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contents

EDITORIAL

<i>after i read</i> by Brian MacKinnon.....	9
<i>Winter Fantasy</i> by Sue Matheson.....	10
<i>The Role of Food in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth Century Colonialism in North America</i> by Jim Daems.....	11
OFF TO THE FUTURE by <i>Rupert M. Loydell</i>	36
<i>Sentry in Black and White</i> by Sue Matheson.....	38
<i>Critical Issues in Research Ethics Involving Human Subjects</i> by Jim Gough.....	39
SQUATTING by Allen Berry.....	60
<i>Marshmallow Treats</i> by Sue Matheson.....	59
<i>Posing a Problem: Prozac Nation and the ghostly failures of Jewish American Assimilation</i> by Amy Tziporah Karp.....	62
ABOUT THE SKY by Rupert M. Loydell.....	94
<i>Snoangel #2</i> by Sue Matheson.....	96
<i>Intervening Angels, May 1937</i> by Margaret Shaw-MacKinnon.....	97
LINGUISTICS by Allen Berry.....	107
<i>Treads #1</i> by Sue Matheson.....	108

contents

<i>RECONSIDERING IMMORTALITY, CONSUMPTION & TRAGEDY IN THE NARRATIVE STRUCTURE OF DC COMICS' SUPERMAN</i> by Kwasu David Tembo.....	109
<i>HUNGER</i> by Léna Remy-Kovach.....	135
<i>Winter Eventide</i> by Sue Matheson.....	136
<i>THE MACROECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY OF EDUCATION TOURISM IN BRITAIN'S ECONOMY, 1895 - 2015</i> by Ben-Akinduro C. Funmike.....	137
<i>Raven #3</i> by Sue Matheson.....	161
<i>from Battle For Life: A Poetic Autobiography</i> by Zhang Yawen translated by Ying Kong.....	162
<i>Snow #2</i> by Sue Matheson.....	170
<i>A Study of the Dramaturgy of Fatalism in Lancelot Imasuen's Invasion 1897</i> by Taiwo Okunola Afolabi and Stephen Ogheneruro Okapadah.....	171
PAGE 129 by Rupert M. Loydell.....	191
<i>A Road Not Taken</i> by Sue Matheson.....	193
<i>Sweating in two Worlds</i> by Joseph D. Atoyebi.....	194
DECONSTRUCTION by Allen Berry.....	220
<i>Frosted</i> by Sue Matheson.....	224
<i>"Guess I do Look Rotten--Yust out of Hospital": Female Psychological Turmoil in Eugene O'Neill's Anna Christie</i> by Olfa Gandouz.....	225

contents

ANOTHER DARK TOMORROW by Rupert M. Loydell.....248

Moon Above Batbox on Birch by Sue Matheson.....251

"The twisted feet, the half-blind eyes, are easily forgotten": The Collision of Trauma and Counter-Trauma in J.M. Coetzee's Waiting for the Barbarians by Suchismita Dutta.....252

Shadows on the wall by R.P. Singh.....266

Windy Day by Sue Matheson.....268

Boxing Helena: An Obsession Worth Recovering by Antonio Sanna.....271

CAFFEINE NATION by Allen Berry.....275

Snow Fence by Sue Matheson.....276

The First Ingredient by Walter M. Young.....277

Main Street, The Pas, MB by Sue Matheson.....282

A Review of Arundhati Roy's The Ministry of Utmost Happiness by Paromita Sengupta.....283

CONTRIBUTORS.....289

CFP MOSAIC.....294

SUBMISSION.....295

GUIDELINES.....295

CALL FOR PAPERS.....304

It is December, and *the quint* is now ten years old, healthy and growing. This Christmas, new writers from around the world have joined the journal. Showcasing articles from Canada, the United States, Scotland, Nigeria, Tunisia, Italy, and India, this *quint* begins with Jim Daems' fascinating study of food as a colonial marker in sixteenth and seventeenth century North America. Daems argues that early modern colonizers used food as a means by which to structure their perceptions of the indigene. Jim Gough's thoughtful "Critical Issues in Research Ethics Involving Human Subjects" follows. Gough's considerations invite more discussion about the controversial topics and issues associated with making decisions about the use of human subjects in scientific research. Next, in "Posing a Problem: *Prozac Nation* and the ghostly failures of Jewish American Assimilation," Amy Tziporah Karp explores problematics/prohibitions in the Jewish American assimilation narrative. Following, Kwasi David Tembo's "RECONSIDERING IMMORTALITY, CONSUMPTION & TRAGEDY IN THE NARRATIVE STRUCTURE OF DC COMICS' SUPERMAN " assesses the phenomena of Superman's immortality in terms of athanasia as well as timelessness. A careful and well-supported examination, Ben-Akinduro C. Funmike's "THE MACROECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY OF EDUCATION TOURISM IN BRITAIN'S ECONOMY, 1895 - 2015" outlines the impact and viability of education tourism to the economy of the UK as a sustainable industry to the national economy and within a growing global market. Taiwo Okunola Afolabi and Stephen Ogheneruro Okapadah's "A Study of the Dramaturgy of Fatalism in Lancelot Imasuen's *Invasion 1897*" finds a discourse on the belief system that holds sway in African societies in *Invasion 1897* and recommends a continuous exploration of traditional beliefs by Nigerian cum African filmmakers. Then Olfa Gandouz's thought-provoking "Guess I do Look Rotten--Yust out of Hospital": Female Psychological Turmoil in Eugene O'Neill's *Anna Christie* " finds Eugene O'Neill revisits female stereotypes, defends female rights and calls for a better treatment of women in *Anna Christie*. Then, Suchismita Dutta's insightful argument in "'The twisted feet, the half-blind eyes, are easily forgotten': The Collision of Trauma and Counter-Trauma in J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting*

for the Barbarians" considers the plight of the subaltern suggested by the book's covers. Antonio Sanna's provocative review of *Boxing Helena*, one of the most extreme erotic thrillers of its time, definitely worthy of being (re-)watched. Finally, Paromita Sengupta's review concludes that Arundhati Roy's long-awaited *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is not happy or comfortable reading....for very good reasons.

No *quint* is complete without its creative complement. This issue contains poetry and prose for your enjoyment. Ying Kong's stunning translation of Zhang Yawen's *Battle for Life* is simply superb. We know you will enjoy Brian MacKinnon's incredibly taut and resonant work, Allen Berry's beautiful, minimalist verse, and Rupert M. Loydell's sophisticated and superbly controlled poems. Léna Remy-Kovach's direct and sensitive poem makes winter a Weetigo. Then, the playful verse by the award-winning Indian poet, R.P. Singh serves to balance the seriousness of these creative offerings. *the quint* is deeply honored to premiere Margaret Shaw-MacKinnon's deeply touching short story about the depth of a father's love for his son and Joseph D. Atoyebi's personal and forthright account of how sweating can enable us to transcend our cultural limitations. We were thrilled to welcome the first part of Walter M. Young's intriguing serial and hope he'll post its next installment with us....I have to know what the "Second Ingredient" is. When you have finished reading, my visual offerings from the North invite you to consider the many facets of light and snow outside our windows.

With no further ado, here's to good reading and viewing, warm nights inside with thought-provoking material and a cup of something hot while you wait for your Christmas stocking to be filled. At *the quint*, we wish you all the best the holidays can bring and very Happy New Year. *the quint* will be back in March with more offerings for reading and viewing, in time for the Easter holiday.

Sue Matheson
Editor

after i read

after i read
the final
words
after coming back through
the wilderness with the kid

“through the glimmer... where
the old man waited,
a deck of cards
on the scarred
and battered
table”
in the late
Richard Wagamese's
Medicine Walk

i caught my breath
and pulled

the novel
and its entire world
to my heart
and embraced
it

(in seventy reading years)
i'd never
done
that
before

—brian mackinnon



Winter Fantasy

Sue Matheson

The Roles of Food in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century English Colonialism in North America

**by Jim Daems, University College of the North, Thompson,
Manitoba, Canada**

We might think that food served similar purposes, beyond the obvious physical necessity, for people in the early modern period, but, how people culturally and religiously view what they eat and how medical discourses view the way that the body processes that food have changed significantly over the centuries in the western world. What the English, and the Spanish that preceded them, met with in the “New World” were Indigenous peoples that prepared and ate a largely unfamiliar diet. The point may seem an obvious one today; however, strange foods and peoples raised a number of concerns grounded in the limitations of early modern theories regarding the human body, digestion, climate, and, what we may, with certain qualifiers, call race. Food and its preparation—or, indeed, the issue of whether a people cooked their food at all—was of great significance in the

construction of binaries of “civilized” and “barbaric,” commensurate with “English,” or “European,” and “Indigene.” As the structural anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss noted, “The raw / cooked axis is characteristic of culture; the fresh / decayed one of nature, since cooking brings about the cultural transformation of the raw, just as putrefaction is its natural transformation” (142). Even today, we may still see what we eat and how we prepare it as “normal” in contrast to peoples that eat and prepare food that are unfamiliar to us, or in some extremely bigoted examples, as eating food only fit for animals. Yet, for the majority of us, there is no fear in eating Chinese food on Monday, a burger and fries on Tuesday, Mexican on Wednesday, etc. To the early modern European, however, this was potentially, dangerously transformative due to their belief in bodily humours. My argument, then, will focus on how European beliefs about food constructed the relationship between colonizer and colonized. What I will argue, following the work of scholars such as Jorge Cañizares-Esquerro and Joyce E. Chaplin, is that the attempt to construct the Indigenous other through food both problematized early modern European theories while contributing to a pseudo-racial construction of difference based on diet that played a key role in justifying the colonial enterprise.

I want to begin by sketching out the predominant theory, through much of the period covered by this essay, that influenced how Europeans saw food—the theory of humours. The human body was seen as comprised of the same four “elements” as the rest of God’s creation: earth, air, fire, and water. As E. M. W. Tillyard notes,

Man’s physical life begins with food, and food is made of the four elements. Food passes through the stomach to the liver, which is lord of the lowest of the three

parts of the body. The liver converts the food it receives into four liquid substances, the humours, which are to the human body what the elements are to the common matter of the earth. (76)

Each element contributed to a specific “humour.” Earth was equated with a melancholic, air with a sanguine, fire with a choleric, and water with a phlegmatic temperament. Further, these elements and their corresponding humours related to specific qualities. Earth / melancholic is cold and dry; air / sanguine is hot and moist; fire / choleric is hot and dry; and water / phlegmatic is cold and moist (Tillyard 76). Health was an issue of maintaining the proper balance within the body of these four elements. Climate, environment, and diet (itself related to climate and environment) all contributed to how these elements and qualities were mixed and maintained in terms of national / racial characteristics. Yet, precisely because such attention was needed to maintain a correct balance, humoral theory could not effectively constitute a stable, fixed identity—it is radically, potentially fluid because of the influence of diet and the exacerbating factors that could be imposed by climate and environment. As Rebecca Earle points out,

Colonial writers throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries agreed that ‘those who come from other climates through [eating] new foods generate new blood, which produces new humors, [and] the new humors [create] new abilities and conditions.’ A change in food, like a change in climate, was liable to provoke a change in both body and character. (693)

One of the primary concerns, beyond the mere necessity of sustenance, was in securing

food sources that would prevent such physical and behavioural transformations. This may involve, as Joyce E. Chaplin notes, some practical testing that was accomplished through the exchange of food between coloniser and colonised:

If natives could eat English food, that indicated that the two peoples' foodstuffs [...] might be interchangeable [...]. Still, it was possible that Indian digestion was more forgiving. Some colonists believed that it would take some adjustment to live on corn, or to learn which kinds (and what amounts) suited English people and their animals. (150)

Early modern colonizers used the theory not only to characterize their own identities, but also to negatively characterize the identities of Indigenous peoples. They sought to discover what foods were safe, and in what amount, in order to prevent the negative consequences of being subjected to a "New World" climate, environment, and diet which may result in a constitutive change in their own identities and bodies. The colonisers may, in what was seen as the worst case scenario, become like the Indigene if they could not discover the proper balance that would maintain their English humours. This realization points, again, to the radical instability of the humoral model.

This concern was evident from the time of Columbus' "discovery" into at least the middle of the seventeenth century. Earle notes Columbus' belief that European food would maintain Spanish identity in the New World and counteract the negative affects of climate and environment (688). Because humoral theory made the human body a microcosmic representation of the macrocosm created by God, transforming from "civilized" European into "barbaric" Indigene was possible—and Christian theology rein-

forced the shared origin of the "civilized" and the "barbaric" in the genealogy of humanity descending from Adam and Eve. The differences occurred because "through eating this inadequate food, as much as through the impact of climate [...] the Indians had lost their Old World temperament" (Earle 693). But this difference could also prompt some rather peculiar debates about why Indigenous peoples were different from Europeans. For example, the perplexing question of why Indigenous males did not generally have beards, and whether the Spanish colonisers might, therefore, lose their beards (a prized sign of their masculine virility) by ingesting the Indigenous diet and living in a hot moist climate. Gregorio García, however, argued that, "The Spanish were unlikely to lose their beards because the 'temperance and virtue that the Spaniards born in the Indies inherited from their fathers and grandfathers' were continually reinforced through the consumption of Spanish food" (Earle 692-3).

The writings considered in this article consistently address such concerns. Thomas Hariot's cataloguing of "merchantable commodities" and foodstuffs, for example, is marked by frequent comparisons of things currently found in Virginia, or which can be successfully introduced, that can grow because of the "same climate" and latitude with some area in Europe or Asia to provide known food sources to counteract any negative New World affects. This all points, however, to the fact that, "There was little knowledge of the dynamics of climate and of the effects of the movement of the atmosphere from west to east, which makes the weather on the east coasts of continents so different from that on the west" (Kupperman 215). As Karen Ordahl Kupperman points out, this contributed to "The general agreement that English people would be healthiest in the temperate climates they were used to [...] as a reason to concentrate colonization on New

England and Newfoundland” (216). Hariot addresses fears of transformation and disease through diet, and his comments on similar foodstuffs points towards such concerns and are rhetorically intended to correct them. Finally, he also notes that the temperate climate is suitable to introduce European crops and animals based on latitudinal calculations. This, too, appears directed toward the same concerns. Hariot states,

For the holesomenesse thereof I neede to say but thus much: that for all the want of prouision, as first of English victual; excepting for twentie daies, wee liued only by drinking water and by the victual of the countrey, of which some sorts were very straunge vnto vs, and might haue bene thought to haue altered our temperatures in such sort as to haue brought vs into some greuous and dangerous diseases [...]. Furthermore, in all our travailes which were most special and often in the time of winter, our lodging was in the open aire vpon the grounde. And yet I say for all this, there were but foure of our whole company (being one hundred and eight) that died all the yeere and that but at the latter ende thereof and vpon none of the aforesaide causes. For all foure especially three were feeble, weake, and sickly persons before euer they cam thither, and those that knewe them much marveyled that they liued so long being in that case, or had aduentured to trauaile. (31-2)

Hariot's stress on the limited deaths and the lack of any transformation of the English dispel fears expressed vividly in an account of Jerónimo de Aquilar's eight-year sojourn with the Maya after a shipwreck. Unable to eat Spanish food when found by Spaniards, de Aquilar stated that,

‘after so much time he was accustomed to the food of the Indians, and his stomach would regard Christian food as foreign.’ [...] His digestive system had gone native; in humoral terms, he had acquired a ‘second nature,’ and as a result, his body was not quite Christian as it had been prior to his shipwreck. He had begun to turn into an Indian. (Earle 699)

Theory, though, could be forced aside by mere necessity—starvation. But, even here, such concerns manifest themselves. For many, the journey to either Virginia, Massachusetts Bay, Newfoundland, or in search of the Northwest Passage, was a trying time in terms of food. Provisions, if adequate for the journey, were often spoiled or destroyed during the passage. Other issues included the fact that, even reaching America with sufficient rations for the journey, there may not be much left upon arrival. In part, this was a result of colonial promotional literature's recurring chorus of New World bounty of recognizable foodstuffs. Or, as is the case with the Pilgrims, a delayed departure meant arrival during the winter, with little food to be found in nature and no possibility of planting their wheat seed or for providing food for the few animals they had. Wolves, too, exacerbated the threat. John Winthrop records starvation and scurvy among the humans, while wolves attacked their livestock (31). Regardless, food had to be found upon arrival within a relatively short time—for either continuing a journey of exploration and re-provisioning for the return to England, or for the establishment and maintenance of a colonial settlement. While some of the flora and fauna was similar to England's, and other, less familiar food items were known from earlier Spanish and English accounts, the colonizers had to trade with the Indigenous people for food in order to survive, or

learn to plant and harvest like the Indigenous people. At Plymouth, for example, Squanto, an Indigenous man who had been kidnapped by the English and escaped slavery in Europe, taught the Pilgrims how to “set their corne, wher to take fish, and to procure other commodities” (Bradford 229) in their first spring. Some initial interactions may have brought the two peoples together, but in many cases, these situations created strife between the colonizers and soon-to-be colonized.

For example, the Virginia Company’s initial voyage arrived with limited provisions and faced starvation through its first year, until John Smith arrived in Jamestown in 1608. Smith, Trudy Eden argues, taught the colonists lessons learned as a soldier—forage for food and “imitate the natives. In addition, “He [...] managed to obtain a supply of maize from local Indians. If he expected gratitude in return for his efforts, however, he was disappointed. The English colonists told Smith flatly that they would not eat ‘savage trash’” (3). But, Eden initially downplays how Smith “obtained a supply of maize.” The Virginia colonists first traded with the local Indigenous people for some foodstuffs that they did not classify as “trash,” but Smith, “seeing the Salvages superfluitie beginne to decrease,” was forced to explore and make contact with another group of Indigenous people to find more food:

Being but six or seauen in company he [Smith] went downe the river to *Kecoughtan*, where at first they scorned him, as a famished man, and would in derision offer him a handful of Corne, a peece of bread, for their swords and muskets, and such like proportions also for their apparell. But seeing by trade and courtesie there was nothing to be had, he made bold to try such conclusions as necessitie inforced,

though contrary to his Commission: Let fly his muskets, ran his boat on shore, where at they all fled into the woods. So marching towards their houses, they might see great heapes of corne: much adoe he had to restraine his hungry souldiers from present taking of it, expecting as it hapned that the Salvages would assault them, as not long after they did with a most hydeous noyse. (45)

Smith’s small band of men are successful in repulsing the attack and seize the people of Kecoughtan’s “idol,” the Okee, to use as a bargaining advantage to get the food they want—allowing Smith to represent the clash at Kecoughtan as evidence of English superiority, the Indigenous people’s savagery, and the enforced negotiation as a fair exchange when the Natives emerge from the woods in which they took refuge. Smith tells them,

he would not only be their friend, but restore them their *Okee*, and giue them Beads, Copper, and Hatchets besides: which on both sides was to their contents performed: and then they brought him Venison, Turkie, wild foule, bread, and what they had, singing and dauncing in signe of friendship till they departed. (45)

This account justifies English raids as “necessitie,” and while Smith initially recognizes that the first group of Indigenous people no longer have a surplus supply of food to trade or seize, his actions endanger the lives of another Indigenous group by not being particularly concerned whether they have any surplus to spare. The consequence of such actions reach beyond just creating strife between English and Indigenous, having one’s food taken created tension between Indigenous groups in need of food from such depredations.

In other instances, it appears that the Indigenous people avoided conflict by fleeing their settlements upon the approach of the colonizers. Similarly in need of food and “a place for habitation” (Bradford 213), the Pilgrims sent Miles Standish out to explore the area. Following a group of Indigenous people that flee their approach, Standish and his men come upon a settlement where they,

found a pond of clear fresh water, and shortly after a good quantitie of clear ground wher ye Indeans had formerly set corne, and some of their graves. And proceeding funder they saw new-stuble wher corne had been set ye same year, also they found wher latly a house had been, wher some planks and a great kettle was remaining, and heaps of sand newly padled with their hands, which they, digging up, found in them diverce faire Indean baskets filled with corne, and some in eares, faire and good, of diverce collours. (Bradford 215)

Standish and his men take the corn, and repeat this shortly after when they come upon another apparently abandoned settlement. These events occur in November, shortly after the Pilgrims’ arrival, so taking the Natives’ store of corn must have had devastating consequences for them.

In contrast to Smith’s violent response to the superior bargaining position of the supposed inhospitable Indigenous people at Kecoughtan and Standish’s misappropriations of corn, Thomas Morton makes several comments on Indigenous hospitality. In their houses, Morton writes,

either the kettle is on with fish or flesh, by no allowance: or else, the fire is employed

in roasting of fishes, which they delight in, the aire doeth beget good stomacks, and they feede continually, and are no niggards of their vittels, for they are willing, that any one shall eate with them, Nay if any one, that shall come into their houses, and there fall a sleepe, when they see him disposed to lye downe, they will spreade a matt for him of their owne accord, and lay a roule of skinnes for boulster, and let him lye: if hee sleepe untill the meate be dished up, they will set a wooden boule of meate by him that sleepeth, & wake him saying [...] if you be hungry, there is meat for you, where if you will eate you may, such is their Humanity. (25-6)

Understandably, however, many Indigenous groups became increasingly suspicious of the newcomers, fostered by distrust of food raids and other conflicts over land that were often, at least in part, caused by pressures placed on food resources from the arrival of the Europeans.

But humoral fears about eating Indigenous foods, and the perception of it as “trash,” persisted through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Indeed, “Starvation was a more chronic concern in the early settlement of Virginia, where the majority of colonists refused to cultivate—much less eat—native maize, obstinately planting fields with English wheat that grew poorly in tidewater Virginia” (Walden 39). Again, Hariot directly challenges fears of transformation through diet when he writes, “I will set downe all the commodities which wee know the countrey by our experience doeth yeld of it selfe for victual, and sustenance of mans life; such as is vsually fed vpon by the inhabitants of the countrey, as also by vs during the time we were there” (6). In fact, Hariot asserts that the English rejection of Indigenous foodstuffs was because of their own rather “soft” Euro-

pean diet:

Some [detractors of the enterprise] also were of a nice bringing vp, only in cities or townes, or such as neuer (as I may say) had seene the world before. Because there were not to bee found any English cities, nor such faire houses, nor at their owne wish any of their olde accustime daintie food, nor any soft beds of downe or feathers: the countrey was to them miserable, & their reports thereof according. (6)

Theodor de Bry's etchings from John White's Virginia drawings reinforce Hariot's point on the decadence of some of the English colonists by stressing the moderation of the Indigenous diet as an "exemple," (as does Morton) while the comparison of the Pict illustrations visually reveal a stronger-stomached descent that is the ideal colonist of the tract. If any transformation occurs, this implies, it will be to a hardier precursor of English identity that has been endangered by soft beds and "daintie" foods. Smith's *Virginia* contains a startlingly similar claim about the "softness" of the enterprise's detractors:

Being for most part of such tender educations, and small experience in Martiall accidents, because they found not English Cities, nor such faire houses, nor at their owne wishes any of their accustomed dainties, with feather beds and downe pillows, Tavernes and Alehouses in every breathing place, neither such plentie of gold and silver and dissolute liberty, as they expected, had little or no care of any thing, but to pamper their bellies, to fly away with our Pinnaces, or procure their meanes to returne for *England*. For the Country was to them a misery, a ruine, a death, a hell, and their reports here, and their actions there according. (39)

For both Hariot and Smith, the ability to withstand the New World climate, environment, and diet confirms an English "Martiall" identity—it also asserts that the English body itself is suited to the colonization of this new place, a pseudo-manifest destiny of belonging.

Bradford's initial description of the Massachusetts' coast expresses a lament for the lack of similar elements of Hariot's and Smith's critique of "soft" Englishmen. Arriving in the "desolate wilderness," "they had now no friends to welcome them nor inns to entertain or refresh their weatherbeaten bodies; no houses or much less towns to repair to, to seek for succour" (Bradford 161). However, what is significantly different is the Pilgrims' strongly expressed reliance on the spirit. Sustenance, much of which came from foraging and Indigenous foodstuffs, reaffirmed Bradford and his fellow Puritans' godliness. Here, in a sense, "trash" is turned to spiritual affirmation. This process can also be seen in the captivity narrative of another Puritan, Mary Rowlandson. Taken captive during a raid conducted in February 1676 by the Nipmuck, Wampanoag, and Narragansett on the settlement of Lancaster—a retributive raid following the massacre of six hundred Indigenous people by the colonizers during King Philip's War (Kolodny 184-5).

Rowlandson's initial reaction to the food offered by her captors, like the Virginia colonists to Smith, is to call it "filthy trash" (Rowlandson par. 27). But, much like the affirmation Bradford asserts, Rowlandson scripturally justifies her ordeal and its dietary impositions. She comments on eating horse liver, although interrupted while frying it and forced, "so that I was fain to take the rest and eat it as it was, with the blood about my mouth" (Rowlandson par. 29). She eats, "Indian Corn," horse hooves, bear, pulses, acorns, horse, and ground nuts. At one point, she carries a piece of raw bear in her pocket

two days before she has the opportunity to cook it (Rowlandson par. 34). The issue in Rowlandson's account is not just *what* she is eating, but *how* she is eating it—often raw, undercooked, or rotten. However, her accounts of eating this food is usually followed by some sort of scriptural allusion—often that such “filthy” food tasted “savory” in her mouth—what Heidi Oberholtzer Lee notes as “One of the most common taste topoi in the Bible in early American captivity narratives [...] the transformation from bitterness to sweetness” (69). As Oberholtzer Lee argues, Rowlandson, as is Bradford (and to a lesser degree these attitudes are inherent in other examples of colonial discourse that I have cited above), employs a “gustatory theology” which she defines as “a system of belief that articulates religious truths and understandings of the divine and spiritual world through gastronomical language” (65). Thus, while “Rowlandson began to describe her mode of eating in ways that appear more Indian than English” (Herrmann 46), the scriptural overlay within the narrative delineates “the idea that captivity transforms taste and that the sinner and the saved can be divided along lines of appetite” (Oberholtzer Lee 72). Thus, as Oberholtzer Lee concludes, Rowlandson's “tastes have become more godly, not more native” (80)—her digestive system has not “gone native.” Nor does she experience any difficulty later in digesting “Christian” food like de Aquilar did after living for eight years with the Maya.

For both Bradford and Rowlandson, the “gustatory theology” of Puritanism is a form of spiritual trial. Bradford sees it in terms of the Puritan exodus to the New World; Rowlandson is seeing it in terms of both an individual trial (her survival) and as God's punishment of the Puritan community, some of whom had turned away from God—as she ends her text, Rowlandson catalogues things eaten by the Indigenous people that

held her captive and concludes,

It is said, Psal. 81. 13, 14. *Oh, that my People had hearkned to me, and Israel had walked in my wayes, I should soon have subdued their Enemies, and turned my hand against their Adversaries.* But now our perverse and evil carriages in the sight of the Lord, have so offended him, that instead of turning his hand against them, the Lord feeds and nourishes them up to be a scourge to the whole Land. (par. 64)

Much more so than the survival of Bradford's Plymouth or Winthrop's Massachusetts Bay colonies by incorporating Indigenous foodstuffs into their diets, Rowlandson's trial strongly affirms the godly ability to maintain identity because of not only what she eats, but also in terms of how she eats and prepares it. The humoral body as microcosm of God's creation makes Rowlandson's body a microcosm of the godly Puritan community.

Although the foraging conditions imposed by King Philip's War are responsible for the dietary conditions that the Narragansets and Rowlandson experience in her narrative, the supposed “poor,” often uncooked diet of the Indigenous peoples also plays into representations of their pseudo-racial inferiority. As Chaplin states, “The early racial idiom that the English applied to Indians was distinctive because it declared that the natives lacked the physical ability to thrive in their homeland” (231-2). The European diseases that ravaged the Indigenous population also reinforced these beliefs; however, again, some dissented from this view, including Morton who praises Indigenous bodies and sees them as a result of a temperate diet and de Bry's etchings at the end of Hariot's tract.

Yet Hariot's latitudinal comparisons ultimately play into the negative representation of

the Indigenous people, as Kupperman states, “Early experience did not destroy the belief that tropical and Mediterranean crops would grow in Virginia. Thomas Hariot and Ralf Lane maintained that such plants were not found there because the Indians did not have the knowledge to develop the area’s potential” (1982, 1267). Morton, too, comments on their lack of salting meat:

And I am perswaded, that if they knew the benefit of Salte (as they may in time,) and the meanes to make salte meate fresh againe, they would endeavour to preserve fishe for winter, as well as corne, and that if any thinge bring them to civility, it will be the use of Salte, to have foode in store, which is a chiefe benefit in a civilized Commonwealth. (43)

The notion that the Indigenous peoples did not take advantage of their environment to develop and preserve foodstuffs, some of which they ate raw, is a significant marker of difference, as well as further justification of European colonialism. Anthony Pagden notes that,

The consumption of raw things—especially of raw living things—was, like nudity, a sign of technological inadequacy, of the barbarians’ inability to modify significantly his environment [...]. But eating raw things was also, in some sense, ‘unnatural’ because it indicated a failure to understand that food, like everything else in nature, exists *in potentia* and must suffer change before it becomes actual and hence, in this case, edible. (88-9).

What lies *in potentia* in the New World is a “nature” that needs to be brought into its

“natural” state of “civility”—in essence, to borrow a term from Alfred Crosby, a “neo-Europe.”

Rowlandson’s captivity narrative includes one final point to discuss in this article, which is another important marker of difference in colonial texts of the period. Separated from her children, Rowlandson at one point asks an Indigenous man if he has seen her son:

he answered me, that such a time his master roasted him [her son], and that himself did eat a piece of him, as big as his two fingers, and that he was very good meat: But the Lord upheld my Spirit, under this discouragement; and I considered their horrible addictedness to lying. (par. 40)

Although she deflects the concern for her son onto another stereotype—the lying Indigene—her comment points to another dietary error. In the early modern period, as Pagden notes,

cannibalism was, above all else, a failure to distinguish what is fitting as food from what is not. Cannibals were guilty not only of evidently anti-social acts: in eating their fellow men they were committing a simple, but radical, category mistake [which violated] the hierarchical divisions of [... God’s] creation. (85-6)

But, significantly, Claude Rawson asserts, “‘cannibalism’ did not exist before 1492” (69). The term comes from an erroneous identification by Columbus, who either only heard what he wanted to hear or misheard “Cariba” as “Caniba,” “which is to say, the

the quint : an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north 27

people of the khan. But he also understands that according to the Indians these persons have dogs' heads (from the Spanish *cane*, 'dog') with which, precisely, they eat people" (Todorov 30). "Cannibalism" comes to mark a significant difference from the European context to the New World in terms of climate, foodstuffs, geography, and ethnicity:

The word 'cannibal' [...] is not, like 'anthropophagy,' a word that signals its own meaning etymologically, and which could not easily mean anything else. Instead, it is a geographical and ethnic term. It points a finger at a particular people. (Rawson 68-9)

Once Columbus records his misunderstanding, colonial discourse becomes marked by the word "cannibal," and the term spreads widely throughout the geography of the New World—from Columbus in the Caribbean, to Raleigh's Guiana, to Gilbert's Newfoundland, to Davis' and Frobisher's far North. Indeed, some English accounts, such as *A true Report of the late disoueries, and possession taken in the right of the Crowne of England of the Newfound Lands* even includes Columbus' canine misunderstanding of the term in reporting of cannibals "whose foode is mans flesh, and haue teeth like dogges" (Hakluyt 706). And English accounts of the West Indies often include Spanish reports that mark their expectations of encountering cannibals. *The voyage made by the worshipful M. Iohn Haukins Esquire, now knight, Captaine of the Iesus of Lubek* states that the slave-trading expedition,

came to an Island of the Cannybals, called Sancta Dominica [...]. The Cannybals of that Island, and also other adiacent, are the moste desperate

warriers that are in the Indias, by the Spaniards report, who are neuer able to conquer them [...] by all the Spaniards reportes, who make them [the "Cannibals"] Deuils in respect of men. (Hakluyt 529)

The tract is dependent on Spanish "reports," rather than any evidence of such practices witnessed by the English.

John Davis' and Martin Frobisher's voyages in search of the Northwest Passage demonstrate the conceptual link between eating food raw and cannibalism. Davis' second voyage recounts the assumed beastliness of the Inuit who "eat all theyr meat raw" (Hakluyt 782). The account of Frobisher's second voyage is more detailed on the eating habits of the Inuit:

They eate their meate all rawe, both fleshe, fishe, and foule, or something perboyled with bloud and a little water, which they drinke [...] such grasse as the countrie yeeldeth they plucke upp, and eate, not daintily, or sallet-wise to allure their stomaches to appetite: but for necessities sake, without either salt, oyles, or washing, like brute beasts deuouring the same. They neither vse table, stoole, or table cloth for comelines: but when they are imbrued with bloud, knuckle deepe, and their kniues in like sort, they vse their tongues as apt instrumentes to licke them cleane: in doing whereof, they are assured to loose none of their victuals. (Hakluyt 627)

In both narratives, this behaviour leads, without any eye-witness evidence to the conclusion that the Inuit are cannibals: "I thinke them rather Anthropophagi, or deuourers of

mans flesh, then otherwise: for that there is not fleshe or fishe, which they finde dead (smell it neuer so filthily) but they will eate it, as they finde it, without any other dressing. A loathsome thing, either to the beholders, or hearers” (Hakluyt 627). Although Frobisher uses the term “Antrhorpophagi,” his conclusion is, arguably, based on the geographical and ethnic associations of “cannibalism” that go back to Columbus’ initial contact.

However, while Europeans may have perceived cannibalism as entirely beyond the pales of human society and Godly order, this distinction between colonizer and colonized was also problematic because, in English writings, eye witness accounts of cannibalism often involve the English themselves, challenging the etymology of “cannibal.” As Eden points out, “Accounts of [shipwreck] survivors who ate their dead companions was nothing new to English readers. It was a practice called the law of the sea” (10). Richard Hakluyt’s *Principall Navigations*, for example, includes a number of English shipwreck cannibalism stories ranging from the possibility to the act. In *A discourse written by one Miles Phillips Englishman, one of the company put a shore in the West Indies by M. Iohn Hawkins in the yeere 1568*, some of Hawkins’ crew,

being thus oppressed with famine on the one side, and danger of drowning on the other, not knowing where to find reliefe, we began to be in woonderfull despayre, and we were of many mindes, amongst whome there were a great many that did desire our Generall to set them on lande, making theyr choyse rather to submit themselues to the mercie of the Sauages or Infidels then longer to hazard themselues at Sea, where they very well saw, that if they should all remayne together, if they perished not by drowning, yet

hunger woulde inforce them in the ende to eate one another. (Hakluyt 566)

Notable is the fact that Phillips does not specifically identify the Indigenous peoples, the “Sauages or Infidels,” as cannibalistic threats to the crew to be set ashore; rather, the possibility is with the crew itself. Similar to the “necessity” that drives Smith to forcibly appropriate Indigenous’ corn, it is “necessity” that drives the English to cross the boundary into cannibalism. In addition, the abhorrence of English reactions to purported Indigenous cannibalism can be contrasted with not only the rather matter-of-fact account cited above, but also with another representation that employs romance conventions. In *The Voyage of master Hore and diuers other Gentlemen, to Newfound land, and Cape Breton, in the yeere 1536*, a tale for which Hakluyt himself “rode 200. miles onely to learne the whole trueth” (518), we can trace a progressive degeneration of “civilized” behaviour and the confusion of dietary categories negatively ascribed to the Indigene. Trapped in ice, the starving crew initially takes to eating “rawe herbes and rootes” before turning to cannibalism (Hakluyt 518). While there is a sense of abhorrence to the cannibalistic practices of some crew members when they are discovered, the narrative resolves this through a romance reincorporation of the cannibals into English society—“M. Buts was so changed in the voyage with hunger and miserie, that sir William his father and my Lady his mother, knewe him not to be their sonne, vntill they found a certaine secret marke which was a wart vpon one of his knees” (Hakluyt 519). Whereas the term “cannibal” “points a finger at a particular people” (Rawson 69) who inherently confuse dietary categories and transgress divine order, Buts is not substantially changed by his ordeal and is rehabilitated through familial recognition and reincorporation into English society.

Food provided more than just subsistence for early modern colonizers; it provided them with a way to structure their perceptions of Indigenous peoples as inferior or even bestial. As Earle argues, early colonial tracts demonstrate that “Race’ [...] was in part a question of digestion” (697). While humoral theory gradually gave way to more scientific understandings of how the human body digests food through the latter half of the seventeenth century, many of the assumptions made in the period of first contact and the initial establishment of English colonies that were based on diet persist even today as unfortunate stereotypes of Indigenous peoples in North America.

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the quint : an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north 33

- Remained vnder the gouvernement of twelue monethes, At the speciall charge and direction of the Honourable Sir Walter Raleigh Knight lord Warden of the Stanneries Who therein hath beene fauoured and authorised by her Maiestie and her letters patents: This fore books is made in English By Thomas Hariot seruant to the abouenamed Sir Walter, a member of the Colony, and there imployed in discovering.* London: 1590.
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OFF TO THE FUTURE

‘Take away his camera and he’ll draw on his eyeballs with a felt-tip pen.’

– Iain Sinclair, *The Last London*

Compulsion and a flying heart. Nothing will go away, nothing stays the same. He is behind the curve or ahead of the game, never quite where he wants to be. How very sad, how lovely, how does he manage to cope? Picture this: animal tracks and bone, black glass, Sunday morning childhoods. Gone or tidied up. Memory fades away, the past is open to interpretation. The darkness falls as flowers do, wilting in the light; although we are earthbound we can’t wait to get away. Don’t make me choose, don’t make me

explain or err on the side of caution. I need to see, to undo the damage and find out everything for myself. We can argue about the secrets of the past but I am looking forward, ready to go yet full of regrets. Hold my hand and we are off to the future, walking sideways and dodging our own reasons as well as the camera’s flash, mumbling damaged prayers.

—Rupert M. Loydell



Sentry in Black and White

Sue Matheson

Critical Issues in Research Ethics Involving Human Subjects

by Jim Gough,

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Introduction: In order to begin an informed discussion, in which there is a possibility of accurately communicating important information, identifying important conflicts and the basis for relevant decisions, it is useful to set up some parameters. Parameters guide discussion they do not control it. ¹Parameters set limits which are conditional and can be altered given the content and the nature of the discussions they serve to initiate. Parameters fluidly frame issues within manageable limits.² So, as part of the communicative process, I open up this discussion with some considerations of the method of making ethical decisions, the methods of science and what decisions these methods serve to initiate in cases of research on human subjects. ³

1. This idea of the use of parameters in critical discussions were developed further in "The Psychological Parameters of Argumentation," Jim Gough, *Past and Present*, Vol. 4, October, 1985.

2. This is in contrast with parameters used by fundamentalists to stop challenges to the authority of behaviour structured basic beliefs, see, for example, *Images of History: Kant, Benjamin, Freedom and the Human Subject*, by Richard Eldridge, Oxford University Press, 2016, 93, 98-99,

3. This article was initially based on a presentation made as the keynote address, June 13th, 2008, to the Alberta Community Colleges and Technical Institutions Workshop on Research Ethics, Red Deer, Alberta, Canada. I am grateful for helpful comments made by members of the workshop during and after the presentation. This workshop was supported by the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutions (AACTI). Subsequent to the presentation I have made numerous additions well beyond the presentation.

After each section, I offer an example in the hope that this will initiate critical discussion of this and other examples. After the discussion of the content and example, there is at least one resource provided in the body of the text for further critical evaluation. None of the issues raised is intended to negate any reasonable process of inquiry or questioning or to pessimistically portray the situation of human subjects in scientific research as practically impossible or theoretically laden with a minefield of potential explosive disasters.

What I both expect and hope will happen as a result of the following considerations is an opening-up of discussion about some of the controversial topics and issues associated with making decisions about the use of human subjects in scientific research. There is no reluctance on my part to participate in self-criticism and critical reflection that could lead to revision or the abandonment of any or all claims.⁴

Method: The method most often employed in making ethical decisions is now some form of an approach labeled by John Rawls as *Reflective Equilibrium*.⁵ Reflective equilibrium involves a comparison of alternative perspectives, values and considerations so as to reach a reconciliation of competing interests, values, communities and situations that issue in a determinate decision not a holding pattern or confused indeterminate outcome. This is a matter of **balancing** different interests, values or principles in order to make a choice. Priorities cannot be established in the abstract but only in the practice making the

4. This presentation was offered to a group of faculty and administrators facing the creation of institutional ethics in research committees to satisfy the requirements of federal and provincial funding agencies. So, the audience was a mixture of people from essentially technical institutions to degree granting and brokering institutions, each with varying differences in research projects and programs.

5. Rawls, John, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971 later revised 1999. Criticism of his approach can be found in *Reading Rawls: Critical Studies on Rawls' 'Theory of Justice'*, Norman Daniels, New York, Basic Books, 1975.

balancing argument. So, it is not unusual but rather to be expected that one value will be given a priority in one situation but not in another since the balancing argument always takes account of rebuttals or counter considerations in making decisions. Specific counter considerations in one situation may be different from those in another situation making it incumbent on anyone making a decision to pay careful attention to information that both supports one decision and information that might cause one to reject this same decision. This method is not the same as the approach taken in making scientific discoveries, since there is no direct empirical component and it is not an inductive argument but rather a conductive, good reasons, argument pattern.

Example: It is generally crucially important to tell the truth. However, in war time situations, it might be necessary to tell the enemy a lie in order to protect human lives. Jean Paul Sartre builds much of his approach to ethics on the example of his student who pondered whether he should abandon his mother and his support of her for a position in the resistance army or not, with Sartre placing the responsibility squarely on the student for the implications of either decision—good or bad. This example has left some pondering whether any significant ethical decision is an explicit dilemma immune to any rational resolution. But, on the contrary, there is no reason to despair, although there are many who hold this idea.

Example: In our article “Developing Ethical Decision-Making Skills: How Textbooks Fail Students”, Jim Gough and Anne Price, (Chapter 42 in *Readings for Technical Communication*, edited by Jennifer MacLennan, Oxford University Press, 2008, 321-330) we evaluated ways that most textbooks in business communication failed to

provide a viable approach to making ethical decisions, making the mistake that flow charts, shopping lists and check lists could serve in place of making an informed ethical decision that negotiated conflicts, principles and special circumstances.

Resource: This argument pattern is discussed in *An Introduction to Reasoning*, Stephen Toulmin, Richard Rieke and Allan Janik, Macmillan Publishing, NY, 1979, p. 320.

Disclaimer: Since ethical decisions are made by all of us on a regular basis, there are some popular misconceptions about the nature of ethics that need to be addressed and countered. There are, for example, two claims about ethics that are not plausible: ethics is subjective or relative, and ethics is about irresolvable dilemmas involving different values. If ethics were relative or subjective, then we would find no sociological evidence of shared ethical values across cultures, societies or communities; but we do find lots of evidence to support shared ethical values. If ethics were about dilemmas, which are two equally plausible but incompatible choices, then there would be no way of making ethical decisions. But, we do have ways of making viable ethical decisions in all kinds of circumstances where there are conflicts of value; conflicts, however, are not dilemmas and so can be resolved in principle. As well, human beings regardless of circumstances share common goals such that “despite some clear disagreements...people from different parts of the world share common goals like the desirability of promoting people’s health, happiness, opportunities, and cooperation and the wisdom of stopping pollution, oppression, torture and exploitation”. [318]

Resource: *Moral Relativism: A Reader*, Paul K. Moser and Thomas L. Carson, Oxford University Press, 2001.

