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SouthAtlanticReview@clemson.edu

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Biophilia in Thoreau's *Walden*

Judith P. Saunders

Thoreau's profound affinity with the natural world is central to his writing and has generated prolific comment. His simultaneously imaginative and investigative relationship to nature has been explored using a wide variety of interpretive paradigms, most recently that of ecocriticism, but it has yet to be seriously examined through the lens of evolutionary biology.¹ In particular, the concept of biophilia introduced by Edward O. Wilson promises to shed light on the intensely appreciative attentiveness Thoreau lavishes on the "living earth" (*W* 309).² Studying the human propensity "to focus on life" and to affiliate with a wide variety of living organisms, Wilson and other scholars have amassed a considerable body of evidence suggesting that this tendency is innate, an evolved adaptation in homo sapiens (*Biophilia* 1, 85). *Walden*, the book in which Thoreau describes his "life in the woods" and identifies nature as the irreplaceable source of human vitality, contentment, and purpose, speaks eloquently to the "biophilia hypothesis" now under study in fields ranging from biology and anthropology to psychology, cognition, and the arts. Recognizing Thoreau's multifaceted engagement with nature as the expression of a human universal enables readers to probe the adaptive significance of his radical reassessment of human purpose. His defiance of social norms, together with his affirmation of global kinship, reflects a coherent set of fitness-based choices.

Conditions prevailing in the ancestral environment served as the context in which biophilia could evolve. As foraging nomads, the earliest humans were fully integrated in the natural world: intimate familiarity with their physical environment (including flora, fauna, topography, and weather patterns, for example) would have been essential to survival. Many cognitive paths, affective preferences, and psychological responses were shaped in the crucible of environmental necessity, and modern humans continue to inherit these adaptations, although opportunities for expressing them have undergone radical modification. Thoreau lived well before principles of genetic inheritance and behavioral evolution were formulated or understood, but he clearly begins with the assumption that "man's relation to nature has a permanent character" (Drake 73); he speaks "to our common . . . condition as human beings, a condition he viewed as universal" (Specq et al. 2). His thinking, as naturalist, small-scale homesteader, proto-ecologist, and

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environmentalist, proves consistently congruent with the biophilic theory currently fueling research in fields ranging from biology and anthropology to philosophy and aesthetics—namely, that “the widest valuational affiliation” with nature “has conferred distinctive advantages in the human evolutionary struggle to adapt, persist, and thrive as individuals and as a species” (Kellert, “The Biological Basis” 42).

Habitat Selection

“The crucial first step to survival in all organisms is habitat selection,” as Wilson and others explain (*Biophilia* 106, Soulé 443-44). It is no accident that Thoreau describes at such length in *Walden* “where [he] lived” and what attracted him to his chosen site. He is interested in other people’s choices as well: his curiosity concerning cultures worldwide, ancient and modern, reflects his “paramount interest in man’s relation to nature,” his eagerness to study humans “in one kind of natural setting after another” (Christie 211). Just as nonhuman animals follow “inborn rules of behavior” to get themselves into the precise environment “for which . . . their anatomy and physiology is particularly well suited,” there is evidence that humans, too, are guided by “a set of ingrained preferences,” that in choosing living sites they are “responding to a deep genetic memory of mankind’s optimal environment” (Wilson, *Biophilia* 107, 113, 111-12). Archaeological evidence indicates that “for most of two million years” the savannas of Africa served as the original human environment (*Biophilia* 109). Its essential features are open space, abundant vegetation, well-distributed trees, water, and look-out points on nearby hills or ridges. To ancestral humans, such a site promised good hunting and foraging, together with water, fuel, and shelter; it included prospect points for descrying more distant game or approaching enemies (Heerwagen and Orians 145-46, Ulrich 81-82, 89-90).

Thoreau offers numerous descriptions of the place he chooses for his “experiment of living,” evidence that it contains critical elements of the optimal ancestral habitat (*W* 51). He builds his house “by the shore of a small pond” (86). The pond lies “in the midst of an extensive wood,” but Thoreau makes clear that this is a reforested area, with smaller, second-growth trees and plenty of cleared ground: “From a hill top near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills” (86). In some directions he is closed in by “the woods which surrounded” him, but in others he enjoys more extensive prospects “over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones . . . more distant moun-

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tain ranges in the north-west" (87). The house itself is located "on the side of a hill" and "on the edge of the larger wood"; a "narrow footpath" leads "down the hill" to the pond (113). There is "a narrow shelf-like path" completely "encircling the pond," as well (180, 179). Describing his daily walks, he indicates that numerous paths and routes connect his home-base to other places of interest to him. In sum, his chosen location corresponds very faithfully to ancestral preferences. It abounds with animal and plant life, as well as with the critical resources of water and fuel. There are paths to facilitate movement to other places, as well as vantage points from which to survey more distant territory. Much of the open quality of Thoreau's home-site is provided by the body of water at its center: the views beyond and across the pond create important visual space (see Ulrich 82). He notes with pleasure that in winter the frozen pond supplies him with "new . . . routes to many points" and, just as important, with "new views . . . of the familiar landscape" (*W* 271). In winter, his home looks more savanna-like than ever, with "snow lying deep on the earth dotted with young pines, and the very slope of the hill on which my house is placed" (278, 282).

Thoreau discusses the importance of habitat evaluation and selection at length in the second chapter of his book, "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For." Reporting briefly on his earlier attempt to purchase the Hollowell farm, he comments that people regularly make hypothetical decisions about suitable locations; they are ready "to consider every spot as the possible site of a house" (*W* 81). His insight points toward an adaptation that served humans well in the Environment of Evolutionary Adaptation (EEA): nomadic peoples needed to make habitat decisions repeatedly (Heerwagen and Orians 140). Thoreau's propensity to exalt the location he finally chooses lends biophilic energy to his discussion of his own selection process. He praises the site of his small homestead because it answers survival needs, enabling him to feed, shelter, clean, and warm himself, but at the same time he pays tribute to its intangible advantages. He demonstrates aesthetic appreciation of the site's features, large and small, pointing out that the natural resources he enjoys are beautiful as well as useful. The pond, for instance, serves him as a water supply, a mode of refrigeration, and a source of edible fish, but he also lauds Walden water for its "crystalline purity," its "remarkable transparency," its uniquely blue-green color, and the "rare beauty" of the "gold and emerald" pickerel that live in it (*W* 177, 178, 176, 285, 286).

Because water is such a critical element in human habitats, Roger S. Ulrich reports, "both modern children and adults evidence strong preferences for scenes with water and are sensitive to certain optical properties of water in landscapes, especially glossiness" (90). Singling out

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the pond for sustained attention—aesthetic and spiritual, as well as scientific—and attaching special importance to the qualities of purity and transparency he observes in it, Thoreau demonstrates precisely this kind of sensitivity. He further glorifies his home by associating it with paradisiacal places and times: the Golden Age, the Castalian Fountain, the Garden of Eden (*W* 179). By means of such comparisons he underlines the desirability of the site dramatically, confirming the foundational importance of habitat to the human animal.³

Studying Nature

Wilson argues that we inherit the urge to explore the living organisms around us, to learn as much as possible about their physiologies, life histories, and behaviors, from ancestors whose survival depended upon the acquisition of such knowledge. As an amateur naturalist, Thoreau demonstrates this particular biophilic inclination straightforwardly. In his close examination of animal and plant life, seasonal cycles and elemental processes, we see at work the human propensity to understand “the natural world as illuminated by the scientific method” (Wilson, *Biophilia* 81). A patient and curious observer, Thoreau salutes “the necessity of being forever on the alert,” together with “the discipline of looking always at what is to be seen” (*W* 111). He reports on the appearance and behavior of wildlife in the area, including (among many others) mice, squirrels, ants whippoorwills, jays, titmice, muskrats, ducks, and loons. He conducts experiments over time to discover how air bubbles become incorporated into ice; he keeps careful records of freezes and thaws, of high and low water-levels in nearby bodies of water: consistently he devotes attention to “sequence and verifiable patterns” (Burbick 71). He goes to considerable trouble to refute the myth that Walden is a “bottomless” pond, fathoming its depths from a variety of positions (“more than a hundred” individual “soundings”) in order to chart the conformation of its basin (*W* 289).

Frequently Thoreau suggests no immediate practical purpose to be served by the knowledge he acquires. He assumes that accumulating a store of information about the natural world, or at least the portion of it he inhabits, is interesting and valuable in and of itself. Such information may at some future time prove useful, as it does for the fisherman whose knowledge of insect life enables him to get good bait in winter, but even in the absence of pragmatic benefits Thoreau communicates his conviction that studying the natural environment is fundamentally important and compelling, that “knowing [other living creatures] well elevates the very concept of life” (Wilson,

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Biophilia 22).⁴ He shows that such study demands substantial investment of time and intellectual effort, and it is an investment he makes with unflinching enthusiasm.

The results of Thoreau's exuberant yet rigorous investigatory activities occupy a considerable portion of his book. Increasingly his work has been acknowledged "in mainstream scientific literature" (Buell 363). He provides, for instance, "a model of forest succession as an ongoing process with discernible rules upon which reliable predictions may be founded" and demonstrates "other properties of living communities [that] pointed straight toward the modern science of ecology" (Hoag 165, Wilson, "A Letter" xix). Consistently he strives "to observe, order, and describe natural phenomena in temporal sequence" and thereby produce "a theory or law that explains a natural event" (Burbick 71). "Next to us," he confidently asserts, "the grandest laws are continually being executed" (*W* 135, author's emphasis). His interest in discovering the principles governing natural growth and elemental processes sets him apart from numerous contemporaries who celebrated nature far less rigorously and systematically.⁵ Acquainted with pre-Darwinian versions of evolutionary theory (Sattelmeyer 78-92), he demonstrated predictable "receptivity to Darwin's *Origin of Species*," reading it in 1860 and making "extracts from it" (Buell 363, Sattelmeyer 89). "It seems clear," as David M. Robinson asserts, "that Darwin's depiction of the development of the forms of natural life tallied well with Thoreau's sense of nature's inexorable process of change, death, and renewal" (78).

Thoreau investigates a physical world largely tamed by human activity and thus radically unlike the EEA in many ways; his predominantly fearless attitude toward nature is keyed, realistically, to prevailing conditions. His exploration of nature includes appraisal, nevertheless, of its potentially deadly powers. Even in the settled countryside around Concord, long rid of bears and wolves, he reports struggles engendered by competition between and within species. He muses on the spectacle of "myriads" of creatures "suffered to prey on one another . . . tender organizations . . . serenely squashed out of existence" (*W* 318). The human race itself would be easily destroyed, he observes, by a small decrease in global temperatures: "a little sharper blast from the north . . . would put a period to man's existence" (*W* 254). He acknowledges nature's destructive potential, balancing its "less peaceful" aspects against evidence of its "magnanimity" and "abundance" (*W* 228, 166). Interpreting natural processes of decay and death from a "comprehensive perspective," he emphasizes "the perpetual energy and dynamism of nature" (Robinson 74, 78).

Aesthetics and Cognition

Much research in the field of evolutionary psychology begins with the hypothesis that the ancestral environment exercised important influence on development of human cognitive powers, including development of the aesthetic sense. That hypothesis is generally consistent with Thoreau's understandings and assumptions. The exploration of the physical environment to which much of his activity at Walden is dedicated reflects his certainty that "the mind of man thinks and develops by meeting and coming to terms with the world he lives in," that human perceptions conform to preexisting "cognitive frameworks" (Drake 90, Peck 82). Thoreau articulates such ideas most directly in connection with his appreciation of nature's beauty. Frequently he insists that the aesthetic pleasure conveyed by natural phenomena is as valuable as their practical utility. He gathers wild grapes "more precious for their beauty and fragrance than for food" and cherishes the "brilliant fruit" of the barberry even though it provides "food for [his] eyes merely" (*W* 238). He anticipates currently prevailing cognitive theory, namely, that "the mind is innately prepared to receive [the] symmetry and power" of natural phenomena (Wilson, *Biophilia* 61): admiring the "arching" grace of a local weed, wool-grass, he remarks that plant and animal life supplies "forms which art loves to copy" because of their "relation to types already in the mind" (*W* 310). He assumes that our capacity to respond to art is lodged "in our biology and in our relationship to other organisms" (Wilson, *Biophilia* 63).

Linking the human aesthetic response to natural designs, Thoreau states unequivocally that "a taste for the beautiful is most cultivated out of doors" (*W* 38). Moving his small assortment of "household effects" outside whenever he scrubs his floor, he comments that these "familiar objects" look "much more interesting" in this outdoor setting (113). This leads him to speculate that "these forms" (vines, leaves, pine cones, and the like) "came to be transferred to our furniture" as cherished embellishment because once we lived "in their midst" (113). He argues that we choose natural shapes as ornaments because of our long history of dependence on nature for everyday subsistence, that our aesthetic preferences are shaped by our involvement, as a species, with nature. Such comments are congruent with the theory that immersion in the ancestral environment exercised important influence on development of human psychological responses.

Universal Kinship

Foundational to Thoreau's natural philosophy is the conviction that he is biologically connected to all life forms. He expresses in the language of his day the idea, soon to be articulated systematically by Darwin, that humans are neither central nor special as a species, but part of a vast, global network of kinship. Without knowing the precise mechanisms of inheritance and variation, or of evolution by natural selection over time, he insists that he is organically related to everything on earth. Geneticists in succeeding generations have proven the validity of that claim: all life on the planet is descended from single-celled ancestors, and a verifiable genetic relationship therefore links even seemingly distant species (Dawkins 11-12). Thoreau rejoices in the fact of this profound and extensive connectedness, asking rhetorically, "am I not partly leaves and vegetable mould myself?" (*W* 138). Such declaration of kinship with the vegetable kingdom is not mere hyperbole, a pantheistically inspired figure of speech: throughout *Walden* he points implicitly toward the biophysical basis of the interconnections he describes. Lawrence Stapleton distinguishes Thoreau from Emerson and other nineteenth-century transcendentalists in this respect, noting that while his contemporaries base their philosophy upon "the Platonizing idea of correspondences," Thoreau maintains a naturalist's focus on "the minute, the unseen or unnoticed resemblances or differences among concrete objects" (167). Consistently he establishes "a solid bottom," a physical basis, for the "cosmic empathy" he expresses (*W* 330, Christie 201).

Thoreau's eccentric views on human agriculture can best be understood in the context of cross-species kinship. Instead of lamenting weather conditions unfavorable to farming, he takes an ecosystemic perspective, observing that if flooding rains should "cause the seeds to rot in the ground and destroy the potatoes in the low lands," there will be no cause to despair (*W* 131). Though destructive to potatoes, such rain "would still be good for the grass on the uplands, and, *being good for the grass, it would be good for me*" (138, emphasis added). He is convinced, clearly, that he has a stake in the survival of wild grasses: his well-being is bound up with theirs. Although he initially characterizes woodchucks as "enemies" and his efforts to eradicate weeds as "a long war," gradually he arrives at far less homocentric views (155, 161). The bean plants he has sown and hoed "grow for woodchucks partly," he concludes, and his labor as a gardener has "results which are not harvested by [him]" but, rather, by members of other species (166).⁶ He similarly declines to value cultivated plants over wild ones. He regards the agricultural revolution with ambivalence for many reasons, not

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least because it is founded on the faulty premise of human supremacy. The fruits and vegetables tended so assiduously by farmers are not intrinsically more valuable than the indigenous plant life they replace, that “rich and various crop only unrealed by man” (158). Thoreau does not hesitate to assert that all life forms have equal claim on the elemental resources critical to plant growth, such as sun, rain, and nutrient-rich soil. “The sun looks on our cultivated fields and on the prairies and forests without distinction,” he points out; “in his view the earth is all equally cultivated like a garden” (166). If wild creatures eat his crops, or if his crops should die and be replaced by weeds, “whose seeds are the granary of the birds,” his loss will be compensated by the sustenance gained by other, non-human animals whose survival is as important as his own (166).

Thoreau is motivated, evidently, by the principle now defined as inclusive fitness. As George Hamilton was the first to demonstrate, individual fitness cannot not be measured merely by personal, or direct, reproductive success (i.e., number of offspring); rather, it includes the reproductive success of all those sharing genes with the target individual (Daley and Wilson 28-32). The reproductive efforts of siblings, cousins, and collateral kin can raise appreciably the total number of genes an individual passes on to the next generation. Nepotistic behavior results from these facts: throughout the animal kingdom, individuals tend to help relatives, exhibiting a wide range of altruistic propensities, because assistance to relatives fosters the survival of shared genes. Thoreau communicates an evolutionarily expansive version of this principle when he identifies members of non-human species as kin: their fitness contributes to his. His conviction that “what is good for” other living things is also good for him demonstrates a highly developed sense of what Wilson refers to as “the phylogenetic continuity of life” and demonstrates allegiance to a central principle of biophilia, namely, that “we are literally kin to other organisms” (*Biophilia* 130). “From a molecular point of view,” as Richard Dawkins emphasizes, “all animals are pretty close relatives of one another and even of plants” (12).

Since “the relation between man and nature is reciprocal,” it follows that one need not rely solely on members of one’s own species to enjoy nepotistic benefits of community and companionship (Stapleton 171). As a naturalist, Thoreau investigates “interdependencies among species” and “mutual dependencies that made nature work” (McGregor 4). As a writer, he employs a variety of rhetorical devices to lend vivid immediacy to an idea that would be articulated by later generations of ecologists, namely, “all of the environment is a social environment” (Katcher and Wilkins 187); there is “continuous reciprocity between humans and nature” (Kellert, “The Biological Basis” 54). Thoreau

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moves to the woods, he tells readers, because he is “better known” there (*W* 19). He develops an “intimate . . . acquaintance” with the weeds he eradicates from his garden; he shares his habitat with “the squirrel tribe” (161, 65). He hikes many miles “to keep an appointment with a beech-tree,” and pine needles “befriend” him (265, 132). He packs his book with instances of personification such as these, reporting on his daily involvement with non-human others and conveying a “sense of the neighborliness of nature” (Buell 211). As Thomas Pughe comments, such “anthropomorphic tropes . . . may figure, even epitomize, our inevitably intermingled and interdependent relations” with nonhuman nature (256).⁷

Affiliating with life forms commonly regarded as insentient, like beech trees or pigweed, Thoreau indulges in humorous hyperbole to celebrate planet-wide familial ties, using metaphor “to relay not merely intellectual, but total experience,” to combine “scientific interest, environmental care, and aesthetic appreciation” (Drake 78, Pughe 254). He lends human traits to elemental forces and processes as well as to plants and animals, rejoicing in “the friendship of the seasons,” or finding his loneliness assuaged by the other planets in the Milky Way (*W* 131, 133). At times he reverses his strategy, describing human nature or human occupations in terms of animal behavior, plant growth, or seasonal cycles. He compares the cellar of his house to the woodchuck den it replaces, for example, emphasizing common features in the shelters constructed by members of disparate species: “the house is still but a sort of porch at the entrance of a burrow” (45). He enjoys having time for his “thoughts . . . to take root and unfold themselves” organically, like a sprouting seed (132). Metaphorically yoking human and non-human phenomena, he attempts to persuade readers that humans are neither unique nor isolated in the ecosystem. Even in apparently “wild” and “dreary” surroundings, he is supported by “the presence of something kindred” (13).

Walden Pond itself serves as the special focus of Thoreau’s figurative language: persistently he invests the pond with human characteristics. It is his “neighbor” and “bed-fellow” (*W* 86, 272); he refers to its “face,” “lips,” “beard,” “skin,” “lashes,” and “brows” (86, 311, 181, 294, 186). He likens the annual freezing and thawing of its waters to sleep or hibernation: in winter it “closes its eyes and becomes dormant,” and in spring it “stretch[es] and yawn[s] like a waking man” (282, 301). It commands the power, Thoreau asserts, of expressive emotion (“glee,” “joy and happiness”) and of mental activity: “liquid thought is welling up to its surface” (311, 193). He endows it, finally, with metaphysical awareness, describing the annual thawing of the pond’s water in terms of spiritual regeneration: “Walden was dead and is alive again”

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(311). At the core of his book readers encounter “an almost animistic evocation of Walden as a living presence” (Buell 208). In portraying his central symbol, Thoreau persistently harnesses the force of metaphor to compel recognition of far-flung family, to insist upon equivalencies and commonalities linking the human animal with other portions of the biosphere.

The Ecosystem as Living Entity

Inclusive fitness theory typically predicts that affiliative and nepotistic tendencies will be correlated with genetic closeness: the more genes shared, the stronger the loyalties inspired. As discussion thus far has made clear, Thoreau operates according to a generous construction of kinship, egalitarian in spirit, one not regulated by mathematical calculations of relatedness. Humans regularly expand their perception of kinship networks, in fact, when they begin thinking of a coalition, tribe, or nation as a *fraternity* or *brotherhood*. A related phenomenon is that of fictional or ascribed kinship, which anthropologists encounter world-wide. It is necessary only to extend an appreciation of relatedness slowly farther, step by step, to acknowledge even distant life-forms as kin.⁸ We may begin with “selfish genes,” but we can utilize genetic ‘selfishness’ to widen rather than to narrow the range of our affiliations; we can extend our nepotistic loyalties “progressively outward until we end with the whole Earth” (Rolston 381). From the perspective of evolutionary time, moreover, a narrow view of inclusive fitness makes little sense: “selves survive a little while; but all the while, really, the ecosystem in which the self lives is the fundamental unit of development” (Rolston 394).⁹ Richard Dawkins describes “the river of DNA flowing down through the generations, only temporarily housed in particular bodies” (28). Taking the long view, “it seldom matters whether . . . genes are inside me, inside my cousin, or inside a chimpanzee. Indeed, it may not matter whether they are inside me or inside an oyster or an ant” (Rolston 407). This is precisely Thoreau’s point when he cheerfully relinquishes his crop to woodchucks, birds, or worms: “ecocentrism replaces egocentrism” (Buell 155). He subscribes to the notion that “selves have intertwined destinies with the landscapes they inhabit” (Rolston 407). It was obvious to Thoreau, as Krutch maintains, “that man was a part of nature, not nature a part of man . . . so that the merely human was swallowed up in the natural” (186).

Thoreau’s pronounced propensity to assign feeling and intention to inorganic phenomena—water, ice, soil, rain, sun, wind—helps to demonstrate the holistic quality of his thinking. One species “merges into

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another, groups melt into ecological groups until the time when what we know as life meets and enters what we think of as non-life: barnacle and rock . . . and rain and air” (Kellert, “The Biological Basis” 55). His observations as a naturalist lead Thoreau to reflect upon resemblances he discovers across three seemingly disparate kingdoms. Waxing eloquent over the multitudinous shapes created in the flowing “sand and clay” of a thawing sandbank, he perceives essential commonalities in a wide variety of animal, vegetable, and mineral forms (*W* 304). He is struck in particular by the insight that a single “principle,” or design, appears to serve as the basis for thousands of structures, animate and inanimate. “Citing foliation in all its forms as the essential type of natural growth,” he exults to witness how the “idea” of the leaf repeats itself with variations in a bird’s wing, a coral plant, a leopard’s paw, a bird’s foot, and an ice crystal, as well as in a human hand, ear, or lung (Hoag 157, *W* 306). “Lava-like,” representations of all these forms are “bursting out” in ever shifting patterns of sand and clay: the base plan of all organic design seems vitally manifest in the soil itself (*W* 305). He puts forward a proposition resembling the Gaia hypothesis now garnering attention from ecologists: “all living beings together (the biota) behave as a single integrated system with properties more akin to systems of physiology than those of physics” (Sagan and Margulis 352).¹⁰

Engaging in linguistic playfulness and baroque elaboration throughout his much admired encomium to the sandbank, Thoreau grounds his conceit, like his insights, in observed physical similarities.¹¹ “While he does not speak the emerging language of natural selection or the modern language of biocentrism,” Robinson comments, “he is clearly beginning to conceptualize both these perspectives and consider their implications” (“Thoreau” 74). Saluting the diversity emerging from underlying unity, he goes on to personify “the earth”: “inwardly” it “labors with the central “idea” of leaf (*W* 306). Taking a panoramic view, as if he were looking down at the planet’s surface, he concludes that such a perspective would reveal “still vaster leaves,” with rivers forming the veins (*W* 307). The planet as a whole appears to be a macroscopic version of the shape that is everywhere manifest in individual earthly phenomena: “Gaia is simply symbiosis seen from space,” the “global life and environment, the planetary surface seen as body rather than place,” Sagan and Margulis similarly contend (352, 352). Thoreau regards the planet itself as a living entity: “the earth is all alive and covered with papillae” (*W* 302). He presents a modern view of the ecosystem, which is “as real, as ultimate, as any genetic self” (Rolston 396).

Arguing decisively against a homocentric approach to existence, Thoreau reminds readers that “the universe is wider than our views of it” (*W* 320). Even the planet we inhabit is but one in “a system of earths”

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(10). From first to last he urges us to make peace with our personal insignificance, to recognize the “somewhat inconsequential roles” humans play “in the larger drama of which they are a part” (Robinson 80).¹² Asking us to hoe our beans in the “light” of cosmic vastness (*W* 10), he demonstrates a “philosophical humility largely absent from the predominant religions and philosophies of the day” (Robinson, “Thoreau” 80). “All life, he feels, is one, and it is to the All, not merely the small human segment, that he wishes to belong” (Krutch 188). The recognition of universal interconnectedness can prove liberating, furthermore, because it reduces the importance of direct fitness. Since so much of the DNA in any one individual, even that in members of now extinct species, is passed on collaterally by all manner of distant relatives, the earth’s inhabitants—past, present, and future—in effect belong to a single, enormous gene-pool (see Dawkins 27-29, Wilson, *Biophilia* 43-44). Regarded as a multifaceted yet coherent whole, nature manifests an “unequalled fertility,” Thoreau avers, and thus “is likely to outlive all her children” (*W* 176-38). He rejoices in the reproductive success of his multitudinous kin, expressing implicit contentment with the high degree of inclusive fitness that he, like every organism on earth, inevitably enjoys.

Taking this “wider . . . view” of lineage enables Thoreau to assume a nonchalant attitude toward personal fitness and, significantly, toward ensuing competition in the social arena (*W* 320). Struggles to accumulate resources and achieve status may be motivated by proximate goals of various kinds, but the ultimate goals such struggles serve are those of direct fitness: mating and reproduction. Individuals who succeed in building wealth and reputation enjoy enhanced mating opportunities and command means to rear offspring successfully (Buss 22-27, 46-48, 59, 285-86). Thoreau’s indifference to individual reproductive success, which reflects his perception of the extensive kinship network linking all organic life, permits him to reject “the kind of life men praise and regard as successful” (*W* 19). He need not seek to acquire elite employment, prestigious alliances, luxurious furniture, imported foods, or fashionable apparel. From the perspective of “ecological and then evolutionary change,” as Wilson observes, moment-by-moment concerns of “biography and political events . . . shrink steadily in proportion” (*Biophilia* 144). The sources of Thoreau’s disaffection with the materialism, technophilia, and professionalism dominating mid-nineteenth-century America are many-stranded, inevitably, but his biocentric analysis of the human condition provides a firm foundation for his stalwart rejection of social rewards and encumbrances.¹³

Inevitably his disparagement of community values includes unstat-
ed defiance of typical life-history assumptions: he pays scant attention

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in *Walden* to mating and parenthood, issues generally regarded as central to human endeavor. In his encounter with John Field's large and hungry family, he indicates that his principles for living might well be consistent with providing for dependents, but he does not tackle the question directly.¹⁴ Biographers have sought to account for his silence on this topic, speculating that romantic disappointment, homoerotic yearnings, or sexual squeamishness, for instance, might account for it.¹⁵ Such explanations, whether true or not, fail to place Thoreau's attitude toward marriage and children in the larger context of the "kindredship . . . in Nature" he consistently celebrates (*W* 159). As Joseph Wood Krutch justly remarks, "Thoreau himself would have been astonished at the suggestion that a passion for nature was inexplicable except on the theory that it substituted for some other passion which had been frustrated" (33). He constructs no argument against individual reproductive efforts; he adopts a perspective, rather, from which these may come to seem relatively unimportant. Given the universal relatedness everywhere manifest in the natural world, genetic continuity is inevitable. It is planetary life as whole that is valuable, Thoreau suggests, rather than the continued existence of any one individual or species. The task of eco-proliferation is so broadly shared that the contribution of any one organism is miniscule. Affiliating with the "great central life" of the planet, he construes family and, by extension, fitness, in the widest possible sense (*W* 309).

In considering whether such insistence on universal kinship and corresponding disinterest in personal fitness might prove to be adaptive, prevailing environmental conditions must be taken into account. During the nineteenth century, the human population was experiencing such unprecedented growth that the species, together with its technological modifications of habitat, was beginning to threaten the well-being of the planet. Thoreau lived and wrote at a moment when it became possible for persons with scientific knowledge and imaginative sensibilities to realize the threat humans posed to the natural world and, concomitantly, to their self-interest as a species (see Walls, *Seeing* 187-88). In the decades since his death, human activity has precipitated wide-scale extinctions, polluted groundwater, lakes, and oceans, and punctured protective layers of ozone. Meanwhile human population growth has continued to accelerate. Modern environmentalists consequently support principles that elevate planetary fitness above personal fitness, emphatically endorsing the point of view Thoreau adopted on the basis of evidence available in his day (Wilson, "Biophilia and the Conservation" 39-40, Kellert, "The Biological" 65). Rolston, for one, argues that our species needs to be "released from an ethics that is nothing but selection for maximum production of human off-

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spring” in order to affirm “biophilia and concern for environmental integrity” (414, 412). From the perspective of twenty-first century readers, a nepotism divorced from egocentric weighting looks more adaptive than “fanciful” (Buell 128). Determined to “live deliberately,” Thoreau in effect proposes a conscious reconfiguring of evolved mechanisms for kin selection (*W* 90).

Competition and Conservation

A sense of cosmic kinship tends to reduce the intensity of competition between individuals and between species, at the same time fostering a conservationist spirit. Thoreau clearly is committed to biodiversity, a crucial component of twenty-first-century environmentalism, and he manifests a concomitantly respectful and protective attitude toward all life forms (Wilson, *Biophilia* 131-32, Rolston 410-11). His appreciation of the intrinsic, intangible value in every insect, shrub, rodent, and pebble dovetails as well with emerging awareness of the “nonmonetary . . . value” of natural resources (Ulrich 115). Refusing to “carry the landscape . . . to market,” he valorizes the non-commercial benefits it yields (*W* 196). Wilson credits Thoreau with having articulated “the first elements” of “a global land ethic” (“A Letter” xxiv, xxiii). Thoreau insisted, moreover, that “nature is not elsewhere, but everywhere, and all the land holy, not just a few last, best places” (Walls, “Believing” 24).

His noncompetitive philosophy is further buttressed by his often expressed confidence that nature’s plenty is inexhaustible, more than sufficient for the needs of all the earth’s diverse inhabitants. He tells his readers that it costs “incredibly little trouble to obtain one’s necessary food,” even in a New England climate, if one adopts “as simple a diet as the animals” (*W* 61). If one aspires only to self-sufficiency, losses sustained to other creatures during the growth or storage of crops become manageable. The individual who can “do with less” is “richer” indeed, better equipped for survival in a world of volatile natural forces, than one who requires more (23). Biophilic philosophy accounts in large measure for Thoreau’s conviction that the quest to accumulate resources in excess of need (“more warmth . . . richer food, larger and more splendid houses”) is unnatural and unsatisfying (15). Information he obtained through his reading about diverse human cultures, ancient and modern, further convinced him that “the basic necessities of man’s physical life had not changed much over the long course of the centuries; even the means of acquiring them had changed less than might be supposed” (Christie 215). In his discussions of railroad workers or displaced aboriginal populations, he offers evidence that the human

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animal's pursuit of material luxury has led to the many miseries associated with social and economic stratification, "the luxury of one class . . . counterbalanced by the indigence of another" (*W* 34).

Advocating a non-homocentric sharing of planetary resources, Thoreau clearly is convinced that he will not lose everything to weevils or woodchucks: he can afford to share because there always will be enough left for him. A committed locovore before his time, he advises readers to minimize the effort needed to sustain themselves by relying on locally available foods rather than "depend on distant and fluctuating markets" (*W* 63). He points out that it is cheapest and most efficient to plant those crops already adapted to regional growing conditions (63). Hence grains like rye and corn contribute significantly to his diet, and he proves by experimentation that he can make or obtain, on the spot, a number of foods that his neighbors import at considerable cost and inconvenience. He can make sweeteners from home-grown "pumpkins or beets," for instance, or tap local maple trees for syrup (64); he notes that he could get his own salt without traveling far. Repeatedly he identifies unutilized local resources.

He also makes use of wild foods, sustaining himself in part with nuts, berries and wild apples he collects in the vicinity of his Walden home; during his first year there he also eats fresh-caught fish. He is a knowledgeable gatherer, utilizing his familiarity with his habitat to exploit its resources effectively. Instead of regarding squirrels solely as competitors, for example, he respects them as allies in the quest for food and profits from their instinctive knowledge: he gleanes their "half-consumed nuts" because "the burrs they had selected were sure to contain sound [centers]" (*W* 238). He locates groundnuts and acorns in the vicinity, preparing sample batches in Native American fashion. He does not adopt either as a staple in his diet, but he is glad to discover that such food sources, currently unexploited, are readily available. His goal is to make plain the many unused or under-utilized food sources all around us in the natural world, to recognize the "promise of Nature to rear her own children and feed them simply" (239).

He goes on to remind us that cultivated crops are far more vulnerable to ecological disasters than are wild-growing plants. If "wild Nature" were to "reign" again, he warns, "the tender and luxurious English grains will probably disappear before a myriad of foes . . . but the now almost exterminated ground-nut will perhaps revive and flourish . . . and resume its ancient importance and dignity as the diet of the hunter tribe" (*W* 239). His cautions sound eerily like those E. O. Wilson would make in the 1980's: "we have come to depend completely on less than 1 percent of living species for our existence, with the remaining waiting untested and fallow" (*Biophilia* 132). Thoreau is determined to under-

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take such neglected testing, to explore the extent of nature's bounty. He would be unsurprised by the statistics biologists currently have amassed: they estimate the existence of "at least 75,000" sources of unutilized but edible vegetation, "and many of these are superior to the crop plants in use" (Wilson, *Biophilia* 132). For readers living in a natural world largely "cut to pieces, mowed down, plowed under, gobbled up," his experiment in simplicity, with its emphasis on appreciative investigation of local resources, appears ever more prescient, an adaptive response to environmental deterioration (Wilson "A Letter" xxii).

Nature's Mysteries

Despite the constant quest to investigate nature that has characterized humans since hunter-gathering days, our species is dismayed by the prospect of knowing or taming the natural world completely. This is an intriguing aspect of the biophilia hypothesis, one Wilson considers at some length. "The greater the knowledge" we acquire about the natural world, he muses, "the deeper the mystery" that remains—and we would have it no other way: "Nature is to be mastered, but (we hope) never completely" (*Biophilia* 10). Thoreau's views on this point mirror Wilson's: "At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable" (*W* 317-18). We require contact with "the vastness and strangeness of nature," he maintains (171). Life in towns and cities is tenable only because the world of nature remains accessible. "Our village life would stagnate if it were not for the unexplored forests and meadows which surround it," Thoreau declares: "we need the tonic of wildness" (317).

Even the spectacle of violent interspecies competition assures us of nature's "inexhaustible vigor" (*W* 318). Luckily, Thoreau reminds his readers, they need not go far from settled communities to find hidden pockets of "strangeness": "It is remarkable how many creatures live wild and free though secret in the woods, and still sustain themselves in the neighborhood of towns, suspected by hunters only" (227). Only our own apathy can prevent us from investigating and enjoying nature's rich variety: "there is an incessant influx of novelty into the world, and yet we tolerate incredible dulness" (332). Thoreau anticipates Wilson's contention that "our intrinsic emotions drive us to search for fresh habitats, to cross unexplored terrain," asserting that "we still crave the sense of a mysterious world stretching infinitely beyond" (*Biophilia* 76).

Nature as Restorative

Biophilia theory culminates in the proposition that humans need to foster a relationship with nature in order to enjoy full psychological and emotional health. “There can be no very black melancholy,” Thoreau asserts, “to him who lives in the midst of Nature and has his senses still” (*W* 131). Although we live daily lives that are very disconnected, for the most part, from the natural world, Wilson reminds us that “the brain evolved into its present form over a period of about two million years . . . during which people existed in hunter-gatherer bands in intimate contact with the natural environment” (*Biophilia* 101). From these ancestors we inherit an inclination to involve ourselves with the natural world, to learn about it, to grapple with its dangers, beauties, and mysteries. Examining the adaptive value of close contact with the natural environment from a “functional-evolutionary perspective,” Ulrich concludes that such contact fosters a “recharging of energy” and thus may “enhance survival chances” (98, 99). Even simple enjoyment of “the quiet motion of pond life,” research suggests, may promote “physiological relaxation” or “better problem solving” (Katcher and Wilkins 177). Some of the most compelling research supporting the biophilia hypothesis explores the psychological and physiological damage caused by humans’ increasing disconnection from nature, together with the manifold benefits to be obtained by deliberate acts of reconnection.¹⁶

Predisposed to associate nature with vital, even curative, energies, humans invest it with significance: “we are in the fullest sense a biological species,” Wilson explains, “and will find little ultimate meaning apart from the remainder of life” (*Biophilia* 81). One of Thoreau’s chief purposes is to communicate exactly this conviction. Persistently he compares natural phenomena to celestial ones, investing nature with transcendent significance by means of metaphor and analogy. Declaring that “Olympus is but the outside of the earth every where,” he assures us that the natural world we live in is, in very fact, supernaturally wondrous (*W* 85). “Reflecting the sky,” Walden Pond is “a lower heaven” (86). Its water is comparable to “the sacred water of the Ganges,” endowed by implication with holy and healing effects (298). Associating a humble New England pond with regenerative potency, Thoreau demands awe and reverence for the natural world in its most commonplace manifestations. His strategy is to insist that the ordinary is extraordinary: the ponds near his home are “great crystals on the surface of the earth, Lakes of Light,” more valuable than “the diamond of Kohinoor” (199). The common trees in his neighborhood, whether pine, or black-birch, or dogwood, are “temples” or “shrines,” inspiring “worship” (201, 202).

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Involving himself in natural cycles of regeneration, he, the human, is reinvigorated: like the thawing pond, he finds that he is “alive again.” Likening the “coming in of spring” to “the creation of Cosmos out of Chaos and the realization of the Golden Age,” he places the re-making of the natural world, which occurs each year, in a profound context (*W* 313).¹⁷ Marveling at nature’s energies, Thoreau expresses “the cathedral feeling” Darwin described in response to seeing the results of nature’s prolixity in a tropical forest: “wonder, astonishment, and sublime devotion, fill & elevate the mind” (qtd. in Wilson, *Biophilia* 27). Readers of *Walden* encounter the same expression of reverence and awe in Thoreau’s evocations of the natural environment in Concord, Massachusetts. Nineteenth-century versions of pantheism provide him with a vehicle to exalt the regenerative organic interconnectedness he discovers everywhere around him.¹⁸

Biophilia and *Walden*

Point for point, Thoreau articulates in his book ideas and values compatible with those Edward O. Wilson would gather together under the concept of “biophilia” more than a hundred years later. He expresses the foundational biophilic conviction that every individual needs a close relationship with nature, in all its wildness and variety, in order to thrive, and he further implies that this need is an inherent part of human nature. He argues in passionate detail that “improved means” of agriculture, industry, and technology have disrupted the original relationship between the human species and the natural world (*W* 52). As corrective, he undertakes an experimental re-immersion in nature, demonstrating how the experience contributes to increased emotional health, mental alertness, aesthetic pleasure, and psychic renewal. Investigating his immediate environment closely, he offers evidence that all living organisms and elemental phenomena are kin; he comes to appreciate his position as an individually insignificant member of a coherent ecological whole. He acts on these perceptions by extending nepotistic affiliations and loyalties beyond himself and even beyond his species, concluding that all life forms have equal claim on planetary resources. Thus he rejects the idea of homocentricity. Instead he highlights conservationist principles, particularly that of biodiversity; he models living simply and without waste, relying on local resources. At the same time, he promotes the idea of interaction and sharing across species.

Adopting “wider . . . views” of fitness, he celebrates a planet-wide network of ancestry and descent; in this larger context, he implies, personal reproduction is an irrelevant goal. The individual organism is

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merely “a sojourner in nature” (*W* 37). Thoreau’s evolutionarily expansive understanding of inclusive fitness not only supports ecosystemic health, it frees him from competition for status and wealth in the social environment. Ignoring or rejecting the reproductive goals motivating so much human behavior, he extricates himself from a host of societal constraints and directives.¹⁹ Biophilia provides the logical launching-ground for his socioeconomic philosophy, rendering explicable, in fitness terms, behavior that otherwise might be labeled maladaptive. Indeed, his powerful identification with the well being and continuity of the biosphere as a whole serves as necessary context for his most controversial social criticisms and personal renunciations.

Notes

1. In *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture*, Lawrence Buell offers a detailed though “not exhaustive inventory of Thoreau’s range of motives and analytical equipment in approaching nature” (134). He notes the emergence of ecocritical and eco-feminist interest in Thoreau’s work, making only brief mention of E.O. Wilson, biophilia, and “the evolutionary hypothesis” (9, 215-218, 386, 188).
2. References throughout are to *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau: Walden*, ed. J. Lyndon Shanley (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1971).
3. Sherman Paul discusses in detail Thoreau’s use of paradisiacal allusions to invest Walden Pond with divine qualities (“A Fable” 109-110, 113-115).
4. Reviewing Thoreau’s revisions to the original draft of *Walden*, Buell indicates that these “show an irregular movement toward discovery, retrieval, and respect for the realm of physical nature whose substantial reality must be honored in the face of the desire to appropriate it for one’s own use” (178). Commenting from a biographical perspective, Krutch similarly concludes that Thoreau moved “away from the transcendental assumption that the meaning of nature can be reached by intuition and toward . . . scientific observation” (175). Walls confirms and supports this assessment (*Seeing* 115).
5. In his rejection of the notion of spontaneous generation, Thoreau distinguished himself from contemporaries such as Horace Greeley, Louis Agassiz, and Ralph Waldo Emerson (McGregor 190).
6. This recognition of kinship with woodchucks does not stop Thoreau from later announcing a desire to “seize and devour” one “raw” (*W* 210). He explains his urge as principally a symbolic one: he is “hungry” to assimilate the “wildness” the animal embodies (*W* 210). Examining some twenty references to woodchucks in *Walden*, John Bird concludes that “respect” for this animal predominates (141).
7. Scott McVay defends the anthropomorphism often associated with biophilic discussion—and obviously inherent in many of the rhetorical devices Thoreau

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favors—as a legitimate component of “acceptable science” (17). He contends that “any kind of deeper truth about the fellow organisms with whom we share space” requires some degree of “intimacy in observation and reporting” (17).

8. For detailed discussion of the implications of planet-wide extended kinship, see Burghardt and Herzog: “Beyond Conspicifics: Is Brer Rabbit Our Brother?”

9. “Across a thousand years, the approximate threshold interval of *evolutionary time*,” Wilson points out, “individuals lose most of their relevance as biological units” (*Biophilia* 43-44, author’s emphasis).

10. The idea of Gaia initially was put forward by James Lovelock in *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth* (New York: Oxford UP, 1979). Scigaj and Simmons point out that Thoreau’s insistence on “the biocentric value of all life” proves “surprisingly congruent with the central tenets of ecofeminism” as well (124, 121).

