nobody had resolved the uncertainty, and I had not inquired—that Christophe might still be submerged on the end of his rope, attached along with the collapsible boat, to a stanchion on D-Deck. He had said we should pull him behind us—alive or dead—all the way to New York; but this had been bravado. He must have clambered aboard the surf-boat when the ship's engines were stopped, if the man in the life-boat had not hauled him in long before. Besides, the boat would have been wanted for saving lives, and must have been occupied, and be gone. Talk of Jonah, in the mouth of Christophe himself, and the speculation about the whale that had been cut in half—and other references, in addition—had sug-

gested to me that Christophe would make further use of his coffin. It had been no more than a half-formed idea: but I had pictured Christophe, like Ishmael, sole survivor of the crew of the Pequod, floating round and round the vortex that the ship had left, until by chance he found the coffin-lifebuoy floating at his side. Now this was not to be.

I stood for a moment watching the men who had just passed me, clambering up the deck, skidding, jumping, searching, flinging open chests and doors, shouting as they went: "Christophe! Christophe!" like men possessed. I was astonished by their enormous energy. They ran, and leaped, and scaled the deck, hauling anything wooden to the side, breaking up whatever would be broken, unravelling ropes, heaving at what had seemed to be fixed and solid. And I had thought these men would lay themselves down on their bunks, and quietly die!

There was something altogether too desperate about it all—too doomed, I suppose—for me to want to stand watching any longer. I took one last look at the ring of chanting passengers, clinging to the stern-rail, silhouetted against the stars, at the men ram-paging, and finally—and hopelessly—at the line of darkness where the stars stopped. There were one or two very distant, very faint points of light on the sea that I took to be those of the last of our life-boats, but no sign of a ship. It was no comfort to me to think that the ladies who sat in the cold in open boats were no more certain of rescue than the hundreds of us who remained on board. Nor, of course, should it have been.

I came below, heart-sick, though my spirits can sink no further. I am quite numb now. There is no feeling in me at all. Even at this lurching stern-end, where there is still heat and light, there is no life left to speak of. When people move at all, they move like zombies.

I wonder how many people have died in their beds, as I suppose we all hoped we would. It has all happened too slowly, since the explosion, for anyone to have been surprised by the sea. No-one can have been drowned in their sleep, even on the lowest deck of all. The stewards saw to that.

I wonder if my cabin is underwater yet, with my office-suits in it, and the shirts from Kendals that I can't have worn above half a dozen times; and the leather case from Ducie Street; and Lucy's letter to me, written on the powder-blue paper that she's used since I was at Chad's, with a DV on every other line. And I wonder whether the wireless-operator has escaped yet, with my life-preserver on; and whether there'll be a mention of me on the Recreations Page of the *Manchester Guardian* on Saturday. I'll be listed among the missing in a good few papers, I suppose; and fellows who were at Wilmslow with me will say: "Edwin Robertson? I was at school with an Edwin Robertson," or: "He was at Chad's with me. Had a crisis of faith, I seem to remember. Fell foul of the Tübingen School. The poor devil, what a way to go." As for the Ducie Street people: one or two might rue their generosity when I left; some of them'll raise a tankard to me, and say they knew me, to make them feel important, like I should have done in their place—and then they'll forget all about me. There'll be a lot of people who'll say my name for a day or two. Mr. Cook, on the Manchester train, might miss me for a while. I shall be news as long as this marvellous damned ship is news.

I took one last look at the first-class accommodation as I came down. Mr. Cameron was sitting, as if stunned, in the middle of the first-class smoking-room; and another gentleman in evening-dress was half-sitting, half-lying, slicing open a spare life-belt with a

penknife, and showing his wife what was inside. Mr. Cameron sat with his arms folded, leaning against the slope. I have never seen a man—in stiff white shirt, Oxford shoes, and satin-collared suit; with a Wellsian moustache, and a good Scotsman's head of hair—I have never seen a living man look so much like a waxwork before. And yet, it seems to me, we are all waxworks before our time: a tableau that mocks understanding. And the fact that I walked whilst most others sat, drinking, reading, staring, praying, some of them, did not make me any less of a waxwork than anyone else. I contributed little to the tableau—I was not dressed up; I was neither stilled by fear, nor swayed by religion; I neither debated, nor caroused—but I could not detach myself from it, and argue that I was alive; more alive than those about me.