Values: There are general two kinds of values involved in research ethics; epistemological values and ethical values. *Epistemological values* in knowing, understanding or comprehending are based on information, facts, or data. Information is valuable because of how it enhances our knowledge or understanding. It is important to have information but it is also important to be able to use this information to make good decisions. Information is not important in itself but it is important if it can be critically evaluated so as to be used well in making effective decisions. *Ethical values*, in general, establish a value relationship between knowledge and the use of this knowledge to make good decisions so that on the basis of relevant and sufficient knowledge, as well as a consideration of values, we know not about *what is the case* (factual knowledge) but about what *should be the case or what we ought to do* (*prescriptive claim*). Knowing what we ought to do, occasion the use of references to: obligations, duties, rights, laws, and considerations that control, not describe, decisions and behaviour that follows these decisions.

Resource: “The Misuse of Non-Argumentative Approaches in Practical Ethics”, Jim Gough, *College Quarterly*, Fall, 2005.

Decision 1: The first decision involves whether there is a *need to know* the information that could be gained by conducting an experiment of discovery or whether the information that might be discovered is basically of no significant or relevant use to anyone. This is referred to as the *relevance test*. The point of research is to advance knowledge and understanding of an important area of study. There is vagueness in the reference of *need to know*, namely (i) does science need to know, (ii) does humanity or the international community need to know, (iii) does some particular society need to know or (iv) does

some segment or special group *need to know*? There is a potential for a competition between who needs to know and why they need to know the information that could be provided by a particular scientific experiment. There needs to be a balance in these different needs to know; for example the need to know of science (i) could be in conflict with the need to know of some society or other (iii) or even some sub-group of any particular society. There is a potential for conflict.

Example: Some religious or secular group may *not* need to know and may *not* want to know (i) how to perform certain kinds of *in vitro* fertilization procedures, or (ii) how evolution can be understood to work to produce necessary differentiation in species within the environment; since such knowledge would not only *not* serve the interests of the group but be antithetical to the group's beliefs and perceived interests.

Example: In the *Logic of Scientific Discovery*, Thomas Kuhn, (Harvard, 1972) describes the ways that science progresses not on the basis of cumulative knowledge but on the basis of paradigm shifts in knowledge based on the directions and needs of the sociological group of scientists at one time and a change in membership of the group at a later time. The conclusion is that *science is not separate from society* but an integral part of what different societies perceive to be their priorities at different times, making science context-bound not objectively impartial.

Resource: *Ethics from Experience*, Peter Caws, Jones and Bartlett Publishers, London, 1996, 96-99.

Decision 2: Although we seem to have cleanly separated the various audiences for our

need to know some information that only a scientific discovery could provide, the separation is not so clear. So, we need to pose the question of whether or not there is a special interest group that needs to know the information. We can ask, for example, whether or not there is an ideological, political or commercial interest behind the inverted scientific need for information. While science might claim to want to know *for its own sake*, political ideologies and commercial interests have no such esoteric interest. Rather, their interests are instrumental, interests in how knowledge can be used to support other non-intrinsic interests; for example, supporting a political ideology or individual profit. On the surface, there is no problem with mixed motives. For example, I drive a small four cylinder truck because I know that it is friendlier to the environment than its bigger mega-truck brothers and I know that it will cost less in gas and maintenance. We might concede that I have done the right thing, chosen the right truck but I've done so for two different motives which do not necessary complement each other, one other-regarding and one self-regarding. This mixed set of motives has, however, been instrumental in taking me to the right choice, to produce the best overall result. Nothing seems to be wrong in this case.

However, we know that where I direct my spending priorities on scientific research might be influenced by motives that are *not* scientific, not of any significant value to humanity, and not of any significant value to society but of politically ideological or commercial value. In this case, science becomes the handmaiden or servant of other interests. The knowledge goals of science are not satisfied but those of special interests are satisfied. There is a single motive which may be in conflict with other motives or may be

deceptively hidden behind other motives creating some suspicion. So, if it is possible to identify a motive, then we need to make sure that we are not guilty of creating black and white thinking, arguing that this is the only motive anchoring decision making; we need to ensure that the motive itself is in evidence and if so whether or not it is problematic or unacceptable. The simple identification of a motive is not enough. We have to be able to argue that this motive is the *only* or *most probable* cause of some decision or behavior, isolating this motive from other components of the decision. As well, we need to be able to argue convincingly that this motive has overridden good reasons.

As well, it is important to maintain an honesty, openness and transparency (HOT) in our scientific transactions so that there will be the possibility of others opening up the process we use to public knowledge, understanding and possible critical challenge. It is not just that HOT pays long term benefits to those who employ this in their transactions, the character of the society or community involved as well as the character of the individuals who compose the community are made demonstrably better by contributing to the ongoing process of HOT in all scientific dealings. Oddly enough, some behavioural scientists document their frustrations at subjects who jeopardize the validity of a researcher's inferences in experiments. This can occur because the subject's understanding and misuse of the complex informed consent protocol makes them "distrustful and recalcitrant" because of their perceived lack of control, causing problems for the scientific pursuit of knowledge.⁶ There is no dilemma facing the social scientist here between the pursuit of scientific knowledge and the restraints of contracted ethical consent, just a

6. Rosnow, Ralph and Robert Rosenthal, *People Studying People: Artifacts and Ethics in Behavioural Research*, Freeman, NY, 1997, 116-117

conflict which may be resolved by employing HOT as a negotiator.

Resource: *The Price of Truth: How Money Affects the Norms of Science*, David B. Resnik, Oxford University Press, 2007.⁷

Decision 3: In the case of scientific research, there is often a question, issue or problem that is addressed in the research project with the overall aim to increase our knowledge by use of new information. So, the first decision is whether or not to employ an approach known as (a) a literature search and analysis as the basis for acquiring new knowledge to help provide an answer to the question, to help us understand the problem or issue better, or (b) to use an experiment to collect new information and fit this information into a thesis or theory which attempts to answer the question or help resolve the issue or problem. It is important not to overlook (a) as a viable approach especially since, it is often more *cost efficient*, avoiding redundant and less effective experimental approaches; it does not involve any possible direct harm to animals, human beings, or the environment. It is sometimes the case that the (a) literature search is used as the benchmark for determining whether an experiment is required or not. However, if it is determined that an experiment, as identified by (b), is the best, most efficient way to gain needed information, then it will be useful to go beyond the literature search. Unfortunately, one of the ways that fraud in science can be perpetuated is using (a) literature searches as the sole basis for making claims and not subjecting the information obtained by these searches to controlled scientific experimentation and observation following the laws of both inductive and deductive logic. Bypassing the latter process has produced questionable potentially fraudulent claims about the *Shroud of Turin*, Jesus of Nazareth's disputed burial garment,

7. Reviewed by Jim Gough in the American Library Association's journal, *Choice*, fall, 2007.

and claims by psychic archeologists to literally see into the past.

Resource: *Frauds, Mysteries and Science: Science and Pseudoscience in Archeology*, Kenneth Feder, Mayfield, CA, 1990, 19-22.

Decision 4: A mixed approach to making a needed discovery may be employed. This may begin with an initial literature search (i) along with (ii) some use of constructed models, thought experiments, mathematical models, physical models or computer models, as well as (iii) an empirical experiment or experiments to produce a reasonable set of predictions. So, for example, the process may start with a literature search to determine whether—based on previous research—there are important and relevant questions left unanswered or posed as a result of efforts in the past. These important questions may invite modeling or portraying the set of possibilities in such a way that one could make some reasonably accurate predictions. If, however, there is a need to ground these models in some observations, data or facts; then the first two steps could be followed up by a set of experiments limited to the parameters set by the initial information provided by the literature search (i), and the models based on this research.

Example: Some of the research on global warming is done on the basis of what could be called a literature search, researching the temperature and weather records over the historical accounts of such recordings. These records are sometimes challenged because of (a) the regional nature of the recordings, as opposed to global records, (b) the imprecision of the measurement devices (for example, water buckets or other containers have varied somewhat in size and capacity over the period of time when rainfall measurements have been recorded), (c) the different understandings of science and scientific measurement,

and so on. These records are often supplemented by current readings using more accurate measurement devices. But this still leaves open the question of the system related issues so then scientists build models, and, more often than not, the computer models are criticized for their changing predictions (even though this is an asset of such models). I have challenged the attempted arguments of so-called global warming deniers elsewhere but the negative influence of biased ideology over science cannot be underestimated even as the scientific evidence seems overwhelming.⁸

Resource: Examples of this approach occur in the following textbooks. *Apocalypse Soon? Wagering on Warnings of Global Catastrophe*, Stephen J. Haller, McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal, 2002 and *Hell and High Water: The Global Warming Solution*, Joseph Romm, Harper Perennial, NY, 2007.

Decision 5: Cost compared to perceived or probable benefit is often the basis for making a decision to do a scientific experiment and how to conduct the experiment. So, for example, in scientific studies involving human subjects, whether the subjects are paid for their participation and how much they need to be paid compared to the predicted value of any new information that could be discovered is a cost-benefit analysis. Cost/benefit can be construed in either a narrow view or a wider perspective. In the narrow view, predicted negative consequences of a particular decision can be limited to only those who are direct participants while a wider perspective would include those in personal relationships to those directly affected and members of the community or society of which the participant is a member. There needs to be a clear understanding of the cost of, for example, an expensive space program and the costs of experiments to establish cures

8. Gough, Jim. Defective Arguments Denying and Inconvenient Truth, *the Trumpeter*, 20, 1, 2016, 55-72

for various cancers. It is in the interest of society (since society is the environment where science occurs) to evaluate the benefits of some science—in open critical consultation with scientists—as opposed to the costs of doing the science and the likelihood that these costs will be covered by future benefits. This analysis should not be left to either private enterprise or the professional discipline of science. Society has a right to know in a process similar to that of informed consent.

Example: When a cancer drug was being tested by British and American scientists to counteract the effects of breast cancer on a large sample of women, it was discovered—well before the end of the trial period established for the experiment—that the effects of the drug were dramatic in their improvement of the situation of women with breast cancer. A medical decision was made to discontinue the trial—well before the planned termination date-- and give the women receiving a placebo the effective cancer treatment drug. In this case, on balance, the medical/social decision overrode the scientist's objection to an incomplete trial. Whether this was the right decision or not remains open to considerable critical discussion.

Resource: “Informed (but Uneducated) Consent”, Franz J. Ingelfinger, in *Ethical Issues in Professional Life*, edited by Joan C. Callahan, Oxford University Press, 1988, 180-182.

Decision 6: Sometimes when we employ the cost/benefit analysis we substitute the notion of *harm for cost* and *good or good results for benefit*. Generally we consider that it is wrong to harm someone else needlessly or for our own satisfaction without any consideration of the other who is harmed. Of course the idea of “harm” covers a wide range of possibilities: physical harm, psychological harm, emotional harm, and economic harm to name a few.

So, in order to *quantify harm* in some scientific or statistical sense, we need to be able to identify which or which combination of harms are involved and what the relationship is between these various harms. In order to know how to perform a risk analysis we need to know what harm (or harms) is being predicted, the seriousness of the harm and the likelihood that it will occur. It seems inevitable that the seriousness of the harm will have an irreducibly subjective component since we know that a personal slight to me could have a decidedly different effect than a person slight to someone else, depending on what experiences of each individual preceded the harm. So, there needs to be some *care* taken in assessing harm especially when predicting its effect on potential victims.

Example: The cost/benefit analysis approach can work when considering pure economic harm, for example, to compensate people who have suffered some economic harm by giving them a monetary compensation for lost income, lost revenue, lost profit, and so on. But it is a mistake to assume that non-economic harms can be dealt with using the same analysis. Many disadvantaged groups in Canada (Residential School victims, LGBTQ groupe political discrimination), for example, have sought not just monetary compensation but sometimes more importantly they have sought an apology as part of process of reconciliation between victim and victimizer or the proxy for the victim or victimizer.⁹

Example: The now infamous case of Ford Motor Company documented in most business ethics texts in which the company misused cost-benefit analysis to risk human lives based on a comparison of insurance payouts in relation to providing a one hundred dollar part

9. Gough, Jim, Tera Dahl-Lang, Elaine Spencer. No Regrets: Suggested Improvements for Public Apologies, *Journal of Social Work Ethics and Values*, 11, 2, 2014, 12-20

installed to help prevent the gas tanks of Pinto cars from easily exploding on minor rear impacts.

Example: Many elderly medical patients are, sometimes justifiably, worried about the allocation of medical resources on purely economic or cost/benefit analyses since their situation in life may be unfairly compared to younger patients. The elimination of patient's advocates in some care homes and hospitals caused patient's stress level to rise as the voice of their concerns was silenced.¹⁰

Resource: "Forgiveness, Apology, Acknowledgement and Reconciliation", a paper presented by Jim Gough and Mano Daniel to the *Canadian Society for the Study of Practical Ethics*, Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, June 2, 2008.

Decision 7: To what extent is the decision to follow through on a scientific project based on the need to know some non-scientific, commercial, political or ideological information. Funding for much research is now provided more and more by private enterprise and there have been some startling examples of the use of human subjects to test pharmaceuticals which have no significant effects on the health and well-being of human beings but are primarily cosmetic. Military based research on human subjects to test mind-altering drugs does not have an enviable history in Canada. The history of the failed experiments in Nazi Germany to establish politically-ideologically biased physical, genetic components of Aryanism does not need repeating. A number of these experiments were conducted on subjects who were not informed and did not give their

10. Gough, Jim and Lillie Lum, *Volunteer Governance of Health Services in Canada: Redundant or Relevant*, *Healthcare Management Forum*, Vol. 18, No.1, 2008. 18-22

consent. Even those who were informed were not capable of understanding or making use of the information in their decisions to agree to be subjects. Their marginalized situation in society, as prisoners of war, prisoners in current civil jails, university students inside an institution where their cooperation was a matter of loyalty to educational principles, made them vulnerable to abuse.

Example: In two books, *Acres of Skin: Human Experiments at Holmesburg Prison* (New York: Routledge, 1999) and *Sentenced to Science: One Black Man's Story of Imprisonment in America*¹¹ Allen Hornblum documents the current use of prisoners in medical experiments conducted by the US Army and pharmaceutical companies concluding that "the many men and women incarcerated in the Philadelphia Prison System who chose to become a part of the medical research program were no better than throwaway people, part of the conveyor belt of research subjects used for exploitation and experimentation. Desperate, ill informed, and easily taken advantage of, they had little recourse if anything went wrong." (65) Turning state prisons over to the contracted management of private companies seems to have opened up new ways for these companies to pursue more income sources, including the use of public facilities to help private pharmaceutical companies develop their human-based drug testing research programs.

Decision 8: Natural science and social science share a more or less common methodological tradition (except that in the social sciences there is both a quantitative approach to measurements and a qualitative approach, while the latter is not common in the natural sciences). However, in most experiments in natural science there is a deliberate attempt to separate the experimenter from the content of the world that is the subject of the experiment.

11. Reviewed by Jim Gough in the American Library Association's journal *Choice*, winter, 2007.

There is a deliberate attempt to separate, in language, approach and methodology, the person doing the experiment from the subject of the experiment to avoid bias, and a misreading of observations. When this distancing is employed as an attitude to doing experiments in social science involving human subjects, there are serious issues about how it is possible and whether distancing, to achieve objectivity, should be attempted at all. The commoditization or objectification of human subjects *may be* different from the commoditization or objectification of objects in the natural world or systems of natural ecology. Objectivity is part of an aim or goal that may both illuminate us with detached and impartial information or harm us with a detached and impartial attitude to information that we should be involved with on the basis of a personal relationship. So, for example, some environmentalists now argue that the problem with the natural world is that human beings have taken an impartial, dispassionate and disconnected attitude toward this world. This is unlike the world inhabited by our indigenous ancestors whose physical, spiritual/metaphysical and emotional life was encased in the natural world and not deliberately separated from it.¹²

Resource: *The Impossibility of the Wilderness and the Possibility of the Wilderness*, Jim Gough, paper presented to the Environmental Studies Association of Canada conference, June 4, 2008, the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Vancouver, BC.

Decision 9: Distribution of information and objectivity or impartiality are important considerations for both science and ethics. Research is done in the public domain, using public resources and with the approval of the public, either implicitly or explicitly.

Ethical decisions can occur in the *private domain* of personal relationships or the *public*

12. Friesen, John. W. First Nations of the Plains: Creative, Adaptive and Enduring, Detselig, 1999, 33-48.

domain of open and accessible documented procedures. The experiences that most of us have of making good or bad ethical decisions most often happen in the private domain. However, when it comes to assessing the situation of research subjects as part of scientific experiments, the ethical decisions occur in the public domain. So, there needs to be a shift in our approach to making decisions in the public domain. The movement must be made towards accountability. The shift needs to be one in which persons making ethical decisions or decisions that involve ethical concerns, position themselves to take public responsibility for their decisions. There is a need to develop argumentative strategies to support decisions with good reasons, reasons that are capable of convincing others that the best choice was made under the prevailing circumstances. The public has a vital interest in decisions made in the public domain.

Resource: *Bioethics in Canada*, Bernard Dickens, David Roy, and John Williams, Prentice-Hall, 1994, 310-335

Decision 10: The final decision involves education. Information about how information is assessed, how decisions are made, what policies are followed, the format for applying processes and procedures, are all open to be revised. This can only happen if there is an approach to deciding which includes an educational aim; that is, the process of making decisions must include the idea that it is important to continue to educate the decision-makers and all the participants in the decision-making process to provide the basis for making improvements. We've argued that this should happen across all college curricula.¹³

Through education we will come to realize that no process or set of procedures, no matter

13. Gough, Jim, Bill McKay and Bruce Wallace. Educating 21st Century Learners in Canadian Colleges, *the Quint*, Vo.8, No.1, December, 2015, 8-34.

how well considered or how well articulated, is always open to revision, alteration and replacement. For all procedures depend on the people who apply them to, for example, (i) overcome self-interest in favour of the interest of others, (ii) to overcome a focus on the present circumstances and relegate the future to a closet as yet unopened, and (iii) to focus on abstract considerations of principles and precedent when the real concern is people and knowledge to help them survive in their circumstances.

Example: Jeremy Bentham, the father of utilitarian ethical theory, identified the situation in his *Handbook of Political Fallacies* (introduction by Crane Brinton, Harper Torchbooks, US, 1962, 230): “Towards the advancement of the public interest, all that most public-spirited man, which is as much as to say the most virtuous of men, can do is to do his best to bring the public interest (meaning his own personal share in it) as often as possible into coincidence, and as seldom as possible into repugnance with his private interests.”

Example: There is a current debate about the use of the brain death criterion to decide when someone becomes a viable transplant donor. The use of hearts and other donors often requires that their harvesting and transplantation takes place while they are still operating, so it was decided that brain death would be the determinate of human death. If it were cardio-pulmonary death as previously considered, prior to the introduction of viable transplant procedures, then the heart, lungs and so on could possibly be of no use since they were dead. Since it is not possible to transplant a brain, it is essentially useless for transplantation purposes, so its death would suffice to protect the transplantation vital organs like the heart and kidney. The use of this criterion hinges on the utilitarian principle that more people could likely use these organs than the individual who is in

the process of dying anyway. However, this violates the fundamental principle that the individual should make this decision and not society, that the dignity and sanctity of the individual's person be protected right up until s/he is dead. There is clearly a connection between the scientific development of transplantation technology, anti-rejection drugs, and viable operating procedures and the introduction and continued use of the brain death criterion, which opens up some serious ethical issues and poses some important ethical questions.

Resource: *Death and Donation: Rethinking Brain Death as a Means for Procuring Transplantable Organs*, D. Scott Henderson, Pickwick Publications, 2011.¹⁴

Conclusion: In an environment of open discussion, the fair and equal consideration of alternative points of views and counter considerations, the possibilities for making good ethical decisions about the treatment of research subjects is good. In an environment of static and fixed decision making with authority resting on procedures and not on expert, authoritative knowledge, and a preoccupation with legally sanctioned rules or precedents over considerations of personal relationships and the advancement of knowledge, the chances of making good ethical decisions are bleak.

Instead, we need to constantly question procedures, embrace criticism for the valuable insights it can provide, and proceed as if we are collaborating members of the crew but by no means the captain. The crew is a disparate set of individuals with the clear interest of navigating the best route but with varying degrees of expert knowledge and information. There needs to be a balance so that the scientist doesn't win all the

14. Reviewed by Jim Gough in the American Library Association's journal, *Choice*, Fall, 2012

contests and society's interest does not override every scientific consideration, where knowledge predominates over procedure. It is this transparency or openness to revision or change which is fundamentally important to the establishment of a process within the context of an institution, an institution with varying degrees of expertise and varying degrees of ethical expediency or proficiency. This means that appeal processes should be embraced and not avoided.¹⁵ By embracing appeals one opens up the possibility of change, acknowledges the possibility of institutional mistakes, errors or omissions, and generally enhances a context of learning and improving on what is to what could be.

Finally, if one were in an ideal world and were to have the authority to establish a body of individuals to evaluate and monitor proposals for research involving human subjects, it might involve a set of individuals whose expertise and experience was capable of contributing to (a) the best ethical decisions possible, (b) the best use of science to produce discoveries that were important and relevant, (c) the best approach to doing science which minimized risks to vulnerable members of society, and (d) the best approach to advancing knowledge of epistemological *and* ethical values to the general community or society. This is, of course, a tall order, but it might involve the real instantiation of a Rawlsian set of choosers, not behind a veil of ignorance as in the imagined Rawlsian situation but rather individuals having the character and integrity (instead) to choose well. The change up is from situation to character or chooser's ethos. The critical thinking movement got a foothold in the United States in the late 1950's and early 1960's at the initiative of people who wanted to educate citizens in the United States who knew

15. Those who reject the appeal process do so because they falsely believe that appeals undermine the authority of the process or procedure when in fact they solidify and give us confidence in a process that can survive an appeal or modify itself as a result of a successful appeal.

how to critically evaluate information towards creating good election decisions.¹⁶ That task may not be completely fulfilled but its mandate remains a guidepost for those who teach philosophy or any other discipline areas where critical analysis of information takes priority over the regurgitation of information through the application of multiple choice tests. With the manipulation of beliefs by technology so prevalent through media sources like computers, internet, phones and tablets, it remains a pressing concern that the consumer be not only discriminating but also critically prepared to challenge information that is fed through the filter of educational entertainment.¹⁷ The borders are smudged by the merging of the means of easy access to information dressed up in the guise of entertainment.

16. Today with the proliferation of a US President who abandons truth-telling and embraces fake news, this skill is clearly more needed than ever and every discipline should include either a course in critical thinking or integrate critical thinking throughout the course in practical problem-solving exercises.

17. This theme is taken up further in "Bits and Bytes: The Impact of Modern Technology on Ethical Social Work" co-authored with Elaine Spencer in *Social Work Ethics: Progressive, Practical and Relational Approaches*, edited by Elaine Spencer, Duane Massing and Jim Gough, Oxford University Press, 2017

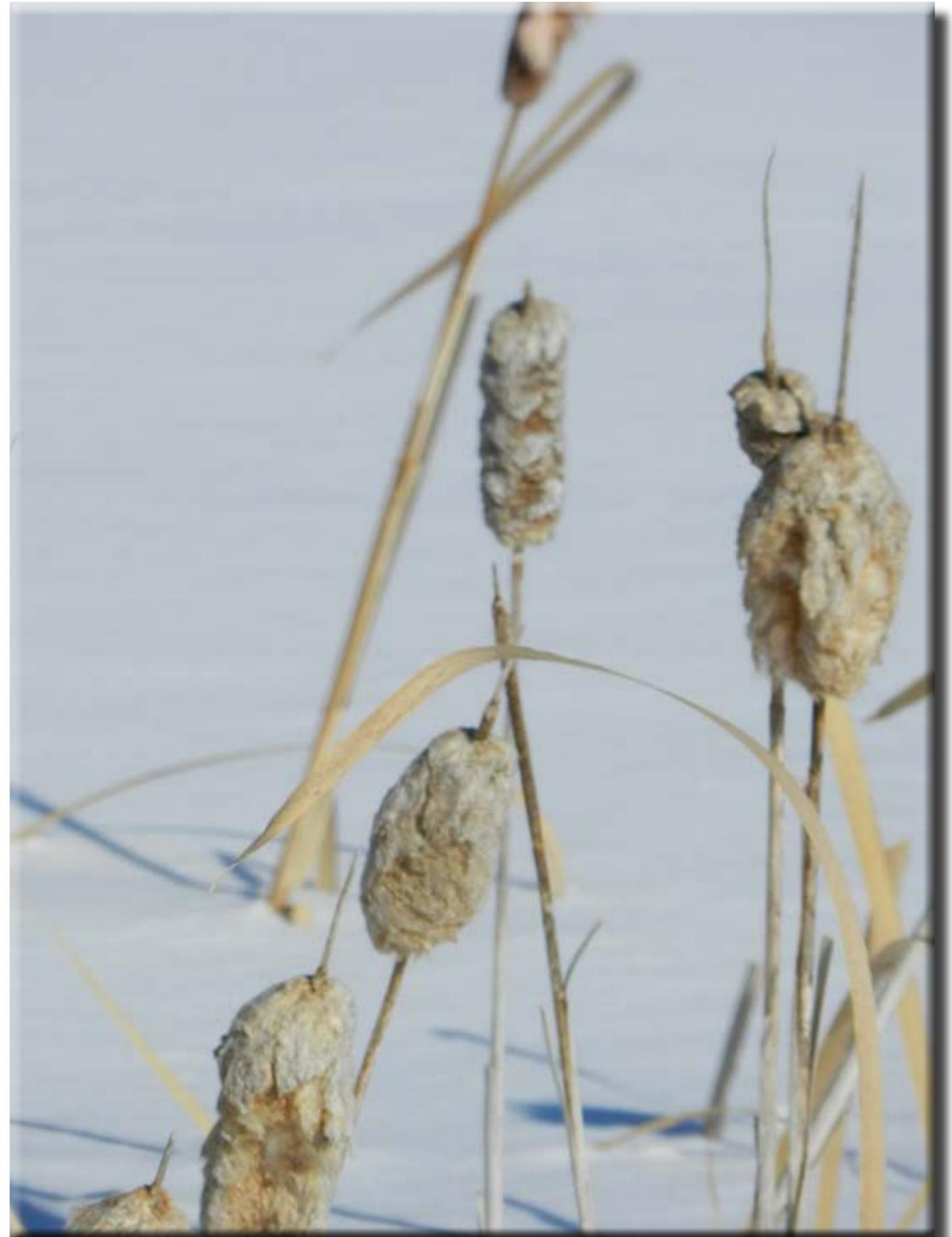
SQUATTING

The Meek shall inherit the earth someday.
Chances are, though, they'll be too timid
to take it.

So here we'll all be,
Squatters,
and the landlords
will be too shy to
pick up the rent.

—*Allen Berry*

Marshmallow Treats



Sue Matheson

Posing a Problem: *Prozac Nation* and the ghostly failures of Jewish American Assimilation

by Amy Tziporah Karp, CUNY, New York, New York

Preface

In an October 3rd, 2007 *Village Voice* review of Michael Chabon's *Gentleman of the Road*, Alexander Nazaryn writes, "What strange days these are to be a Jew... Less occupied with assimilation, these new Jewish novelists search through diaspora, immigration, and genocide for those precious strands of continuity that would make Jewish history their own" ("Gentleman of the Road"). Nazaryn's assertion reflects an assumption that this new wave of writers inherited an assimilated position in the United States. Such a premise illustrates a tendency to allow contemporary narratives that evoke a picture of completed Jewish American assimilation to serve as the entire vision of post-World War II Jewish American life.¹

This essay undertakes a complex project: to use *Prozac Nation* and the experience of young, Jewish, female otherness to explore problematics/prohibitions in the Jewish American assimilation narrative. To achieve this goal, I offer an alternative reading of Elizabeth Wurtzel's experience of depression as described in *Prozac Nation*. My reading imagines Wurtzel's depression as a response to the ongoing burden of *strangerhood*, of

1. For instance, Jonathan Safran Foer, Michael Chabon, and Gary Shteyngart.

incomplete assimilation and the struggle to "pass" as white. It is not entirely incompatible with a medicalized conception of depression as an illness, but it does seek to establish a framework through which to understand why *Prozac Nation*, and indeed Wurtzel herself, exists in a cultural space of *strangeness*.

Prozac Nation's strangeness emerges at the simple mention of the book title--it is as loved as it is hated, reviled as it is worshipped--on the *New York Times* Bestseller list for weeks on end, selling millions of copies, all while being torn to shreds by literary critics. David Klinghoffer, in a book review of *Prozac Nation* appearing in the January 1994 issue of the *National Review*, sums up the overall critical reception of the memoir; "Of course there is something inherently egotistical about a 27-year-old writing her memoirs," writes Klinghoffer. "However, until she began taking the antidepressant Prozac, Miss Wurtzel's life really was about as harrowing as it could be--given that she is a middle-class New Yorker who went to private schools, then Harvard" (74).²

As in most of the reviews written about *Prozac Nation* in popular national newspapers and magazines, Klinghoffer conjures a vision of Elizabeth Wurtzel as the quintessential Jewish American Princess—disregarding the precarious economic circumstances Wurtzel describes experiencing during her adolescent and early adult life. The story of completed assimilation, so seductive in its relentless promotion of the achievability of the American dream, proves alluring not only to the critics of *Prozac Nation*, but also to Wurtzel, I will show, as she tries to tell the story of her struggle with depression.

Rather than simply dismissing Wurtzel's text as histrionic writing by a 'spoiled brat,'

2. See Also: Tucker, Ken. "Rambunctious With Tears." *New York Times Book Review*. 25 Sept. 1994:11. Print. Harris, Mark. "Prozac Nation." *Entertainment Weekly* 23 Sept. 1994. Print.

I argue that Wurtzel's depression can be read as giving form to the anxieties and struggle of being Jewish and "off-white" (a *stranger*) or still not quite completely assimilated. To fully understand Jewish American assimilation, in all its manifestations, it is necessary to look beyond the narratives of those who themselves immigrated. We must also consider that the succeeding generations may also experience the splitting and double-consciousness endemic to being neither here nor there, or what Adrienne Rich calls being "split at the roots" in her influential essay of the same name.

To re-read Wurtzel's story, it is necessary to think about unearthing matter that is not immediately available or apparent. Avery Gordon, in *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* offers useful tools with which to excavate. She proposes that to fully understand the complexity of life and the difficulty of compressing it into intelligible and linear narratives, theoreticians must also listen to the spaces, the pauses, the information that comes to us in 'ghostly' ways, because this can offer special insight into the workings of power (Gordon 3).

Thus, this essay gives life to the ghostly matters inherent (yet submerged) in Wurtzel's memoir and creates a companion reader of sorts. It seeks to show the true critical weight of a text typically passed off by critics as an empty shell penned by a whiny, spoiled girl.³

Here I will show the palimpsest *Prozac Nation* offers and how we might better read it for

3. Note that "spoiled" can be used interchangeably with the euphemism "Jewish American Princess," or "JAP." Like Hollywood movies produced in the mid-twentieth century by Jewish writers, Elizabeth Wurtzel's *Prozac Nation* makes a nationalistic statement out of a group-oriented problem. Unintentionally, the aforementioned group and the latter create an imaginary national community out of profoundly Jewish interests, stories, ghosts, and historical aftermaths (one might even say Freud is such an example, though not, at least during his time, pop culture). Thus, not only does the country, if buying and inserting themselves into the story, begin to become "Jewished," but the Jewish-American subject loses license to his/her (his)story. In essence, becoming whitened, we can see the deleterious effects of such a (subconscious) project in the despair expressed (though doubted by critics) by Elizabeth Wurtzel.

a fuller understanding of contemporary experiences of Jewish American assimilation.

Ghosting *Prozac Nation*: Anzia Yeziarska, Mary Antin, and the Problems of Jewish American Assimilation

To understand Wurtzel's story in context, it is first necessary to re-visit, briefly, the beginning of the twentieth century. Through a look at Yeziarska's memoir, *Red Ribbon on a White Horse* (1950) and Mary Antin's *The Promised Land* (1912) I will place Wurtzel firmly in a tradition of Jewish American women's writing about ethnicity and assimilation, despite Wurtzel's disavowal that the issues she struggles with are rooted in Jewishness and the difficulties of incomplete assimilation.

Anzia Yeziarska's 1950 fictionalized memoir, *Red Ribbon on a White Horse*, exemplifies the ambivalences and difficulties of assimilation. She describes being exoticized by her non-Jewish counterparts, and how through this exoticization she becomes acceptable. Yeziarska's experiences foreshadow many of Wurtzel's experiences in *Prozac Nation*: as a Jew, she is exoticized as hyper-emotional, serves as an outlet for others to vent repressed feelings and through this outletting is admitted to an elite, wealthy white society. Both Yeziarska and Wurtzel desire acceptance in this white world, and struggle with the emotional and cultural sacrifices that are required for continued acceptance.

In her memoir, Yeziarska struggles with the ambivalences and difficulties of assimilation, moving away from Hollywood as soon as she understands that she will become an acceptable (token) Jew only while the Jews she left behind in the Lower East Side (NYC) are further denigrated and made invisible in their poverty. For instance,

Yeziarska details working as a stenographer for John Morrow (a fictionalized John Dewey) and developing a personal relationship with him. Through the scenes in which the two interact the reader is privy both to Yeziarska's anxieties about her racial status and personhood and to the ways Morrow exploits her otherness. Because he is a wealthy white man he both validates her existence, thus causing her to fall in love with him, and exploits her simultaneously.

He calls her an "unusual person," rendering her strange, at the same time as he pats her hand, bridging the tactile gap Yeziarska usually feels with "gentiles". She writes:

He patted my hand. It was a gesture of simple kindness, but it stirred currents in me that I had never been touched. The mountain of hurts I carried on my back from czarist Russia....dissolved. I had been accepted, recognized as a person...I tasted the bread and wine of equality" (107).

When Morrow asks Yeziarska to the Lower East Side for dinner, he remarks that her neighborhood "is like a foreign country!" (108). After the two attend the Yiddish theater, Morrow says that "the emotion of the actors was so vivid and the audience so responsive that this interested him more than the play" (109). He goes on to tell her, "You know, they have something you have too...The same intensity. I think it comes from fighting for every inch of ground on which you stand" (109).

Morrow begins to write her love letters, despite being married. His letters exemplify that he is not in love with her, but in love with how he begins to feel emotion with and through her, precisely because he sees her as hyper-emotive. He writes, "My life has

been an evasion of life. I substituted reason for emotion, hiding behind a shell of safe abstraction. I've been so repressed by the fear of feeling" (111).

Yeziarska is made super-human with a hyper-emotive body through which Morrow, who struggles mightily to repress and control his emotions, may expunge his unwanted feelings. As soon as he has rid himself of his unwanted passions, he rids himself of Yeziarska (like Wurtzel, many years later will be used by her rich, white Harvard counterparts).

Like Wurtzel, Yeziarska stands on the periphery of many worlds. She exists, in memory, in Eastern Europe, while she lives, in her present, in the United States. She enters an elite, white world, and is quickly pushed back to her poverty-stricken tenement on the Lower East Side of New York. She is denigrated by white women and Jewish women, white men and Jewish men, and the brief encounters she has with people of color suggest both a solidarity and a complete alienation (denoting the ways in which Jewish-Americans were just one of the many groups imported and incorporated into whiteness in order to combat the "threat of blackness" in the middle twentieth century). She thinks of this connection, writing "I wondered whether it was harder to be born a Jew in a Christian world than a Negro—a black skin in a white world" (158).

Yeziarska skips the birth of her daughter and her middle-aged years where she exited poverty and returns to her narration in her later years where we find her better off but still riddled with the anxieties of being in-between. In an attempt to finally find some peace to her anxiousness and alienation, she moves to Vermont and attempts to become like the stoic, white, working class people in her town. She writes:

I remembered Will Rogers upbraiding me for always harping on the past. “You’ve won success the hard way. Must you play the same tune forever?” ...I would learn from Marian Foster to be happy...Instead of the fear and anxiety with which I once wrote, I would write with joy and thanksgiving...I actually believed I could slough off my skin and with this new home begin a new life. The furniture that was presented to me, so steeped in the history of the village, would help me take on the life of the villagers (202).

Yeziarska envies her neighbors for their concrete concerns about crops, while she “was plagued by doubts and uncertainties, the conflict between what I was and what I wanted to be, the consuming fear that I was nothing, nobody—and the inordinate craving for approval” (206).

Mary Antin, Anzia Yeziarska’s contemporary, immigrated to the United States from Polotsk with her family when she was a child. While Yeziarska writes about the illusion of the American Dream, Antin embraces the United States as the place where she was able to bloom. However, the prologue to Antin’s memoir, *The Promised Land*, complicates reading the text simply as an illustration of the achievement of the American Dream. While the rest of the memoir upholds the rags to riches ideas of American assimilation success stories, Antin’s prologue gives light to the underbelly of this assimilation.

In the prologue to *The Promised Land* Antin illustrates the ways in which she became a fragmented person when she left Polotsk and came to the United States. She suggests a fragmentation so violent that she wishes for the telling of her tale to be the end of her

former self. Antin writes:

All the processes of uprooting...took place in my own soul...I can never forget, for I bear the scars. But I want to forget...It is painful to be consciously of two worlds. The Wandering Jew in me seeks forgetfulness. I am not afraid to live on...if only I do not have to remember too much...And I have thought of a charm that should release me from the folds of my clinging past...I...will tell my tale, for once and never hark back any more. (xiv-xv)

Here, Antin suggests a traumatized state in which her past life and her present life are at odds, existing as irreconcilable fragments. She hopes that through the telling of her story she will be able to shut the book on it and sever the hold her past self has on her present self. This is in line with psychoanalytic thought developing during the same time, in which re-telling, or re-enacting, the past might lead to resolution of issues troubling the psyche. Whether or not it is possible for the re-telling of Antin’s story to effectively silence her past, the desire for it to do so is telling about the consequences of otherness and *strangeness* she experienced.

Antin’s work, both the upholding of the American Dream and the complicating of it in the prologue, is important, she suggests, because she is just one of many who have experienced this type of fragmentation, loss of self, and disorientation. She writes:

I am not yet thirty...and I am writing my life history... Although I have written a genuine personal memoir, I believe that its chief interest lies in the fact that it is illustrative of scores of unwritten lives... We are the

strands of the cable that binds the Old World to the New. As the ships that brought us link the shores of Europe and America, so our lives span the bitter sea of racial differences and misunderstandings. (xiii)

Like Yeziarska, Antin tells the story of many immigrants, attempting to get at the strange experience of dislocation, otherness, and all of the anxieties associated with inhabiting these *strange* places. Accompanying their own anxieties is the anxiety to tell the story of abjection experienced not just by themselves, but many.

What is Recognizable Here?

Judith Butler, in *Giving an Account of Oneself*, suggests that asking a subject to mediate her life experiences through language is inherently violent. As one struggles to tell oneself, there are inevitably holes, gaps, and places one is reaching towards but cannot yet find; “Moreover, the very terms by which we give an account, by which we make ourselves intelligible to ourselves and to others, are not of our making” (Butler 21). Elizabeth Wurtzel is “constrained in advance by a regime of truth that decides what will and will not be a recognizable form of being” (22). Therefore, we encounter two distinct problems—Wurtzel’s inability to tell herself outside of the frame of the Jewish American assimilation story through most of her text and the inability of receivers of the text to read her story outside of the framework of completed Jewish American assimilation (or, rather, an inability to see Jewish-Americans as anything other than privileged, middle-upper class whites).

(or an unmarked white girl). Yet, between these pleas she writes of her family’s precarious financial state, disrupting her desire to be read as metonymic of the “average” depressed, privileged, twenty-something white female. Why, then, is Wurtzel dismissed as a whiny, overly privileged brat by critics? Wurtzel is trivialized because though she often inhabits an off-white (*stranger*) identity (when she is unable to remediate herself) she, and others, are instructed to read her as always, and originally, authentically white because of the relentless and pervasive nature of the narrative of successful and completed Jewish American assimilation. Her own desire to establish herself as the depressed every-woman masks the tenuous hold she has on an assimilated status and the daily struggle she has to maintain her status in privileged spaces. Wurtzel not only exhibits the anxiety of assimilating her depressed self into sanity, she also exhibits the anxiety of assimilating herself into proper white femininity from her off-white Jewish position, projects that this essay illustrates as deeply intertwined.

Wurtzel, in order to maintain her assimilated identity must attempt to unmark herself of the traces of working class, “ghetto girl” (a popular term for working Jewish women in the 1920s and 30s) Jewish femininity in order to ‘put on’ whiteness. This includes becoming quieter, smaller, smiling more, and relying on masculine attention/desire for self-worth and happiness. Wurtzel is never able to fully contain herself, however, and relies on psychotropic medication and therapy to propel her to the outskirts of whiteness. However, this *strangeness* is attributed to her managed, but not ameliorated, depressive state and not a confusing, liminal ethnic position. Wurtzel, hovering between a white and off-white (*stranger*) female status is neither here nor there.

Wurtzel repeatedly asks readers to accept her as a clichéd, middle-class, every-girl

Commenting on the phenomenon of the performativity of white femininity, Karen Brodtkin writes:

When immigrants learn that the way to be American is to claim white patriarchal constructions of womanhood and manhood and a middle-class or bourgeois outlook for themselves, they are adapting patterns and practices that were here long before they were. These are the patterns and practices by which the United States has continually redefined itself as a nation of whites (however variably white has been defined) (178).

Wurtzel's ambivalent ethno-racial status is dependent on location. Brodtkin, writing about her own childhood, addresses this in-between status that depends upon its context for solidification. She writes, "In relation to "the blond people," mainstream white folks, the women of my family felt different. However, in relation to African Americans, we experienced ourselves as mainstream and white" (17). This shape-shifting, this neither-here-nor-there status exacts its toll in its constant demand for performativity. Jewish women who do not whiten themselves properly are abjected as backwards, lazy, hyper-consumptive, frigid and/or hypersexual, fat, loud, and, conversely, sans white performance, as impostors attempting to claim non-white status.⁴ The motions available for Wurtzel are limited to the performance of white, middle to upper-class femininity and deviations from this performance make her unreadable, a position so profoundly uneasy that she

4. An oft-used example of "backwards" women (within larger U.S. communities and narratives and sometimes also within Jewish communities themselves) are religious Jewish women who fully cover. Franny Fine from the show *The Nanny* exemplifies the JAP stereotype which includes laziness, over-consumption, preoccupation with appearance, and a ravenous appetite. Sandra Bernhard, particularly in her performance *Without You I'm Nothing* exemplifies the impostor attempting to claim non-white status.

is driven to debilitating anxiety and depression. In order to be proclaimed rehabilitated from her depression, as well as reabsorbed into whiteness, she must rid herself of the behaviors that make her unrecognizable lest she risk complete disenfranchisement.

Wurtzel, therefore, becomes properly white through her comportment and expression, rather than through the vocational and legalistic rights that whitened Jewish men. This suggests that Jewish feminine assimilation into whiteness is much more highly dependent on the body and its movements than its masculine counterpart. While assimilation for straight Jewish American men has been explored as something facilitated by public inclusions such as the GI Bill following World War II, Jewish American women's assimilation needs to be explored as a highly personal ability to perform white femininity, lest we imagine Jewish women were all carried into white, middle-class status by their male counterparts. Wurtzel is mentally ill (off-white, *strange*) when she cannot perform proper white femininity and well (white) when she is able to discipline her body and behaviors. Mental illness, particularly the diagnosis of depression, is therefore, not simply about easing this particular patient's suffering, which is undoubtedly real and harrowing, but also a method of re-establishing Wurtzel where she has been relegated post-Jewish-American assimilation in the racialized, gendered, and classed hierarchies already present in the United States.