11. This rich passage has generated comment from a variety of perspectives—psychological, historical, literary, linguistic, scientific, and religious; Gordon V. Boudreau ably summarizes and categorizes many of these (see 125-131). Andrew McMurry addresses the passage at some length (135-140), emphasizing that “for Thoreau, what counts is the *aliveness* of the whole planet” (138). According to Max Oelschlager, the passage illustrates Thoreau’s intuitive grasp of “fundamental evolutionary principles,” namely, that complex forms evolve from simpler ones” (164). Leo Marx discusses Thoreau’s “endless creation of new forms” here in the context of pastoral defiance of the machine age (262). Most intriguingly of all, perhaps, Boudreau points out that the passage seems to anticipate the final paragraph in *The Origin of Species*, where Darwin examines the teeming life represented on a single overgrown bank, noting the different yet interdependent “forms” it assumes (127-28).

12. In her analysis of Thoreau’s response to emerging evolutionary science, Nina Baym comes to different conclusions, arguing that Thoreau discerned and repudiated the negative implications of Darwin’s work: he refused to accept “the irrelevance of man in the universe” (234).

13. See, for instance, discussions of Thoreau’s economic philosophy by Leo Stoller and Michael T. Gilmore.

14. Krutch notes that “there is no evidence to suggest that Thoreau . . . advocated universal celibacy.” Thoreau acknowledges that a person with dependents “would need more than he did . . . but such a man would also . . . need less than he thought” (88).

15. Llewelyn Powys, for one, suggests that Ellen Sewell’s rejection of Thoreau’s marriage proposal “helped to dry up his already somewhat sapless nature” (55). Richard Bridgman also comments on Thoreau’s possible sexual timidity, “his inability to come to terms with the quite powerful feelings that were tormenting him” (119). Walter Harding points out that Thoreau “delighted in jibing at women and at marriage,” speculating that he “was able to sublimate his love for the opposite sex in a worship of the world of nature” (110, 104).

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16. Some of this research is presented and discussed in *The Biophilia Hypothesis*; see, for example, essays by Katcher and Wilkins, by Ulrich, by Orr, and by Kellert.
17. Many readers have discussed the centrality of the theme of rebirth in *Walden*, analyzing the analogies and metaphors Thoreau invokes in this context. See, for example, commentary by Sherman Paul, Lauriat Lane, Jr. (74-76), Stanley Edgar Hyman (28-29), and Walter Drake (72-74).
18. There is a discernible line of causal connection between Romantic philosophy, particularly its idealization of nature, and the changes precipitated in Europe and America by rapid growth in industry and technology. Emerging just as natural environments were undergoing radical degradation, Romanticism expresses a collective response to thwarted biophilia. It forms a critical part of the biocultural framework in which Thoreau's views take shape. Robert Sattelmeyer justly observes that "a thoroughgoing Transcendentalist naturalist would find it easier to accept organic evolution than special creation," including a "dynamic" rather than a hierarchical conception of nature (88). "Holism . . . pervaded romantic science," moreover, as William Rossi emphasizes (32).
19. Readers long have tended to dichotomize Thoreau's ideas, attempting to explain the "distance between the social and the natural" in his thinking (Cameron 24). He enjoys "two separate reputations," as social critic on the one hand, and as nature writer on the other (Krutch 287). Exploring the supposed "nature/culture opposition" in his thinking, readers wonder whether his work "is meant as an appeal from culture *for* nature, or as a reproach from nature *against* culture" (McMurry 121, 131). Viewed through the lens of biophilia, the relationship between these two thematic strains in *Walden* becomes much clearer. Thoreau "subordinates human presence" to an all-encompassing affiliation with the natural world (Cameron 154).

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About the Author

Judith P. Saunders is Professor of English at Marist College in New York State. Her published commentary addresses a wide range of literary figures and topics, including evolutionary analyses of work by Benjamin Franklin, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sherwood Anderson, Zora Neale Hurston, D. H. Lawrence, and Aldous Huxley. She is the author of *Reading Edith Wharton through a Darwinian Lens: Evolutionary Biological Issues in Her Fiction* (2009). Email: judith.saunders@marist.edu.

“Never Would I Be a Miner Digging in a Darksome Hole”: James Still’s Biophilic Perspective in *River of Earth*

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Although barely acknowledged outside of Appalachian literary studies, there is little doubt that James Still’s regionalist fiction deserves much wider recognition, especially its capstone achievement—the exquisite little novel *River of Earth*, a heartwrenching story of a Depression-era Kentucky family’s struggles for survival which merits comparison with the best work of Faulkner and Elizabeth Madox Roberts or Katherine Anne Porter and Bernard Malamud (Stoneback 7, Cadle 199). Appreciations of Still’s fiction have tended to highlight features such as its connections to the Nashville Agrarianism by which Still’s social and literary consciousness was molded, its pitch-perfect inscription of the speech patterns and folkways of the region, the shrewd and sympathetic delineation of characters who, notwithstanding their cultural “otherness,” engage our empathy as archetypal human beings, and its consummate literary artistry (see, e.g., Stoneback, Foster, Boggess, Cadle, Berry, Mayhall, Salyer). In his seminal essay “Rivers of Earth and Troublesome Creeks,” however, Still’s most distinguished critic H.R. Stoneback suggests that the ultimate hallmark of Still’s work is an “ecological wholeness” which grows out of his interpretation of the Agrarian Manifesto as an actual “design for living” (Stoneback 19, 9).

Rather than valorizing the lifestyles of a bygone Southern culture from the comfort of an academic armchair, Still chose instead to appropriate as his own one of its hardy survivals deep within the hills of Eastern Kentucky, with a century-old log cabin as the homebase from which he would submerge himself in the local culture and transmute it into literary art. Sustaining himself largely by growing his own crops—“sweet corn, beans, squash, okra, cushaw, tomatoes, cucumbers and cabbage,” supplemented by fruits and nuts gleaned from local trees (Still, *Wolfpen Notebooks* 20)—his self-sufficient existence in a cove “accessible only by eight miles of dirt road and two miles of creek bed” (Cadle 197) brings to mind immediately Thoreau’s comparable lifestyle at Walden, or William and Dorothy Wordsworth’s at Grasmere, or Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings’s at Cross Creek. Perhaps even more to the point, it recalls Aldo Leopold’s experiences on the Baraboo, Wisconsin farm which provided the model for his *Sand County Almanac*, com-

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monly regarded as a founding text of the modern ecology movement. Like theirs, Still's literary sensibility grows as naturally as a tree from its roots in a local ecoculture and thus, as Stoneback says, embeds an "ecological wholeness" which is its most salient feature and a promising topic for future research (Stoneback 18-19).

In this essay I take up Stoneback's invitation to explore Still's fiction from an ecological perspective, but first, an amendment to his key terms is in order. With the additional connotations furnished by the cognate terms "health" and "whole" (e.g., healthful living, wholeness of spirit), "ecological wholeness" is a playful but also substantial improvement on Karl Kroeber's seminal term "ecological holiness"—a coinage intended to capture the sacramental bond with nature that Wordsworth expressed in a poetic liturgy of "simple, joyous worship" (Kroeber 138). But in light of more recent research in biological and behavioral science, a term such as "biophilic perspective" might be more accurate and comprehensive, since the "truly primitive response to nature" (Kroeber 138) which informs Kroeber's "ecological holiness" or Stoneback's "ecological wholeness" can be better understood as a strong phenotypic expression of *biophilia*—"a human need, fired in the crucible of evolutionary development, for deep and intimate association with the natural environment, particularly its living biota" (Kellert 20).

First proposed by E.O. Wilson in 1984 (Wilson, *Biophilia*), the "biophilia hypothesis" is now a well-fleshed theory premised on the idea that biophilia meets the criteria for an ancestral adaptation, and is probably one of the deepest evolutionary taproots of human nature. As summarized by Stephen R. Kellert, one of the principal architects of the theory, "the hypothesis suggests that the widest valuational affiliation with life and lifelike processes (ecological functions and structures, for example). has conferred distinctive advantages in the human evolutionary struggle to adapt, persist, and thrive as individuals and as a species" (Kellert 42). Consequently, whether as something to be explored, hunted, farmed, worshiped, or simply enjoyed, the natural environment molded our ancestors' minds in adaptive ways whose traces are still evident—often in rather uncanny forms that suggest (to the romantic imagination, at least) that for all the benefits and affordances of civilization, we might have been happier in the state of nature: for example, the dramatic restoration from stress afforded city dwellers by urban parks; the improved recovery rate of patients whose hospital rooms have a window overlooking a pleasant landscape; or the tonic effect of natural surroundings on high-order cognitive functioning (which helps explain why artist/writer workshops are so often located in pastoral settings) (Uhlrich 98-114).

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The standard visual tropes of classical and popular landscape painting provide startling support for the biophilia hypothesis. Typically, these include hills and valleys that invite exploration, sheltering trees for refuge from the elements, lush vegetation for edible plants and good animal habitats, and prominent sources of water to support the entire biotic community. Since research suggests strongly that the appeal of such paintings is more universal than culturally conditioned, the most plausible and parsimonious explanation is that when we gaze into them, we are unconsciously practicing an optimal hunter-gatherer form of habitat selection. In other words, we like such paintings because their landscape features signal precisely the kind of assets crucial for survival in an ancestral hunter-gather culture (Dutton 13-28, Heerwagen & Orians).

And of course, except that the landscape tends to be more rugged, much the same features define the “postage stamp” of eastern Kentucky where James Still chose to live the greater part of his life and which provides the setting for most of his fiction and poetry. Some of the most sublime paintings of the Hudson River Valley school depict precisely such an environment as well. And this provides an important clue—no, the decisive clue—as to why *River of Earth* is, perhaps more than anything else, a biophilic hymn to a traditional agrarian culture preserved, like a fly in amber, at a moment of time (around 1930) when it was already surrendering to the ruthless economic pressures of the coal mining industry. For Still, the Arcadian environment which nourished that culture is, like the folkways of its people, something to be cherished and preserved, not degraded and exploited. To the extent that the novel is a *romàn a thèse*, this is its central thesis.

Still, however, is neither a polemicist nor a literary pastoralist (Stoneback 9). Although he might conceivably agree with the author of a recent dissertation that like other Depression era novels, his “presents labor oppression and environmental degradation as integrated consequences of industrial hegemony” (Westerman), the lean, impressionistic narrative unfolds through the recollections of a boy narrator who is largely innocent of its political implications. And like it or not, the mines provide necessary and even attractive employment—especially for men temperamentally unsuited to farming who in an earlier epoch of Kentucky history would have provisioned their families with the legendary Kentucky “long rifle.” Such a man is Brack Baldrige, the narrator’s father. Like his pioneer forebears, Brack is an expert marksman capable of bringing squirrel or rabbit to the table without wasting a shot (Still, *River of Earth* 12). In fact, at the risk of indulging the kind of speculation that has earned evolutionary psychology a good deal of hostile criticism, he might even be seen as a virtual throwback to the

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even deeper past of hunter-gatherer cultures. But speculation aside, since the hills have long since been hunted out of the once-abundant large game, and even the cost of bullets is a constraint (58), minework provides the best alternative for a man such as he who loathes farming, but who declares “I was born to dig coal” (241). This proud self-assessment is amplified by a number of others along the same line, compressed here for the sake of economy into a simple, stoic philosophy of life and work:

“No use stirring the top of the ground if you’re going to dig your bread underside (35). . . . I never tuck natural to growing things, planting seeds and sticking plows in the ground. . . . A sight of farming I’ve done, but it always rubbed the grain. But give me a pick, and I’ll dig as much coal as the next ‘un. (47). . . . It was never meant for a body to be full content on the face of this earth. Against my wont it is to be treading the camps, but it’s bread I’m hunting, regular bread with a mite of grease on it. . . . I choose mine work, the trade I know. I choose to follow the mines.” (51)

Although Brack’s behavioral disposition allies him with mineowners who care no more for his family’s welfare than the environment, Still allows the political irony to resonate as a subtext, while the main issue, which forms the thematic spine of the novel as well as much of its plot, is the way his choice to “dig his bread underside” positions him as an antagonist to his deeply agrarian wife, Alpha. By choosing the uncertain seasonal employment at the mines, he has uprooted his family year after year, moving them from the plots of farmland where they spend the crop seasons to one dismal coal camp after another. The stress on Alpha has been especially severe, since she desperately longs to plant her roots in the soil of a pretty little hilltop farm. Her repeated expressions of this psychic need form a parallel thread of narrative leit-motifs which articulate a radically opposed world view. And at (once again) the risk of indulging in evolutionary “just-so” stories, since women were quite possibly the first horticulturalists (a fairly common speculation—see, e.g., Joyce, Watson & Kennedy), her unhappiness also suggests the kind of regrets that ancestral women might well have experienced when forced, by the exhaustion of local game reserves, to abandon their primitive garden plots and accompany their men-folk in the never-ending quest for animal protein:

“I allus had a mind to live on a hill, not sunk in a holler where the fog is damping and blacking. . . . a place certain and endur-

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ing, with room to swing arm and elbow, a garden place for fresh victuals and a cow to furnish milk for the baby (51). . . . Never' n I get me set down down in a place and have a garden patch growing, then it's up and go (68). . . . So many places we've lived—the far side of one camp and next the slag pile of another (51-52). . . . Nigh we get our roots planted, we keep pulling them up and planting in furrin ground. (182). . . . I'm longing to set me down shorely and raise my chaps proper." (52)

If Brack were motivated primarily by the desire to meet his family's caloric needs, such passionate, well-reasoned objections by his life partner should incline him to at least consider trading his pick for a plowshare. Why, then, does he refuse to do so? As Dean Cadle points out in his excellent foreword to the novel, one reason is the lure of high wages in a cash-scarce economy: "At the height of the coal boom—around 1920—a farmer who seldom had owned a dollar bill could earn from \$20 to \$50 dollars a day and buy more from the commissary in one week than he could grow on a farm in a year" (*River* v-vi). And were that still true when the novel begins, there would not have been sufficient occasion for its plot. However, as Cadle also points out, by the time the novel begins, a watershed decade has passed, and with the nation in the throes of the Great Depression, the demand for coal has decreased, wages have been cut, and many of the mines have either shut down or reduced their operations. The consequences for the Baldrige family have been devastating. At the beginning of the novel, the mine in which Brack has worked during the fall and winter has shut down, leaving the family on the verge of starvation while anxiously awaiting an early spring crop from its bean patch. Later in the novel, Alpha's angry, despairing litany of the various mining camps where they have been forced by the availability of employment to live—Blue Diamond, Chavies, Tribbey, Butterfly Two, Elkhorn, Lackey, Hurlyburly, and Blackjack (179)—underscores the fact that their current misery is the merely the predictable outcome of an annual boom-and-bust cycle.

It would appear, then, that Brack is trapped in an occupation that, although profitable when he took it up, has been rendered marginal by economic change. And yet, he has continued to pursue it with the singleminded focus of a gambler seeking to recoup the losses from a string of bad cards. In view of the high stakes—his family's material well-being or even its survival—neither his aversion to farming nor his forlorn hope for good wages will quite explain his reluctance to settle down and farm.

One possibility, although as Fred Chappell points out, not a very convincing one (Chappell 226) is Brack's vulnerability to hay fever

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(*River* 174-75). Although working deep in a mineshaft might well provide some relief, the pollens which produce the allergic reaction are concurrent primarily with the late spring and summer seasons when the mines are typically closed. A more plausible explanation, as Martha Billups Turner suggests, is that gardening cannot satisfy the family's natural "craving for meat; the money Brack earns in the mines provides this 'luxury'" (Turner 72). However, the family does its best eating during episodes when the vegetables provided by patient husbandry are supplemented by meat from flocks of guinea fowl and chickens, raised from mating pairs obtained by gift or barter. Moreover, the novel suggests that Brack might make enough money to obtain the rich side meat the family relishes (along with other luxuries like coffee and sugar) by part-time logging (like his agrarian brother-in-law Jolly), or even by accepting payment for his occasional services to his neighbors as a "horse-doctor" (i.e., a folk-veterinarian).

The crucial missing piece, as Fred Chapell also has noted, is that Brack is "called to mining the way another man might be called to baseball or religion" (Chapell 226), and besides the accurate self-knowledge revealed by his claim "I was born to dig coal," the underlying motive is barely concealed in his fierce assertion "Give me a pick and I'll dig as much coal as the next 'un" (47). The psychic bedrock of this typically laconic Appalachian understatement—an all but transparent boast, in fact—is the same deep-seated masculinity that must have attracted Alpha to him from the beginning, leading her, as her mother sadly recalls (128-130), to choose him over several other suitors (including two, who by the time-frame of the novel, have achieved genuine wealth). For a proud, competitive man like Brack, what mining provides nearly every day, and farming almost never would, is a welcome challenge to prove his masculinity to himself and others (thereby enhancing both self-regard and community reputation) in a hazardous, physically and mentally demanding work environment, as well as camaraderie with like-minded men impossible for a comparatively isolated farmer.

That such qualities of spirit would have won Alpha's heart is strongly suggested by research indicating that even in the information age, with its abundance of low-risk material affordances, evidence of physical courage is very attractive to women and can even be a significant mate criterion (Farthing, Kelly, and Dunbar)—and if true now, how much more likely in the resource-scarce honor culture of Still's novel, so much more akin to the hunter-gatherer cultures of our ancestral past. That they also help account for the irresistible lure of the mines for a certain type of man is suggested by the expert testimony of a more contemporary actual miner—Stephen Voynick, a Hemingwayian adventurer who for two years worked the underground copper and uranium

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mines of the Rocky Mountain West and whose memoir *The Making of a Hardrock Miner* (Voynick) is itself an unacknowledged American masterpiece. Reflecting on why men take up this high-risk, arduous line of work, Voynick observes that

. . . not every man who takes it up can stay, even if he wants to, for it takes a unique psychological makeup to cope daily with the darkness, the danger, the confinement. Those who are able to cope soon develop a strong sense of pride in their confidence and their abilities, and in their knowledge that not everyone could make it as an underground miner. A good number of miners, whether they choose to admit it or not, revel in that daily risk and danger, finding it fulfills a basic psychological need. . . . Mining, since the underground dangers constitute a very real and tangible enemy, fills a definite void in these people by giving them something to fight, to battle, and to beat. And every day they walk out of a mine in one piece, they enjoy the deep-seated satisfaction of having looked it in the eye and beaten it again. (216)

Besides helping explain Brack's emotional makeup and attraction to mining, Voynick's shrewd insights also help account for Brack's fondness for his shiftless cousins Harl and Tibb, whose chronic free-loading drives Alpha so much beyond her patience that in a comic episode early in the novel, she burns down the family cabin to get rid of them. Granted, kin assistance is a basic human predisposition, clearly distinguished from altruism by a major tenet of evolutionary theory (Hamilton)—by aiding our relatives, we improve our “inclusive fitness” (i.e., the likelihood that the genes we share with them, which include little copies of ourselves, will be propagated). Even more to the point, kin assistance is one of the sacred codes of Still's Kentucky, a cultural practice brought over by Scotch-Irish immigrants and further ingrained by generations of hardship and blood feuds. But even so, Brack's insistence on accommodating such costly, unwelcome guests is somewhat puzzling—at least until, near the novel's end, when Brack has secured jobs for them in the Blackjack camp and has once again taken them in as boarders, and the narrator recalls the trio's typical after-dinner conversations in which they vie for bragging rights as to who has worked the hardest and best cheated the grim reaper. Like the many similar conversations which Voynick reports, it clearly exemplifies their shared pride as members of an elite fraternity:

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I thought of Harl and Tibb and Father sitting before the fire of winter evenings, legs angled back from the blaze, speaking after the way of miners. They would brag a little [another Appalachian understatement], drawing back the corners of their mouths. . . . “I loaded fourteen tons today if I shoveled one chunk.” “I heered a little creak-creak, and by grabbies if a rock size of a washpot didn’t come down affront o’ me. Hit scared my gizzard, I tell you.” “I set me a charge o’ powder, lit the fuse too short, and got knocked flat as a tape.” (194-5)

As a skein of the novel’s thematic tapestry, Brack’s compulsive pursuit of mine-work wherever it can be found also invites ironic comparison with Walking John Gay, the novel’s legendary wanderer of the hills. John’s wide range of experience is envied by the soil-bound folk in Still’s corner of Eastern Kentucky, but most importantly, his carefree peregrinations mirror the forced migrations of the Baldrige family. Alpha makes the connection first, when trying to clinch one of her arguments against Brack’s annual relocations of the family: “I saw Walking John Gay once when I was a child,’ Mother said. . . . A lifetime of going and he’s got nowhere, found no peace” (52). Near the end of the novel, when the Blackjack mine is shutting down for good and Brack is preparing to move the family to a yet more distant camp, Still accents the counterpoint with an even more salient observation by his brother-in-law, the narrator’s Uncle Jolly: “Be grabs if you folks hain’t a pack o’ Walking John Gays, allus a going. Don’t warm one spot o’ ground for long” (242). As Jolly’s tart critique implies, it’s all very well for John Gay, but with a wife and children to support, Brack’s desperate optimism—“Somewheres they’s a mine working. Fires still burning the world over and they got to be fed” (241)—is a luxury the family cannot afford.

In the hands of another kind of writer, Brack’s temperament might well have provided material for a social protest novel akin to both Eugene O’Neill’s drama “The Hairy Ape” and Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*, with a hero whose self-worth (like Yank’s) collapses when he realizes his subalternship and consequently (like Tom Joad) takes a redemptive turn toward the emerging union movement. Still, however, is much more interested in how the clash between his temperament and Alpha’s creates a poignant domestic tragedy with social-historical resonance. Moreover, her championship of the settled agrarian life embeds something almost as important for her family’s well-being as “a place certain and enduring” and a reliable source of fresh foods. I have already suggested some ways in which our biophilic attunement to nature yields therapeutic benefits, and a good deal more along the

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same lines could be said. A vast body of biophilia research confirms the popular wisdom that direct contact with nature provides mental health rewards such as stress reduction, emotional well-being, and enhanced coping ability (see, e.g., Davis, Heerwagen). Recreational gardening, as research from the psychiatric subdiscipline of horticultural therapy indicates, appears to be especially useful in ministering to troubled spirits—horticultural therapists have proved its efficacy in a variety of institutional settings such as nursing homes, mental hospitals, and prisons (Frumkin, Relf & Lohr). In short, as stated by the authors of a recent study on the benefits of urban green spaces, “many researchers have come to the conclusion that humans are dependent on nature not only for material needs . . . but perhaps more importantly, for psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs” (Maller et al. 52).

Although Alpha is only a semi-literate hill woman of a bygone era, probably none of this would have surprised her. What she understands, by virtue of her native intuition and her deep attachment to the soil—and Brack, because of his comparative indifference to his environment and commanding need to prove himself as a man’s man does not—is that every time he insists the family abandon its seasonal farms for yet another foggy-bottom coal camp where the dominant landscape feature is a burning slag-heap, he compromises not only its material security but also its emotional and spiritual well-being.

Still confirms this implication with an exquisitely symbolic incident on the eve of the family’s final return to the dismal Blackjack coal camp (from which, as noted above, they will soon be forced to move). To begin with, having passed an exceptionally good crop season on a rented hill-top farm which fulfills her dreams, Alpha is bitterly opposed to leaving it: “I’m a-mind to stay on here,” Mother said, her voice chilled and tight. ‘It’s the nighest heaven I’ve been on this earth’” (176). Although speaking figuratively, in alluding quite literally to the high ground on which the farm is situated—“the hills arising from the mouth of Flaxpatch [creek] (169)—she also expresses a gut-level intuition of the innate habitat preferences which Jay Appleton, in his anthropological study of English landscape painting, terms “prospect” and “refuge.” At both the human and subhuman level, Appleton argues, “the ability to see and the ability to hide are important in calculating a creature’s survival prospects” (73)—which helps explain why so many landscape painters have situated their perspectives from a point slightly above a refuge in the foreground (e.g., a cottage, ruined castle, grove of trees, and so forth), from which open prospects of nearby bodies of water and distant hills invite the viewer’s appreciation. Thus, in stark contrast to a coal company cabin “sunk in a holler where the fog is damping and blacking” (51), the farm provides a healthier, more picturesque refuge

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from which the views of the surrounding countryside also provide an enhanced sense of well-being and freedom.

Not only is her productive little farm ideally situated; the ground, moreover, is hallowed by the grave of the infant she has recently lost to a round of the “croup” (i.e., influenza). Finally—as if that were not already enough—she has further consecrated the land by creating an egg tree: a bare-branched sapling decorated with egg shells mouth-blown by her and her daughter Euly, which she is especially loath to abandon:

“Moving is an abomination, Thar’s a sight of things I hate to leave here. I hate to leave my egg tree I set so much time and patience on. Reckon it’s my egg tree holding me.” (182)

Alpha’s egg tree is not, as many modern readers might suppose, the product of some childlike personal fantasy or of some obscure local custom. Originally introduced by German immigrants to Pennsylvania and New York in the 18th century, the gaily decorated egg tree—an Easter season counterpart to the Christmas tree—became a widespread, authentic American folk tradition which actually still survives. Research on the subject indicates that from the mid-nineteenth through the early twentieth century, egg trees were quite popular among residents of Appalachia, who saw them not only as symbols of renewed life, but as talismans to help insure good crops and successful pregnancies, and even ward off evil spirits (Kaufman 110)—the belief-set to which Alpha (who is already anticipating another pregnancy to replace the dead child) alludes when she declares, “I allus did want me an egg tree. . . I hear tell it’s healthy to have one growing in the yard” (173).

However, an even more cogent (and much more universal) explanation of the egg tree’s value to Alpha can be found, as she vehemently argues, in the kind of “time and patience” spent on its construction, which Ellen Dissanayake, in her evolutionary theory of the arts, calls simply “making special” (Dissanayake 39-63). Dissanayake’s elegant reduction comprises the whole spectrum of signifying practices (e.g., music, dance, decorative and pictorial art, poetic speech) which, since the beginning of human culture, have provided outlets for the aesthetic imagination, thereby shifting the focus of life from the endless flux of utilitarian needs to a more transcendent realm akin to, and often allied with, religious belief. At this level of signification, the tree plainly symbolizes Alpha’s deeply spiritual attachment to her farm, and it is precisely this that Brack fails to appreciate. Moreover, when he seeks to appease her by moving it to the coal-blackened soil of their new home, he only makes matters worse. Alpha’s sarcastic comment when she discovers the sadly-bedraggled tree the morning after

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Brack has transplanted it—"It takes a man-person to be a puore fool" (185)—suggests that while she may be touched by Brack's gesture of affection, it has failed to make its mark. Rather than an emblem of the family's new-found harmony with the plenitude of nature, the tree is now merely a reminder of its perpetual uprootedness and slavery to economic necessity.

The symbolism here, of course, exceeds the capabilities of the nine year-old narrator who reports the incident; rather, it embeds the covert perspective of a mature, crafty author for whom, as Joe Glaser argues, "guile is a prime ingredient of art" (Glaser 91). But it is nonetheless consistent with what has already been firmly established—that the narrator identifies much more with Alpha's agrarianism than Brack's compulsive pursuit of mine-work. The structure of events in itself suggests as much, but the crucial self-revelation comes early in the novel, when playing idly in a stand of wildflowers and daydreaming about his future, he declares a vocational preference that undercuts his father's value as a role model:

Sitting there I thought that I would grow up into such a man as Grandpa Middleton had been before he got killed . . . I would learn to plow, and have acres of my own. Never would I be a miner digging in a darksome hole. (21)

In opting for the agrarian life, the narrator identifies not only with his mother, but with her whole side of the family—represented at the time of the novel principally by Grandma Middleton (who, even at the age of 78 supports herself well enough by subsistence farming) and her son Jolly, who by the end of the novel intends to give up his roguish ways as a bachelor farmer and settle down with "a doughbeater [i.e., a wife] fair as ever drew breath" (242). Besides reinforcing the narrator's point of view with his own professed contempt of mining—"I wouldn't work in a coal mine if there was gold tracks running in" (35)—it is Uncle Jolly who introduces him to plowing, and as he feels the dirt flowing smoothly under the plowshare, he experiences an "agrarian epiphany" (Stoneback 16) which confirms his preference:

The earth parted; it fell back from the shovel plow; it boiled over the share. I walked the fresh furrow and balls of earth welled between my toes. There was a smell of old mosses, of bruised sassafras roots, of ground new-turned. The share rustled like drifted leaves. It spoke up through the handles. I felt the earth flowing steady as time. (134-35)

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Although this is a watershed moment, the way it captures the “feel” of a time when “there was splendor in the grass and glory in the flower” is far from unique. Time and again, and especially with each micro-change of season, the narrator exhibits the superior attunement to nature that Wordsworth saw as the birthright of all children and the special prerogative of the country child—a view supported empirically by contemporary research in environmental psychology (Wells & Evans). His sensitive registrations of the onset of cold weather and the first signs of spring provide typical examples of how, just like the other critters he notices, he measures time primarily by sensory data from the environment. Studded with visual, auditory, and olfactory details which command our attention and enhance the sensuous richness of the description, they also suggest how, as Ruel Foster says, the narrator’s acute consciousness of nature “both frames and interpenetrates most scenes in the book,” even competing for space with incidents of the plot (Foster 66):

The days shortened. The air grew frosty. Nights were loud with honking geese, and suddenly the leaves were down before gusts of wind. The days were noisy with blowing, and the house filled with the sound of crickets’ thighs. There were no birds in the bare orchards, not even the small note of a che-wink through the days. (103-4)

Before a tip of green showed in any brushy place, you could feel spring growing through the sky. The robins came early, cocking heads in the cold. The gray bodies of goldfinches yellowed, for all the world like pussy[willow] buds blooming. And where no other sign held on wood or field, finger twigs of elder and willow and service swelled beneath their hull of bark. (126)

Descriptive passages of this kind serve a purpose much deeper than narrative embellishment. Supported by dozens of references to the plant, bird, and insect species that the narrator also registers with a naturalist’s eye, and to the various creeks whose importance as sources of water, landmarks, roadbeds, and sites of cultural memory is a “master motif” in Still’s fiction (Stoneback 11), they ground it solidly within an ecosystem where humans are merely another species claiming its space on the great chain of being. Indeed, the relative insignificance of humans in the natural order is the subtext of the sermon by the folk-preacher Brother Sim Mobberly from which the title of the novel is drawn:

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“My brethren, they hain’t a valley so low but what it will rise again. They hain’t a hill standing so proud but hit’ll sink to the low ground of sorrow. Oh my children, where air we going on this mighty river of earth, a-borning, begetting, and a-dying—the living and the dead riding the waters? Where air it sweeping us to?” (76)

From the privileged historical viewpoint of both the author and reader, where it is sweeping them is toward the end-game of a sustainable way of life forged out of generations of settlers having met the environment on its own terms and yoked it productively with their needs. The inevitability of the process is captured by the narrator’s crushing realization, by the end of the novel, that cultural forces are so powerfully aligned against his hopes that he too may be earning his bread in some “darksome hole” within a few years (227-28).

But before agreeing with Fred Chapell that the novel is an Appalachian Paradise Lost (226)—which I think it is, both in terms of the narrative and the underlying social history—let us be sure that we are not guilty of the pastoral fallacy. For the Baldridges, year-round farm life would have been far from idyllic, and the gardening more exhausting than recreational. But as the biophilia hypothesis suggests, the emotional and spiritual rewards (as well as the nutritional benefits) would have probably outweighed the disadvantages. An old farmer in Still’s short story “The Stir-off” speaks to the kind of contentment that the family might have enjoyed in a way that also suggests a spiritual kinship with Native American peoples for whom the environment is still mother, teacher, and living sacrament (Nelson):

“We’re old-timey people. We may live rough, but we’re lacking nothing. For them with muscle and backbone, Troublesome Creek country is the land of plenty.” He swept an arm toward gourds of lard, strings of lazy wife beans, and shelves of preserves; he snapped his fingers at cushaws hanging by vine tails. “We raise our own living, and once the house and barns are full, we make friends with the earth. We swear not to hit it another lick till spring.” (qtd. in Stoneback 19).

Already old-fashioned in its time, such a view nonetheless sounds a mystic chord of species memory within us because it proclaims a respect for the natural order which served our ancestors very well and thus is embedded in our genes (Kellert, Ulrich 73-90). This is a kind of genetic predisposition for which we should be grateful, because the genes that incline us to affiliate with nature also undergird the long-term agenda for

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our continued well-being as a species—namely, as E. O. Wilson says, “to shrink our ecological footprint to a level that can be sustained by Earth’s fragile environment” (*Consilience* 317). And this suggests why Still’s novel speaks more directly to our condition than it did to that of its original audience in 1940. Beguiled by the romance of modern industry, most people were simply indifferent to ecological concerns. And with a war on the horizon which would tax the nation’s industrial capacity to the limit, how many readers would have cared if an archaic, “hillbilly” subculture was being erased in the name of progress?

Moreover, the novel also had the misfortune to be published at virtually the same time as two bestselling novels with comparable themes of deracination and working-class oppression. The first of these was Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*, published in 1939, less than a year before Still’s, and ironically by the same publisher (Viking). The kind of competition this posed for Still’s novel has been well documented (Olson). At the same time it was struggling for recognition, Steinbeck’s (already having won the Pulitzer Prize) was amassing huge, unexpected popular sales and garnering votes for the 1940 National Book Award as the American reading public’s favorite book of 1939. Propelled more by the power of its political message than its art, as Ted Oson argues, *The Grapes of Wrath* would go on to exaggerated acclaim as a great American masterpiece, but in the meantime, yet another novel was in press that would swamp Still’s in the wake of its publication. This was the 1940 American edition of Richard Llewellyn’s *How Green Was My Valley*—a highly-romanticized fictional memoir by the ostensible scion of an early 20th century Welsh coal mining family with a theme, as the title suggests (i.e. the impact of unrestricted coalmining on the picturesque Welsh countryside) very similar to Still’s, even if not well realized. Like most best-sellers, the book has been largely forgotten. However, at the time, with a broad popular appeal enhanced by sympathy for heroic Britons preparing to defend their homeland from Nazi invasion, it vastly overshadowed Still’s deceptively modest achievement, winning the 1941 National Book award for the favorite novel of 1940.

The 1978 republication of *River of Earth* by the University Press of Kentucky has partly righted the balance, by providing new generations of readers the opportunity to discover what an honest, affectionate but unapologetic portrayal of an iconic American subculture the novel really is. As time goes on, it may even earn the place in the American literary canon that its champions claim that it deserves. If it does, it will be not only because the novel is so well-crafted and true to life. It will also be because, as sociologist James William Gibson argues, we have entered, as much by necessity as choice, a new age of “reenchantment” with nature (Gibson), and thus we have finally caught up with

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Still's biophilic perspective. Pressured by increasingly urgent concerns for biodiversity and sustainability, we are beginning to acknowledge the wisdom of Aldo Leopold's simple formula for stewardship of the environment: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise" (262). Seen from this moral vantage point, Still's postage stamp of Eastern Kentucky, poised on the cusp of total surrender to a rapacious coal mining industry, is now a valid metaphor for the entire nation, or even the entire biosphere. And in light of the 21st century pushback—a globalized green agenda which bonds our contemporary ecological discourses with Still's personal brand of agrarianism under the rubric of biophilia—the novel could hardly be more timely or more relevant.

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About the Author

Charles Duncan is Professor of English and core faculty member of the interdisciplinary humanities PhD program at Clark Atlanta University. For many years he also edited the university's scholarly publications, and throughout the 1990s directed a series of NEH grants to promote the infusion of multicultural literature into college and high school literature curricula. His eclectic research interests for the past seven years have been shaped by the emerging school of biocultural criticism commonly known as Literary Darwinism, culminating in over a dozen conference papers and several published articles of which the article in this issue of *SAR*, notwithstanding its strong affinities with ecocriticism, is also an example. His interest in James Still was sparked by panel discussions at the 2008 SAMLA conference in Louisville KY, and the present article also represents the fulfillment of his subsequent desire to contribute to the scholarship on this underappreciated Appalachian master-craftsman. Email: cduncan@cau.edu.

A Deep Map of the South: Natural History, Cultural History, and William Bartram's *Travels*

Mark Sturges

When William Bartram traveled through the American South, from 1773 to 1777, he moved through a landscape of beauty and violence. He trekked up the Savannah, the Altamaha, and the St. Johns Rivers, encountering woods and wetlands ripe with fecundity, full of exotic pitcher plants, alligators and coach-whip snakes, the wood ibis, the sandhill crane, and the great land tortoise. He wandered overland across Florida and Georgia, to Mobile and the Mississippi. He hiked through the Nantahalas, from Keowee to Cowee, where the Cherokee lived, and he rode through the heart of the Creek Nation between Coweta and Kolumi. Along the way, Bartram recorded the names of both Indian towns and botanical species. He visited Creek and Cherokee villages, smoked their pipes, attended their festivals, observed their customs, and explored their ruins. He pondered the origins of the Southeastern Indians—their history of conflict, conquest, and cultural succession—as if reading the deep time of geology. As a natural historian, Bartram treated indigenous peoples as part of the land, pieces of the place, but he also acknowledged their dynamic cultural history and the enduring presence of Indian antiquity.¹

Eventually, Bartram worked his experiences into a book, a sprawling excursion narrative and botanical study known in shorthand as the *Travels* (1791), now a classic of American nature writing.² In past decades, Bartram's work has served as a touchstone for scholars seeking to understand the environmental discourse of the eighteenth century. Through numerous studies, critics have uncovered the roots (and routes) of the *Travels*, positioned it within a tradition of natural history, and analyzed its elements in relation to Quaker theology, Romantic aesthetics, U.S. nationalism, plantation capitalism, the emerging science of ecology, and even the author's personal depression.³ Typically, historians place Bartram among a group of late eighteenth-century scientists who followed in the footsteps of Carolus Linnaeus and Count Buffon. During the 1740s, Linnaeus had invented a new system of biological taxonomy that retooled the study of natural history, prompting a massive, global mission of knowledge-gathering, hence the primary purpose of Bartram's trip: to discover and classify new botanical species.⁴

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Inspired by Foucault, literary critics often view this botanical project as an extension of the imperial project, a grand conspiracy of science and power that subjugated nature, ordered its chaos, and exploited its commodities. Christopher Looby and Pamela Regis, for example, both read Bartram's Linnaean language as an ideological device, a mechanism akin to the surveyor's tape. Once collected and identified, recorded and classified, plants and animals enter a system; they are transformed into objects, destined for museums and textbooks. In this reading, science serves only the function of power; it neither cultivates intimacy nor inspires ethical treatment. According to Pamela Regis, this so-called "rhetoric of natural history" especially dehumanized American Indians by treating them as "just another type of natural production" (xii). Because Bartram aligned people with plants and animals, he removed them from time, erased their histories, and placed them in a static zone of scientific study—or so the reading goes.⁵

But not all readers of the *Travels* have retreated into a radical critique of science. The poet James Dickey, for instance, has suggested that Bartram employed Linnaean taxonomy to establish a deeper, more emotional relationship with the landscape. Likewise, William Stowe reads Bartram's word-stacks alongside Whitman's catalogs as poetic expressions of the cosmic unity of the natural world. Other scholars have identified Bartram as a proto-ecologist, recasting his botanical project as a tribute to biodiversity and a platform for conservation. Charlotte Porter sees Bartram as a precursor to the nineteenth-century movement to oppose plume-hunting in the southern swamps, while Richard Judd aligns him with a group of natural history writers who promoted a "spirit of conservation" well before the work of John Muir and Gifford Pinchot. Similarly, Michael Branch sets Bartram alongside Alexander Wilson and John James Audubon in a nature-writing tradition that anticipated Thoreau, while Ian Marshall believes that Bartram's ecological understanding led him to embrace a politics of social equality.

In contrast to these standard interpretations, a few scholars have detected a profound ambivalence at the heart of the *Travels*, which they diagnose either as a side effect of Bartram's prolonged writing and revision process, as a byproduct of the slippage between science and art, or as a classic case of pastoral ideology. Thomas Hallock argues that "the compulsion to implicate or absolve an author from an imperial context fails to address what a work like the *Travels* manages to accomplish as a narrative; that is, to imagine an alternative set of relations without endangering the culture that it purportedly critiques" ("Borders" 127). Like Hallock, Joshua David Bellin interprets the *Travels* as a kind of slippery dialogue between white and Indian cultures, between recogni-

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tion and dispossession of native land claims. Thus, Bellin and Hallock have attempted to move beyond current tendencies to read Bartram's natural history as either a mission of colonial hegemony or a vision of arcadian harmony.⁶ Despite their efforts, however, Bartram scholarship remains fundamentally bifurcated—with one branch delivering an imperial critique and the other trumpeting Bartram's ecological insights.

I'd like to suggest yet another explanation for the textual and critical contradictions that continue to define the *Travels*. Simply put, Bartram drafted the book not only in the wake of the American Revolution, but also on the eve of a momentous scientific revolution that transformed the study of both natural and cultural history. During the eighteenth century, scientific discourse was dominated by Linnaeus and Buffon, whose systems of taxonomy encouraged writers like Bartram to remove objects from history, freeze them in time, and place them in botanical tables, specimen boxes, or display cases. But at the turn of the nineteenth century, the very structure of Linnaean taxonomy began to unravel, and soon the field of natural history evolved into modern biology and anthropology. According to Michel Foucault, this epistemic shift unfolded in the span of a few years around 1800. To make sense of this scientific revolution, I'd like to revisit Foucault's analysis before turning to the text of the *Travels*, which, I argue, embodies a kind of "epistemic overlap" between eighteenth-century natural history and nineteenth-century biology and anthropology. This overlap theory, I believe, offers the best explanation for the textual and critical ambivalence defining the *Travels*.

Throughout his career, Foucault sought to interrogate the historical processes through which humans became both subject and object of political, economic, and scientific discourses. Searching for the link between knowledge and power, he highlighted the dividing practices that different disciplines have employed to distinguish, for example, between the sane and the insane. Naturally, such a project points to the history of science, for taxonomy and classification are, perhaps, the most obvious examples of dividing practices. Like Thomas Kuhn, whose historical model of the paradigm shift explained "the structure of scientific revolutions"—that is, the process whereby new discoveries overturned accepted truths and resulted in new theories of nature—Foucault directed his attention to the epistemological fields (or epistemes) that exist beneath the surface of scientific discourse, shaping the very structure of its methodology. Thus, he described his project as an archaeology of knowledge production and cultural discourse.

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault unearthed three historical periods of western thought: the Renaissance (up to 1650), the Classical era (1650-1800), and the Modern era (after 1800). Between each of these

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periods, he detected a major epistemic shift that transformed the study of natural history. In the Renaissance, objects were grouped together based on resemblance and relationship, but the order of objects could change depending on context. In the Classical era, however, a new system of taxonomy removed objects from context, erased their histories, and classified them in a static order outside of time. This system rested upon the assumption of fixed identity and permanent difference. Finally, Foucault marked the dawn of the Modern era around 1800, when temporality made a dramatic comeback. Suddenly, the order of things became more fluid and objects could no longer be detached from their personal and collective histories. Things became *lives*, and *Life* became the new epistemological field guiding scientific discourse. At this moment, classical grammar transformed into philology, political economy adopted new ideas of labor and production, and natural history evolved into biology.⁷

Sure enough, from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, the field of natural history underwent a sweeping transformation. But what happened in between? And why mark 1800 as the pivotal year? The debate over extinction, I believe, offers one possible explanation, while the emerging field of anthropology provides another. In the late eighteenth century, natural historians began to uncover new evidence of biological change within species—which, in turn, revealed the possibility of extinction—and at the same time, these scientists became increasingly attuned to the cultural history of their human subjects; they began to place those subjects within a more dynamic historical narrative; and by 1800, the descriptive manners-and-customs account gave way to a more narrative ethnography. In other words, Bartram and his peers pioneered new methods of cultural analysis that anticipated the nineteenth-century field of anthropology.⁸

While most eighteenth-century accounts of the American South depicted the land as a smorgasbord of commodities and looked forward to its economic development, the *Travels* looked back to the natural and cultural history of the region, constructing a “deep map” of place that was sensitive to its ecology, its evolution through time, and its indigenous inhabitants. In addition to surveying the natural landscape of the South, Bartram conducted an ethnographic study of the cultural landscape. He visited Creek and Cherokee villages, recorded their customs, and pondered their pasts. He devoted particular attention to their history of conflict and conquest, their migration across the continent, and their evolving political confederacies. Unlike previous writers of natural history, Bartram located the Indians *in* time, as agents of historical change. He described how different communities—both human and botanical—adapted to a place, a habitat, or a climate, and

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in the process, he portrayed Indian antiquity and cultural succession as part and parcel of ecological change. In short, he combined the study of natural and cultural history.