I passed the letter-box outside the library. I noticed it had a metal inside, and a flap above the mouth that pulled down, effectively shutting the box. Even so, I still thought better of dropping this notebook in there when I have finished with it: I shall place it in my rain-proof brief-case, and throw it overboard, in the hope that it might float until a Cunarder spots it among the abandoned deck-chairs and hats.

There are still men, and a very few women, at green-baize card-tables in the second-class library, with two legs of the tables folded away. There are passengers sitting reading on the over-stuffed sofas whom I've seen sitting reading there before. And there are still one or two letter-writers at the bureaux by the wainscoting, improbably writing letters. (I don't know why I say "improbably"; what I am doing is no less improbable, no less empty). The gentleman whom I had taken to be the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* is sitting at the bureau that I came to think of as mine, reading what looks like a back number of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. I am sitting at a crazy angle, at a bureau behind a fluted column, and I am therefore unseen by two gentlemen at a nearby table whose voices I recognize as those of Mr. Tallboys and Mr. Percival.

"They say the wealthiest man on board is going down with four thousand two hundred and fifty dollars in his pocket," says Mr. Percival. "And there's a famous book-collector in the first-class lounge, and in *his* pocket, they say, there's a first edition of the essays of Francis Bacon."

"It just goes to show," says Mr. Tallboys, mournfully. He is not the man he was two hours or so ago.

"But perhaps he'll have given it to one of the ladies to take with her, with instructions to add it to his collection. Posthumously."

I go on scribbling, though I know it's far too late—or perhaps it's far too early—to make any sense of what's happening. I'll go on writing while the dynamos are still working—if they are still working. The lights are dimmer now than they were, and there's a pinkness about them that there hasn't been before. There can't still be men down there keeping the lights burning for the likes of me to write by. I wonder whether the boilers will burst when the salt water reaches them. Surely, it must have reached them already; in which case we may yet go up in an explosion, instead of down in the flood. It hardly matters how we go. We might, after all, have gone at any time for days past. We should have done if the stokers hadn't done what England had had no right to expect.

Where is the tattooed stoker now? And the seaman in the jersey? And the cockney waiter, Mr. Getzels, Mr. Connors, and the lift-boy? Where is Alexei Kristoff, the little Russian; Christophe, the Frenchman Jew? Perhaps when you have been as many people as he

has, it comes easier to be no-one at all. Perhaps I have been more than one person myself, and that is why I seem to be so resigned to becoming another. I am sure I should be feeling much more than I am. But I am not.

I haven't talked to many people in the course of the voyage; and I've not come to know anybody at all. Not even Mr. Percival. Not even Dorothy. Dorothy, above all. I have invested as little in people as in things. If I value books and ideas more highly than things, it's to be doubted whether they should take the place of people. There are Pooters on all sides of me, with no more imagination than it takes to play gin rummy. Reading *The Diary of a Nobody* is a second-hand way of understanding people; writing the diary of an about-to-be-nobody is the work of a confirmed egoist. Yet I am surely less guilty of killing time than the card-players.

We must be at an angle of more than forty degrees now. Not only can I feel she's going; it's evident she's going soon. Dorothy (might she be thinking about me at all? Did we share anything beyond polite conversation?) will be well away from the ship by now. The boats will all have rowed as far away from us as they could so as not to be sucked into the vortex of our going down. Yet perhaps there will be no agitation of the water when we go down—just a momentary parting of the calm, and a dignified disappearance. Walnut panelling, rococo clocks, Victorian brocades, and Persian carpets; the Boulevard, the Café Parisien, the mock Tudor promenade deck, the first-class cathedral, and the third-class tabernacle; the glass dome on the stairs, the gymnasium, and the Turkish baths with their gilded cooling rooms will all go down with the man who built them and all his blueprints. Half of them have gone already.