Elizabeth Wurtzel, though certainly encompassed within and aware of a philosophy of the Holocaust that insists all Jewish Americans born since are bearers of survival and memory, is not a descendant of survivors and barely touches on the traumatic matter that pushed her father's family to emigrate from Russia to the United States, nor does

she ever mention her mother's family's assimilation story, though it is alluded they are from Germany. Not only does she not offer readers a contextualization for her anxiety and depression (for to do so would disrupt her authorial intent to posit herself as an unexceptional, white twenty-something with no reason to be depressed other than a chemical imbalance), I suggest she also does not possess lenses with which to understand the impact of inherited history/epigenetics on her present because such a lens has been eradicated in order for contemporary Jewish Americans to be seen, and to understand themselves, as seamlessly white. For, if Jews are white in America, having been racialized others in every corner of the world previously, then we may believe in the American dream and we may finally believe we have found a 'true' and accepting home (in many ways eerily similar to how assimilated and secular German Jews felt right before the Holocaust began).

Prozac Nation: Jewish and Struggling to Pass in America

Wurtzel, in the prologue to *Prozac Nation*, writes, "I start to feel like I can't maintain the facade any longer, that I may just start to show through" (2). The statement instructs readers to understand Wurtzel as a person who "passes" through the world as "normal" while underneath she is "abnormal" or possibly crazy. However, the façade may also be read as a white mask that hides her ethnic Jewish markings that are threatening to emerge. The very possibility that Elizabeth Wurtzel may be working, and often failing, to keep her "whiteface" intact struggles against the very foundational notion of Jewish American Assimilation.

Jewish American assimilation is used as a foundational example in white ethnic

studies of the constructivist nature of ethnicity/race in the United States. Critics like Jon Stratton, Michael Rogin, David Roediger, and Karen Brodtkin show how Jews in America, particularly Eastern European Jews arriving after 1880 during the third wave of Jewish immigration to the United States, went from being classified as non-white ethnic others to being white after World War II. While the sources of this whitening are contested amongst scholars concerned with this assimilation, there is almost no challenge to the notion that all Jews achieved assimilated white status after World War II. The story Elizabeth Wurtzel conveys in *Prozac Nation*, rife with hiding, grappling, and striving to become someone else (enunciated as a struggle to transcend depression) suggests that the assumptions about completed Jewish American assimilation need to be questioned and our conception of Jewish American assimilation is in need of reform.

Wurtzel begins her construction of whiteness when she attempts to portray her parents as American (i.e., white) and her junior high and high school Yeshiva peers' parents as old-fashioned and outdated (i.e., off-white). She focuses on her mother's life history because it helps to solidify Wurtzel's white racial position more than her father's life history that is rife with immigration and poverty. She writes, "She'd gone to Cornell... her mother told her that all she could be was an architect's secretary, so she majored in art history...She'd spent a junior year abroad at the Sorbonne and did all the studiedly adventurous things a nice Jewish girl from Long Island can do" (22). Her mother holds the expectations of an upper-class white woman coming of age in the late forties and early fifties. She is educated, but as a woman she is also simultaneously limited in what work she may expect to obtain; only through marriage may she expect to be uplifted economically.

Here Wurtzel begins identifying herself with other white upper-class American women of her generation, who expect to surpass their mothers' economic status in part because of their mothers' work in the second wave of the women's movement.⁵

In order to construct this version of unmarked⁶, white identity, Wurtzel chooses to give very little attention to her father's working-class, immigrant Jewish family. While her maternal grandparents appear in her memoir, her paternal grandparents and family rarely emerge, even as subjects who are an absent presence in her life. However, what she does offer about her paternal family exemplifies one of the many moments in *Prozac Nation* where Wurtzel begins to open the possibility that some of her misery is related to her (and her families) Jewish matters and the process of ongoing assimilation. Despite this dearth of information she does assert that this side of her family was rife with depression and sadness (28).

While Wurtzel will drop this information in the text and never revisit it, this very information suggests her own misery may be related to her father's families' misery which is likely, at least partly, a product of immigration, assimilation and all of the attendant failures associated with these processes. We can make this analytical leap from studying earlier Jewish American women's writing, such as Yeziarska's and Mary Antin's, to see the ways in which being in-between and unincorporated contributes to anxiety and (what we would now call) depression as well as what is now referred to as post-traumatic stress

5. The "Second Wave" of the women's movement included considerable involvement by Jewish women. Theorists see this movement as one of the sites of Jewish women's metamorphosis into whiteness.

6. While whiteness is often spoken about in popular culture as an unmarked and empty hegemonic identity, Ruth Frankenberg notes that "the more one scrutinizes it, the more the notion of whiteness as unmarked norm is revealed to be a mirage, or indeed, to put it even more strongly, a white delusion" (73). Benedict Anderson's notion of imaginary community usefully explains why Wurtzel (along with her family, doctor's, and friends) is convinced maintaining a façade of 'whiteness' will make her ordinary, unnoticed (or in essence unmarked).

disorder. However, Wurtzel does not ruminate on any of this history, nor do any of her therapists analyze this matter as important in understanding her depression diagnosis. Rather, this information begins to amass as ghostly matter.

Describing her father, she writes, "He came from a background that was more blue-collar immigrant than anything else. And instead of college, he'd done time in the U.S. Army. He was not cool or groovy at all, just a fuckup" (24). While her mother "was frantic to keep at least a toehold in the bourgeoisie...my dad was working overtime (or actually, not gainfully working much at all) to stay the hell out of it" (24). In this version, and throughout the text, Wurtzel will associate herself with her mother and dissociate herself from her father, as if she has inherited nothing from him. Disassociating from her father, and her father's family, allows her to extricate herself from any need to think about the weight of Jewish history in relationship to her depression diagnosis. An alternative reading of this information evidences a man raised without any ability to escape his working-class status besides joining the army. The experience of the army leaves him alienated and disenfranchised, and he cannot pull himself up by his bootstraps into the upper-class white world as his wife, his community, and the nation expect him to do.

A few pages later, Wurtzel writes of the school she attends and the reality of family life for most of her classmates, again attempting to position herself as "normal" and therefore white in relationship to their *strangeness*. Wurtzel abjects religious Jews (physically marked by the necessities of dress dictated by religious tenants) to normalize (whiten) her own identity. "Since I went to a Jewish school where the divorce rate among parents was fairly low (that was the main reason my mom sent me there), I would visit friends' homes

and find myself amazed at how glum things seemed compared to life at our apartment” (34). Here, Wurtzel is the exception to the rule, in some ways *more* “American” (and thus “normal” and “white”) than her Jewish schoolmates. She describes her classmates’ fathers as unapproachable and distant, while the mothers “quite simply lacked style, were dowdy and school-marmish, and they often smelled bad to me as well. . . . The sheer joy of having kids seemed completely lost on them. They did not get down with parenthood” (34). The description of Wurtzel’s classmates parents seems an extension of the description of her paternal grandparents, setting up a moment where Wurtzel can disavow their influence and her classmates influence on her identity formation all in one clean break.

Her mother, she writes, “hung out with me whenever she was home, helping me fill in the patterns on the Lite-Brite or dunking Oreo cookies in milk with me or dancing around the living room with me while we played *Free to Be You and Me*” (34). Wurtzel’s mother is hip and fun, a Bohemian New Yorker, while her friends’ parents are purveyors of a more austere Jewish parenting that she sees as unloving, cold, and even smelly (conjuring stereotypes of Jews popular during the third wave of Jewish American assimilation mentioned earlier in the section on Yeziarska).

Wurtzel continues to attempt to construct a normalized, white identity by abjecting more visibly religious Jews. She writes:

While we didn’t keep a kosher home, I somehow managed to win the school Brochos Bee, the Jewish equivalent of a spelling bee, five years in a row...I retired from this rather odd competition after winning the national contest, against boys

with earlocks and girls who wore long sleeves and thick tights in June” (35).

Wurtzel establishes herself as separate from the environment in which she competes, a temporary inhabitant of this *strange* world. She learns the prayers, she insists, because she is bored and precocious and absorbs any information like a sponge. These are not “her” people with “their” strange fathers and schoolmarmish mothers. Rather, they serve as colorful examples of the *strange*, mystical, “exotic” world of Jewish practice. Wurtzel imagines herself to be part of the assimilated, white world, and not the *strange* world her classmates inhabit in which men wear yarmulkes and girls wear dresses below the knee and past the elbow.

Later on, Wurtzel will use stories of these “funny,” “quirky” spaces and people to entertain her friends at Harvard as well as to differentiate herself from the Jewish world she both represents and portrays. She conjures the “religious Jews...intellectual types that you’d see in Woody Allen movies...” of her Upper West Side upbringing in order to establish the ways in which she, while perhaps neurotic and depressed, is not one of the American Jewish separatists from her tales (107).

Wurtzel, again displaying her anxieties about being *strange* as well as her intense desire to read herself as the American every-girl (or unmarked white girl), recalls her adolescent identification with Bruce Springsteen and the hours she would spend listening to his music in the dark. She writes, “But I identify with him so completely that I start to wish I could be a boy in New Jersey...I’m figuring if I can just become poor white trash, if I can just get in touch with the blue-collar blues, then there’ll be a reason why I feel this

way” (44).

Here, Wurtzel creates a scenario similar to the use of blackface by Jewish actors as a tool of whitening in early Hollywood described by theorist Michael Rogin in *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot*. Rogin, writing about the function of minstrelsy in constructing and incorporating immigrants into white America, states, “It was Americanizing ethnics, first the Irish and then the Jews, who dominated minstrelsy at the antebellum flourishing and early-twentieth century revitalization of the form. Blacked-up ethnics entered, even as they helped to create, the American melting pot” (53). By constructing herself in opposition to the “white trash” she claims she longs to be, Wurtzel effectively solidifies herself as a white insider in opposition to the white *strangers* Springsteen refers to in his songs (*strangers* largely because of class). However, the reader also knows her mother is employed only part-time and her father rarely pays alimony and that she is in private school on a scholarship—this information undercuts her desire to align herself with middle-class white America and is mentioned only a few times in the text (Wurtzel 23).

When Wurtzel finally manages to spend a summer at her aunt’s home in the New Jersey of her Springsteen dreams she finds herself as miscast there as anywhere else. She spends the summer hanging out with her cousin; going to parties, smoking pot, listening to music, swimming, and sleeping. The cousin and her friends are set to start community colleges in the fall and Wurtzel writes, “It was hard for me not to seem like a superior snothead in that environment...Where on earth would I ever fit in? I kept wondering. At camp everyone is so Jappy, and here in Matawan they’re not Jappy enough” (78-79).

Here the *strange* hovering space in which Wurtzel exists is illuminated. By using the word JAP, Wurtzel invokes language that is used as a tool of discipline both within and without Jewish communities. Evelyn Torton Beck, in her essay “From “Kike” to “JAP”: How Misogyny, Anti-Semitism, and Racism Construct the “Jewish American Princess,” writes that “in the popular imagination, Jews, “Japs,” women and homosexuals have all been viewed as devious, unreliable, and power hungry” (88). Further, Beck writes:

The Jewish Princess is seen as manipulative, particularly of the men in her life...In addition, she’s lazy -- she doesn’t work inside or outside the home. She is the female version of the Jew who, according to anti-Semitic lore, is a parasite on society...There are physical stereotypes as well: the Jew with the big hook nose, thick lips, and frizzy hair. The Jewish American Princess has had a nose job and her hair has been straightened, but she too has large lips (an image we immediately also recognize as racist)... (90)

Perhaps without intention, Wurtzel here allows readers to understand how deeply the stereotypes of Jewish American women instruct how she evaluates herself and other girls around her. While she uses the term JAP to exemplify class difference, she also inadvertently invokes Jewish difference and how this is understood in her contemporary moment.

Wurtzel imagines she has found entrance into whiteness, or insider status, when she begins to date the most popular boy in her high school. Wurtzel begins dating Zachary, “this really great, sociable, charming, fun-loving guy,” and feels that her long-standing

yearning to transcend herself is finally granted (86). “It seemed that for years I had quietly and surreptitiously prayed to God that He might make me—or whatever it was about me that made me—disappear, metamorphose into somebody else”(Wurtzel 86). Dating Zachary allows Wurtzel to gain temporary entrance into clearly intelligible white femininity because she attaches herself to the school’s symbol of clearly intelligible *normal* masculinity. Sensing this precarious grip on being rescued from her *stranger* identity, Wurtzel clings to Zachary with a stranglehold, emphasizing the anxieties she has about slipping back into her *stranger* state. The demise of the relationship with Zachary pushes Wurtzel into a deep despair. She writes, “I used to weep for never having anything worth losing, but now I was simply resplendent—puffy, red, hysterical—with a loss I could identify completely” (90). The deep sadness Wurtzel began to exhibit when she reached puberty is finally explicable in its scope.

While Wurtzel will root this sadness in the chemical depression with which she is later diagnosed, aligning herself with ‘other privileged’ people who are inexplicably sad, I contend that her sadness is in large part related to being raised Jewish in a post-Holocaust world in which the Holocaust is a trope for all Jewish histories of public traumas. Though she rarely mentions the Holocaust in *Prozac Nation*, she spends a good deal of time relating the ways in which previous trauma dictates how she is parented and how an inexplicable sense of loss and fear of sudden disappearance is deeply attached to this upbringing. The fact that this insinuation is ‘written between the lines’ of Wurtzel’s text makes it no less salient, in fact perhaps more salient.

Janet Burstein, in *Telling the Little Secrets: American Jewish Writing since the 1980s*,

writes “all the salient issues that perplex American Jews and that figure in their literature after 1980 are bent, wrinkled in some way by either forgetting or remembering what happened in the thirties and forties to the Jews of Europe. (3) Burstein goes on, stating, “psychoanalysts and historiographers insist that the past haunts and hobbles us until its losses are mourned” (8). This haunting can emerge in post 1980s Jewish American literature as a “sense of the individual as fragmented, strange, unrecognizable to itself in its ceaseless changes” (9). In *Prozac Nation* this haunting, or ghostly matter, is inscribed through the ways in which Wurtzel’s depression is exacerbated by her anxious upbringing as well as how she must mediate herself in the world to not appear “too Jewish”. Her relentless sadness, her sense that anything can disappear at any moment is cultivated not only in her own family, but also in the Holocaust education popular in Hebrew Schools (and now in secular schooling as well where Jewish students become, inadvertently, the living example of past Jewish trauma) as a tool of remembrance and as a prevention of future genocide. But the sense of loss, far removed from the soil of Eastern and Central Europe, is amorphous, inexplicable, and somehow inappropriate--much more easily diagnosed as a chemical imbalance than as remnants of Jewish history and the reality of post-Holocaust Jewish life (her parents are both born during the Holocaust).

In “Third Generation Descendants of Holocaust Survivors and the Future of Remembering,” Eva Fogelman explores the ways in which third generation Holocaust survivors are recognized in Israel but not in the United States (where they are imagined to have not inherited any trauma). While she finds that 3Gs thrive in light of their legacy, respondents bitterly refuted her, suggesting that the far-reaching effects of the

Holocaust continue to shape the psyches of the Jews who have been born “after”. An anonymous respondent on June 28th, 2008 refutes Fogelman, citing her own position as a descendant of survivors of Pogroms and extreme anti-Semitism as the main contributor to her history of depression and anxiety (Fogelman). Further, she claims that in Hebrew School the time spent learning about the Holocaust heightened her anxiety and feelings of being a *stranger* (Fogelman). She goes on further, stating, “Now, in my mid-thirties, I struggle with my own emotional challenges and...I feel strongly that if it were not for the...historical strands of trauma and persecution on both sides of my family, the pervasive legacy of abuse, trauma, and mental illness might not have existed” (Fogelman).

Wurtzel’s relentless desire to be read as seamlessly *normal* inhibits her from exploring the historical residues contributing to her depression and anxiety, but the familial relationships she describes (as well as her schooling) illuminates these ghostly markings. Wurtzel, acting as the receptacle for these unwanted worries for her family, momentarily finds an outlet for her own anxieties by attaching herself to the symbol of stability, assimilation, and white masculinity she finds in Zachary. With appropriate outlets for her anxieties, Wurtzel can momentarily stabilize herself into a middle-class, white, adolescent female narrative in which heterosexual heartbreak is an acceptable and encouraged circumstance for feeling sad and not wanting to get out of bed. This narrative absolves her of her inability to explain her sadness, and even allows her mother to stop worrying, for a moment, about her daughter’s *strangeness* because she is finally exhibiting *normal* worries for an assimilated girl with no inherited worries.

The less frequently Wurtzel’s parents appear in her narrative, the more *normally*

white Wurtzel becomes. She becomes rootless, untied from her parents and the semi-assimilated Jewish identity they represent, yet still outside of the white, moneyed circles she moves in, both at Harvard and later in Dallas, working for the *Dallas Sun*. “I’m a stranger wherever I go because I’m strange to myself” Wurtzel writes (142). In assimilating more fully than any other generation of American Jews, Wurtzel and others of her generation are expected to bear no markings of passing anxieties. Yet, her identification as a *stranger* shows that she sees herself as belonging nowhere—not with her Jewish counterparts, people of color, or inheritors of white privilege.

Wurtzel’s *stranger* Jewish identity becomes apparent in her anxieties even as she struggles to maintain an image of white, middle-class femininity. “Don’t you get it?” she says to her psychiatrist, Dr. Sterling, “Nothing sticks. That’s my whole problem. And that’s how it is for me with everything. Nothing is real to me unless it’s right in front of me.” Dr. Sterling responds, “What a terrible way to live” (Wurtzel 203). Anxieties about disappearances or sudden absences are embedded in much of post-Holocaust Jewish writings, music, and art, suggesting these anxieties are not merely signals of a universalized depression, as the anxieties exhibited by Wurtzel’s presumed white body are read. However, Wurtzel’s anxieties over disappearances are not read as a deep-rooted ethno-cultural anxiety. Rather, these anxieties are read simply and exclusively as the symptoms of a “chemical” depression induced by her parents’ divorce. Dr. Sterling’s belief that underneath Wurtzel’s morose exterior lies a giggly girl who just wants to have fun points to the belief that Jews born after 1950 have prefiguratively acquired white culture.

While Wurtzel's therapists try to unearth the smiling, happy girl they believe lies beneath her morose exterior, her friends seem less convinced that she is actually one of them, e.g., a properly white, middle-class person. Rather Wurtzel's friends view her as different and exotic, a colorful additive to their Andover-educated, whitewashed world. She writes of her friend Archer who was "one of those Yankee gentlemen who collects hysterical Jewesses as good buddies because we are as foreign and exotic to him as the natives in Tahiti were to Gaugin—and no matter how well he got to know any of us, his bafflement never abated" (218). While she enjoys the attention she receives as an exotic Jewess in the hallowed halls of Harvard, the realities of exoticization and the *strangeness* it entails push Wurtzel deeper and deeper into the funhouse mirror of anxiety and depression, in which all is distorted through a lens that suggests her excessive emotions need immediate remediation. This idea of being excessively emotional points back to Evelyn Torton Beck's assertions of stereotypes of Jewish women, a stereotype that contributes to the diagnosis Wurtzel receives despite the ways in which her Jewishness is erased by her therapists.

Archer is baffled by her hyper-enmeshed family, just as she is baffled by his affluent Protestant family's distance in which each person is imagined to be on his/her own after the age of eighteen. Wurtzel writes, "The concept of Who asked you? does not exist in my family, because the concept of individuals doesn't exist. We're all meshed together, all a reflection of one another, as if we were a pot of stew in which all the ingredients affect the flavor" (224). A stew metaphor is an apt one in reference to assimilation projects because family members are often used as gauges for one another's authenticity/inauthenticity.

For instance, the largest wave of Jewish immigration to the United States included large numbers of impoverished and uneducated Jews. Jewish organizations already present in the United States began benevolent programs in part to discipline these immigrants into white, middle-class Americans because they understood that the racialization of these new immigrants would also affect their own race identity within the United States (Baum, 163). It is necessary for members of Wurtzel's Jewish family to police one another's behaviors into *normalized* performance in order to continue to pass for white and middle class.

Her friends, intelligibly middle and upper-class white women "don't understand how desperate I am to have someone say, I love you and I support you just the way you are because you're wonderful just the way you are. They don't understand that I can't remember anyone ever saying that to me" (225). Wurtzel's therapists, parents, classmates, romantic interests, and employers are all invested in Wurtzel inhabiting a normal (white) identity; thus, the notion of "you're wonderful the way you are" is not available to her as such proclamations would encourage her to relax and cease putting forth the effort to pass. Her "properly" white female friends cannot understand this significance because their relationship with abjection, and subsequently acceptance, is nonexistent, showing some of the differences between inhabiting an unmarked, normalized position and inhabiting an assimilating (and threateningly *strange*) position. These simple words seem trite to them and make them think Wurtzel is indeed a bit off. In fact, Wurtzel's success (working for *Rolling Stone* and several national newspapers before graduating college), coupled with her feelings of inadequacy and failure, seem incredibly disturbing to those

around her, almost as if Wurtzel enjoyed indulging in her miseries, partly for the pleasure of playing the hysterical Jewess.

The ways in which Wurtzel's deepening depression gets acted out place her solidly into the standard narrative of the body-mutilating white, middle-class girl endemic to talk shows, after-school specials, and nineteen-nineties memoirs. However, Wurtzel's particular narrative strays from the motif of the girl who hurts herself for no reason when she writes, "but I could never completely drop out, I could never lose my mind to the point where they'd have to send me away to a loony bin...because my mother would not be able to survive such a personal debacle. She barely wanted to know about the extent of the despair I was able to experience" (47). Here, Wurtzel's mother is not the doting white mother of Betty Crocker commercials who will do anything to make her little girl better. Rather, she explicitly instructs Wurtzel to contain and manage her anxieties, to "tell this stuff to Dr. Isaac, she'd say every time I tried to talk to her about my depression" (47). Wurtzel's mother cannot deal with her depression or accept her mental state, because Wurtzel's opportunities for assimilation into white middle-class communities far surpassed the opportunities she had herself.

As Wurtzel descends further into depression, she writes of becoming "one of those people" who engage in behaviors viewed as deviant, like "one of those people who walks alone at night while others sleep or watch Mary Tyler Moore re-runs or pull all-nighters to finish up some paper that's due first thing tomorrow" (181). She sleeps during the day, skips classes, and spends much of her time crying. The control Wurtzel exercises during the beginning of her life starts to waver in her early twenties as she sees the ways

that assimilation is not an actual absorption into whiteness but a shoddy facsimile in need of constant reiteration to appear authentic.⁷ However, since there is no "original" whiteness, Wurtzel's off-whiteness must be in place in order to brighten the whiteness of her imagined horizontal peers.

Finally, on page 225, in one of the last chapters of the book, Wurtzel suggests, "part of the problem (the depression problem) relates to ethnicity" (225). However, she does not point to post-Holocaust anxieties or assimilation problems, but to the differences between Catholic guilt and Jewish guilt—"Catholic guilt is about impossibility, while Jewish guilt is about an abundance of possibility" (225). Wurtzel does not ask whether the super drive toward ambition and possibility may be embedded in attempts to excel and assimilate in an effort to avoid threats of annihilation or expulsion that have plagued Jews throughout thousands of years of human history.

Toward the end of the *Prozac Nation*, Wurtzel describes the ways in which she tried to compensate for being depressed; "I had developed a persona that could be extremely melodramatic and entertaining. It had, at times, all the selling points of madness, all the aspects of performance art. I was able to reduce whatever craziness I'd experienced into the perfect anecdote" (290). Here Wurtzel exists as the exotic entertainer for her old-moneyed white friends, the hysterical Jewess with endless stories of intrigue and sex. However, she posits herself as attempting to cover up her depression, to pass as sane, rather than as attempting to assimilate, or at least gain entrance into privileged white spaces by performing the "exotic little American princess" she had set out to be at the

7. Though whiteness is a construct and no person fully embodies this imagined identity, we must acknowledge the material reality that those who are 'more naturally' able to perform the behaviors and body movements associated with white middle-class identity are more likely to garner the benefits of white hegemony.

beginning of her freshmen year at Harvard (95).

Wurtzel's memoir ends with an epilogue bearing the same name as the title, *Prozac Nation*. As in the prologue, Wurtzel establishes the current United States as a deeply troubled, alienated place in which Prozac might be used as a pacifier for symptoms of the empty way that, she contends, we live. The epilogue collapses the United States into a horizontal community of depressed individuals all suffering the same feelings of disenfranchisement and emptiness and Wurtzel relentlessly insists that her story is unoriginal and clichéd in its prevalence. She asserts that what is fascinating about this wave of depression is that the depressed individuals are those who hold the greatest promise for success and achievement, reaffirming Wurtzel's imagined adoring public's vision of her as an overly privileged white girl. She does not talk about the ways in which her depression may be related to the constant process of assimilating in which she must always be proving her proper whiteness even as she continuously fails.

Like Wurtzel's literary predecessors, and contemporaries, she exhibits anxiety and depression about being a *stranger* wherever she goes, in whatever context she finds herself situated. While earlier writers like Yeziarska more readily understood themselves as being off-white *strangers*, and her contemporaries understand themselves to be *strangers* in need of bodily and behavioral modification to shrug off their *strange* state, Wurtzel continues to assert that she is *strange* "simply" because of a chemical imbalance due to her parents divorce (and perhaps hereditary genetic factors). Her reliance on this narrative belies her desperate desire to be read as an upper-class white woman who has "made it" but continues to be besieged by depression and anxiety. Wurtzel wants readers to be alarmed

that even the most elite of America's youth are depressed, and while this may surely be a worthy criticism, it is a mask meant to distract us from her assimilating status. Between the cracks, in small utterances, readers can begin to see the fragile hold she has on being 'normal' and the lurking sense of *strangeness* haunting her at every turn.

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ABOUT THE SKY

I have mirrored your accident
and fallen up the stairs, fallen off
the map. I am mostly in hiding
from imagined enemies and critics
of my own devising. You know
how it is: these thoughts arise
and worm their way in, quickly
becoming facts. Everyone is a poet
now and if they are not they borrow
texts and call them their own,
or sing and dance, seek fame
and a public any way they can.
One learns to tire of audiences
and withdraw, preferring to mail
pamphlets to a group of friends,
as though it were still the seventies.
Back then shops were independent
and sometimes sold small books
on sale or return (usually the latter).

We found our feet underground
and watched as business knocked
us over, told us that our poems
would never sell. Then poetry was
the new rock & roll, then it went
online. Everyone's become a critic
and an expert but no-one wants
to read or think about their work.
Everything is in the moment,
everything is now, then gone.
There's dust on all my books
and people don't believe I can
have possibly read them all.
Today I'm flat on my back,
wondering how I might
write about the sky.

—Rupert M. Loydell



Snoangel #2

Sue Matheson

Intervening Angels

May, 1937

by Margaret Shaw-MacKinnon

“Did you read them?” Tom Wintermute, a middle-aged farmer in a worn Sunday suit, leaned forward on a plain metal chair, elbows on his knees, hat clasped between his hands. He addressed his son, Johnny, who was propped up on pillows in a hospital bed in the Pembina Hills Sanatorium near Ninette, Manitoba. On his previous visit, a good three weeks prior, he’d given his son a book and an old yellowed clipping to read. The clipping was out of *The London Evening News* in 1914, a story called “The Bowmen” by Arthur Machen. The accompanying book was *On the Side of the Angels: The Story of the Angels at Mons: An Answer to “The Bowmen”* by Harold Begbie.

Tom knew “The Bowmen” was a story to inspire any young lad, about angels intervening on the side of the English in the Great War in the Battle of Mons. For a young reader, such as Johnny, the accompanying book was another matter altogether.

In a queer turn of events, the author Arthur Machen had published “The Bowmen” as a fiction, but it turned out that numerous soldiers had, in fact, seen angels at Mons.

Machen tried to argue that the story he'd written was pure invention, but across England in the churches and in the streets, uproar arose, claiming the angels truly had been seen. Begbie's book attempted to prove the soldier's accounts of angels were true. He suggested that Machen, the author, had written "The Bowmen" through telepathic communication with dying soldiers who had seen the angels, a great mystery to be sure. Had Tom done the wrong thing by putting before his sick thirteen-year-old son such a controversial report? What had his son made of the book?

"I read them." His face was pale, haloed by a mess of dark hair, a frown line etched between boyish blue eyes. He thought "The Bowmen" was all right, but he enjoyed Begbie's book more than anything he'd ever read, a book of new science, showing how all the universe was connected and that the minds of men could reach anywhere through telepathy.

Johnny knew this was true, being a twin. He and Tommy often read each other's minds, finished each other's thoughts and sentences. He wished he could have given Begbie his own hundreds of examples of telepathy to beef up his book, the countless times they started to talk of the same matter at the same time; the time when they were four years old, when Tommy got lost in the wild west crowd at the Polo Park horse races, so he, Johnny, took their father's hand and zigzagged through the crowd to the place where Tommy stood marveling over a Coca Cola billboard of a dark-haired rosy-cheeked lady in a blue gingham apron who bore an uncanny resemblance to a carefree version of their mother, leaning back in a chair, pop bottle in hand; or the time he was about to round the corner of the barn where an escaped bull from a neighboring farm was tearing

at and munching their hay, and sensing danger without seeing it, Tommy threw out his arm to stop Johnny from moving forward, whispering, "Wait!" He saved the two of them from being gored to death like their poor dog, Rover, who scooted onward into the path of the bull whose owners aptly named Destruction.

To be sure, Johnny had been riveted by all the accounts of soldiers with their bloody wounds and their astonishing visions. But it disturbed him that his father had given him such a book when he was ill, a book all about angels and ghosts and death. Johnny had no intention of dying. "What I want to know is why you asked me to read them."

Tom twisted his hat, and then untwisted it to pat it back into shape. He hadn't expected such a direct question. What should he tell him? That he feared Johnny might die? That back in the Old Country, death by consumption had been common enough amongst the folk of his village, and more common in those who went to work in the factories? That his young Uncle Bertram, a bachelor who taught him his ABCs and how to row a boat and make a wily snare, had wasted away just like Johnny, until he coughed blood and died? That if worse came to worst, he wanted his son to die with a sense of hope, like so many others had done in the Great War because of what was in that book?

Johnny's future was precarious, most certainly, but whatever the outcome, Tom knew the time was right to talk big ideas with a son who's had to grow up too quickly. The loss of his sister, Charlotte. A life-threatening illness. Johnny was an entirely different lad than he'd been a year before. As scrawny as he was, he frightened Tom; he was like a wise old man. Tom cleared his throat. "Well, I wanted you to know something about me that I never told anyone, except your mother."

Johnny leaned sidewise towards his father, feebly propping himself up on an elbow, fire in his gaunt face. “What? Were you there, at the Battle of Mons?”

“I was. And...” He would exaggerate, as he’d planned, to give comfort. “I saw the angels.”

“You saw the angels!” Johnny plunked back onto the pillow, staring up at the ceiling. He repeated quietly almost to himself. “My own father was at Mons and saw the angels.” He picked up the book and looked at the cover, at the title, *On the Side of the Angels*, and at the two robed and winged angels, their swords held high, each blade crossing the other to create a holy arch over the book title. Johnny knew his father would never lie to him. He was a God-fearing man. So, everything in the book was true, just as the author, Mr. Begbie argued. The book, published in 1915, was one of the few his father had brought over from England, and it had been innocently tucked in the little bookcase in their Manitoba farmhouse for years. Johnny had at times looked with interest at the cover, never quite curious enough to open the book, and here, all the while, it contained within it a world of wonders. In his unutterably boring life in the San, he had avidly read the mysterious document. “Father, it’s so strange.”

“The events were strange. May I have the book so I can read you the part that has special meaning for me?” Johnny handed his father the small volume. Tom thumbed through the pages, landing on one on which he’d turned down the page corner many long years before. “Do you remember the part about the nurse, Miss Campbell, who was called to the side of a wounded Englishman?”

“My favorite part!” said Johnny. “Except that her name is the same as our teacher at school. Our Miss Campbell is a battle-axe.”

“Same name but a different person,” winked Tom, who thought she was a battle-axe too. “Let me read the passage to you,” Tom Wintermute continued. “He was propped in a corner, his left arm tied up in a peasant woman’s head kerchief, and his head newly bandaged. He should have been in a state of collapse from loss of blood, for his tattered uniform was soaked and caked in blood, and his face paper-white under the dirt of conflict...’ (64-65). Then, you’ll recall, the soldier asked Miss Campbell for a medal of St. George.”

“Did you see soldiers in that condition, Father?” Johnny coughed into his blanket, all the while keeping his eyes on his father. He had never dared to ask his father anything about the war. Children knew. The men wouldn’t talk to anyone who wasn’t there. The war worked away on the men, making them turn crazy and mean at the slightest provocation, but the war tied their tongues. Now, suddenly, his father had created an opening, as if they were man to man.

“I saw worse,” said Tom. “I was at the Front, in and out of the trenches, fighting for four years, son. I won’t say more, but I saw worse. Broke my heart, breaks me still. Now, what it is, about that young man, is that I likely knew him. I have my suspicions that he was a lad called Jack Manning who died. You see, I might have known the dying boy in the book because I was a Lancashire Fusilier, just like him.”

“You were?”

“I was.”

Johnny took in the news with a raspy whistle.

Tom continued. “The cottage I grew up in was near a village called Banks, Lancashire, as beautiful a countryside as you could find, a place dreamt up by the Sea, we always said. But there was more hardship than beauty in that life. You’ve no idea, really, what it was like, eight people in one room, a cow in the attached byre, to keep us warm in the wet chill of winter, no proper windows, the stink of humans and animals and the bitter smoke from peat in the hearth, the riot of noise. Oh, we had our moments, singing and dancing, or as children, playing with alleys—marbles to you, or fishing or hunting songbirds with a catapult for the womenfolk to cook into a pie.”

Johnny grimaced. “What songbirds?”

“Sparrows, robins, finches. Aye, we were poor enough to rescue our hunger with those tiny morsels, while the squire who owned the land grew fat. I was a slave to the garden and later the field.” His voice lowered, and he looked at his old shoes on the scrubbed linoleum. “When I was one-and-twenty, I found my father dead in the field, his ale barrel drained beside him. I might well have carried on that dismal life, but the Great War started and I seized the opportunity to join the Lancashire Fusiliers for pay. That’s how I ended up in Mons.”

Johnny had never heard his father share so much. His father was a closed man, miserly about revealing personal history. “None of your damn business!” was his common retort. And now—Banks, Lancashire. A place dreamt up by the Sea, as if the Sea could

dream. Johnny felt as if a rare bird had flown into the room; he was afraid if he moved the wrong way, startled it, it would be gone.

“Can I read the next part?” Johnny spoke with a passion his father hadn’t heard in so long. Tom put the book into Johnny’s thin hands. Johnny looked at his father and said, “Do you know, I read this part out loud when I was reading the book. If the nurses were outside the door, they must have thought I’d gone off my rocker. But I wanted to hear the soldier’s voice, his way of speaking. It’s funny.”

“Funny!” exclaimed Tom. “It’s pure poetry, it is!”

“That’s it!” said Johnny. “Poetry. Here goes. ‘We all saw it. First there was a sort of a yellow mist like, sort of risin’ before the Germans as they come to the top of the hill, come on like a solid wall they did—springing out of the earth just solid, no end to ‘em. I just give up. No use fighting the whole German race, thinks I; it’s all up with us.’”

“And so it was—all up with us!” stated Tom.

Johnny continued. “The next minute comes this funny cloud of light, and when it clears off there’s a tall man with yellow hair in golden armour, on a white horse, holding his sword up, and his mouth open as if he was saying, ‘Come on, boys! I’ll put the kybosh on the devils.’ Sort of ‘This is my picnic’ expression. Then, before you could say knife, the Germans had turned and we were after them, fighting like ninety. We had a few scores to settle, Sister, and we fair settled them (56).” Johnny put down the book. “I would never have believed it, if I hadn’t read the whole book, all the men’s stories. Dying men, men with nothing to lose, and no reason to lie. What did you see, Father?”

The truth was that Tom hadn't seen anything but he was dead certain that others had. But to convince his son of God's intervention, he knew he had to pretend that he'd seen something too. Tom told the white lie he'd cooked up at home, the lie that even he almost believed after he'd practiced it so many times to tell Johnny. "When I said, 'I saw the angels,' well, I didn't see them like that fellow did. I didn't see the figure of Saint George—or Saint Michael, as the French did. I didn't see the three great and winged beings that some saw. But I saw the Light." Tom's eyes filled. Even if he hadn't seen anything, he'd felt God's presence along with the rest. "It's as all the accounts say. There was Something that came between us and them. Our men were exhausted and outnumbered. There is no way we could have survived if that Something hadn't helped us."

"You didn't see angels up there. Just a Light."

"That's so. No actual angels. But I felt the Holy Presence, the same as the rest. I have no doubt."

"I don't think I'd see angels either," decided Johnny. Since the disappearance of his sister, Charlotte, he'd called to her spirit, begging her to appear to him and she hadn't come once. He knew Charlotte. She'd come if she could. So, he couldn't decide if she hadn't appeared because God wouldn't let her or because ghosts weren't real or because she was still alive. He hoped she was still alive. "No, no angels for me."

"Maybe not. Maybe not. But you'd feel the Presence." Tom added, "I've thought it over, why one would see this and another that. I'm a practical man, a farmer, a no-

nonsense man. I can hardly imagine an angel, let alone see one. Some of the other boys, they were poets, they were. They were painters. They were fine-bred gentlemen with fine-bred ideas. But, you see, it doesn't matter what each of us saw. We were all in it together. We all had the strange unearthly feeling, and so did the Germans. Even their horses went skittish, turned, and galloped off. Why, it's as if we were all inside God's head. Something said, 'Stop.' And we stopped."

"I believe you, Father," said Johnny. "It makes sense. Why wouldn't God help the English? They were in the right."

"Perhaps," said Tom, catapulted into a long-standing quandary. That innocent explanation wasn't one he believed. God didn't defend those who deserved to be defended. How many times had he prayed, as a child, that God stop his father when the drunken rages and beatings began? Sometimes, in his adult own life, he'd beaten his wife Jean when she didn't deserve it—though most times she did—and hadn't she asked God to stop him to no avail? Where was his daughter, Charlotte, who'd been gone for a year? Why was Johnny fighting for his life? God wasn't fair. God didn't reward the good. No, Job was the truest book in the Bible. But at Mons, God stepped in. God just wanted both sides to stop fighting. Tom looked at Johnny. He'd tell him, whether he understood or not. "Johnny, I don't know that God was favoring the English over the Germans. We soldiers were all hard done by, by arm-chair Generals. I think God didn't approve of the Great War. He'd had enough."

"If I were God, I wouldn't let bad things happen," said Johnny. He wouldn't let boys get T.B., for one thing. For another, he wouldn't let sisters disappear. He wouldn't

let fathers beat mothers. God's world was out of control, a darkness always welling up to overwhelm people. Sometimes people were at fault, but mostly, God's world was not a safe place.

"Ah, well. God started us off in the Garden of Eden," said Tom. "But we weren't ready for Paradise." He didn't want to preach to his son right then, but if Johnny got worse, he might die. Then he'd have to meet his Maker. "We must each get ready for Paradise."

Johnny sighed. He wanted to stay close to his father, but the mysterious bird was gone from the room. Was his father getting ready for Paradise? Was anybody? His father hadn't told him about his past to encourage him to live; he'd told him about it in case he died. Johnny wasn't interested in dying. He wanted to live, to figure out how to improve things right here on earth, if God wasn't interested in the task. "I'm not going to die, Father," Johnny said with the defiant anger of the perilously ill. "I'm not planning to see God or any angels any time soon."

"That's my boy," said Tom, in a voice rough with feelings undisclosed. There, he'd done it. If his son had to leave the world too soon, like Tom's young friends unfairly and outrageously blown to bits in the bloody muck at Mons, he'd think of their talk and be comforted by angels as he went.

LINGUISTICS

Because he couldn't
make them understand
peace,

the gentle man
learned to speak
violence fluently,

just in case
a conversation
broke out.

—*Allen Berry*



Treads #1

Sue Matheson

RECONSIDERING IMMORTALITY, CONSUMPTION, & TRAGEDY IN THE NARRATIVE STRUCTURE OF DC COMICS' SUPERMAN

by **Kwasu David Tembo, University of Edinburgh**
Edinburgh, Scotland

“EPILOGUE: ON THE FOURTH DAY: I STAYED TO WATCH. I SAW THE WHOLE CEREMONY. AND...I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT I SAW...LZYXM LTPKZ, THE SUPERMAN OF THE FIFTH DIMENSION, TOOK THE D.N.A SAMPLE I SAVED FROM SOLARIS AND, TOGETHER, THEY TURNED IT INSIDE OUT THROUGH TIME UNTIL IT BECAME A WOMAN. THAT'S HOW IT STARTED...IT WAS LIKE HE'D WAITED A BILLION YEARS FOR HER. LIKE NOTHING ELSE HAD MEANT ANYTHING IN ALL THAT TIME. IT FELT LIKE THE WHOLE UNIVERSE WAS BEING PUT RIGHT SOMEHOW. AND MEANWHILE HOURMAN, THIS WEEDY LOOKING ROBOT GUY STARTS... GATHERING UP TIME AND PLAYING WITH IT LIKE SILLY PUTTY”

-DC: One Million No. 4 (1998) “Death Star”

INTRODUCTION

The title of this essay may seem to be ostensibly misleading. A cursory glance on any search engine containing the words ‘death’ and ‘Superman’ will invariably lead one to *Superman* No. 75 or ‘*The Death of Superman!*’, a crossover event (an event unfolding through multiple titles simultaneously) detailing the ‘death’ of Superman. The story takes place over three arcs. They are as follows: “*Doomsday!*” (October 1992-November 1992); “Funeral for a Friend” (January – June 1993); and “*Reign of the Supermen!*” (June-October 1993). The resonances of the death of Superman are subsequently explored in the ‘*Funeral For A Friend*’ story arc dealing with the consequences of Superman’s apparent demise, developed over *Justice League Of America* No. 70, *Adventures Of Superman* No. 498, *Action Comics* No. 685, *Man Of Steel* No. 20, *Superman* No. 76, *Adventures of Superman* No. 499, *Action Comics* No. 686, *Man of Steel* No. 21, and *Superman* No. 77. Within the diegetic narrative of the character, unbeknownst to both enemies and colleagues, even beyond the purview of the intrepidity of Batman, Superman spends six months in a reanimation/regeneration stasis after an epic brawl with the extraterrestrial killing machine Doomsday. Superman ‘returns’ in *Superman* No. 81 to once again take up the cause of truth and justice for all. It is clear that Superman’s ‘death’ lacks the permanence human beings typically associate with ‘death’; a permanence that is simultaneously a source of relief and anxiety for humanity. A narrative with a clearly defined beginning and end furnishes the reader/viewer with existential clarity whereby the chaos, absurdity, and aporias of existence conform to consumable patterns within a clearly defined structural and temporal framework. Within the diegetic and hyperdiegetic earths of the

DC Comics Multiverse which reflect extradiegetic sociopolitical, cultural, and historical reality, to portray Superman’s ‘death’ then is simultaneously to free the character from its existential condition of being a super-subject while also mastering the myriad potentials for new or alternative ipseities, histories, bodies, ideas, values, ecologies, lexicons, and even semiologies, by destroying the catalyst of their reification. That said however, in view of the fact that Superman does not stay dead, we are invited to ask why that is and what, from a philosophical point of view, are the ramifications of the character’s immortality. Referring closely to Umberto Eco’s essay titled “The Myth Of Superman” (1972), I will attempt to assess the phenomena of Superman’s immortality in terms of athanasia as well as timelessness.