Natural and Cultural Succession

During the eighteenth century, most scientists embraced a doctrine of fixed-species creation that simply could not account for the possibility of extinction. They believed that God had created all creatures and none could vanish without his consent. The Great Chain of Being was the preferred metaphor for visualizing relationships between species, and no individual could exist apart from its kingdom, class, order, and genus—nor could any species disappear, for such an extinction would upset the divine design. Neither Linnaeus, Buffon, nor Thomas Jefferson believed that a species would entirely vanish, though it might diminish or degenerate. In *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787), while asserting the existence of the mammoth, Jefferson wrote, “Such is the oeconomy of nature, that no instance can be produced of her having permitted any one race of her animals to become extinct; of her having formed any link in her great work so weak as to be broken” (53-54). According to historian Mark Barrow, not until the 1790s, when Georges Cuvier conducted his comparative study of fossil remains, did natural historians begin to accept the fact of extinction. By the 1850s, fixed-species creation had largely fallen out of favor; before long, Darwin published his dangerous idea; and from then on, natural history yielded to the field of evolutionary biology.⁹

For Foucault, Cuvier’s intervention marks the dawn of modernity, the origin of a new epistemological field. But we can trace this breakthrough back to the mid-eighteenth century, to the work of scientists (like Bartram) who studied the limits of naturalization and found evidence of localized extinctions. Alan Bewell labels this aspect of eighteenth-century natural history an “emerging field of biogeography” (116) and like other scholars, he illuminates the discourse by describing the famous debate between Count Buffon and Thomas Jefferson.¹⁰ In the voluminous *Natural History: General and Particular* (1749-88), Buffon argued that the climate of the New World had produced species inferior to the Old World and subject to generational decline—what he called “degeneration.” Buffon did not believe that species actually *changed* when located in a new context, but their ability to reproduce effectively declined. To support his theory, Buffon cited several failed efforts to naturalize European plants and animals in North America. In response, Jefferson dispatched agents to recover the bones of a giant

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moose and shipped them to Buffon in France. In *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson insisted that “situation” and “circumstance” determined the cultural and biological character of different populations (60), and he refuted Buffon’s theory of degeneration by moving from a discussion of native plants and animals to Native Americans, a trajectory that Bartram later replicated in the *Travels*. Although Linnaeus taught Bartram to see nature as a fixed system, Buffon and Jefferson led Bartram to believe that environmental context could in fact alter the biological character of species.

Throughout the *Travels*, Bartram voices this principle of environmental determinism when he describes plant and animal habitat, but nowhere is it more pronounced than in Part II when he compares the Creeks (or Muskogeas) of the Alabama and Chattahoochee River regions with the Seminoles of central Florida.¹¹ According to Bartram, because the Creeks reside near their enemies, the Choctaws, in an area exposed to attack from all sides, they have evolved a “more strict government or civilization than the Indians in general” (133). They live in large towns, congregated together, which forces wild game to the perimeter of their settlements and “obliges them to be vigilant and industrious,” thus shaping their “natural disposition” (133). In contrast, the Seminoles, though fewer in number, possess a larger territory naturally defended against invasion. Abundant in fish and game, Seminole land far exceeds the privation of Creek territory. In turn, this “superabundance” makes the Seminole people “free from want or desires” and “as blithe and free as the birds of the air” (134). Thus does Bartram engage in a kind of comparative anthropology that draws upon the insights of biogeography.

Likewise, Bartram and his fellow botanists understood the process of natural succession in which an area transforms from a marsh to a swamp, or a grassland to a forest, and the *Travels* devotes several passages to this process of ecological change. During his first excursion up the Savannah River, he suggests that the native fauna show signs of colonial conquest: “As for the animal productions, they are the same which originally inhabited this part of North America, except such as have been affrighted away since the invasion of the Europeans” (29-30). “The buffalo,” he continues, “once so very numerous, is not at this day to be seen in this part of the country” (30). Meanwhile, Bartram ponders the potential of the land to renew itself. Although St. Simons Island “had formerly been cleared and planted by the English,” he observes, “it is now overgrown with forests” (40). Such attention to ecological change comes to the foreground in Bartram’s account of Lake George: “About fifteen years ago I visited this place, at which time there were no settlements of white people, but all appeared wild and savage;

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yet in that uncultivated state, it possessed an almost inexpressible air of grandeur which was now entirely changed" (64). Bartram proceeds to lament the loss of a "venerable old grove" that settlers have cleared for agricultural production, and later, while traveling across Florida, he writes, "I have often been affected with extreme regret, at beholding the destruction and devastation which has been committed . . . on those extensive, fruitful Orange groves" (160).

Bartram realized, however, that such ecological change did not simply begin with the arrival of Europeans. Instead, for Bartram, the land told stories of a fluid history in which native communities worked within and against the local environment. Throughout the *Travels*, he finds places where Indians have burned the forest to make accessible hunting grounds or clearings for agriculture. He also discovers Indian ruins and burial grounds, describing them as "mounts" or "artificial hills," thus blurring the line between nature and culture (43, 232). While visiting native communities, Bartram imagines past conflicts in order to reconstruct the process that brought about current settlement patterns. These sketches of cultural history often parallel accounts of natural history. After exploring the Ogeechee mounds, Bartram shifts to describe "the ravages of the common grey caterpillar" (43). Likewise, following his violent encounter with a "tribe" of alligators, he awakes in the morning to find himself camping atop an "ancient burying ground" where the Yamasees were "slain by the Creeks in the last decisive battle" (88). During another excursion up the Savannah River, Bartram passes through "a wild country now almost depopulated" that contains "heaps of white, gnawed bones of the ancient buffaloe, elk and deer, indiscriminately mixed with those of men" (204). In such scenes, Bartram depicts the southern landscape as shifting beneath him. It's an unstable terrain, full of swamps and sink holes, haunted by ghosts, inscribed with violence. And from these pieces of the past—these mounds, burial grounds, and ghost towns—he assembles a complex narrative of Indian history, a story of conflict, conquest, displacement, and succession.¹²

Put another way, Bartram portrays the Deep South as more than a physical location; it is also a temporal narrative, a terrain where the traveler may wander through a kind of dreamtime. While crossing central Georgia on the trading path into Creek territory, he passes an "old Ocone town" abandoned by the Indians in the wake of white settlement. First, the inhabitants migrated west into Upper Creek territory, but "that situation not suiting their roving disposition" (240), they wandered south into Florida, built the village of Cuscowilla near the Alachua Savanna, and reinvented themselves as the Seminoles. Along the Mississippi, Bartram tells yet another tale of a French settlement

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striving to “establish” itself at the Natchez cliffs. Ignoring the “sovereigns of the soil,” the French built a fort and several plantations, often committing acts of cruelty against the native people, until finally the settlement was destroyed during an Indian raid. Fifty years later, when Bartram arrives, a “very respectable village” has again “established” itself (274-275). Thus, Bartram views human history—both Indian and European—as subject to natural change, constantly struggling against time, territorial invasion, and the threat of violence.

Critics too often overlook this temporal dimension of the *Travels*. According to Pamela Regis, for example, Bartram’s natural history project necessarily “presents America . . . as outside of time” (25). In works like the *Travels*, she contends, “Native Americans are subsumed under this natural historical description, becoming entries on a list, links on the chain. The rhetoric of this description denies them any history, individual or cultural, because that rhetoric did not include a way to represent time” (25). Unfortunately, Regis ignores the many moments in which Bartram engages with Indians on a personal level, in narrative time, seeking permission for his botanical studies, participating in their rituals, and soliciting them for information about their cultural history. Even Mary Louise Pratt, who criticizes the imperial dimension of natural history writing, admits that the genre often shapes description into a “storyline” (26).¹³ Indeed, not only does Bartram *describe* the Southeastern Indians, he also *narrates* their cultural history.

Consider, for example, Bartram’s attention to the Creek migration story, which surfaces at multiple sites in the text of the *Travels*. In Part I of the book, after paddling a stretch of the Altamaha River, Bartram pauses to describe the Ocmulgee Mounds several miles upstream, an aside that inspires an additional reflection about the history of the Creek Indians, the people who (he believes) succeeded the mound-builders in the region.¹⁴ Later, in Part III, Bartram visits the Creek settlement of Apalachicola along the Chattahoochee River, where he wanders through the “artificial mounds or terraces” of an “ancient” town predating the arrival of the Creeks (246-47). While exploring the site, Bartram begins to imagine the collapse of the great chiefdoms of the American Southeast—“like the ruin or dispersion of the ancient Babel” (247)—the diaspora of Indian peoples into scattered villages, the influx of new nations from the west, and the ultimate formation of the Creek confederacy. In other words, he constructs a deep map of Creek nation-building, a temporal cartography charting their conquest of the Yamasees, their unsteady alliance with the Cherokees and the Chickasaws, and their ongoing struggle with the Choctaws. Like the ancient Greeks and Romans, says Bartram, the Creeks engage in warfare for the sake of national glory, and much like the United States, they

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also embrace the dream of a “universal confederacy or commonwealth” (248). Accordingly, Bartram connected the *past* of Indian history to the *future* of republican ideology in an ongoing narrative of natural and cultural succession. Instead of locating native peoples in a static zone outside of time, he saw them as participants in a long human history of intercultural contact and conflict, expansion and imperialism.¹⁵

At the end of Part III, after returning to Savannah, Bartram offers a final reflection upon the Creek migration story, but this time he tests the oral account against the written work of the French historian Antoine-Simon Le Page du Pratz, who published a history of Louisiana in 1758 (translated into English in 1763), a book that Bartram consulted while drafting the *Travels*.¹⁶ The passage reveals much about Bartram’s ethnographic methodology:

It appears to me pretty clearly, from divers circumstances, that this powerful empire or confederacy of the Creeks or Muscogulges, arose from, and established itself upon the ruins of that of the Natches, agreeably to Monsier Duprat. According to the Muscogulges account of themselves, they arrived from the South-West, beyond the Mississipi, some time before the English settled the colony of Carolina and built Charleston; and their story concerning their country and people, from whence they sprang, the cause of leaving their native land, the progress of their migration, &c. is very similar to that celebrated historian’s account of the Natches, they might have been included as allies and confederates in that vast and powerful empire of red men. The Muscogulges gradually pushing and extending their settlements on their North-East border, until the dissolution of the Natches empire; being then the most numerous, warlike and powerful tribe, they began to subjugate the various tribes or bands (which formerly constituted the Natches) and uniting them with themselves, formed a new confederacy under the name of the Muscogulges. (294)

Such a narrative resembles the stories Europeans told of their own arrival in North America. Its theme of removal and migration, trial and progress, might equally apply to Plymouth Plantation, while its vision of political unification reveals a potent imperial project. Meanwhile, this history of the Creek confederacy also hearkens back to Bartram’s introduction, where he imagines a more perfect union between American Indians and the new American Republic. He implies that both Indians and Europeans participate in the process of nation-building; he finds a common imperial drive, a shared history of territorial expansion; and

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in doing so, he insists that native peoples cannot be jammed into a fixed category—they cannot be removed from history.

Ethnohistorians now believe that Bartram got some of the facts wrong, but not as many as his contemporaries.¹⁷ More importantly, for our purposes, Bartram's study of Creek migration combined European and Indian sources—written and oral histories—in a manner that anticipated the ethnographic approaches of the nineteenth century. He consulted the Indians for their version of the past, he compared their accounts to the written archive, and his cultural analysis led many of his contemporaries to revise their understanding of Indian history. Likewise, Bartram's work later influenced nineteenth-century archaeologists like Ephraim Squier, who published studies of Indian mounds in 1848 and 1850. A few years later, in 1853, Squier printed one of Bartram's previously unpublished manuscripts, "Observations on the Creek and Cherokee Indians," in the *Transactions* of the American Ethnological Society. Thus, we can link Bartram's writings to both the natural history tradition of the 1750s and to the cultural history of the 1850s.¹⁸

Predation and Political Unification

As a Quaker, Bartram disapproved of political warfare, but as a scientist he recognized that predation was necessary to maintain the balance of nature. Thus, he suggested that war arose from a common, biological impulse. "The Indians make war against, kill and destroy their own species," he wrote, "and their motives spring from the same erroneous source as it does in all other nations of mankind" (135). Just as animals commit acts of aggression to defend or expand their territory, Bartram concludes, so do human nations, both Indian and European—but he has mixed feelings about the behavior. On the one hand, it violates his ethical principles, but on the other, it validates his theory of nature; warfare, that is, balances the political food chain much like predation balances the biological food chain. When describing the history of the Creeks, Bartram portrays war as a necessary evil, the prelude to a perpetual peace. By the end of the *Travels*, however, he begins to express a creeping anxiety about the threat of an Indian war on the southern frontier, which puts his own safety in jeopardy, causing him to abandon his botanical studies, retrace the trading path across Georgia, and return to Philadelphia.

From the very beginning of the *Travels*, this theme of predation blurs the line between natural and cultural history. Bartram opens the introduction, for instance, with a brief discourse on the imperatives of

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natural history, describing his approach in the very first sentence. "The attention of a traveller," he writes, "should be particularly turned, in the first place, to the various works of Nature." Even as he announces this *first* priority, however, Bartram declares that "Men and manners undoubtedly hold the first rank" (li). Thus the narrative begins with a paradox: both "Nature" and "Man" are "first" in the study of natural history. For Bartram, this paradox was not a problem, because he viewed mankind as part of the natural world. As a philosopher of natural history, steeped in the science of his age, he saw man as a link in the Great Chain of Being and also as the privileged member of the earthly domain. Nature exists for man, he believed; its productions serve the "human economy" (lii). Hence, he hoped to "promote the happiness and convenience of mankind" (li). Meanwhile, he desired to exalt the divine creation, attributing all natural productions to a "sovereign Creator" or "great Author" who charitably sustains the happiness of his creatures (li, lii). This is the conventional rhetoric of natural history: the traveler at once glorifies nature as the work of God and interprets nature in the service of culture.

Despite this benevolent premise, Bartram immediately shifts to survey a series of predatory relationships. First, he admires the provocative design of the pitcher plant, which "cheerfully" invites botanical reverie both for its beauty and its adaptation to the environment. Anticipating Darwin, Bartram assigns such adaptation to the agency of "nature," which has "furnished" the leaves with a defense mechanism against heavy rains (liv). But not all aspects of the pitcher plant are so curiously benign. "[S]ee these short stiff hairs," Bartram raves, "they all point downwards, which direct the condensed vapors down into the funiculum" (liv). Suddenly, on a devilish whim, Bartram has thrust the trajectory of the perspective away from the high design of the heavens into the hellish chaos of a carnivorous plant. He continues: "these stiff hairs also prevent the varieties of insects, which are caught, from returning, being invited down to sip the mellifluous exuvia, from the interior surface of the tube, where they inevitably perish; what quantities there are of them!" (liv). For Bartram, the plant's interior has become a territory of violence strewn with bodies—an insect burial ground, a little shop of horrors.

Bartram replicates this zone of predation throughout the introduction, raising the stakes each time. After the pitcher plant, he shifts his attention to the Venus' fly-trap, whose appetitive inclinations hide behind a "gay and ludicrous" façade, a grotesque form of deception. Like a malevolent machine, the fly-trap remains "ready on the spring to intrap the deluded insects." Swiftly, Bartram's botanical description transforms into a conquest narrative: "what artifice! there behold one

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of the leaves just closed upon a struggling fly, another has got a worm, its hold is sure, its prey can never escape—carnivorous vegetable!” (liv). Moments later, Bartram describes a human hunter stalking a bear dam and her cub, employing the same “artifice” as a predatory plant, shooting both mother and child without remorse (lvii). Likewise, in a bloody episode Bartram surprises a spider hunting a bumble bee. The spider turns upon him, “as if ready to spring,” disturbed by the human intrusion into his “predatory attempts against the insect tribes” (lix). As Bartram watches, the spider returns to his prey, leaping upon the back of the bee, trailing behind him a strand of web fastened to a twig. For fifteen minutes, the spider clings to the bee as it circles through the air, attempting to break the line of web and suffering from the “repeated wounds of the butcher.” Bartram seems almost to relish the violence. Finally, “the devouring spider” carries the bee back to the tree “and perhaps before night became himself, the delicious evening repast of a bird or lizard” (lix). Such is the story of the food chain.

Bartram’s introduction, I would like to suggest, emphasizes predation in order to forge an alliance between the two poles of his focus, “Nature” and “Man.” Not only does Bartram see plants and animals as symbiotic players in predator-prey relationships, but he employs the same language to describe them. Like animals, carnivorous plants have “motion and volition,” and both the fly-trap and the hunter operate with “artifice.” Upon the death of its mother, the bear cub “approached the dead body, smelled, and pawed it, and appearing in agony, fell to weeping and looking upwards . . . and cried out like a child” (lvii). Through metaphor and juxtaposition, Bartram subverts the strict categories of natural science. A “cunning intrepid hunter,” the spider “conducted his subtil approaches, with the circumspection and perseverance of a Siminole, when hunting a deer” (lix). Thereafter, Bartram delivers an anthropomorphic description of birds. “Birds are in general social and benevolent creatures,” he writes, “intelligent, ingenious, volatile, active beings, and this order of animal creation consists of various nations, bands, or tribes” (lix). These birds have language and dialect; they compose musical scores; they express emotional tenderness, affection, and passion; they even possess immortal souls.

As a natural historian, Bartram worked to understand the place of every plant and animal in the natural world. He imagined each organism endowed with a common “vital principle” and subject to the “economy of nature,” a phrase inherited from Linnaeus. Like other Linnaeans, Bartram believed in the fundamental order of nature, and he understood predation as the mechanism that maintained the natural balance. According to Donald Worster, the Linnaeans envisioned “nature’s economy” as a series of cycles repeated and replicated throughout the organic

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world: the water cycle, the seasonal pattern, life and death, propagation and preservation, destruction and succession. Predator-prey relationships participated in this circular paradigm, but they were not without moral justification. To reconcile the problem of predation, Linnaeans adopted three principles of intelligent design. First, they saw nature as a machine, with God as the sovereign craftsman. Second, they insisted on God's benevolence, believing that the world was ordered for human prosperity, despite its occasional dangers. And third, they represented nature as a Great Chain of Being in which all parts were linked in an interdependent web.¹⁹

Bartram's text certainly participates in the Linnaean tradition; that much is obvious from his use of taxonomy. But the *Travels* does not simply rationalize its scenes of predation within a conventional system. It also arranges those scenes to challenge the rigid hierarchy embedded in the Linnaean world view—and in the process, Bartram pushes eighteenth-century scientific discourse toward the insights of nineteenth-century biology. Ultimately, he says, "If we bestow but a very little attention to the economy of the animal creation, we shall find manifest examples of premeditation, perseverance, resolution, and consummate artifice" (lvii). In other words, Bartram goes beyond Linnaeus by interpreting predation as evidence of botanical and animal personhood. He anthropomorphizes plants and animals, elevating each species in the Chain of Being, and thus makes a case for universal ethical rights. Michael Branch sees this moral maneuver as a "strain of radical nonanthropocentrism" (288), while Richard Judd describes it as a kind of "pan-rationalism," attributing it widely to Bartram's "upbringing and temperament, his Quaker sense of humility, his love of natural beauty, and his somewhat reclusive preference for nature over civilization" (205-06). Similarly, Ian Marshall perceives a relationship between Bartram's depiction of the natural world and his opposition to slavery. Marshall suggests that perhaps Bartram's ecological insights led him to advocate cultural tolerance; that is, he embraced social equality precisely *because* he saw humans as part of the natural world. In this reading, Bartram becomes an advocate of animal rights, a prophet of ecopiety, and the spokesman for a land ethic that anticipates twentieth-century deep ecology.

This argument has become second nature to ecological readings of the *Travels*, and rightly so, since it highlights an important element of Bartram's thought—one that carries with it radical implications. Simply put, Bartram sees no "essential difference" between plants, animals, and Indians. He describes natural productions, like human cultures, as organized into "tribes" or "nations," and he considers how plants, like humans, possess the means of "transplanting or colonis-

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ing their tribes” (lv). Indeed, the allusion to colonialism is no simple coincidence. Meanwhile, Bartram emphasizes the role of “climate” in shaping both biological and cultural phenomena, and he stresses the importance of going to the place where native species “naturally dwell.” To study the fly-trap, he declares, “[L]et us advance to the spot” (liv). To conduct diplomacy with the Indians, the federal government should begin “sending men of ability and virtue . . . as friendly visitors, into their towns” (lxi). Bartram also analyzes the language and dialect of the birds, an ethnographic approach which he eventually applies to the American Indian, using comparative linguistics to classify their cultural groups. Finally, Bartram concludes the introduction by shifting from nature to culture, from plants and animals to the “Indian nations” of the American South. In the process, he counters the prevailing cultural prejudice and contemplates the possibility of a “revolution” bringing about a more congenial “union” between whites and Indians. Like the Constitution, Bartram’s vision of Indian policy aims to create a more perfect union without resorting to “coercive or violent means” (lxi). In political affairs, Bartram desires to avoid the depredation of predation. He suggests that perhaps humans can adapt beyond the self-interest of predation—beyond the violence of colonialism—to arrive at a more cooperative social community.

Such adaptation depends upon locating the proper place, the right environment. In Part II of the *Travels*, Bartram discovers a riparian phenomenon where a tributary flows into Lake George and forms a clear, watery expanse without cover or obstruction. Because the clarity of the water eliminates covert operations, this crystal bason offers its inhabitants a temporary reprieve from predation. In such a natural space, alligators, garfish, trout, bream, catfish, stingrays, skates, bass, drum, and flounder—all the “separate bands and communities”—swim about with “no signs of enmity,” performing their evolutions “with free and unsuspecting intercourse” (105). Bartram sees this place as a “representation” of possibility, where different species and communities, though elsewhere in conflict, might come together in “equality” (106). In other words, place has the capacity to shape cultural relationships and promote cultural tolerance. Likewise, on the Alachua Savanna, Bartram imagines a future settlement thriving on the natural conditions of climate and fertility. “[B]y the arts of agriculture and commerce,” he writes, “almost every desirable thing in life might be produced and made plentiful here” (148). However, in the same paragraph where Bartram envisions this national scheme of agricultural improvement, he also stresses the sovereignty of the Seminoles, thus revealing the ambiguity at the heart of his attempt to frame cultural history. The very space that might make possible a republican empire

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was already inhabited, and the future of the nation required bringing those inhabitants into the fold of the new government or removing them elsewhere.

Bartram envisioned a peaceful solution to this geopolitical problem, even as his nation moved increasingly toward violence. Though he never held public office, he used the medium of natural history to advance his benevolent cause. George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson all purchased copies of the *Travels*. When they read the first edition in 1791, they would have encountered these lines:

I presume not to dictate in these high concerns of government, and I am fully convinced that such important matters are far above my ability; the duty and respect we owe to religion and rectitude, the most acceptable incense we can offer to the Almighty, as an atonement for our negligence, in the care of the present and future well being of our Indian brethren, induces me to mention this matter. (lxi)

Bartram died in 1823, seven years before Congress passed the Indian Removal Act and fifteen years before the Cherokees set forth on their tragic walk to the west. He never saw that final fate, but for a brief moment he presented the possibility of a more accommodating future. He saw the study of natural *and* cultural history as the prerequisite to a more humane Indian policy, and he imagined a place for the Indians in the new American Republic.

The Deep Time of the *Travels*

At the end of the eighteenth century, following the American Revolution, a new fascination with Indian mounds swept across the United States, and Bartram certainly jumped on the bandwagon. But as Gordon Sayre has suggested, depending upon an author's genre and ideology, the mounds invited different interpretations. For some, the ruins revealed a kind of North American classical antiquity—that is, they confirmed the existence of a proto-Indian civilization—and so refuted Buffon's argument that the New World lacked a viable cultural history. If the continent once supported a great civilization of mound-building Americans, these writers reasoned, then the potential remained for a new American empire to rise up and redeem the fallen past. Meanwhile, by depicting the Southeastern Indians as a race of barbarians who had vanquished the ancient mound builders, Euro-

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Americans stripped the Indians of their indigenous rights to the land and justified policies of removal.²⁰

On the surface, by constructing a vision of vanishing peoples, Bartram's description of Indian mounds may have aided this mission of conquest and displacement—and thus, critics of the *Travels* may detect a rationale for Indian removal. On a deeper level, however, Bartram's narrative of Creek migration and confederation hardly erased the Indians' claims to the land. Instead, by recording their effort to establish a universal political confederacy, Bartram elevated the status of the Creek nation. He aligned their imperial ambitions with the British, Spanish, and French colonial powers, and he saw a similarity between their political confederacy and the new American Republic. Indeed, I believe that Bartram's study of Indian history actually enhanced the political legitimacy of the Creek and Cherokee peoples and so strengthened his proposal for a more benevolent approach to U.S.-Indian relations.

Because of his attention to the many layers of Indian history (and pre-history), Bartram seems to have anticipated the “deep time” approach to cultural analysis that Wai Chee Dimock has proposed in a different context.²¹ Bartram's interest in Indian mounds and ruins, along with his attention to Creek and Cherokee migration stories, effectively decentered the geographic and historical trajectory of Euro-American empire. Whereas the ideology of imperialism imagined the U.S. nation-state advancing west across the American continent, Bartram portrayed a culture of dynamic Indian peoples with their own political ideals migrating *east* across the continent, and this counter-narrative pushed against the U.S. progress narrative. Bartram's study of deep time—his deep map of the American South—articulated a more pluralistic vision of American history, and in turn, bolstered his argument for a more diplomatic relationship between the U.S. and the Indian nations, all of whom shared a common colonial history.

As a Quaker, an artist, and a botanist, Bartram narrated his experiences in multiple registers. Under the influence of religion, he praised the divine design, representing God as a sovereign creator, the great author of an elaborate text. He also believed that a common vital principle circulated through the entire universe. Plants, animals, and humans were all subject to the same laws, the same natural processes. Following Burke, Bartram marveled at the sublime quality of nature, the simultaneous awe and terror of dangerous scenes, whether a storm at sea or a spider stalking a bumble-bee, the Appalachian Mountains or the Alachua Savanna. As a scientist, he attempted to reconcile these emotional responses with the empirical project of natural history. While predation offered a taste of the sublime, it also revealed a net-

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work of interspecies relationships that blurred the line between nature and culture, sometimes challenging the notion of human dominion, sometimes locating acts of cultural violence under the rubric of natural phenomena. Like other natural historians of the eighteenth century, Bartram understood predatory relationships as part of the Great Chain of Being in which each species played a crucial role to sustain “the economy of nature.” But Bartram went further than his peers in emphasizing the correspondence between natural and cultural history, and in this sense, he anticipated the insights of modern biology and anthropology.

If we accept Foucault’s theory of an epistemic break occurring around 1800, then we might place Bartram in a kind of “epistemic overlap” between eighteenth-century natural history and nineteenth-century biology and anthropology. But that scientific revolution was not without political implications. In the *Travels*, Bartram employed natural *and* cultural history to frame a vision of the political future. Connecting nature and culture, he rewrote the past as a narrative of ecological relationships between human communities and the natural world. He did not remove the Indians from time, as some critics have argued, nor from the land, as U.S. policy would later do, but rather he saw them as agents in a natural-cultural history of colonial contact—a history that predated the European arrival in North America. He emphasized their past displacement, migration, and succession in order to suggest that Indians participated in the process of nation-building, but he did not call for their removal. Instead, amidst the ratification of the Constitution, he imagined a more perfect union between American Indians and the new American Republic. His deep map of the South envisioned a political geography of pluralism, a kind of multicultural federalism and accommodation, and not the flattening form of imperialism and acculturation that came to pass.

Notes

I would like to thank Timothy Sweet for organizing a panel about natural history and temporality at the 2013 Society of Early Americanists conference. Professor Sweet, my fellow panelists, and several audience members helped me to think through the argument of this article and enhance the connection to current trends in American literary studies.

1. For biographical background and details related to Bartram’s travels, I draw primarily upon Thomas Slaughter and Edward Cashin. I am also indebted to Gregory Waselkov and Kathryn Holland Braund for contextualizing Bartram’s experiences among the Southeastern Indians.

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2. The full title of Bartram's book is *Travels through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws; Containing an Account of the Soil and Natural Productions of Those Regions, Together with Observations on the Manners of the Indians* (Philadelphia: James and Johnson, 1791). In this article, I quote from *The Travels of William Bartram: Naturalist's Edition*, edited by Francis Harper, hereafter cited parenthetically. Although Bartram's additional writings can certainly enhance our understanding of his view of American Indians, only the *Travels* appeared in print during his lifetime, so I have chosen to focus on this primary text.

3. Here, for example, is a partial taxonomy of recent criticism: Christoph Irmscher and Stephanie Volmer both situate the *Travels* within a tradition of natural history. Larry Clarke and Kerry Walter explain the influence of Quaker theology on the text. L. Hugh Moore and Judith Magee discuss Bartram's aesthetics. Christopher Looby, Douglas Anderson, Pamela Regis, and Erica Hannickel assess the political ideology of the *Travels*. Monique Allewaert and Christopher Iannini interpret the *Travels* in relation to the plantation system. Charles Adams, Michael Branch, Ian Marshall, Matthew Wynn Sivils, and Monique Allewaert all view the *Travels* as evidence of an emerging ecological perspective in the late eighteenth century. Finally, Thomas Slaughter's superb biography of John and William Bartram employs a kind of psychoanalysis to make sense of the relationship between father and son (and the natural world).

4. In *Nature's Economy*, Donald Worster classifies Bartram as a disciple of Linnaeus and a member of the "imperial tradition" of eighteenth-century science (33). Worster sketches a very broad pre-history of ecological thought during the eighteenth century, in which he outlines two major trends, an arcadian stance (represented by Gilbert White) and the imperial tradition (represented by Linnaeus). Importantly, however, Worster complicates this strict dichotomy by identifying tendencies within the imperial tradition that echoed the harmonious humility of the arcadians. Bartram would seem to express similar tendencies, but Worster mentions him only in passing. Similarly, historians Robert Elman and Richard Judd locate Bartram within a tradition of eighteenth-century natural history.

5. In *The Poetics of Natural History*, Christoph Irmscher delivers a more balanced analysis of Bartram's *Travels* but draws many of the same conclusions as Regis. Irmscher suggests that the *Travels* functions as a series of snapshots, visual images removed from time, like a museum collection of natural artifacts. This "dynamic stasis," as Irmscher calls it, results in a "suspension of the temporal by the visual" (39). Thus, Irmscher seems to follow Regis in declaring that natural history writing removes objects from time, but he goes on to undermine that argument. Emphasizing the temporal quality of Bartram's Franklania Alatomaha painting, Irmscher reads a narrative dimension back into the natural history collection. He calls this a "playful balancing of temporal succession and visual simultaneity" (46-47).

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6. In addition to Hallock and Bellin, scholars who discuss the rhetorical or textual slippage of the *Travels* include Judith Magee, Stephanie Volmer, and Nancy Hoffman.

7. Because previous historians had failed to uncover these different epistemological fields, Foucault argued, they had lapsed into anachronism: "Historians want to write histories of biology in the eighteenth century; but they do not realize that biology did not exist then, and that the pattern of knowledge that has been familiar to us for a hundred and fifty years is not valid for a previous period. And that, if biology was unknown, there was a very simple reason for it: that life did not exist. All that existed was living beings, which were viewed through a grid of knowledge constituted by *natural history*" (127).

8. I am not the first scholar to cast Bartram as a proto-anthropologist. In *William Bartram on the Southeastern Indians*, Gregory Waselkov and Kathryn Holland Braund make a similar argument, but I take their analysis in a different critical direction by suggesting that Bartram's ethnographic approach can explain the textual ambivalence of the *Travels*. Historians often date the origins of modern anthropology to the late-nineteenth century, when ethnographers like James Mooney and John Swanton conducted their studies among the Southeastern Indians, but professional training programs did not begin until the early-twentieth century. Terry Barnhart, on the other hand, argues that anthropology began to separate itself from natural history as early as the 1840s, when archaeologists like Ephraim Squier initiated more scientific methods of cultural analysis. At this time, a number of new anthropological societies sprang up in the U.S., including the American Ethnological Society (1842), the Smithsonian Institution (1846), and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1848). We might trace these developments to an earlier date as well, to the work of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and John Howard Payne, both of whom drew upon Bartram's ethnography of the Southeastern Indians.

9. In *Nature's Ghosts*, Mark Barrow offers a helpful history of extinction discourse from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. As Barrow observes, before Cuvier, natural historians believed that the "loss of any organism across its entire range implied an unacceptable imperfection in God's creation, while violating deep-seated assumptions about the balance of nature and the great chain of being that proved central to Western understandings of how that creation was ordered" (19). From what I understand, the literary critic Timothy Sweet is also currently working on a study of extinction discourse in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. For a sample of that work, see "The Eighteenth-Century *Archives du Monde*: The Question of Agency in Extinction Discourse," in *Oddball Archives*, eds. Judith Roof and Jonathan Eburne, forthcoming from Indiana University Press.

10. Bewell also suggests that "One of the more radical gestures of eighteenth-century naturalists, from Linnaeus onward, was to argue that human beings, though impressive as a species, nevertheless were part of natural history" (119). See Stanley Hedeon for a lively summary of the debate between Jefferson and Buffon. For a comprehensive history of biogeography, see Janet Browne.

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11. Bartram's terms are somewhat confusing here. The Seminoles actually belonged to the Creek confederacy, but Bartram sets them apart for the sake of comparison. In this passage, he also blurs the line between the Upper and Lower Creeks, preferring to define the Creek nation as those people who resided in the main villages near the headwaters of both the Alabama and the Chattahoochee Rivers. Elsewhere, he refers more broadly to the Creek nation, including the Seminoles of Florida. See Gregory Waselkov and Kathryn Holland Braund for more details about Bartram's travels among the Southeastern Indians.

12. Similarly, Monique Allewaert has suggested that Bartram portrays the Deep South as a liquid terrain, a shifting landscape that threatens to dissolve at any moment and plunge the white traveler into a moral and material abyss. Provocatively, Allewaert implies that southern swamps enable a kind of political and geographic resistance among African slaves and maroon colonies, and thus she attributes (dubiously, perhaps) an ethical agenda to the land itself.

13. In *Imperial Eyes*, Pratt suggests that even natural historians who saw themselves as benign or benevolent still participated in the imperial project by exploring the "contact zone," mapping its boundaries, and conducting epistemological surveillance. According to Pratt, "natural history provided means for narrating inland travel and exploration aimed not at the discovery of trade routes, but at territorial surveillance, appropriation of resources, and administrative control" (38). Scholars like Thomas Hallock have borrowed Pratt's concept of the "anti-conquest" narrative—the term she uses to describe the imperial implications of natural history and travel writing—to interpret Bartram's *Travels*, but I hope to complicate this label by suggesting that Bartram actually adopts a more sensitive and self-aware form of ethnography.

14. Technically, the Creeks did not succeed the mound-builders in the way that Bartram suggests. See Vernon Knight for an analysis of the cultural link between the mound-builders and the modern Indians of the American South (i.e., the Creeks, Cherokees, Choctaws, etc.).

15. In *Facing East from Indian Country*, Daniel Richter explains how the great chiefdoms of the American Southeast collapsed during the sixteenth century, but their decline may have had more to do with internal pressures and conflicts than with the arrival of European colonists. In turn, the descendants of the chiefdoms formed new village communities and forged new cultural identities—among them, the Creeks, the Cherokees, the Choctaws, and the Chickasaws. Bartram was fascinated with this history of cultural evolution, this story of change and adaptation, and like Richter, he attempted to understand this past by "facing east from Indian country."

16. Gordon Sayre has completed a partial translation of Le Page du Pratz's *L'Histoire de la Louisiane* (1758), available online <darkwing.uoregon.edu/~gsayre/LPDP.html>. For more on Le Page d Pratz, see also Gordon Sayre, "Le Page du Pratz's Fabulous Journey of Discovery."

17. For example, Bartram failed to understand the degree to which European diseases actually caused many of the demographic disasters and population movements among North American Indians that interested him. He also

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downplayed (even ignored) the fact that the Yamasee War of 1715, inspired by Euro-American imperial ambitions, contributed more to the destruction of the Yamasee Indians than the Creek nation-building strategies that preceded European arrival in the New World. In fact, we cannot really understand the Creek effort of political unification apart from its colonial context. For more details, see Marvin T. Smith, Peter H. Wood, Tom Hatley (*Dividing Paths*), and Kathryn Holland Braund (*Deerskins and Duffels*).

18. In his biography of Ephraim Squier, Terry Barnhart argues that the archaeology of the 1840s and 1850s laid the foundation for the modern anthropology of the early twentieth century. Barnhart's prologue provides a succinct summary of the development of anthropology as a field.

19. For more on Linnaean thought and the Great Chain of Being, see Arthur O. Lovejoy and Burt Kornegay. Like Foucault, Lovejoy describes a historical transition (circa 1800) from the Enlightenment, with its mechanistic view of nature as a machine, to the Romantic era, which developed a more organic vision of nature as a plant or tree.

20. See Gordon Sayre, "The Mound Builders and the Imagination of American Antiquity in Jefferson, Bartram, and Chateaubriand." More recently, Erica Hannickel has read Bartram's descriptions of Indian mounds as evidence of a deep political anxiety over the state of federalism in the new republic.

21. Dimock recasts American literature by reaching deep into the past of world history to an era before "America" was coined as a term and the U.S. was founded as a nation. By setting American literature in the context of sweeping historical trends like the rise of Islam, Dimock's "deep time" approach explodes geographic boundaries and challenges conventional notions of historical periodization. In a different contribution to the so-called "temporality turn" in literary studies, Thomas Allen considers how nineteenth-century narratives about U.S. national identity situate the nation in time. In short, Allen argues that visions of U.S. nationhood have negotiated different conceptions of temporality; there is not, nor ever was, one homogenous national time, but rather a heterogeneous variety of times. Whereas most of the recent work on temporality has focused on the nineteenth century, Bartram was exploring alternative versions of temporality and history during the late eighteenth century, further evidence to suggest that his work appeared on the verge of a momentous change in cultural discourse. Bartram, in other words, gave voice to a kind of "Indian time" in an effort to include native peoples in the complex variety of temporal cultures circulating in the early Republic.

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About the Author

Mark Sturges is assistant professor of English at St. Lawrence University, where he teaches both American literature and environmental literature. His research examines the relationship between regional writing, agricultural history, and political discourse in the early American Republic. Email: marksturges@gmail.com.

A Problematic Agency: The Power of Capital and a Burgeoning Black Middle Class in Edward P. Jones's *The Known World*

Shauna Morgan Kirlew

Truth comes to us from the past, then, like gold washed down from the mountains.

Carter G. Woodson¹

I'm for truth, no matter who tells it. I'm for justice, no matter who it's for or against.

Malcolm X²

Much of the scholarship on the black middle class has focused on free or enslaved artisans in the antebellum period and the era just after emancipation or on the white-collar working blacks who emerged later. Benjamin P. Bowser's recent work, *The Black Middle Class*, asks "Was there a black middle class in the nineteenth century?" (36). He addresses the emergence and proliferation of a black middle class, and he notes that "the most extensively trained and skilled industrial workers in the country prior to 1830 were slaves" (36). Bowser further argues that the black middle class, as we know it, emerged out of a society of black artisans who were skilled at crafting items necessary for their various communities. Before Bowser, E. Franklin Frazier also spoke to, and arguably laid the foundation for, the discussion of the black middle class. His landmark text, *Black Bourgeoisie*, emphasized the problematic aspects of a black middle class, revealing the ways in which the apparent economic liberation of black people was ultimately exclusionary and restrictive. Frazier's numerous respondents,³ including critics who have continued to build on his seminal work, have focused primarily on the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. Many of these scholars de-emphasize the role of black

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slaveholders in the development of the black middle class. It might be argued that a dearth of information about African Americans who owned slaves could explain the limited discourse. However, as Thomas J. Pressly has shown in his special report for *The Journal of African American History*, Carter G. Woodson's 1924 and 1925 groundbreaking studies⁴ of free African-American heads of families who owned slaves offers a great deal of insight into the leadership role of blacks in the slave economy of the United States. Pressly notes that Edward P. Jones's neo-slave narrative *The Known World* "is consistent with what we know from the U.S. Census" (82). What is important for this study, however, is not the historical accuracy of Jones's novel but rather the understanding of current U.S. society which can be gleaned from the literary representation of that period. Worth noting here is Christel Temple's essay, "Rescuing the Literary in Black Studies," in which she takes on the conflict that exists between black radicals in Black Studies academic departments and African-American literary scholars. She notes that

Literary topics are not prioritized at most Black studies and African-centered conferences and symposia, and there is a contingent of African-centered scholars that believes literature is not capable of making practical contributions to the struggle to increase the life chances and life experiences of people of African descent. For them, the study of literature is esoteric, myopic, elitist, and unrelated to reality. (767)

Temple insists that this schism is caused by an even greater gap between privileged literary studies departments and Black Studies departments. If Temple's assertions are correct, the need for cultural producers to engage narratives that could expose the continued and evolving function of capitalism in empire-building and the expansion of power and cultural and economic hegemony is very present. This essay approaches the task by examining how Edward P. Jones's *The Known World* is one such narrative, and it presents the too often forgotten story of enslavement as a means of profit for some in the then emerging black middle class. The novel exposes the culpability of the subjugated class that moves out of bondage, and it illustrates how the nascent black middle class was complicit in part with the system of U.S. American Capitalism that would further suppress blacks in the United States. More specifically, I argue that the novel exposes how newly-freed black men, under the tutelage of white enslavers, uphold the values of racist capitalism, and how black women within that class structure navigate an economic and cultural whiteness which grounds

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the black middle class in a position of power, ultimately implicating bourgeois black society in the twenty-first century.