The ship was born in a furnace and welded together in spitting heat; and she'll glide down into the cold—at the end of a glorious, pitifully short life. I can't face gliding down with her. If I jump into the ocean, will death be instantaneous? There's no other way I can go.

If it mattered, I'd work on some immortal lines. I'd say something choice about size and speed and the flawed machine; and the flawed men who conceived it. But all I can think of is you, Mother, wearing yourself out weeping.

People are looking at each other, murmuring. Mr. Percival has fallen silent, and the cards have stopped slap-slapping on the tables. We all know, and we're waiting.

There are some dull booms a long way down.

"The water-tight bulkheads are crumpling under the weight," Mr. Percival's whispering to Mr. Tallboys. Mr. Tallboys is whispering to God.

There's a lot of noise on the deck above: people rushing, clambering, panicking by the sound of it. There's no panic down here. It's difficult to see now; but nobody's stirring. One or two people are holding each other; sobbing a little. I think there's someone crying in the covered way outside.

I wonder where the Captain is. A man like that'll be going down with us, to add to all the other waste.

I look about me, and there's Christophe, stretched out on pillows on an upholstered bench at the stern end. I can't think how I didn't see him earlier.

He's lying—clenching and unclenching his fists, over and over again, like I saw him doing before.

More muffled explosions—dull and heavy—the movement of machinery. Just now, the lights snapped off—then there was a flash.
They're still burning, but they're red now.
It's time to go up.

APPENDIX
SPEAKERS IN THE ENGLISH RESEARCH FORUM 2004-2009

William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

Dr. Lawrence Normand (Middlesex University, London)
March 23, 2004

Reading Shakespeare's *Tempest*

Dr. Lawrence Normand (Middlesex University, London)
March 24, 2004

Recent Developments in Shakespeare Criticism

Dr. Lawrence Normand (Middlesex University, London)
March 25, 2004

"Tango Finlandia": An Introduction to Imagology and Its Social Dimensions

Dr. Anthony Johnson (University of Oulu)
October 25, 2004

Shakespearean Imagology: *Anthony and Cleopatra* and Portability

Dr. Anthony Johnson (University of Oulu)
October 27, 2004

Resurfacings: Greenaway's *Prospero's Books* and Shakespeare's *Tempest*

Dr. Anthony Johnson (University of Oulu)
October 28, 2004

Aspects of Education in Hungary

Dr. Colin Swatridge (University of Miskolc)
December 13, 2004

Annual Erasmus Talk

Ms. Szilvia König (Middlesex University)
February 28, 2005

Homophones in British English

Mr. Zoltán Töltéssy (University of Miskolc)
March 21, 2005

Religious Figuration in Anthony Burgess's *Autobiography*

Dr. Ákos I. Farkas (Eötvös Loránd University / University of Miskolc)
April 25, 2005

Mistress, Mother, Father, Idol: Hidden Aspects of Wordsworth's Nature

Dr. Éva Braidwood-Varga (University of Miskolc)

May 9, 2005

Basics of Construction Grammar

Dr. Judit Szabóné-Papp (University of Miskolc)

October 25, 2005

Book Launch: *A Country Full of Aliens*

Reading and Round Table Discussion with Dr. Colin Swatridge and Dr. H. E. Bailey (University of Miskolc)

November 29, 2005

Global Violence and Personal Impact

Mr. Gerry Miller (The Peace People)

March 23, 2006

The Awakening: A Poetry Reading

Mr. Gerry Miller (The Peace People)

March 23, 2006

Human Rights in Ulster

Mr. Gerry Miller (The Peace People)

March 24, 2006

"Austerely intoxicating": Calvinism and the Arts in Scotland

Prof. Tom Hubbard (The Scottish National Library)