MYTHIC STRUCTURES: THE CLASSICAL AND AMERICAN MONOMYTHS

Superbeings in superhero comics typically adhere to the pattern of the Classical Monomyth put forward in Joseph Campbell’s study of world mythology in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). Classical examples of such a journey include Hercules and the Twelve Labours and Aeneas in the Underworld. Superman, however, more readily conforms to the American Monomyth as described by Jewett and Lawrence in *The Myth of the American Superhero* (2002). The former describes a somewhat contested universal or archetypal plot for heroic narratives and action in classical mythology from cultures across the world. The underlying pattern is as follows: “A hero ventures from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with

the power to bestow boons on his fellow man” (Campbell 80). Superman’s tales follow this pattern with certain caveats. This is because one of the central ideas behind Campbell’s pattern concerns the hero/heroine’s return and reintegration to the place and people of his/her birth. With the destruction of Krypton being contemporaneous with its own birth, for Superman, there is no home or people to which to return. As such, all the power, knowledge, and assets accrued over time serve only either itself, or its adoptive people and their society. I argue that this inability to complete the heroes’ journey makes Superman a disrupted Monomyth. Such disruption exemplifies what Roger D. Abrahams calls, in his essay “Some Varieties of Heroes in America,” the major type of American popular hero, namely, the hero-as-outsider. Heroes-as-outsiders

...exist apart from society because of the variance of their vision of what life should be from that of the city or town dweller [remember that Superman was raised by the Kent family on a bucolic farm where agrarian values prevail]; they must fabricate their own ethos and carry it around with them wherever they go. Because of their unbounded optimism, clear-sightedness and essential egotism whenever this ethos collides with society’s, that of the hero prevails...whenever they enter a community, one can predict they will find its wound and cleanse it before they leave...They not never marry, they never find the real heroic culminating in death. They are permanently stuck in the hero role. (Abrahams 359)

For Superman, being stuck in the hero role results in an inherent, always-already occurring existential crisis, like a never-ending Today, in which the decisive conclusions of either

total victory (utopia), or total defeat (dystopia/death) remain intrinsically unavailable. For a hero who can’t succeed or die, the trials of the journey are essentially inconclusive.

What is the purpose of this monomyth and why is it so pervasive in the collective consciousness? To begin, the myth centralizes aspects of a fantastical journey that reinforce the importance of the reproduction and maintenance of social bonds, and the values and identities of whichever culture the hero/heroine represents. This is emphasized by in the mythic narrative and its structure which highlights “rites of initiation, in which persons depart from their community, undergo trials, and later return to be integrated as mature adults who can serve [the community] in new ways” (Jewett & Lawrence 6). This journey is a preparatory if not an outright pedagogical one that psychologically and physically trains the hero/heroine for the task of permanent social responsibility.

Also, the American Monomyth differentiates itself from the Classical Monomyth precisely on the point of the hero’s integration back into the redeemed community. While the Classical Monomyth emphasizes reintegration as the final stage in completing the hero’s journey, the American Monomyth emphasizes the absence of this final stage and therefore, the incompleteness of the Classical Monomyth. The pattern is as follows:

A community in a harmonious paradise is threatened by evil; normal institutions fail to contend with this threat; a selfless superhero emerges to renounce temptation and carry out the redemptive task; aided by fate, his decisive victory restores the community to its paradisiacal condition; the superhero then recedes into obscurity. (Jewett & Lawrence 6)

With Superman, this framework only holds because two things don't happen: 1) its decisive victory never is decisive enough, calling for the necessity of more victories and; 2) it doesn't fade into obscurity because it is a triune being, it is always-already both integrated and disintegrated, both inside and outside the community it serves. By 'triune being' I am referring to the fact that Superman is a composite creature, made up of the tension between three identities, personas, or modes of being "Clark Kent of Smallville; Kansas," "Kal-El of Krypton;" and "Superman, guardian of Metropolis." This sense of incompleteness and circuitousness is further underscored by a central tenant of Superman's ethic namely, that he doesn't use his power to kill. This sentiment precludes any kind of decisive vanquishing of evil, which further assures the incompleteness of both the Classical and American Monomyth. As such, this essential incompleteness of the heroes' journey means that this narratological framework of the journey can be repeated indefinitely.

So, while the Classical Monomyth emphasizes fundamentally pedagogical rites of initiation, the American Monomyth centralizes a narrative of redemption. In this way, it secularizes the Judeo-Christian dramas of community redemption that emerged throughout American history that combine "elements of the selfless servant who impassively gives his life for others and the zealous crusader who destroys evil" (Jewett & Lawrence 7). This is why it is not uncommon to hear/read comic book superbeings being perceived as replacements for messianic figures. While the credibility of a Christ figure, for example, has experienced a consistent erasure since the Enlightenment, the comic book superhero's superhuman abilities reflect a pervasive interest in transcendent, redemptive powers that reason or the scientific method has never totally extirpated from the popular imagination.

Indeed, Superhero comics remain resolutely engaged with these ancient patterns and ideas. For the better part of a century, the figure of the comic book superhero has continually maintained and developed these patterns, translating them into a form more suitable to a post-industrial society. Directly or indirectly, the genealogy of the figure of the comic book superhero links the modern reader to the ancient adherent or worshiper. Yet, while most comic book heroes fit these patterns in some way or other, the modern superhero, like its demigod forebears, remains a figure of fundamental contradiction. For the modern reader looking at Superman, certain questions immediately come to mind. In an era of sexual liberation and deconstructive discourse on human sexuality, why do heroes marked by an essential sexual renunciation still exist? In this our post-modern, secularized Information Age, why is the fantasy of redemption through supernatural power still so readily demanded and consumed by global audiences? What does the figure of the comic book superhero say about the current modes of modern democracy when some of its most popular fictions concern the rescue of ineffectual democratic institutions and their ideals by beings that almost exclusively act supra-legally? Does the popularity and longevity of the comic book superhero represent the desire for a non-democratic or at least different form of governance, life style, values or being in general? (Jewett & Lawrence 7-8).

In many ways, being a human being is just as, if not in some ways, more precarious than it was in ancient times. The Information Age is still beset with the same hazards as those preceding it. From war, poverty, epidemics, and environmental devastation, to more modern problems like Cybercrime, surveillance, economic inequality and resource scarcity, being – ancient or modern – is a struggle. When compared with the issues we contend with daily, it seems that a particularly mythic pattern entrenched in the popular

imagination, given shape and sound by our entertainment, has a lesser degree of urgency. Ultimately, we cannot afford to wait for a Messiah, caped or not, to redeem us.

On the one hand, the Monomyth's predilection toward emotional superheroic redemption seems to exacerbate all such valuative and existential problems, but, on the other hand, the cult of the hero is increasingly ubiquitous in popular culture. Superhero films dominate domestic and global box-offices. The comic convention has expanded and attained a level of popularity that now includes popular entertainment from all media and genres – including console games, network television, theatre, amusement rides, and film (Lawrence & Jewett 14). These include, but are not limited to: *Batman: Arkham Asylum* (2009); *Injustice: Gods Among Us* (2013); *Arrow*; *Gotham*; *The Flash* (2012-2014, Fox & The CW); *It's A Bird...It's A Plane...It's Superman!* (1966 Broadway, 2013 New York City Encores!); *DC Comics Super Hero Adventures* (Six Flags, New Orleans, Louisiana); The DCCU (DC Cinematic Universe). For better or worse, global culture is saturated in the lightning and frenzy that characterizes the concept of being a superbeing.

A NEVER-ENDING BATTLE: NARRATIVE STRUCTURE AND IMMORTALITY

Superman is part of a robust genealogy of anthropic mytho-religious hero figures which includes Gilgamesh, Samson, and Herakles among numerous others. Where Superman departs most starkly from these preceding heroes of myth is the manner in which the character's narrative is presented to the reader. Superman's presentation is a question of narrative *structure*. Eco states that

the traditional figure of religion was a character of human or divine origin, whose image had immutable characteristics and an irreversible destiny. It was possible that a story as well as a number of traits backed up the character; but the story followed a line of development already established, and it filled in the character's features in a gradual but definitive manner. (15)

An example of such a hero story – indeed only one of many – is the myth of the twelve labours of Hercules. In an image, a statue, a tapestry, any artistic rendering of Hercules or any scene from his labours, in a story belonging to him that which distinguishes him from mortal men – his divine features – would be highlighted and reproduced through the artwork. Mythological and messianic heroes are inserted into pre-determined narrative structures so that the reader/viewer is always-already aware of what has and should happen. The work of art thus contains a recounting of what occurred throughout the hero's journey, her/his traits, the trials that beset her/him, how s/he were overcome, what laurels were conferred upon her/him and so on. What results is a kind of inverse reading or retrolection whereby the narrative looks backward, conforming itself to the hero's status while simultaneously confirming the reasons for her/his repute and status as a hero. The traditional heroic figure therefore embodies something elemental, prime, a law, trait, or demand and therefore is necessarily predictable. In typical superhero comic book narrative structures, this traditional retrolective narrotology is *reversed*. As a result, “the reader's main interest is transferred to the unpredictable nature of *what will happen* [whereby] the event [or the essential occurrence that signals a definitive conclusion] has not happened before the story; it happens *while* it is being told, and usually the author

does not know what will take place” (Eco 15).

Superman is one of few characters in the history of the comic book medium that has seen continuous publication since his debut in 1948. Seeing that the Superman’s narrative is still active, that it is still actively consumed and unfinished, there is no set precedent regarding how the narrative should end. However, as Eco points out, in order for the narrative to become myth it needs to end. A paradox thus emerges whereby, in order for Superman’s narrative to continue within the aesthetico-narratological mythos it has established for itself over more than seventy-five years, it must appeal to mythology and interpellate many of its tropes while being essentially un-mythological. As such, readers read on, some because of childhood nostalgia, some because Superman and the character’s narratives are valued as essential elements of one’s identity and world view, some to discover, to know how and at which point in history the narrative ends and becomes mythological. As perhaps the ur-example of an unceasing champion of the downtrodden in the history of post-industrial Western popular culture, Superman and the character’s entire mythos occur within the remit of this diegetic/hyperdiegetically purgatorial, liminal position precisely because the character “must be an archetype, the totality of certain collective aspirations, and therefore, [it] must necessarily become immobilized in an emblematic and fixed nature which renders [it] easily recognizable” (Eco 15).

Part of Superman’s reality is produced and reproduced within the readily consumable medium of superhero comics, which are serialized in nature. As such, any consideration of the immortality of Superman must acknowledge that it is in part both temporal and

narratological in nature. This is to say that the character’s diegetic existence is sustained through the device of a floating timeline which is, in view of Eco’s reading of mythological narrative structures, traceably mythological. If one considers Superman as a creature of simultaneity and multiplicity predicated on its psycho-physical power, Otherness, and uncanny anthropicness, then the nature of the narrative structure of the comic book superhero story in which this multiplicity appears is at once the death of superbeing as an embodiment of power, potential, and the power of potential. Simultaneously, the nature of the narrative structure through which the onto-existential complexes that are inextricable from the confluence of the character’s power, uncanny body, and Otherness signals the birth of the *superhero* as a being of power and potential whose power of potential is always-already sublimated by a narrative that cannot exist if it actualizes said potential in any definitive way; that is, if Superman acts in such a way so as to affect an event that subsequently results in a conclusion, an end, or a new beginning. As such, the character must shoulder the entirety of diegetic human being and its hunger for being more, being other than it has heretofore been without the respite of an immovable conclusion in the form of Superman’s own death, nor without being able to decisively satisfy human being by utopianizing any of DC Comics’ fifty-one earths.

Regardless of which earth in DC Comics’ orrery of worlds the character appears in, Superman exists in a hyperdiegesis wherein which the diegetic representations of extradiegetic sociopolitics, culture, and history portray humanity as being in constant need of saving. Within the worlds of superhero comics, humanity (and whichever earth it is shown to occupy, more generally) is always under threat in some form or other,

whether originating internally within its own biosphere, or externally from beyond its exosphere. What is most notable about the so-called ‘resurrection’ of Superman in *Superman* No. 75 is that that particular event illustrates, despite all the character’s power, power that always-already intimates an eschatological potential – be it in the form of the redemption or destruction of humankind – that a conclusive event, the ending of a world both in terms of its destruction or fundamental changing, is always *delayed*. As such, for nearly a century to date, the narrative continues, never arriving at a reified ending. This immediately invites various questions, some which cannot be answered due to their inalienably temporal nature. For example, will Superman one day die and stay dead? Will Superman one day decide to abandon all earths, as does Dr. Manhattan in Dave Gibbons and Alan Moores’ seminal *Watchmen* (1986)? Will Superman turn on the creatures ‘he’ under oath, swore to protect? Will Superman ever use its alien powers, faculties, and apparatuses collected from across the galaxy to make humanity like ‘him’? Will Superman ever know peace? Will Superman ever know happiness? In terms of athanasia and timelessness, I believe that the history of Superman to date always leaves the reader’s consumption of both character and plot perpetually incomplete, unsatisfactory, and in delay.

TRAGEDY, HUNGER, & CONSUMPTION

The lack of any conclusive dramatic resolution in the Superman mythos is what makes the character so tragic. By tragic I mean that the combination of Superman’s power and Otherness provide a potent opportunity for diegetic humanity to revalue

itself on a metaphysical and evolutionary level, but always-already exist within a narrative that simultaneously prohibits all potentiality Superman intimates. Eco’s understanding of tragedy is decidedly Aristotelian, stating that “a tragic plot...involves the character in a series of events, reversals, recognitions, pitiful and terrifying cases that culminate in a catastrophe” (Eco 15). However, if one thinks of Shakespeare’s tragedies, *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Othello* and *Macbeth*, the respective protagonists of these narratives find themselves invariably entangled in situations, occurrences, and actions which propel them toward the certainty of a tragic conclusion namely, their own deaths. Regardless of the power of their rank and station in each instance – emperor, general, king, and prince – its cannot allay or defer the catastrophic destiny which their actions lead them toward. Tragedy, therefore, is also predicated on the irreversibility of a catastrophic conclusion which cannot be delayed by the protagonist, despite the power he or she commands. In this sense, Superman and the character’s history suggest that even the god-like power of a superbeing is tragic in nature. Due to the formal aspects of the narrative structure within which it occurs, neither its power nor its being can be completely consumed in any act, tragic or otherwise. In this way, the narrative structure Superman finds itself entangled in resembles that of Hamlet. In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare illustrates all attempts by the protagonist to delay the inevitability of the tragic act that will totally consume him and bring his narrative to the resolution of a conclusion, which in Hamlet’s case, is the murder of Claudius. Superman’s entire existence and power are always-already delayed by the narrative structure, tropes, conventions, and serialized nature of the superhero comic. This phenomena is certainly also true of large scale narrative shifts that affect Superman and its history. For example, retroactive continuities (rectons) and reboots

in the DC comics Multiverse in such monumental events as *Crisis on Infinite Earths* (1985), *Infinite Crisis* (2005-2006), *Flashpoint* (2011), and *The New 52* (2011-2016) would all suggest that Superman's narrative has in some way come to an end. But what has actually occurred are changes made that will affect how Superman's narratives are produced, reproduced, and consumed. As such, the infinitely inconclusive and infinitely reproducible or regenerative aspects of the history of Superman suggests that something as definitive as the death of Superman has hitherto invariably had to be delayed, the object of some distant future, or imaginary. What is at stake here? The answer is as paradoxical as it is dis-empowering: Superman can neither save nor destroy the a diegetic world because Superman exists in worlds driven by a continuous albeit circuitous narrative structure. The series of actions and events Superman affects are paradoxically dis-affected by the very circuitousness of the continuity they propel. In this sense, with the possibility of definitive affectivity and the repercussions therefrom called into question by the very structure in which such utopian/dystopian possibilities emerge, the circuitousness of Superman's narrative's continuity becomes an end in itself and must be maintained *ad infinitum*. Because of this, one is invited to entertain a nihilistic reading of Superman and ask, "well, what does Superman's power mean if it is unable to decisively affect the fundamental conditions of its world(s)? Can Superman really change, save, or destroy anything? Can Superman actually bring something truly new into its world(s)? Why does Superman even act, or act in the invariably moralistic way it does if its actions can be reduced to naught by reboots and retcons?"

I view of these questions, it would then seem that there is nothing left to do except

to put Superman to the test of several obstacles which are intriguing because they are unforeseen but which are, however, surmountable by the hero. In that case two effects are obtained. First of all, the reader is struck by the strangeness of the obstacles – diabolically conceived inventions, curiously equipped apparitions from outer space, machines that can transmit one through time, teratological results of new experiments, the cunning of evil scientists to overwhelm Superman with kryptonite, the hero's struggles with creatures endowed with powers equal to his, such as Mxyzptlk, the gnome, who comes from the fifth dimension and who can be countered only if Superman manages to make him pronounce his own name backwards (Kltpzyxm); etc. Second thanks to the hero's unquestionable superiority, the crisis is rapidly resolved and the account is maintained within the bounds of the short story. (Eco 16)

With regard to strangeness, consider the epigraph to this section. It is taken from Grant Morrison's 1998 limited series *DC One Million*, illustrated by Val Semeikis. This story follows the Justice League of America from the twentieth century's co-operation with the Justice League of the eight hundred and fifty third century in order to defeat the immortal supervillain Vandal Savage (who exists in both temporalities and all those between) and Superman Prime's (the original Superman) future nemesis Solaris, the Tyrant Sun. Through the four part event, Morrison hyper-extends the reader's gaze, allowing one to read through and across time, to stare into the sun as it were. What one sees at the conclusion of this narrative is Superman's resurrection of Lois Lane in which she is conferred superpowers and immortality like Superman. The text 'concludes' with the tacit suggestion that the pair will live together, happily, and forever. This text, like

Morrison's 2005 *All-Star Superman* (hereon *All-Star*) and Alan Moore's 1986 *Superman: What Happened to the Man of Tomorrow?* (hereon *Man of Tomorrow?*) are attempts at 'closing the loop', so to speak. Morrison 'rewards' Superman for the character's centuries of service by presenting a distant, almost unimaginable future in which, through the impossible techno-mystical apparatuses of the future, Superman is able to have what it truly desires namely, an eternity with Lois Lane. This conclusion is pre-empted in Morrison's future work *All-Star Superman*. At the conclusion of *All-Star*, Superman, dying under the adverse effects to hyper exposure to solar radiation at the hands of Dr. Quantum/Lex Luthor, finds out that its body is transforming, becoming, or converting itself into a solar radio-consciousness. The character's last act against Lex Luthor and Solaris, the Tyrant Sun from the 853rd century, who have tampered with the Sun, making it unstable, Superman flies into the sun and repairs it with the massive amounts of energy emanating from its hyper-charged body, effectively 'sacrificing' itself for the planet. Despite the formal prohibitions acting against the definitive end of Superman's narrative, Morrison's dual 'conclusion' in both *DC One Million* and *All-Star Superman* evokes the Romanticism of the Liebestod, whereby Superman's noble quest and its tragic 'conclusion' attempts to situate Superman and Louis Lane within the same tradition as Tristan and Isolde, Pyramus and Thisbe, Romeo and Juliet, Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai (or 'the Butterfly Lovers'), Layla and Majnun, and Popocatepetl and Iztaccihautl.

Moore is seemingly more severe. Moore's *Man of Tomorrow?* serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it is a means for Moore to pay homage to Superman's near century long history. Secondly, acting against his typical revisionist narratological style, Moore uses this story to

attempt to conclude or 'retire' Superman's narrative. The story unfolds through a framed narrative set a decade after the last sighting of Superman. The story is told primarily from Lois Lane's retrospective perspective where she recounts the conclusion of Superman's "career" to a journalist from the Daily Planet. In her account, Superman comes up against its most tenacious enemy, the fifth dimensional being named Mxyzptlk. In this, their final encounter according to Moore, Superman is left with no choice but to trap Mxyzptlk between its own dimension and the Phantom Zone, essentially trapping it between dimensions and tearing or ripping it apart. Being struck with the significance of breaking its one inviolable rule that forbids it, under any circumstances, to kill, Superman steps into a chamber in the Fortress of Solitude containing Gold Kryptonite. Gold Kryptonite affects a Kryptonian on an earth by permanently stripping them of their powers. After Superman's confrontation and extreme act of penance, the character disappears into the Arctic wasteland, never to be seen again. Its body is never recovered, leaving its colleagues and lover to assume that it had completed a ritual suicide through which it had, much like the Creature/Adam in Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*, removed to the Arctic wasteland, de-powered, to die. In Moore's hands, Superman's continual existence and its adamant adherence to prescriptive and out-dated moral and ethical codes is treated in such a way as to suggest that keeping Superman embroiled in its purgatorial never-ending-battle is a continuous act of cruelty. Moore's story, diligently and with respect, imagines a definitive end for Superman and the tragedy of its circuitousness much in the same way one puts down an ailing pet. The end of the comic reveals that when Lois states that she never saw Superman again, she is referring to the character's supra-human *Otherness* and *power* and the pro-global civic-minded use of that power through the 'Superman' persona, one

of three alongside 'Clark Kent' and 'Kal-El'. The comic concludes with the revelation that Jordan Elliot, the working-class suburban mechanic husband of Lois Lane, is in fact the now de-powered Superman. In this sense, by eradicating the character's birthright of uncanniness, Otherness, and power, Moore allows Superman to have what it is that it wants most, a life and child with Lois Lane. In essence, the conclusions of Morrison and Moores' respective narratives are identical. Where they differ is the question of what becomes of Superman's power. Through *DC One Million* and *All-Star*, Morrison suggests that the perpetuity of Superman's existence is an essential byproduct of its power. As such, the only way for the character to be happy, that is, to be with Lois Lane, while empowered is for her to become empowered in turn. Moore's narrative acquiesces to anthropic models of Western, post-industrial happiness in a way that suggests that power and happiness are dialectically opposed and that Superman is always-already trapped at the simultaneous apex and nadir of these two antipodes.

Though it is true that Superman's narrative arcs can be 'complete' stories in themselves, they do not resolve or consume the character in question. They do not resolve the character's narrative but rather keep it enmeshed in the circularity of the following narratological equation: Earth/human being->threat->intervention of Superman and its power->threat overcome->temporary resolution->repeat. It is here that a nihilistic reading of Superman becomes problematic. Though Superman is enmeshed in a seemingly non-progressive narrative structure, the character does act. As such, once the trail set upon Superman is overcome, at the conclusion of the arc or story interval, "Superman has still *accomplished something*" and as such, it "has taken a step toward death, [it] has gotten

older, if only by an hour; [its] storehouse of personal experiences has irreversibly enlarged" (Eco 16). In this sense, to act, for Superman, Othello, Caesar, Macbeth, Hamlet, you, or me means to consume oneself.

ON CONSUMPTION

Superman finds itself in a difficult onto-existential and narrotological position. The character must be kept from consuming itself totally, whether through a series of events or a single eschatonic, utopian, dystopian Event. It must, like hero figures of classical and messianic mytho-religion and folklore, remain 'inconsumable'. The hero figures of classical and messianic mytho-religion and folklore became incosumable precisely because they "were already 'consumed' in some exemplary action. Or else [they] had the possibility of a continuing rebirth or of symbolizing some vegetative cycle – or at least a certain circularity of events of even of life itself" (Eco 16). One need only think of regenerative figures of myth and religion and myth, such as Quetzalcoatl, Dionysus, Barbarika, Prometheus, Osiris, Baldr, Meng Po, Heitsi-Eibib, or Jesus to see that whilst Superman is genealogically associated with these and other figures of myth and religion, the character is also immersed in the quotidian aspects of human being; through the aesthetic onto-existential apparatus known as 'Clark Kent', the character apes an 'ordinary man's life' and as such is entrenched in the sociopolitics, culture, and historical movement of the everyday. The suppression or stagnation of the utopian potential of the character's power and Otherness is predicated on the narrative structure that ultimately turns a superbeing into a man. As such, Superman, the so-called 'Man of Tomorrow', is trapped in an endless *today*, to the inalienably human concern for the conditions of life

and death. The character's latent promise of a resplendent future is reduced invariably to the circuitous trials of a perpetual present. What is at stake here? What are we to make of this inconclusiveness? On the one hand, we can declare, as Eco does, that "an immortal Superman would no longer be a man, but a god, and the public's identification with [its] double identity would fall by the wayside" (Eco 16). On the other hand, I believe that Superman is, in the last instance, more god than man and yet neither. Identification with Superman through 'Clark Kent', being only one of three aesthetic onto-existential personae worn by the character, is neither reliable nor enough to contain the power Superman possesses. Where does this leave the character in question? Though Superman's presence on an earth, a diegetic representation of First Contact or the coming of the Other more broadly, is itself in many ways a utopian moment that catalyses the necessary revaluation of human being, the character remains a purgatorial figure, vibrating in a quotidian middle, a beast of burden, on the the axiom of changing a world in a definitive and spectacular way. As such, Superman "must remain 'inconsumable' and at the same time be 'consumed' according to the way of everyday life. [It] possess the characteristics of timeless myth, but is accepted only because [its] activities take place in our human and everyday world and time" (Eco 16).

DAILY PLANET: TIME AND TIMELESSNESS

The consideration of the condition of human being and all the phenomena encountered therein is invariably subtended by time. The narrative structure that, in many ways, grounds Superman's existence simultaneously delays time, temporal progression,

and the metaphysical association between cause, effect, and the time in which both occur. In short, "in Superman it is the concept of time that breaks down. The very structure of time falls apart, not in the temporal sphere *about which it is told*, but rather, in the time *in which it is told*" (Eco 17). In Alex Ross and Paul Dini's *Superman: Peace On Earth* (1998), Superman sets itself to the task of fighting world hunger for one day. This monumental task, undertaken within the narrative frame of twenty-four hours, ultimately results in Superman failing in its task at which point this story ends. This story, with its elemental theme of Superman battling both for and against the human condition, namely the oppressive circuitousness of hunger, does not take place in the contingent diegetic reality, pocket dimension, microverse, or divergent timeline of an Elseworlds story for example, nor is the narrative cannon either. This is a story about a being attempting to use its power to affect perhaps the fundamental aspect of human being itself, namely the essential need to survive, to continue somewhere and sometime else. But what is the value of a story as important in its symbolic value as this, which reduces Superman and its relationship to human being to a fundamental level (the power to survive) that takes place outside of the various tributaries that form the chronotope of the DC Comics hyperdiegesis? In a way, *Peace On Earth* is subject to what must inevitably occur under the nature of the narrative structure Superman exists in. That is, after this or any Superman story concludes,

in the same book, or in the edition of the following week, a new story begins. If it took Superman up again at the point where [it] left off, [it] would have taken a step toward death. On the other hand, to begin a story without showing that another had preceded it would manage, momentarily, to

remove Superman from the law that leads from life to death through time.

(Eco 17)

The outcome of this temporal disjointedness that, as long as the character's narrative exists, delays the exhaustion of Superman's power in some definitive act(s), is a sort of onerous, amnesiac atmosphere; it seems to facilitate a penetrating kind of forgetting in both the reader and Superman himself: a forgetting that takes as its object what this chapter claims is always-already at stake when Superman is considered, namely the power to affect a change in being on an earth.

As mentioned above, the various dystopian/utopian repercussions of Superman's existence are typically explored elsewhere. Elseworlds stories act as narrative heterotopias wherein which Superman's onto-existential disruptivity may be explored, without disrupting the circular cannon from which the character emerged in the first place. Eco calls this an original solution, but it does not so much solve as it does delay. Eco sites the example of Superman's marriage to Lois Lane as a wish fulfilled through the subjunctive mood of the Elseworld narrative. Though it is true that the marriage of Lois and Clark/Superman are, in the main continuity of Earth-One, typically either hoaxes, dreams, or imaginary tales as Eco says, there are two notable examples that must be mentioned. *Action Comics* No. 484 (1978) entitled "Superman Takes a Wife" and the cross-media event *Superman: The Wedding Album* (1996) both depict the actual marriage of Superman and Lois Lane. The first of the two aforementioned marriage narratives occurs in the Earth-Two continuity and, as such, can be viewed as non-canonical. The second takes place in Earth-One continuity and coincides with the television series *Lois & Clark: The*

New Adventures of Superman (1993-1997) episode entitled "Swear To God, This Time We're Not Kidding" appearing in season four, also depicting the marriage of Lois and Clark/Superman. This event remained canonical up until the DCU reboot event entitled *Flashpoint* (2011). Understandably Eco, having written his essay in the spring of 1972, years before both marriages, would have only hoaxes, dreams, and hypothetical 'what if' scenarios as references. The fact that these marriages take place in tributary timelines or have been reduced to non-canonicity by universal rebooting actually helps illustrate why Superman cannot consume itself or die. This is because the marriage of Superman, to anyone, would signal an event that would produce an irreversible movement toward Superman's death. To be consumed, to give itself, ritually, legally, and symbolically to another being in any kind of exclusive way would be an irreversible act of consumption, latent within which is an irreversible conclusivity, ending, or resolution which would rupture the circuitousness of the character's mythos. As such, such a scenario can only be explored safely, meaning that any definitive event or act that would result in a movement toward the consumption of the character in question must remain essentially hypothetical, or imaginary. In this sense, marriage, death, and exile are all consumptive acts that would firstly be inimical with Superman's civic consciousness and secondly, would result in Superman's power being consumed illegitimately, that is, not in the pursuit of truth and justice for all. Inherent in the narrative structure of Superman that prevents this kind of consumption is a type of chastity and Platonism with regard to the character's affections toward Lois Lane, for example. The consummation of the character's desires as such must always-already be momentary or indefinitely delayed despite its power or will to reify said desires. The number of imaginary tales, Elseworld stories and general non-canonical

narratives that in some way reward or end Superman's narrative are numerous. They serve to satisfy the reader's desire to experience what would happen if Superman actually did this or that, if Superman were to experience a myriad of phenomena that the character's canonical narrative structure forbids. What results is that this "massive bombardment of events which are no longer tied together by any strand of logic, whose interaction is ruled no longer by any necessity [and as such,] the reader [stands to lose] the notion of temporal progression" (Eco 18).

What is at stake in the idea of the necessary prevention of consumption or death through the device of a continuous, albeit immobile, present? One answer is that the reader becomes accustomed to the notion of events occurring in a circuitous present whereby the necessary temporal constituent that dictates them is effaced. Inherent in this loss of temporal sensitivity for Superman is the existence of any kind freedom of will and the irreducible delay of the dualistic potential for dystopia/ utopia of the character's power. This fact only exacerbates the terminal displacement and tragic nature of the character. Because of its power, Superman is unable to live what one could consider to be a full life both as an Earthling or as a Kryptonian. Whilst on an earth substantiated by the narratological rules of canonicity, having a wife, children, or anything resembling a normal human life means death. Superman thinks like a human and therefore desires what human beings desire. Despite having the power to re-create what it means to be on an earth, to produce alternative ways of being, the character has no alternative to being on an earth: Krypton no longer exists, it cannot have a Kryptonian life either. The character's existence is one of irresolvable crisis whereby it is always-already extraordinary,

but its superlative nature is governed by a relentless framework that makes it ordinary, leaving it stunted as a man and feeble as a god.

As a result, Superman is trapped in a narrative situation that necessarily produces an irresolvable existential crisis. The character can neither succeed in its task of solving a fundamental problem of human being for to do so would be to totally consume it and produce an irreversible utopian situation in which the world would no longer have any need of Superman. Nor can Superman abandon its task entirely as shown in the final pages of Moore's *Man of Tomorrow* and Morrison's *All-Star*, either through exile, de-powering, or death. In this sense, Superman's very existence within the diegetic frameworks of the DC Comics Multiverse forbids the poignancy and catharsis of either outcomes. Though the character has the power to interrupt and revalue being on an earth in a direct manner, Superman's mission of saving or changing the world must inevitably, *necessarily* always-already fail. The character must therefore remain the 'man' who has everything and nothing at once, a being that is everything and nothing at once, a creature of potent impotence, a beast of burden playing at a humility and a manhood that simply do not and cannot exist for it. In this sense, to wish death upon Superman begins to appear like mercy. Whether one views Superman as a invading one-being army, or a guardian or redeemer of human being, in the last instance, one has to decide what value these stories that occur elsewhere, in terms of space, time, and canonicity, have. One has to reconcile the paradoxically purgatorial nature of the character in question and the necessity of this nature dictated by the narrative structure within which it occurs.

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HUNGER

I hold your language in my pocket,
she wears your feathers in her hair;
their feet on your land –

our feet on your land.

No(w)where do we go?

green card and
black snake with
white skin on
red path but

it's not like I know

anything.

The Windigo devours –your people –my people.

He digests the wind

and leaves us with no colors.

Only snow.

—Léna Remy-Kovach



Winter Eventide

Sue Matheson

THE MACROECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY OF EDUCATION TOURISM TO BRITAIN'S ECONOMY, 1985 – 2015

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INTRODUCTION

The replacement of industrial revolution with finance and services industry, especially in the present twenty-first century, saw the bulk of Britain's economy becoming dependent on services by 2012. Services produced a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita that placed it third among the world's ten largest economies. The viable education tourism, a branch in a subset of the Visitor economy, is gradually becoming a global competitive market. International education assumed global importance when students' number from 1.3 million in 1990 increased to 4.3 million in 2011–12. By extrication, the contribution of international students to macroeconomic activity and export earnings, claim an impressive percentage of the billions generated from education in 2011–2012 and 18% of jobs created; aside from knock-on effect. Unfortunately, this practicable vehicle of economic growth is victimised by UK's domestic policies and the politicisation of immigration rules. In a mercantilist approach, the UK resorted to antiquated methods

in dealing with education tourists especially from 2012. Focusing on university education and emphasising on international students, this paper, in four parts, examines the macroeconomic sustainability of education tourism to Britain's economy, 1985–2015. The first part outlines the itinerary of education tourism, the second discusses its impacts, the third part examines its viability, and the fourth discusses threats to viability before concluding.¹

ITINERARY OF EDUCATION TOURISM

The definition of 'Education Tourism' (ET) incorporating all kinds of educational exporting activities, is adopted from the report on: "The Value of Transnational Education (TNE) to the UK" commissioned by Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). TNE or ET is defined as 'award or credit-bearing higher education learning undertaken by students based in a different country from that of the awarding institution.' As an industry, Higher Education (HE) is defined as the universities together with the expenditure of its staff, international students and international visitors. HE is undertaken by universities, further education colleges, private institutions classified as non-profit institutions, and approximately 700 alternative education providers, representing a significant sector of the national economy. Ceballos-Lascurain explained that the large market share of UK in ET is determined by the combination of "market forces and exogenous variables". These are: quality education, better job opportunities, higher standard of living, and availability of research funding, infrastructure, vibrant educational sector, career enhancement, choice

1. Trevelyan, George Macaulay O.M. *British in the Nineteenth Century and After (1782 – 1919)*, 2nd ed., 1, 4, 5, 9, 10 and 15. London: Longmans, 1960; See also, *Supporting international education in the UK*. UK: ExEdUK, 2016. [http:// ExEd_Parthenon-EY_Supporting_International_Education_062016_WEB.pdf](http://ExEd_Parthenon-EY_Supporting_International_Education_062016_WEB.pdf); Tourism Definitions. London: The Tourism Society, 2012; <http://www.tourismsociety.org/page/88/tourism-definitions.htm>; Mary M Kritz, "Why do students study abroad?" *University World News(UK)*, July 1, 2016, Issue No:420. <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20160630213709566>.

placements, practicality, and networking. Others are: teaching methodology, diversity, good learning environment, immigration rules, international accreditation and vibrant marketing of liaisons and agents facilitating Admission and Visa procedure. Basically, for internationals, major attractions are: growing middle-class, sudden changes in currency, positive policy changes, and personal motivation, opportunity to learn English as a major language, and transport system.² Periodisation starts at 1985 when Nigeria was UK's highest registered African migrants in ET, while the 2015 end date is determined by the introduction of NHS payment.

The British pedagogic experience is founded on a progression through a wide range of study opportunities in institutions. Teaching approach focuses on "disciplines, critical engagement and expertise right from the undergraduate level to the postgraduate". Academic pyramid in the UK include: Pre-preps, Prep schools, High Schools, Sixth Form Colleges, Further Education, HE, Professional Training and Education Publishing. The UK uses one educational systems and policies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and another in Scotland. In 2013, to solve the controversies that trailed the Robbins Report of 1963, UK took on different policies on HE. Therefore, Wales and Northern Ireland operated variants of England's Teaching Excellence Framework (Tef) plan and a new tuition fee system; while Scotland continues to support undergraduate tuition through

the public sector. This study is concerned with the HE Sector provided by universities,

2. "International student statistics: UK higher education," Last modified 08/04/2016, accessed 16/07/2016, <http://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk//info-for-universities-colleges--schools/policy-research--statistics/research--statistics/international-students-in-uk-he/#>; See also, Tom Kennedy, "UK Tourism facts and figures," 20/06/2011. Accessed 04/07/2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/environment/tourism/8587231/UK-Tourism-facts-and-figures.html>; "Educational systems of the UK and the USA", n.d. accessed 14/07/2016, http://skola.amoskadan.cz/s_aj/AJpdf/aepdf/ae04.pdf; Adesulu, Dayo. "Why Nigerian students patronise foreign schools." *Vanguard (Lagos)*, October 22, 2015. <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/10/why-nigerian-students-patronise-foreign-schools/>; Jobbins, David. "New diversity index helps find multinational campuses" *University World News(UK)*, July 13, 2016, Issue No:422. <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20160712170543350>; Ceballos-Lascurain Héctor, (1996) "Tourism, ecotourism, and protected areas," <https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/html/tourism/section4.html>; DOI: 10.2305/IUCN.CH.1996.7.en.

liberal arts colleges in taught and research categories and other institutions that award academic degrees. It includes professional education, such as law and medicine, but excludes vocational learning. This limit is factored on the absence of data on other levels of study with registered foreign students, especially in independent colleges. Again, most international students in the UK especially Africans at 34, 160 in 2012/13, registered for postgraduate level study at degree-awarding public and private universities.³ Reliability has constrained data used to trusted agencies such as the BIS, the British Council, HESA; the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Universities UK.

Applicants, after demonstrating funding and written evidence of English language, access the UK educational system through a Confirmation of Acceptance to Study CAS), issued by the sponsor-educational establishment. Degree study for international students then starts with the necessary foundation courses or pathway programmes in related field and English as Foreign Language (EFL) to bridge the advanced level part of the General Certificate of Education (GCE), lacking in many countries outside the UK. Another route is the UK Advanced Level (AL) a part of the GCE, and school leaving qualification administered by the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) exported to many Commonwealth countries. In countries, such as Brunei, India, Nigeria, Malaysia,

3. "International student statistics: UK higher education." UKCISA. n.d. <http://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk//info-for-universities-colleges--schools/policy-research--statistics/research--statistics/international-students-in-uk-he/#>: See also, Educational systems of the UK and the USA; The impact of universities on the UK economy. UK: Universities UK, 2014. <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2014/the-impact-of-universities-on-the-uk-economy.pdf>; Boxall, Mike. "Higher education white paper: the big changes." *The Guardian*, May 16, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2016/may/16/higher-education-white-paper-the-big-changes>; Liam Byrne: "We need to put higher education at centre stage of policy," *the Guardian* (UK), <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2014/aug/28/liam-byrne-higher-education-policy-reforms>; Supporting International Education in the UK; HESA: University EU research funding, HESA: Student Record 2012/13, <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c12051/pdf/c12051.pdf>. <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/international-and-eu-students>; Ceballos-Lascuráin Héctor.

Pakistan, Seychelles, and Sri Lanka; it is written usually through British international schools; and select foreign and international centres for private candidates. In Mauritius and Singapore, the AL is jointly administered by national ministry of education and the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, (UCLES). New international postgraduate students on study in the UK have designed support system such as pre-Masters to block any academic inadequacies through an academic curriculum. Again, there are exchange programmes involving direct study programmes specially arranged by schools, colleges, universities and experienced study abroad operators for international students on short-term students' visa.⁴

The pathways are English medium programmes. This enables the English language sector to maintain flow of students, netting £23.3 billion in revenue before policy shift in 2012–2013. EFL teaches English at 479 centres, for at most 12 months; as the 208 publicly funded Further Education colleges teach international students on courses of 6 months or longer. In addition, there are: privately owned Pathway Colleges for preparatory courses to transit to first degree or postgraduate study. The Independent Higher Education Colleges on non-public funding, teach for creative or vocation-focused subjects in a smaller study environment. In its data, English UK revealed that visa restrictions, especially the fact that EFL students are excluded from net migration count is responsible for many EFL students' showing preference for shorter courses of 11 months. A BIS research paper also showed reductions in enrolment visa to independent colleges and further education colleges. From 53,000 studying at independent colleges in 2010/11, it was estimated that 57% less of international students or 22,790 applied. By

4. "International students and net migration - Why students should be counted as net migrants." Migration Watch UK. July 1, 2012. <http://www.migrationwatchuk.org/briefing-paper/265>; See also, GCE_Advanced_Level, EY_Supporting_International_Education_062016_WEB.pdf; Dayo Adesulu, "Why Nigerian students..."

2013/14, visa statistics stated a loss of 72% or fewer than 15,000 international students studying at independent colleges. Further Education colleges recorded a reduction in the application to enrolment visa between 2011 and 2013, from 78% to 69%, representing 65,000 fewer visa applications in these categories than in 2011.⁵

Educational journeys filled with transitions in form of one study to another, or from study to work experience opportunities, was eliminated in November 2015 by the Home Office. This was preceded in 2012 by cancellation of the automatic Post Study Work (PSW). The Tier System, which is different categories of student visas, was introduced in 2008 under the Point-Based System. Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) Visa, is granted to students set on personal business and endorsed by a University, or through the UK Trade and Investment's Sirius Program²¹. The visa covers 12 months but could be extended to 24 months on positive progress. Students Tier 2 (General) allows students a period of five years to work as a skilled worker with a licensed employer if there is a guarantee of at least £20,800 – or more in salary. Reapplication is only considered based on a higher salary scale of £35,000. The Tier 4 Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) introduced in April 2013 under the University sponsorship, provides Doctorate level students with a 12-month work experience period after study leave. Tier 5 that is, Temporary Worker – Government Authorised Exchange; opened in 2008 under the sponsorship of an organisation with a licensed scheme, is for short term migrants and recognises work experience, training or research for 12 or 24 months depending on the scheme applied to. It should be noted that, none of these visas can transit to another Tier.⁶

Unfortunately, these visa regulations and government policy marred the attractiveness of

5. The impact of universities...; See also, Supporting International Education in the UK.

6. Supporting International Education in the UK.

pathways, and UK education at the postgraduate levels. Steps taken to control inflow of students seems political and anti-economic. Stipulations such as NHS payment, reduced number of working hours centred at zero for International Foundation Year (IFY) students, prove of maintenance funds; aside from ambiguous and contentious reasons advanced for visa refusal are encumbrances. Cited for this argument is the December 2012 visa-refusal incident of 100,000 students not from low-risk countries. It is stated that the system negates objectivity being almost impossible to get decisions changed even when administrative process is reviewed. Accessibility to UK education seems defeated by deliberate hurdles placed by Home Office.⁷ Interviews with Benita Ben-Akinduro and Suzan Ben-Akinduro⁸, revealed a backlash in drop of Nigerians undertaking IFY, for instance, the University of Salford had a zero registration of this category first time ever in the 2016/17 academic session.

THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION TOURISM ON UK'S ECONOMY

Globally, increase in international migrants from 2.9% to 3.1% between 1990 and 2010; and in Europe, from 6.9% to 9.5%; in what is termed 'tourism' aided the increase in education tourists. By 2012, education tourism became UK's fifth largest export in the services industry, ("UK Immigration review ordered into 'education tourism'"). Highly functional education tourism is a unit of "revenue, employment, output generator, export earner, and contributor to GDP, with additional knock-on effect." Data revealed international students contributing a remarkable percentage of the 2011–2012 £73 billion generated through education to macroeconomic activity and export earnings. In addition, nearly 20% of direct and indirect output and 18% jobs created, eased leanings

7. "International Students and Net Migration."

8. Author in interviews with Benita Ben-Akinduro and Suzan Ben-Akinduro, students at the University of Salford during their vacation in Nigeria at 6 Omololu Street Surulere, Lagos, Nigeria, July 18, 2016.

on public funding of universities. In 2014-15 HESA data on fresh international students studying in the UK showed 436,585.

International (non-UK) students in UK HE in 2014-15
International student numbers by UK nation and English regions 2014-15

Country	T o t a l international students	% of student population who are international
England	356,820	19%
Scotland	50,015	22%
Wales	24,230	18%
Northern Ireland	5,525	10%
UK	436,585	19%

Source: [HESA First Statistical Release 224 \(2014-15\)](#) [^]Table 1a and Chart 4.

Note that Total = full time, part time non-UK students

Unfortunately, education tourism was schemed in an attempt by UK's immigration to reduce net migration. A contradiction is set in the UK Government's 2015 Autumn Statement, showing the intent to increase education exports from £18 billion in 2012 to £30 billion in 2020. The reality is that the UK is crying abuse, but the international community is on track for expertise and quality education. Likewise, any abuse suffered, is outweighed by the benefits from this industry. The pendulum for this part of the work swings on the impact of ET on UK's economy.⁹

Classical ET activities produce characteristic education tourists' products that cause expansion and sustainable growth in the economy. For instance, 18.9% international

9. Mary M Kritz, "Why do students..."; See also, Chapter Two: "The UK must maximise openness to the global economy to tackle the productivity challenge." In *Britain's place in the global economy at the start of the 21st century*, http://www.cbi.org.uk/global-future/05_chapter02.html.

students' STEM preference in 2014–15, has encouraged the introduction of such courses and formation of new universities. These in turn led to development of new sites, infrastructure, policing and maintenance, region-specific characteristic goods and so on. Therefore, the 23 Alliance Universities established to commercialise education, are driving businesses, creating more jobs and adding more to GDP. Forming clusters, these universities open up areas for investment and specialisation, turning around to improve and increase urbanisation; serving as push-factor to status mobility. The growing middle class, in turn has a spiral effect on increased demand for infrastructure, banking, and health insurance. Overall, momentum is built for the UK's finance and services industries. Increasingly, the ET as sources of income became a diversifier of dependence on the public sector, as students finance teaching resource by £9,000. English HEIs alone sprang from below £23 billion in 2010 – 2011 to increase to almost £24.3 billion in 2012–2013. Consequently, the revenue resource generated from high tuition paid by internationals funded 30,000 additional places created for home students in 2014–2015 academic session especially applicants to high cost STEM. HESA's survey on HE business and community interaction revealed that universities in 2012–2013 earned £1.2 billion in business research contracts. Likewise, universities in consultancy and CPD extending to courses on regeneration programmes and rental services gained another £1.5 billion; totalling £3.6 billion.¹⁰

Key to the sustainability of any economy is stability, offered by education tourism as it drives long term growth. HEIs are motivating powerhouses for socio-economic growth;

10. "International Student Statistics..."; See also, "Educational systems of the UK and the USA"; David Willetts, "Contribution of UK universities to national and local economic growth," gov.uk April 04 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/contribution-of-uk-universities-to-national-and-local-economic-growth>; Chapter Two: "The UK must..."; The impact of universities...; "Number of Nigerians studying in UK will nearly double by 2015." ICEF Monitor. Last modified April 2, 2012. <http://monitor.icef.com/2012/04/number-of-nigerians-studying-in-uk-will-nearly-double-by-2015/>.

it does not contract in recession unlike other sectors, nor susceptible to fluctuations and sharp declines. Higher education industry demonstrated effectiveness in generating GDP per capita. Analysis of the revenue base shows that universities remains the largest single source of funding for public services, earned from private and international sources. In 2011–2012, HE in UK contributed 2.8% in GDP of industry output, up from the 2.3% in 2007–08. This shows greater proportion of GDP from UK higher education sector tending to promote macroeconomic stability. Moreover, it has measurable income compared with the core tourism sector. Also, full-time equivalent jobs created were more than 750,000, at such a period of recession, or around 2.7% for 2011 UK employment. Subsequently, HEIs became a vital part of the government's long term economic plan to build a more resilient economy and create jobs. By this, Britain introduced changes through some programmes and tax system to help expand businesses and create jobs for students, graduates and parents. Consequently, in 2014–2015 academic sessions, student placement was increased by 30,000, so that successful institutions can expand and grow further. Consequently, in 2015–2016, the cap on indigenous student enrolment was removed to accommodate about 60,000 applicants denied admission in every academic year. This was towards the commitment to generate 2 million apprenticeships.¹¹

Education tourism helps in redefining the society accommodating large employment, social mobility and status change. Employment generated cuts across occupations and range of skills—the highly skilled, the non-academic professionals, non-academic staff and most time the outsourced auxiliary staff such as cleaners. The different categories of employees help the attempt at 'redistributing opportunity' within the UK economy, considerably reducing social exclusion. For instance, literacy is penetrating suburbs

11. David Willetts, "Contribution of UK universities..."; See also, The impact of universities...; Hector Ceballos-Lascurain).

such as, Shrewsbury, Yeovil and East Anglia; opening the education advantage to the disadvantaged. The University of Worcester, a case in point, has succeeded in bringing the community to its campus through weekends drama workshops and its public library—the Hive. The Hive advantage in book loans has given to the disadvantaged soft skills. Status change is effected in the calibre of jobs applied to and the impetus for literacy. The March 2014 Labour Force Survey, showed that employment rates for young people with an undergraduate degree leapt from the second quarter of 2008. The statistics of young people on job search with an undergraduate degree to those with A-level is 3:2 or 60% to 50% respectively. The indication is that young people under age 20 in England's disadvantaged areas apply more than previously. In addition, the Hive's work clubs offer adult education and provides jobs. Subsequently, improved standard of living and growing middle-class with greater disposable income often lead to preference for and increased investment in better education.¹²

Education in the UK equips graduates with international perspective helping diversity. Studying in the UK is a link to a multicultural community of foreigners and the UK citizens. Higher education in the UK is a miniature of the global community, where total number of foreign students is almost 17%, and the academics and professors constitute 25%. David Jobbins "New diversity index data..." recorded the University of Westminster as the most diverse of UK universities, with 169 nationalities represented. The nationality and cultural mix on campuses often yields diversity in universities' student bodies, which collapse into the National Union of Students (NUS). Diversity is on display particularly at SOAS where as many as 30 African languages could be heard

12. The impact of universities...; See also, Helen Lock, "Six ways higher education benefits the UK economy," the Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2015/jul/09/six-ways-higher-education-benefits-the-uk-economy>; Chapter Two; David Willetts.

VIABILITY OF EDUCATION TOURISM TO UK'S ECONOMY

Increasingly, the twenty-first century era of global cross-border flows in capital and labour has boosted education tourism. In 1975, the world had less than one million mobile tertiary students, whereas in 2016, it has grown to five million, with the prospect of rising to seven million by 2020. In 2011–2012, this growing international students market had the worth of nearly £10 billion. In this era, education export gained momentum in the UK as a stable economy; attracting over 500,000 students into primary, secondary and tertiary education, and over 580,000 students learning English, yearly. Estimation by OECD showed increase in the number of enrolled international students from 6-7% in tertiary enrolment, especially by 2012. HESA showed International students comprised around 18% of those in higher education in the UK in 2013–14; were over 312,000 in 2014/15. However, Britain's close door policy to migrant scholars, from 2012, dwindle the pathway market importantly as Australia, Canada, and Germany have restructured through the PSW. It then appears a contradiction for Britain planning an increased return from the system that it abuses. This part concentrates on the viability of education tourism to the UK's economy.¹⁴

Education Tourism has become a way of life and a buoy to internal economy especially in the advanced economies. The global growth in mobile tertiary scholars climbed 4.3 million in 2011–2012 from 1.3 in 1990. In 2016 the United States ET claims 1.2 million—almost the world's number of ET in 1990. This progressive growth in number is marked by the demand for top quality higher education, willingness to study abroad, global and national competitiveness in the work environment, family affordability, population size, GDP per capita, urbanisation, inadequate supply in tertiary education

UK top 10 most diverse universities

	University	Total international student nationalities	Total international students
1	University of Westminster	169	8429
2	University of Greenwich	168	7547
3	Kingston University	156	8061
4	Open University	155	9666
5	Middlesex University	155	8604
6	King's College London, University of London	154	10088
7	University of East London	154	5564
8	City University London	152	9518
9	London Metropolitan University	151	5972
10	Brunel University London	150	6120

David Jobbins: “New diversity index helps find multinational campuses”

13 July 016 Issue No: 422

in a moment. In the HESA Student Record of 2012/13, the five African countries with the highest number of students enrolled on higher education programmes were: Nigeria – 17,395, Kenya – 2,175, Ghana – 1,980, Mauritius – 1,450, and Libya – 1,395. A further 1,395 came from Libya, 1,230 from South Africa, 1,220 from Egypt and 950 from Zimbabwe. In total, there were 34,160 African students representing 8% of all non-UK students (425,265) and 11% of all non-EU students (299,970). Cultural mix is aided especially where there is scarcity of students' own nationals as the case was in 2012/13, when 32 African countries sent fewer than 100 students to the UK. Adding to diversity through ET is football loving students choosing the UK to experience first-hand the English Premier League.¹³

13. Helen Lock, “Six ways...”; See also, Chapter Two; David Willetts; “African students in the UK.” GoStudyUK. Last modified 2009. http://www.gostudyuk.com/life.jsp?id=LIFE_africa_general; Jane Marshall, “International mobility of African students – Report Issue No:279.” University World News, July 6, 2013. <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20130705203103913>; David Jobbins; “African students in the UK.”

14. Chapter Two; See also, Supporting international education; HESA; Mary M Kritz; The impact of universities.

to demand; demand from emerging economies and an expanding middle class in places like China, India and other Global South countries. To a large extent, affordability and the recognition of education, research and innovation are responsible for growing Outbound Mobility Ratios in both high and low-risk economies in Kenya, Nigeria, and South Korea. The internationalisation of ET is responsible for decision reversals on PSW by Australia and Canada, while New Zealand introduced a multi-level study visa to boost international students' enrolment. The UK being an attractive destination receives over 300,000 migrants yearly, with yearly increase at 90,000, and an estimated 800,000 migrants by 2021. Attempt to actualise this, led to the 13 satellite campuses set up in 2016 by regional universities in London to attract high-paying foreign students. The intakes of these satellite campuses number over 8,000 in total, with each averaging 652 students, The intakes of these satellite campuses number over 8,000 in total, with each averaging 652 students.¹⁵

Education migration is the foundation to the development of UK's knowledge economy in research funding, vital research collaborations and skilled migrants. The UK universities benefit from membership of the EU in terms of valuable academic collaborations, which facilitated ground-breaking research and access to shared research facilities used to solve global problems from cancer to climate change. Such funding includes the three multi-million-pound project grants received by the University of Cambridge on vulnerability to breast and other cancers, the over €2 million received by the University of Essex and seven partners across the EU to develop intelligent wheelchairs for the aging population.

In addition, the University of Aberdeen and nine teams from different universities,
^{15.} Goodman, Paul. "The Advantages and Disadvantages of Tourism." Soapboxie. Last modified October 3, 2016. <https://soapboxie.com/economy/Advantages-and-disadvantages-of-tourism/>; See also, Mary M Kritz; Tim Ross, "Nicky Morgan orders immigration review to examine education tourism," the Telegraph (UK), August 16 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/11805477/Nicky-Morgan-orders-immigration-review-to-examine-education-tourism.html>; Supporting international education.

research centres and high-tech companies in six countries developed MRI scanners. The chain reaction is claimed to benefit the UK economy, boosts growth, creates direct and indirect job in different sectors; placing the UK as a global innovation powerhouse. It also provides irreplaceable networks and frameworks enabling UK researchers a genuine impact on society by pursuing breakthroughs, discoveries and inventions. Again, skilled migrants from UK's education economy could rescue the country from increased global competitiveness by developing new markets. For instance, the AVF Group in UK employs based on language skills in French, Spanish and German, to access new markets and opportunities. Languages, is part of the challenge to British business denying it from developing a new product mix in China and India. This clog could be removed employing the hands trained within Britain.¹⁶

Education tourism aids securities in its primary capacity to develop. There is sustainable development in town planning for instance. New universities like Lincoln University opened in 1996, revived the town and infrastructures such as its abandoned railway land. Consequently, the greenhouse is encouraged in buildings, transport and business schemes. The university has doubled the size of the local economy, and created 3,000 new jobs. Integration developed between schools and businesses to feed engineering firms, creates synergy between schools, universities, industries, students and employers, in a work and study palliative to student's debt. Employment-for-enrolment became the criterion for admission at Warwick and Jaguar Land Rover; Sheffield University and Rolls. The 12,240 collaborative research projects between universities and businesses; including 368 in the arts and humanities; and 6,260 in engineering to the worth of over £3.5bn built UK's global ranking. Such expansions promote job securities removing

^{16.} HESA; See also, Chapter Two; Helen Lock, "Six ways..."

seasonal income dependency for local economy in Salford-Manchester. ET's openness to movements of people, secures UK's global role and benefits, especially when Europe would have only 26 per cent of the 35 per cent spaces of skilled workers needed by 2020. There is direct economic benefit as nationals of first class economies, cross boundaries to learn in the UK becoming net contributors to public finances. The Office for Budget has emphasised migrants' importance to STEM skills projecting a fiscal drain of 181% by 2060 where there is zero net migration. HEFCE projected deficit in the sector even with 5% shortfall in income from international students.¹⁷

Education tourism is a self-developing and funding industry, earning national income and contributing to the British economy. Aside from its generating significant levels of gross output and employment; a key measure of its contribution to the national economy is to GDP. The GDP measures the net change in wealth or prosperity over a year. It appears the UK government is not evaluating the Gross value added (GVA) from ET before its immigration policy. As analysis, has shown, higher education gross value added in 2011–12 to national GDP through direct and secondary effects; and off-campus expenditure of international students and visitors of £3.5 billion, add-up to nearly £40 billion—equivalent to 2.8% of GDP in 2011. According to Universities UK Report, ET's £39.9bn or 2.8% turn over to GDP in 2011-12, is four times more than agriculture, which had 0.6%. A report equally commissioned by the National Union of Students in 2013 revealed that students boost the economy with £80 billion through

17. Chapter Two; See also, David Willetts; "What are the advantages and disadvantages of tourism." reference.com. Accessed July 2, 2016. <https://www.reference.com/world-view/advantages-disadvantages-tourism-cf69096d47d08e2b>; Liam Byrne: "We need to put higher education..."; Are international students in the UK getting a raw deal? The Guardian, April 23 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/apr/23/are-international-students-getting-a-raw-deal>; Kandiko Camille Howson, "Drop in foreign student numbers: are UK universities too complacent?", the Guardian, April 04 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2014/apr/04/drop-oreign-student-numbers-uk-universities-too-complacent>; Helen Lock; Supporting international education.

expenditure. Interestingly, the University of Birmingham generated 2.2% of local wealth at £530 million, an amount which was twice the total amount realised by the region's eight largest football clubs. Again, student cash supports 2.6% of GDP in Wales and 1.26% of GDP in Scotland.¹⁸

ET is a knock-on provider in business activities, wholesale and retail trade, and manufacturing. The Glasgow City Marketing Bureau stated that universities 'conference ambassador programmes', and Visit Manchester, secured international conferences that boomed in 2012-13. Further evidence gathered through Universities UK analysis on education trading, declared EU funding supporting 8,864 direct jobs, £836m in economic output and a contribution of nearly £577m to GDP or 14.2%. In industries outside the university sector, EU research funding to UK universities generated more than 10,190 full-time-equivalent jobs, output of **£1.02** billion and a contribution of nearly £503 million to GDP. Further, every generated 100 full-time jobs within the system generated another 117 full-time-equivalent jobs in knock-on. Another 373,794 full-time-equivalent jobs in other sectors depended on student expenditure. For every £1 million of university output a further £1.35 million of output was generated in other sectors of the economy. This meant that an additional £37.63 billion of output was generated outside the universities from student's expenditure. New figures published on 10th of June 2016 by the EU showed research funding generated over 19,000 jobs for local economy in 2011/12 or £1.86 billion for the UK economy and contributing £1 billion to GDP across the UK. By BIS calculation, the total value of education exports in 2011 was £17.5 billion; excluding off-campus expenditure of international students and visitors. Significantly, conventional activity of universities is outweighed by its knock-on

18. The impact of universities...; See also The Advantages and Disadvantages...; Helen Lock.

effects of jobs dependent on the Universities and the contribution made to Gross Value Added (GVA).¹⁹

Education tourism is viable to UK in its attempt to situate itself within a changing global economy. From early 21st century, Britain witnessed a decline in its share of trade with Europe and developed nations, which its June Brexit promises to aggravate. Disruptions to ET are anticipated in “productive collaborations, the free movement of talent, the networks, collaborations, critical mass of research activity and funding”, despite assurances. For instance, the University of Cambridge would lose around £100 million a year. The coin of Britain is building trading links with emerging economies at the same time maximising trade with established markets as an independent actor. Britain would “sell off its strength in town planning, design, architecture and infrastructure.” Britain’s strategy is maximising integration, in a system of bilateral ad hoc arrangements. The UK’s arrangement is expectation on trade and investment linking China’s new markets and investment. The UK also targets other members of the BRIC countries like India; and the MINT countries— Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey. This is to harness the projected 55% global growth for growing economies from 2012–2015, and arrest its predicted low ranking to the BRICs, MINT and Russia by 2050. Again, Britain plans to offset any BREXIT upset with promising countries such as Nigeria. The British Council and HESA recorded Nigerians spending ₦246 billion in 2010 and a total of ₦1.5 trillion in 2012, projection is Nigeria providing 241,000 postgraduate international students by

19. The impact of universities...; See also, The economic impact of higher education institutions in England. London: Universities UK, 2014. <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/economic-impact-higher-education-institutions-in-england.aspx>; Supporting international education; “How much value do international students add to the UK economy?” Full Fact. August 31, 2012. <https://fullfact.org/immigration/how-much-value-do-international-students-add-uk-economy/>; Peter Scott, “Immigrants, UK universities need you,” the Guardian (UK), November 04 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/nov/04/uk-universities-need-immigrants>; Are international students...; Howson, Drop in foreign student...

2024. Unfortunately, Nigeria has foreign exchange dilemma that worsened since 2016.²⁰

Education tourism is an avenue to build lucrative market and soft power base. In 2012, the ISC puts the contribution of international students in the independent school sector to the UK economy at £890 million, equivalent to 22,700 jobs. Again, in 2012, a study of international students in Sheffield by Oxford Economics stated the government spending £27.2 million of £147.5 million paid by 8,222 international students giving a net economic contribution of £120.3 million. The Coalition Government’s International Education Strategy acknowledged boost to the local economy, enhancing cultural life, and broadening the educational experience of the UK students.” A 2015 survey on the impact of international students listed development of a global network between individuals. International students in the university sector also attract an additional 160,000 student visitors. A more interconnected global economy and shared research activity has made international students integral to the material and intellectual property of UK and its institutions. The presence of non-UK students keeps alive STEM courses, and are strong contributors to highly cited publications in the UK. UKip identifies the high skill of immigrants from outside Europe as the brainpower in UK knowledge base. Competitors are set to explore this soft skill through visa policies that emphasise on transitions. Restrictive student visa policy since 2011 and prohibition of PSW in

20. Chapter Two; See also, Dayo Adesulu; Claire Shaw and Rebecca Ratcliffe, “Nigerian postgrads set to outnumber Indian students in UK universities,” the Guardian, October 07 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/oct/07/-sp-nigerian-postgrads-set-to-outnumber-indian-students-in-uk-universities>; The Independent (London). “Brexit result: What does it mean for the UK’s higher education sector and students?” June 24, 2016. <http://www.independent.co.uk/student/news/eu-referendum-result-brexit-leave-remain-higher-education-sector-students-a7100106.html>; “Number of Nigerians studying in UK will nearly double by 2015.” ICEF Monitor. Last modified April 2, 2012. <http://monitor.icef.com/2012/04/number-of-nigerians-studying-in-uk-will-nearly-double-by-2015/>; The Premium Times (Nigeria). “Number of Nigerians studying in the UK triples.” 2013. <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/150542-number-nigerians-studying-uk-triples.html>; International Students and Net Migration; Clive Crook, “The Brexit question that nobody asked.” Bloomberg, August 21, 2016. <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2016-08-21/the-brexit-question-that-nobody-asked>; Tunde Fatunde, “Forex ban hits Nigerian students around the world.” University World News (UK), March 11, 2016, Issue No:404. <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20160311115230974>.

2012 have hindered utilizing soft skills unlike in Australia, Canada and the USA. USA continues leading the pack expanding provision for international STEM graduates to work after study or apply-to-stay.²¹

Since 2011, student visa restriction has countered continual growth in ET ceiling enrolment at 300,000, in comparison to Australia, Canada and the USA. Even the historical dominance in EFL and pathway programmes is being eroded by the rise of European English medium courses, with the global value at \$825 million in 2015. The 2013 BIS study on international students recorded increasing loss from 2010, causing an increased tuition and the surrender of Tier 4 licences by institutions as the regulation became too costly. Programmes like the 1999 Prime Minister's Initiative, its second phase in 2006 (PMI2) and the Dearing Committee's recognition; suggest the UK government recognised the economic benefits of overseas students to its economy. But, Britain's domestic policy made this fell flat on its face in 2012. The reasons for this are discussed in the last section of this work.²²

THREATS TO VIABILITY

Overtime, the introduction of 2008 Point Based System (PBS) appears opening the UK immigration system to abuses of bogus and illegal students, (International students and net migration). Aggravating this is the Mediterranean crisis where illegal immigrants from Europe and North Africa attempt to reach Britain's shore from the Calais Camp. Negatives associated with ET such as terrorism, culture-mix, ideological differences could shroud its' benefits. Britain, having simulated culture and the English Language into

state building finds xenophobia natural against foreign languages and strange culture of

21. "Educational systems of the UK..."; See also, Peter Scott, "Immigrants, UK universities..."; Supporting international education.

22. Supporting international education; See also, The impact of universities.

migrants from Eastern Europe. Apparently, internationalist-Britain cannot operate with racism and xenophobia in the principle of globalisation especially with the aspiration of being the global hub to HE. Other assertions include: exploitation of the UK health and benefits system, and free education in state schools, job snatching by migrants, and post-study long term residency of 2.3 million EU migrants living in UK and 611,779 non-actives. Therefore, assess to the pull factors attracting EU migrants and international students were tightened around the NHS as non-EU migrants are charged 150% cost for treatment from April 6, 2015. Others are: reduction to 50% in PSW through Tier 2 (Skilled Migration), and the habitual residence test by which EU migrants claim a right of residence and benefits. Amidst counter-allegations on abuse between Brussels and UK, and the facts that only 1% of international students have a permanent leave to remain after study; the UK is worst off from the aftermath of its control measures. It is such that decrease threatens the viability of this sector.²³

National issues beset the viability of education tourism. First politicians to a large extent are accused of not applying research findings to come up with policies. Second, UK is behind in terms of investing in education R&D, third is the facts of aging researchers and fourth is inability to recruit and retain teachers. Fifth is the gap in STEM skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The next two are: frequent policy changes such that closes university teacher training schools; and the increasing divergence within the UK on how teachers are trained. In addition, the shadow of Brexit that

casted on the campaign of equality revealed racism and xenophobia. Britain's need of EU

23. Daniel Waldron and Sanwar Ali, "Brexit Supporter Slams 'Unlimited' UK Immigration of EU Migrants." workpermit.com, June 23, 2016. <http://www.educationuk.org/global/articles/uk-study-travel-tourism-hospitality-course/>; See also, Tim Ross, "Nicky Morgan orders..."; Nicholas Watt, "David Cameron and Europe at odds over benefit tourism issue," the Guardian (UK) 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/15/david-cameron-europe-benefit-tourism>; International student statistics; "Soaring youth unemployment, no long-term jobs strategy – time for some joined-up thinking Chancellor." University Alliance UCAS (blog). n.d. Accessed July 5, 2016. <http://www.unialliance.ac.uk/blog/tag/ucas/>.

had diminished, as it did for the Commonwealth post-World War II. But, twenty-first century Britain, had acquired migrants as a legacy from its imperial past mostly from South Asia and the Commonwealth countries; and from the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent in the 1950s during its attempt at rebuilding. British stringent immigration conditions against international students and Brexit hurts UK's income and European research funding. Still, the obstruction from Ofsted's value for compliance with bureaucracy and paperwork dilutes effectiveness, and the Home Office designed rules and guidance damage the system. The modern knowledge economy is endangered by decline in STEM dominated by international students, particularly at the postgraduate level.²⁴

The argument is that blame-shift on abuse of the immigration policy is UK's responsibility since it can learn from the system of embarkation used by the United States and Australia. Britain has failed to make direct measures such as e-borders, survey evidence from the International Passenger Survey (IPS) effective for record keeping. Again, the UK's claim of migrants taking all the jobs meant for citizens is debunked by the June statistics of the Association of Graduate Recruiters, which showed an 18% increase in graduate job opportunities. A 2016 leak from the Home Office asserts that only 1% of newly created jobs are taken up by migrants. It is stated that there is no gainsaying the fact that non-EU students studying in UK universities pay a discriminatory average of £12,000 on STEM courses, and £30,000–35,000 tuition on such courses as Medicine susceptible to increase. This makes international students a higher net contributor to UK's economy

24. Claire Shaw, "Education has never mattered more, so why won't the UK invest in it properly?" the Guardian (UK), March 26, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2015/mar/26/education-has-never-mattered-more-so-why-wont-the-uk-invest-in-it-properly>; See also, Jenny Rohn "There is turmoil ahead, but UK scientists can weather the post-Brexit storm," the Guardian (UK), <https://www.theguardian.com/science/occams-corner/2016/jul/14/post-brexit-referendum-fallout-uk-scientists-weather-storm>; Are international students...; Howson, Drop in foreign student...; Supporting international education; "The British Empire was the largest empire the world has ever seen," accessed 02/05/2016, <http://www.businessinsider.com/the-10-greatest-empires-in-history-2011-9?op=1>; John Darwin, "Britain, the Commonwealth and the End of Empire;" *Last updated 03/03/2011*, accessed 02/07/2016 http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/modern/endofempire_overview_01.shtml#top.

but pushed to the zero game. Reducing the human capital at this time of global race for "high-tech economy" would automatically deny the UK benefits of pioneering the pathways and baccalaureate; and being the benchmark for quality.²⁵

Politicisation of education, led to UK exploiting learners, and treating internationals as numbers for revenue; accounting for cancellation of internships, job placements, and other opportunities. A positive balance is ignored where the UK system chose to evict students after studying in the UK without any opportunity to practice the skills acquired within the system. The helplessness of international students are exploited and abused by a system that operates the winner takes all principle. Britain is thus engaged in economic nationalism operating from the false tenets of mercantilism.²⁶ Cameron's Five-Point Plan stimulating commitment to improving the competitiveness of the UK's visa system through accessibility was defeated in the Immigration Rules of 2012.²⁷ Apparently, the Tier 2 and 5 cannot work where organisations complying with expulsion after graduation refrain from employing internationals. The misplaced preference given to prestigious universities is toppled by the 2012 higher education reforms and the entry of entrepreneurial profit providers of the 21 Alliance universities. It is shown from UCAS application figures for 2010 that Alliance universities provide STEM skills vital for shaping the new economy; since its applicants are more. The complementary £185 million invested to support the STEM delivery starting 2015/16 was sourced from internationals. Foreign education should be mutual benefit to scholars and host country but mercantilist-Britain is a short

25. International Students and Net Migration; Are international students...; Howson, Drop in foreign student...; Hassan Abdulwasiu, "Population of Nigerian students in UK trebles." The Daily Trust (Lagos), November 28, 2013. <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/general/population-of-nigerian-students-in-uk-trebles/33283.html>.

26. Laura LaHaye, "Mercantilism" (The Concise Encyclopedia Of Economics) accessed 04/07/2016, <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/Mercantilism.html>; "Mercantilism," accessed 04/07/2016.

27. Paul Colston, "Prime Minister Cameron announces 5-Point Plan for developing tourism in UK." Conference News (UK), July 17, 2015. <http://www.conference-news.co.uk/2015/07/prime-minister-cameron-announces-5-point-plan-for-developing-tourism-in-uk/>.

change to itself. The result is diversion in the global international market to new recruiters such as Spain, Russia, Korea, and Malaysia, Ghana and South Africa.²⁸

CONCLUSION

This study has thoroughly examined and established the macroeconomic sustainability of education tourism to Britain's economy. Data and research materials used have elucidated the impact and viability of education tourism to the economy of the UK especially as a sustainable industry to the national economy and within a growing global market. In addition, threats to its contributions have been identified. Notwithstanding the advantages to studying in the UK, abuses in the system have dulled market potentialities in ET. The Home Office policy and politicising education tourism have adversely affected UK's share in the international student market. Analyses have shown that any decline in number of these net migrants would cost the UK a fiscal drain. Clearly, UK's global competitors in this stream are exploiting the negative policies of UK starting 2011/12 to attract the market. Therefore, a review and improvement of the Tier system and the entire education system is essential. Already, Britain has shot itself in the foot by Brexit which would reduce opportunities in terms of EU research support. In this stream of viability, the shield for Britain's interest in its share of the global international student market remains colonial ties, a shared language, proximity and improved technologies. However, it is a foregone conclusion that international students would drift to countries of better opportunities, already attested to with the decline in 2014-16 enrolments.

28. Are international students...; See also, Howson, Drop in foreign student...; Mary M Kritz; Tim Ross; Helen Lock; Supporting international education; Aimee Oakley, "A closer look at African student mobility," Posted 19/07/2013, accessed 16/07/2016; <http://monitor.icef.com/2013/07/a-closer-look-at-african-student-mobility/>; "UCAS," accessed 05/07/2016, <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/international-and-eu-students>; Hector Ceballos-Lascurain; Peter Scott.



from
Battle for Life: A Poetic Autobiography of Zhang Yawen

translated by
**Ying Kong, University College of the North,
Thompson, Manitoba**

I must be the literary girl
Father wanted us to be noble and literary
To change his fate as a peasant
He lived off the land, face in the mud, back to the sky
Worked himself to death yet found himself penniless
He went to town to gamble, hoping
For money to feed his family
Debt collectors threatened to put him in jail
Mother sold everything to pay them

Moved to a wretched mountain ravine
Started a life worse than humble
No villagers nearby, nor debt collectors to fear
Only their ghosts around the hut
Thatched with straw and stalks from corn and sorghum

No food for hungry children
Father and brother went to the mountain
To forage for food and wood
Cultivated land to grow more food
Mother and sisters worked hard to make their hut a home
No schools in the ravine for noble and literary kids
To parents I pleaded to send me to school
Still treating me like a boy, father said
“No school nearby, son.”
As the men climbed the mountain to cut firewood and look for food
Mother and sisters gazed at the mountains and longed for their world

The desire to get down from the mountains
Impressed me and became inspiration
For my novel forty years later
A Woman Crossing the River of Men
But how could I become a writer
With no education in the ravine
None of us went to school, but I cried
“I want to go to school!”
“Wretched child of this broken family
Adults here don’t even have food
And you still want to go to a bloody school?” father scolded
“Didn’t you say nothing can be more deserving than reading?”
“Little brat, how dare you talk back to me?”

“I’ll go down the mountain to find a school.”
“I’ll break your legs if you go alone.”
That night I cried myself to sleep
Dreamed of being at school, yelling and shouting
I am at school!”

Next morning while still asleep
Father woke me with an angry look
“Get up!”
Mother asked me
“Don’t you want to go to school?
In your dreams, you even yelled
‘I’m at school’.”
In the dark we left the hut
My little legs catching up with his big strides
We walked through boundless grass
Muddy land and mountain pass
Till a village house when the sun well above our head
Wearing a tattered cotton-padded jacket
A grass root belt around his waist
A barefooted man came out to greet us
He would be my school teacher
In the one classroom school
I studied hard for one year
Because of big boys bullying

I moved to another school

My second school stood at another mountain’s foot
Fifteen kilometers round trip
To accompany me for the three-hour walk
Father got me a dog
Each morning I trotted to school with the big dog
And with him sauntered back home again
Hence my nickname Dog Girl
My body grew strong like an athlete
Before I finished primary school
At the age of fifteen I was chosen by Jiamusi city
To join in an athletic team
I was trained as a speed skater
And dreamed of becoming a master
But fate played a big joke on me
Injured in my early twenties
My dream melted away
Retired from an athletic career

As a bank clerk I was not content
Went back to a night school prepared for university
But broke out the Great Cultural Revolution
Since 1966 there was no school
From friends, I borrowed foreign literature books

Read Shakespeare, Tolstoy, and Victor Hugo...
I read them under the covers of *Mao's* books
Started writing journals and found
I loved reading, and was good at writing
In 1979 my city hosted a national hockey game
My husband, a hockey coach, encouraged me
To write a short poem
Eight Hundred Million Citizens Come to Fight for You
I tasted the sweetness of publishing
“You will write when you are retired,” he said
“Opportunity comes to those who pursue it,” I told myself
I took a writing workshop, started writing my first novel
With only five years of education I published
The Splashes of Life
At the age of thirty-five I gave in to my writing addiction
Soon found my knowledge too sparse
Words too simple, vocabulary too poor
So I burrowed deeper into books
I wrote poems, short stories, novels, and TV series
In 1980 I exchanged my clerk job
For professional editing of manuscripts
At home I wrote for my soul
My vision widened, my heart opened
Words gushed from my pen

My boss mocked me
“How could a five grader become a great writer?
An editor is good enough.
Let go of the dream to be a writer.”
I refused to listen, and went to an open university
To get rid of the “pupil” label
Persevere perspire prosper
And I would be a great writer
A creative writer at the cultural bureau
I swam with passions
I would despise evil, oppose ugliness
Stood firm in righteousness, revealed injustices
I reported blood bank corruption in a hospital
And created a sensational hit
Seeing the power of my report
The cultural bureau commissioned me to write
A positive story about the city’s notorious mayor
Many were desperate to curry favor with the mayor
But never had a chance; I refused
People laughed, called me an idiot
I laughed it off; Let me be an idiot!
Addicted to writing my passions
I kept these basic principles
To write diligently
To live cleanly

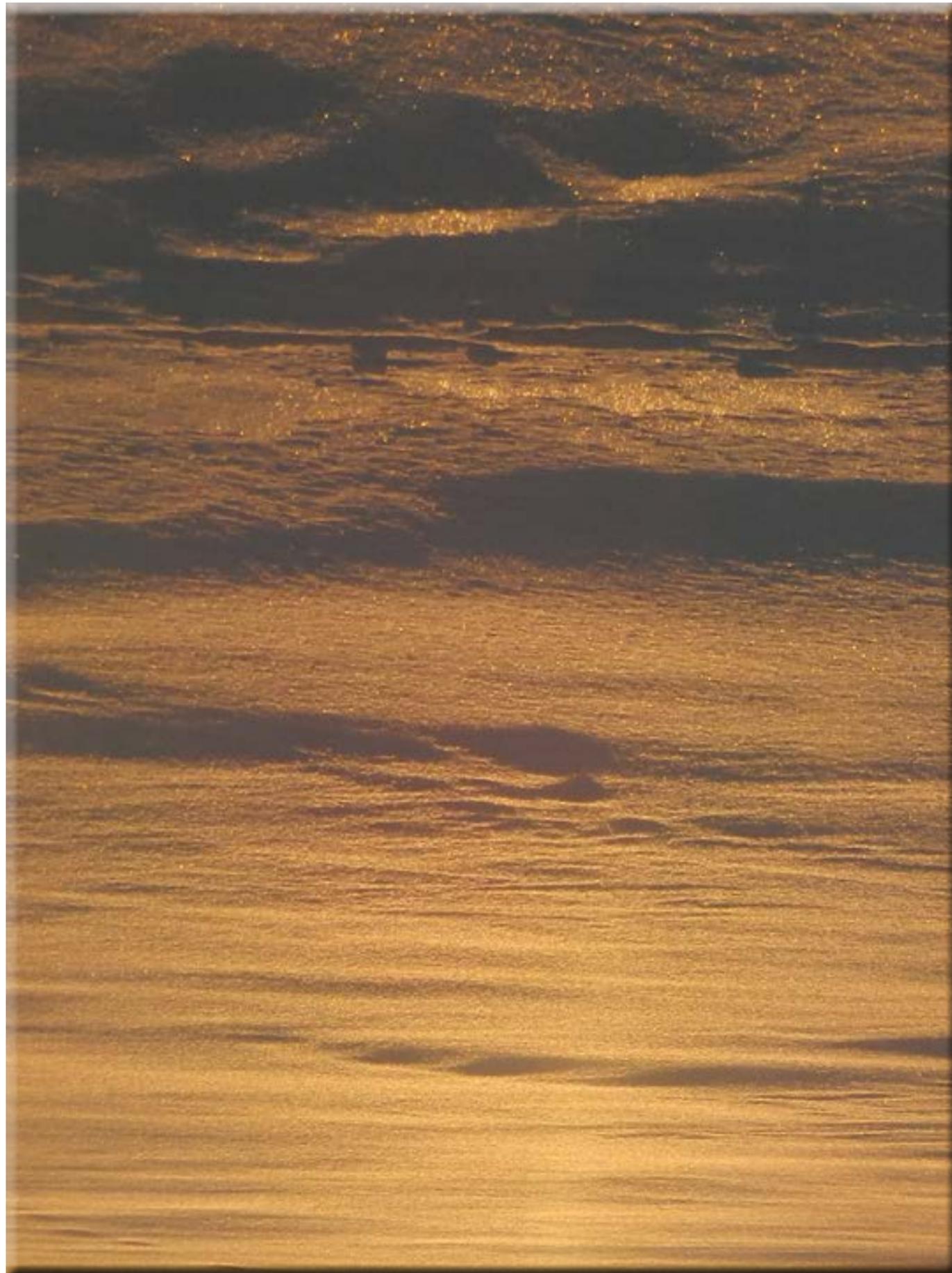
To resist flattery
To rely on my ability
To cross whatever bridge came to my way
I spent my time in labor camps and prisons
Interviewed inmates I found
Shocking stories behind their crimes
Hidden inside their minds
And uncovered social and family problems
Produced social food for thought
Looking at the despairing face
Of the nineteen-year-old man facing execution
I asked him, "Qin, what are you thinking?"
He heaved a long sigh,
"What's more to think about than to survive?"
From his innocent childhood to his criminal life
I wrote a novella
How Beautiful It Is to Live

I went into the forest, wrote a report on a case of a person
In jail for 17 years, wronged by an incorrect judicial verdict
While making noise about injustices dealt to others
I launched a legal case for the copyright of my play
A Chinese Woman at Gestapo Gunpoint
A true story of a Chinese-Belgian woman, Qian Xiuling
She saved more than a hundred Belgians from the Nazis

With the help of German general Alexander von Falkenhausen
I had been twice to Belgium, interviewed Qian Xiulin
The female Schindler of China
I worked day and night, completed the TV drama series
It was broadcast on CCTV
But my name as a playwright disappeared
I fought to get my name back
The legal case took me seven years
As the playwright my name finally was there
My autobiography, *Battle for Life*, tells the whole story of my fight
Based on that TV drama, I produced a novel with the same name
Chinese President Xi Jinping presented my book
To King Philippe of Belgium
Battle for Life also won the Lu Xun Literature Prize

I grew up reading translated novels from the West
One Hundred Years of Solitude, *The Sound and the Fury*
Catch 22, *The Third Wave*...
Now my books *Battle for Life*, *Play Games with the Devil* *Lessons for the Future*
Translated into English and other languages
They are all published under the name of Zhang Yawen

A Chinese woman writer who fought for justices
Zhang Yawen, noble and literary my father wished me to be
I didn't let him down and became a writer warrior.



A Study of the Dramaturgy of Fatalism in Lancelot Imasuen's *Invasion 1897*

**by Taiwo Okunola Afolabi, University of Victoria,
Victoria, British Columbia
and
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Introduction

African societies (especially traditional African societies) are characterized by beliefs in witchcraft, the mystical, spirit possession fatalism, and so on. These beliefs are located in various African cultures and traditions. These practices facilitate a bond between the material (physical) and the spiritual worlds; which, as Anigala (14) notes, “allows for a spiritual interaction between humans and the gods. It is also assumed that such interactions illuminate the being by lifting the individual to a new level of awareness and consciousness”. What binds the above concepts together is that they are all in the plane and realm of the spiritual. There are supernatural forces that are believed to control the affairs of man. These forces provide and sustain life in traditional African societies. They give life, protect it and ensure that man fulfils the purpose for which he was created. However, the spiritual does not exist alone, it takes the physical to carry out the biddings of the spiritual, hence the need for man to partner whether consciously or unconsciously

with the metaphysical. Fatalism is a relationship between the physical world and the spiritual and it involves either somebody or a group of people to stage a fatalistic and mystic contest. The above beliefs are exemplified in African arts and creative industry, including Nollywood in which one finds films that are replete with witchcraft, fatality, cultism and the mystical, cast in Nigerian home video industry.

African writers have shown how African belief in fatalism has played out. Such is the artistic rendition of the famous Benin invasion by the British empire in 1879. The invasion of the Benin Kingdom under the leadership of Oba Ovonronwem has been documented and interpreted in play text by Ola Rotimi and Ahmed Yerima. Another effort to render of this history through the camera lens has been done by Lancelot Imasuen. This paper examines the dramaturgy of *fatalism* and *mysticism* in Nollywood home video films. It argues that Lancelot Imasuen's *Invasion 1897* is apt in its crystallization of fatalistic realities in the African context. In this study, the terminologies Fatalism and Destiny are used interchangeably.

Conceptual Clarification

Fatalism is a philosophical theory (doctrine) "that stresses the subjugation of all events or actions to fate". Fatalism emphasizes the idea that what will be will be, or that human action has no influence on events. According to Blackburn (n.p), the concept of fate itself has multiple meanings and might be used to describe events that are arbitrary, unavoidable, mysterious, or having a particular destiny. Fatalism includes the following basic tenets: 1) the view that we are powerless to do anything other than what we actually

do. this implies that implies that humans have no power to affect their futures, actions, or choices; 2) an attitude of resignation in the face of some future event or events which are thought to be inevitable and which those future events over which humans have no control. clarifying the role of action and stipulates that although actions reflect free will, they inevitably work toward a preset outcome; and lastly 3) that acceptance of, rather than fighting against, the outcome is more appropriate or resisting the inevitable.