Many, like Sidney Kronus, have located the foundation of the black middle class in the system of slavery, albeit in peripheral ways. Kronus introduces his 1971 study *The Black Middle Class* by noting that, “the black class structure in American society had its roots in the plantation system of the rural South” (2). He further notes that in the place of distinct social and community structures, there emerged a new culture where the body was a commodity, “a laboring human to be bought and sold as economic necessity demanded” (2). While Kronus’s approach, naïve to the retentions of African systems of belief, emphasizes what he sees as the complete destruction of “any fabric of African social structure and heritage,” it nonetheless offers something of an argument that had merely been implied and not thoroughly taken up by scholars who preceded him (2). Unfortunately, Kronus’s study quickly departs from his discussion of the plantation and moves to offering “analytic types” of black men in the middle class, effectively presenting four economic caricatures of black manhood. Frazier’s reference to the black middle class’s emergence out of a class of slaveholding blacks is more successful at acknowledging the societal complexities, but he does not delve into the matter as he is primarily concerned with the current state of Black America. Still, he states that “if one would ferret out the roots of the black bourgeoisie in the United States, one would have to study the varied and sporadic efforts of the Negroes who were free before the Civil War to acquire wealth” (29). Outside of Carter G. Woodson and Abram L. Harris, whose 1936 book *The Negro as Capitalist* (which relied heavily on Woodson’s work), no detailed study of antebellum slave ownership exists. Just as slave narratives unearthed history’s little-known experiences, the neo-slave narrative—in this case Jones’s *The Known World*—serves as a literary record of history. In an interview with *Black Creation*, Toni Morrison discussed the importance of bearing witness.⁵ This process of revealing truths functions to validate the experiences of African Americans as they share untold, and often controversial, narratives. Jones’s novel moves us to a more informed understanding of the effect of the black slave owning class on the broader African-American body.

While little to no evidence exists to support the degree to which slave-owning blacks shaped the black middle class versus the emergence of black artisans and craftsmen, the novelization of this historical fact raises important questions about black capital, African-American participation as benefactors of empire-building, and the indirect and unintentional buttressing of white supremacist economic values by the hopeful ambitions of a nascent black middle class. The novel refracts

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an image that exposes the emergence of black power in the nineteenth century and raises questions about the twenty-first century's persistent economic divide in which Black America is limited by the rules of racist capitalism.

Of Edward P. Jones's novel *The Known World*, Susan V. Donaldson says: it is "a new kind of historical novel, one that underscores its own provisional status by calling attention to its literary operations—that is, how it goes about representing the past—and that also problematizes history by unearthing discontinuities, anomalies, and multiple possibilities and by posing alternative content and alternative forms" (270). Jones, and *The Known World* in particular, has received much critical attention for these anomalies and alternative stories that unfold in the form of the neo-slave narrative. The novel portrays a society enmeshed in multiple contradictions beginning with Henry Townsend, former slave turned plantation owner and enslaver. Donaldson's argument specifically makes reference to the text's unearthing and fictionalizing of the little-explored fact that Black people in the Antebellum United States enslaved other African Americans. She suggests that Jones' text is questioning recorded history by revealing elements of that account which were erased by the dominant society. In that unearthing, the text is moving to interrogate all of recorded history while revealing the very atrocities undertaken by the dominant white supremacist society. Still, I contend that there is an additional and overlooked "alternative content" not yet explored by scholars of Jones's work. Yes, *The Known World* questions history; however, the work also presents a nuanced look at the current epoch's veins of oppression that run from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, ultimately connecting them to the contemporary global order evolving in the twenty-first century. But why does this text, in the form of the neo-slave narrative, initiate a dialogue with the twenty-first century? What does this neo-slave narrative offer through this peculiar representation of the legacy of white supremacy, specifically how it is internalized by African Americans?

I argue that as Jones's *The Known World* reveals the heinous system of slavery and its destructive effects on black identity and self-concept, it ultimately portrays the emergence of a Black middle class of men and women whose participation in the capitalist system has implications for the widening class gap in a United States. A marker of Jones's fiction, this is later depicted in *All Aunt Hagar's Children*, also the title story of that collection, where a twentieth-century black community is plagued by a systemic racism that disempowers African Americans. This fictional indictment of the black middle class in Jones's oeuvre is a literary refraction or a specific looking back through narrative

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illumination that produces a particular image forming an implication for the twenty-first century. It offers a radical critique of contemporary hegemonic structures, particularly as they relate to the economy or access to capital. Edward P. Jones's fiction depicts this movement and exposes the capitalist drive of the burgeoning black middle class. This literary refraction,⁶ I contend, also speaks to the black middle class's continued participation in the global market at the cost of the continued subjugation of an underclass African-American society, as well as a latent and subtle disempowerment of the black middle class itself.

White Ethics, Purchasing Power, and Agency

The Known World tells the story of the black slaveowner Henry Townsend. Henry, whose father is able to purchase his wife's and his own freedom, is left with the plantation owner until his parents are able to buy him out of bondage. Under the tutelage of his white master, William Robbins, the young boy develops a business acumen and sense of the world that causes him to perpetuate the system of slavery and join the budding North American capitalist class after he becomes free. Henry's father, Augustus, stands as one of the African-American slave owners of whom Frazier speaks when he notes that "in many cases the Negro owners of slaves had bought a wife or husband, a brother or sister, or children, who were slaves and who thus became legally slaves of the Negro who bought them" (*Black Bourgeoisie* 31-32).

The novel also reveals that this act of purchasing one's family out of bondage is not the case for Henry, who is depicted as completely invested in the slave market. Frazier insists that "although it is impossible to say what portion of the Negro owners of slaves bought them for philanthropic motives, those free Negroes who owned plantations or maintained large estates in Charleston and New Orleans owned slaves for the same reason as the white slaveholders" (32). Jones's fictional slave owner, Henry Townsend, clearly fits into the latter group. While still in bondage, Henry became his master's groom and made every effort to ingratiate himself to William Robbins. The narrator tells us, "Henry would, in those early days when he was trying to prove himself to Robbins, stand in front of the mansion and watch as Robbins and Sir Guilderham emerged from the winter fog of the road, the boy's heart beating faster and faster as the man and the horse became larger and larger" (*The Known World* 20). At a young age Henry was able to recognize power and lay his allegiances at the center of that authority. Consequently, Henry bought his first slave, the overseer Moses, from

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William Robbins. This transaction solidifies Henry as an enslaver and begins his transition to black middle class. His acquisition of land, home, additional slaves, and a wife followed the mold of a southern planter. Henry's economic exploits echoes Frazier's assessment of this freed black society and its allegiance to an Anglocentric vision of success:

The free Negroes constituted, in fact, the element in the Negro population that had made the greatest progress in acquiring European culture. The pattern of family life of the well-to-do free Negroes in the plantation South was the same as the patriarchal family pattern of the slave-holding whites. Moreover, their outlook on life and their values were the same as the white models. (14-15)

Even though Henry is depicted as somewhat contemplative about his role as slaveholder, the novel reveals that he is ultimately incapable of truly seeing the heinousness of his situation. This is a key difference between Henry and his father, Augustus—this inability to see the suffering of his own people. There exists a schism between the father and son that is emphasized and at times mediated by Henry's mother, Mildred. Henry's relationship with women underscores this lack of awareness. With the introduction of Henry's second slave purchase, the narrator presages the import of Henry's inadequacy with regard to women: "the strange thing was that it would be the second black person Henry Townsend bought—not the first, not Moses who became his overseer—who would trouble him after the purchase (49-50). It is unclear whether the fact troubling Henry was his purchasing a cook, a woman named Zeddie who was likely his mother's age, or that "Henry didn't feel Zeddie was worth the money Robbins paid for her" (50). Henry attempts to morally negotiate, even superficially, the system of enslavement; however, as we learn later, "Henry had always said that he wanted to be a better master than any white man he had ever known. He did not understand that the kind of world he wanted to create was doomed before he had even spoken the first syllable of the word *master*" (64). At this particular moment in the text the narrator's judgment of Henry's ambitions offers a refraction that addresses the psyche of the black planter and enslaver. More importantly, it suggests that the mode by which Henry aims to achieve power—via his footing in the plantocracy⁷—would not only have limitations for him but would also be detrimental for the black people enslaved under his power. Unlike his father, Augustus, and many of the enslaved on Robbins's plantation, Henry failed to see the crime of enslavement because he was condi-

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tioned in the way of William Robbins and the society of Virginia planters. Recall that “when Henry went into freedom, Robbins had the boy come back again and again to make boots and shoes for him and his male guests” (112). It was in this way that

Henry began to accumulate money, which, along with some real estate he would eventually get from Robbins, would be the foundation of what he was and what he had the evening he died. It was Robbins who taught him the value of money, the value of his labors, and never to blink when he gave a price for his product. Many times he traveled with Robbins as the white man worked to create what he had once hoped to be an empire. (113)

Henry’s distance from Augustus is further exacerbated by William Robbins’s continued mentorship. The young man is not even able to discern the meaning of his father’s inquiry about the emancipation when Augustus finally purchases Henry from Robbins. When Augustus asks, “you feelin any different?” (49), Henry is unable to discern that his new status should entail a disconnection from the world in which he has been trained. Henry remains unchanged because his years in bondage were spent under the guidance of Robbins and in the machine of capitalism. Augustus’s son is incapable of viewing himself outside of the economic contraption, and he moves to firmly secure himself to the system. Henry’s alignment with the capitalist system is notably signaled in his allegiance to one of its most powerful symbols, to which he had been introduced while enslaved: it was the slaveholder “Robbins [who] had told him to trust the Manchester National Bank and Henry would put part of what he earned there” (114). We are reminded in Frazier’s *Black Bourgeoisie* that “. . . it was mainly in the field of banking that the new spirit of business enterprise manifested itself” (29). Thus, Jones’s narrative of Henry’s development captures this moment in American economical development, and his allegiance to the ways of his former master, William Robbins, is juxtaposed with his separation from his parents and the values of their society. The consummation of this dynamic, quoted at length below, is telling:

When Henry, at twenty, bought his first piece of land from Robbins, he told his parents right off. The land was miles from where they lived but a short ride from Robbins’s plantation, though it was not connected. By the time he died he would own all the land between him and Robbins so that there was nothing separating what they owned. He had supper with

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Mildred and Augustus the day of the land sale. But the day he bought from Robbins his first slave, Moses, he did not go to their house and he did not go to them for a long time. He spent that first day of ownership with Robbins, and Moses and he and the white man planned where he would build his house. (122)

Henry is firmly situated as an enslaver with ambitions to build his own empire, and when he does return to his parents' home and informs them of his purchase, the interaction reveals that Henry's motives and ethics are governed by his belief that he "ain't done nothing that any white man wouldn't do" (138). The young man sees his efforts to enslave and build his wealth not as a crime against humanity but as his right as a free man with capital, and thus his quest for power is marked by an effort to emulate whiteness.⁸ Henry's declaration echoes the charge that "the single factor that has dominated the mental outlook of the black bourgeoisie has been its obsession with the struggle for status" (Frazier 236). Henry's claiming of this status comes in a number of ways, including the direct subjugation of his slave, Moses. Under the direction of Robbins, Henry comes to understand that despite their shared age group and race, Moses and Henry are not equal because of the assumed power difference. Robbins's chiding of Henry for wrestling with Moses in the dirt immediately changes the outlook of the young enslaver. Robbins warned him:

. . . the law expects you to know what is master and what is slave. And it does not matter if you are not much more darker than your slave. The law is blind to that. You are the master and that is all the law wants to know. The law will come to you and stand behind you. But if you roll around and be a playmate to your property, and your property turns around and bites you, the law will come to you still, but it will not come with the full hear and all the deliberate speed that you will need. You will have failed your part of the bargain. (123)

Shortly after, Henry slaps Moses several times and calls him "nigger," effectively drawing a clear line between master and slave, man and property. Henry continues to set himself apart as a man of material worth, and no longer sees himself as a member of the black community of Manchester County. His access to capital gains him entry into a type of financial whiteness.⁹ Much in the same way, some in the black middle class of the United States disavow a particular notion of blackness as they attempt to acquire wealth and status. Moses's proximity to Henry,

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and his role as an overseer, allows him to experience and see the power of a slave master. His attempts to become the man of the house after Henry's death exemplify Frazier's position regarding the desire for status, and Moses's efforts are arguably a direct result of his witnessing the power of a black slave owner. He begins to go to the house nightly to give Caldonia reports of the plantation and its inhabitants. When Henry's widow requests that Moses tell her stories about her husband, Moses passes on embellished narratives of Henry's greatness, and Caldonia requires him to share the tales again and again in her parlour. After several evenings of having sex with Caldonia, Moses begins to ask if he was indeed "on his way to being freed and then marrying a free woman . . . on his way to becoming Mr. Townsend?" (293). With those aspirations in mind, he tells Alice, the enslaved woman who wanders nightly, that he has the power to free her, and he asks her to take his wife and son along. Like Henry, Moses undergoes a type of education under his master. Although Henry and Moses are black, their relationship is no less exemplary of the power dynamic between white masters and black slaves. The result of this more prevalent racial encounter is described by Frazier: "living in close association with whites, the house servants were subject to a type of discipline which caused them to identify themselves with their masters. This discipline included both moral and religious instruction" (12). In the case of Henry, however, it was instruction on financial rather than religious matters, and for Moses, it was an indirect instruction about power. When his desire for freedom is not immediately granted by the widow of the plantation owner, Moses sees his opportunity for status and authority disappearing. This exchange illustrates a literary refraction in which the black middle class effectively thwarts the potential for uplifting the underclass African-American community. Thus Moses is relegated to the margins of influence, and later on, before he leaves the Townsend plantation, he reflects on his distance from the center of power. He remembers Henry saying, "You be the boss of this place. There's my word, then my wife's word, and then there's your word" (332). Moses also recalls Henry telling him that he was listed in the "big book" as "Overseer Moses Townsend," and his contemplation leads him to wonder about his own humanity—his status as the property of another person. Moses even fancies himself as "Marse Moses" in an attempt to envision himself in the position of power (333). His thoughts manifest as a kind of lamentation and he eventually leaves the plantation, unknowingly headed south. This refraction casts an image of an underclass black society whose efforts to advance are in opposition to a black middle class that functions within the framework of white supremacy. The ultimate failure of the underclass is refracted in the figure of Moses, who leaves the plantation and his role as overseer, moving with little direction and

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little hope for a better future. This is of course signaled most resoundingly in his misdirection southward as he departs the plantation.

Jones's novel portrays several layers and degrees of power in Manchester County. From Henry's house with his wife Caldonia, to the plantation and slave settlement, and out in the county among free blacks and white, there is a negotiation of power that occurs on a micro and macro level. That Caldonia's actions produce the failure of Moses's attempt to gain power speaks to the unique and rarely explored role of the free black woman in the antebellum South. The experiences of women in *The Known World* offer intriguing and even more problematic models of agency than that of Henry Townsend the black slave owner. Starting with Henry's wife, Caldonia, Jones's text presents the shifting reality of moneyed free black women in the antebellum United States, and it forms refractions that offer a great deal of visual acuity about the current state of middle class African-American women.

Free Black Women and the Power of Capital

The Known World aptly opens on the day that Henry dies, and his departure introduces the black women of Manchester County, Virginia beginning with Henry's widow, Caldonia Townsend, who, we are told, was "a coloured woman born free and who had been educated all her days" (5). In his 1936 book, *The Negro as Capitalist*, Abram L. Harris remarked on the educated and free blacks of the nineteenth century, noting that "their contact was with the benevolent members of the white upper class and they sought to emulate the social values and ideals of the members of that class" (3). It is also arguable that free black women of wealth also attempted to imitate their white counterparts. Caldonia, as the wife and ultimately the widow of a plantation owner, demonstrates, to a great extent, the characteristics associated with white women of that class. She is relegated to the home and is initially depicted within the realm of the cult of domesticity.¹⁰ However, Jones's depiction of Caldonia, her mother Maude, and other free black women in Manchester County suggests that these women lived within a revised structure of near-white womanhood. While their race precluded their acceptance into the realm of nineteenth-century womanhood, their privilege allowed them to attempt to claim some of the characteristics. Hence, these moneyed women of color would mimic the lives of white women who were wives of plantation owners. In this way the women take on a non-physiological whiteness—a whiteness shaped by access to capital. Katherine Clay Bassard argues that the free black characters in Jones's novel "cross a social line of demarcation

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that nonetheless amounts to a metaphoric passing” (408). This type of class-passing afforded middle-class black women in the world of the text the authority to participate as decision-makers in the plantation culture of the antebellum south (Bassard 408).

E. Franklin Frazier’s *Black Bourgeoisie* speaks to the efforts of free blacks and mulattoes to emulate their white enslavers in religion, education, manners, etcetera, in order to gain “white” status. Unlike his counterparts in the academy, such as Sidney Kronus who wrote about the black middle class with a problematic paternalistic and at times racist lens, Frazier offered a scathing critique of that group of African Americans whom, he claimed, suffered from a nothingness in the middle class that voided the “content and significance” from their lives (238). In the cases of the free black women in *The Known World*, the suffering engendered comes not from a voided “content and significance” but rather from a new importance shaped by freedom and access to capital. Scholarship following Frazier raises additional questions about the evolution of the black middle class and the efforts to halt the pandering to white society and culture.¹⁴ All of these observations are useful for understanding the worlds of Jones’s texts and the alternative content therein. As Katherine Clay Bassard notes: “That there are both male and female black slaveowners in this text troubles our usual ways of discussing issues of race, gender and slavery as a clearly delineated set of power relation” (407). Through this unusual depiction of power, and even as Jones exposes the heinous white supremacist regime and the crimes of enslavement, he presents a burgeoning black middle class—particularly of women—many of whom stand on the backs of enslaved African Americans. Henry’s widow Caldonia, and even Fern Elston, participate in, and benefit from, the system of enslavement. Again, these African-American women’s experiences emerge as a distinctive story of middle class black society and present as new and unique narratives that, at once, move against the dominant narrative to depict empowered black women even as they show how this power was, in part, driven by capitalist white supremacist systems. Jones’s novel repeatedly refracts images that force a look at the legacy of raced capitalism and its current permutation in the twenty-first century. This point calls for pause and consideration of Bassard’s warning against “the tendency to focus too heavily on the ‘historical’ accuracy or authentication of African-American literature as autobiography, sociology, and lived experience and an under-appreciation for the genius of the black imaginary” (410). Certainly, Jones has produced texts of literary brilliance, as evidenced by his acclaimed collections of short stories *Lost in the City* and *All Aunt Hagar’s Children*. We see his imagination unfolding in artful prose and multi-dimensional characters. But his

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imagination also weaves a narrative which pulls a thread through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and into this era—one rife with the legacy and project of dehumanization and disenfranchisement that so shaped early American society.

Jones's development of Caldonia and Fern is but one testament of the genius of his imagination. Not only does Jones create an intricate community around the black slave owner Henry Townsend, he also re-shapes what is arguably the most subjugated group in the antebellum era and shows how she—the black woman in freedom—can unfortunately function as a tool of a U.S. economic and cultural hegemony. It seems appropriate that the free women are together at Henry's passing. His death signals a transfer of power to, and a narrative focus on, the free women. We are told that Fern and her husband owned twelve slaves and she also served as a paid teacher of free black children. Like Henry and Caldonia, she is clearly depicted as being invested in the exclusionary and oppressive system, and when Henry dies she says to Caldonia, reflecting on her role as Henry's teacher: "I always thought you did right marrying him" (7). Fern's affection for Henry began when he was a young slave owner, sent to her by William Robbins to be educated along with the free black children. Fern is said to have reported that "Henry had been the brightest of her students, someone she would have taught for free" (7). The memory and values of the black slave owner, Henry Townsend, are continuously invoked by the free women of Manchester County, and the moments before his death, and his passing itself, signals the confirmation of their power. This legacy, and its significance to the emergence of the black middle class, is portrayed in refraction early in the text:

That last day, the day Henry Townsend died, Fern Elston returned early in a buggy driven by a sixty-five-year-old slave her husband had inherited from his father . . . Fern and Caldonia spent a few hours in the parlor, drinking a milk-and-honey brew Caldonia's mother was fond of making . . . There were not that many free educated women in Manchester County to pass her time with and so Fern had made a friend of a woman, who, as a girl, had found too much to giggle about in the words of William Shakespeare. (10)

Fern is transported to the vast Townsend plantation by an old slave who came to her via inheritance. This moment in the text, just before Henry's death, results in Caldonia's shift to power and presents the image of a burgeoning black middle class arriving at the seat of power through the demoralization of a black underclass that is enslaved and

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exploited. At the moment of Henry's passing, Fern and Caldonia are engaged in a conversation about a white widow who was kept prisoner by her two slaves and made to do hard labor for such a long time that upon being freed, "she did not remember that she was supposed to be the owner, and it was a long time before she could be taught that again" (11).¹² The women's observations at the time of Henry's death present a refraction, not only on the foundation of the black middle class, but also on the persistence of the trauma of bondage in shaping one's concept and understanding of self. Just as the white widow was unable to see herself as master after being under the bridle of labor, so does the underclass black society remain incapable of emerging into a mental liberation, particularly as their lives are juxtaposed with the freedom and privilege of a black over/middle class.

By the end of the novel, power moves to the women's hands and the farm is referred to as "Caldonia's plantation," and the widow does in fact assume the role of enslaver (324). Not only does Caldonia insure her human property, she also perceives herself within a differentiated race and class framework. After having sex with Moses, her dead husband's black overseer, Caldonia wondered, "Was this a kind of miscegenation?" (292). Even though they are of the same race, Caldonia perceives a clear difference between herself and Moses as she recalls the recent whipping of a white woman who had relations with a slave. Refusing her twin brother's pleas to abandon slave-holding and move to the north, Caldonia re-affirms her position on the plantation and among the community of slave-owners in Manchester County. Thus she stands as an example of the black middle class that was born on the plantation of the American South which took its values from white masters and enslavers. Frazier notes that the "social psychology of the middle-class African American often revolved around an identity crisis," arguably an urge toward whiteness (11). We see this negotiation of self-concept unfold with Caldonia's contemplation of her own identity in relation to Moses—whom she concretely sees as property despite her affection for him. Caldonia says: "I love Moses. I love Moses with his one name" (292). Moses's place as an enslaved person, as well as his status, is cemented in that reference to his single name. He would not be offered the name of his master or mistress. Even though she affirms her feelings for Moses, Caldonia still regards him as distinctly different from her and again thinks of herself in relation to the white woman who was whipped for having sex with a slave. The inverse sexual power dynamic between Caldonia and Moses complicates the conversation about an emergent black middle class as it assigns a trait of male whiteness to her role.

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Jones's novel emphasizes the significance of generational heritage, and particularly in the case of Caldonia, whose mother serves as a model for the young widow, we see a replication of the power (albeit limited) of the free black woman. The text reveals that Maude's anxiety about what her daughter Caldonia will do with the plantation and its enslaved population stems from her keen understanding that there is very little distance between free black and enslaved. The narrative tells us that "her own family had been free for generations but they had never had enough to buy even one slave" (184). Despite this awareness (or, possibly, as a result of it), Maude insists on cementing her daughter's status. She entreats Caldonia to think of her legacy, and we are told that, "For Maude, the legacy meant slaves and land, the foundation of wealth. Her fear was that Caldonia, in grief, would consider selling the slaves, along with the land, as if to accomplish some wish Henry, tied to the want and need of a material world, had been too afraid to try to fulfill in life" (180). Maude's reaction to her daughter's grief replicates the urgency she felt when her husband, who bought himself from bondage, wanted to free his slaves as a form of penance for not buying his family out of bondage. We learn that Maude poisoned her husband to prevent him from freeing his slaves. Maude's efforts to maintain her status as a free black woman of money began with thwarting her husband's purchase of his family. The novel tells us that Maude told her husband, Tilmon Newman, "your parents and brothers will wait until we are good and set on our feet, until we have enough of everything so they can come into freedom and not want for anything" (183). Much in the same way the contemporary black middle class aspires for a power and wealth that would prevent them from falling into the abjection of poverty, so did the antebellum black bourgeoisie seek a status that would keep them from bondage and suffering. Accordingly, figures like Maude adopt the characteristics typical of white owners. We are told that like white mistresses in the South, Maude "felt God had pitted the world against [her] and no one could be more against [her] than property that could hear and speak and think. [She] would never make the mistake of believing a slave was no more than a cup or saucer" (182). Although Caldonia's sentiments depart from her mother's in many ways, she nonetheless asserts her intentions to uphold Henry's legacy, and she mirrors her mother in the ways that she views herself and her property. We learn that Maude took a lover, a man named Clarke who was enslaved on her plantation. Like Caldonia, Maude also thinks of herself in terms of white womanhood, saying to Clarke after they had sex, "Do you know . . . if I was a white woman, they would come in here and tear you from limb to limb?" (246). When he asks her what they would do since she is not white, Maude responds saying, "I suspect that

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since I own you, since I have the papers on you, they might do the same thing if I up and screamed. They wouldn't be as fast, I suppose, but they would come" (246). Maude at once reaffirms Clarke's position as slave even as she situates herself within a realm of whiteness—in economic terms. Her access to papers—the documents which are evidence of her capital—position her as powerful and set her degrees away from enslaved women and free blacks without property. This disjunction between the concepts and expectations of black womanhood and the lived experience of black women of property manifests in several ways. More importantly, these instances offer literary refractions that complicate the notions of antebellum black womanhood in the ways that they illustrate contemporary notions of black womanhood. In the figures of Maude and Caldonia, we see the concept of self hedge on an idea of womanhood directly shaped by whiteness; yet we also see the negotiating of the racial line via access to wealth. We are told that:

The morning after Caldonia Townsend made love to Moses her overseer for the first time, she woke up about dawn and sat up in her bed . . . She had had a dream just before waking of being in a house smaller than her own, a house she had to share with a thousand others . . . nothing came to her except the memory of someone in the dream saying that people in the attic were burning other people. (284)

It is arguable that her dream is linked to her intercourse with Moses. The novel often focuses on Moses's proximity to Caldonia and his ability to touch or reach her in different ways. After their first sexual encounter, it is as if Caldonia is touched by the state of bondage in a way that being a master would not allow. Still, she is incapable of seeing herself within this realm. While the dream reveals her connection to the "thousand others" in a small house where the people at the top were burning others, Caldonia finds it peculiar and is incapable of seeing herself among those people suffering from a racial and financial hierarchy. Further separating herself from the enslaved, Caldonia finds it difficult to believe that a slave would have the desire to leave the Townsend Plantation. Regarding the escape of Moses's wife, child, and Alice, Caldonia "[found] it difficult to believe that two women and a boy would leave what she and Henry had made. A man perhaps . . . not a madwoman and a woman who seemed to adore her" (317). Caldonia remains bound in the nineteenth-century notions of womanhood, albeit more nuanced. Bassard's note that "the most disturbing aspect of Caldonia's character is the way in which she uses her power as slaveholder for the purposes of sexual exploitation of a black male slave"

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highlights Caldonia's complicated position as enslaver and woman (413). Caldonia further complicates her position even as she perpetuates the exclusiveness of the black middle class by agreeing to marry Louis, the biological son of William Robbins and his slave Philomena. Her decision to do so in spite of her relations with Moses the overseer tenders a refraction that suggests she is bound to remain in the realm of slave ownership. Furthermore, when she says to Louis, "we are all worthy of one another," it is clear that there is a distinct circle of inclusion, and only the free black property owners fit into this mold (24).

Fern Elston, however, who is also among that peer group, is more perceptive, and her experience offers an additional look at the complexities of the raced and gendered class dynamic in the antebellum period and beyond. We are told that Fern was a free black woman who, while she chose not to, could pass for white. She was the school teacher for free black children in Manchester County, and she had taught Henry who was then her first and only dark-skinned, former slave, adult student. It's probable that Fern's work with Henry shaped her views on enslavement, but the novel does not offer the possibility for any clear conclusions about Fern. She exists as somewhat of a paradox and her thoughts and actions reveal that Fern, even if subconsciously, grapples with the issues of race, power, and money that shape her current life. While she functions according to black middle class rules about race and marriage, she nonetheless confronts and moves against other societal norms. The narrator explains that "In four generations, Fern's family had managed to produce people who could easily pass for white. 'Marry nothing beneath you,' her mother always said, meaning no one darker than herself, and Fern had not" (74). Fern negotiates a racial boundary with her ability to pass for white, and even though we are told that she chose to identify as black, we consistently see her white skin as a means to privilege. When Fern decides to purchase the slave Jebediah Dickinson (a transaction which occurs because the seller believed her to be white), she initially has intentions of freeing him from bondage. However, Jebediah's brazen insolence and sexual references injure her pride and she decides to teach him a lesson. The novel tells us, "Fern never liked to flog slaves; for every whip mark on one slave's back, she estimated that his value came down \$5. But there were some unforgivable matters in the world" (259). Perhaps what is unforgivable is the enslaved man's crude remark to a woman of status, but it is also likely that her near-whiteness makes his comment more offensive. More importantly, this image of Fern in deliberation on the matter of flogging her slaves reveals a slavemaster reflecting on the value of her property. Even her ability to negotiate a deal with Jebediah's owner, as well as her access to banks and the law are markers of the hierarchy

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of identity driven by property ownership and access to capital. Fern's interaction with Jebediah, a highly literate and resistant enslaved man, forces her to ponder her position and the enslavement of others. Here we see the ways in which the black middle class is incapable of escaping the effects of enslavement. Fern says of Jebediah Dickinson, "With him there . . . I feel as if I belong to him, that I am his property" (286). Her discomfort comes from not only being subject to Jebediah's daily pestering, but it also stems from her seeing that Jebediah was her intellectual equal. The others in Fern's presence are incapable of seeing this reality and we are told that:

The young people laughed to hear her say something so extraordinary. They were all members of a free Negro class that, while not having the power of some whites, had been brought up to believe that they were rulers waiting in the wings. They were much better than the majority of white people, and it was only a matter of time before those white people came to realize that. (287)

Unlike Fern, who is at times unsettled by the realities of the system of slavery, the young people fail to understand that their status as free black participants in the capitalist society is buttressed by slave labor.¹³ Still, in Fern's regard for slavery, her thoughts show that she sees herself as completely distinct from those of the race who are enslaved. She says, "I realized all over again that if I were in bondage I would slash my master's throat on the first day. I wonder why they all have not risen up and done that" (288). Fern's position is a complex one, and she functions beyond any binary of black/white, good/bad, poor/rich. However, her interactions with the party of free blacks mark a moment in which the black middle class separates itself from other African Americans and rests on the privilege of capital.

Jones's novel offers literary refractions that reveal the thread of capitalism in the subjugation of African Americans, and, more importantly, these refractions reveal how the efforts and interests of the black middle class can serve to buttress white supremacist systems. The novel depicts this evolution of power and exposes the shifting ideology and status among African Americans initially depicted with Henry and Augustus and the land-owning black women of Manchester County. Bassard notes that "in marking the transition between Augustus and Henry, Jones is saying something important, as well, about a generation of African Americans who participated in the capitalist project for well-intended purposes, only to have the next generation who were beneficiaries of that participation miss the irony or ambivalence of

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those gestures” (418). Thus, both the power and limitations of the black middle class are directed and shaped by white supremacist capitalist interests which are directly implanted in the newly-freed individuals. The efforts of a black middle class only serve to reify the function of white supremacy, in effect increasing the racist capitalist structure and solidifying the power of the white supremacist hegemony. Jones’s story exposes the paradox of life in the black middle class, and his problematizing of this status serves to show that the power of the black middle class is limited and is ultimately a tool of the very system it hopes to overcome.

Notes

1. See Johnson.
2. Ibid
3. See Teele, Platt, and Washington and Cunnigen.
4. See Woodson’s *Free Negro Heads of Families in the United States in 1830* and *Free Negro Owners of Slaves in the United States in 1830*.
5. See Morrison and Childress.
6. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines refraction as “The fact or phenomenon of a ray of light, heat, (†the sight), etc., being diverted or deflected from its previous course in passing obliquely out of one medium into another of different density, or in traversing a medium not of uniform density” or, more widely used, “change in direction of propagation of any wave as a result of its travelling at different speeds at different points along the wave front.” In other words, a light is shone into the eye and when the ray returns to the front of the eye it reveals the eye’s ability to see. This refraction is both a test of visual acuity and the very process by which the examination occurs. In terms of the literary, the refraction functions in the same way within the space of a narrative that connects the past and the present.
7. See Morgan.
8. Jones’s literary predecessors such as William Wells Brown in *Clotel* and Pauline Hopkins in *Hagar’s Daughter* offer similar representations of slaves whose self-importance is shaped by their master’s wealth and status. Elizabeth J. West examines Frederick Douglass’s derision of such slaves in her essay “Conflicting Epistemological Selves in the Narratives of Frederick Douglass.”
9. A discussion of Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of Symbolic Capital can further the understanding of Henry Townsend’s “financial whiteness,” in which his access to money allows him some of the privileges not afforded to black men in the antebellum United States.
10. See Hewitt regarding the overuse of the notion of domesticity and Barbara Welter’s study regarding the Cult of True Womanhood.

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11. See Williard Gatewood's *Aristocrats of Color: The Black Elite, 1880-1920*, which looks at antebellum free blacks and their influence in the post-civil war era, and more recently, Bart Landry's *The New Black Middle Class*, and Karyn R. Lacy's *Blue-Chip Black: Race, Class, and Status in the New Black Middle Class*.
12. Jones's treatment of this antebellum phenomenon of white slavery has also been explored in 19th-century works such as William Wells Brown's *Clotel*; Francis Harper's *Iola Leroy* and Frank Webb's *The Garies and their Friends* reflect on the experiences of black slaveholders.
13. See Harris.

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About the Author

An assistant professor in the Department of English at Howard University in Washington D.C., Shauna Morgan Kirlew is a globalist who researches and teaches literature of the African Diaspora with a particular focus on representations of Black womanhood in 21st-century literature. She has published creative and scholarly works in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, *Anthology of Appalachian Writers Volume VI*, *The Pierian*, *Pluck! The Journal of Affrilachian Arts & Culture*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, and *ProudFlesh: New Afrikan Journal of Culture, Politics & Consciousness*. Email: shauna.kirlew@Howard.edu.

Old World Inca: Euro-American Families in the Late Eighteenth Century European Imaginary

Richard B. Apgar

Inca and Peruvian society formed the setting and source material for many of the eighteenth century's most popular and successful literary works. Retelling the conquest of Pizarro and his men presented eighteenth-century authors an opportunity to revisit a seminal moment in the expansion of European power as it met what many considered the greatest indigenous civilization of the Americas.¹ Core elements of the historical record, made malleable by the temporal distance of more than two centuries, were deployed by European authors in the course of re-imagining the conquest. Inca society would remain throughout the nineteenth a convenient example for European writers to utilize in critiques directed at the brutality of the Spanish or to stage a critique of contemporary society from, or in the voice of, the past and the oppressed.² In critiquing the Spanish, these texts envision alternate, more humane and gentle forms of colony taking, inserting paternalistic and pedagogical aims as a substitute for the violence and bloodshed of the historical record. In posing these alternatives, texts of the era provided more palatable plot lines, which fit better with the timbre of the times and rendered the dominance of Europe over the Americas in terms acceptable to their contemporary audiences.

The final episode of the conquest, it has been argued, becomes a melodramatic tale about the establishment of a Euro-American family. The colonization of the Americas in literary works is staged, both as the constitution of a new family that weds the best elements of the Old and New World into an idealized union, thereby legitimating "hierarchy and colonial subjection as natural" extensions of a domestic relationship (Zantop 131), and as a life-giving force which rescues and rejuvenates an ill and aging Europe. The Americas, widely depicted as feminine, female, and effeminate in European arts and literature, are a willing and eager bride or wet-nurse for masculine Europe.

The foundation for this argument is drawn from *Les Incas, ou la Destruction de L'Empire du Pérou*. Most readers are familiar with *Les Incas* (1777), the colossal work of Jean-François Marmontel (1723-1799), whose retelling of the fall of Inca society at the hands of Pizarro centers on the love story of Cora and Alonzo. Fatefully brought together by

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an earthquake, their love story produces a near revolution that fundamentally changes Inca society. Beyond the figures of Cora and Alonzo, who will be discussed in further detail below, Marmontel's work also proposes a second male-female relationship between Europe and the Americas in the offer of breast milk to an elderly Bartolomé de Las Casas by a young Peruvian woman. As recently argued by Jutta Gisela Sperling, this scene, in which Las Casas—the missionary priest, first critic of Spanish brutality, and author of *Brevisima relacion de la destruccion de las Indias* (1552) (English: *A Short Account*, 1583)—is revived at the breast of a native, became the subject of two well-known French paintings and offers a second paradigm, in addition to the model colonial marriage, for the colonial-familial relationship.

In these paintings, Sperling argues, Las Casas's "engulfment of New World riches was presented as the gracious, measured acceptance of a native woman's voluntary offering of her body for non-sexual consumption" (50). This complicates the husband-wife model central to the plot of *Les Incas* and establishes a triangular relationship between the nurse, her husband, and her adoptive father. This suggests "a form of cross-racial kinship grounded in milk, care, and adoption rather than blood, rape and procreation"; even further, Sperling notes that the composition of the paintings of Las Casas breastfeeding alludes "to the possibility of a power reversal between the New World and Old" (50). The vulnerable European given over to the care of this *Ersatzmutter* [substitute mother] finds an echo in a German text that appeared shortly after Marmontel's novel.

Joachim Heinrich Campe's *Entdeckung von Amerika* [Discovery of America, 1781-2] is a three-volume work that stages the conquests of Columbus, Cortez, and Pizarro as a collection of evening stories delivered by a father figure in a pseudo-familial setting to an assembled group of listening children.³ He is their *Ersatzvater*; they are his *Ersatzkinder*. This work, which would remain in print well into the nineteenth century and has been subject to limited scholarly attention,⁴ contextualizes and explicates the events of the conquest in interactions between the narrating father and the listening children. The children, guided by the father, are encouraged to identify first with the heroic traits displayed by Columbus as he planned and executed his voyage of "discovery." By the end of the series, however, the listening children are asked to compare themselves to Peruvian boys as the father narrates their quest to pass the physical tests necessary to become Inca. In executing this shift, I contend, Campe's text subverts the traditional male-female relationship between Europe and the Americas. Devoid of the sexualized, masculine conquest found in Marmontel, and, as we shall see, in August von Kotzebue's *Die Sonnen-Jungfrau*, one of

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Marmontel's German imitators, Campe's work substitutes an identificatory relationship formed through reflection on the practices of the conqueror and the conquered. By inverting the object of identification from the conqueror to the conquered, the text connects its two subjects—children listening to the narrating father and the encountered civilizations—into an analogous relationship, whereby the reversal alluded to in the image of Las Casas is realized in a remapping of the New World onto the Old. The linkage between both spheres of the narrative is constituted in two key scenes: the moment of first contact in the tale of Columbus and the pseudo-family's discussion of the tests to become an Inca.

Through the interjections of the narrating father, Campe's text contrasts the childlike innocence of the islanders Columbus contacts with the pinnacle of human perfectibility necessary to become "Kinder der Sonne" [children of the sun] (3: 111). In culminating this multi-volume retelling of the conquest of the Americas with young males as the primary object of identification, Campe's work proposes a different position for the Americas in the transatlantic relationship. A position defined not by its availability as willing wife, eager, as Susanne Zantop argued, for a "better husband" (128-32), nor as the source, as seen in Sperling's discussion of the depiction of Las Casas, for Europe's renewal through the 'natural' resources of the Americas, *Discovery of America* links Europe and the Americas in a universalizing pedagogical project, which appropriates the spectacle of the conquest in service of its goals. In exposing this linkage, I seek to counter Zantop's claim that Campe's work served as a compensatory fantasy for German colonial impotence. Campe's work imagines the relationship of Europe to the Americas along familial lines—paternal Europe, a narrating father figure in Campe's work, guiding his child subjects—without any indication of male desire.⁵ The paired interaction generated through these transatlantic narratives exposes the pedagogical-paternal impulse as central to Europe's identity.

The text's emphasis of an element of Inca culture other than the melodramatic romance accentuated by Marmontel and Kotzebue lends a different light to our understanding of the relationship between Europe and the Americas in the late eighteenth century, a relationship drawn from and faithful to the historical record of the conquest—Campe admits to using the acclaimed history of the Americas by William Robertson and central elements of Campe's presentation of Inca society can be found in the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* (1609, 1617) by Garcilaso de la Vega—yet also permitting the author to amend, insert, and alter as he saw necessary to achieve the goals established for his text (1: vii). Robertson's *History of America* (1777), translated

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immediately into German by Friedrich Schiller, has the distinction of distancing itself from the fundamental inferiority of Americans found in the work of Buffon and de Pauw (Keen 275). In drawing specific attention to this source, Campe's text stakes out a position in the ongoing debate about human diversity and the relationship of Europe to the world at the end of the eighteenth century. Where previous scholarship has assigned German texts a secondary role, I claim that this work, by virtue of its subject matter and publication date, is a direct participant in conceptualizing European understandings of the broader world.

Campe (1746-1818), one of the Enlightenment's leading pedagogues and considered a father of German children's literature (Wild, *Geschichte* 84), utilizes these tales as a measuring stick and proving ground for his vision of an enlightened society. This vision for society, Campe's fantasy, is a pedagogical utopia in which his texts counteract the deleterious forces of the modern, sentimental world. Campe envisioned the *Discovery* and the other dozen volumes of travel narratives he adapted as an antidote to poisonous books of the era.⁶ These works, Campe promised in announcing his epoch-making *Robinson Crusoe* adaptation, would awaken, ignite, and strengthen every slumbering "physische und moralische Menschenkraft" [physical and moral energy of man] of their readers, bringing them out of an idealized world into the "wirkliche, so wie sie jetzt ist" [real world, just as it now is] ("Ankündigung" 119). Campe's plan to utilize historical narratives, set two centuries in the past to counter the perceived danger of popular literature and the ills of the present, is fraught with temporal dissonance from the start. In the *Discovery of America*, this awakening into the real world is staged in conversations between the narrating father and the children. The link between Europe and the Americas is repetitively forged and affirmed in the moments between the historical narratives.

Euro-American Families

Returning to the figures of Cora and Alonzo, central to the seemingly countless adaptations of Marmontel's work that appeared throughout Europe well into the nineteenth century,⁷ it is clear that these ill-fated lovers are also involved in a pedagogical project. As portrayed in Marmontel and the most successful adaptation for the European stage, August von Kotzebue's continental hit *Die Sonnen-Jungfrau* (The Virgin of the Sun, 1789), Alonzo, a noble Spaniard, flees from the marauding hordes of Pizarro to bring his knowledge and skills to the Peruvians.⁸ His decision to reject the violent and inhumane practic-

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es of his compatriots and embrace the paternal-pedagogical impulse culminates in the sexual conquest of Cora, leading her from vows of chastity to, as Susanne Zantop has argued, the more natural state of motherhood (123-5). In simultaneously seeking to rescue the natives from Pizarro and defiling the most sacred of Inca institutions, Alonzo fulfills both halves of this impulse. In Marmontel's text, this dually perfect union, a union which weds the best of Europe and the Americas, collapses with the death of Alonzo in battle and the deaths of Cora and their child on his grave. Kotzebue's play ends, in contrast, with this union intact and the promise of the birth of this Euro-American child in a still potentially blissful future (139-41).

Kotzebue and Marmontel both creatively use widely available knowledge of Inca culture to drive their plots. Most notably, Cora and her entire family are to be executed for violating her vows and defaming the glory of the sun god. To prevent this, the Inca must be swayed to change the law. Alonzo, an outsider freed from any responsibility to Inca laws in Marmontel's novel, makes an impassioned plea for the king to look to nature and reason, arguing that this law must be ordained by man and not the sun, since Cora and all women are intended by nature to be mothers (2: 136). In the penultimate scene of Kotzebue's play, the king arrives—the audience having been informed of the king's intention in the final scene of the fourth act—and quickly changes the law. This frees Cora's family, yet leaves the two lovers subject to death. In the scene in act four, the high priest indicated that the king was inclined to free Cora and Alonzo as well, but to maintain peace in the realm, he is obliged to make an example of someone (107). This sets the stage for a popular uprising that demands, not the death of Cora or Alonzo, but rather that they too receive pardons; after many emotional pleas, the high priest makes a final entreaty to the king. He, like Alonzo in *Les Incas*, bases his appeal on nature and reason. In earlier times, nature and reason may have both spoken to the necessity of this law, now both cry for its end. This reform effort, set in sixteenth-century South America, when read as directed to the play's contemporary audience makes plain that the wisdom of the high priest's pleas—to bring laws in accord with the present age—is valid on both sides of the Atlantic. With a final dramatic flourish, the two are called before the king, who with sword of justice in his right hand and the palm of pardon in his left pronounces “vernichtet sey das Gesetz! Cora frey! [the law is destroyed! Cora is free!] (143). All parties saved, the proto-Euro-American family survives as the promise of an alternate future.