March 27, 2006

At the End of the Broken Bridge: A Scottish–Hungarian Poetry Reading

Dr. Tom Hubbard (The Scottish National Library) and Mr. Zoltán Töltéssy (University of Miskolc)

March 27, 2006

Religion and the Popular Novel in America

Dr. Harry Edward Bailey

April 12, 2006

Annual Erasmus Talk

Ms. Linda Lakatos (Middlesex University) and Ms. Éva Podlovics (University of Oulu)

October 11, 2006

The State of English

Dr. Aladár Sarbu (Eötvös Loránd University / University of Miskolc)

November 6, 2006

Landscape Lyric and Identity Construction in Douglas Dunn's Poetry

Dr. Attila Dósa (University of Miskolc)

November 29, 2006

The Escapologist: Reading from a Novel in Progress

Dr. Colin Swatridge (University of Miskolc)

December 4, 2006

Multicultural America

Dr. Carlos Morton (University of California at Santa Barbara)

March 2, 2007

Human Rights in Ulster

Mr. Gerry Miller (The Peace People)

March 21, 2007

Poets from Northern Ireland: Reading and Round Table Discussion

Mr. Gerry Miller (The Peace People), Dr. Attila Dósa and Mr. Zoltán Tóltéssy (University of Miskolc)

March 21, 2007

Conceptual Metaphors

Mr. Zoltán Tóltéssy (University of Miskolc)

April 4, 2007

Welcome to Zlín!: Erasmus Exchange Program

Dr. Helena Janasová (Tomas Bata University in Zlín)

April 5, 2007

Comments on "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" by John Keats

† Dr. Dezső Bánki (University of Miskolc)

May 3, 2007

On the History of the English Language

Mr. Andy Chernel (Tomas Bata University in Zlín)

June 5 and 6, 2007

English Research Forum Café Bar

—At the Zipfer Beer Cellar with student presentations, readings and poem posters

September 28, 2007

Annual Erasmus Talk

Mr. Richárd Baráth (Middlesex University)

November 12, 2007

Poetry Reading: Poems by Miss Emese Lénárt and poems by Mr. Gerry Miller translated into Hungarian by Miss Lénárt and Mr. Zoltán Töltéssy

Readers: Ms. Emese Lénárt, Ms. Lilla Pintér and Mr. Zoltán Töltéssy (University of Miskolc)

November 26, 2007

Anthony Burgess in Hungary

Dr. Ákos I. Farkas (Eötvös Loránd University / University of Miskolc)

December 3, 2007

Emerich Pressburger: Reviving the Memory of the Miskolci-born British Filmmaker

Ms. Gabriella Varga (University of Miskolc)

December 5, 2007

The Ethics of Garrett Hardin

Mr. Gábor Varga (University of Miskolc)

March 19, 2008

Hungarian Americans

Dr. Steven B. Várdy (Duquesne University)

June 30, 2008

Secrets and Falsehood in Jane Austen

Ms. Ildikó Kocsis (University of Miskolc)

October 21, 2008

The Troubles in Northern Ireland

Mr. Gerry Miller (The Peace People)

March 4, 2009

Poetry Reading and Round Table Talk

Mr. Gerry Miller (The Peace People)

March 4, 2009

The Verins: Family Violence and Liberty Conscience in Early New England

Dr. Margaret M. Manchester (Providence College)

April 29, 2009

Virtues, Vices and Victory: How Baroque Jesuits Wrote about Themselves and Their Experiences

Dr. Paul Shore (Saint Louis University)

April 30, 2009

SZERZŐINKNEK

Minden tanulmányhoz bibliográfiát kérünk csatolni az alábbi formai követelmények szerint. A hivatkozásokat lábjegyzetes formában kérjük a bibliográfiában jelzett módon.

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¹ A vezetékneveket kiskapitális betűtípussal kérjük.

² A címetet minden esetben döntve kérjük.

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