Discourse on Fatalism in Nollywood

Perhaps, in the Nigerian literary corpus, no work of literature have been able to evaluate the concept of fatalism-destiny and to an extent, mysticism, as Late Prof Olawole Rotimi's classic, *The gods are not to blame*. Odewale's mystical contest is not only against man (such as King Adetusa), but it was also against the gods as he tries to evade his unwholesome destiny. In fact, his determination to avoid his destiny, leads to his fulfilling it. Fatalism, a concept that contradicts the ideology of free will, posits that there is no free will. All actions are rooted on a pre-ordained ground. Thus, Orangun in his appropriation of the terminology, states that "the ultimate meaning and purpose of man can be sought from the power believed to control events. So long as man regards his existence as a purposeful design, to which he must adapt himself, he cannot be enslaved to the empirical view of the meaning of life" (4).

Fatalism is a recurrent feature-theme in Nigerian home video films. In fact, the dramatics of fatalism in Nollywood, is an offspring from the Nigerian theatre tradition. The belief in predestination encased in the dramaturgy of playwrights such as Wole

Soyinka (*Death and the King's Horseman*), Ola Rotimi (*The gods are not to Blame*), and to a large extent, Zulu Sofola (*Wedlock of the gods*) watered the ground for a fabulous exploration of the subject of Fate in Nigerian home video films. Thus, Obilor (87) notes that “our indigenous film industry has been turned into a form of festival of demonology. There is hardly any local film without a scene displaying the spirit world”. In other words, there is a nexus between mysticism and fatalism. The two concepts are interwoven. Consequently, *Living in Bondage* (1992) (the first Nollywood film) produced by Kenneth Nnebue is built around fate and the mystical. Andy, who seeks various means to become rich, finally resorts to ritual.

Andy uses his wife, Merit, for money ritual. His action leads to numerous transcendental combats. He has to contest Merit's wraith in a duel. The resultant effect of this mystical contest is Andy's madness. Furthermore, the filmmaker utilizes the *deus ex machina*—a pastor with his team of prayer warriors pray for Andy, he confesses, and he is healed. In this context, there is also a challenge between the church and the spirit of Andy's self-inflicted madness. Other films in the repertoire of fatalism and the mystical, include Andy Amenechi and Don Pedro Obaseki's *Igodo* (1999), Fred Amata's *Ijele* (1999), Zeb Ejiro's *Amadioha* (1999), and others. In *Ijele* (1999), the eponymous character had been ordained by the gods to save the woman who facilitated his upbringing. One feature of fatalism, is that fatalistic situations take place in a near mystical condition. *Ijele* is birthed by his mother, in a shrine. An old man, who is a messenger of the gods and much later, *Ijele*'s guardian angel, puts the child in the care of an old woman. He tells her (the old woman) that the boy would grow up to save her life and also marry her. However,

the old man's statement is a proverb. The boy fulfils his destiny by saving the life of his guardian's granddaughter and marrying her.

Moreover, in *Amadioha* (1999), Azuka, the nephew of a King becomes a king when the uncle dies. Before now, he had been told to stick to some pictures, that would chart the course of his destiny. In the same vein, Ernest Obi's *Idemili* (2015) is rooted in fatalism, and Mmais destined to be the priestess of the Oshimili, so she can liberate the people of her community after executing some rituals. Her mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great grandmothers were the priestesses in their times, hence, being a priestess is her destiny too. In course of seeking her roots, she confronts her destiny.

Synopsis of *Invasion 1897*

Invasion 1897 (2015), a film produced by Iceslides Films and Wells Entertainment, historicizes the 1897 defeat of the old Benin empire by the British Colonial Masters and the extradition of Oba Ovonramwen from Benin to Calabar. A Benin indigene who resides in Britain is accused of stealing some ancient Benin art works from the British Museum. In court, he narrates how the Benin empire was looted by the British. In the flashback scene, Oba Ovonramwen refuses the British entry into his kingdom because it is forbidden for a stranger to enter Benin when it is in the middle of a festival. The British entourage which comprises of seven white men threatens to defy the king's order and they are killed by the Benin warriors, and some chiefs. The battle line is drawn as a full-scale war ensues between the Benin kingdom and the British Colonial masters. After

a war in which both sides lost immensely, the British Colonial masters defeat the Benin soldiers, and Oba Ovonranwen is deposed and exiled to Calabar.

Fatalism in *Invasion 1897*

The dramaturgical nuance of Lancelot Imaseun's *Invasion 1897* is fully located in the belief in the fatalistic. This is not unusual, since an artist's worldview greatly influences his works of art. Lancelot Oduwa, Imasuen, an indigene of Edo state, would believe in fatalism, since Edo cultures believe in predestination and determinism. In this film, Oba OvonranwenNogbaisi, the son of Adolor is a godlike king (he is powerful and proud). He is a king who has other kingdoms such as *Akure, Urhobo, Itsekiri, and Ijaw* subjected to his kingdom. His flaw-hubris leads to his tragic end. Predestination is paramount in the progression of the events in the film. While Ovonranwen is destined to fall like the Greek Achilles, his chief, Obaseki, whom he also appoints as the intermediary between his kingdom and the white colonial masters, is destined to betray him. For Ovonranwen's destiny to be realized, there must be a Judas.

Like Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello*, Brutus in *Julius Ceasar* and Macbeth in *Macbeth*, Obaseki betrays his people-the Benin kingdom. To put an end to the numerous deaths in Benin, Ovonranwen placates the gods with sacrifices,-rituals that are "a means of communicating something of religious significance through word, symbol and action" (Mbiti, 126). Yet, despite the numerous sacrifices, death and tribulation refuse to evade Benin. His perplexity is portrayed in the statement below:

Oba Ovonranwen: *Haven't we made enough sacrifices? When the earth, wind, fire, rain*

conspire to undo the peace that my ancestors promised me, then it is time to extract solution from the bosom of Ogiuwu.

Then, he orders Chief Obakhavbaye to summon Obo-iro for them. That night, with all the chiefs present in the palace, Obo-iro appears. His entry is mysterious. Only Ovonramwen is able to withstand Obo-iro's mysterious appearance. With fatalism comes mysticism as Obo-iro appears to speak of the fate of the event ahead in parables. A contest of mysticism comes to play here as Ovonranwen commands him to show his face.

Obo-iro: *Idugbowa, son of Adolor, you have picked an irreversible destiny.*

Ovonranwen: *Is that why my people are dying of mystery ailment?*

Obo-iro: *Ogiuwu will do anything to unsettle whomever he chooses to.*

Ovonranwen: *The gods choose to be unkind to me, let them at least spare my people.*

Obo-iro: *The destiny of the king is intertwined with that of his people... You are about to pay the price of the fame you so seek. You are by your fall is going to be known in all the worlds created by God.*



Fig. 1. Obo-iro communicating with Oba Ovonranwen.

Obo-iro tells the king the irreversible nature of his destiny. The rise and fall of

Ovonranwen had been preordained by the gods. T Citing Gustav Frytag, Umukoro notes that “a man cannot become a hero until he can see the root of his downfall” (53). The fame Ovonranwen seeks comes to pass, along with his downfall. From this moment, Ovonranwen becomes a sailor in a boat being rocked by heavy wave. Like Shakespeare’s Hamlet who is confused as to what action to take about the assassination of his father, Ovonranwen becomes disorganized. He knows not what action to take, especially in respect of the encroachment of the white man. This makes him place the responsibility of communing with the white man, in the hands of Obaseki, who turns out to be a trickster. The obstinate disposition of the Colonial masters, fuelled by the undying love of tradition and norms by the colonized, culminates in a full-scale war.



Fig. 2. The inhabitants in flight as Mr Galway and his soldiers invade Benin.

The crux of the matter is Oba Ovonranwen, who is aware of his destiny-imminent downfall, tries to avert it. After the numerous sacrifices to the gods, war ensues between Benin and the British soldiers. In its genesis, Benin soldiers deal ruthlessly with Mr Galway’s soldiers. However, the British soldiers later have the upper hand. Due to their firepower, they easily slay Benin soldiers and invade Benin. Oba Ovonranwen resorts to a mystical contest to curtail the menace of the Benin soldiers, and also avert his destiny.

He fortifies himself with the venom of *Akuobisi* so that whoever he spits on will remain invalid. Here, ‘spit’ is allegorical. Spit indicates his enemies. He further tells the priest to bathe him with the mystic power of the gods. He shall be present, yet invisible. He shall be dead, yet alive. He tells the gods to hide him from the evil that is planned against him. Ovonranwen knows that Galway’s aim is to eliminate him and have full access to his kingdom.



F.3 and 4. The priest bathes Ovonranwen with the mystic water of Okuobisi.

Oba Ovonranwen, dependent on the mystical to curtail the peril of the British, nay, expects to emerge victorious over the British Empire. In so doing, he would also avert *Obo-iro's* prophecy about his downfall.

Having failed in using his mystical prowess to win the war against the British and avert his destiny, like Odewale in Rotimi’s *The gods are not to blame*, Oba Ovonranwen tragically surrenders. He surrenders to the British and his destiny. Ovonranwen does not lay a blame of betrayal at Chief Obaseki, when he (Ovonranwen) meets him. Perhaps, he knows it is not Obaseki’s volition that led him to betray him—rather, it was his (Ovonranwen) destiny that came to pass. His refusal to lay blame on Obaseki supports

the fatalistic tenet that man is powerless to do anything other what fate decides. As a helpless entity, man is subjected to forces that surround him. These forces control him and dictate his life and living. Indeed, man is a pencil in the hands of these transcendental forces.

From the beginning of the film, the concept of fatalism is carefully set. Ovonranwen's destiny comes to his children, princess Evbakhavbokun and his first son, the prince, in a dream. In African cosmology, it is believed that dreams forewarn a man of his impending doom. A revelation, such a dream is a state in which the future intersects with the present. The film therefore begins with the prince in a dream state. In the dream, the decision of his father to execute two men, who are probably traitors, incurs the wrath of the British imperialists, and war follows between Benin and the British soldier. Of course, Benin is greatly plundered. The Prince is devastated with the nightmare. He needs no interpreter to tell him the meaning of the dream. Consequently, he forces his way into the palace, uninvited. He tells chief Okhavbiogbe:

Prince: *I must see my father. Okhavbiogbe, it is life and death and the gods bids us to choose one.*

The Prince's faith in the implication of dreams, leads him into confiding in his father and his chiefs. Then, in the wake of the incessant deaths in Benin, Evbakhavbokun's has a dream, which she tells her father:

Evbakhavbokun: *A message came upon me in the dream.*

Ovonranwen: *A dream?*

Evbakhavbokun: *I saw your chiefs. Your chiefs were screaming, and you just stood there father, unmoved as the fire advanced towards you.*

Symbolic, fire indicates danger. Ovonranwen's belief in fatalism and attempt at outdoing it, sets the pace for mysticism in the film. Like Oedipus in Sophocles' *King Oedipus* and Odewale in Ola Rotimi's *The gods are not to Blame*, Oba Ovonranwen fittingly ends in exile. As Julius Caesar Scaliger, cited in Dukore (140), states "all great tragedies end in deaths and exile". Ovonranwen, exiled to Calabar by the British, died on January 1914. The downfall of the royal, dynamic and proud Oba Ovonranwen, undoubtedly elicits compassion in the minds of the spectators and incites compassion and fright in the soul of its audience. "Fright and compassion are the two objectives of tragedy" (Castelvetto, 144). Because the plot of the film revolves around the tragic-hero, Ovonranwen, one would think that the filmmaker should have been titled his film, *Ovonranwen*, following the examples set by Ahmed Yerima's *The Trials of Oba Ovonranwen* and Ola Rotimi's *Ovonranwen Nogbaisi*. After all, the plot of the film, which revolves around the hero, to a large extent, subscribes to Aristotle canon of tragedy.

The plot of [tragedy and the epic] must contain action which is not only human but also magnificent and royal. And if it is to contain action by a member of the royalty, it follows that the plot must contain action which definitely occurred and which involves a king who has lived and who is known to have lived (Castelvetto, 146).

Tragic heroes do not reverse their decisions. In Ola Rotimi's *Kurunmi*, the

eponymous hero refuses to back track on his decision to go to war. This is also evident in Wale Ogunyemi's play *Ijiaye*, in which the tragic hero, Kurunmi also refuses to go back on his words. In Zulu Sofola's *Wedlock of the gods*, perchance, Uloko and Ogwuoma are destined to be husband and wife. Hence, despite the accusations leveled against them about the death of Adigwe, Ogwuoma's husband, they still go ahead to let the world know that they are in a marital relationship, which leads to their tragic end. King Odewale in Ola Rotimi's *The gods are not to Blame*, refuses to go back on his decree that the murderer of king Adetusa be unveiled and dealt with. He realizes that the murderer he seeks, was himself. Nevertheless, he does not reverse his decree. The concept of tragic irreversibility, which is inherent in the Greek tragic canon, is prominent in *Invasion 1897*. As a tragic hero/figure, Ovonranwen refuses to make peace with Mr. Galway. He sees such an action as cowardice.

Ovonranwen will not bow to the white man. Herein lie the concepts of *peripeteia* and *anagnorises*, as situated in the poetics of Aristotle:

[peripeteia] is a change by which the action veers round to the opposite, subject always to our rule of probability or necessity. While recognition (*anagnorises*), as the name indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune (Aristotle, 40).

Anagnorises is the stage in a tragedy when the tragic hero recognizes his error. "It is the primal limit when the character achieves an awareness that is equally transferred to

the audience (John Gassner Cited in Charles and Patrick, 42). *Anagnorises* is also known as enlightenment. Ovonranwen recognizes his mistake in trusting Obaseki, who stabs him in the back.

The king also realizes that pride contributed to his downfall. The downfall of tragic heroes, especially those with blue blood, is caused by a flaw or weakness. This weakness is pride (*hubris*). Tragic characters/figures such as *Kurunmi*, *Oedipus*, *Odewale*, *Pentheus* and so on, come to their tragic end due to *hubris* inherent in them. Therefore, the downfall of most tragic heroes/figures occur through the *agensis* caused by pride. Ovonranwen accepts defeat. However, in defeat, he warns the white man of the implications of his action:

Ovonranwen: *The ditch that swallows the elephant will have no room for another animal. Moor, you have bitter the sweet bitter bile of fame and power. But remember, none last, nor will your life.*

As the African traditions which contextualize this discourse reveal, there is a distinct pattern in fatalistic dramas. Such a drama begins with a mystical revelation through dream, prophecy, etc. *Invasion 1879* followed this pattern through the inclusion of dreams and the appearance of *Obo-Iro*. The essence of the revelations about future incident serve to fore-warn and perhaps suggest the inevitable, promoting the view that a human being, powerless when dealing with the divine, is unable to do anything other than what he is destined. Also, an attitude of resignation in the face of events which are thought to be inevitable and over which humans beings have no control becomes evident, for although actions reflect free will, they inevitably work toward a preset outcome. Even a human being takes actions and makes decisions out of his own volition, he is enacting a divinely

written script. Thus, the decisions of Oba Ovonranwen to disengage from the British Empire, to appoint Obasekias as his liaison officer, to defend the intrusion of the British Empire only contribute to the inevitable fulfilment of the prophecy. Oba Ovonranwen's actions and inactions, decisions and choices, and those of his chiefs, the kingdom finally fall to the invasion. As in Ola Rotimi's *the gods are not to blame*, Odewale's decree only heralded the imminent fulfilment of the prophecy. Hence, Ovonranwen's acceptance of, rather than fighting against, the outcome is more appropriate than resisting the inevitable.

An Appraisal of Filmic Aesthetics in *Invasion 1897*

Various performance/filmic aesthetics come to play in *Invasion 1897*. The performance/dramatic elements in the film are culturally engraved, as they reflect the culture, traditions and beliefs of the Benin people. The indices of dramatic elements include *dances, songs and music, proverbial communication, and the narration or the storytelling technique*. All of these constitute the total theatre projected by the filmic elements for the total filmic experience. These filmic elements are every element that constitute a scene in a movie, the film narrative, cinematography, mise-en-scene, sound, and editing.

First, *dances* serve various functions in this film. While most of the dances in the films are secular, there are a few ritual dances. In the scene of Evbakhavbokun's (Ovonranwen's daughter) marriage to Chief Ologbose, various dances are displayed. In the domain of the sacred, Oba Ovonranwen does a ritual dance when he is being bathed with the mystic water of Okuobisi. This is to accentuate the efficacy of the charm, and

also it is an evidence of Ovonranwen's possession by the gods. T

In African societies, the heroic deeds of kings and notable figures are sung by *praise singers*. This has been often utilized in modern African plays and films. *Praise singing* is imperative in the fulfillment of fate. For instance, In Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*, the market women, led by *Iyaloja* sing the praise of *Elesin Oba*. For the destiny of the latter to be fulfilled, this praise sung for and about him, elevating or transporting him into another, metaphysical plane of existence, and thereby, making him see the reasons for his dying (as a ritual scapegoat) which liberates his people from the shackles of the unknown. The effective use of this traditional element in a number of African plays encouraged its use in Nollywood home videos. Nollywood films, have, from the genre's inception, properly utilized this African aesthetic. All the chiefs sing the praise of Oba Ovonranwen. In fact, all and sundry, including all the chiefs, sing his praises, whenever they make any suggestion. This singing of his *praises* makes Oba Ovonranwen's head swell. It brings about his own consciousness of his strength, ego, and valour. These songs also historicize *artifacts* of traditional Benin society, since art works are the core of the conflict between the British colonial masters and the Oba Ovonranwen-led Benin. Thus, *Invasion 1897* straddles the legendary and the historical. *Praise singing reveals* Oba Ovonranwen as a legend-god while the events in Benin that revolve around him portrays history.

In African culture, many playwrights use songs in their works, because song plays a major role in creating a bond between the metaphysical and the physical worlds. Song is a core element in the transition process from the corporeal into the supernatural world. In

films like *Idemili*(2015), mystical songs form the nucleus in the invitation of the goddess, *Oshimili*—suggesting the language spiritual beings understand is the language of song. In fact, Aristotle's appraisal of song as an important element of the tragic art, states that “of the remaining elements, song holds the chief place among the embellishments” (37). To this end, *songs* play a major role in accentuating the tragic mood of *Invasion 1897*. The cathartic effect of this film is achieved via the use of songs. Witnessing Oba Ovonranwen's journey to Calabar, one of his subjects raises a song (a dirge) on the demise of Oba Ovonranwen and other subjects follow suit. Touched by the song, he looks back and shakes his head in agony as he is led to the Ship by Mr Galway's men.

As well, the filmmaker's use of language as a tool to fully elicit the emotion of his audience and also fully characterize Oba Ovonranwen is noteworthy. Since “a tragedy is the imitation of the adversity of a distinguished man” (Scaliger, 140), distinguished men speak metrical language. In the Nigerian and African context, metrical language is exemplified in *parable, proverbs* and so on. Oba Ovonranwen speaks in proverbs, in the course of his communication with the gods and his subjects. Some of his proverbs are depicted below:

Ovonranwen: *When the earth, wind, rain, fire conspire to undo the peace that my ancestors promised me. Then it is time to extract solution from the bosom of Ogiuwu.*

Ovonranwen: *The smoke reveals the fire in the name of all the gods in the kingdom.*

Ovonranwen: *The ditch that swallows the elephant will have no room for another animal. Moor, you have bitter the sweet bitter bile of fame and power. But remember, none last, nor*

will your life.

At his deposition to Calabar, Ovonranwen is metaphorically the elephant. In other words, having been deposed, there will be no other deposition of a future Benin king. He also warns the white man that no man lasts forever.

Questions beyond the work

The historical incident that formed the basis of Imasuen's *Invasion 1879* has a long history in the creative arena in Nigeria. Following ObaroIkime's version of the history, under the caption: “The Western Niger Delta and the Hinterland in the 19th Century” (262), the picture of an erstwhile powerful, peaceful and prosperous Benin, was that of a troubled kingdom during the first half of 19th century. First engaged by one of the first-generation renowned playwrights, Ola Rotimi's creative rendition of history in *Ovonranwen Nogbaisi* (1974) simply luxuriates the grandeur of Oba Ovonranwenin's office. Although he is a custodian of culture who inspires people, he does not actively participate in their struggles. Then, question of staying faithful to the authenticity of history became imperative in the works of playwrights like Ola Rotimi and Ahmed Yerima, whose plays diverged from one another in many respects. One of the criticisms levelled against Ola Rotimi's work that it favoured the Western version of the invasion led to the recommissioning of Ahmed Yerima to re-interpret the incident from the perspective of the Benin people rather than the Western one or that of a company like Shell which is interested in perpetuating Western ideas.

Consequently, when viewing *Invasion 1879* one must ask what is the director's

interpretation of the historical content? How did the director treat the story? Apart from the fatalistic and tragic hermeneutic lens through which the film has been examined, one must also consider whether the director remained faithful to the authenticity of the history.

Conclusion

Ovonranwen is a legend in the history of Benin. He is the most celebrated king in Benin historiography. It is no wonder that his name continues to reoccur in Nigerian art, that several plays, novels, poems, sculptures, paintings, music and films have been constructed about him, and that he has been a subject of discourse in Nigerian popular culture. To a large extent, the tragedy of Oba Ovonranwen is cast in the African and Aristotelean doctrines of tragedy. The dramaturgy of fatalism in Lancelot Imasuen's *Invasion* 1897 contains a discourse on the belief system that holds sway in African societies. From the foregoing, we therefore recommend a continuous exploration of traditional beliefs by Nigerian cum African filmmakers.

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PAGE 129

I wondered if he had known the copy of the book he'd sent, dedicated and signed, was damaged. Several pages were creased from the printing process, others had bled ink onto the poems opposite. I was still glad to have it, to be able to read the series as a whole. Reading it in the bath, I managed to wrinkle the book's edges in the steam and start to delaminate the cover. Later, I found a bloodstain from my cut finger on page 129.

The book draws on other texts, juxtaposed images, stories and ideas alluding to elsewhere: the reader leaves the written text and thinks herself away, puzzling over the tesserae offered to her. Is it possible to make or intuit a whole or must it always be perceived as fragments and disparate ideas which appear to move towards but never achieve cohesion?

It is a cold night, the heating has turned itself on, the cat is asleep on the end of the bed. A friend did not email me for several weeks, so concerned was he by the word 'theology' in the title of a poem I dedicated to him. He asked me to remove his name and then ceased communication. Recently we resumed our correspondence. 'What is grace?' he asked, and we threw around ideas of states of being, acceptance, living in the moment, being gifted faith.

We might call theology philosophy he suggested, and I concurred. We should not assume theology is to do with organized religion or dogma, I wrote, it may be ontological, social or political (small p). Like everything, it changes and evolves. We touched upon that, also, how to square evolution and belief, science and faith, society and aspiration,

writing, art and teaching.

The poems, or letters as the book title suggests, are full of momentary narratives, paraphrase, events observed and enacted. Each has equal weight, each is as carefully constructed and evoked. Themes are written around, a poetry of absence, a theology of absence, that unnerving concept of inversion and the negative, describing what cannot be known by engaging with what it is not.

Skins of blue and soft black marks. A distant conversation underneath the village streetlight, an owl's call in the garden. Precious words on cheap paper, documenting the holy and unknown.

And now he is in love and has left the city behind.

—*Rupert M. Loydell*



Sweating in two Worlds

by Joseph D. Atoyebi

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It was a sunny winter afternoon in February. As ironic as that may sound, sunny afternoons in winter are a common feature in Northern Manitoba. In the city of Thompson, the winter months are characterized by several inches of blanketing snow. On that particular afternoon, the temperature was twenty under with an attendant wind chill. As expected in that time of the year, in spite of the clear sunny sky outside, there was so much snow that could be knee-deep if one made an error in judgment by straying off the ploughed path. An announcement had gone out about a week earlier notifying the University's community of an upcoming sweat ceremony under the auspices of the University's Aboriginal Centre.

As a faculty member and one of African descent, Ayo, together with Xia, his colleague who was both faculty member and of Chinese ancestry decided that they would participate in the ceremony. It was going to be their first. All prospecting sweaters had been advised to converge on the Aboriginal Centre at 1 pm on the sweat day. At about ten minutes to the hour, Ayo and Xia both made their way to the Centre. It was barely a three-minute walk from their offices on the third floor of the four-storied university building to the

Aboriginal Centre which was located on the ground floor. At the Centre, both faculty members realized that they were too early. Apart from the three regular staff that run the place, they were the only ones there. Ayo glanced at his wristwatch; it was five minutes to 1. "I think we are a bit too early," he noted to Xia directly.

Cheryl, one of the three female staff at the Centre suddenly chipped in a question directed at the two guests. "Are you here for the sweat?" She smiled warmly, as she switched her gaze between the two expecting the obvious response in the affirmative.

"Yes," answered Xia.

The two friends seemed to have an unwritten code between them, namely, that Xia should be the first to respond to any question directed at them. Their friendship and collegiality have been going on for three years now. It started the very first week when Ayo was hired as an instructor in the Department of English. Xia is the older of the two. Both friends were first generation Canadian from two culturally sensitive backgrounds. Ayo, being of African descent, related with Xia as his African culture dictated, that is, elders always get to speak first.

"I guess we should try and make ourselves comfortable while we wait," Xia advised, directing her statement to Ayo, but still loud enough for Cheryl to hear her.

"Absolutely!" Cheryl quipped, gesturing with two thumbs up. "As you can see, we also have a kitchen area here at the Centre. There is coffee, as well as tea. There are also soda drinks in the fridge. Please help yourselves to any of our offerings." The phone on her desk started to ring. She excused herself and went to answer the phone.

Xia turned to go to the kitchen area. “Do you care for coffee?” she asked Ayo, even though she knew that he never drank coffee. She only asked out of tradition.

“No! I would rather have tea.” Ayo momentarily joined Xia at the kitchen counter.

Xia was already filling up an electric kettle from a faucet. She had the kettle going.

They both turned around to observe the goings-on in the well-furnished center. Cheryl and her colleagues at the Centre were going around their duties. The main door which led into the Centre was shut, but it appeared to be anxiously expecting a flood of visitors.

Ayo glanced at the Quartz wall clock; it indicated three minutes past one. “Have you ever heard the expression, “African time”?” He asked Xia with a very soft voice, only a couple of decibels above a whisper.

“No,” answered Xia, “what does that mean?”

The electric kettle was beginning to force itself into the relative quietness at the Centre as there was an apparent change in the condition of the water within it. The intrusive noise made by the kettle was a welcome development after all because it meant that Ayo could go ahead and explain the meaning of African time to Xia without the fear of providing an unsolicited lecture to a perceived uninterested audience.

“It is difficult to arrive at a concise definition of African time, but I can explain it using an example.”

The sound that was coming from the kettle has now increased to a rather imposing

but appreciable point. It was an indication that both friends would soon be holding steamy tea mugs in their hands.

Xia turned around to open a top shelf which revealed an assemblage of tea mugs of different shapes, sizes, and colours. She selected one and stepped out of the way for Ayo to make his choice. They also found different boxes of assorted tea, but both friends settled for a bag each of an orange-flavoured tea. When their tea was ready, they picked up their mugs by the handle and turned around to resume their former posture.

“I suggest we make ourselves comfortable in one those beautiful seats,” Xia advised.

“I agree. At least, we will be able to place our mugs on the coffee table in the centre.”

They found a comfortable two-seater and proceeded to place their mugs on the coffee table before them.

“If an event, a meeting, or an appointment was scheduled to begin at 2 pm, but it didn’t happen until about 3 pm, or even much later, that is the African time syndrome.” Ayo picked up his mug to take a sip but immediately changed his mind for fear of scalding his tongue. “I think it will be correct to philosophize by saying that the African time phenomenon relates to the way we Africans view ourselves in relation to time as a concept.” He picked up his cup again, but this time, he tried to force the hot tea to cool off by blowing it with his mouth. He finally managed to get a tiny sip. The taste of the orange flavour on his tongue and the warmth of the tea were very satisfying. “Time lives for us; we don’t live for time. Hence, we have a leisurely attitude to life, which some people misconstrue as being nonchalant.”

“Interesting. But how about the idiom *time is money* which I read about in the works of some African writers? I know that the expression cannot be credited to a particular culture as it has a universal application, but how does the *les affair* attitude by your average African relates to the expression?” Xia asked without a trace of sarcasm in her tone.

“Of course, time is money! In the Nigerian Pidgin, it is rendered as *time na money*. The meaning of the expression has a place in my culture. In fact, the Yoruba people have a similar idiom, namely, *àárò l’ojó* or *òwúrò l’ojó*, equivalent to the English idiom “bright and early.” That notwithstanding, they still reject the absolute clock-bound way of life of Western civilization.” Ayo concluded.

The minute hand of the wall clock has moved to twenty-five minutes past the hour. Two more sweaters had come into the Centre while Ayo was engrossed in his lecture about “time.”

“So, can we now claim that there is Aboriginal time? Because I suspect that is what you are trying to get at,” Xia pointed out with a smile as she observed two more sweaters walk in through the main door.

“I would like to say so, Xia.” I have been here these past five years, long enough to conclude that like my African kin, my Aboriginal hosts also have a relaxed approach to life. Perhaps, Time should serve humans, and not the other way round. We mustn’t be slaves of time.”

“I don’t know whether to agree with your or not, but I fear the consequences of a

world without any care for punctuality.” Xia surmised.

Both friends silently sipped at their apparent lukewarm tea while they observed the now boisterous activities going on in the Centre. It was beginning to appear as though they would soon be heading out to the sweat lodge. Their observation was spot on because they didn’t have long to wait. At thirty-three minutes past the hour, one of the facilitators at the Centre notified them that it was time to go.

The lodge was situated about four hundred meters away from the University’s main building. It laid on the northern fringes of the expanse of land that formed part of the sports field. On stepping out of the warmth which the Aboriginal Centre offered, the sweaters were immediately greeted by a gust of chilly wind, an unpleasant reminder that it was still winter. The two faculties, together with two males and four females, comprising of students and non-faculty staff, gingerly made their way towards the sweat lodge. The sun casts its radiance on the immaculate snow. Save for the chilly wind and the sleepy winter trees in the far background, one may as well pretend that one was walking among heavenly plains. The small entourage soon arrived at the lodge.

Before entering the secluded building which also housed the sweat dome, Ayo observed an open fire which was being used to heat up some rocks of different sizes. The significance of heating rocks in an open fire was completely lost to him. He wasn’t certain if Xia knew better. Anyway, his ignorance was only in the interim as he soon learned that the rocks were called grandfathers, one of the most important items in any Aboriginal sweat ceremony.

The eight individuals were welcomed into the lodge by Martin, a middle-aged man who was also in charge of making sure everything was up-and-running in the lodge. They were also greeted by Agatha, a *petite* lady in her late sixties who was an elder and the lead celebrant at the ceremony. Finally, there was Kristen, Agatha's protégé.

Ayo thought of Martin as Elder Agatha's Man-Friday because he was efficient, knowledgeable, strong, and tough-skinned. His tough-skinned description of Martin was because while everyone else was sitting on wooden benches within the confines of the well-heat lodge, Martin was going out at intervals to check on the grandfathers before coming back into the lodge. Even though he had a very thin piece of clothing on his back, he seemed unperturbed by the chill outside.

During one of the intervals between going out to check on the heating rocks and staying to chat with others in the lodge, Martin lectured the sweat participants on some of the characteristics of the lodge. He talked about the spiritual significance of the dome. He informed them that constructing a sweat dome is a spiritual exercise. "It is very sacred."

While listening to Martin's lecture and waiting for the commencement of the ceremony, Ayo carefully observed the interior of the lodge from his corner. There were two makeshift changing rooms in the northern end of the lodge, one for both sexes. The changing rooms have canvass contains like those used in hospitals to provide patients some privacy. The privacy curtains can slide across a silver-coated rod to whatever direction the user needs them to go. Each changing room is proximal to the sitting area assigned to the respective sexes. The male group sat with their backs to the east while facing west. The female group, on the other hand, sat with their backs to the west and

facing east. Situated between both groups is the sweat dome. The dome sat at the very centre of the lodge. It was about 6 foot high at its pinnacle. The dome structure, save for an open entrance facing south, was completely covered with several layers of canvass materials. The support frame of the dome structure was made of willow sticks. According to Martin, a new dome for the sweat lodge is constructed ones a year. The old one is taken down, and a new one is constructed in its place.

Kristen, Elder Agatha's protégé was dutifully preparing a smudge all the while on her knees. The smoky emblem was an herbal mix made from sweet grass. The aroma from the incense-like smoke protruding from the small wooden bowl pervaded the lodge. Ayo thought that the aroma was calming. He later discovered the importance of the smudge to the ceremony; it was used for the purpose of purification. In fact, every utensil and item used for the event had to first pass through, or run over the smudge. Martin momentarily picked up the small smoky bowl and crawled into the dome to smudge it. He soon emerged from the dome with the bowl. He handed it back to Kristen who resumed fanning the ember.

Shortly afterward, Martin started bringing in the grandfathers from the fire outside. As he brought in each rock or rocks, depending on the number he was able to collect at a time with his spading fork, he first made sure to run the fork with the rocks in place over the smudge before taking them into the dome. Then he gently deposited the rocks into a shallow circular pit in the center of the dome. Martin continued the back and forth journey: collecting rock or rocks, running the spading fork over the smudge, then depositing the rocks in the pit. At a certain point during Martin's back-and-forth

trips, the elder and her assistant crawled into the dome headfirst to closely supervise the growing population of the grandfathers.

Participants waiting on the sidelines could hear Elder Agartha instructing Martin to get more grandfathers as their number was insufficient. Martin picked up his pace. Soon afterward, he received the temporary all-good signal. It was intended to be a reprieve because, as Ayo later found out, after the first round of sweat, some more grandfathers were added to the rock collection. There were twenty grandfathers at the start of the first round of sweat. More rocks were added in subsequent rounds. At the start of the fourth and final round of sweat, there were thirty-two rocks in total.

“What’s in a number?” The Aboriginal culture as Ayo later realized is one that is strong on numerology, the belief in the existence of a mystical relationship between a number or group of numbers, and coinciding events. By the way, what culture is not? For instance, it is common knowledge that the Chinese have a special place for the number eight, as it is the number associated with good fortune. Conversely, the number thirteen is associated with ill-fortune in some cultures.

Among the Aboriginal cultures of North America, the number four has divine and spiritual attributes. For instance, the number four represents the four elements of nature to which obeisance is ascribed. First, the sun, which represents light, and it is considered the source of every living thing. Second, the thunder, which is associated with rain producing water, essential to the survival of living things. Third, the wind, the source of air, without which no living thing can survive. Lastly, the buffalo, which represents food, an absolute necessity for every living thing. As noted in the response

of an elder to Ayo’s inquiry, these four elements are not deified, rather, they are seen as agents of the one God - the creator. However, they give thanks to each of these elements for their faithfulness through the ages.

The significance of the number four was also evident during the sweat. First, the ceremonial pipe was passed around four times. The sweat ceremony also had four rounds. The dipping of the evergreen branch into the bucket of water and the splashing of the collected water on hot rocks to generate sizzling steam for the sweat was done four times. Also, there are usually four different medicinal ingredients in the water used for the sweat. The choice of the four ingredients varies according to the purpose of the particular ceremony. The following four ingredients were added to the water used in the sweat ceremony in which Ayo and Xia were participants: wild mint, cedar, sage, and tobacco. It is important to mention that all ingredients used in a sweat ceremony according to the Aboriginal culture must be gifted, not personally procured by the celebrants.

Ayo recalled that the Igbo culture of Nigeria from where his mother hailed also reveres the number four. Similar to the Aboriginal belief in four natural elements, the Igbo also believe in the following: The Sun or *Anyawu*, the source of life and husband of the Moon. The Moon or *Onwa*, the keeper of time and wife of *Anyawu*. The Sky or *Elu*, the abode of recognized deities. Finally, the Earth or *Ala*, the abode, and source of sustenance for humans. “But how can two different cultures across two continents share a somewhat similar belief?” That was the question Ayo asked himself.

Another aspect of the Igbo culture that relates to the preeminence of the number four is in the designation of the days of the week. There are only four days in the Igbo

traditional week. Each day is ascribed to a market day in the following order: *Eke, Orié, Afor,* and *Nkwo*.

Back in the sweat lodge, another number which Ayo noted was the number thirty-two. There were thirty-two grandfathers at the start of the fourth and final round of sweat. The thirty-two rocks symbolized the years of training of the lead celebrant. The testimony was that Elder Agatha had fulfilled thirty-two years of scholarship in her native tradition. The thirty-two years of training show completion, leaving nothing more to acquire. “That is even more than the required time from grade 1 to earning a doctorate in the western education system,” Ayo observed.

“What’s in a name?” Ayo has always had a fascination for traditional names, especially unique names which are a result of significant events that occurred at the time of birth or other significant moments in the life of the bearer. Spiritual names are a common part of the Aboriginal cultures of North America.

When the curtain was pulled down to signify the commencement of the sweat ceremony, Elder Agatha introduced herself by her spiritual name – Dancing Star. According to her story, which she narrated in brief to the congregation of sweaters, “I was blessed with the name at the end of a forty-day fast in the wilderness,” the elder said. “The name came to me from the spirits.”

Both Martin and Kristen have spirit names as well. They are Soaring Eagle and Morning Star respectively. Ayo attempted to make some comparisons between the aboriginal spirit-naming tradition and the Yoruba child-naming tradition. He was able

to identify a few similarities and differences between both ways of life. He observed that the art of naming in both traditions is situational. It is based on a significant event in the life of the bearer. However, while recipients of spirit names in the Aboriginal tradition have to wait until certain stars are properly aligned, the Yoruba people, on the other hand, name their children on the eighth day after they were born. Among the Yoruba people of Western Nigeria, child naming is a very important aspect of the culture. The system is one in which the child is named based on the circumstances surrounding his or her birth. For instance, a child born right after the demise of a grandparent, if the child is male, and the beloved departed was male, the child’s name, circumstantially, will be Babatunde, which means, father or grandfather has returned. On the other hand, if the child were to be female, and the departed beloved was also female, the child’s name will be Iyabo or Yetunde, meaning, mother or grandmother has returned. The Yoruba believe very strongly in reincarnation. With the Aboriginal naming tradition, the system appears to be more spiritual. A child would normally be called by whatever names the parents chose, and the child will be known and referred to by that name until such a time when the child came of age and decided to explore his or her spirituality. During the process of the exploration, which usually involves spiritual exercises such as undertaking a lengthy fast and presenting a prescribed gift or gifts to an elder, the person will then be blessed with a spirit name. Both the Yoruba and the Aboriginal naming cultures are also similar in the sense that names have associated meanings. A striking difference, however, is that on the one hand, the Yoruba names which are usually given to the child exactly one week after he/she is born becomes part of the child’s identity - his or her legal name. That is the name that will be recorded in the child’s birth certificate and any other government-issued

document. In the Aboriginal culture, however, the spirit name which is usually given at a later stage may never be recorded in the person's birth certificate. It is a ceremonial name mostly used in special occasions, and sometimes at home by people such as elders and others who are very close to the bearer of the spirit-given name. Another quick fact worth mentioning about the Yoruba naming tradition is that the Yoruba have another class of names called *oriki* - a praise name. It is sometimes used to connect the bearer to his or her clan by describing the heroic exploits of the clan. Though special, this class of names are not ceremonial. They may or may not be included in a government-issued document. An *oriki* may also be an endearment name mostly used by one's parents and other loved ones, including one's spouse and clan elders as a symbol of honour, respect, and affection. An average Yoruba child raised in a Yoruba home with culturally sensitive parents would have an *oriki*.

Part II – Epiphany

They were finally going to start the ceremony. The elder invited everyone who was still outside to come into the dome. They went in one after the other, on all fours, headfirst into the dome. The significance of the headfirst entry represents the journey of the spermatozoa towards the female egg leading to conception. Similarly, after the sweat, a sweater must again emerge from the dome, which is seen as the uterus, headfirst, representing the natural birthing of a child.

The participants in the ceremony chose their spots in the dome based on their gender

classification. Male to the right, female to the left. After everyone was comfortably seated, Martin wanted to know whether there were first-timers to not only that particular sweat ceremony but to any other sweat. Of all those present, only Ayo and Xia indicated that they were neophytes by the raising of hands.

Martin reminded the group that they were about to commence the sweating part of the ceremony. "I would like to encourage you all to have an open mind because it is possible that you have a spiritual experience while undergoing the sweat," he advised. According to Martin, it was not unusual for someone to experience a visitation from his or her forebears.

The prospect of encountering a ghost in the dome was a rather scary proposition, to say the least, to Ayo.

Martin, however, attempted to allay everyone's fear. "Don't be afraid; just have an open mind. If you are fortunate to have a spiritual visitation, then consider yourself blessed."

After Martin was done with his exhortation, it was time for the ceremonial pipe to make its rounds. Elder Agatha lit the pipe and drew her first smoke. She passed it on to Ayo, but not before guiding him on how to receive the pipe. To receive the pipe, one must accept it with both hands by supporting the bowl area with one hand to prevent breaking the wooden shank. Also, smokers and nonsmokers alike must accept the pipe. Everyone must touch his or her chest with the bowl end of the pipe before passing it on to the next person. The pipe went round among the group of sweaters four times.

After the pipe ceremony, Martin brought in a bucket of medicinal water with a small evergreen branch. He passed on both items to Elder Agartha. The elder gently set the full bucket right in front of herself. Everyone patiently waited for Martin to pull down the canvas curtain hanging over the entrance of the dome. But before pulling down the curtain, Martin first ensured that everyone was ready and properly seated. Martin sat at a proximal distance to the entrance; he was the gatekeeper. The very instant that the curtain came down, the dome was plunged into pitch darkness. It was so dark that it would be a fruitless exercise to try to see one's hand even if it were placed an inch away from one's face.

Ayo felt completely blind in the absolute darkness. He imagined that was what they meant by the dome being a replica of one's mother's womb. Life appeared to have gone a complete cycle, and they were back to where it all started. "I suppose I have gone back to being an embryo again," he thought to himself.

Elder Agartha's words interrupted Ayo's thoughts. He found himself listening intently to what she was saying. The darkness wasn't a barrier to the penetration of her words. The elder's words carried on to everyone in the dome like they are light themselves. She said a prayer, thanking her creator, all her progenitors, and her mother. She thanked them all for the gift of life, and for blessing her with a name. She also mentioned her beautiful spirit name, Dancing Star, which served as her piece of identification in the spiritual realm.

Ayo's ears picked up the sound of something coming out of a body of water. The next thing that followed was the sizzling sound "wuussh," of water pouring on hot rocks.

Hot steam pervaded the entire dome. Ayo suddenly found himself struggling to adjust to the change in the atmosphere inside the dome. The simple act of breathing suddenly became an onerous one. Sweat was beginning to pour out of every sweat duct of his body. Just when he thought he was beginning to adjust to the change, a second dip and pull, followed by another high-intensity sizzling sound. More sweat followed. It went on two more times. After the fourth time, Elder Agartha sang an Apache song which she had learned from her father. After the song, followed by a brief moment of personal meditation, and the question whether everyone was okay especially first-timers like Ayo and Xia, it was time to raise the curtain.