In many respects, the conclusion of Kotzebue's work is directly reflected in Campe's. The idealized Euro-American family is recreated through the structure of the text with the narrating father assuming

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the role of Alonzo, who, in this case, flees the present world into the history of the narrative as a means of rescuing his little Incas from stories rife with the afflictions of sentimentality. The children, in Alonzo's case represented by the natural perfection of Inca society, need to be rescued from the ravages of the growing tide of sentimentality. To push this analogy one step further, Pizarro represents wayward, immoral trends in European society. Marked from first mention as an anti-hero and compared to a wild, untended wasteland in the father's narrative,⁹ the figure of Pizarro forms the negative in a contrast with Columbus, thereby exposing the remapping of the conquest of Peru onto Europe. The figure of Columbus, an unquestioned hero in the series' first volume, is the model of Europe's virtues in just application. Pizarro, on the other hand, is the epitome of brute, physical strength in an unjust application. Pizarro might seem to prove through "seine unermüdbare Geduld im Leiden, und durch seinen Löwenmuth" [his indefatigable patience in suffering and through his lion-like bravery] that he is worthy of praise, however these traits, for which both Columbus and Cortez were frequently praised, unaccompanied by "Rechtschaffenheit und Güte des Herzens" [virtue and goodness of heart] become "ein Messer in der Hand eines Rasenden" [a knife in the hand of a madman] (3: 46-7).

In introducing the *Discovery of America*, Campe countered fears that presenting such questionable characters might do more harm than good by justifying his use of this source material as an examination of human frailty (1: viii). The conquistador's "errors"—to put the conquest of the New World in an overly generous light—become points of commentary for the father and points of discussion for the children. The title figure is not always right, and his actions are not always justified. His actions, taken out of the space of the narrative, become the subject of criticism and comment within the narrative family. This shift permits the action of the narrative to be contextualized for the reader, whereby disparate elements of the father's narrative are underscored for the benefit of the listening audience. By encapsulating these stories of conquest within the frame of the father's narrative, the children learn, or it is intended that they learn, to analyze travel descriptions and establish a critical stance vis-à-vis exploration. The native might be childlike, feminine, and weak versus the paternal, masculine strength of the explorer, but this disparity should, if the father's appeal is heeded, guide the explorer to a kinder, gentler mode of exploration; philanthropic pedagogy should become philanthropic exploration. Education and exploration are bound together: the world of the narrative is reflected within the sphere of the narrative family; the sphere of the narrative family is a model for the world. The Euro-

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American link is forged by a family tie built on pedagogy, not violence and sexual conquest.

This link is fully exposed when the father asks the children if they want to yield to the tests of the Inca. Where Columbus served as the standard in the first volume, in the last the native becomes the standard by which the children should be measured. Inca society is presented in terms that are strikingly similar to Campe's vision for enlightened European society. Laws governing the division and distribution of land are praised as just and equitable, the process of identifying leaders reflects a society which privileged deeds over birth, and most notably, only those who have shown their nobility through both physical and mental tests can lead (3: 110-13). Not so subtly, the Old World system of rule by birth is usurped by the New. In this description of Inca culture, the text makes plain that the resource the Americas offer Europe is decidedly not economic. The rejuvenation of Europe will come not through the exploitation of America's natural resources—represented by the breastfeeding *Las Casas*—but through the establishment of a social order that privileges and rewards individual merit. That Campe, in his *Letters from Paris*, would celebrate arriving in time to “attend the funeral” of French despotism is, in this context, not surprising (“Revolutionsbriefe” 49).

New World Children

In the passage retelling Columbus's first encounter with people of the Caribbean, many elements of the Noble Savage trope are listed for the listening children: the natives are peaceful, live in harmony with nature, and are fascinated by trinkets (*Spielereien*); they are smaller, their skin darker, their hair black, their chins and face beardless; their “Gesichtszüge waren fremd und sonderbar, ihre Mienen sanft und schüchtern” [facial features were foreign and curious, their expressions gentle and shy] (1: 91). The Indians were amazed at the Europeans who appeared before them and the longer “die erstaunten Indier da standen und gafften, desto unbegreiflicher war ihnen alles, was sie sahen und was sie hörten. Die weiße Farbe der Europäer, ihr bärtiges Gesicht, ihre Kleidung, ihre Waffen, ihr Betragen—alles war ihnen neu und wunderbar” [the amazed Indians stood there and stared, the more incomprehensible everything that they saw and heard was to them. The white color of the Europeans, their bearded faces, their clothing, their weapons, their demeanor—everything was new and wonderful to them] (1: 90). Eventually, they begin to believe that the Spaniards are “übermenschliche Wesen” [supernatural beings] even, “Kinder ihrer Gottheit” [children of their deity] (1: 90). It takes little imagination

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to see that the native is primitive, passive, and perhaps even effeminate. This description fits with widespread, contemporary accounts of inhabitants of the New World. The most widely read—and contested—of these accounts was de Pauw's *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains, ou Mémoires intéressants pour servir à l'Histoire de l'Espèce humaine* (1768-1770). His argument, which would become a point of reference for virtually every writer and philosopher that followed, emphasized bearded vs. beardless as the physical expression of inherent European superiority. This marker also makes its way into the father's catalog of visible difference. His description of this encounter does not end there, moreover; he continues, turning his eye to the sailors, who were similarly awed by what they had "discovered." The father tells us that the Spanish were amazed by "die neuen und wunderbaren Gegenstände, die sie jetzt vor Augen hatten, beinahe eben so erstaunt, als die Indier über sie" [the new and wonderful objects that they now had in front of their eyes, nearly as amazed as the Indians were by them] (3: 91). The explorers mirror the silent amazement of the native. In this first contact, there is a moment of mutual astonishment.

Overlooking, briefly, the tensions latent in this scene, this description notes the potential for equanimity, for common humanity. There is in this encounter, at least on one level, a delicate balance. The gaze of the explorer is reflected by the Indian. The beardless, darker-skinned American is fascinated by the bearded, white European just as the clothed, armored explorer is fascinated by the nearly naked native. After a few minutes of observation the natives classify their other as gods, or demi-gods, and the explorers view their other as coming from a different class of human. This first moment in which the Old World and the New World come face to face speaks of a different relationship and a potentially different history between the two. In this moment a pedagogical utopia is envisioned: the European has starry-eyed New World pupils, who see in the explorers the embodiment of a higher power. For an instant the idealized dynamic of the narrative family—benevolent patriarch guiding model students—is reflected in the father's narrative. Inherent to the tension in the father's description of this encounter is the knowledge that this moment of perfect teachability will be abused and corrupted. Mirrored in the narrative family, this relationship will, by the end of the *Discovery of America* series, also distort the teacher to student bond. The relationship between New and Old, just like that of teacher-student, is and never would be an equal partnership, but for an instant this passage proposes an opportunity for the European to behave differently, to live up to the assumption of the New World population and look after and care for them as a

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supernatural being—as a “god”—would. Of course, this New World pedagogical utopia expires.

After hearing about the report of this encounter Columbus sent to the King of Spain, the mother, who makes infrequent appearances in the text, asks the children, “wie gefallen euch diese Wilden?” [how do you like these savages?] To which they all in unison respond: “O sehr!—Die guten Menschen!” [Very much so—the good people!] (1: 109). The children, in contrast to the mother, readily identify the Indians as people, which prompts clarification of the term *Wilde* as people who have had no instruction, who have had no education, who “nicht einmahl den lieben Gott kennen” [do not even know the good Lord] (1: 109). This definition betrays the colonizer’s fantasy of tabula rasa. What separates the “wild” from the “civil” is education, upbringing, and religion. By this definition, anyone without education is a *savage*, and the only path to civilization is through education. Within the constraints of the text, a “Wilde” is simply a person who has not been educated in the ways of society. Thus, in *Pizarro* when the father questions, “wer war hier der Wilde? Der unbekleidete Indianer, . . . oder die Spanier” [who was in this case the savage? The naked Indian, . . . or the Spaniards] (3: 12), it is clear that in the controlled world of the narrative, the uncivilized, wild animals can only be Pizarro and his men. They will act inhumanely and without restraint. Pizarro, uneducated and at a remove from society, is Diderot’s unleashed tiger that slakes its thirst in blood.

To complete the scene, the father underscores this difference by emphasizing the advantages and responsibilities of being born in Christian society. He imposes the additional burden on the privileged youth in his circle that failure to utilize the advantage of their birth brings about eternal disgrace. The father warns:

Schande, ewige Schande für uns, wenn wir an Güte des Herzens und an thätiger Menschenliebe von ihnen [den Indianern] übertroffen werden sollten! Wie viel mehr Bewegungsgründe zum Guten, wie viel mehr Hülfsmittel zur Rechtschaffenheit hat uns die göttliche Vorsehung verliehen, als diese armen ununterwiesenen Indier hatten! O Kinder! laßt uns ja aus allen Kräften uns bestreben, uns unserer großen Vorzüge werth zu machen! (1: 109-10)

[Shame, eternal shame for us, if we should be bettered by them [the Indians] in goodness of heart and in active philanthropy! How much more motivation for goodness, how many more resources for righteousness have been granted us by divine providence than these poor uneducated

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Indians! O, children, let us strive with all our might to make ourselves worthy of our great advantages!]

Even though the Indians, who, according to Columbus's report, were naturally guided by the Golden Rule and possessed innate goodness, the children, who have the good fortune of receiving the guidance of religion, should surpass their level of charity. Christianity, as defined in this quote, is an extension of innate human kindness. It should encourage the believer to acts of philanthropy beyond those that humanity itself demands. The influence of religion, specifically Protestant Christianity, decidedly not (Spanish) Catholicism, plays a major role in all of Campe's works. The European by virtue of Christianity should be superior to the New World population. This provides a further point for the father to criticize Cortez and Pizarro. For the father, the enlightened Christian act is to treat the native with human decency. In the second volume, Cortez and his men are criticized for their religious fanaticism, which they used to support their decimation of the population. The father commences an unusually impassioned two-page rebuke directly to Cortez. He begins:

Was machst du, Unglücklicher? Was thaten dir die Unschuldigen, in deren Blute du jetzt deine Hände waschen willst? Was thaten sie deinem Könige oder deinen Landsleuten? Ist es ein Verbrechen, nicht zu glauben, was die Leute in Europa glauben, wenn man niemahls gehört hat, daß ein Europa in der Welt sei? Oder sind diese Unschuldigen etwa um deswillen keine Menschen, weil sie keine Kristen sind? Barbar, öffne deine Augen! Schau an ihre Gestalt; ist sie nicht die menschliche? (36-7)

[What are you doing, unfortunate one? What did these innocents, in whose blood you now desire to wash your hands, do to you? What did they do to your king or your compatriots? Is it a crime not to believe what the people in Europe believe, even if one has never heard that there is a Europe in the world? Or are these innocents somehow not humans for the fact they are not Christians? Barbarian, open your eyes! Look at their form, is it not human?]

The emotion of the father's plea only underscores his belief in the value, if not absolute equality, of all human life. He wants his listeners to recognize that the people of the New World are not animals or sub-human, but rather simply blameless, innocent, unenlightened. Not responsible for their ignorance of Christianity, having committed

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no crime, they deserve at a minimum the respect common humanity guarantees. When the father's position in this passage is juxtaposed with the description in Columbus's report to the crown and the first encounter scene, it completes an image of the native as a child-like innocent, who should not be faulted for shortcomings. Rather, he should be nurtured and lifted up, so that he may someday approach equal status.¹⁰ The pedagogue father imagines that education will level the differences, but he sees this plan in strictly European terms. His lesson, while directed at European children, could also benefit the "children" of the New World. In this sense, the father ignores cultural specificity, and thereby, the distance between the European and the New World "child" has narrowed. What remains is the reversal, the mapping of New onto Old to complete the metaphorical shift.

Old World Inca

Before describing the trials that a young Peruvian must withstand in order to become an Inca, the father provides several background notes about the society. The first law of the Peruvians is a variation on the Golden Rule: "Liebet euch unter einander, als Brüder!" [Love one another, as brothers!] (3: 107). If anyone should break this or any other law, he comes forward, confesses his misdeed and asks for punishment. With societal norms fully internalized, the need for external pedagogy is eliminated. There is an unbroken connection between the individual and society that needs no explicit articulation. Individual and community exist in perfect harmony. The ultimate and most shameful crime is "Müssiggang" [laziness] which is the "Quelle aller Laster" [source of all vices] and a sin against "die ganze menschliche Gesellschaft" [the entire human community] (3: 110-1). From this depiction the Peruvians are not that different from the ideal that the father sets for his children. This description blurs the line between the narrative present and the narrated past; the domestic and the exotic converge, and, it would seem that Peruvian society was not drastically different from the enlightened society the father hoped to create through his pedagogy. To accentuate this conflation of narrative time and geographic distance, the father presents his description of the Inca tests as an opportunity for the children to take stock of themselves:

[I]hr könnt mit den jungen Inka's euch im Gedanken zusammenstellen, um zu erfahren, ob ihr an Geduld in Ertragung körperlicher Schmerzen, an männlicher Standhaftigkeit, an Stärke, Behendigkeit [sic] und Geschicklichkeit des Körpers

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und an unerschrockener Herzhaftigkeit euch mit ihnen wol schon messen dürfet? (3: 111)

[You can compare yourselves with the young Incas in your minds, in order to know whether you can be permitted to compete with them in manly steadfastness, in strength, agility and dexterity of body, and in fearless vigor?]

This thought exercise, which invites the children to determine if they could measure up to these yet-to-be described tasks, exposes the text's shift. Over the course of the *Discovery of America* series, the standard has remained constant; what has changed is the model. The explorer, the measure of greatness in the first, is replaced in the third volume by the conquered culture. Fritz, one of the listening children in all three books, who forswears assistance tying his shoes in the hopes of one day "becoming a Columbus," is asked in the passage that follows the description of the Inca trials if he would also be willing to undergo these same tests (3: 126). In drawing this connection and the delicate interplay between historical fact and fatherly fiction these narratives are given their insidious power. The historical existence of the Inca combined with the father's intonation and accentuation of Inca values, whether factual or not, that mirror enlightenment values strengthens the message. That the Inca existed and privileged the *same* values as the father, leads the reader to the impression that European values are, in fact, fundamental truths of humanity. In this way the tests of the Inca and the pedagogy of the father are equated.

Measuring themselves against the Inca is valuable for the children to determine if they are ready to be leaders, not of the Inca, but in European society. The children are, in this sense, Old World Inca. If they can pass the tests of the Inca, then they are also ready to be leaders in Europe. When the moment comes and the father asks if he is ready to submit to the tests, Fritz pauses, and then asks for some years to prepare, to which the father responds,

Ich freue mich indeß, Kinder, daß ich euch abermahls habe zeigen können, was der Mensch alles aus sich machen kann, sobald er nur den ernstlichen Willen sich zu vervollkommen hat. Da ist keine einzige unter den unzählbaren Kräften und Fähigkeiten seines Leibes und seiner Seele, die er nicht bis zum Bewundernswürdigen ausbilden und stärken könnte. (3: 120)

[Meanwhile, I am pleased, children, that I have once again been able to show you everything a person can make of himself, as soon as he has the earnest intention to bring himself to perfection. There is not a single one among the innumerable

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powers and abilities of his body and his soul, which he cannot develop and strengthen to worthiness of marvel.]

Delayed into the undefined future, these tests become an opportunity for the father to discuss humanity's potential. In utilizing the Inca, the text has provided a further example of individual improvement. In this way, the father ultimately exploits the draw of the foreign to further his goals. His two prime examples, Columbus and the Inca, are thus reduced to mere symbols. The text's interest in Columbus, the Inca, or other aspects of the Americas is reduced to a pedagogical function. Through the allure of adventure and the exotic backdrop of the New World, the text draws in and captures an audience, but ultimately what is delivered are stories that invoke cultural difference to show that everyone is the same. Within the context of the discourse on imperialism, Campe's message is positive and affirms a belief in the goodness of humanity, but when viewed from the perspective of his pedagogy, cultural difference is nothing more than a canard, a shiny lure that offers a look into a foreign world only to switch it for the domestic. The father continues and laments his own imperfection, finding consolation in the hopes of the next generation. The father prays:

[I]n euch, meine Kinder, wieder aufzuleben; euch, in welchem ich jetzt einzig lebe und webe, gesund und stark an Leib und Seele, und mit tausend nützlichen Kenntnissen und Fertigkeiten aufwachsen und zu braven gemeinnützigen Männern reifen zu sehen—dieser Gedanke tröstet mich, wegen des Mangels einer verständigen Anweisung in meiner eigenen Jugend. . . . O Gott, laß doch diese Hoffnung—das süßeste Labsal meines Herzens unter den schweren Vatersorgen, die du mir aufgelegt hast—o laß sie mich nicht täuschen! (3: 120-1)

[In you, my children, to come back to life; you, in whom I now singly live and exist, healthy and strong in body and soul, and to watch you grow and mature into honest, charitable men with a thousand useful skills and abilities—this thought provides me comfort, because of a deficit of prudent direction in my own youth. . . . O God, let his hope—the sweetest relief of my heart among the heavy fatherly concerns, which you have laid upon me—O, let them not disappoint me!]

Invoking the language of the Bible, this prayer shifts the burden onto the children.¹¹ They become the hope, not only for the future, but also for himself. His fears and fatherly worries—a burden from God—are

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made lighter in that he has placed all of his hope in these children. It is in this passage, in the shift from the Inca tests to the father's worries that the text's pedagogy finds its most sinister note. The father places his burden on the children; if they fail, he fails. His every hope and every failure are bound with them. He lives on through them and they should rectify his shortcomings. Through them the father will be perfected; in them he will find his own perfection. This perversion of the parent-child, teacher-pupil relationship is the culmination of the text's pedagogy. This doubles the burden on the children. If they fall short in proving themselves beneficial to the common good, "gemeinnützig" in the original, they bring shame to themselves and their teacher/father. In the invocation of God, the father extends this bond beyond the pastoral setting of the father's narration and into eternity.

These children are the first in line for the benefits of the colonial-pedagogical impulse. They are to become the first citizens of the German colonial world; it just happens that they are not, at least in the traditional terms of the colonial relationship, any different than their colonizers. Children are an internal, domestic colony that must be civilized. In this respect, Campe's stance vis-à-vis colonial activity is consistent—European children need the light of the Enlightenment as much as the inhabitants of the New World. Thus, the Americas are ultimately a cipher for the domestic. And conversely, the world of the narrative family is a cipher for the Americas. The two worlds of the text, the foreign and the domestic, are linked. The Euro-American family, bound together by the hyphen and united in the same project. Combined by and confined within the narrative structure of the text, both take on metaphoric value. Functioning as metaphors they become idealized caricatures of their "real-world" counterparts. The children, based on students from Campe's days as a private tutor, are in the text fantasies of pedagogical perfection, just as the natives from the explorer's tales are mediated representations of New World populations. Linked as they are, these two distant worlds can be discussed in similar terms. The children are the subjects of the father, as the natives are the subjects of the explorers. Two seemingly different projects, exploration and pedagogy, are in effect the same. The control, manifested as physical power, exerted by the explorers is reflected in the control, manifested as emotional coercion, employed by the father. This control manifests itself in different forms—physical vs. emotional—but the goal is the same: the creation of productive citizens. In this sense, colonial control, which is to say domestic pedagogy, is the way to an ordered society. Or, put differently, domestic control, exercised as colonial pedagogy, is the way to an enlightened world.

Notes

1. Cortez and the conquest of Mexico were also popular subjects. For examples, cf. *Konquista spielen*, edited by Gabrijela Mecky-Zaragoza. Benjamin Keen notes that the conquest of Mexico lacked a sympathetic chronicler, who would describe the plight of the defeated, and the sympathy of the European audience, which was put off by the historically inaccurate tales of widespread human sacrifice in Aztec culture (57).
2. Cf. Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought*. While Keen's primary focus is Aztec culture, his work includes many references to the portrayal of Inca society, particularly when it served as contrast to the treatment of Aztec society in European letters.
3. The narrating figure is called "Vater" by all of the children in the group even though only one is his natural child. All translations from the German are my own. Citation of quotes for *Entdeckung von Amerika* is by volume number, with the tale of Columbus appearing in volume one, Cortez in volume two, and Pizarro in volume three.
4. Most scholarship discussing the *Discovery of America* series mentions it as the follow-up to Campe's first major work, *Robinson the Younger*. For a selection of these, see Hentschel 1-13; Brune-Heiderich 98-111; Wild, *Vernunft* 218. The most recent printing of the *Entdeckung* series is a 2007 facsimile reprint of a Spanish translation from 1845.
5. Susanne Zantop notes that "colonial relations, as they are literalized in *Robinson the Younger*, are a form of "homosocial" male bonding, seemingly unaffected by desire" (119).
6. In an article on Campe's *Robinson*, Matt Erlin sees the text as an "imaginative space" for contemplating the disruptiveness of luxury in the economic order of the late eighteenth century (356).
7. Lawrence Marsden Price provides a detailed list of the many adaptations and translations as well as their performance history on stages throughout Europe (87-93).
8. Zantop cites performance numbers and translations into English and other languages as evidence to support her claim, that "no other single writer with the exception of Campe, influenced German thought on colonialism more than Kotzebue." By citing the translation history, Zantop undermines her own argument which claims these texts as uniquely "German," a fact also countered by the success of Kotzebue's plays on the English stage (127).
9. The father before even mentioning his name, states "mein Held ist dismahl kein Mann, den ihr werdet lieb gewinnen können" [this time, my hero is not a man, of whom you will be able to be fond] (3: 47-8).
10. Cf. *Entdeckung* 3: 146-7. The father tells the children: "Wer weiß, was Amerika noch alles werden kann, werden wird, wenn es das Joch seiner Europäischen Tirannen einmahl ganz wird abgeschüttelt haben, und was es nie geworden wäre, wenn es dieses Joch nicht erst eine Zeitlang getragen hätte?"

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Mir wenigstens wird es von Tage zu Tage wahrscheinlicher, daß dieser unterdrückte Welttheil über kurz oder lang der Sitz der Freiheit, der allgemeinen Duldung, der Wissenschaften und der Glückseligkeit werden wird." Here, in a clear reference to the American Revolution, Campe sees the beginning of the end of Imperial rule. As noted above, he was also at least in principle a supporter of the French Revolution.

11. The expression "leben und weben" appears in Acts 17: 28. The father is, in essence, making the children his disciples.

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About the Author

Richard B. Apgar is Assistant Professor of German at Sewanee: The University of the South. His research explores the interface and representation of cultures in travel literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, cultural transfer, and media culture of the Enlightenment. His current project examines travel accounts from Paris at the time of the French Revolution. Email: rbapgar@sewanee.edu.

St. Alban's English College, Valladolid: Enclave or Doorway to the Reception of English Books in Spain?

Ana Sáez-Hidalgo

When the Jesuit Robert Persons founded St. Alban's College in Valladolid in 1589, he had in mind an institution for training English Catholic priests, the first English seminary on Spanish soil. Because of the religious persecutions in England at that time, these spiritual fathers-to-be needed a safe place to settle and study. This was conceived as a temporary situation, a period of training in order to get ready to return secretly to their homeland with the purpose of converting their fellow countrymen to the "old religion." Despite the political enmity between the two nations, Spain was considered a religious safeguard, and therefore preferred to other places where the political and religious climate was a threat to the success of the English mission—such was the case in Flanders and the English college of Douai, after 1585, when Queen Elizabeth decided to support the Dutch against Spain in the Revolt of the Netherlands (Houlston 5ff; McCoog ch. 2; Williams, *St. Alban's College* 1-33). The English College in Valladolid, being an educational institution, thus housed books from its early years, and this collection has developed into the large library that is still extant nowadays. Because of its status as a seminary committed to the training of priests, the Library offers insights into the dynamics of reading in a particular group of people, English Catholic exiles. In this article, I intend to examine St. Alban's library as an agent of reception of English books in Spain from its early years until the end of the eighteenth century, a period when English books were mostly absent in Spanish book collections, both private and public. It cannot be taken for granted, however, that the material reception of English books in this Valladolid seminary is evidence of their similar reception among Spanish readers. This is another aspect I shall address here: the degree of isolation vs. permeability of the College as indicative of both the dynamics of book culture in the institution itself and the library's role as locus for interactions between various reading communities.

In the late sixteenth century the establishment of an English seminary on Spanish soil was considered polemic, to say the least. John Blackfan, the first annalist of the College and one of its original mem-

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bers, mentions the most important difficulties that students and professors had to face:

All of these [the Inquisitors and the Governor] were creating the greatest difficulty for the plan, some in the name of religion, lest perhaps the cancer of the plague of heresy be injected and circulate through the hidden veins of the republic before being discovered. Others feared lest perhaps a traitor conceal himself here beneath a student's gown, and finding out what is going on here should betray their whole project to enemies. (Blackfan 13-14)

The College was founded the year after the Spanish Armada was defeated by England. It is therefore understandable that Spaniards resented any English presence. But this did not exclude admiration for the seminarians “who had left their native land, their parents and the other consolations which they might be able to enjoy at home, in order to keep faith with their Master in heaven, and who had pledged their life and their blood for his honor” (Blackfan 10). In fact, the martyrdom eventually suffered by many of these seminary priests earned them a great number of supporters in the Peninsula—hence the proliferation of martyrdom accounts.¹ Vallisoletanos seem to have had mixed feelings towards St. Alban's. On the one hand they appreciated that some members of the College, like Persons and Creswell, got involved in the Anglo-Spanish political confrontation (Fernández Suárez 71-72; Williams *St. Alban's College* 32); on the other, some malicious comments were spread, no doubt resulting from the mystery surrounding these foreigners (Fernández Suárez 45-84; Loomie 224-25). And to a certain degree this distrust was mutual. As we will see later, some rectors preferred to keep the collegians isolated from the city where they had settled. The relationship of St. Alban's College with Valladolid and with Spanish people, institutions, and culture is an essential factor in understanding the degree of its integration and interaction between them. It will be no less relevant when considering the College library and its impact on the reception of English books in Spain. This is the next point I intend to examine.

Although the English Seminary in Valladolid was a Jesuit institution with an educational purpose in itself, a teaching agreement was established with another Jesuit College in the city, St. Ambrose, so that the English students could take some of their lessons in it (Blackfan 6-7; Williams *St. Alban's College* 9).² This was the most important Jesuit center of Valladolid—the university grammar courses were assigned to it for years (Burrieza Sánchez *Valladolid, tierras y caminos* 101-111).

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Thus, the English seminarians shared classrooms and instruction with Spaniards. Even though no record has left any indication of an actual intellectual exchange between the English seminarians and their Spanish classmates at St. Ambrose, contemporary sources suggest that some other degree of mingling with Spaniards must have happened, as both the students and the administrators of the English College express some complaints about it, questioning the practice of external lessons, mostly over health and morality issues (Blackfan 146-47; Williams *St. Alban's College* 34). It was not until 1767, when Jesuits were banished from Spain, that the complete academic independence of the English seminary was achieved. Philip Perry (r. 1768-74), the rector in charge of establishing a new, non-Jesuit education system, claimed that if the English students stopped attending their lessons outside St. Alban's, they would avoid any risk of learning the "worldly and wicked habits of some of their colleagues" (Williams, *St. Alban's College* 88 n.59). Instead, he opted for the Douai system of cloistered education, with no externalized lessons, making St. Alban's a more isolated institution, an English enclave in Castile (Williams, "Philip Perry" 56ff.). However, Perry's attempts at seclusion did not succeed for long, and the contact between English and Spaniards was only discontinued briefly during his rectorship. The records show that a couple of decades later some Spanish students were admitted to St. Alban's, one of them by intercession of the King and two more by petition of Campomanes, president of the Council of State and patron of arts.³ Therefore, a door must have been open, even if only to a few persons.

Another point of a somewhat problematical crisscrossing of the English and the Spanish communities was the administration of the College. St. Alban's was a Jesuit center established in Spain, but subject to the English Catholic church. In an attempt to avoid major authority clashes between Spanish Jesuits and the English ecclesiastical establishment, power was distributed: the rectors of the College would be Spanish while the administration would remain in English hands. This agreement remained until the banishment of the Company of Jesus from Spain (1767), with a significant break between 1614 and 1617—largely the result of complaints about difficulties in mutual understanding (Williams *St. Alban's College* 17ff., 34ff.). These few years excepted, for two centuries the coexistence of a Spanish person in command and English students and teachers was an integral part of everyday life in the College; but that coexistence not infrequently proved tenuous, and this surely explains why, in 1767, an English rector, Philip Perry, was appointed.

The Anglo-Spanish contact was not only evident in the instruction and administration of the English College. In its early years the

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involvement of St. Alban's with Spain was also made explicit in festivities, royal visits, and other social and academic events commemorated in a style combining Jesuit and Habsburg traditions, with display of emblems, discourses and multilingual explanation of psalms intended to show the collegians' literary accomplishment (Cano-Echevarría and Sáez-Hidalgo, *Fruits of Exile* 35off. & 471ff.). These celebrations were immediately publicized by printing news pamphlets both in English and Spanish, a kind of propaganda highly beneficial both to the College and to the Crown (Cano-Echevarría and Sáez Hidalgo, "Comfort without offence"). Although some of these events, like the royal visits of Philip II (1592) and Philip III (1600), were celebrated privately in the College and were only attended by select groups of courtiers and academics, some others were open to the wider citizenship: this was the case of the reception of the statue of the Virgin *Vulnerata* (1600), a public celebration with the involvement of local, religious, and university authorities and popular participation of citizens; both English and Spanish students wrote poems for the occasion.⁴ These types of events declined in the College after the first decades of the seventeenth century. No later records refer to celebrations with a similar involvement of both nations. It would only be after 1767 (the year of the banishment of Jesuits from Spain, when English secular rectors started to run St. Alban's) that a comparable connection with some Spanish social and political groups was resumed. Apart from the above-mentioned admission of a few Spanish students to the College, other links with high political spheres were developed by the first post-Jesuit rector, Philip Perry, as will be discussed later in this article. The second secular rector of the College, Joseph Shepherd (r. 1774-96), also achieved social and cultural commitments in the city by his honorary membership to the Academy of Mathematics and Drawing of Valladolid and patronage of the "Gremio de Carpinteros, Entalladores, Maestros de Coches, Carreteros, Torneros y Silletteros."⁵ He became a well-known and well-connected figure in late eighteenth-century Valladolid (Sáez-Hidalgo Letterless Englishman of Letters).

Since its foundation, then, the Royal English College of St. Alban's experienced a tension between isolation and integration with the Spanish world and culture, mostly due to the contradictions, anxieties and paradoxes resulting from its situation as a seminary of exiles, a college founded on foreign soil. It is against this backdrop that its library should be studied. And it is also under these circumstances that we have to consider the reception of English books in St. Alban's collection until the end of the eighteenth century. By 1796, when Joseph Shepherd died as second secular rector of the College, the common library of St. Alban's had gathered a very rich, large number of books that must be considered

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unique not only for the above-mentioned factors, but also for several other reasons (Williams Library of St. Alban's). Firstly, the combination of Spanish and English holdings is almost unequalled in any pre-nineteenth century library, even if considering the important book collection gathered by Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar, and Spanish ambassador to England (1613-22), the first Spanish bibliophile interested in English books. He brought back to Spain an important amount of them, both manuscripts and printed texts, including James I's works, Middleton's writings, Sidney's *Arcadia*, and Drayton's *Polyolbyon* (Andrés Escapa and Rodríguez; Manso Porto esp. 611-13, 627-28).⁶ It will not be until the late eighteenth century that Spanish intellectuals will develop curiosity about English literature; but they would only read the texts in translation, however. Beyond this few, the influence of English thought would only start in last decade of the century (Aguilar Piñal *Biblioteca de Jovellanos*; Glendinning; Alberich). Ofelia Rey Castelao has made a survey of English holdings in institutional Spanish libraries in the eighteenth century only to confirm their scarcity due to the predominance of the French book in trade, their high price, the ignorance of the language and the difficulties imposed by the Inquisition (Rey Castelao *La influencia inglesa; Libros y lectura*).

Secondly, the Inquisition or Holy Office did not have as much impact on St. Alban's as on other book collections. The importation of foreign books being forbidden by the Inquisition, institutional libraries were regularly checked for any trace of heterodoxy (Pérez Villanueva and Escandell Bonet 773-828; Bethencourt 241-80). Ample evidence of this is offered by the *visus* notation on the title-pages of many books of the English College, dated 1612-14, 1632, 1633-34, 1641-42, and 1694. However, during the eighteenth century, the Inquisition officers did not exert a tight control of the College library—only in 1707-9—and after the banishment of the Jesuits, Perry was granted permissions to import forbidden books when he argued the necessity of “armarnos de las mismas armas de nuestro Enemigo, para vencer y derrotarle, con más eficacia y acierto.”⁷ In spite of this type of authorization, the customs control was compulsory, and so the books imported by Perry and Shepherd in 1768-69 were checked and listed. However, either the Inquisition officers despaired of identifying the texts—many of them in English—or they overlooked these “strange” books. Among them were forbidden authors like Butler, Voltaire, or the Jansenist Ceillier.⁸

Thirdly, one more factor that makes St. Alban's book collection special is the fact that it is one of the few private religious libraries in Spain to escape the nineteenth-century *desamortización*, or confiscation of property belonging to religious institutions. The first seizure of this kind occurred precisely in 1767, with the banishment of the

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Jesuits (Rueda Hernández). Not only did the English College escape this seizure but paradoxically enough the suppression of the Society of Jesus meant an enlargement of its book collection and archives. In 1768 Philip Perry claimed, on the one hand, the properties—including books—of the two other English seminaries in Spain, those recently closed down in Seville and Madrid (Williams *St. Alban's College* 73; Philip Perry 54 ff.); and on the other a long list of volumes from the libraries of the suppressed Jesuit colleges, those “escrituras de nuestro país como contenientes cosas, que nos tocan especialmente y después otros no menos necesarios . . . por quanto consta muchos de los libros haver sido sacados deste Collegio de San Albano.”⁹ Although the former claim was only partly successful because some properties were already sold, the latter was eventually granted and many volumes were sent to St. Alban’s. Perry even managed to recover Jesuit books already donated to the University of Valladolid.¹⁰ All this is recorded in the College archives, preserved largely thanks to Perry’s careful keeping of documents (Williams, *St. Alban's College* 252-53).

The year 1767 therefore proved to be a turning point for the history of the English College.¹¹ It entailed a major change in its management as well as in its library and archive, that developed both quantitatively and qualitatively. In fact, the eighteenth century is a key moment in the reception of English books at St. Alban’s, as the rich documentary evidence for that period shows. This type of record is, however, less abundant for the period of Jesuit governance, what makes it more difficult to know the history of the College library until 1767. There are only three sources of information: the books of accounts, the indications of ownership in the books themselves, and the inventory made upon the expulsion of the Jesuits following the government orders.¹² Unfortunately, the books of accounts are too vague and flimsy in that regard—they only rarely give bibliographical details of the books acquired for the College; on the other hand, not all the book owners marked their volumes, the most significant exception being the founder of St. Alban’s, Robert Persons, whose books—about seventy volumes—bear his name on the title page.

Persons’s book collection departs from the official Jesuit curriculum, *ratio studiorum*. Earle Havens contends that Persons’s collection is built around dogmatic and patristic literature, intended to prepare future missionary priests to combat the arguments of English Protestants, who drew solely from biblical and patristic sources in their anti-Catholic polemic.¹³ This necessarily leads to a reflection on two key aspects of St. Alban’s library, the purpose of the College library on the one hand and the possible disparity between personal collections and the common library on the other. Among the rules for the College,

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Persons established the following: “está la librería abierta una hora cada día para los alumnos, y dos horas los días de fiesta y no más.”¹⁴ This implies that it started as a research resource only for professors and students of divinity rather than as a reference library for all collegians, who must have had their books in their private rooms. The 1767 inventory records books and papers in the chambers, though unfortunately they can hardly be identified through the vague descriptions.

The catalogue made upon the expulsion of the Jesuits lists about 1,300 titles in the common library in 1767, approximately two-thirds of them religious texts: doctrinal and theological, sermons, saints’ lives, and controversial literature. This evinces the dual purpose of the institution, educative and missionary. The scarcity of history texts—except for a few classical works—and other arts is remarkable; only a few grammars, dictionaries and literary texts are listed, almost all of them classical. The rest of the collection consists of handbooks for education purposes: astrology, medicine, logic, mathematics, metaphysics, geography, and rhetoric, both modern and vernacular material amounting to more than a quarter of the holdings. In sum, leaving aside the abovementioned salience of patristic books in Persons’s private collection, the titles found at the College common library before 1767 do not greatly differ from those in other Jesuit colleges all over Spain—except for the English Catholic controversy books, essential for the education of missionary priests, as we shall see below.

Other factors concomitant to the banishment of the Jesuits in St. Alban’s effected a major change in the College library, not only quantitatively but mostly in the new character of the collection, one that would render it unparalleled in any other religious, institutional, or private library in late eighteenth-century Spain. Three factors explain this new profile: the substitution of the *ratio studiorum* as a teaching method; the English origin of the new rectors; and the fact that the first two secular rectors, Perry and Shepherd, were great book lovers. Philip Perry was in charge of establishing a new education system, coinciding with a curriculum renovation in Spain (Torremocha ch. 1). In his case, he followed the model used in the English College of Douai for St. Alban’s. As it was unprecedented in the Valladolid College, this required a renewal of the handbooks and readings for students, and therefore the purchase of texts ranging from Ainsworth’s *Dictionary* to Longinus’s *On the sublime*, as well as Aesop’s fables, Xenophon’s *Institutio Cyri* or Demosthenes’s discourses.¹⁵

The fact that the new secular rectors were English, and not Spanish, for the first time in more than 150 years is especially significant from the point of view of book importation, as their interest in English books and their knowledge of the book market contributed signifi-

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cantly to the reception of a considerable number of volumes edited in Great Britain, both in English and Latin. Some of these volumes were acquired for the common library, but most of them belonged to Perry's and Shepherd's personal collections; these would eventually become part of the College library after their deaths. Each rector's collection amounts to about 500 volumes.¹⁶ It is precisely these two major additions to the College holdings that largely modified the character of the library, as both Perry and Shepherd were bibliophiles, each of them with very well-defined tastes.¹⁷

Besides the abovementioned handbooks and texts, Perry also imported works on doctrinal theology and canon law both for the common library and his own use. This is hardly surprising given his role as head of a seminary. But Perry's most important contribution to the College library derives from his own interests: history (and related genres like historical biography and hagiography) and religious controversy; these were for him two different approaches to the same purpose, the defense of Catholicism in England through its history (Sáez-Hidalgo and Yeager 386ff.). In his *Sketch of the Ancient British History* he claims the continuity and legitimacy of the Christian doctrine in Britain (Carrera *et al.*). Perry's antiquarianism is attested in his copies of Thomas Innes, Rowland's *Mona antiqua*, or Daniel Langhorne. He was particularly concerned with two moments of British history: the early years of English Christendom—in his mind, the roots and origin of Catholicism¹⁸—and the Reformation, when Protestants took an “errant path.” In order to study the former period, Perry imported texts such as Collier's *Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain* and Ussher's *Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitatum*, and for the latter he relied on authors like the Catholic historian Charles Dodd but also on writers dogmatically opposed to him like William Camden. Relevant among his history books is the number of texts by the antiquarian Thomas Hearne, ranging from his autobiography and his life of Richard II to his editions of chronicles by Sprott, Newbridge, Fordun, and Otterbourne, so salient for the depth of Hearne's scholarship. Many of these volumes show traces of having been profusely read. Perry wrote marginal notes and signs to identify those passages he found of interest for the arguments and sources of his own works.

Since Persons's time the training of the English seminarians in *theologia polemica* had been essential to their missionary purpose. Philip Perry continued this profile, gathering pamphlets on points of dogmatic disagreement between Catholics and Protestants, such as transubstantiation or idolatry—the Stillingfleet-Godden controversy being particularly well represented.¹⁹ He also accumulated volumes debating the laws that imposed civil disabilities on Roman Catholics—the

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Test Act, the oath of allegiance and of supremacy²⁰—as well as documents on the Popish plot, both from the Catholic side—Castlemaine's *Compendium* of the trial—and by those opposing religious toleration like L'Estrange. These volumes make St. Alban's English College one of the richest repositories of Catholic and anti-Catholic English controversial literature, and no doubt the most important in late eighteenth-century Spain.

Although Perry brought a large number of English books, only a few English literary works were listed in his personal collection, no more than a dozen, and many of them attracted his interest largely due to their historical, antiquarian, or local subjects. This is probably the case of Hobbes's *De Mirabilibus Pecci* and Cotton's *The Wonders of the Peake*, both of them guidebooks to Derbyshire and the sensational experiences to be enjoyed by travelers; Perry probably acquired them when he was chaplain in Bakewell, a small town in this area. He did have a few literary texts popular in England at the moment: Gay's *Fables*, *Ossian*, and Samuel Johnson's *The Rambler*, a short number, if compared with the rest of the collection. Still, it must be noted that these were probably only for his private use, as Perry himself expressed his opposition to any kind of "light reading" among students (Williams, *St. Alban's College* 102).

This profile contrasts with the type of books belonging to the second secular rector, Joseph Shepherd. Although his collection includes many titles on theology, hagiography, and controversial literature, Shepherd had a wider variety of interests, ranging from education and geography to agriculture, architecture, or medicine. The number of literary texts he owned clearly surpasses the religious works. In fact, it can be asserted that when his books were incorporated to the main library, St. Alban's collection took a certain turn towards English literature, almost absent until then.

During the Jesuit period most literary texts had been Latin or Greek classics used for education, sometimes (like José Petisco's *Aeneid*) edited by the Jesuits themselves. The 1767 inventory made before Perry and Shepherd's arrival has only a few vernacular literary texts in Spanish: *St. John of the Cross*, a news pamphlet on the abovementioned royal visits to the College (1600), and the literary periodical *Diario de los literatos de España* (1737-42), with highlights of criticism from contemporary publications in favor of the new aesthetic tendencies. There was only one English literary title in the general library before 1767: Shakespeare's works. The clerk in charge of the inventory was not acquainted with the Bard, as he could only identify the volume as "Un libro extranjero empastado de afolio de Historias, Comedias y Tragedias,"²¹ with no reference whatsoever to the author. It was no doubt

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the Second Folio copy now in the Folger Library, where it is known as the “Inquisition Folio” for the heavy censorship it went through while at St. Alban’s.²² The rest of the literary texts in English found in the College in 1767 were kept in a separate room, called *infierno* (“Hell”), the location assigned to restricted books, not accessible without permission, following the Inquisition guidelines. This is however a very exiguous collection: Sidney’s *Arcadia* (1622, sixth edition) and Milton’s *Paradise Regained* (not extant). Therefore, if we rely on the 1767 inventory to describe the character of St. Alban’s library during the Jesuit period, there was a low interest in or use of vernacular literature; this is confirmed by indirect references to book purchases as well.