With daylight now flooding the dome again, Ayo took the opportunity to examine himself. He wanted to see how well he had sweated at the end of the first round.

Before the start of the second round, an enamel cup containing cold drinking water was passed around. Everyone in the circle took a sip from the cup. Ayo made the important observation that the life-celebrating circle did not discriminate against anyone. In fact, there was no room for discrimination. The group saw itself as many human embryos cohabiting a single womb. The eleven of them were children of one mother, one cup, one family. The second and third rounds went the same way as the first. Ayo has become accustomed to the routine.

The fourth and final round of sweat started like the previous three. But this time, there were thirty-two hot grandfathers in the pit. Elder Agartha, like in previous times, splashed the hot rocks with water using the evergreen branch four times. The heat this time seemed to, at least to Ayo, have increased by some notches. "Why is this so?" He

pondered. "I suppose it's because there are more rocks this time."

The participants, before entering the fourth round had been informed that they would all take turns to splash the hot rocks. Elder Agatha called Ayo from the pitch darkness in the dome by his name to indicate that she was handing over the bucket of medicinal water to him.

Ayo groped in the darkness for the almost-full bucket of medicinal water. He touched the metallic rim and lifted the bucket towards himself with both his sweaty hands. Thanks to a few embers, he was able to sense the position of the pit. He did the first splash and was amazed at the sizzling sound that followed. He felt a sense of pride for being the facilitator of the heat. He had no time to think about how his body was responding; he was focused on doing the splashing correctly without accidentally overturning the bucket. After the fourth time, he passed it on to the next male sitting to his left. Ayo quietly retreated to his original position. He tried like several other times during the sweat to wrap his arms around his two raised knees. Again, like at former times, his effort was greeted with failure because of the slippery state of his entire body. Therefore, he resorted to dropping his arms to his sides with both his palms on the carpeted floor.

It suddenly happened when the third person away from him was doing the splashing. The steamy heat was excruciating. He tried to raise his head higher, with the hope of discovering a pocket of cool air above the level of the heat. But like a pilot hoping to fly higher than a stormy cloud only to discover more turbulence so was Ayo. The heat seemed to rise all the way to the heavens. He decided to calm down and pray that it

would all be over soon. No sooner had he managed to calm down that he had an out-of-body experience.

"Ayo! Ayo!" The young woman in her late twenties called. "Wake up! You will be late for school if you don't get up right away!" She gently tapped the ten-year-old on his left foot after exposing it by first pushing aside his blanket.

"Huumm!" was the only sound that the little boy made, as he stretched his lean frame. He groped for the blanket without opening his eyes. His mother quickly pulled back the blanket and away from the reach of the small groping hands.

"I need you to get up! Your bathing water is already in the bathroom!"

"No, mom, I don't feel like going to school today, I am feeling sick." The boy complained. "I think I have a fever." He coiled himself into a fetal position since he couldn't get back his blanket.

Anike felt for the boy's neck using the back of her right hand. Sure enough, he was already running a temperature. Her fears from the previous night before retiring to bed was confirmed. Ayo wasn't his usual bubbling self after he came back from school the previous afternoon. He didn't play soccer with his friends as he was used to doing each day after school. Rather, he napped all afternoon and was forced to wake up to eat supper. Now she knew for a certainty that her son was down again with malaria. She felt very sorry for him. She replaced his sleeping blanket with a more breathable two-yard piece of *ankara*. She called her neighbour, Iya Titi, to cancel their planned trip to *Ogbete* market. At intervals of between thirty and forty-five minutes, she checked on the sick child. Each

time, she felt his temperature with the back of her hand.

Thermometers were found only in hospitals and the homes of people in medical practice, not something commonly found in the average person's home. Feeling the neck and back of a person using the back of one's hand was also a good way of checking body temperature.

Shortly before noon, she brought Ayo an enamel bowl of *akamu*, and a plastic bowl containing four balls of *akara*. "Wake up and eat, my child," she gently appealed. She prayed that she wouldn't have to force-feed him.

"Okay, mom," the child responded drowsily. "But I want to sleep a little more."

"You must get up now before you become too weak to do so." Mom insisted.

"Okay," said the child, as he slowly pilled off the *ankara* wrapper. He gradually collected himself as he sat up in his bed.

"Will you feed yourself?" asked Anike, presenting him with a silver-coded spoon. "Or do you want me to spoon-feed you?"

Ayo accepted the spoon. He held on to it but didn't make any attempt to dip it into the bowl. In fact, he suddenly appeared to be dozing off.

"Come-on, wake up!" Anike scolded. The strong tone of her voice jolted the child.

Ayo handed back the spoon to his mother. "Please feed me; I am too tired."

Anike accepted the spoon. She scooped a spoon-full of *akamu* and directed it towards the sick boy's mouth. "Open up!" The child opened his mouth to accept the

akamu-laded spoon. Anike patiently fed her son who seemed to want to take a brief rest after each spoon.

"No more, mom," he finally said. He had only eaten about a quarter of the content of the medium-sized bowl. He made to lie on his right side on the bed, but his mother quickly stopped him.

"Not so fast! You should try some of the *akara*." She picked one ball of *akara* and handed it to him. Ayo accepted it. He had always loved *akara*. He bit a piece of the soft ball and chewed it slowly. Two more bites and chews, the first *akara* disappeared. Anike happily handed him the second ball. This time, it took some encouragement before he could finish the second *akara*. "You shouldn't be lying down right after a meal. Come with me to the living room and watch a cartoon video."

Shortly after 4 pm, Akin, Anike's husband returned home from work. He had been gone as always since 6 am. He made his way to the bedroom to take off his work clothes and to change into a pair of khaki shorts and a T-shirt.

"Ayo didn't go to school this morning," Anike informed her husband. "I think he has malaria."

Akin continued with his changing business appearing not to have heard his wife.

"Your food is on the dining table, and your bathing water is in the bathroom." She left her husband in the bedroom and returned to cutting the spinach on the kitchen counter.

After having had both his bath and supper, Akin went to the kitchen to get his machete. He didn't bother to check on Ayo. He simply knew what he must do about the malaria plaguing his son. "I will be back shortly," he announced to his wife as he left the house.

After walking a distance of about two kilometers from his quarters in the military barracks, he came to the bush area surrounding the Board Ammunitions Depot (BAD) of the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army in Enugu. He cut a few rough-looking barks from a cashew tree which he found in the bush. He also found a neem tree in the area from which he harvested some leafy branches. Because the leaves of a neem tree are very bitter to taste, and the bitter taste lasts longer on one's palms even after prolonged washing, he carefully made use of his machete rather than expose his palms to such acidity. After cutting down some of the neem leaves, he carefully used his machete to transfer the leaves into his small bag like a successful snake hunter would treat a trapped poisonous snake. There were also a few pawpaw trees in the area. All he needed from them were dried paw-paw leaves which usually fall off the trees still attached to their hollow leaf-bearing stems. He was in luck. He found enough dried leaves at the base of a few pawpaw trees. "One final ingredient," he muttered to himself. He walked the short distance to the administrative building of the BAD Unit where he found what he was looking for – lemongrass. He collected a bunch of the grass which was growing in front of the building. He did a quick check of his mental list again and was satisfied that he had all four items required for the *àgbo*. It was time to head back home.

"Boil these in the large cauldron!" He directed his wife, tossing the small shopping

bag containing the collected herbs into the kitchen. "Please make it fast. Leave everything else that you are doing and focus on this."

Anike picked up the bag and went about carrying out her husband's directives.

About an hour later, she found her husband and Ayo in the living room watching the 7 pm local news on the television. "The *àgbo* is ready, Baba Ayo."

"Okay, we will be out shortly; thank you." Akin turned to his son. "*O ya*, go to the bedroom, take off your clothes and join me in the bathroom." He instructed his son.

Ayo stood up on wobbly legs; he fell back on the couch landing on his bottom. "I think I am very weak, dad," he said to his father as they both made eye contact.

"Come, I will help you up." Akin guided his son to the bedroom. He helped him get out of his clothes and then led him to the bathroom. He sat Ayo down on a small wooden kitchen stool which had been put there by Anike. Akin made a quick dash to the front of the house where the cauldron was still boiling on the open wood fire. Using a small towel to protect his palms from being scalded, he picked up the cauldron and carefully carried it into the house, and straight to the bathroom. "Mama Ayo, please bring me some blankets!" He made it to the bathroom without an incident. He placed the cauldron on the bathroom floor and waited for his wife to arrive with the blankets. "Where are the blankets?" He called out to his wife, feeling impatient. "Don't let the *àgbo* go cold on us!"

"Here they are, sir!" Anike rushed in as she handed out four grey military-issued blankets to her husband.

Akin looked around the 6x4 bathroom space and directed Ayo to place the wooden stool in the middle of the space. He then placed the steaming cauldron directly in front of his now-seated son. The cauldron was only a couple of inches away from the boy.

Little Ayo knew what was coming. He was always prone to malaria, a common affliction in the tropics. There were two options for treating malaria in their home. First, they could treat malaria using traditional knowledge with herbs through sweating and drinking the bitter concoction. Second, they could go the way of orthodox medicine through the use of prescribed quinine tablets. The tablets were available in the Pharmacy Department of the Military Hospital. Out of the two options, Ayo preferred the sweat because healing was faster and he wouldn't have to put up with three sleepless nights of frustrating body-itching that always accompany the administration of quinine tablets. He belonged to the percentage of people who react to quinine tablets with severe itching which often lasted three days.

Ayo's thoughts were interrupted by the sudden darkness into which he was plunged. He was now sitting under the weight of four blankets with only the steaming cauldron as his companion. "Baba, this is too hot!" he was almost screaming from under the blanket. "I am going to die!"

Akin heard him crying out from under the blanket. He felt very sorry for his son, but he reminded himself that the treatment was going to do Ayo some good in the end. "Hold on son! It will soon be over," as he tried to throw in some words of encouragement.

Anike too heard her son's cry of agony. She had been pacing back and forth from

the living room to the bedroom and only stopping short of opening the door that led to the bathroom through the bedroom. What she wouldn't give to pull her beloved son from under the blankets. Tears were already streaming down her cheeks. She tried to wipe them off with the loose end of her *ankara* wrapper. She never seemed to be able to handle sweat therapy even though they had to do it about three times in a year since the time Ayo turned seven and became old enough to undergo the sweat.

Ayo cried and cried, but Akin didn't let him out.

The sweat lasted a whole ten minutes. Then, Akin removed all four blankets covering the boy.

Ayo appeared to be in a daze, short of hallucinating. His father took an empty bucket and diluted some hot **àgbo** from the cauldron with some cold water. His father gave him a warm bath using the mixture. After the bath, he was dried up with a white military-issued towel which had two green parallel and horizontal strips running through it.

Akin guided his son back to the bedroom. He sat him up in bed and offered him a half-full medium-sized enamel cup containing the black concoction of *àgbo*.

Ayo accepted the cup like a good child would, even though he dreaded the very bitter taste that would soon pervade his mouth. The little boy held the cup by its handle in his right hand. He took two slow deep breaths, brought the rim of the cup up to the space between his lips, shut both his eyes, and tilted the cup. He was overwhelmed by the strong bitter taste now resident in his mouth, but he continued to gulp down the content

of the cup. He had learned from experience that the best way to treat a cup of *àgbo* was not to stop drinking after one had started. Because to do so would mean to start all over, which may turn out to be an impossible task.

“Good boy,” Akin remarked as he supervised his son. He collected the now empty cup from him. “Lie down on your left side. You will be feeling very well in no time.” He assured his son as he tucked him in bed. He stood watch over the sleeping boy to study the pattern of his breathing.

“Is he sleeping?” Asked Anike who had been standing unnoticed behind her husband since he assumed the standing position.

“Yes. I think he has fallen into a deep healing sleep. Our boy is going to be fine by the time he wakes up. Make sure you have something ready for him because he is going to be feeling very hungry.”

Ayo saw himself flying over great oceans and high mountains, over sandy deserts and lushly green plains. Then he was flying through a deep canyon. He found himself flying towards a black hole at the end of the thoroughfare. He was like a drone in flight whose travel path and destination are determined by someone at the controls. He flew right into the black hole which turned out to be the doorway into a dark tunnel. His flight continued unchecked, and so did the dark tunnel. When light finally appeared, it wasn't anticipated. It wasn't like something that appeared at the end of the tunnel, but it appeared abruptly. It was like someone lifted a curtain. The dark tunnel in Ayo's dream-like world was suddenly flooded with light.

He opened his eyes. He realized that he was sitting half naked with only a pair of shorts in a dome. He wasn't alone. He also observed that he was pouring with sweat from every tiny hole of his body. He heard a distinguished lady sitting to his right ask that they all say the serenity prayer¹.

All eight voices automatically responded: “God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.”

1. Serenity Prayer by Reinhold Niebuhr <http://www.beliefnet.com/prayers/protestant/addiction/serenity-prayer.aspx>

DECONSTRUCTION

You want to construct
the perfect suicide.

There are as many methods
as there are people, and as yet
no one has ever pulled one off

with the correct amount of
style, panache, and that most
difficult of quantities...
grace.

After you burn your ear
in the kitchen, imitating
Sylvia Plath, the hose
slips out your driver's side
window, you awaken with
a headache, the volume of
Anne Sexton open on your lap.

You consider pitching forward
into the moon like Li Po.
Now there was a poetic ending.
Face first into the water reaching
for the unreachable.

But what if you don't drink?
or own a boat?
Hm.

The absence of a gun is troublesome,
an inconvenience really,
missing is the heft of oily steel mechanism
sure and swift transportation to
"the undiscovered country from whose
borne..." you know the rest.

But those are messy.
There is no style in a self-painted
Thanatopsis someone else
will have to clean up.

This is supposed to be poetic.
It's supposed to mean something,
to make the world split open and
everyone take notice,
think for a moment: "wow, that was art."
They're supposed to join hands
and sing Kum By Ya for that matter.
You realize it's all bunk.

It's none of that. It's just you
looking at the wreck of your narrow little dream
getting what you ordered out of life and
wanting to send it back to the kitchen.
Argue with the chef, the maître de, but
not the bartender. NEVER the bartender.

Oh, Li Po,
the bartender was your friend, wasn't he?
Your willing co-conspirator.
"A little more rice wine for the journey?"
Sure, why not? Lovely moon out
You should see it..."

I wonder if Hart Crane knew,
skipping off the Lido Deck
into the Gulf of Mexico
drunk on wine and rejection,
that it was a poetic tradition
he was joining?

And what about Berryman
off the Washington Bridge?
Minnesota's too far away...
there's not much beautiful
about being a sot, and
it's almost time for happy hour.
Anyway, and you shouldn't
keep your co-conspirators waiting.

—Allen Berry



**“Guess I do Look Rotten—Yust out of the Hospital:”
Female Psychological Turmoil in Eugene O’Neill’s
*Anna Christie***

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Introduction

An atmosphere of mystery prevails in *Anna Christie* because Eugene O’Neill seeks to dramatize the seriously disturbed psychic life of a former prostitute who pretends to be a chaste woman so that she would be easily integrated within the patriarchal mainstream society. Indeed, the play was primarily entitled “Tides and was copyrighted as the Ole Devil.”¹ From a psychoanalytic angle, both titles are significant, identifying the symbolic function of the sea as the epitome of the unconscious world. In *The Psychology of the Transference*, Jung compares the unconscious to the sea by defining it as “an island surrounding itself with the sea and unlike the sea itself, the unconscious yields an endless and self-replenishing abundance of living creatures, a wealth beyond our fathoming.”²

The profound nature of the unconscious self resembles the depth of the sea. In fact, “the

1. Egil Tornqvist. *Eugene O’Neill: A Playwright’s Theatre*. New Heaven: Yale University Press, (1999), p. 89.

2. Jung. *The Psychology of the Transference*. London: Routledge, (2013), p. 177.

sea, as symbol of the... unconscious has not real boundaries.”³ Ineffable, the unconscious goes beyond our understanding because of its psychological complexes. In the play, complexity is created because of the constant struggle between Anna’s outer self and the tumultuous inner one. The sea functions as a metaphor for Anna’s unconscious sphere, which centers on her longing for a purified soul. Anna’s confused female psyche, her desire to forge an ideal mask of idealization and her fall into psychological troubles because of prostitution, also add dramatic intensity to the play.

The Female Social Burden

The duality between misleading appearances and the complex interior world is the source of the play’s dramatic intensity. This dichotomy is made conspicuous from the very beginning of *Anna Christie* through the physical delineation of the heroine whose “youthful face is already hard and cynical beneath its layer of make-up. Her clothes are the tawdry finery of peasant stock turned prostitute” (Act 1, 73). Despite her young age, Anna is obviously life-weary and her beauty is extinguished. Her weariness emanates from the fear of being socially denigrated inside her strict patriarchal milieu where a raped woman and a former prostitute are secluded. She therefore puts a mask of idealization and pretends to follow social codes so that male characters will give her a high social position. Her fear of social judgment vanishes during her journey in the sea where her unconscious part is unveiled. As Jeffrey Nevid points out, “[t]he unconscious is like the large mass the iceberg lying under the surface of the water. It contains primitive sexual and aggressive impulses as well as memories of troubling emotional experiences.”⁴ Like

3. Ibid.

4. Jeffrey Nevid. *Psychology: Concepts and Applications*. Boston: Cengage Learning, (2012), p. 481.

the hidden part of an iceberg, Anna’s past is concealed, and her sexual relationships and the traumatic event of rape are buried.

“It’s Man all the time! Gawd I hate them:” Female Neurasthenia

In *Anna Christie*, the heroine’s neurasthenia is caused by her fear of being stigmatized by female stereotypes. Obsessed with curtaining her past as a raped girl and a former prostitute, Anna, faces the nightmare of having tarnished reputation. In part, culture helps to shape female neurasthenia. According to historian Robin Hallers, neurasthenia as “a reservoir of class prejudices, status desires, repressed sexuality [and] urban arrogance”.⁵ Anna is tired because she discovers that her father is a common worker and considers prostitution to be the best form of financial support. However, prostitution is forbidden in a patriarchal society where women are considered as “creatures inferior to men yet somehow akin to angels.”⁶ Anna’s neurasthenic tendencies are noticeable when she yells: “I am tired to death, I need a rest, I don’t see much chance of getting it” (Act 1, 84). Anna becomes nervous and feels responsible for supporting her father financially, but she is also concerned about her social reputation and regrets the disrespect of the socially invented angelic female qualities. When her father complains about his psychological ill-being, she tells him that she is sicker than him. He explains: “Ay work on land long time as yanitor.... Ay got dis yob cause Ay vas sick, need open air. Anna [sceptically] Sick? You? You’d never think it” (Act 1, 83). Interrupting the father shows Anna’s amplification of her deep fatigue. Her depression is another aspect of her neurasthenia.

5. Louise Newman. “Health, Sciences and Sexualities in Victorian America.” *A Companion to American Women’s History*. Ed. Nancy Hewitt. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, (2005), p. 481.

6. Jerome Loving. *Lost in Customhouse: Authorship in American Renaissance*. Iowa: University of Iowa Press, (2005), p. 109.

In her interpretation of the differences between male and female neurasthenia, Charlotte Gilman Perkins observes that neurasthenia is evident in the “business man exhausted from too much work, and the society woman exhausted from too much play.”⁷ In *Anna Christie*, Anna’s father’s anxiety is caused by overwork and the daughter’s malaise is the outcome of playing many social roles. She is the devoted daughter who wants to bear her own responsibility at the expense of her body. In fact, she accepts to be exploited as a prostitute so that she can support her family financially.

Anna’s psychological disturbance is also evident in her overthinking. She is often “seated in the rocking chair by table, unhappy troubled frowning concentrated on her thoughts” (Act 3, 111). Anna is lost in thought because she knows that her male relatives will not tolerate her prostitution and will condemn her rape. She becomes neurasthenic because she believes herself to have been imprisoned in what she considered to be a rural asylum. Her father falsely believes that the farm was the best environment for her. She even tells him: “I wish you could have seen the little home in the country where you had me in jail till I was 16” (Act 3, 113).

In a similar vein, Gilman Perkins confirms that passivity and female domesticity accentuate female psychological sears. In *The Yellow Wallpaper*, she invents a female captive who is so deeply restricted that she fancies about the existence of some female ghosts. The caged woman reveals: “candlelight, lamplight and worst of all by moonlight, it becomes bars! The outside pattern I mean, and the woman behind it as plain as can be. I didn’t realize for long time what the thing was showed behind, that dim sub pattern, but now I quite sure it is a woman” (40). She fancies the existence of a woman in the wallpaper

7. Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *Human Work*. Walnut Creek: Rowan Altamira, (2005), p. xiii.

whose dream is to escape and go beyond the bars. This fancy denotes her longing for freedom and leaving the domestic jail in a patriarchal society where female domesticity is praised. Male oppressors in *The Yellow Wallpaper* ignore the psychological effects of domesticity and the role of passivity in igniting female adversity. In this context, *The Yellow Wallpaper’s* heroine is depressed because her doctor advised her to be bed-ridden. But instead of alleviating her pain, the rest increases the narrator’s nervous exhaustion. She affirms: “I cry at nothing, and cry most of the time...I am alone a good deal just now.”⁸ The narrator of *The Yellow Wallpaper* and Anna Christie share the same feelings of psychological and social alienation. Like Anna who was exiled at the farm since the early days of her childhood, Gilman’s protagonist is imprisoned inside the walls of her domestic sphere. Both women become neurasthenic as their thoughts about female independence are handicapped by male hegemonic agendas.

The common point of agreement between the doctor in Gilman’s novella and Anna’s father is their belief in the importance of home as a peaceful spot for female cure. Bette Mendl has pointed out that “Gilman suggested in a treatise in 1903 that home was viewed as something perfect, holy, and quite above discussion. This idea about home also seems to dominate the imagination of the Tyrone family” in Eugene O’Neill’s *A Long Day’s Journey Into Night*.⁹ In *A Long Day’s Journey Into Night*, the Tyrones condemn their mother for disrespecting the sanctity of home without recognizing that she is psychologically traumatized because of her loneliness and the unsettledness of their father. Their mother is so psychologically disturbed that she becomes a source of horror

8. Gilman, Perkins. *The Yellow Wallpaper*. Chicago: Mundus Publishing, (1990), p. 18.

9. Mendl, Bette. “Wrestling With The Angel In The House: Mary Tyrone’s Long Journey,” <http://www.eoneill.com/library/newsletter/xii-3/xii-3e.htm>.

for Jamie. He discloses to his father: “It was her being in the spare room that scared me” (Act 4, 133). Jamie is also ashamed of his mother’s morphine addiction and associates her addiction to drugs with prostitutes: “I’d never dreamed before any women but whores took dope” (Act 4, 143).

Like Jaimie Tyrone who believes that only whores use narcotics, Anna’s father believes only prostitutes use obscene language. It is clear that at her moments of nervousness, Anna uses uncensored speech and employs some harsh words to rage against a patriarchal society that turns a deaf ear to female exploitation or women’s psychological wounds. She blusters: “I’d get the hell out of this barge so quick you couldn’t see me for dust” (Act 3, 111). Notably, instead of understanding that Anna is irritated, the father denounces her violent tone. He wonders: “You vas getting learn to svear. Dat ain’t nice for young gel, you tank?” (Act 3, 111). Promoting the same patriarchal agenda, Anna’s father and the Tyrones do not recognize that social repression affects the female psyche. Anna is frustrated because her father does not give her the floor to speak her mind.

A rest cure is prescribed for Anna because she has some symptoms of neurasthenia. But when she visits her father, she is concerned whether he will provide her with respite or will add to her distress. Her confusion is made explicit through her skeptical tone and her doubts about her father’s intentions. She asks Marthy: “then you think he’ll stake me to that rest I’m after?” (Act 1, 77). Here, it is pertinent to remember that the nineteenth century American physician, Silas Weir Mitchell recommended the rest cure “to general practitioners at the earliest signs of neurasthenia,... to avoid the possibility of insanity

developing.”¹⁰

10. Cheryl Warsh. *Moments of Unreason*. Quebec: McGill Queen’s Press, (1989), p.45.

According to Charlotte Perkins Gilman “for men, neurasthenia meant passivity and lassitude, derived from the sedentary effects of the modern workplace; neurasthenia was marked by depression over the balance between work, family, and the inability to function as properly feminine.”¹¹ From a feminist vantage point, neurasthenia is a psychological malaise caused by gender inequity and the social pressure inflicted on women after quitting the domestic sphere. This view is supported by the female physician Dr Margaret Cleaves who confirms that nineteenth century women suffered from neurasthenia because they used to “fulfill the duties of wives, mothers and housekeepers with never ending social duties and under unhygienic influences.”¹²

This patriarchal classification of women intensifies Anna’s psychological dilemma. Anna, who played the role of a servant in the farm, is appreciated by Bruke who believes that women in the land are “chaste” and different from sea women who spend their lives roaming from one ship to another. Bruke idealizes Anna and classifies her as a “pure” woman when he is informed that she used to practice nursing. Strangely, despite the fact that women’s integration in the professional life was not appreciated by the patriarchal community, some jobs related to domestic duties were accepted. Between 1840 and 1850, the first generation of nurses appeared and some women moved from the domestic to the public sphere to show their female virtue. This virtue can be manifested through the association of nursing to philanthropy. As Carol Helmstadter, a specialist in the history of American nurses, puts it, “disease was considered a variation from God to improve the moral character of the sick person, nursing also offered an opportunity for

11. Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *His Religion and Hers*. Walnut Creek: Rowan Altamira, (2003), p. xvi.

12. Dana Becker. *The Myth of Empowerment: Women and the Therapeutic Culture in America*. New York: New York University Press, (2005), p. 85.

ladies to exercise their capacities for the moral improvement of others.”¹³ We recognize that nursing as a profession contributes to the moral uplifting of women. This moral idealization of nurses encouraged some women to create a network of sisterhoods. In this respect, the Nursing sisters of the Holy Cross was founded in 1841 and some nurses of the Holy Cross were idealized because of their moral goodness that is reflected in their philanthropic activities. One sister describes the virtuous mission of the Holy Cross’s nurses by announcing: “God’s instrument of good.... To spread the congregation of the Holy Cross wherever there is need of ministrations for the sick, care for the orphan, and training for youth.”¹⁴ These activities mirror the nurses’ piety and their use of domestic duties for the sake of creating a positive image of moral goodness.

Anna derides the traditional image of “ideal” nurses when she reveals her inner dilemma and how she has been exploited. She screams: “being a nurse girl was yust what finished me ... When you are only a kid yourself and you want to go out” (Act 1, 79). She is nervous because she was prevented from enjoying the phase of childhood; instead of rejoicing in the age of innocence, she was ordered to follow the social dictums which instill in young girls the idea of female submission and convince them to accept their state of thralldom. This social consideration of women leads Anna to the brink of depression.

O’Neill’s sympathy with the female nurse stems from the history of his family and his constant suffering because of his absent father. Indeed, the playwright observed the dilemma of his female relatives who were compelled to face hardships and to work for a living. A prime example of this dilemma is evidenced by O’Neill’s paternal aunt who

13. Carol Hemastadter. “Professionalizing Nursing in Nineteenth Century London.” *Nursing History Review*. Volume 11, (2003), p. 126.

14. Ave Maria. *A Story of Fifty Years*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, (2010), p. 214.

used to be a nurse,: “in 1898 she spent two months in Puerto Rico, nursing American soldiers in the war with Spain.”¹⁵ In *Anna Christie*, O’Neill mimes the dilemma of his female relatives and links female domesticity and female exploitation to criticize women’s suffering inside and outside the domestic sphere.

Rest Cure: A Pathological Therapy

In the nineteenth century, the rest cure was offered as a solution for female neurasthenia and intense nervousness. There are differences between the rest cure prescribed to men and women. In fact, when “Mitchell diagnosed neurasthenia in men, he prescribed a trip west, with as much rigorous outdoor activity and the recording of closely observed detail as possible.”¹⁶ The doctor advised men to be active, but he recommended another regime for women, one that was based on “absolute bed rest, absence of intellectual or creative activity, massage, over feeding and in a later refinement, electro therapy.”¹⁷ Chris follows Mitchell’s prescription when he advises Anna to have a rest: “you don’t never have to work as nurse gel no more. You stay with me, by golly” (Act 1, 84). He believes that overwork is the major drive behind Anna’s psychological malaise, being unaware of the role of female minimization has in intensifying her distress. He adds: “You work too hard for young gel already. You need vacation, yes” (Act 1, 85). This male interpretation of female anxiety is mocked by the female activist Perkins Gilman. She criticizes male misunderstanding of women’s anxiety and affirms that female psychological malaise does not lie in having “physical pain [but consists in having] just

15. Charles Royster. *Garrison Tales from Tonquin*. Baton Rouge :Louisiana State University Press, (2006), p. 1.

16. Christine Bold . *The Frontier Club: Popular Westerns, and Cultural Power 1880-1924*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2013), p. 59.

17. Ibid.

mental torment, and so heavy in its nightmare gloom that it seemed real enough to dodge.”¹⁸ Gilman insists that physical rest does not contribute to reduce psychological nervousness.

Anna also does not believe in the efficiency of the rest cure because it attempts to heal women physically and does not pay attention to their inner psychological strife. Her hopelessness emerges when she does not expect her father to understand her. When he promises to afford her with comfort, she answers: “[wearily] Gee, I need that rest! I’m knocked out. [Then resignedly] But I ain’t expecting too much from him” (Act 1, 77). Anna is pessimistic because she expects her father to be harsh and to ignore her psychological distress after learning about her past. It is obvious that the rest cure does not help Anna get rid of her psychological troubles. In reality, the rest cure’s “technique emphasized childlike obedience and its success was based on the authority of the physician.”¹⁹ Depriving women of any possibility of independence, its male centered approach shows that the doctor’s dictates are based on male authority. Denouncing Mitchell’s therapy and abandoning the rest cure, Margaret Cleaves, a female colleague of Doctor Mitchell, expresses female resentment against the way women were treated and defined as passive creatures. Her rejection of the rest cure also alludes to the call for replacing passivity by vigorous activity. Challenging Mitchell’s technique by declaring that women should play active social roles instead of being imprisoned at home, Cleaves recounts her own experience—“I have a physician under care now, this time a woman, who regrets piteously that she was not given something to feed her intelligence instead of

an unqualified rest cure”²⁰—and criticizes Mitchell’s technique, because it leads to female passivity, by ordering women to be confined to bed and to do less efforts.

Cleaves’ call for female dynamism is shared by Eugene O’Neill who used to encourage actresses to be active instead of resorting to rest cure as a therapy. For example, when actress Lillian Gish was in Germany taking care of her ill mother, “vacationing alone in Bad Nauheim and taking the rest cure,”²¹ she received a telephone call from the American drama critic, George Jean Nathan. “[T]he manuscript Nathan informed her, had been finished and O’Neill, impressed with Lillian’s earnestness in memorizing the roles...suggested her once more.”²² O’Neill’s request for Gish demonstrates his support of female productivity outside the home and his opposition to the idea of confining women to the traditional social roles. Female activity was also hailed by Gilman who announces: “what we need is not rest, the cessation of action—but more power and better engines.”²³ Anna, however, is not provided with “better engines,” because she remains lost in thought, even when her father provides her with physical comforts. She is immersed in psychological distress because she lives in a society where female prostitutes are incriminated with no opportunity to defend themselves. Accordingly, she resorts to the sea as a locus of psychological comfort.

Female Journey into Sea

The sea contributes to appease the tension of Anna’s confused memory. Anna

18. Perkins Gilman. *The Yellow Wallpaper*. Chicago: Mundus Publishing, (1990), p. 50.

19. *A Historical Dictionary of Psychiatry*. Ed. Edward Shorter. (2005), p 135.

20. Sander Gilman. *Hysteria Beyond Freud*. Berkeley: University of California Press, (1993), p. 300.

21. Stuart Oderman. *Lillian Gish: A Life on Stage and Screen*. Fairleigh: McFarland, (2000) p. 200.

22. Ibid.

23. Cynthia Davis. *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: A Biography*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, (2010), p 49.

enjoys her experience in the sea because it represents a break from her social chains and a return to the phase of innocence. Indeed, “the sea is one of the most nearly universal of maternal symbols passively the waters accept the fertilizing action, of the flaming radiations.”²⁴ It is a maternal symbol because life in the sea equates one’s floating in the water with the floating of the foetus in the maternal womb. Freud’s Hungarian associate, Sandor Frenzi links the embryo to the aquatic life; he notices “[the] amniotic fluid represents a sea interjected as it were in the womb of a mother...the delicate and easily injured embryo swims and executes movements like a fish in water”²⁵. The free movements in the water remind Anna of the pre-lapsian moment when she was blessed with peace, especially before the death of her mother. Before being an orphan, Anna used to be protected by her mother, and her cousins did not dare to rape her. Because the sea has the protective effect associated with the mother, Anna feels relieved and clean. She murmurs, “I feel clean and I feel happy for once yes, honest! Happier than I ever have been anywhere before!” (Act 2, 93). Her rejoicing originates in being freed from the guilt of prostitution. On land, Anna is concerned with social reputation and is petrified of being denigrated as a former prostitute. Comparing Anna in the sea and on land reveals that she prefers life in the sea because it is not governed by any social ties. She is thrilled by the sea journey that she contemplates: “It’s nutty for me to feel that way, don’t you think” (Act 2, 93). The sea endows her with an exceptional feeling of cleanliness, suggesting that she is unconsciously longing for purgation.

Unlike the land, “the sea symbolizes a dream like shelter against the corruption

24. Paul Shepard. *Man in the Landscape*. Jackson: University of Georgia Press, (2010), p. 112.

25. Sandor Frenzi. *A Theory of Genitality*. New York: Norton & Company, (1968), p. 56.

of modern civilization.”²⁶ The sea is O’Neill’s haven of spiritual freedom, a place to which one may elope from social manacles and a source of “release, peace, security, beauty, freedom of conscience, sinlessness... longing for the primitive and mother symbol yearning for pre- natal competitive freedom from fear” (Tornqvist 103). Thus, serenity is felt when Anna discloses to her father: “I’d found something I’d missed and been looking for....If this was the right place for me to fit in? And I seem to have forgot everything that’s happened like it didn’t matter no more” (Act 2, 93). Anna misses both physical and spiritual freedom when on land. Physical freedom is missed as she will be condemned because of her raped body. Finding solace in the sea and perceiving marine life as a healthy environment in which women are gifted with female freedom, Anna describes the beauty of the nautical world: “yust water all round, and sun, and fresh air, and good gub for make you strong, healthy gel. (Act 1, 85) The natural elements provide women with strength as they are allowed to be active, using their own visual and auditory senses while relishing the oceanic view.

When writing *Anna Christie*, O’Neill was also influenced by the Scottish travel writer Robert Louis Stevenson who compared life on a South Sea island to the state of virginity. Virginity presupposes the presence of innocence for which Anna yearns. In his *In the South Seas*, Stevenson refers to “the first experience [that] can never be repeated. The first love, the first sunrise, the first South Sea island, are memories apart and touched a virginity of sun.”²⁷ In other words, one’s first visit to the sea is like the experience of

a maiden before losing virginity. This innocence is experienced by Anna who cherishes

26. Volker, Paul Duane. *The Early Plays of Eugene O’Neill*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, (1974), p. 24.

27. Stevenson, Robert Louis. *South Sea Tales*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2008), p. 9.

lucidity at sea because it sends her back to the period of early childhood when she was surrounded with the love of her parents and the respect of her cousins. She tells her father: “You see many tangs you don’t see before. You gat moonlight and night, maybe; see steamer pass; see schooner make sail and see everytang dat’s pooty” (Act 1, 85). Anna enjoys the movement of the steamers because they have the opportunity to sail in a boundless space. Anna’s description suggests that she considers the sea as the locus of female freedom. She is obviously jealous of ships. This reaction is used by O’Neill elsewhere—as noted by *Mourning Becomes Electra*’s shipmaster, Adam Brant who observes, “women are jealous of ships. They always suspect sea” (Act 1, 44). The women’s jealousy stems from the mobility of the ships and their ability to roam to different places. This freedom and possibilities are denied to Anna who used to be stifled by social rules at the farm.

As well, the motif of the sea in the O’Neill’s canon “exhibits points of confluence with Baudelaire’s sea poems.”²⁸ “Les Fleurs du Mal” (1840) is one of the French poet’s famous poems in which the speaker addresses free souls: “Free man, you will always cherish the sea! The sea is your mirror\ your contemplate your soul.”²⁹ Here the speaker delineates the sea as a space for infinite spiritual freedom. With this in mind, Baudelaire is a source of inspiration for O’Neill’s Edmund Tyrone who undergoes the same experience of quitting urban life by being proximate to the sea. In *Long Day’s Journey into Night*, Edmund recalls the positive effects of the sea: “I dissolved in the sea, became white sails and flying spray, became beauty and rhythm,” he says, “I belonged without past or future,

28. Michael Manheim. “Eugene O’Neill and the Founders of Modern Drama.” *Maufort*. 47-59, p. 47.

29. *Ibid.*, 48.

within peace and unity and a wild joy, within something greater than my own life” (Act 4, 113). The sea is the initiator of Edmund’s elation since it contributes to his escape from the dismal reality of his family’s disintegration. In the same way, Anna flies to the sea as a refuge from the social approbation she fears, and the sea acts as a form of spiritual tranquilizer that helps her close her eyes to the ghosts of the past. She turns to the sea to forget her past as a prostitute and to cease feeling apprehensive about being denigrated by Chris and Bruke.

Female Politics of Resistance: “You’d think I’m a piece of furniture!”

A symmetrical element, strength combines female resistance with the loud sound of sea waves. When Anna’s lover humiliates her and mistrusts her by stating in a “[voice trembling with passion]: God’s curse on you! Clane, is it?” (Act 3, 135), she prefers to keep silent and does not offer any explanation. She orders him: “Get out of here! Leave me alone” (Act 3, 136). Her resistant silence is meaningful, because it expresses a furious reaction against the stereotypical confinement of women being “an alternative kind of truth, or sometimes, an alternative to anger the only kind—the only kind that would be socially tolerated. Women’s silence may be read as a strategy of resistance and choice—a ritual of truth.”³⁰ Thus, female strength is divulged by Anna seducing Bruke and convincing him in a silent manner about her sincere feelings and inner depth.

Love also is a universal and non-verbal language that helps Anna rebuild her female identity. In reality, “Anna loves Mat, an emotion as novel as it is powerful that it will

30. Patricia Laurence. “Silence as A Rutual of Truth.” *Listening to Silences*. New York: Oxford University Press, (1993), p. 159; also pp. 156-176.

complete her being.”³¹ Not only does he “complete her being”; she also completes his by helping him create a functional family. She promises him: “I’ll get a little house somewhere and I’ll make a regular place for you two to come back” (Act 4, 158). Her fervent desire to establish a united family captures the attention of Burke who admires her supportive behaviour. His admiration shows that he appreciates Anna’s inner richness instead of condemning her for her past. Successful at extracting herself from the faulty socio-cultural judgements, Anna displays the ability to shift position as she moves from the periphery to acquiring a significant and central place after dismantling the female stereotypes.

Anna’s strategy of female resistance encourages her to be engaged in a monologue in which she speaks her mind freely without being controlled by her male relatives. The theater critic Percy Hammond defines Anna’s monologue as “[a] fine speech with a wallop in every syllable, spoken in the racy lingo and flat monotonous tones of the Minnesota underworld.”³² Her monologue reverberates both her deep suffering from the monotony of captivity and her agitation against male suppression. In her monologue, Anna is heard “[speaking] to herself in a tense, trembling voice: Gawd, I can’t stand this much longer! What am I waiting for anyway? – like a damn fool” (Act 4, 145). She curses herself for being passive, assenting to patriarchal authority, and decides to be a decision maker, raising her sound of ire. Accordingly, she breaks into hysterical fits: “you’re just like the rest of them you two! You’d think I am a piece of furniture” (Act 3, 130). Anna rages at Mat and Chris for considering her a commodity and struggling over possessing her. Her

31. John Patrick Diggins. *Eugene O’Neill’s America: Desire Under Democracy*. London: The University of Chicago Press, (2007), p. 175.

32. Ivonne Shafer. *Eugene O’Neill and American Society*. Valencia: University of Valencia, (2011), p. 92.

hysterical reaction is an alternative to the absence of any linguistic tools that could help her exteriorize her inner turmoil.

In short, “[female hysteria] is the alternative to the male symbolic, a female miming that has no recognizable referent.”³³ Anna’s hysterical fits are part of her resistance to an authoritative male community which devalues female presence. Her mission to debunk female stereotypes is accomplished when she smoothly convinces Burke to re-examine his consideration of a prostitute as a woman with “a rotten body.” She deconstructs the stereotypes inflicted against prostitutes through the intermediary of perennial love. In fact, love is healing for Anna as it makes Burke tolerate her past. Hence, love is represented as a positive source of redemption for the former prostitute. As R. R. Khare remarks, “Without love, redemption is not enough. As a result, [she] cannot become an integrated spirit because integration is possible only through love,”³⁴

Love facilitates the social integration of Anna and her pure feelings prove her inner depth. After displaying a condescending behavior and exerting a certain male power over Anna, Burke evaluates the former prostitute’s emotional profoundness. He is among the romantics who believe that “[a prostitute] embodied the belief that love can purify the impure and cleanse the unclean.”³⁵ In this respect, Burke informs Anna: “If I was believing that you’d never had love for any other man in the world but me- I could be forgetting, the rest” (Act 4, 153). Burke’s revelation redeems Anna socially. She and Burke are turned into kindred spirits enkindled by the glow of everlasting love. O’Neill’s repositioning of Burke from being dominant to considering Anna as an equal partner marks his heroine’s

33. Jill Ehnenn. *Women’s Literary Collaboration*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, (2008), p. 114.

34. R. Khare. *Eugene O’Neill and His Visionary Quest*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications, (1992), p.119.

35. Arthur Holmberg. “Fallen Angels at Sea.” *Eugene O’Neill’s Review* 20. (1996), p. 43.

social reconciliation. When Burke's position shifts, Anna has successfully broken down the male stereotype of prostitution as "moral perversity."

According to Arthur Holmberg, Anna's moral superiority encourages us to identify her as "a childlike noble pagan, victimized by a dogmatic society which poses as Christian. She is Christ against the disciples."³⁶ As a Christ figure, Anna's nobility and goodness are manifested in her behaviour and her emotional depth. She proves to be deeper than her lover Burke who superficially believes in religious scruples and forgets the importance of tolerance in determining moral wealth. Holmberg points out that "[t]his tradition which asserts the moral superiority of the prostitute over the self-righteous bourgeois who condemn her, reached its literary peak with Sonya in *Crime and Punishment*."³⁷ In *Crime and Punishment*, Sonya's inner charm emerges when she supports Raskolnikov in his moments of distress and forgets about his haughtiness. When he is psychologically broken, Raskolnikov finds "Sonia beside him. She had come up noiselessly and sat down at his side. She [gives] him a joyful smile of welcome."³⁸ Similarly, Anna supports Burke and accepts his Catholic culture (which is alien to her). Both Burke and Raskolnikov are captivated by female inner profoundness. Falling in love with Anna's inner radiance makes Burke propose marriage to her in a special way. Comically, he tells her: "I'd go mad if I'd not have you! I'd be killing the world" (Act 4, 157). This hyperbolic way of expressing his deep love for Anna signals a rebirth, for Burke repressed Anna in the previous scenes. The couple's union, despite their ideological differences, not only showcases Anna's strength but also guarantees her an interesting position within her community.