After 1767 the books received in the College were quite different. Besides the new editions of the classics imported for the students’ readings—Virgil, Martial, Juvenal, Ovid, and Terence, principally—the library was enriched by Shepherd’s collection of English works of literature and criticism. The list of Shepherd’s books includes some of the most widely-read authors in that moment, from members of the Scriblerus club like Pope and Swift to Thomson’s *The Seasons* and Young’s *Night Thoughts*, as well as a few pre-eighteenth-century writers (Shakespeare and Milton) reissued by the London publishers before 1774 (St. Clair 123). Although Shepherd’s interest in some texts must have been religious—that is the case of Ward’s *England’s Reformation*—orthodoxy does not seem to have guided his selection of books, given the intellectual and dogmatic diversity of works he gathered. This includes writers like Addison, particularly militant in his Protestantism and in his defense of new scientific ideas (Rousseau 202). Travel literature is also present in Shepherd’s collection through works by James Cook, John Hawkesworth, Henry Swinburne, and Richard Twiss. These show that Shepherd’s intellectual concerns were what can be described as characteristic of a man of the Enlightenment. This is further confirmed by his ownership of literary texts edited with the type of commentary and annotation previously applied to the classics, and now used for English authors as a strategy of institutionalizing a vernacular canon (Walsh 192-94). A good example of this is the 1766 edition of Pope’s *Works*, a sign of Shepherd’s interest in literary criticism, aesthetics, rhetoric, and literary history. Furthermore, he got hold of several British volumes on these topics, many of them first editions: Campbell’s *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Pope’s *Essay on Criticism*, Harris’s *Three Treatises*, Hurd’s essays and his commentaries on Horace, Lord Kames’s *Elements of Criticism*, and Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry*. Although some British theorists and aestheticians such as Alexander Gerard, Edward Young, or James Beattie are missing from Shepherd’s library, it can be said that he gathered the

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core of eighteenth-century poetics, both in English and in other languages, because he had copies of Boileau's *Oeuvres* (including a translation of Longinus's *De sublimitate*); Du Bos's *Reflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*, a text that patterned the debate between the ideas of *semiosis* and *mimesis* as artistic forms of representing nature; Batteaux's *Principes de la littérature*; or Andres's *Dell'origine, progressi e stato attuale d'ogni letteratura*.

There are—or have been in the past—more pre-nineteenth century books in the College library, but it is not always possible to map all the circumstances surrounding their material and intellectual reception. Sometimes, the works listed in records are no longer extant on the shelves: Butler's *Hudibras*, for instance, was imported in 1768, thus proving that St. Alban's managed to get books explicitly forbidden by the Inquisition. Sometimes, the imported English literary texts are actually in the library, though the details of their importation are elusive: the rhetoric and poetics section includes a 1789 edition of Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, the most comprehensive guide on composition in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, in this case—as in so many others—many questions remain unanswered about its ownership and provenance, and, what is more significant, about its reading and reception.

On the whole, by the end of the eighteenth century St. Alban's library had the richest collection of British works (both in Latin and English) in Spain, no doubt thanks to its peculiar circumstances. It should not be forgotten that it was not until the last decades of the *settecento*, with the decline of the French models and the emergence of new aesthetic patterns, that Spanish readers started to develop an interest in British works. These texts started to be available to the Spanish readership first in French translation, thus prompting the Spanish Inquisition to forbid the French versions of authors like Hume, Locke, Pope, Adam Smith, Defoe, Burke, Swift, Sterne, and Addison (Defourneaux, appendix). Many of these texts were already at St. Alban's library in their original English editions. These French versions eventually became source texts for Spanish translations, as is the case of the first Spanish *Hamlet* translated by Ramón de la Cruz (1772) (Pujante and Gregor 45-124; Gregor 8-12; see also Pujante). Spanish translators would only use English original texts from the mid-1780s, the first direct translations being *Ossian* (1788), Young (1789), Pope's *Essay on Man* (1790), or Cook's *Travels* (1791). Significantly, all these texts had been imported to St. Alban's in their original English editions two decades before. It might be argued that this should not come as a surprise, since this was part of the British literary canon at the moment (Ross ch. 4-5). The original English texts would not be found in Spanish libraries

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until the end of the century, as the inventories of private institutions, book lovers, and relevant figures of the Spanish Enlightenment can attest: Cook's *Travels* is inventoried among the books of the *Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País*; Jovellanos read it too, and he also read books by Anne Radcliffe, Samuel Richardson, Richard Bentley, and *The Gazeteer*. Jovellanos also had copies of *The Essay on Man* and *Night Thoughts*. The new interest in the English language can be attested in the proliferation of English grammars, handbooks on pronunciation, spelling, and reading among the *ilustrados*' book holdings—that's the case of Cándido M. Trigueros or Jovellanos himself (Aguilar Piñal *Biblioteca de Cándido María Trigueros* #579, #722, #943; *Biblioteca de Jovellanos*; Clement).²³

Most of these English titles were imported to the English College in the late 1760s, two decades before they started to be translated and became popular in Spain. It is worth considering the connections between both. Although it is true that St. Alban's was in a certain way an "English island in Castile," in Javier Burrieza's words, a foreign enclave, it was not completely isolated. Some side door might have been open (Burrieza Sánchez *Isla de Inglaterra*). Perry was on good terms with Campomanes, Fiscal of the Council of State, and they had several things in common, namely their "bibliomania" and an interest in keeping and organizing records and books. Their friendship can be attested in the Latin poems Perry dedicated to Campomanes and in the books he gave him on behalf of the English bishops (Williams, *St. Alban's College* 95n.81). The good relationship continued with Perry's successor, Shepherd, when Campomanes's nephew was admitted as a student at St. Alban's. The documents prove this connection, this open door. However, this cultural permeability between the St. Alban's library and the Spanish readership did not bear much fruit.

Others may have had a more fruitful access to the books held at the English seminary, by means neither recorded nor acknowledged. José Alonso Ortiz, first translator of *Ossian* (Alonso Cortés, Montiel), also rendered into Spanish Alban Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and other principal Saints* as well as his *Moveable Feasts, Fasts and other Annual observances of the Catholic Church* (in 1789-92 and 1791 respectively). These two works were also imported to St. Alban's by Perry and Shepherd and are not extant in any other late eighteenth-century library in Spain. Ortiz also wrote the Spanish version of Adam Smith's *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Though no copy of this English text has been found at St. Alban's library, what is still there is Ortiz's translation itself.²⁴ Unfortunately, it does not bear any reference to ownership, provenance, or donation, but it is located on the library shelves next to other Shepherd's books. Although no

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record proves his direct connection with the College, Ortiz worked in the Chancery in Valladolid and belonged to the local intellectual elite where Shepherd was also integrated, and therefore it is not unlikely that they knew each other and had common interests. This suggests that St. Alban's books were probably known outside this supposedly cloistered institution, that the British works imported by Perry and Shepherd in the 1760s may have influenced Spanish literary tastes—the coincidence in dates and titles transcends matters of fashion and canon. The Valladolid English College—and its library—was by no means a completely isolated enclave until the end of the eighteenth century, neither for English nor for Spaniards. In spite of the implications of its particular circumstances, of the rootlessness implied in the exile character, away from home but foreigner in the new country, St. Alban's English College participated in the contact with both cultural environments, Spanish and English, leaving a door open—even if only slightly—for a mutual enrichment through its library.

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Notes

1. Robert Persons himself was aware of the potential impact of these narratives for the English mission: only a year after the foundation of St. Alban's College, he published *Relacion de algvnos martyrios, que de nuevo han hecho los hereges en Inglaterra* (1590), including accounts of English Catholic martyrs, and news about the English College. On Catholic martyrdom accounts, see Marotti 66-94; Dillon; and Monta. More specifically on St. Alban's, see Cano-Echevarría & Sáez-Hidalgo, "Educating for martyrdom."
2. The *Diario de costumbres* in the Archives of St. Alban's College (henceforward, ACSA) specifies the seminarians' studies at St. Ambrose.
3. ACSA, Registers III, book 7, 26 May 1787; book 8, 28 January 1791 and 20 July 1793.

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4. The *Vulnerata* is a statue of Virgin Mary that had been defiled by the English during the sack of Cadiz, 1596. It was received in the city of Valladolid with a popular demonstration of devotion; in fact, it is one of the few celebrations collaboratively organized by the town council, the cathedral chapter, the monarchs, diverse religious institutions, and the English College. For an edition of the narrative account of this celebration, and the poems written for the occasion, see Cano-Echevarría & Sáez-Hidalgo (“Comfort without offence” 51-56; *Fruits of Exile* lxi-lxx, 533-664). Anne J. Cruz comments on how it was used for propaganda purposes (39-60). All the details about the history of the statue in Cadiz and Valladolid can be found in Burrieza Sánchez’s *Virgen de los ingleses*.
5. “Guild of carpenters, carvers, masters of carts, wainwrights, lathe operators and chair makers” (ACSA Registers III, book 7, 23 January 1785; 7 November 1785).
6. Most of Gondomar’s books are now in the Royal Library, Madrid; the inventory and catalogue are published online: <http://www.realbiblioteca.es> (last accessed July 2014).
7. “The same weapons as our enemy, we shall win and defeat him more efficiently and skilfully” (ACSA, Registers III, book 4; 12 January 1771). Early Modern texts are transcribed in their original spelling, modernizing the usage of accents. The translations into English are mine, unless otherwise stated.
8. The complete enquiry of the first shipments is kept at the Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid (AHN henceforward), Inquisición, leg. 3273.
9. “Writings related to our country about matters that concern us and some others no less necessary to us . . . it is stated that many of them were loaned from this College of St. Alban’s” (ACSA Registers III, book 4).
10. Archive of the University of Valladolid, book 15, fols. 565v-566, 29 July 1769.
11. For a detailed account of the impact of the expulsion of the Jesuits on the English College, see Williams, “St. Alban’s College.”
12. The 1767 inventories for St. Alban’s are part of the document *Rollo principal de autos hechos para la ocupación de temporalidades de el Colegio de San Albano* (AHN, Jesuitas, leg. 72), but the book catalogue has been found in a separate bundle of papers (AHN, Jesuitas, book 407, fols. 90-114).
13. Earle Havens analyzed Persons’s library in his lecture “Missionary Books and the English Catholic Underground, 1580-1625” for the Conference *In Principio: The Beginning of the English College at Valladolid* (Valladolid, Spain. 23 Oct. 2008); I am grateful to him for having been given the opportunity to read his unpublished text. See also his “Notes from the Literary Underground.”
14. “It must be open an hour a day for the students and two hours on feast days, and no more” (ACSA, *Libro de costumbres*, 92).
15. AHN, Inquisición, leg. 3273, fols. 26r-v.
16. ACSA, Registers III, book 6 (Perry’s testament); ACSA, Registers III, book 8 (Shepherd’s last will and inventory). See Sáez-Hidalgo (forthc.).

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17. Some of the ideas in the ensuing paragraphs draw on a paper written in collaboration with M^a Eugenia Perojo Arronte (“Opening the Path to the Reception of English and Foreign Books in Spain in the Eighteenth Century: The Case of St. Alban’s Library,” for the Conference *Literary Migrations: Transmission and Adaptation in 18th Britain and Europe* (U. Warwick, May 15, 2005)). I am grateful to her for allowing me to use some of our joined work for this article.

18. This discourse was first developed by Catholic English controversialists in an attempt to counterargue the Anglican claim that they represented the real and original spirit of Christianity (Rhodes 7). On this debate, see Felicity Heal.

19. Some volumes include titles like *An Epistle of a Catholique to his friend a Protestant touching the Doctrine of the Reall Presence* (1659) (ESTC R222634), and *A Rational Discourse concerning Transubstantiation* (1676) (ESTC R2970).

20. Most of these texts were published anonymously: *Some few Questions concerning the Oath of Allegiance: Propos’d by a Catholick Gentleman in a Letter to a Person of Learning and Honour* (1674) (ESTC R38417); *A Discourse for taking off the Tests and Penal Laws about Religion* (1687) (ESTC R3313).

21. “A foreign folio book of histories, comedies and tragedies bound in hard-back” (AHN, Jesuitas, book 407, fol. 104r).

22. The expunging of this Folio was carried out by William Sankey, who arrived from Flanders in 1641 and from 1649 would be in charge of signing the books of the Valladolid English College; it was probably in his capacity as confessor (1666) that he carried out the expunging of Shakespeare’s works (Henson xxviii-xxxi). See Sidney S. Lee; Roland M. Frye, in his analysis of Christian doctrine in Shakespeare, studied it in the appendix entitled “The Roman Catholic Censorship of Shakespeare: 1641-1651” (Frye 275-93). For a more recent assessment of this copy the “Inquisition Folio,” see Cummings. This Second Folio was acquired by the Folger Library in the 1930s.

23. On the reception of English literature in Spain in the eighteenth century, see Galván Reula; Deacon.

24. Adam Smith, *Investigación de la naturaleza y causas de la riqueza de las naciones . . . la traduce al castellano el Lic. D. Josef Alonso Ortiz, con varias notas e ilustraciones relativas a España*. 4 vols. (Valladolid: en la oficina de la Viuda e hijos de Santander, 1794). See the introduction of the facsimile edition by Enrique Fuentes Quintana. Also, the translator was probably acquainted with the rector of the Scots College, John Geddes, who had been living at St. Alban’s College under Perry and Shepherd.

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About the Author

Ana Sáez-Hidalgo is an Associate Professor at the Universidad de Valladolid, Spain. Her research interests focus on medieval and early modern Anglo-Spanish relations, literary and material exchange, the cultural dynamics of reading and writing, in particular English Catholic exiles and the dissemination of recusant book culture in Spain. Her published works include articles in *Viator*, *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme*, and *Recusant History*; her books and book chapters have been published by Ashgate, Gredos, Alianza, Boydell & Brewer. She has also edited and translated into Spanish medieval and early modern texts like Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. Email: ana.saez@fyl.uva.es.

Idols, Icons, and Moving Pictures: William Faulkner's Southern Lady in Lyndon Chubbuck's Adaptation of "A Rose for Emily"

Taina Tuhkunen

William Faulkner's widely anthologized short story "A Rose for Emily"¹ (1930), about a Southern lady turned into a murderer, was published before Margaret Mitchell's epic novel and David O. Selznick's 1939 Technicolor blockbuster, *Gone with the Wind* (1936), immortalized the Southern Belle in the eyes and minds of international audiences. Bearing in mind the amazing filmic triumph of the Southern scarlet woman, as well as the numerous later avatars of Southern dames, including more deranged and disquieting Belles on screen, one may wonder why it took so long to make Faulkner's famous tale into a film. Half a century after the publication of this now classic short story, Lyndon Chubbuck finally adapted it into a short film which has nevertheless failed to raise critical attention.

The aim of this article is to examine Chubbuck's cinematographic attempts to transpose Faulkner's multilayered narrative—often presented as a good example of Southern Gothic fiction—onto the screen without losing the uniquely appalling charm of Miss Emily Grierson: the reclusive spinster who poisons her Yankee lover before locking up his corpse in an attic bedroom until her own death some forty years later. Portrayed through a collective narrative voice obsessed with the goings-on within the Grierson house, the literary Southern Lady was a significant challenge for the only filmmaker, so far, to have dared convert into a cinematographic construct Faulkner's period-bound yet strangely ageless oddity, difficult to assign to a definite aesthetic category. Despite its limitations, the twenty-seven-minute adaptation proposes, we shall argue, a thought-provoking approach into the understanding of Faulkner's story centered upon an enigmatic, both minute and monumental Southern Lady whose indomitable presence ultimately escapes cultural and artistic polarizations, to embrace traditions and transgressions, norms as well as margins. For not only does the cinematic reinterpretation inform us about the subjective reading of the fictional text by a filmmaker, but it also sheds light on the source text, providing the reader-spectator with new insight into

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the complexities of the story, perhaps somewhat mistakenly reputed as one of Faulkner's most accessible works.

Making a Long History Short

While military historians still sometimes wrangle over whether the Confederate states were defeated because of internal divergences, economic weaknesses or Northern naval blockades, film historians seem quite unanimous regarding the existence of an epic "Southland" reconstructed, over and over, by films that highlight characters with "gumption," the specifically Southern concoction of grit, guts, and horse sense exemplified by Margaret Mitchell's undefeated Scarlett O'Hara. To the extent that when appropriated by the cinema, the great Southern master narrative centered upon the idea of a "Lost Cause" appears to have given rise to a kind of collective Tara: a fictitious, transcultural "home" whose international appeal has never been totally dismantled, even after the 1970's Blaxploitation films, or the more recent *Django Unchained* (Quentin Tarantino 2012) and *12 Years a Slave* (Steve McQueen 2013), which set out to revision the Southern Cotton King era with its ladies, masters, and "happy darkies" in a drastically stark light. These cinematic challenges do not merely confront a long tradition of nostalgic melodramas and Southern heritage movies but also seek to break through the curious customs of a "Southland" where fantasy-laden History remains fused with legends and myths and also with gossip and speculation of various kinds. While Americanized damsels in distress and other European cultural relics such as courtly love (*amour courtois*) work their ways into the plantation *Americana*, Southern movies—or "southerns" as we wish to call them—keep exploiting every bit of fact and fiction at their disposal to display a less fabulous, yet quite as captivating, facet of America as the one promoted by classic Hollywood westerns.

As demonstrated by Chubbuck's cinematic rereading of Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily," in the course of these successive melodramatizations of "things lost," the best-known protagonist of the Southern drama, the paradigmatic Southern Belle, has grown into a far more polymorphic cultural construction than suggested by the Southern melodramas inspired by nineteenth-century plantation novels and minstrel shows. It would therefore be difficult not to agree with Tara McPherson when she claims, in *Reconstructing Dixie* (McPherson 40), that "the southern lady is not fixed in her meaning, endlessly circulating the same, but neither is she easily mobilized toward more progressive modes of southern feeling." Not only does this key figure and image mirror a series of pre-Civil War ideals, Reconstruction, prejudices, and *postbellum* ambitions, but it also reflects numerous later tensions and desires associated with the "New South": an-

other both real and imaginary site shaped by the joint creative venture of historiography, literature, theater, and cinema. Strikingly, however, even when set in motion by the adaptations of Tennessee Williams's play texts where the "New South" jerks street-car-like away from the monomanias and fairytalish dreamlands of the "Old South," filmic fictions on the American South often tend to remain imbued with a longing for a safely stagnant, sexually, racially, and socially segregated "home": an age-old fantasy our theoretically post-modern world still keeps struggling with, years after the publication of Faulkner's puzzling account of a Southern lady observed by the people of Jefferson, the county seat of Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi, the setting for most of Faulkner's novels and short stories.

This persistent trend together with the difficulty to read beyond the nostalgia enhanced by the southerners of the Hollywood era may help explain why Chubbuck's 1983 portrayal of Miss Emily Grierson, a cryptic character embodied by Anjelica Huston, has gone widely unrecognized. Resonating with a series of other dismal Southern heroines seen on film, Chubbuck's dutiful daughter of a Southern "Daddy" (John Randolph) has less to do with the bombastic bravery of Miss O'Hara (Vivien Leigh) than with such disquieting leading ladies as Charlotte (Bette Davis) in Robert Aldrich's *Hush . . . hush, Sweet Charlotte* (1964), or Katherine Caldwell (Louise Allbritton), the eerie *femme fatale* of the first Southern vampire film in Robert Siodmak's *Son of Dracula* (1943). Instead of being consumed by fire, as Siodmak's Miss Caldwell who marries an East European vampire in an attempt to gain immortality, and contrary to Aldrich's aging spinster mistress of a creepy Southern mansion who ends up cleared of accusations of having decapitated her lover in her youth, the Lady haunting Faulkner's story seems to linger on without resolution, despite the text's epiphanic ending, as a complex historical and cultural allegory difficult to capture on screen.

Another explanation for the lack of success of the film adaptation of Faulkner's short story—told in five sections through a series of flashbacks—may be the fact that it was not turned into a feature-length movie, but into a short film. Indeed, unlike the more panoramic visions offered by the popular Southern bestsellers and epic blockbusters, Chubbuck's film provides a remarkably abridged, narrowed-down approach to the South's ambiguities, silenced hostilities, and suppressed desires. Above all, when compared with other adaptations based on Faulkner's longer fiction², what we have here is a condensed Gothic thriller, a bleak, deliberately non-syrupy account of the American South and its glorious heydays so legendarily "gone with the wind."

At the beginning of the short story which pivots upon the Southern archetype of the reclusive spinster, and well before the eponymous heroine is introduced to the reader, her house is presented as a miscel-

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laneous ensemble of “cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies” (287). Reminiscent of ornate Victorian gingerbread-style houses, Emily’s dwelling, located along a previously “select street” (287), is an “eyesore among eyesores” (288). Besides a startling proof of the South’s refusal to change, the metonymic house works as an apt image for the central Lady and her “coquettish decay above the cotton wagons and the gasoline pumps” (288). The importance of the architectural and anthropomorphic details is such that when failing to find them in Chubbuck’s adaptation, those familiar with the text are bound to feel frustrated. Understandable, this reaction should not prevent us from recognizing the adaptor’s cinematographic recreative freedom from the text, to perceive the measures taken to counterbalance some of the inevitable “losses” due to the change of medium. As illustrations of the verbal as well as of the non-verbal elements used to reactivate the source text, they remind us that we should not disregard nor “dishear” the different representational means involved in the cinematographic retelling of a literary text.

One of the best examples of Chubbuck’s creative condensations and expansions is the establishing sequence of the film. After the italicized words and capitalized name of the author in pale yellow letters against a black background have reminded the spectators that the story is “*Based on a Story by WILLIAM FAULKNER*” [00:44-00:48], the camera zooms towards a moonlit house behind whose bluish walls the town doctor (Bert Williams) is preparing his instruments to examine Emily Grierson’s corpse. Once inside the house, the camera lingers on a pair of screeching wheels that help the doctor hoist the lifeless body lying on an examination table, thus starting the post-mortal journey into the past of the “indomitable and weary Southern woman of seventy-four,” found with her “head propped up on a pillow yellow and moldy with age and lack of sunlight” [01:46-01:60], as asserted by the text (293) and the film. These opening remarks pronounced by the town doctor initiate the sluggish clinical comments that accompany the film’s subsequent telling of the story. Prior to the first narratorial comments, however, jazz music, barking dogs, and sounds of unseen automobiles are heard, interspersed with female shrieks from an unspecified off-screen space. It is only later on that the viewers will connect these audio allusions with a more modern *The Great Gatsby* America, precisely the kind of urban flapper-populated America from which Faulkner’s Southern “Angel of the House,” turned into a cold-blooded murderer and a necropheliac, was barred from the very beginning.

Quite surprisingly, the film’s atmosphere-setting opening sequence also exposes us to the crackling radio voice of Franklin D. Roosevelt [01:01-01:11], as the American president of the Depression era is heard

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reading through his 1933 inaugural address known for its phrase, “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” The movie offers a mere fragment from the eminent speech and seems to count on the audience’s capacity to identify the distinguished presidential voice and his memorable message, which resonates eerily through the muggy microcosm of Mississippi at the heart of Faulkner’s story. Despite the spatial and cultural distance between Washington, D.C. and Jefferson, the inserted bit of Roosevelt’s speech seems, right from the start, to call for a wider reconsideration of Faulkner’s tale by making us ponder over the enlightened head of the state’s emphasis, within the context of the story, on the “nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”³

Besides music, Chubbuck’s adaptation strategies include various non-verbal elements, such as painterly effects and a particular color palette. These correspond to what Linda Hutcheon calls “a multitrack medium” in reference to the cinema’s ability to “direct and expand the possibilities of perception” (Hutcheon 42-43) but also to signify through sound, music, and moving images. Keeping in mind the film’s inherent hybridity (verbal, visual, and audio registers), and rather than lamenting over the “left-outs” and “disloyalties” regarding the source text, one might even claim that the very brevity of the filmic format chosen by Chubbuck facilitates the elucidation of the techniques used, and helps improve our understanding of the general structure of the short story: a form of story which, according to Stephanie Harrison, the editor of *Adaptations: From Short Story to Big Screen*, “has a distinct advantage over the novel: few short stories are embedded in the public’s consciousness in the way that popular novels often are” (Harrison xvi).

The stifled Belle and a laughing Yankee

One of the main things the spectator of *A Rose for Emily* is struck by is the scarcity of dialogue. Even when escorted by her Yankee lover, Emily, a vestige of the vanquished South, seldom speaks in a movie that, owing to its long silences and brief narratorial comments, at times makes one think of a silent movie. And when Emily does utter a word or two, words such as “daddy” and “arsenic” inexorably gain prominence within the filmic portrayal of a nineteenth-century Belle stifled by the ancestral code of honor. To what extent Chubbuck’s parsimonious showing and telling techniques resonate with Faulkner’s own reluctance to resort to a more inflated style is difficult to say, but in both cases we are far from the wildly gesticulating Southern hero-

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ines of D. W. Griffith, the filmmaker known as the inventor of narrative cinema. Unlike Griffith's seminal motion picture, *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), which gave birth to the South in cinema—marked by blatantly supremacist, fixed vision of the American South, as well as by emotional, submissive, and vulnerable Southern women—neither Faulkner nor Chubbuck's Emilies show signs of similar frenzy, their female protagonists operating as foils for the fears, rumors, and mistrust reigning in the generic Southern town of Jefferson, marked by bigotry and self-righteousness. One might wish to add that Chubbuck's film seems to share some of Mark Twain's suspicion of the "wordy, windy, flowery 'eloquence,' romanticism, sentimentality—all imitated from Sir Walter [Scott]" (Twain 501). In a sense, too, Twain's remark echoes Faulkner's own observation concerning the differences between writing a short story and writing a novel:

You can be more careless, you can put more trash in [a novel] and be excused for it. In a short story that's next to the poem, almost every word has got to be almost exactly right. In the novel you can be careless but in the short story you can't. . . . it's because it demands a nearer absolute exactitude. You have less room to be slovenly and careless. There's less room in it for trash. (Faulkner in Gwynn and Blotner 207)

If Faulkner certainly cast away all "trash" from "A Rose for Emily," he littered his text with hints at perversion and degeneration, fears of mingling (more than of actual miscegenation), as the people of Jefferson, obsessed with keeping things immaculate, divulge their double-edged admiration of the upper-class "Daughters of the Confederacy," pedestalized and voiceless virtue-vessels requiring male protection who, as Diane Roberts notes in *Faulkner and Southern Womanhood*,

rarely speak for themselves; they are spoken *for*, constructed to serve the ideology that made them into emblems of sexual and racial purity. When, in Faulkner's fiction, they do attempt to speak for themselves, they disrupt the pedestal and contradict the masculine discourses that placed them there. (13)

When challenging the class, sex, and race-obsessed anxieties of the earlier southerners marked by Griffith's openly racist portrayals of the South in his ignominious yet technically brilliant *The Birth of a Nation*, both Faulkner and Chubbuck totally ignore the long-standing stereotype of the "brutal black buck" analyzed by Donald Bogle in *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, & Bucks: An Interpretive History*

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of *Blacks in American Films*. The story of Emily, an eccentric white woman leading a secluded life in a house with a black manservant has, indeed, nothing to do with Gus (Walter Lang), Griffith's ex-slave whose insatiable sex drive pushes the virginal Flora Cameron (Mae March) to her death. Instead of a similarly greedy Griffithian brute, ready to kill, plunder, and rape, Chubbuck sets up a white woman and a black man whose quiet coexistence expresses loyalty and a tragic absence of options rather than abuse. The stereotype of an oversexed "black buck" is replaced by a "combined gardener and cook" (287) whose role, in many ways, reflects that of Emily Grierson's own, a paradoxically both central and peripheral position. This is underlined, most strikingly, by the way Emily's final seduction act is made to alternate with shots on Tobe's hands, slicing a red apple with a long knife in the downstairs kitchen, while Emily is poisoning her lover in the upstairs bedroom. The Jim Crow South is still in place, but in a story which could also be read as a revenge tale between the North and the South, the chief risk factor is now a white Northerner, a foreman named Homer Barron who arrives in Jefferson to supervise sidewalk paving. Just how ironical this "paving" or "covering up" of Southern surfaces actually is remains a question to be pondered over at the end of the story, but one thing seems certain: Barron embodies the deeply resented control over the South by the North after the Civil War.

Rather similarly to the literary text where the bossy Northerner is viewed through the suspicious, anonymous eyes of the Jeffersonians, Chubbuck's Barron first stands out as an unbaronesque working-class Yankee intruder who slyly slips into the Southerntown to depedestalize the white lady depicted as an old "idol," "icon," or a "relic." While Faulkner's Barron seems more like a stand-in for the Civil War victors, H. Kaye Dyal's screenplay, which relies on fewer historical references, downplays most of Faulkner's subplots. Disconnected from History (and from the rest of Faulkner's oeuvre), but not from the epic stories on the South, Homer Barron (Jared Martin) comes out more like a man merely abusing the confidence of an isolated, undefended woman. And when turned into a "moving picture," the rose-receiving Emily loses most of her wider allegorical scope, her filmic avatar failing to gain the status of an object of worship, let alone that of a figure elevated to the rank of a regional deity.

In the course of the short story, we are generally offered mere glimpses of Miss Emily Grierson, which reinforces the impression of instability in Faulkner's portrayal of the Southern woman, frequently perceived, as we know, as a paradigm for the entire South. After being framed, quite literally, by the doorframe when standing next to her father, Emily is caught, more voyeuristically, after her father's death through the windows of the

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house “that had once been white” (287). There is constant tension between the static portrayals of the iconic and ornamental Southern woman and the references to the dynamic, vigorous Homer: the “big, dark, ready man, with a big voice and eyes lighter than his face” (290) who breaks the circle of solitude and silence around Emily and takes the unchaperoned young woman out on a “glittering buggy” (291) beyond the town’s visual boundaries. The transgressive effect is reinforced by Faulkner’s repeated use of the color yellow, which makes Barron appear as a nearly mythic hero in his “yellow-wheeled buggy” (290), “with his hat cocked and a cigar in his teeth, reins and whip in a yellow glove” (291), as the dazzling male character temporarily enlivens the bleak and stagnant town pivoting upon a walled-in, always somewhat ghostly, white-skinned spinster. Many of these intertextual ingredients were overlooked in the chromatic emphasis of the film shot in pastel tones which differ from the more common, big-screen Technicolor dramatizations of the South. Besides a few salient yellow spots, Faulkner’s own limited palette remains quite as pale, as he draws more attention to the “faded rose color, upon the rose-shaded lights” (293), the fading hues of the South’s arcadianism, its obstinate clinging to its olden and golden era, as highlighted by the things surrounding the already old Emily, including her crayon portrait of her father, set prominently on a “tarnished gilt easel” (288). As a result, the chromatic ambiguity of the color yellow, basically a warm color, ends up resonating more with malaise than malady, somewhat similarly to the case of “yellow fever,” a calamity at the center of another memorable movie on the American South, William Wyler’s *Jezebel* (1938).

The above-mentioned narratorial comment on a “faded rose color” coincides with a visit by the Board of Aldermen during their unsuccessful attempt to collect the old Lady’s unpaid taxes. The new town authorities no longer want to relieve Miss Emily of her civic obligations, trying to put an end to a decision made, years before, by Colonel Sartoris: “They rose when she entered—a small, fat woman in black, with a thin gold chain descending to her waist and vanishing into her belt, leaning on an ebony cane with a tarnished gold head” (288). In accordance with the logic of tainted and toned-down colors, dimmed lights, and waning desires, the final part of the story offers a few visual echoes of the previously felt, powerfully solar, sexual energy incarnated by Homer. What is left is an imprint on “a pillow yellow and moldy with age and lack of sunlight” (293), a posthumous reminder of the Southern woman’s refusal to let go of the already passed-away colors and withered dreams.

From the very beginning of Faulkner’s depiction of the highly gendered and strictly segregated South, it is made clear that the men of Jefferson view the deceased Lady as a “fallen monument” (287), while

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the townswomen cannot wait to discover the indoors of the Grierson house that nobody but the male servant had seen for more than a decade. As already pointed out, the story is told by invisible, unnamed narrators whose pronouns (“we,” “our,” “us”) convey the closely-knit rural community’s dread of disgrace and stubborn, confederated attachment to old rules of honor. Although Faulkner never establishes fool-proof links between the horrific finale and the townspeople’s intentions to commit harm upon Emily and her “sweetheart” (289), the constant promotion—by the first-person plural voice—of the courtesy and decency in relating the events (undercut by a string of slippages and contradictory comments) ends up raising doubts. Despite the continuous pitying of “poor” Miss Grierson until the closing paragraphs, the story—told seemingly from behind jalousie-curtains by people whose age, gender, or generational appurtenance is not identified—the focal point remains the heroine’s fantasized surrender to things non-Southern, embodied by the rough-talking, charismatic Northerner. This is rendered perceptible by Faulkner’s vocal strategy, which creates the impression of a chorus, a homogeneous, non-individualized group of performers capable of keeping Emily under careful scrutiny—if needed, with the help of a priest requested to call upon the young Lady to bring her back to her Southern senses. In the process, the heroine becomes a Southern Antigone of sorts, a young woman accused of civil and sexual disobedience. On a deeper level, the Faulknerian chorus could be regarded as a menacing, mask-wearing *vox populi* whose collective voice intersects with other accounts of the post-slavery South, including brutal mob actions capable of summoning up some of the darkest chapters of more recent Southern history that the cinema began to deal with only gradually in the 1960s, under the impulse of the Civil Rights movement.

Despite all this, Faulkner’s non-linear, disorderly story, which keeps “confusing time with its mathematical progression” (293), never permits the reader to remain a passive bystander. We find ourselves engaged in the reconstruction of a jumbled time-line, and contrary to the screenplay where incidents are presented in a chronological order, we are encouraged to elaborate a portrait of our own out of the scattered allusions to Emily’s life and fragmented references to local history. Owing to Faulkner’s intricate, obscured causality, when contrasted with the conventional, linear portrayal used in the movie, Faulkner’s heroine evolves into an increasingly inconsistent, shifting figure, both morally and aesthetically. Viewed alternately as a “small, fat woman in black” (288), an “upright torso motionless as that of an idol” (289), “a slender figure in white” (290), a pitiful yet humanized “pauper” (290), as a gray lady with “vigorous iron-gray . . . hair of an active man” (292), or more figuratively “like the carven torso of an idol in a niche” (292-293), Emily resists classifica-

tion. Trapped in a doll's house of a Southern species, the Faulknerian Belle clutching the past cannot be pinned down, so enmeshed her truncated image remains within the North-South split, between adoration and repulsion, language and silence.

The hybrid murderer enters the screen

One of the greatest difficulties in making "A Rose for Emily" into a film seems to have been the fact that Faulkner's Emily stems from a heterodox, both Christian and modernist, visual legacy that complicates and eventually undermines the more conventional representations of the iconic, presumably pure-blooded Belle. While "look[ing] like a girl" (290) who bears "a vague resemblance to those angels in colored church windows" (290), Emily is equated with a sacred icon, a sign of visual, moral, and ideological orthodoxy. Once turned into a "bloated" (288) corpse, she is pictured as a pallid "body long submerged in motionless water" (288) before being reduced into an even more monstrous, iconoclastic "lump of dough" with "two small pieces of coal" (288) pressed into it for eyes. In his adaptation, instead of searching for analogous visual ambiguity, for instance through the use of death-in-life figures typical of the Gothic mode in the portrayal of bodies, Chubbuck favored other available gothicisms and grotesqueries, namely by applying what James Mellard calls "retrospective Gothic" (Mellard 37-45) in a story which, by definition, turns out to be a Gothic tale only at the end. During the transference from text to screen, the death-in-life effects of "A Rose for Emily" do not disappear but are worked into the *tableau vivant* instances that punctuate the movie, thus revealing the townspeople's paradoxical wish to view Miss Grierson as a statuesque relic of the past.

Neither Faulkner nor Chubbuck present Emily merely as an ostracized spinster or as a pitiable recluse trapped into solitude by more or less absurd social conventions. Tragic or wretched as she may seem in the eyes of most Jeffersonians, the "Old Southern Maid," who (already) clung to her father's corpse, is gradually turned into a wider expression of iconoclasm, as her archetypal image is allowed to decompose and silently sabotage some of the basic binary codes still prevalent in the Southern society. More unequivocally than the short story, the more contemporary adaptation refuses to deprive Miss Grierson of her forbidden sexual impulses. Before Thanatos finally takes over Eros in the form of a glass of wine spiced up with arsenic offered by Emily to her lover, another proleptic sequence of the film shows her in a sarcophagus-like bathtub, dreaming of her suitor [13:11-13:43]. The sequence follows another shot in an all-male public bath house,

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more common in American westerns than southern, where Homer Barron laughingly tells the men with whom he is drinking and joking that he “ain’t the marrying kind” [12:58-13:11]. The final shot of Homer alive captures him ripping open the corset underneath Emily’s evening gown, as if to free her from the bodily restrictions young women of her rank were laced into in the Old South. Whether intentionally or not, this sequence preceding an off-screen sex act seems to operate as a reversal of the well-known sequence of *Gone with the Wind* where Mammy (Hattie McDaniel) struggles to bring Scarlet O’Hara’s belligerent body into the proper borders of white womanhood by pulling at the laces of her corset. In *A Rose for Emily*, the bath house sequence is paralleled by a scene where Emily is seen in a curiously anachronistic bubble-bath, before her last romantic dinner with her Northern gentleman caller. As a result, and since the adaptation provides a significantly more carnal embodiment of the “dear, inescapable, impervious, tranquil, and perverse” (293) female Southerner created by Faulkner, one could argue that if, in Diane Roberts’s words, Faulkner “negotiates” the “female images he inherits from southern culture” (Roberts 11), Chubbuck pushes the process of negotiation and interpretation towards more contemporary reinvestments of the Southern types and stock characters.⁴

This is emphasized by the film’s casting. Quite clearly, Chubbuck exploits Anjelica Huston’s ability to reinforce the neo-Gothic effects of the film by setting up her *persona* in such a way as to anticipate the actress’s later performances as a Gothic figure, as the Grand High Witch in Nicolas Roeg’s *The Witches* (1990), or as Morticia Addams in Barry Sonnenfeld’s *The Addams Family* (1991). Unlike the literary Miss Grierson whose long hair is sheared like a nun’s after her father’s death, Anjelica Huston’s long black hair is left uncut and disheveled as a sign of resistance and bodily vigor. On the other hand, the fact that, unlike her literary counterpart, the filmic Emily’s hair never turns gray deprives the final scene of some of its epiphanic impact. In Faulkner’s tale, after Homer vanishes from Jefferson, Emily retires behind the closed door of her house. When she reappears several months later, her hair has turned gray. It is this much-insisted upon grayness and fading of colors⁵ that inevitably echoes the Confederate gray that, together with recurrent allusions to smells and disgusting odors, stuffiness, and acidity, prepares for the horrid finale of the story. As a kind of Ariadne’s thread, gray hair is present until the final, puzzling sentence of the short story: “Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head. One of us lifted something from it, and leaning forward, that faint and invisible dust dry and acrid in the nostrils, we saw a long strand of iron-gray hair” (294).

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In the adaptation, the aesthetic interest lies elsewhere. With the intertextual and interfilmic dialogue perceptible through the film, the movie director gives the impression of shunning what might be considered as mechanical application of the “Gothic mode.” During one of its most openly self-reflexive sequences, the film creates an arresting *tableau* effect, mirroring the mute male-female duo of Grant Wood’s “American Gothic,” one of the best-known, most frequently parodied icons of American popular culture, exposed for the first time in 1930, the very year Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily” was first published. In a pose reminiscent of the iconic painting, frequently interpreted as a satire about the rigidity of American small-town life, the film portrays a grim-faced and stiff grown-up daughter next to a rural, somewhat more aristocratic Southern “Daddy.” The couple is viewed through the camera lens of a photographer (Patrick Reynolds), clearly smitten with Emily, but the young man’s courtship is cut short by Mr. Grierson [02:31-02:50]. Mr. Grierson is soon drunk, plunged in a ludicrous, imaginary battle against the Northerners. All this turns quickly into pure caricature, and the filmic depiction of the inebriated father and the abusive educator of his motherless daughter misses the implied violence beneath the literary portrayals of the “high and mighty” (289) Griersons who “held themselves a little too high” (290): “We had long thought of them as a *tableau*, Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horsewhip, the two of them framed by the back-flung front door” (290).

In addition to some other photographic or painterly instances that function as visual summaries of the different sections of the short story, the short film seeks further extensions by revisiting some of the scenes from *Gone with the Wind*. Of course, *A Rose for Emily* does not overtly emulate Miss O’Hara’s descent along the grand staircase of Twelve Oaks, the beautiful mansion Scarlet dreamed to become a mistress of by marrying Ashley Wilkes (Leslie Howard), but there is something almost parodic in the superimposition and fade effects used, for instance, during Emily’s final embrace with Homer Barron: a man who, unlike Rhett Butler (Clark Gable), did not have the wits to get out of the Southern house before it was too late! Until the denouement scene, played against high-pitched, nondiegetic music, the shrillness of which instantly brings to mind the most violent scenes of Hitchcock’s *Psycho* (1960), the slow-paced voice of the town doctor keeps the filmic story-telling seemingly under control. At the same time, while maintaining the focus on Miss Grierson’s silent solitude and her devout rather than grotesquely iconic Gothic quality, Chubbuck’s character construction relies on camerawork that transgresses the social rituals of Faulkner’s

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Southerntown. For the major difference between the text and its adaptation remains the way Faulkner's narrator is forbidden entrance into the Griersons' house.

While Faulkner generally stops the townspeople and his readers at the front door, Chubbuck's camera narration leads the spectators into Emily's bathroom and bed chamber, turning them into quasi-voyeuristic trespassers. The rearrangement of the diegetic spaces helps Chubbuck reveal and briefly dramatize the presumably chivalric and noble Southern family's drinking and fencing patriarchs, former town authorities such as Colonel Sartoris (John Carradine), as well as "old lady Wyatt" (Frances Bay): Emily's mad great-aunt in the attic. In the process, Chubbuck's heroine sees her freakishness reduced due to the emphasis on her crazy family. Conversely, as the perverted Belle grows into a lesser oddity or object of abjection, the townspeople are made to appear suspicious and uncanny [16:51-17:05, 18:50-18:56]. And once Emily's wild ancestors are dead and gone, and Emily left alone with Tobe, the black servant (David Downing)—probably the only one who knew what really happened—the film requires surprisingly simple visual rhetoric to give rise to its final instances of *Unheimlichkeit*.

As with the metafilmic references to photography, Chubbuck's appropriation of Faulkner's tale underlines the importance of framing in the cinematographic rendering of the story. This is the case when the translucent quality of a simple pane of glass in the Griersons' front door allows the spectators to see the townspeople through a curious lens effect, in vague yet evocative outlines as they are trying to enter Emily's house. The interest of these shots lies in their capacity to defamiliarize Faulkner's collective "we" narrator, to display the townspeople no longer as mere voices, but as invasive, corporeal intruders. The effect is intensified by the emblematic rose engraved in the middle of the glass pane. Needless to say, no such etched or other type of flowers are found in Faulkner's short story, which reads more like "a puzzle for the reader" than "a rose for Emily." Like the red rose laid on the dead Lady's bosom by an ex-Confederate soldier in the film, the etched rose is a homage to the frail yet resilient heroine but is perhaps also a reminder of the finely etched, in-built figures of Faulkner's text.