36. Egil Tornqvist. *Eugene O'Neill: A Playwright's Theatre*. New Heaven: Yale University Press, (1999), p.46.

37. Arthur Holmberg. "Fallen Angels at Sea." *Eugene O'Neill's Review* 20. (1996), p. 43.

38. Fyodor Dostoyevsky. *Crime and Punishment*. Clayton: Prestwick House, (2005), p. 465.

Conclusion

In *Anna Christie*, Eugene O'Neill revisits female stereotypes, defends female rights and calls for a better treatment of women. Anna experiences a long journey of maltreatment that intensifies her social and psychological dislocation while O'Neill deconstructs the stereotypical madonna\whore polarities when foregrounding his heroine's inner worth. Like Perkins Gilman, Anna also experiences the failure of medical discourse to endow women with psychological comfort. Neurasthenia is another common thread linking Gilman to Anna. Both women can be seen to be on the verge of psychological collapse when their interior strife is discounted and they are only defined as wheels turning the patriarchal machine. Anna can be considered as a tragic heroine as she spends the play struggling against social forces that misplace her at the margin of society, but her social tragedy ends when she finally succeeds in carving out a larger space for herself within the patriarchal community. Perennial love is the gateway to her social reconciliation. Her male lover reconsiders his misconceptions about women (especially former prostitutes) and ends with a more objective view about female identity. In final analysis, *Anna Christie* is a play that insists that a woman should not be defined in terms of gender stereotypes, but treated as an independent creature.

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246 Vol. 10.1 (December 2017)

ANOTHER DARK TOMORROW

'I am writing to you from depression, from a body
of black cloud through which a bird's shadow passes,
like a knife.'

– Bhanu Kapil, *Humanimal*

Sometimes the lights at the end
of the tunnel are out, the sound
switched off. Reflection is just
a reflection, or something coming.

Every tomorrow is a kind of quiet
as friends I've upset drift away,
tired of my anxiety and worry.
The way out stays elsewhere,

the winner is as distant as ever,
the winter is here. I am clinging
to black thoughts, as dark as
discontent, with no reason to be.

All I can think of is cloud although
it is sunny everywhere around me.
Why anxiety or depression, stress?
Each and every day is just as dark:

I can find the music but tomorrow
the silence hurts. Ask someone else
before filtered grey light or arctic night
surfaces in my panic and finds me

beyond the shadows I have hidden in.
Words and paint bewitched by despair,
I scream at the horizon, am looking for
a moment's calm, blue sky or saxophones.

It could be here but it is hard clinging on
to find release, coming up for air when
fire has gone out and looking drifts away.
The world drones on, unsure of why,

my words cannot express me; there is
no reason for sitting staring into space.
Our garden's overgrown, it is cold winter
everywhere and the stars are coming out.

—*Rupert M Loydell*



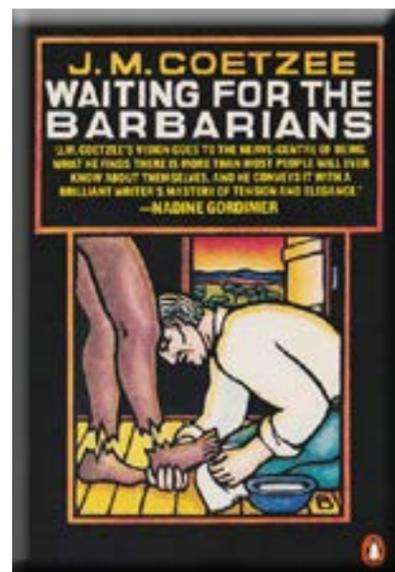
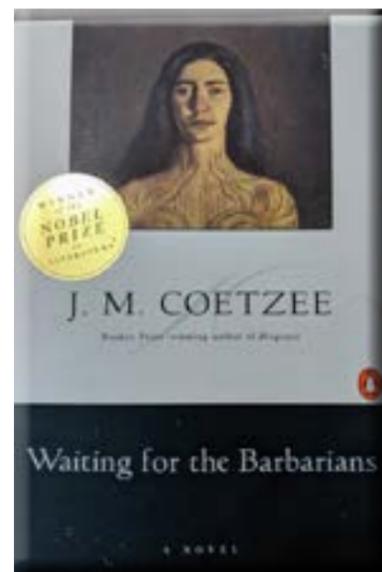
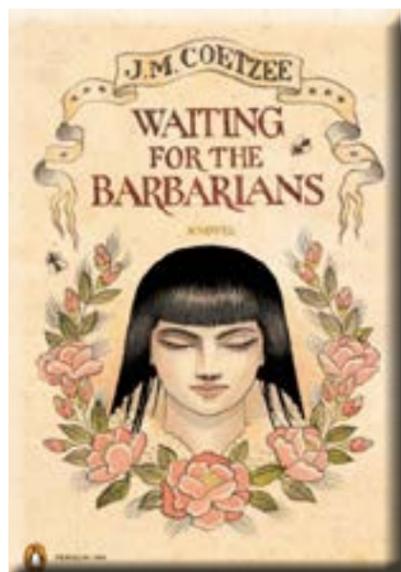
“The twisted feet, the half-blind eyes, are easily forgotten”:

The Collision of Trauma and Counter-Trauma in J.M.

Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians*

by Suchismita Dutta, University of Miami,

Coral Gables, Florida



The book covers of J.M. Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians* that I have illustrated above have the predominant presence of a disabled and silenced female figure. All the three images deal with the common theme of the effects of the Empire’s dehumanizing regime on a female body. There is something distinctly traumatic in these images; figure

1 depicts the barbarian girl’s face encircled by a garland. She is light skinned, has shiny long hair, and is seen wearing a thick white furry attire to probably shield herself from the brutal weather. However, her eyes are closed which indicates that she is either blind or is unwilling to look. In the second book cover, the girl’s eyes are open, her skin is darker, she is naked and has patterns drawn all over her bare body which could be indicative of Afro-tribal body art, a popular form of self-expression. In the third image, below Nadine Gordimer’s note of critical acclaim for Coetzee, lies the picture of an old white man wiping the tribal girl’s foot with a white towel, and there is a bowl of water next to him. The girl’s skin tone is much darker here stressing her specific racial identity. The window is open and the red-orange hue of the skyline denotes that it is time for sunset. There is a disturbing sense of continuity in all these covers, which is further highlighted by the broken feet of the girl. In fact, her feet are not just broken but separated from the rest of her body giving the readers an awareness of the deranged pornographic violence that they are about to encounter in the story. In this essay, I establish that although the absence of any spatial and historical specificity in Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians* disrupts the reading methodologies for understanding his novelistic approach, Coetzee’s position of “nonposition” witnesses the co-presence of the subaltern’s trauma as well as the counter-trauma that ensues from it which is encountered by the colonizer (Orwell 84).¹

The book covers chosen by Penguin Books for different editions of this novel offer an insight into trauma studies endowing possibilities to study the oppressor’s trauma

1. Orwell uses the term “nonposition” to indicate that critics find it difficult to attribute any positionality to Coetzee’s postcolonial authorship.

through the socially constructed body of the barbarian girl.² By assimilating the sufferings of a non-Western culture with that of its colonizer's, *Waiting for the Barbarians* opens avenues to understand the varying definitions of pain and recovery of a marginalized community especially in the discourse of postcolonial studies. Discussing ways of decolonizing trauma studies, Sonya Andermahr points out that "while trauma theory has undoubtedly yielded numerous insights into the relationship between psychic suffering and cultural representation, postcolonial critics have been arguing for some time that trauma theory has not fulfilled its promise of cross-cultural ethical engagement" (1). Her argument also highlights how "a narrowly Western canon of trauma literature has in effect emerged, one which privileges the suffering of white Europeans, and neglects the specificity of non-Western and minority cultural traumas" (1). J.M. Coetzee's novel dismantles this issue by allowing the readers to perceive simultaneously the trauma faced by the barbarian girl and the Magistrate of the Empire.

Investigating the madness of civilization that the Empire entails, Jane Poyner draws our attention to the Magistrate's dilemma because he neither identifies himself with Colonel Joll nor does he align himself with the tribesmen. "Yet in his proximity to the likes of Joll on the one hand and in his imprisonment and torture at the hands of the latter...the Magistrate's position of both the oppressor and the oppressed is experienced as a kind of double consciousness that can only lead to madness" (Poyner 54). While Poyner perceives the Magistrate's quandary as madness, I study it as the

2. See Sonya Andermahr's "Decolonizing Trauma Studies: Trauma and Postcolonialism"- Introduction" p. 1. Trauma studies emerged in the early 1990s as an attempt to respond to forms of human suffering and their cultural and artistic representation. "Born out of the confluence between deconstructive and psychoanalytic criticism and the study of Holocaust literature, from its outset trauma theory's mission was to bear witness to traumatic histories in such a way as to attend to the suffering of the other."

traumatic experiences encountered by the oppressor.

Figure 1 and 2 fail to capture the colonizer's predicament and only highlight the silence of the subjugated barbarian girl. In the first image, the girl's eyes are shut, which can also be interpreted as a state of conscious blindness; a state where she chooses to remain silent, and shuts her eyes to the harrowing experience of being governed by a totalitarian institution. In the second cover, the girl has a deathly, vacant gaze. Her expressionless face draws our attention to the word "waiting" in the title allowing us to presume that the readers could get caught up in the quagmire of eternal waiting. What is far more troubling to grasp in the third image are the dismantled feet of the girl. While the Magistrate seems to be completely engrossed in the act of washing them, the feet do not form a part of her body. The upper part of the girl is invisible, and since her feet are detached from her body, the readers cannot fathom if she is in pain or if she is experiencing physical pleasure upon having her feet massaged. The aim behind examining these three visuals is to establish that this novel alters the ways in which trauma theory bears witness to traumatic histories of race. The artistic representations of trauma on the book covers provide ethical responses to the sufferings that colonialism thrusts on marginalized communities as well as on the ones who suppress their mobility. My analyses reveal that having a silent, subjugated female on the cover of a powerful Nobel prize winning book is not merely directed towards attracting readership, but it proves how trauma creates silence and how silence creates new, impenetrable frontiers endowing agency to the subaltern, female "other" leading to a total disruption of the imperialist teleology. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak defines the term subaltern as a position in which

the right to social mobility is taken away. In her words,

If the thinking of subalternity is taken in the general sense, its lack of access to mobility may be a version of singularity. Subalternity cannot be generalized according to hegemonic logic. That is what makes it subaltern. Yet it is a category and therefore repeatable (475).³

The barbarian girl's social mobility is hindered due to two reasons; 1) due to her physical deformity which is caused by her broken foot, as well as her partial blindness, 2) her capture that results in the Empire giving her a choice between navigating within the colonial space either as a beggar woman kneeling "in the shade of the barracks...muffled in a coat too large for her" or as the "Magistrate's slut" (25, 73). While her social immobility seems like a state of subalternity, I argue that her silence is not her weakness because it leads to what I term as counter-trauma that is eventually inflicted on the Empire.

Through the course of the novel, the girl's muteness becomes a weapon which is used against the Magistrate giving her a kind of ruthless superiority during moments of sexual encounter as well as during her long and arduous escape from the Empire. "'What do I have to do to move you?': these are the words I hear in my head in the subterranean murmur that has begun to take the place of conversation. 'Does no one move you?'" (44); these are questions that intermittently echo in the Magistrate's head during their semi-sexual engagements that lead to no emotional fulfillment. I use the term semi-sexual because the girl seems impenetrable, and offers no carnal gratification, and so the

3. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's "Scattered Speculations on the Subaltern and the Popular." Here Spivak argues that "differentiations between subalternity and the popular must thus concern itself with singular cases and thus contravene the philosophical purity of Deleuze's thought" (475).

Magistrate visits the woman, called The Star at the inn to feed his sexual appetite. The girl's silence, her physical distortion echoes the Empire's guilt, and the vision of pitiless colonial soldiers beating her foot up to pieces and then almost burning her retina with a hot iron. The Magistrate gets caught up in an emotional swamp where he can neither draw any pleasure from the girl's calmness, nor have a moment of complete contentment with the woman at the inn. Therefore, his situation becomes deplorable as during a sexual act with the beautiful prostitute at the inn, he feels like he is losing his way like a storyteller losing the thread of his story (45).

Right from the beginning, Colonel Joll's mindless slaughter of innocent tribesmen and his view that, "[P]ain is truth; all else is subject to doubt" seem to have become naturalized within the colonial system of power portrayed in the novel. Against this backdrop where "thousands of deer, pigs, bears were slain, so many that a mountain of carcasses had to be left to rot," the Magistrate forms the softer and more reasonable side of the Empire (1). His sympathetic side is reflected through his actions during several instances such as, when he tries to tend to the bleeding tribal boy whose father is brutally murdered, his arranging for food supplies for the fisher folk who are taken in as prisoners, and his undertaking the responsibility of rehabilitating the blind young girl. In *Postcolonial Witnessing*, Stef Craps sums up the postcolonial critique of the Eurocentric bias of trauma theory and marks the difficulties faced in "constructing a thoroughly decolonized trauma studies" (1-12). Craps argues that despite its "laudable ethical origins, which sought to foster cross-cultural solidarity, trauma theory has largely failed to recognize the sufferings of non-Western others (1-12). Coetzee makes

the human, the non-human and even the ecological trauma visible through graphic descriptions of the mass extinctions. Considering the barbarian girl to be a member of a seemingly non-Western community, her manifestation within the hodgepodge of her tattered attire, her long eyebrows and her shiny “black hair of the barbarians” makes the girl an exotic object of desire (25). The old Magistrate is at once tempted to take her under his refuge. He offers her food and a place to stay, and in return he makes the act of oiling her naked body every night his daily exercise, the rhythm of which lulls him to sleep. But such pleasurable, physically intimate experiences come disguised as arcane sensations because the Magistrate never gets an adequate response or reaction from her.

The ritualistic oiling sessions denote dichotomous meanings. On one hand, it seems like a daily purgatorial venture where the Magistrate seems to be engaged in an act of cleansing himself off the Empire’s sins by taking care of the girl personally, on the other hand, these episodes symbolize a different kind of torture inflicted on the woman’s disfigured body where neither her consent is asked for nor is her satisfaction given any attention. At the end of every session, the Magistrate falls asleep and there is no mention of any sexual consummation, and every carnal sensibility culminates to futility. The Magistrate’s dark realization that, “[T]hese bodies of hers and mine are diffuse, gaseous, centerless, at one moment spinning about a vortex here, at another curdling, thickening elsewhere; but often also flat, blank” makes his experience of these private, amorous moments unapologetically blistering (34). Coetzee’s metanarrative legitimizes the fact that the Magistrate is a part of the Empire, he is a colonizer and therefore, he should also be punished for the Empire’s mindless slaughter of innocent tribesmen.

Coetzee’s good, old Magistrate suffers throughout the novel and fails to give readers a concrete response to colonialism and the apartheid. He struggles in an epistemic space between the fringes of the Empire and the existent barbarian community. This space however, belongs to neither the “history that the Empire imposes on its subjects” nor “the history of Empire laid upon them (barbarians)” (169-70). Commenting on the South African writer’s “fragmented national context in which positionality is always at issue,” David Attwell pens down certain questions that continually resurface in his mind; he asks, “[W]ho is the self-of writing? What is his or her power, representativeness; legitimacy, and authority?” (Attwell 3).⁴ My counter reading of the novel shows that the “power,” “representativeness,” “legitimacy,” and “authority”, specifically the authority to express trauma and disability in her own silent way, lay in the hands of the blind barbarian girl the moment she had access to the Magistrate’s bedroom. Her agency passes through her stillness, and leads to a moment of displacement in both herself and the Magistrate, ultimately proving the failure of imperialism’s dominating self.

During the Magistrate’s quest for self-atonement through the act of washing and oiling the girl’s body, the barbarian girl’s “otherness” becomes superior against his inadequate masculinity, so much so that it becomes a metaphorical attack on the Empire. Hence, the Magistrate’s ruthless colonial self is titillated by an unreactive female who he equates to a non-human animal, and an indigenous creature. He says to the girl, “[P]eople will say I keep two wild animals in my room, a fox and a girl” (34). For the first time, his kind and compassionate self is defeated by the loyal colonial subject in him

4. Analyzing the positionality of the colonized subject, David Attwell call’s *Waiting for the Barbarians* a “postmodern metafiction that declines the cult of the merely relativist and artful” (1).

who is comparable to Colonel Joll himself. The man who had earlier sheltered and fed an entire group of barbarian prisoners momentarily exposes his sadistic, monstrous side, and the Magistrate introspects in private unleashing thoughts that say, “I undress her, I bathe her, I stroke her, I sleep beside her- but I might equally well tie her to a chair and beat her, it would be no less intimate” (43). The blind girl’s desirable body at once becomes “ugly” for the Magistrate as he temporarily becomes a barbarian himself, uncivilized, and ready to barter his empathy for a successful sexual conquest with an ugly creature who is beyond his control (47). Hence the routine act of oiling strips him off every iota of peace after which he embarks on an almost impossible mission to cross the vast stretches of the swamps and deserts in order to unite the girl with the rest of the barbarian tribe. When the moment of atonement finally arrives, and the Magistrate and the girl stand in front of the rest of the tribe, he loses his purpose. The dormant colonizer in him comes alive, and he refuses to let her go. She at once begins to embody the subjugated private slut, the vulnerable beggar, the fox, and the taut oiled body, all of which belong to the Magistrate. Gripping her arm strongly, he implores her to rethink her decision; “[T]ell them what you like. Only, now that I have brought you back, as far as I can, I wish to ask you very clearly to return to the town with me. Of your own choice” (71). For the first time, the girl reacts, she smiles a sadistic smile, “shakes her head, keeps her silence” and blatantly refuses to go back to the Empire displaying an outrageous clash between her trauma and her oppressor’s counter-trauma (71).

In a study charting the development of disability studies, Casper and Morrison propose that, “disability studies has done an exceptional job of moving disability beyond

the body to the broader social, political, and cultural contexts in which bodies are located and which give them meaning” (“Intersections”). This view is especially true in the case of Coetzee’s novel because through the girl’s wound and impairment the historical origins of her trauma come into light while her disabled body gets socially constructed. Her barbarian self is the prototype of “the hysteria about the barbarians” which makes the entire colonizing force feel scared of “visions of the barbarians carousing in his home, breaking the plates, setting fire to the curtains, raping his daughters” (8). It is this invalidated fear that marks the beginning of Colonel Joll’s mad venture of ethnic cleansing along the fringes of the Empire. Hence, even the existence of the tribesmen is posited as being in struggle with the normative Western culture. Since the Magistrate neither believes in the apocalyptic powers of the barbarians nor approves of the Third Bureau’s decision of ethnic cleansing, he suffers from what E. Ann Kaplan calls “collective or cultural trauma” that “involves taking responsibility for injustices in the past... preventing future human-based catastrophe” (53-54).

The girl’s subaltern position is disrupted, the façade of her “barbarian upbringing” drops instantly and she takes control by attacking the colonial Empire with one refusal, “[N]o. I don’t want to go back to go back to that place,” she says (56-71). Perhaps this solves the mystery behind the fictional, impending attack of the barbarians on the Empire for which the Third Bureau led by Colonel Joll was appointed. The girl remains stoic throughout her transition as a tortured body, beaten, bruised and blinded by the colonial soldiers, and eventually oiled and pampered by another colonial subject, the Magistrate. Both these very different and almost conflicting acts keep her disability dominated under

the bondage of colonialism. Commenting on the metaphor of the injured body Susana Onega writes, “the African body is continually “on show” in colonial and postcolonial discourse: objectified, manacled, incarcerated, whipped, tortured, branded, categorized, starved” (202). Due to this reason, the girl’s silent mutiny in the end is broadly symbolic of the Empire losing against a woman which makes it a more humiliating loss. Susan Onega’s theory on the objectification of the African body is applicable to the idea of the colonized body in general. In fact, objectifying, feminizing and sexualizing a colonized nation, a colonized body, colonized desires is a common occurrence in colonial and postcolonial writing. For example, in Shalija Patel’s *Migritude*, Asian-African women wearing saris and jewelry become emblematic of the South Asian diaspora’s political reality in Africa until they are mercilessly raped and robbed by colonial soldiers. Examples like these echo the thought processes that Penguin Books might have followed while choosing book covers that portray the trauma encompassed by a silent body. Colonialism’s lingering control on postcolonial thinking makes it easier to imagine the colonized subject as a female, physically weak, and therefore conveniently controllable. This analysis explains why Coetzee chose not to give the barbarian girl a name because as Spivak points out, “subalternity is a position without identity” (476). Hence, the name of the girl becomes inessential.

By choosing not to speak, the uncivilized, savage girl negates her subalternism, and imposes it upon the Magistrate and on the fading imperialism. Egyptian-Greek poet C. P. Cavafy’s poem titled, “Waiting for the Barbarians,” ends with the following lines:

...night has fallen and the barbarians have not come.

And some who have just returned from the border say
there are no barbarians any longer.

And now, what’s going to happen to us without barbarians?
They were, those people, a kind of solution.

The poem as well as Coetzee’s novel end by establishing the broken subjectivity of the Empire and the barbarians. The Magistrate’s incomprehensible dream of a hooded girl building a fort of snow becomes a premonition that the wait for the barbarians will be eternal because there are no barbarians after all. The exodus of the girl and her merging with her tribesmen is a knell of the looming death of an Empire, and the death of the idea called barbarians.

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Shadows on the wall

Shadows on the wall
shadowed on a wall
scorching overnight,
complaining under the sun
a lover's heart hemmed in the dream's hennaed palm
a bela-bud of desire / the sickle of Marx .
Charm, let's stoop to game ,
the game of pleasure –of love- of lust- of labour - of pain
let's sustain whatsoever-the loss or gain,
barter the reality ,I'll bet a connoisseur
an aficionado of reality-of deadly hunger , the thirsty deaths
of ailing youths, and bandying age,
bandying about myths
of youth,
of olds
of odds
of sails
of nails
of cheeks

of breasts
of lusts!
Bet back my heart
I'll tell you
what you're closing for them.
Yea, I will yell
I will tell
That the system is so;
Cute
Cuddly and ravishing!
O rose bud –give me back my pace-
I will narrate your glory- TILL THE END OF DAYS-
You someone –stunning /ravishing/ dazzling/ fetching so on- so on- so on
Yes, bewitching of course!
Since your stricture sucks –hey Shadows on the wall!

—*R.P Singh*



Boxing Helena: An Obsession Worth Recovering

by Antonio Sanna, University of Cagliari, Cagliari, Italy

Boxing Helena is the debut film by American screenwriter and director Jennifer Chambers Lynch (b. 1968), daughter of popular director David Lynch. Jennifer had previously written *The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer* (a revealing text about the fictional early 1990s TV series *Twin Peaks*) and her subsequent directorial works are *Surveillance* (2008), *Hiss* (2010) and *Chained* (2012). *Boxing Helena* was first presented at the Sundance Film Festival in January 1993 and then at the Venice International Festival in September 1993, and it attracted much publicity because of the rumors about the fact that several popular actresses of the time involved in erotic films (such as Madonna and Kim Basinger) were contacted for the leading role and then renounced it. The film was not a success at the box office, especially after many feminist critics attacked its depiction of the female protagonist as victimized and as an object with no personal wills or desires. *Boxing Helena* is part of that current of erotic thrillers – including Adrian Lyne’s *Fatal Attraction* (1987), Paul Verhoeven’s *Basic Instinct* (1992), Uli Edel’s *Body of Evidence* (1993) and Phillip Noyce’s *Sliver* (1993) – that conquered worldwide viewers in the late 1980s and

1990s and provoked many shocked reactions and/or protests because of their explicit depiction of nudity and unconventional sexual practices as well as their portrayal of controversial female characters (especially rapacious, obsessive, psychotic women). Unlike his predecessors, however, *Boxing Helena* did not enjoy a fame and reputation lasting to the present day. A recovery of the film could be, however, a pleasant experience for both those viewers who are familiar with it and those who have never watched it.

The story begins with a flashback sequence set during the male protagonist's puberty, when he is a young blond boy, whose father is too busy with his medical profession and whose mother prefers the attentions of young men. The subsequent scene portrays the male protagonist, "Nick Cavanaugh" (Julian Sands), now a brilliant surgeon who works at his father's hospital, attending the latter's funeral. Nick lives in his deceased parents' luxurious villa, and has a very nice and thoughtful girlfriend, "Anne" (Betsy Clark). However, he is obsessed with "Helena" (Sherylyn Fenn), a very attractive and provocative young woman with whom he slept once in the past. After meeting her by chance in a bar, he becomes anxious and loses his self-confidence. Also, he starts following Helena around, sends her flowers, and even invites her to an exclusive party at his villa. Helena already has a boyfriend, "Ray" (Bill Paxton), whom she leaves the day before the party because she has decided to leave to Mexico. She is not interested at all in Nick and finds him pathetic, boring and annoying. During the party Helena makes a scene by bathing in the garden's fountain and flirting with a friend of the doctor. Nick witnesses the scene and his evident frustration and pain are discovered by his girlfriend Anne, who understands his fixation for Helena and temporarily leaves him. The following day Nick

tricks Helena into visiting him home to return her the passport she forgot at the party; she is enraged by his tiresome requests for attention and leaves his house in a hurry. Unfortunately, she is run over by a car and, when she regains consciousness, she discovers that Nick has amputated both of her legs and has secretly kept her in his villa.

Helena thus becomes a prisoner of Nick, who retires from his job in order to take care of her. Helena is furious against Nick and uses all occasions to blame, attack and ridicule him, particularly after the visit of a preoccupied Anne results in a disastrously brief sexual performance by Nick. In spite of her objectified position, Helena is verbally dominating over Nick, never hesitating to insult him and using harsh language and an aggressive tone to address him. After a furious fight in which she attempts to strangle the surgeon, he decides to cut both of her arms too, forcing her into a position of total dependence on him. This even intensifies the woman's verbal violence against him until he has a vision in which an Helena still possessing her arms and legs suggests him how to treat and arouse a woman sexually. Nick then invites a prostitute to his home and has a passionate intercourse with her while Helena watches from a semi-closed door. After this episode Helena becomes less bad-tempered and hostile towards Nick, but fate intervenes precisely when she realizes the reality of her need for him and declares her love to him. Indeed, her former lover, Ray (who had been suspicious of the surgeon's intentions all the time), discovers the couple while kissing each other and, after entering Nick's home, he severely beats the surgeon who collapses on the floor. Nick then wakes up in a hospital where he realizes that everything that happened after Helena's accident has only been a fantasy of his, a fantasy of male domination over woman probably induced by his

simultaneous consumption of medicines and alcohol, a fantasy involving all the people belonging to his daily life (in a similar way to Victor Fleming (et al.)'s 1939 *The Wizard of Oz* and Walter Murch's 1985 *Return to Oz*). Nick is told that Helena will recover from the accident and he visits her, but, terrified by a flashback of his own dark fantasy, he leaves without waking her up. The film ends with a nightmare of his that depicts his replica of the Venus De Milo exploding.



Helena (Sherylyn Fenn) and Nick (Julian Sands) during one of their frequent (verbal) fights (copyright Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer).

Boxing Helena is deeply interested in voyeurism, especially in its first part: Nick spies on Helena from the tree in front of her window while she undresses, he watches her photographs as a model and the camera lingers on the details of her body frequently. The viewer is therefore involved in the visual enjoyment of the female protagonist's body, especially through the use of slow-motion repetitive frames. Furthermore, several

unmotivated close-ups on Helena's face are dispersed throughout the first part of the film, thus further suggesting her involuntary appearance in the doctor's mind. After Helena is "boxed", however, the frequency of close-ups is drastically reduced and they are replaced by medium and large shots of her, thus almost confirming Nick's interest in her as a persona rather than exclusively as a sexual object. The film nevertheless offers a harsh perspective on men's possessiveness and sexist treatment of women: Ray tells Helena what to do and what to wear, Nick cheats on Anne and then forces Helena to be his possession by mutilating her body. On the other hand, *Boxing Helena* partly attributes the fault of Nick's misbehavior against Helena and his desire to possess her to an evident Oedipal complex (the surgeon's mother has died few months before the beginning of the story). This is revealed in a series of flashbacks and visions that depict Nick's mother as a severe man-eater who mistreats him and is never ashamed to appear naked in front of him. Simultaneously, Helena is represented as a strong, selfish, malignant and voluptuous woman, who refuses to comply with men's desires until the end of the narrative. Unfortunately, this would seem to allow a chauvinist spectator to justify her imprisonment and the mutilation of her body as a deserved punishment.

Both the protagonists perform their roles convincingly: Julian Sands manages to express with realism the doctor's fixation (especially in those sequences he is suffering from jealousy) as well as his insecurities, which would rather suit to an inexperienced adolescent (he has to rehearse a phone call a couple of times before calling Helena and then he hangs up on her). Sherylyn Fenn excels instead in those moments of furious rage that her character vexes against the doctor. One of the greatest merits of the film are those

scenes which establish a clear parallel between the female protagonist and a caged bird or between her and the replica of the Venus De Milo statue present in the doctor's house. Noteworthy is also the film's soundtrack, which includes the seductive track "Sadeness" by Enigma, the enchanting orchestral piece providing the "Love Theme" by Graeme Revell and a series of opera songs by Puccini. On the other hand, an almost unforgivable fault of *Boxing Helena* derives from the fact that the device of the dream narrative is revealed too abruptly and with a simplicity that almost make it hideous, in spite of the realization that actual victimization of the female protagonist did not occur. Many viewers will probably think that, since the narrative had ventured so outrageously far throughout its development, it could have represented at its end the ultimate consequences of the surgeon's obsession rather than denying them. Considering that it is one of the most extreme erotic thrillers of its time in spite of its finale, *Boxing Helena* is definitely worthy of being (re-)watched. Undoubtedly, it is a modern narrative that could be well set in contemporary days, since it describes an obsession of the male psyche that has not ceased to exist in a world that still contains many traces of sexism.

CAFFEINE NATION

A caffeine nation, born after sundown,
Skulking across the arc-light landscapes.
The insomniac parliament, shoaling for
cigarettes and waffles, holding court
in all night diners; we will create a
a new world, hidden from the oppressive sun.
Give us the slow mournful nightingale's call
for a national anthem.
Give us a streetlight illuminated landscape,
a jazz tinged, Coltrane carpeted world.

—Allen Berry



The First Ingredient

by Walter M. Young

The envelope lay on the glass table. Its contents stirred a great and terrible storm within me.

The emblem of the buffalo marked the original source of where the package came from. Buffalo Courier. It was a private service I used when important messages had to be sent discreetly. As of late, my uses for such a service have been many.

I removed its contents and skimmed through the letter. It was addressed to myself, Mr. Loci. The letter was from a northern agricultural town called Elliot's Lake. The writer was a pilot I'd met in my salad days, Tyler Tobacco. He confirmed there was someone who knew the plant of which he wrote of months prior.

After reading through it a second time, I place the letter down and sat in silence. A sense of relief weakened my knee. Or was it my search finally bore fruit?

* * * * *

About four months ago my wife became sick with a mysterious disease. Doctors and science could not save her. For days, I would watch her as she slipped in and out of madness. Some nights she would cry to sleep in my arms. We weren't ready for that part of marriage where *we do part*. I promised her I would find a solution.

It was then I spoke to a character of aboriginal descent who specialized in spiritual and herbal medicines. He presented me with three ingredients written on a pieces of birch bark. I memorized the elder's writing carefully. Within the hour the

birch papyrus with these three ingredients dissolved into woodchips. I was astounded, yet drunk with revelation.



I drove down highway ten later that day. The passing green sign informed me the town of Elliot's Lake was twenty minutes away. The journey into the north revealed a vast land of canola fields and Trembler trees. A blue barn rose up on the left side, where windmills swayed gently. A passing mail box read **MITH 82**.

The first houses and commercial buildings began rising up like sentinels guarding the north. It was a lazy afternoon when I reached the main street. I parked outside a diner called the Mystic Wok where I was supposed to meet the pilot, Tyler Tobacco.

The front entrance opened and I stepped in. The owl bear clock above the cash register read nearly four. No one filled the rows of empty booths. At the bar stand, a grey old man in a green vest gripped his menu pad. The scent of hot sesame seed oil and rice wine filled the air.

I ordered a black tea and waited for Tyler.

Forty ticks later, a stubby man with well groomed braids and sunglasses came strolling in. He didn't remove his dark sunglasses when he recognized me. Instead, the pilot swaggered to the barstool beside me and asked, "What the h'all do you want? I got five kids to feed." He then waved five fat fingers between our faces.

I asked him about the letter he wrote.

He dipped his chin before asking, "All these years and you're not even gonna greet me. Well, I did mention something about something. The chief of the Otah Indian Band has a plant like the one you spottin for."

When he told me where to find this chief, Tyler extended his hand. "When your done with this little pow wow come by the place."

I thanked him and left the Mystic Wok.



The chief of the Otah Indian Band had a notorious reputation as a politician in band legislature.

Rumours speculated his connection to gangland myths. Across the media venues, Kesekaw Morrin, was an ally of sustainable resource development. The latest circulations reported he had tested a renewable power source in his backyard.

Personally, I didn't know him. If there was one thing about anyone with the title Chief is they must have time for someone.

The street leading to the chief's house was a dirt road with numerous potholes and flanked with deep shrubs of red willow. A cloud of dust bellowed in my rear view mirror. I was most particular about the number of vehicles that were parked outside the chief's residence.

When I parked my car, I began walking toward a double duplex with white gables. The estate had a remarkable D shape drive way with a wooden tablet set in the granite foundation. I gazed in curiosity at the tablets' mysterious syllabics. Given my limited knowledge of the Inninew language I could not deduce its meaning. The lawn toward the river was well kept with occasional shrubs sprouting like green mushrooms.

As I climbed the wooden patio I noted an elderly woman and her daughter sitting beside the entrance. I asked them where the chief was.

The elder spoke an archaic dialect that was pre-residential school. Then the daughter translated what her mother said. The chief was in his bush garden, the daughter said. When she pointed where the bush garden was I thank her and proceeded.

The chief's bush garden was behind the residence. Its flat, rock pathway branched in several locations. The green mushroom shrubs I'd seen before grew around

the path ways. As I looked closer, the branches bloomed with a strange, jaded fruit. Its smooth and strong colour made me think it was a plum.

“*Taneke*,” a voice behind me said. “Who are you?”

I turned to meet the figure known and clothed as Kesekaw Morrin. He wore grey trousers and striped shirt with rolled up sleeves. His silver braids were taut and hung over his right shoulder.

I told him my name and asked if he knew of the plant specimen I described.

“I know of this medicine,” replied Kesekaw. “The grandcestors told me someone would come seeking in my garden. Would you follow me?”

The chief led me down his flat, stone path way toward the river. Curiously remembering the wood and granite tablet I had seen before, I asked Chief Morrin what it meant.

The aging chief smiled and said, “It is written in the syllabics of my people. It is a form of short hand which produces the textual equivalent of our language. Every time a new chief is elected a wooden tablet is set in the granite foundation. The legacy of my grancestors is also written to remind the community of past leadership.”

As we approached the edge of the river I could hear the rushing of water. The green mushroom shrubbery receded by this point except for one. Swaying near the grassy shores was a single shrub with pale branches. Hanging from a single twig was the plant I sought.

When I asked the chief for the plant he explained, “My daughter took care of this part of the garden. After she died the river began rising until it touched the roots. She told me it was a special plant and someone would seek it.” When the chief nodded his solemn red chin, he said, “You may have this plant.”

After I gave him a pouch of tobacco, I carefully placed the plant into a plastic bag and thanked the chief.

* * * * *

As I left the chief’s estate, I took one last look in the rear view mirror then at the plastic bag laying in the passenger seat as if it would disappear in a puff of smoke. With one of the three ingredients I now possessed the smiling face of my wife came to mind. Hope had not faded from me. I drove down the gravel road and continued my journey into the north.

* * * * *

How Ethan Loci retrieved the other ingredients remains in another story.



A Review of Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

**by Paromita Sengupta, Sovarani Memorial College,
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India, currently, is a land of chaos, of war, of many and conflicting identities, of contradictions, of oppositely positioned powers who claim to love her and crave to possess her, of vicious forces that have the dangerous potential of destructing it from within. Arundhati Roy wanted to so vigorously argue this idea in her much-awaited second novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, that she sometimes seems to lose her way in its rambling, maze-like, narrative. That sense of losing way, that experience of being burdened, that un-comfort, that un-novel like unfolding of events and characters, however, seems but part of a conscious literary strategy—the novelist's way of telling the complacent reader that all is not well with the world around, all is not perfectly structured, a myriad injustices are compounding all around us, and that maybe we cannot afford to ignore these issues with our snug little life because whether we realise or not, we are part of the becoming of the problem, and we can either be the unbecoming of it or our very existence itself may soon "unbecome."

The novel is steeped in political statements and hardly forgets to touch on any of the significant issues that have been part of the history of India in last thirty years or so- from the assassination of Indira Gandhi and the riots that followed it, the Bhopal gas tragedy, the Narmada Bachao Andolan, Godhra, 9/11, Kashmir, the Maoist rebellion, Dalit issues, the current saffron wave, Modi's rise to power in spite of Godhra (he's brilliantly satirised as "Gujarat ka Lalla"), the anti-corruption crew of Anna Hazare, Arvind Kejriwal (camouflaged as Mr Aggarwal): no one escapes Roy's attention- neither the recent Srinagar floods nor the deluge of spam SMS from Thyrocare. We are shown the harassment of parents whose children are suffering from cancer: "People crowded the counters of the all-night chemists, playing Indian Roulette. (There was a 60:40 chance that the drugs they bought were genuine or spurious.)" But Roy's greatest contempt is reserved for the superficial middle-classes, many of whom are her potential readers, represented by three "beautifully groomed, pencil-thin college girls" who walk past the protesters in Jantar Mantar mouthing: "Oh wow! Kashmir! What funnn! Apparently it's completely normal now, ya, safe for tourists. Let's go? It's supposed to be stunning." For a people who fear to take a stance on even one issue, to be faced with a writer who has a stance on everything, is bound to create discomfort.

Attempting to tell a "shattered story", the novel assumes many voices, many points of view. It begins brilliantly with Sophie Mol's question from *The God of Small Things*, "Where do old birds go to die?" Roy then takes us to a graveyard where Anjum lives "like a tree". The graveyard is a "mehfil", "a gathering. Of everybody and nobody, of everything and nothing. Is there anybody else you would like to invite? Everyone's

invited." The reader is then taken back in time, the first of the innumerable time-shifts of this achronological yet breathtakingly powerful narrative that defies any attempt to tame it with our reading. We are soon introduced to the little baby Aftab, who is both male and female, and who is, the first of the many metaphors of India in the novel. Aftab grows up to realise his "fitrat" (tendency), that he is not a "he" as projected by his mother, and he soon leaves the "duniya" (world) to live in the "Khwabgah" (literally – dream world). Aftab transforms into Anjum whose conflicted yet inclusive body-condition is a powerful metaphor for the multiple-identity ridden India. As pointed out by Anjum's friend: "The riot is inside us. The war is inside us. Indo-Pak is inside us. It will never settle down. It can't."

Anjum's life changes when she experiences Godhra. She gives up her flashy, feminine way of dressing to mourn for it and moves out of the "Khwabgah" to the graveyard in grey, masculine "*pathan* suit". In the graveyard she makes motley of interesting friends, prime among who is Saddam Hossein, a victim not only of caste-politics, but also of misinformation.

Like Anjum's divided soul, Tilottama's complex life is the other major metaphor for India in the novel. Tilottama seems heavily modelled on Roy herself. Her very birth is a disturbed history and the subject of conflicting versions. Her adult life is rife with complexities as well. She is loved by three very different men, all of who are charmed by her. If Tilo is India, these men are the various forces that lay claim on her - a high-ranking government official called Biplab Dasgupta posted in Kashmir, a journalist - Naga, and Musa- a Kashmiri, co-opted into militancy by his personal tragic experience

with Indian Army. She briefly allows them all in her life in some way or other, but she can truly belong to none. Tilo takes the story from Delhi to Kashmir- the beautiful valley steeped in blood and war. While hammering on the gross injustice of India in Kashmir, Roy does not suggest any simple separatist resolution. She is equally aware of the internal conflict of Kashmiris and of the terrors inflicted by the militants.

An intriguing and unforgettable character in this novel is Amrik Singh, the perpetrator of unthinkable hatred, posted in Kashmir, wreaking havoc on all who come his way, who ultimately becomes insane and kills his own family and also himself. He too is a metaphor for India. Roy pertinently points out that Kashmir is an “incubator for every kind of insanity”, and will eventually send India insane, make it “self-destruct”. The process has already started with hatred and disrespect for life now flowing into the heartland of India. The violence spreads like induction current.

Roy deploys various narrative modes - diary entries, news clippings, a very interesting as well as disturbing ‘Reader’s Digest Book of English Grammar,’ text messages and a very effective ‘Kashmiri-English Alphabet’. It is also crammed with various documents, diaries, reports, narrations and their re-tellings that emerge out of the most unlikely of places such as a freezer. In Roy’s world things and people often are what they don’t seem to be. They are not what they are. They are what they are not. With all these and the various metaphors, word play, satire, it does indeed seem that she is over doing it a bit, and this overdoing is symptomatic of the intensity of Roy’s politics which infiltrates the novel not only in every line but also in between them. The apparently careless and haphazard style is well suited to a story whose span is panoramic, a montage of contemporary India

in all its myriad social, political, religious and cultural crisis that subsist just beneath the seemingly smooth surface of everyday life.

Before Roy, some of the novels that have engaged with the tumult and violence prevalent in Kashmir, are *The Collaborator* (2011) by Mirza Waheed and *Our Moon has Blood Clots* (2013) by Rahul Pandita, both realistic and brilliant portrayals. *No Guns at my Son’s Funeral* (2005) by Paro Anand also was on the Kashmir issue, but toed the official Indian stance on the subject. Roy’s novel surpasses these earlier works in its sheer scale and encyclopaedic nature.

The Ministry, for all the problems it highlights, is not a pessimistic or dark novel. It suggests that redemption is possible and it may come from the margins. Lost children are recovered, lonely individuals come together to form a strange but beautiful family. All of it comes through assertion of personal choices, sacrifice and self-denial.

The Ministry of Utmost Happiness is not happy, comfortable reading. Neither is it going to go down well with a lot of readers. Unlike *The God of Small Things*, which mostly was a story of persons, *Ministry* is the story of a nation- a nation which is a many headed monster. Its telling can never be easy. It jerks us out of our comfort zone, makes us part of the problem and questions our very humanity, our very being. It suggests that another way of life is possible but we are not humane enough to risk it. It suggests that a ministry of utmost happiness may be created even in a graveyard, but for that we must first reject the “duniya” that we have created and nurture a space of everyone and everything in our hearts. That kind of proposition is not likely to go down well with all readers. Misplaced nationalists who earlier wished that Roy should be tied to a jeep must

be now clamouring for something far more gruesome for her for daring to point out that in the end, “Kashmir will make India self-destruct”.

Who after all likes to be told that they are doing it all wrong? Who likes to be reminded that the cosy, sheltered good life that we propagate on social media is but a bubble that may burst anytime? Who would like to face the truth that in the India that they think is “progressing”, rape, torture, death are everyday living realities for many?

CONTRIBUTORS

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