The impact of this and further cinematographic license in the film is such that the front door scene ends up curiously intersecting with Spielberg's movie *E.T.: The Extraterrestrial* (1982) because of the distorted, abnormally long-necked heads the townspeople outside the door are endowed with when craning their necks to try and peer into Emily's living quarters. The temporal as well as aesthetic gap between Emily and E.T.—both trapped in curiously unfamiliar worlds of their own—is

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significant, but raises the question of otherness in stories whose “alien” heroes are perceived as a threat by the surrounding community.

Towards the end of the film, the vocal scope is increasingly narrowed down from a communal, choric narrator to a single “townsperson” or “town chronicler,” a doctor whose voice-over commentaries (read by John Houseman) are isolated from the communal chitchat, in fact quite spiteful speculation emanating from the vigorously verbal Faulknerian “mob,” composed, most likely, by both men and women capable of violating Emily’s intimacy. The film’s final intrusion into Emily’s bedroom coincides with the macabre discovery of Homer’s body, four decades after he suddenly disappeared from Jefferson. Accompanied by Emily’s inquisitive Alabama cousins (Sarah Cunningham, Eda Reiss Merin), the doctor breaks into Emily’s sealed-away, dust-covered tomb-like bridal chamber, a timeless sanctuary now reconnected to clock time. Looking down from the ceiling, the camera eye seizes the pre-epiphanic instant when the door crashes open, the high-angle framing creating a sudden, brutal shift of perspective. Next, after glancing over the spider web-covered objects of the room (a graying wedding-dress, a man’s faded costume and toilet set in tarnished silver, an empty wine carafe and two glasses), the camera cuts into a grisly close-up on Homer’s decayed corpse, as the curtains no longer conceal the much-fantasized bridal bed. What we see, at the end, is a skeleton with its grotesquely gaping skull and—as remarked by one of the stunned Lady-cousins, uttering the final words of the story—“a long strand of gray hair” on the pillow next to the bony Barron, which suggests that Emily kept sleeping with her dead lover until the final years of her life.

As if this were not enough, and to challenge even further the dualistic visions of the virtuous, self-effacing Southern woman, Chubbuck’s filmic portrayal is led to resonate with more recent filmic fictions. Similarly to Tim Burton’s adaptation of Washington Irving’s *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (1820), a 1999 movie quite literarily punctuated with pumpkins, Chubbuck’s film integrates traces of the Halloween tradition in a way that seems to share more with contemporary American popular culture than with previous masterpieces of American letters. Right after the scene where Homer embraces Emily before swallowing the deadly drink concocted by his mistress, Emily reappears to blow out a candle stuck into a grinning Jack O’Lantern [16:26-16:34], thus foreshadowing the fleshless yet peculiarly iconic, final grin of the story. And as the film draws almost wordlessly to its close, the old maid viewed by Faulkner’s Jeffersonians as “a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town” (288) turns into a tragically solitary,⁶ more than ghostly figure, before she is seen pulling down a lace-bottomed curtain at one of the windows of her house, as if to indicate that the show is now over.

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Without wishing to take up the often quite sterile “fidelity”-centered debate opposing the film adaptation to the “original,” and therefore necessarily “superior” text, one is nevertheless forced to admit that Faulkner’s extreme economy of language generates an incomparably ghastlier final image than the grinning skeleton seen at the end of the film, meant to stand for “The man himself lay[ing] in the bed” (293). Whether another attempt at superimposition (for instance a composite image of the skull over Homer’s already-seen open jawbones during the bath house sequence) could have counterbalanced the bony realism that eradicates mystery from the ultimate “attitude of an embrace” (293) in the film is another story and exceeds the framework of this article, but until other adaptations of “A Rose for Emily” have seen the day, one can only speculate about how the oxymoronic smirk conveyed by the “profound and fleshless grin” (293) and the “grimace of love” (293) might have been transposed onto the screen.

As we tried to demonstrate, when adapting “A Rose for Emily,” rather than seeking to capture the richness of Faulkner’s *écriture* in the form of a dense vocal webwork the renowned short story so heavily relies on, Chubbuck used a variety of often quite surprising strategies. Even if many of the original backstories and subtexts are thus inevitably “lost,” others may be “found” during the study of the cinematic recreation of a story that reminds us of the nonexistence of a single, fixed reading of a given text. In the mutually enriching versions of a story where the central protagonist gets away with her crime, we are left with the blanks and paradoxes of a woman who killed her lover to keep him in a “house filled with dust and shadows” (293).

Chubbuck’s brief, remediated version of “A Rose for Emily” undoubtedly fails to do justice to the intricate structure of Faulkner’s short story, which intently probed into the South’s pathological attachment to a ghoulish past. Instead, it elaborates a brief yet dense filmic portrayal by mingling different art forms, such as photography and painting. Given the filmic means applied to include and bypass some of Faulkner’s aesthetic and structural choices, these cinematic reappropriations and defamiliarizations open up new, hybrid spaces for reflections on Faulkner’s fallen Southern Lady, easily reducible to a stock character. Finally, by narrowing down the number of voices, and by condensing and sharpening some of the painterly and pictorial references present in the text, intensified by the use of a suggestive soundtrack, the filmmaker invites the readers of “A Rose for Emily” to pursue their speculations concerning the complex interrelations underlying Faulkner’s “fallen monument” well beyond the macabre epiphany so intimately associated with the fall of the house of Grierson.

Notes

1. William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" was originally published in the April 30 issue of *Forum*, in 1930.
2. For instance, *The Story of Temple Drake* (Stephen Roberts, 1933), *The Long, Hot Summer* (Martin Ritt, 1958), and *The Sound and the Fury* (Martin Ritt, 1959).
3. The words indicated in italics in the following extract from Roosevelt's 1933 inaugural speech are those actually heard at the beginning of Chubbuck's adaptation: "This is preeminently the time to speak *the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly*. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure, as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance." The association with Roosevelt is not developed any further in the film, which renders more difficult the recognition of the speech extract, not easily grasped as an element allowing a greater narrative range.
4. The sequences evoked here correspond to some of the twists woven into the fairly freely adapted film scenario. During another sequence, it is suggested that Homer Barron actually interrupted Emily's plans to commit a suicide using a razor blade. During their first encounter, when Homer walks up to the Griersons' front door to apologize for the noise caused by his workers, he takes the razor blade off Emily's hands, saying: "Looks like you're doing some barbering." [07:25-08:20]
5. "When we next saw Miss Emily, she had grown fat and her hair was turning gray. During the next few years it grew grayer and grayer until it attained an even pepper-and-salt iron-gray, when it ceased turning. Up to the day of her death at seventy-four it was still that vigorous iron-gray, like the hair of an active man" (292).
6. The effect is reinforced by Chubbuck's use of medium and extreme close-ups to single out the heroine as somebody profoundly solitary and excluded from the community, rather than to insist upon her ghostliness.

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About the Author

Taina Tuhkunen is professor of American studies at the Université d'Angers, France. Tuhkunen has published a number of articles on American literature and cinema and her book, *Sylvia Plath: Une écriture embryonnaire* (L'Harmattan, 2002), was the first scholarly study published in French on Plath's poetry and prose. Her most recent publication, *Demain sera un autre jour: le Sud et ses héroïnes à l'écran* (Rouge Profond, 2013), deals with the representations of female figures in the movies on the American South, and explores the evolution and the historical as well as cultural and aesthetic implications of a difficult-to-define cinematic genre called the "southern."

“Fumbling with the Key” to Narrative and Feminine Duality in Henry James’s *Watch and Ward*

Margaret Jay Jessee

Relative to the vast critical attention paid to the whole of Henry James’s fiction, his first novel, *Watch and Ward*, has garnered little. The absence of a thorough body of criticism is understandable considering that by most accounts, the novel became an embarrassment to James after the success of his career. As Lee Ann Johnson notes, he attempted to persuade readers to consider *Roderick Hudson* his first novel by not including *Watch and Ward* in the New York editions (169). Its tendency toward melodrama, its less nuanced plot than those in his later novels, and its shallow construction of characters’ positions *Watch and Ward* as a minor work. However, what critical reception exists is quite consistent on the point that there is a compelling case of doubling in the novel.¹ In fact, I argue that the doubling in *Watch and Ward* anticipates the textual, narrative ambiguity in James’s later fiction. What makes James’s late fiction distinctive—the use of figurative language, an omniscient narrator who speaks in first person periodically, and various gaps in the text—works to structure doubling in his first novel, as well.

While parts of James’s textual structure might reveal doubling, his distinctive stylistic ambiguity also works to *conceal* any simplistic categorizing of duality in plot, genre, or character. It is this working to conceal that encourages the reader to unpack and make sense of the ambiguities while thwarting the ability to do so in any simplistic way. That is, James’s ambiguities are themselves a doubling: they work to prohibit an interpretation of meaning while they simultaneously allow for a complex series of interpretations. This is especially true of James’s dualistic characterization of femininity, which he portrays as wife-daughter. Unlike James’s later novels, *Washington Square* and *The Golden Bowl*, which place female characters in figurative marriages with their fathers, *Watch and Ward* has an explicit plot of a father-daughter marriage. However, this unambiguous plot should not be confused with an unambiguous narrative style. As this essay will attempt to show, the narrative ambiguities function simultaneously as both the lock that keeps out a singular interpretation of femininity and as the key to interpretation.

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Watch and Ward is itself concerned with locks and keys, and the theme of a watch-key and the ward that enables it to function is mirrored in the narrative doubling, in the textual ambiguities. The narrative follows a single man, Roger Lawrence, as he shapes Nora Lambert, his legal ward, into his ideal wife. Nora's father asks Roger for financial help, and after Roger refuses, her biological father attempts to kill her before committing suicide in a hotel room adjacent to Roger's. Though Roger is indirectly involved in Nora's orphaning, from the outset, Roger's true motivation for taking Nora in is that he envisions her as his future wife. He trains her to become an acceptable spouse, a "fashioning of a wife to order" (84). Because Nora sees Roger as only a father figure, the sudden realization after she has grown up that Roger had always intended their union leads her to a somewhat melodramatic state of helplessness and homelessness, which only Roger's protection can resolve. Thus, Nora becomes Roger's wife only after she needs protection and saving from something he sets in motion, just as she did when she became Roger's ward. Throughout the novel, she functions as both virginal daughter and sexualized wife at once. James's narrative ambiguities ultimately position the wife and daughter split not as oppositional but as complimentary, feminine doubles.

Fumbling for the Key to Interpretation

The incidents of a narrative of this kind must be adapted to each other, as the wards of a key must tally accurately with those of the lock to which it belongs.

—Sir Walter Scott, *Waverley*

The relationship Roger develops with Nora is, in part, a means of actualizing the fantasy he creates just before proposing to and being soundly rejected by Miss Morton. While sitting in Miss Morton's parlor with her ten-year-old niece, waiting for the opportunity to press her to accept him, Roger envisions a "home-scene in the future,—a lamp-lit parlour on a winter night, a placid wife and mother wreathed in household smiles, a golden-haired child, and, in the midst, his sentient self, drunk with possession and gratitude" (27). In his desire to possess this woman and child as his own, Roger ignores the fact that he finds Miss Morton's prettiness merely "a matter of coquetry" and ignores her previous refusals to marry him. In fact, so desperate to be with Miss Morton, the narrator suggests he tries to possess the kiss that she gives

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her niece: "As the clock struck nine the little girl was sent to bed, having been kissed by her aunt and re-kissed—or un-kissed shall I say?—by her aunt's lover" (27). This strange and ambiguous notion of re-kissing and un-kissing sets up a double feminine position. The verb tense, "having been kissed," perpetuates the present tenseness of the kissing. She is having been kissed when Roger kisses her, presumably un-kissing her in order to indirectly kiss Miss Morton; however, it is initially a re-kissing, a kissing again. The suggestion is that she is being kissed and kissed again. The narrator then undoes the *rekiss* by suggesting an *unkiss*, a never having been kissed for being un-kissed most often means being completely virginal. In this moment, the two females figure for Roger both a wife and a daughter, both sexually experienced and virginal, both woman and child.

The doubling of feminine archetypes coalesces into a single figure when Roger discovers Nora. Miss Morton's steadfast refusal to marry Roger takes a more decidedly final turn because she is now engaged to another man. In desperation and agony, Roger goes back to his hotel, tries to sleep, and is awakened by gunshots coming from down the hall. Within a few hours of his vision of possessing a wife and daughter, he goes into Nora's room, finds her sobbing over her father's dead body, opens his arms, and "she, conscious of nothing but the presence of human help" rushes "into his embrace" (30). Roger almost immediately views Nora as both a "precocious" child and a "potential woman" (33). Without parents, Nora's "tender feminine promise" positions her in relation to Roger as potential wife and daughter, a woman-child. Roger's decision to become her watch and ward is simultaneously his decision to conflate his desire to possess the two female figures of his fantasy of that "home-scene" (27) into one, into Nora.

There is a doubling evoked by the term "watch and ward," one that situates the subject as simultaneously possessing agency and being a subject to another's agency.² A ward both is the guardian as well as the one being guarded, both the watcher and the watched. Thus the phrase "watch and ward" at once means one person (one who watches and wards) while it implies two different people (the one watching and the ward being watched). Roger Lawrence is the watch and ward over Nora who is also the ward. As Roger's ward, Nora functions as both a daughter and as a potential wife. Roger prepares a country house "into a home for Nora,—a home admirably fitted to become the starting-point of a happy life" (38). His design to raise a wife makes Roger feel "as if life had begun afresh and the world had put on a new face" (39). Part of Roger's goal is to create for Nora an "obliterated past" because "he wish[es] her life to date from the moment he had taken her home" (39). Nora tells Roger that while her peers at her new boarding school

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are “always talking about what they meant to do in coming years, what they hoped, what they wished,” her “future is fixed” because she “has nothing to choose, nothing to hope, nothing to fear,” as her only role in life is to make Roger “happy” (66). Roger writes to Miss Morton telling her that Nora will one day perhaps “not refuse” him as she did and that “it will be” his “own fault” if Nora does not turn out to be his “perfect wife” (53). Thus Nora’s life begins in the dual role of wife and daughter, as her past as someone else’s daughter is “obliterated” and her future is “nothing” other than its relation to Roger. Nora’s past and future selves are as the double position of Roger’s daughter-wife.

To further this doubling, a ward is also the protruding piece of metal on both a key and inside a lock that makes the key fit to open the lock. A ward both allows and prevents access depending on the particular key and lock. This is also true for a watch-key and its corresponding watch: the ward either allows the watch-key to fit the watch and wind it or thwarts that winding when the pieces of metal do not fit together. The ward, then, is what allows a lock to open or a watch to wind while it is also what thwarts that opening or winding when the wards do not fit together.

When Roger first contemplates taking in Nora, he pictures Miss Morton’s rejection as “turn[ing] the key on his heart,” but as he looks at Nora, he pictures “a child’s fingers fumbling with the key” (34). Nora, then, functions as a key to unlocking Roger. As wards, they could fit together, allowing the lock to function and thus open. As he educates and shapes Nora, Roger thinks of her not as the key but “as a thing wound up with a key, whose virtues would make a *tic-tic* if one listened” (56). Her virtues, then, function like a watch. They require a key, a fitting together of wards. In Roger’s conception of their relationship, Nora depends on him, as her watch and ward, to develop and make evident her virtues. As Roger’s ward, Nora is dependent on his winding her up yet provides the key to unlocking his heart. They are both wards that must fit together for both to function.

James figures Nora’s double sexuality—her simultaneous innocence and seductiveness—as watches and wards. For example, Roger’s cousin, Hubert Lawrence, warns Roger that he should not wait so long to reveal his true designs to Nora, arguing he should marry quickly because she is becoming more desirable as she grows. After spending the evening with Nora, Hubert advises Roger not to “sow for others to reap,” implying that though she is still technically a child, Roger should act quickly before some other man takes action (109). Just as he is giving Roger this advice/threat, Nora appears:

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Her errand was to make use of Rodger's watch-key, her own having mysteriously vanished. She had begun to take out her pins and had muffled herself for this excursion in a merino dressing-gown of somber blue. Her hair was gathered for the night into a single massive coil, which had been loosened by the rapidity of her flight along the passage. Roger's key proved a complete misfit, so that she had recourse to Hubert's. It hung on the watch-chain which depended from his waistcoat, and some rather intimate fumbling was needed to adjust it to Nora's diminutive timepiece. It worked admirably, and she stood looking at him with a little smile of caution as it creaked on the pivot. (109)

While Roger pictures Nora as a young child "fumbling with the key" to his heart (34), it is with Hubert that the more adult Nora does the actual "intimate fumbling" for a key (109). The suggestive figure of "fumbling" in the first passage is heightened by the more overtly sexualized second passage.

While the sexual implications of the scene suggest Nora desires Hubert and not Roger, there is simultaneously the suggestion that Roger's winding her up has prepared Nora to give another man her virtues. Her *tic-tic* works with Hubert's watch-key and not with Roger's. Suddenly, despite his earlier assumptions, Roger's ward is not reliant, in fact, on him to function. As Roger begins to realize that Nora is actually in love with Hubert, he tells Miss Morton that Nora is "wound up tight; but the spring will snap and the watch run down" (182). Roger's fear is that while he has been "winding" Nora, he has inadvertently been preparing her *tic-tic* for someone else. But Hubert is no better a match for Nora than Roger. He is a cad, a hypocritical clergyman who attempts to seduce Nora while hiding his engagement to another woman. As the narrator suggests, "it had been maliciously said that he had turned parson because parsons enjoy peculiar advantages in approaching the fair sex" (103). The text makes it clear that Roger and Nora are misfit wards after she desires Hubert, but whether this means that the fitting together is based solely on sexual desire is unclear. Would her eventual heartbreak be the "snap" of the tightly wound spring in the watch, or is that snap the result of fulfilling her sexual desires? The text is both explicitly suggestive and ambiguous at once. As William Stowe writes of a similarly complex set of passages from *Wings of the Dove*: "Figurative language expands the suggestiveness of James's text without making its meaning any more explicit" (191).

Lending a textual doubling and ambiguity to the novel, the particular narrative voice in *Watch and Ward* is one of familiarity with the reader.

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Lee Ann Johnson argues that James “supplements” Roger’s portraiture throughout the text “with the practice of ‘going behind,’ of interjecting evaluative comments into the text whenever he deems necessary” (174). This “technique,” Johnson argues, is “double-edged,” resulting in “conflicting impressions” of Roger.³ I would add to Johnson’s reading the suggestion that there is an intimacy created through the narrator’s first-person language in conjunction with the omniscient point of view that at once reveals what Roger is thinking while also giving the impression that the narrator is letting the reader in on a secret, a shared moment of gossip. For example, referring to Miss Morton after she has married and become Mrs. Keith, the narrator quips, “you have heard many a young unmarried lady exclaim with a bold sweep of conception, ‘Ah me! I wish I were a widow!’ Mrs. Keith was precisely the widow that young unmarried ladies wish to be” (43). Addressing the reader directly, the narrator here gives the impression of letting the reader in on an inside joke.

This narrator-reader intimacy, particularly in the more overtly sexualized passages in the novel, develops an ambiguity between what is a tantalizing joke the narrator tells the reader and what are Roger’s actual sentiments:

I may add also that, in his desire to order all things well, Roger caught himself wondering whether, at the worst, a little precursory love-making would do any harm. The ground might be gently tickled to receive his own sowing; the petals of the young girl’s nature, playfully forced apart, would leave the golden heart of the flower but the more accessible to his own vertical rays. (80-81)

The use of “I” clearly establishes the narrator as the voice of the passage, and the explanation that it is Roger’s “desire to order things well” pokes fun at Roger’s fastidiousness. But the narrator’s claim that “Roger caught himself wondering” suggests the sexualized imagery comes from Roger’s consciousness, not the narrator’s. There is a space, then, between the “I” and Roger, between the narrator and the character. Inside that space, there is a sense of the narrator giving a wink and a nudge to the reader, making a bit of a joke at Roger’s expense. But whether or not Roger’s thoughts are actually so overtly sexual is impossible to tell. The multiple possible readings of the meaning behind the sexualized language, in conjunction with the ambiguity surrounding the narrator’s dirty joke and Roger’s actual consciousness, form a doubling that is paradoxically explicit and opaque.

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Femininity as Duality

They were but opposite faces of the same deep need.

—Henry James, *Watch and Ward*

Ironically, the more Roger works to shape Nora into a virtuous daughter-wife, the more he feels threatened by her beauty and obedience, and thus the more he views her virtues as artificial. Though he forces her to become feminine and dutiful, he simultaneously wants to see behind the artificiality, to remove her mask of “placidity and patience” (69). Efrat Tseëlon’s analysis of the history of the Eve versus Virgin Mary myths so prevalent in literature argues that femininity is a means of controlling “a seductive threat” (24). “In mythological and theological representations,” Tseëlon argues, “the woman features as synonymous with artifice, inauthenticity, and duplicity. She appears as made up, claiming false identity. . . . Artificiality is not threatening in itself. It is a means to an end. The end is to seduce the man, to lure him to his destruction” (34). Tseëlon’s argument draws from Joan Riviere’s claims that femininity works to ward off anxiety for the woman, yet it induces anxiety in the spectator because the mask is that “behind which man suspects some hidden danger” (43). The woman uses her masquerade in order to divert retribution but in so doing highlights an anxiety over being deceived, an anxiety inevitable in all masking. “Woman deceives by means of deception itself,” Slavoj Žižek explains, because “she offers the mask as mask, as false pretense, in order to give rise to the search for the secret behind the mask” (1). Just as the ward of a key can function both to allow and to thwart entry, femininity evokes desire to see behind the mask of artifice while it thwarts that desire, resulting in anxiety about what that mask hides, if anything.

The more Roger works to educate and shape Nora, the more the narrator describes his fears of her eventual preference for another man. He begins to “taste, in advance, the bitterness of disappointment,” and he considers treating Nora “as Rochester treats Jane Eyre” or to “shut her up in a convent and keep her childish and stupid and contented” (68-9). Nora’s “very placidity and patience somehow afflict[s]” Roger, causing him to suspect her of being “too monotonously sweet, too easily obedient” (69). He wishes that she would “once in a while” allow herself to “flash out into petulance or rebellion”; he suspects her of keeping “her temper so carefully” and wants her to “bless him for once with an angry look and tell him that he bored her!” (69). Roger suspects, fears,

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and yet desires something lurking behind her “placidity and patience.” Roger fantasizes about possessing and controlling her while his desire for her makes him wish she would reciprocate (thus the desire to treat her as Rochester treats Jane). He wants her to be both exposed and concealed, both masked and unmasked at once.

Roger’s desire for Nora to be both feminine and rebellious at once is largely the result of his inability to read her correctly. This misreading becomes all the more apparent as Roger also shows an inability to read novels correctly. Roger is embarrassed by falling asleep while Nora reads out loud “the classic tale,” *The Heir of Redclyffe*, and lashes out in anger: “all novels seem to me stupid. They are nothing to what I can fancy! I have in my heart a prettier romance than any of them” (70). The text is making a joke at Roger’s expense. Charlotte M. Young’s *The Heir of Redclyffe* tells a story exceptionally similar to that of Roger’s own experience: a man in love with his guardian’s daughter falls victim to his lying cousin’s desire for her and must struggle to win her back, which he succeeds in doing just before dying of the fever he catches from his cousin.⁴ James’s Roger even comes down with a fever in *Watch and Ward*, and while his cousin, Hubert, does not give Roger his illness, his desire for Nora indirectly leads Roger to live in the basement of a home while he refurbishes and paints it to win Nora’s desire, causing his fever. The doubling of the two novels is particularly interesting in light of Henry James’s claim that, while most novels that “embody a moral lesson . . . render them incompetent as novels,” the exception is that “occasionally, like the ‘Heir of Redclyffe,’ they almost legitimate themselves by the force of genius” (78). For James, this legitimation is dependent on “a first-rate mind” to take “the matter in hand,” by which he means the author is the “master” of the material rather than the “slave” to the subject (78). The fact that Nora is reading Young’s novel for the “twentieth” time and that Roger clearly has not read it and dismisses it as less pretty than his own strikingly similar situation reveals the narrative’s use of doubling again to complicate Nora while making a joke at Roger’s expense: He wants Nora to be more than what he sees as her artificiality, but he fails to recognize that she already is.

Miss Sands, Roger’s image of the perfect wife, predicts Nora’s rejection of Roger, something he misreads as merely her jealousy, but Roger becomes determined to shape Nora into a beautiful woman like Miss Sands. Nora’s beauty, clothing, hair, and manner must confirm her modesty and thus her femininity. From the beginning, Roger’s hope is to make Nora into a beauty, and the assumed result is that she become his object of his desire alone. One of Roger’s “first acts” as a “father” is to “divest Nora of her shabby mourning and dress her afresh in childish colours” despite the warnings from other women that this is regarded

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as “an act of gross impiety” (40). It is important to Roger that Nora be considered beautiful. He goes as far as having her photographed and then judged by his acquaintances to see if they find her attractive. Roger observes Nora’s “fitness of not speaking of her own affairs” and a “precocious good taste,” but her lack of obvious beauty bothers him (41). Because she has evidently “sprung from a horribly vulgar soil,” Roger works to “shape” her language, her vocabulary, her learning, and “plunge[es] into a course of useful reading, and devour[s] a hundred volumes on education, on hygiene, on morals, on history,” going as far as to “measure her food” (43). Nora grows from a plain girl to a “beauty” (167), her hair even changing from dark to “golden” (174). The change in hair color indicates a cleansing, civilizing process; Nora goes from dark, vulgar orphan to fair, feminine daughter-wife.

It is no wonder that after Roger finally proposes to Nora, she feels she must “throw off those suffocating bounties” used to shape her, which she suddenly realizes are “meant to bribe her to the service” of marrying Roger (193). The realization that Roger had always planned to marry Nora makes her earlier notions of an “obliterated past” (39) and comfortably predictable future of being devoted to Roger appear absurd: “The whole face of things [is] hideously altered” (190). The appearance or mask of her reality becomes grotesque in her realization that she was always intended to be a daughter-wife, her relationship to her father always a perpetuated sexual desire. A “sudden horror” has now “sprung up in her innocent past” making it seem “to fling forward a shadow” casting on “the future a blank darkness” (190). Once Nora knows of Roger’s desire, her future is obliterated rather than her past.

The unscrupulous George Fenton, who identifies Roger’s plans for Nora early on as a “fashioning of a wife to order,” also accurately identifies the feminine duality revealed in and by Nora’s masquerade. As a confidence man himself, Fenton seems particularly attuned to what might be lurking beneath Nora’s outward beauty. Karen Halttunen, in her study of nineteenth-century middle class culture notes, “American Victorians condemned hypocrisy as a major social threat. In the vast literature of advice on personal conduct published in America after 1830, middle-class concerns about the problem of hypocrisy assumed the form of an extended attack on two archetypal hypocrites, the confidence man and the painted woman” (xiv). The novel certainly highlights the hypocritical nature of Fenton’s disgust with Roger. Roger insists that Nora no longer live with him as his daughter and only return home after she becomes his wife. He effectively makes her homeless unless she agrees to marry the man she has always known as her father. Reminiscent of Richardson’s *Clarissa*, Nora decides to flee this unhappy marriage, taking refuge with Fenton in a room he

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sets up in a home for women on a street looking “shabby and of ill repute” (194). Fenton’s sense of Nora’s desire for Roger despite her running from him makes Fenton feel used “as a senseless stepping-stone,” but this feeling “quicken[s] his appreciation of her charm but [takes] the edge from his delicacy” (204). Just as Roger earlier sensed Nora’s desire for Fenton and felt both attraction and fear, Fenton admits to being “afraid” of Nora (204), her feminine duality a paradoxical lure and threat. Naming the feminine stereotype binary quite clearly, Fenton claims that he loves Nora but cannot quite understand her: “Are you an angel of purity, or are you the most audacious of flirts?” (226). She is at once the virginal innocent and the seductive tease, the conflation of the Eve and Virgin Mary binary. Fenton’s question situates Nora as the masquerading woman, what Tseñlon might describe as representing “a threat while being constructed as a defense against that threat” (24).

Fleeing from Fenton to Hubert Lawrence provokes a similar series of dualities in which Nora is both desired and feared. Nora’s sudden appearance on his doorstep is, for Hubert, “either a rapture or a shame” (230). The narrator explains that “Hubert [is] simply afraid of her” now that she is an adult and ready to reciprocate what she believes is his passion. Though he is cruel to Nora at one moment, he then proposes he give up his fiancé and marry Nora if she will have him. Hubert desires the excitement of their potential rebellion while he fears what that desire might mean. Hubert’s fiancé enters and accuses Nora of seducing Hubert: “the harm’s done, madam! He will never be what he was. You have changed, Hubert!” (234). Despite the obvious fact that Hubert seduced and lied to Nora, it is Nora’s beauty that is described as tempting Hubert, of leading him to his destruction. She “is beautiful” and thus positioned as the temptress, the seductive threat that has left Hubert changed (235).

“Once More Her Father’s Daughter”

Let the ambiguous procession of events reveal their own ambiguousness.

—Herman Melville, *Pierre; or, The Ambiguities*

Nora writes to Roger telling him that they “shall be better friends than ever” only after she “learn[s] to be [her]self again” (209). She must relinquish Roger as father in order for him to become her lover. Roger’s proposal resurrects Nora’s once “obliterated” past: “She seemed to feel

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about her, as she went, the old Bohemianism of her childhood" (194). Importantly, it also resurrects, for Nora, her biological father: "She was once more her father's daughter" (194). She must be her (biological) father's daughter in order to become her (legal) father's lover. Nora must disguise Roger as her husband, her father as not her father. By becoming "once more her father's daughter," Nora is evoking a necessary change that is both real and imaginary. She is not biologically Roger's daughter; thus she is able to disguise the role she has always associated as paternal with the fact that she has another biological father. Nora's disguise as not her (legal) father's daughter is, as her (biological) father's daughter, an ambiguous position as both/and: she is both a daughter and not a daughter, both the father's daughter and the father's wife.

Nora tells Roger to burn the goodbye letter she left him; she wants him to "see" her burn it "and to remember that" (237). Roger asks, "what does it mean, Nora?" (237). Nora answers that she is "a wiser girl to-day than *then*," and she claims, "I know myself better" (237). Nora "knows" herself "better" because she behaves exactly as she did as a child: after a great loss and in desperation, Roger opens his arms, and "she, conscious of nothing but the presence of human help" rushes "into his embrace" (30). In the opening of the novel, Nora transitions from her father's daughter to Roger's daughter. In the end, she transitions back again. Despite the fact that father and daughter must not marry, Nora's transitioning disguises itself as the reality by which the incest taboo might be transgressed.

The text partially conceals and thwarts a means of reading Nora's eventual acceptance of Roger as a simplistic romantic resolution. Just as Hubert and George Fenton do not provide legitimate alternatives to Roger as a lover, Nora's biological father, who attempts to murder her before committing suicide, is not a more palatable alternative as a father figure. Though the novel's marriage plot resolution presents a literal replacement of Roger as father with Roger as lover, this ending is more ambivalent than a traditional sentimental novel. After fleeing Hubert's room, Nora feels a strange sense of freedom and happiness, "almost absurdly free and light of spirit" but as she watches Roger approach on the street, realizing he is her only option to safety, she has an "altogether nameless sensation, strangely similar to the one she had felt a couple of years earlier when a physician had given her a dose of ether" (236). As a dose of ether, Roger's appearance as her lover is not described in typical sentimental form. There is a duality in the possible interpretations; the resolution is both a happy ending and a decidedly unhappy one. It both transgresses a taboo and reinforces it. Nora's acceptance of Roger's proposal is the result of her being used by George

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Fenton and deceived by Hubert Lawrence. She is desperate, homeless, and in need of rescue, just as she was as a child. She is at once saved and doomed.

Alfred Habegger argues that “it is in its treatment of love and freedom” that *Watch and Ward* “fails most egregiously” because the novel, like “all the other guardian-ward love stories” of the time, “masks dependency as love” (257). “James tried hard to eliminate the coercive pressure of the intolerable middle-aged lover,” Habegger surmises, “but when all was said and done the coercion was still there, right at the center and more disguised than ever” (257). It is “that dose of ether in the middle of Nora’s euphoria” that, for Habegger, “is a telltale sign of this deep rationalization and unconsciousness” (257). But what Habegger reads as a psychological masking, a disguising of the unconscious, is more accurately described as a narrative masking. Habegger’s reading conflates Henry James and his narrator as well as the narrator and Roger. However, what *Watch and Ward* as a text does is create those very gaps. The narrator’s intimate relationship with the reader, making jokes at Roger’s expense, works to separate the narrator from Roger. It is in the creation of these gaps that the text is critical of Roger, indeed does describe “coercion” at “the middle” of the text.

Importantly, the text does suggest a masking of “dependency as love”; however, unlike Habegger’s suggestion that James masks his unconscious with an attempt at writing a story that argues otherwise, the masking dependency as love is the thematic duality revealed in and by the formal ambiguity, the stylistic doubling. Masking dependency as love is the key to the novel: the daughter-wife is inherently a conflation of dependency and love. This is the duality the text interrogates throughout, and rather than the novel’s conclusion being a failure to do otherwise, the text ends as it begins: the daughter-wife reveals “opposite faces of the same deep need” (James 121).

One of the ways *Watch and Ward* anticipates James’s later novel, *The Golden Bowl*, is in the textual ambiguity that reveals and conceals the duality of dependency and love or paternal desire and marriage. The relationship between Maggie and her father, Adam Verver, is never explicitly discussed as a desirous one. However, it is through the textual ambiguity, through what is unsaid, that the text establishes just this reading. As Lynda Zwinger argues, “the most important love in [Maggie’s] life is her father, and their relation—glossed, gilded, half submerged as it is in diminutive accolades—is the enigma which centers the novel” (77). And just as Roger is able to be Nora’s father and husband, “Adam Verver,” Zwinger suggests, “allows his daughter to marry and he keeps her—literally and figuratively—too” (77). He is able to have a figurative daughter-wife.

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While the crack in the golden bowl certainly signifies the crack in Maggie's marriage, tellingly, it is not for the Prince that Maggie purchases the flawed bowl; it is for her father. Thus, when Maggie tells Fanny Assingham that she wants "the golden bowl—as it was to have been . . . The bowl with all happiness in it. The bowl without the crack," the literal discussion is that she means she wants to go back to a time when her marriage seemed secure. But the fact that Maggie purchases the bowl for her father works to open the possibility that she means her relationship with her father (which must end with separation now that she knows Prince Amerigo has had an affair with Charlotte). Zwinger reads the sentimentality in *The Golden Bowl* as a "gloss" or "veil" used to "offer terms with which to treat the forbidden desire," the desire "we would rather not see" (78). "The sentimental trope," Zwinger explains, "in turn, enables James to tell a more fundamental love story to those who would hear: the story that structures all heterosexual relations of desire, the story which is built upon the unarticulated, unspeakable, and finally, perhaps, unknowable relation between the impassive desiring father and his acquiescent desirable daughter" (79).

What is intriguing about *Watch and Ward* is that it draws attention to what lies behind the veil of the sentimental novel. Roger quite literally marries his daughter; the text suggests, through its guardian love story, a means of *not* glossing that "forbidden desire." Yet it is that very appearance of transparency that is the ward of the story, working to allow entry into the novel while working to keep out a literal reading of the story as singularly a story of paternal desire satiated. Instead of pulling back a veil, the guardian love story functions as a masquerade: it is constructed to thwart anxiety induced by a father-daughter sexual relationship while it elicits an anxiety that the story speaks to a fundamental element of desire itself: all desire is rooted in dependence, in paternal desire or desire of the parent. Just as Habegger's reading reveals, suggesting that love is not separable from dependence is disconcerting. The guardian love story certainly evokes that anxiety. The dualities in the novel, like wards on a key and its corresponding lock, are complementary, creating ambivalence, an uncomfortable both/and: both watch and ward, both wife and daughter, both formal and thematic.

Notes

1. What that doubling is, exactly, varies from critic to critic. For J. A. Ward, the novel has a “double structure” consisting of a superficial theme and a deeper psychological “secondary theme,” which leaves the novel “at odds with itself, tending to delve deeply when the sentimental plot requires it to be superficial” and thus “neither structure is successful” (614). Leo B. Levy describes the novel as having a “dual point of view” of comedy and realism, which is the result of James placing “the contrary model of George Sand’s conception of the novel of passion, considerably modified” against Balzac’s style of “provincial manners” (87). Johnson refers to the duality as James’s “double-edged technique of portrait-comment,” in which the main character is described at once favorably and as a cad. This is a technique that creates “conflicting impressions” but is “conscious and rather successful” (174). “The intentional design of the depiction,” Johnson concludes, “is such as to admit two coexisting interpretations” (176). What these examples have in common, of course, is their highlighting of the duality the novel creates, but their differing analyses show that duality to be ambiguous. For Ward, it is an issue of plot, for Levy, one of genre, and for Johnson, one of narrative point of view and characterization.

2. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a ward as the “guardianship of a child, a minor, or other person legally incapable of conducting his affairs” as well as “the condition of being subject to a guardian.”

3. Johnson surmises from her analysis of the narrator’s “going behind” Roger that “Roger can be seen as a comic, well-intentioned hero and also as a meddler in disguise who, frustrated in his attempts to achieve matrimony and fatherhood, imposes his designs upon another” (176). My point of departure from Johnson’s conclusion is with her reading of the equally plausible interpretations that Johnson sets up as binaries. Roger as “a comic, well-intentioned hero” becomes implausible as the narrative consistently works to undermine such a reading. And while Roger’s intentions are certainly ambiguous at times, Johnson’s interpretation gives too much agency to his designs rather than to the ambivalence the text actually creates.

4. In the unrevised, original version of the novel, Nora is reading Thackeray’s *The Initials* in this passage. While also an example of a romance involving marriage to a cousin that borders on sentimentality without becoming melodramatic, the plot is less similar to *Watch and Ward* and thus makes Roger look less foolish for claiming novels are “nothing to what” he can “fancy.” The revision more expressly makes a joke of Roger by suggesting he does not read novels well yet forms opinions of them. This is also true of his relationship with all women in the novel, and in particular with Nora, whom Roger manages to misread consistently throughout the text while maintaining his misguided opinions of her.

5. The putting on of “unwonted graces” recalls quite strikingly Coverdale’s description of Nature in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Blithedale Romance*: “There was, at such moments, a novelty, an unwonted aspect on the face of Nature, as if she had been taken by surprise and seen at unawares, with no opportunity to put off her real look, and assume the mask with which she mysteriously hides

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herself from mortals" (75). Here, too, the unwonted aspect functions as a mask, able to be put off and thus put back on.

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About the Author

Margaret Jay Jessee is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Alabama at Birmingham where she teaches courses in gender studies and women's literature, American literature, and critical theory. Her work has appeared in *JML: Journal of Modern Literature* and *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*. She is currently working on a chapter about the role of the theater in Nathaniel Hawthorne's tales and novels, which will appear in *Nathaniel Hawthorne in Context*, under contract with Cambridge UP.

Grandfather's (Secular) *Tale* of Hijra and Hajj: Ulfat Idilbī's Paralleling of Islamic Sacred History

Kari Neely

Syrian-Dagestani author Ulfat Idilbī's novel, *Grandfather's Tale*, published in English in 1999 by Interlink Publishing Group is a novelization of the author's family biography. Where many Arabic novels in translation focus on sectarian conflicts, here is a novel that problematizes that monolithic representation of an Arab/Muslim Middle East by instead focusing on a Dagestani immigrant family's settlement in an unfamiliar Muslim country in the nineteenth century and their ultimate acceptance and integration into Syrian society. Like the characters in her novel, Idilbī viewed herself as a Syrian who maintained her Dagestani traditions and customs.

For background, Dagestanis are a small ethnic/linguistic minority group within Syria who are Muslims. In the 1800s, due to the pressure of the Russian advance, they (along with other Caucasian groups such as the Circassians and Chechens) moved in droves to the Ottoman Empire in what can be called a form of *hijra* or migration. While many remained in what would become the Turkish Republic, others continued their migration into the regions of modern-day Jordan and Syria. As Muslims, Dagestanis should have been easily assimilated into the Syrian Muslim community, religion being the primary form of group affiliation. However, their linguistic, ethnic, and cultural differences conferred outsider status upon them. These markers of Dagestani identity were actively maintained by the new immigrants as was a continuous desire to make a pilgrimage, or *hajj*, to the homeland to visit those left behind. At the same time, they maintained a desire to be integrated into their host communities and accepted as fellow Muslims. This article explores the use of Arab/Muslim symbolism to both connect and distance Dagestanis from the larger Syrian population resulting in integration rather than full assimilation. More explicitly, the sacred movement of *hijra* links the Dagestani diaspora to the early Muslim community and its *hijra* from Mecca to Medina while the pilgrimage back home to Dagestan reifies their ethnic identity in a comparison to the Muslim rite of *hajj*.

Grandfather's Tale opens with a scene straight out of *A Thousand and One Nights*. The narrator, "Mother," plays the role of Scheherazade

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reciting the story of Grandfather's journey from Dagestan to the Holy Land. "Mother" positions us as members of her family listening to "our" history, the story of how "we" came to be in this land which is not "our" home. And from that opening paragraph, we are taken on a journey of desire . . . desire for the narration to continue, even though like the method of Scheherazade, that narrative is continually interrupted, and desire to be reunited with "our" origin, a desire to return home. Most of us are not immigrants, but Idilbi enables us to connect by highlighting an urge that is practically universal, the protagonist's desire to reunite with his mother. Idilbi's simple and unpretentious Arabic allows a brilliant parallel structure to emerge between Islamic motifs of physical movements across space (*hijra*/emigration and *hajj*/pilgrimage) and the diasporan dilemma of displacement. Peter Clark, one of the pre-eminent Arabic to English translators who also translated her *Sabriya: Damascus Bitter-Sweet* in 1995, faithfully renders Idilbi's vision of the Middle East as a complex patchwork of ethnic identities, brought together under Islam, that promotes immigration and acceptance of ethnic diversity.

That reality is difficult to tease out of Western representations of the region as a war zone and a hot bed of ethnic conflict. Yet, here is a novel that discusses the realities of being a minority in the region without devolving into sectarian conflict. Idilbi frankly discusses perennially difficult issues for diasporic groups that are applicable globally, not just in the Middle East. It is, however, her use of Islamic motifs that is innovative and which is rarely discussed in Western scholarship. Such religious motifs should not be surprising when paralleled to Western literature's frequent allusions to biblical texts.

Readers first connect with the boy protagonist, Salih (Grandfather), who grapples with his identity as his family migrates from Dagestan to Syria. It is Salih's physical movements across this vast territory that demonstrates concomitant movements in identity between homeland and diaspora. As a small child, Salih and his father make a *hijra* from Dagestan to the Holy Land of the Middle East, specifically Syria, leaving Salih's mother behind. In doing so, they will attempt to form their own community/*ummah*. The *hajj* marks a return to the origin which reorients people to a common collective identity. For Salih, this will come to mean a dogged determination to return to Dagestan and see his mother. Idilbi's narrative alludes to the *hijra* from Mecca to Medina in order to justify the formation of community outside of the homeland. She substitutes a *hajj*/return to Dagestan to validate the diaspora's retention of a common, shared identity tied to territory. Through these movements, Salih's family comes to stand for the homeland and diaspora dichotomy through the characters of Mother and son (Salih),

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respectively. The natural mother/child bond, which has been severed, creates a desire for reunion that is mirrored in the longing and nostalgia of the diaspora for the homeland cast in the movements of *hijra* and *hajj*.

The Frame story:

As readers, we do not enter the historical narrative of the Dagestani emigration/*hijra* directly. Instead, Idilbī takes us into the domestic sphere and into an audience of recitation. In essence, we become a part of the community:

On the first night of Ramadan, Mother gathered us around the stove. ‘During this sacred month,’ she said, ‘between the sunset prayer and the evening prayer, while your father goes off to recite the special Ramadan prayers, I’m going to tell you the story of how my grandfather migrated from Dagestan to Damascus. (9)

The recitation to which we are privy is at once both religious and secular, at once both Syrian and Dagestani. Idilbī imbeds her narrative of Dagestani diaspora formation within the literary landscape of the Middle East, quickly and deftly alluding to the two primary recitations of the region: The *Qur’an* and the *A Thousand and One Nights*, one sacred the other cultural. Idilbī packages Dagestani history in the form of shared recitation, that method of delivery being comfortable, familial, and sacred. In a region of the world where oral transmission was traditionally the primary form of receiving knowledge (both *The Qur’an* and the *A Thousand and One Nights* come to us from oral traditions, not to mention classical Arabic poetry) mimicking the oral arabesque lends credibility.

Mother claims her (and the Dagestani community’s) Muslim identity through her participation in the rituals of Ramadan, the sacred Islamic month that commemorates the revelation of the *Qur’an* to Muhammad. A central ritual of Ramadan is the recitation of the entire *Qur’an* which contains the sacred history of Islam and the *ummah*. The *Qur’an* is divided into roughly thirty equal parts and a section is recited each night. In the above passage, Mother transforms this tradition. Following the tradition of Grandfather, she recites parts of the story of the family’s *hijra* from Dagestan to the Holy Land *in place of* the *Qur’an*. In other words, Idilbī’s tale of Dagestani migration and history is mapped onto the sacred history of Islam and the early *um-*

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mah's hijra. Idilbī establishes this parallel structure in the frame story planting the idea that the tale about to be recited is comparable to the experiences of the early Muslim community that also came into being in diaspora, away from Muhammad's hometown of Mecca. Thus, migration is uniquely tied to piety in Islam and Idilbī extends this to her own family.

In fact, in the original Arabic, Idilbī cements this connection by using the word "*hijra*." Unfortunately, Peter Clark's translation obfuscates the connection with his substitution of the English word "migration" for *hijra*. A better rendering of the above would be "Grandfather's story of *hijra*" with a footnote giving the definition and history of the term. "Migration" carries more of a modern connotation of globalization which pulls the story forward in time rather than backward.

This comparison between Grandfather's *hijra* and Muhammad's resists becoming subversive because the surrounding text is constructed to firmly root the family (and by extension community) within the sacred tradition. Notice the location of the actors in relationship to society and tradition. The father "goes off to recite the special Ramadan prayers" in the local mosque, or within the public sphere. He represents the family and his actions conform to local and religious traditions. Externally, Father—the public face of the family—conforms and performs the traditional rituals of Islam. The mapping of the Dagestani history onto sacred history is relegated to the private sphere of the house and is transmitted through Mother, the way ethnic identity is commonly performed and protected within a diaspora setting: informally and familiarly. We might think of grandfather's tale of *hijra* as being supplementary without negating the larger Islamic tradition into which Dagestanis are born. There is a difference between transgressive actions that serve to assert a different identity, which is what is occurring in this case, and subversive actions. Mother is transgressing normal rituals to assert difference while still respecting religious tradition. In such a way, she carves out a niche for Dagestani identity within Muslim identity.

Returning to the opening lines of the text, the second allusion to recitation is to *A Thousand and One Nights* with the quintessential female storyteller Scheherazade. The reader feels the echoes of Scheherazade in the structure of Mother's meta-textual frame story. As we remember, Scheherazade saves herself from her homicidal husband's violence through the art of incomplete storytelling. Nightly he would spare her life because of his desire for her to complete the tale the following night. Likewise, the Dagestani diaspora, through Mother who represents the private sphere of ethnic traditions, saves (preserves) itself through the recitation of their own sacred history that is unique and

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set apart from the rest of Muslim society. Instead of easy assimilation into the widely-shared cultural heritage of *A Thousand and One Nights*, their own Dagestani traditions and art forms take center stage within the text even if private in practice. At one and the same time, Idilbī's allusion to Scheherazade's frame story illustrates Dagestanis' familiarity with their cultural surroundings and their social integration while enacting traditions that set them apart and preserve their ethnic identity. Within the frame story, Mother quotes her Grandfather, "But now we are all tired. Let us go to sleep. Morning has overtaken Scheherazade and she has reached the end of her chapter" (71).

This is cultural commentary at its most subtle and is easily overlooked. A first reading can easily fail to see how complex this first paragraph actual is. However from the outset, Idilbī's use of Islamic traditions and cultural reference to *A Thousand and One Nights* establishes that the Dagestani community is

1. part of the Islamic tradition through the family's participation in Ramadan and thus, part of the *ummah*
2. unique and different, with their own traditions based on their own unique history
3. a diaspora and thus pious like emigrants in Islamic tradition, which will be developed more below
4. part of the cultural tradition of the region through the frame story's similarity to *A Thousand and One Night's*

This first paragraph sets the stage for the rest of the novel which, read at plot level, is a sentimental journey of a "lost boy" back to his mother. However, reading below the plotline, the novel is an explication of displaced peoples in the Middle East and their performance of new selves and new communities. Grandfather's departure from the homeland forces him to reposition himself between an "authentic" Dagestani identity and a new, forged Circassian/Caucasian¹ identity. Establishing a new diasporic identity (in essence creating a new *ummah*) means a rupture with the homeland and an attempt to smooth the psychic break that it creates within the fleeing community. The emerging diasporic identity needs to be functional in diaspora while recognizably "authentic" in the homeland.

As the new Syrian host community and the Dagestani community identify as predominantly Muslim, the use of common religious imagery and motifs establishes connections. We are on solid ground as Islamic tradition allows for the extension of the *hijra* to other times and places allowing Idilbī to directly link Grandfather's and Muhammad's

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hijras: “there will be *hijra*’ after *hijra*,’ but the best of people are those who follow the *hijra*’ of Abraham” (Abu Dawud; 2482; 15:6).²

Islamic tradition is predicated upon the *hijra* of the early community. Like most prophets, Muhammad is run out of Mecca for his beliefs. But it is within the tradition of Islam that being an emigrant connotes a special degree of piety. As Muhammad Khalid Masud summarizes in “The obligation to migrate: the doctrine of *hijra* in Islamic law,” the *hijra* was known as “the physical movement away from unbelief” (29). He goes on to explain:

After the migration all ties, including ‘blood’ relationships, were broken with both non-Muslims and Muslims who refused to migrate. Instead, a new bond of brotherhood (*mu’akhat*) between *muhajirs* (migrants) and *ansars* (inhabitants of Medina—generally supporters or local hosts) was established, which entitled them even to inherit from one another (al-Tabari 1958: 199). *Hijra* thus meant to abandon one’s property and relations in order to support the nascent community of Muslims in Medina. Refusal to perform *hijra* meant to weaken the Muslim cause and to lend support (*wala’* or *muwalat*) to their enemies. (31)

The Qur’an³ establishes a special status for emigrants in 3:195:

So those who migrated and were expelled from their homes, and were tormented in My way, and those who fought and were killed—I will surely absolve them of their misdeeds and I will admit them into gardens with streams running in them, as a reward from Allah, and Allah—with Him is the best of rewards.

Daoud Casewit states, “As indicated by the foregoing verse, the *hijra*, in view of the courage and commitment involved in it’s undertaking, was regarded as the door to great spiritual merit” (118).

The Qur’an makes another reference to God’s encouragement for *hijra*:

4:100 Whoever migrates in the way of Allah will find many havens and plenitude in the earth. And whoever leaves his home migrating toward Allah and His Apostle, and is then overtaken by death, his reward shall certainly fall on Allah, and Allah is all-forgiving, all-merciful.

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Certainly, emigration is not only normalized, but it is rewarded and valorized within Islam. In fact, it was considered an obligation (Masud) and some still consider it to be. Exegetes agree that the migration to Medina is no longer obligatory. It would be impossible for Medina to accommodate the over two billion Muslims of the world. However, the discussion about the continuation of *hijras* mentioned in the above *hadith* tradition begs the question of obligatory migration.

In the most literal sense, scholars and believers note the merits of migrating away from territories that fall under the rule of unbelievers. This is the case in which Dagestanis and other Caucasian groups found themselves during the 19th century. As the Russian army of Orthodox Christians took possession of the territory once ruled by Muslims, the impetus for leaving was manifest and *hijra* can be seen as an obligatory undertaking. To willingly stay under the authority of infidels is to strengthen their cause (Masud 34). The state of affairs in Dagestan under Russia would continue to become untenable under what was considered at first Christian and then atheistic rule. Readings of *hijra* within the Qur'an do indicate that such a migration is a self-sustaining/preserving mission. Grandfather and his progeny are more likely to maintain their traditions outside of their homeland than in a conquered one. Once Salih returns, we see the impact the Russian invasion has had on traditional life, "The Russians have taken over houses abandoned by their owners. They either copy them or destroy them and build in their place quarters for their soldiers . . . As for Khadija, your sister, her husband was killed in the revolt when he was yet a bridegroom, just one month after marriage. That was three years ago. She has refused to marry again in spite of many offers" (192).

Others take a metaphorical approach and see *hijra* as the movement away from sin and towards God. Both work for our understanding of Idilbī's *Grandfather's Tale*. Grandfather's *hijra* is definitely in line with a movement away from "sin" and towards "God." In Syria, Grandfather and his descendants are allowed to freely practice their religion and, by extension, to continue to practice being cultural Dagestanis/Caucasians. The lingering question will always be how close is the newly formed diasporic identity to that of the homeland?

To reiterate, Idilbī's use of *hijra* ameliorates and validates Grandfather's movement away from Dagestan as would also be sanctioned and even considered obligatory by Muslim scholars. It is a flight that is meant to preserve a religious and cultural identity that would be under threat if he remained.

The *Hajj*

While in diaspora, Grandfather seeks refuge with other Muslims while asserting his unique ethnic identity. Just as a new “Muslim” identity emerges in Medina, an adaptive, diasporic identity is established in Syria in relationship to the host community that allows integration while eschewing assimilation. *Hijra*/emigration narratives demonstrate that the amalgamation of once disparate identities is to be expected, just as happened in Medina. The Muslim emigrants to Medina came from different tribal groups, but through the common faith they formed a new community/*ummah*. This larger affiliated identity of “Muslim” was reified initially through the prophet and later in their entrance into Mecca for the *hajj*. The *hajj* allows the homeland to validate diasporic identity as authentic and real. Salih’s journey to his mother parallels this in a unique and amazing way.

In a sense, the *hajj* or return home is predicated on the prior movement away from home; that is, the concept and tradition of *hijra* not only invoke ideas of *hajj*, they provide a dimension of meaning and a psychological orientation to migration and the journey home that are unavailable to non-Muslims. Muslims, therefore, have at their disposal a wide symbolic framework within which their own migration may be modeled, justified, and interpreted. If the ‘going forth’ is imagined as *hijra*, then by implication the journey home, like its historical precedent, is a pilgrimage, *hajj*—one evokes the other. (Delaney 523)

As such, Idilbī evokes the *hijra* in the frame story, thus conjuring a story of *hajj*. Salih’s life in diaspora requires many modifications to his identity as a Dagestani male. He must learn to speak Arabic, which he does in a non-inflected way. His work falls outside of the traditional ways of life for a Dagestani male. He marries a Georgian woman who does not speak a Dagestani language. His children are raised speaking a different tongue. All of this speaks to a radical break from what is considered an “authentic” Dagestani identity. Idilbī addresses the formation of diasporic identity via the words of Salih’s father who tells him how different his childhood would have been in Dagestan:

Do you realize, Salih, that it is great shame for a Daghestani youth to cry like a woman? If you were now in Daghestan you would have a shining dagger hanging at your belt. You would be astride a fine colt. Together you would be cantering along

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rocky roads among our lofty mountains . . . Their proficiency [in horsemanship] is celebrated throughout the whole wide world. They are courageous, venturesome and capable of restraining their feelings whatever ills the days may bring. (27-28)

One of the anxieties of diasporic life is a loss of a “true” and “pure” identity. The pressure to survive requires that compromises be made. Salih’s marriage to a Georgian woman who is at least from the Caucasus is better than a marriage to an Arab or a Turk. This is the coalescing of similar regional identities under one more inclusive identity. In this case, Dagestanis do assimilate to the larger category of Circassian (Caucasian). There is evidence for this in the burial of Salih’s father: “If I die here, dear friends, bury me in that land belonging to the Circassians that we have visited together. There I can at least be among some of the sons of my land and people” (115). Salih always feels himself to be Dagestani and strongly identifies with his Dagestani roots. For as his father warned him:

My son, a man without identity has no value. He will continue to be a nobody whatever material success attaches to him. The man to be despised is the man who assumes an identity not his own. He becomes a parasite on the community to which he belongs. Rarely does the community accept him, except when he is so outstanding that the community can take pride in him. But seldom do we find people so outstanding. (29)

As readers, we are led to wonder how Dagestani his children are when they marry Arabs and speak Arabic. History shows us that Circassians who do marry locals still transmit their cultural identities to their children. Even Prince Ali of Jordan is aware of his Circassian identity (both his mother and paternal grandmother were Circassians) and made a pilgrimage back to his tribal village (Natho 496, 505).

Delaney notes that autochthony, “identity with place of birth[.]. . . is not something that can be discarded as one moves but is an indelible part of who one is” (522). She is referring to Turks and their villages, but this applies to a vast swath of Middle Eastern cultures. Armenians also identify strongly with regional and even village affiliations. Idilbi’s characters’ attachment to Dagestan falls within this frame of mind.

Given this strong affiliation and attachment, acceptance by the homeland is a crucial marker of authenticity. The only way to achieve this acceptance is by returning home. In the same way that Idilbi

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mapped the Dagestani *hijra* to *hijra* within Islam, so does she map Salih's pilgrimage home onto the Islamic *hajj*.

The *hajj* is the annual event that connects all of Muslim diasporas together across time and space. Cooke and Lawrence's *Muslim Networks from Hajj to Hip Hop* gives a good synopsis of the centrality of Mecca within Muslim cosmology and daily life:

Each year, Mecca attracts millions of Muslims from all over the world who perform the great pilgrimage, or Hajj, one of the basic requirements of Islam. Daily and annually across time and space, the history of Islam flows from Mecca and back to Mecca. It flows through myriad networks. They connect individuals and institutions, at once affirming and transforming them." (1)

Within the text, Idilbī demonstrates that the *hajj* is a communication network between the homeland of Dagestan and the various Dagestani/Circassian diasporas:

When I was on the Pilgrimage I looked out in my spare time for pilgrims from the Caucasus in order to learn about the revolt in Daghestan. I was especially alert for news about Shaikh Shamil. (173)

The *hajj* is a fully functional means of transmitting information and establishing contacts globally. As such, it becomes a powerful symbol which should easily be transported to other domains. Referring, again, to Delaney's work on Turkish immigrants and their pilgrimages back to their native villages we see a similar methodological framework to my own:

The *hajj*, I claim, is a particularly vivid symbol, capturing the imagination of millions of Muslims regardless of whether they have had firsthand experience of it . . . or even of whether they are devout Muslims. In the Turkish village life it looms large—as the quintessential journey and one that is recognized and legitimate . . . It would be naïve to think that a powerful symbol like the *hajj* is contained within the limits defined by religion (or by scholars of religion); such symbols overflow their boundaries and enter into the cultural mainstream. (514)

Likewise, Idilbī shows us transference of religious longings for pilgrimage to a more mundane and secular pilgrimage "home" . . . to Dagestan.

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It is surprising at first to read *Grandfather's Tale* and to feel the superiority with which Dagestan is depicted in relationship to the Holy Land. In fact, at times, it can feel almost uncomfortable to read Salih's protracted longings for Dagestan while he toils in the Holy Land that no longer holds mystic qualities for him. But this is by design. As readers, we are carefully manipulated by Idilbī in what amounts to a subliminal psychological twist. Within Islamic tradition, spiritual desire during this lifetime culminates in the pilgrimage to Mecca. In a sense, it authenticates one's identity as Muslim as it is the most rigorous of the obligatory tasks. To die without having completed the *hajj* is to not gain a complete Muslim identity as stated in the following hadith from At-Tirmidhī:

God's messenger (p.b.u.h.) said, "He who has the means and the ability to journey to God's house (the Ka'aba) and who does not perform the hajj, it matters not if he dies a Jew or a Christian. That is because God said in His book: God said to His People, perform the hajj those who can bear the journey." (2535, 9:817)⁴

The *hajj* is seen as an ingathering of the Muslim community that remembers the sacred history of Islam and that first Muslim community, the original *ummah*. In a sense, the *hajj* collapses space and time and allows for the reunification of the *ummah* and the faithful.

Similarly, diasporic people maintain a dream of return, a national pilgrimage to their origins, a physical ingathering of their displaced selves. It is through this pilgrimage to the homeland that they will be granted what amounts to cultural authentication. By being accepted within the territorial body of the homeland, they have proven themselves pure, uncorrupted members of the group, untainted by their diasporic status. It is, therefore, easy to see the parallel structure of *hajj* to return to homeland in terms of identity construction. Both validate the members as part of the group.

Idilbī's novel *Grandfather's Tale* can be read as the preparation for and completion of a pilgrimage to the homeland. Just as the substitution of the recitation of the Qur'an during Ramadan was replaced with the profane history of the Dagestani displacement and establishment of the Dagestani *ummah*, Idilbī exchanges the pilgrimage to Mecca with the secular pilgrimage to the homeland/Dagestan.

In other words, the *hajj*/pilgrimage of import for the Dagestani becomes the *hajj* to the homeland. The need for the particularized Dagestani or Caucasian identity, the authentication of the diasporic individual as part of the collective accepted and not rejected by the

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land or the people, is essential to continuity of the new diasporic identity. The need to create the desire for this larger identity and the preservation of the particular *ummah* is necessary for the survival of a group whose minority identity is challenged by the political acceptance or tolerance of ethnic difference in the face of religious similarity. The means of creating this desire is the seemingly insurmountable distance of that space (just like Mecca and Medina are remote spots for the majority of the Muslim populations) and the elusive and occluded nature of it. The fact that Dagestan and much of the Caucasus remained isolated behind the Iron Curtain instilled a desire among the diasporic populations that smoldered instead of extinguishing. In Idilbi's text the fragments of news and information that made their way along the information circuits of the *hajj* line kindled the spirits of the Dagestanis to remain informed about the resistance and the hope of a future unification and autonomy within the beloved homeland. The legendary struggles and the exacerbation at the lack of resolution sustained an interest in the/a return.

For the inversion of the sacred and profane *hajjis* (one to Mecca, one to Dagestan), Idilbi strategically empties the obligatory, religious *hajj* of its sacredness in order to sanctify the homeland *hajj*. First, she enables Salih to perform the *hajj* at an early age, thus absolving him from any future obligation. Second, her positioning of Salih in the role of treasurer on the *hajj* profanes his continued journeys to Mecca. Moving Salih "behind the scenes" to a post that does not fulfill the requirements of the *hajj* but becomes a means of employment and subsistence for the family demystifies the ritual. Idilbi's act of profanation does not defile the pillar of faith as Grandfather strongly advises his son to accompany his mother on the *hajj*: "I also advise you to do all in your power to bring her here to this Holy Land so she can perform the obligation of the Pilgrimage" (57). However, the early fulfillment of the obligation by Salih and his continued presence in this ritual nullifies the awe and reverence that is felt by the average Muslim who will only perform the obligation once in his or her life and under great cost and burden. The profanation or banality of Salih's *hajj* experiences allows an inversion to be created between the sacred space of the Meccan *hajj* with all its Islamic historical landmarks and that of Dagestan and its historical space. Salih's journey to Dagestan will recall the performance of the sacred *hajj* in that he will be returning to the sacred land where "history began" and the only place where an *ummah* may be reestablished. Indeed, Salih must plan for the pilgrimage to Dagestan for what seems the duration of his adult life; he is derailed and must persevere in his efforts, analogous to the difficulties most experience preparing for the journey to Mecca. In such a way, Idilbi continues to stress the

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similarities between the two journeys and their larger repercussions for identity and specifically collective identity.

During the *hajj*, the past and future *ummahs* are glimpsed through the presence of a collective that represents Muslims from around the globe. It is an ingathering of the global Muslim diasporas, in a sense. This one location, Mecca, attracts such a body/collective and is thus sacred ground. Likewise, the only place where a true Dagestani collective can be realized and established in its totality, that place where the *ummah* can be whole again and can be formed, is within the homeland/mother, within the procreative body of faith and hope. Mecca/Dagestan is sacred in that it contains the sacred and religious histories of the community. For a pilgrim/diasporan the soil is the very soil where the prophet/ancestor walked and where future generations will walk thinking these same thoughts, resulting in a temporal collapse; past, present, and future coming together.

For that *ummah* to be reestablished requires the diaspora to return and, conversely, an acceptance of the repatriates by the homeland/Mother. Just as the pilgrims in Mecca don the *ihram*, a metaphorical, cultural *ihram* must be established between the diaspora and the homeland. In Victor Turner's *The Ritual Process*, the liminal phase of rites of passage is shown to be essential for bonding between individuals to create what he calls *communitas*, a type of collective bonding that is necessary for a solid group identity to be formed. Removing physical signs of difference is a primary goal during liminal phases of rites. In the *hajj*, wearing the *ihram*, the white, nondescript, and modest piece of clothing along with the shaving of head, results in a collective body removed of status and distinctions. A head of state can stand with the shop-clerk, both equal before God. Indeed, the aerial images from the *hajj* of all the pilgrims gathered in their white *ihram* confuse the eye in seeing white lines instead of individuals.

Still ingathering is fraught with anxiety because the potential for rejection and repudiation exists due to protracted separation. Idilbi draws attention to the diasporan anxiety about acceptance and authenticity in the following passage:

Even though we have migrated from our homeland it does not at all mean that we have forsaken our language, our customs or those traditions that we have inherited from our fathers and grandfathers. Far from it. It is our duty to cherish them with the greatest care and to pass them on to our sons and grandsons, until we are able one day to return to our homeland—and there is no doubt that, if Allah wills, we shall

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return. On our return we will not be strangers to our land or to our people. (28)

Peter Clark's translation slightly distorts the original Arabic that I render as follows: "And certainly if God wills that we return, our land will not reject us, and our people will not reject us as if strangers/foreigners from them." The active form of the verb is used with the land and people *not* rejecting instead of the passive construction that Clark gives. Thus, an active authentication by both the land and people is sought by the diaspora. Part of that acceptance should be predicated on cultural knowledge. Therefore, upon Salih's arrival there is considerable tension as he is treated in a manner that is different from his fellow Dagestanis. Under Dagestani traditions a guest should be treated with extreme hospitality. Salih is both a guest and at the same time family. There is a question of whether the diaspora is *known* or if they are *foreign* in terms of the hospitality that is provided for him on his return to the homeland. This makes Salih feel strange, a literal stranger/guest in his familial house, "Was I being treated as a guest, a stranger, and were they preparing a feast in my honour" (193-194). Given the best food, he feels guilty and desires the base and simple foods he knows his family consumes. Salih desires to be in a state of *communitas* with his family, to be in a ritual state of *ihram* where difference has been removed.

Salih gains acceptance through his participation in the daily life of his family, not through gifts or changes in their routines. However, like Lacanian theory suggests, this is not the homeland he desires and it never can be. It has changed, the mother of his desires has changed, and he has gained only approximations of those remembrances by way of his marriage to a woman who resembles his mother in her youth. It is his wife's physicality that Salih covets corresponding to his desire to physically be back in Dagestan. Salih and the diaspora, even if repatriated, will never regain what was lost because of the gap between the memory and the contemporary reality. The ideal of reaching a state of *communitas* is beset with difficulties. Though Salih is truly native, his time in the Holy Land has made him Other. He cannot erase a lifetime of experiences that have not been shared by those in the homeland. Even if he speaks his mother tongue, dresses in traditional garb, and marries a local woman, the people will remember that he is different even if he is accepted. Of course he will always be Dagestani, and in *Grandfather's Tale* he is eventually accepted, but not before the homeland gains more knowledge.

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Mother/Son; Homeland/Diaspora

The central drive of the novel, Salih's desire to reunite with his mother, becomes an allegory for Dagestan's desire to unify with the homeland. For some, this interpretation/reading might tend too closely to Freudian analysis, but Idilbī, herself, sets up this analogy in the Prologue:

In his [Salih's] mind any reference to Daghestan called up an image of his mother. And any reference to his mother brought to mind his homeland of Daghestan. The two images merged and became one.

Is not the homeland the same as the mother and vice versa? (7)

Salih's mother *is* the homeland. She remains in the homeland when the Ottoman government exiles her husband to Damascus. He divorces her, symbolizing the severed ties between the diaspora and the homeland. Through the father's explanation of his divorce to his son Salih, the reader learns that the father never stopped loving his wife/homeland. However, in order for her to continue her life and her resistance, he must withdraw from her; he must allow her to draw on her own resources to continue the struggle. The mother is the procreative force that continues to produce the progeny of the nation, both abroad and in her own womb. She provides them with identity and validates and authenticates the differences between them. But she can lose her sight or vision, as Salih's mother literally does in this novel. Mother becomes blind in the absence of her son. When she does, she must learn to see her children in the proper light, see them for what they are and what they can become. Plainly, this is a metaphor for the way that the homeland views and validates the diasporas that emerge outside of itself. Idilbī uses Mother's blindness to construct a new understanding of diasporic/homeland identities. Upon arriving home, Salih is shocked to see that his mother is blind and cannot see him at all. This indicates a unidirectional flow of "seeing" with the diaspora retaining the memories of a homeland while the homeland loses its understanding of the evolving diasporas. Historically, this mirrors the situation of Dagestan under the Soviets. Little information flowed in and out of Dagestan. As Salih (or the diaspora) developed, he became unrecognizable to his mother or the homeland. However, Idilbī's writing conveys the sense of desire of the mother to see her returning child and illustrates that there is no love lost between the two.

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After the child has completed his development, has established himself, he cannot return to the womb; he is formed and complete, a separate entity from the Mother/womb. Thus, when Salih/diaspora returns to Mother/homeland he cannot remain but must exist outside of the Mother/homeland. The Mother may only provide her acceptance of the identity, here diasporan, and see the son with new eyes. Salih gives his mother new eyes to see himself/diaspora in addition to new eyes with which to view the homeland and its position in the world. As Mother prepares to return home after visiting her son in diaspora, she states, "These six months that I've spent with you have been the happiest in all my life. For the rest of my life I will call on you every night and pray that Allah look after your needs and bestow upon you and upon your family health and happiness. Is it not enough that, thanks to you, I am cured of blindness" (224)? It is up to the diaspora to supply this new vision to the homeland, to give it the eyes it needs to see the new reality.

Lastly, the Mother/Child relationship for the homeland/diaspora takes on a special significance within the context of the *hajj*. The *hajj* is a place where the *ummah* unites outside of their territorial homeland to form a (re)union. Thus, when Salih's father takes him on the *hajj* to tell him the devastating news about the permanent separation from his mother/homeland, it is in Mecca that he can experience her and, interestingly enough, at night while he sits alone:

I carried on whispering to Mother, as if she was there before me in the light cast by the moon. I could see her in her blue dress which I liked so much, her long dark plaits hanging over her breasts as she glided up and down, flying, as it were, between heaven and earth. She came near me and then withdrew. She came near again, so close that I felt I could touch her. I stretched out my hand to do so but gradually withdrew until she disappeared altogether in the clouds. (70)

First, a reader can draw parallels between Salih's vision of his mother and Muhammad's Night Journey (*Isra'* and *Mi'raj*) to The Farthest Mosque, often interpreted as Jerusalem. Whether one believes that the Farthest Mosque is metaphysical and in the heavens or in Jerusalem, both represent a return to origins. In much the same way that Jerusalem is the seat of the three major religions and the Night's Journey is a process of returning to this "homeland" of the faiths to rearticulate its dimensions, so too is this a return to the homeland for Salih and a way of re-envisioning himself in terms of "starting a new" in a new land. The passage continues:

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I then ceased my whispering. I was confused. I was looking up to the heavens, my eyes wide open, gazing at the never-ending emptiness. I felt glued to the ground, motionless. Suddenly I woke up from my confusion, glorified Allah and recited the verse, 'Say then, take refuge in the Lord of all people and chase Satan away from your mind.' I was afraid that Satan had appeared to me in my mother's form and that I had been afflicted by a touch of madness. (70)

Notice that he is "glued," which is an English idiomatic rendering of the phrase "I remained in my place with no movement." The diasporan individual remains in this new space, confined, and does not move. There is no return and no escaping the exile, whereas in the previous quote, the mother/homeland moves between the planes of existence, the sacred and the profane, in between the heavens and the earth. The mother as homeland, and a metaphorical one at that, transcends the dimensions of space. Salih's position in Mecca near the Ka'aba where the past and future *ummah* is experienced by the pilgrims is analogous to the experience of the diasporan individual who seeks reunification with the homeland, with the collective. Salih sees a small formation of Dagestan/the Caucasus through the other Dagestani pilgrims and realizes the potential for a future reunification through this vision of his Mother, the symbol for territorial unification. As a child/diaspora has no or limited memory of the homeland and thus cannot visualize its dimensions and shape, a vision of Mother, neatly packaged and understood by all, creates a desire for return. Returning to mother is a return to home/land.

In conclusion, Salih's *hajj* home to Dagestan recasts the relationship between diaspora to homeland and is essential for him to fully articulate his diasporic Dagestani identity. As mentioned above, this restoration of eyesight, the new eyes Mother is given by the diaspora, allow her to see the situation with Russia in more pragmatic terms. The resistance that has been sustained in Dagestan is waning and political adjustments must be made. Secondly, the new eyes allow her to see her son/diaspora in his new form, mature but different/hybrid/diasporic. Only with these new eyes can full acceptance of the diaspora be granted. It is one thing for the Mother to receive reports about this other collective body from a distance and quite another for her to see it with her "own eyes." Thus, at the end of the novel, the reader is assured that "My only consolation was that she had departed from this world approving of me in every way" (225). Salih, just like Muhammad, elects to remain outside of Dagestan/Mecca. Just like emigrants are part of

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the ummah, validated by Muhammad's own separation from Mecca, so too is Salih/diaspora's cultural identity authenticated by this *hijra/hajj* text. Continuity is provided by the frame story that gives the reader a new Mother. The continuation of the diasporic line allows for new mothers to be born and to take up the process of constructing new, or at least modified identities even if these identities are detached from the homeland. The realization of a permanent ingathering is forever frustrated in both the religious and secular domains in this novel. It is not solely the fault of the diaspora. The novel illustrates that reconciliation between diaspora and homeland is attainable and desirable. While there is a reconciliation between the mother and the diasporan, the text ends with the mother, symbolizing the homeland and the collective, dying within that territory frustrated with the lack of resistance, frustrated by the lack of leadership, frustrated by the lack of a future; but completely at peace with the hybridized diaspora formed away from her body, out of territory and in a holy space.

Notes

1. Idilbī uses Circassian or Al-Sherkess throughout her text. However, the inclusion of a Georgian wife leads me to use the more inclusive category Caucasian.
2. Translation from the Arabic is my own: <http://sunnah.com/abudawud/15>.
3. Translations of the Qur'an by Ali Quli Qara'i via Islam Awakened website: <http://www.islamawakened.com>.
4. The translation is my modification of the translation provided by the website <<http://sunnah.com/tirmidhi/9>>.

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About the Author

Kari Neely is an associate professor of Arabic and Middle East Studies at Middle Tennessee State University. She received her PhD from the University of Michigan in Near Eastern Studies. She has published works on Kurdish ethnic identity in Turkey, Armenian repatriation, and the graphic novel *Palestine* by Joe Sacco. Currently she is writing about Armenian operatic productions and female Muslim representations in graphic novels and comic books. Though the scope of her research is broad, minority identity connected to the Middle East region underpins all of her work.

Exhausting Documentary: The Affects of Adapting Histories within and between Three Holocaust Documentaries¹

Daniel Singleton

The production of each of the three documentaries examined within this essay—Laurence Rees’ *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State* (2005), Claude Lanzmann’s *Shoah* (1985), and Alain Resnais’ *Night and Fog* (1955)—confronted filmmakers with troublesome historical quagmires, such as traumatized or senile survivors, on the one hand, and the near-total absence of archival materials depicting the Nazis’ crimes, on the other: aside from four blurry photos and two minutes of film depicting, respectively, naked women walking toward the gas chambers at Auschwitz and a mass execution by firing squad in Latvia, the only surviving archival materials were recorded by Nazi propagandists to justify their genocide, or by Allied filmmakers to expose battle-weary soldiers and war crimes tribunals to the Nazis’ inhumanity. Consequently, several scholars have worried that this footage glamorizes the Holocaust (Denby 109, Camper 144, Kerner 139), whereas others have noted that the ubiquity of archival images has weakened their impact (Hirsch 72). Taken together, then, these obstacles have provoked difficult questions about documentary historiography. For instance, how should documentarians adapt incomplete archives of photographs, films, and documents which clarify little about the Holocaust, and traumatized survivors who cannot discuss their experiences? Should they disavow these archival gaps to accommodate authoritative and self-sufficient histories, or should they expose them to problematize the commonsensical assumption that documentaries can and should provide unmediated historical truth?

Needless to say, some of the possibilities available to filmmakers are more ethical than others. Following prevailing trends in documentary studies, I believe that experimental, modernist, poetic, posttraumatic or self-reflexive modes of documentary historiography encourage viewers to interrogate archival gaps, whereas mainstream, didactic, or expository modes conceal them (and the possibility of debate) behind the façade of *historical continuity*. A derivation of Bill Nichols’ term *rhetorical continuity*, historical continuity describes how the expository mode of documentary narration, which was first popularized by a British filmmaker, John Grierson, during the 1930s and which is pro-

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mulgated today by conservative television networks like the History Channel, PBS, and the BBC, uses authoritative voiceovers, chronological timelines, realist styles, positivist historiographies, and the problem/solution structure of classical Hollywood cinema to disguise the production, organization, and regulation of historical knowledge (35); it thus attempts to secure viewers' uncritical acceptance with the rhetorical questions: "This was so, wasn't it?" or "This is how things were, right?"²

The charge levied by many scholars that historical documentaries sensationalize the past for viewers who, as one producer described them, "do not . . . read very much" only hints at what makes these movies problematic (Kuehl 449). By purporting to have found every last scrap of visible evidence, historical continuity can disguise interpretative *arguments* about history as "facts" that are coherent, complete, and closed to further inquiry. These films thus thus provoke a range of emotions, including curiosity, fascination, pity, poetic appreciation, scientific scrutiny, and inflamed hysteria, that are commensurate with Nichols' concept of *epistophilia*, "a pleasure of knowing" that orients viewers away from history, toward its cinematic representations:

[Documentaries] support the impression that we have achieved a direct form of engagement that has bypassed and even replaced the need for any other, more direct engagement with the world. . . . We come to value and look forward to the pleasure of engaging the world at a distance, looking out through the windows of our theaters and living rooms onto a world that truly remains "out there," with all the assurance this provides about the importance of our engagement with a historical world that we have simultaneously postponed in order to attend to a representation of it. (178–180)

To put it more bluntly, the incontestable "truths" peddled by historical continuity discourage viewers from interrogating the Holocaust for themselves and thus distance them from it emotionally and intellectually: without opportunities for independent thinking and feeling—without things to *do*—viewers can tune *out* of these documentaries just as quickly and willingly as they tune *into* them. If authoritative accounts of the Holocaust make it palatable and forgettable, then anxious and illegible adaptations, which exhaust not the past but cinema's own capacity to access and interpret it, tend to engage viewers more actively, evoking powerful bodily affects which persist long after the credits stop rolling.

In what follows, then, I explore and develop these principles through three documentaries haunted by the specter of Auschwitz. As a final

note, although I believe that *Shoah* and *Night and Fog* are more ethical than *Auschwitz*, I have attempted to avoid ironclad prescriptions about Holocaust documentaries on the grounds that all of these documentaries are participating in an ongoing conversation about adapting history.

Perilous Pedagogies within *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State*

Since starting his television career in the late 1980s, Laurence Rees has written, produced, and directed eight historical documentaries for the BBC, several of which premiered during his tenure as the Creative Director of BBC Television History; he has also written seven bestsellers about World War II. A paragon within the mainstream of World War II documentarians, Rees takes seriously his intertwined archival and pedagogical responsibilities to amass and synthesize material evidence of Nazi atrocities for students today and one hundred years hence. Such good intentions clearly informed his decision to turn his miniseries, *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State* (2005), into a “crime story” which would educate, as well as entertain, millions of high school students and BBC viewers about Nazi atrocities.³ Yet although *Auschwitz* reached four million viewers in the United Kingdom alone and won several awards (such as the prestigious John Grierson Award), the impression of scholarly exhaustiveness that it cultivates ultimately disengages viewers from the Holocaust.

Like other popular examples of “edutainment,” *Auschwitz* can only provide access to unmediated historical truth by concealing the dearth of atrocity photography and smoothing out problematic witness testimony. Although the voiceover narration sometimes acknowledges these historical gaps, the miniseries nonetheless substitutes Allied propaganda of the liberation, mostly shot at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, for the mostly nonexistent documentary footage of Auschwitz in operation, and it minimizes contradictions between and within interviews, endowing survivors and perpetrators with superhuman memories unencumbered by the ravages of time or trauma.⁴ The miniseries most forcefully and problematically appeals to the authority of an exhaustively researched historical archive when it dramatizes meetings between leading Nazis. The voiceovers’ disclaimers that these dramatizations merely approximate, instead of recreate, history belies the degree to which the desaturated, handheld cinematography (which recalls *Saving Private Ryan* [1998] and *Band of Brothers* [2001]) naturalizes these sequences, rendering them so much more authentic, immediate, and transparent than the archival footage that the mini-

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series' website actually warns teachers to make these distinctions for students. Their authenticity is further enhanced by statistics and quotations culled from such sources as Heinrich Himmler's desk diary and transcripts from the Nuremberg trials, all of which were verified by one of four famed Holocaust scholars:

Every scene that we dramatize, as far as is humanly possible, is based on minutes of particular meetings, trial testimony, or testimony of people who were in those meetings, and verified by one or another of these consultants.

Of course, you can't be one hundred percent sure that word-for-word what's being said in those meetings is exactly word-for-word what we're showing, but the viewer will be absolutely sure about the context and source material for a particular meeting. . . . Throughout every stage, you're made aware of the very firm historical basis for the drama that you're seeing.

Yet ironically, this mass of so-called "evidence" does not secure the documentary's authenticity or authority as much as it attests to Rees' *anxiety* about the *impossibility* of offering unmediated access to the past. By substituting dates for debates and burying historical quagmires behind the façade of historical continuity, *Auschwitz* constructs what Gilles Deleuze has called *virtual images*: officially sanctioned or even hegemonic visual archives that engender the muted emotions commensurate with epistophilia, so that history no longer hurts (to borrow Frederic Jameson's famous phrase) but merely stings a little (Marks 40-41). To bolster its pedagogical utility, *Auschwitz* aspires to be more objective than a secondary science textbook, impressing apathetic students with its authoritative weight. Yet this decision backfires: by depriving viewers of unanswered questions to ponder and unresolved debates to enter, it reduces the Holocaust to a vanquished threat that can be studied leisurely and effortlessly. Despite or maybe because of Rees' good intentions to teach millions of viewers, *Auschwitz* implies that Holocaust scholarship should revolve around the academic question of which death toll is more accurate: six million or nine million.

Empirical and Ethical Blindness within *Shoah*

Claude Lanzmann famously struggled to title the documentary to which he devoted eleven years of his life, including one which consisted solely of research. Rejecting the word "Holocaust" for its inap-

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propriate sacred and secular connotations of “burnt offerings,” on the one hand, and the frequently derided dramatic miniseries, *Holocaust* (1978), on the other, Lanzmann ultimately opted for a Hebrew word, “Shoah,” which doubly signifies “annihilation”: references to the word in the Hebrew Bible describe catastrophe and destruction, while many Western intellectuals regard it as a “signifier without a signified, . . . an impenetrable word” (Lanzmann qtd. in Liebman 7–8). Lanzmann’s decision to use this title signals his disdain for historical continuity and the expository documentaries which use it:

I began by reading, for a year, every book of history that I could find on the subject, everything to be found by going through the archives—the written archives, not the photo archives. And I assessed the state of my ignorance. . . . There is an absolute gap between the bookish knowledge I had acquired and what [Holocaust survivors] told me. I understood nothing. (38)

Concluding that historical continuity pretends to understand and explain what cannot be understood or explained, the filmmaker rejected such an approach for his documentary:

There is indeed an absolute obscenity in the project of understanding. Not to understand was my ironclad rule during all the years *Shoah* was in the making: I braced myself on this refusal as on the only possible attitude, at once ethical and operative. Keeping my guard high up, wearing these blinkers, and this blindness itself, were the vital condition of creation. (51)

To share this blindness with viewers, *Shoah* confronts them not with an *exhaustive* history but with one that has been *exhausted*: an often incomprehensible narrative whose inability to interpret the Holocaust confounds and frustrates viewers who are accustomed to the passive, superficial pleasures of epistophilia.

This demanding and downright exhausting historiography has led countless survivors, intellectuals, and artists (not to mention Lanzmann himself) to praise *Shoah* as an ethical monolith, the “greatest documentary about contemporary history ever made” (Ophuls 78).⁵ Yet unfortunately, this almost ritualistic habit of celebrating the documentary for rectifying the missteps of expository documentaries has isolated the film from its cinematic, ethical, and historical contexts. In addition to shielding problematic decisions, such as Lanzmann’s prohibition upon archival photography and his tendency to goad wit-

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nesses, from criticism,⁶ these panegyrics have downplayed the film's responsiveness to historical continuity and its concomitant power over viewers who have watched more than a few expository documentaries. To put it another way, if viewers expect documentaries to exhaust history for them, then *Shoah*, a film which spurs them to interrogate the Holocaust for themselves, will prove to be especially taxing. It is my hope that reinserting *Shoah* into conversation with these expository documentaries will reinvigorate its affective power.

One of the most effective devices by which *Shoah* rejects historical continuity is its nonlinear timeline. Rather than repress archival gaps behind chronological timelines, as *Auschwitz* does, *Shoah* upsets causal and temporal connections between several historical events, including the destruction of Auschwitz's crematoriums in early 1945, the induction of the Chelmno gas vans in early 1941, and the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in January 1943. Disengaged from a chronological timeline, these events do not seem to cause, build upon, or flow into each another but instead simply *follow* one another. Without an exhaustive macrohistory of the sort found in *Auschwitz*, viewers must actively construct their own interpretations about what happens, and why. If this structure raises more questions than answers, it also abolishes the affective distances from the past cultivated by historical continuity, making the Holocaust not simply another dead object for academic inquiry but a living presence with which viewers must struggle continuously and ultimately fail to understand.

The film's refusal to yoke everything to an exhaustive macrohistory also motivates its anti-authoritative approach to interviews. Unlike *Auschwitz*, *Shoah* does not splinter witness testimony into manageable sound-bites but instead preserves trauma within interviews and contradictions between them. Even the most eloquent and conversational witnesses cannot understand the historical events which their words vividly and palpably reincarnate. Six emotional interviews with the prominent historian Raul Hilberg, for instance, reveal so little about the Holocaust, and so much of his outrage about it, that he stops being an authoritative "expert" and becomes another traumatized witness who cannot explain history.⁷ *Shoah* compounds the incomprehension of many of its witnesses by incorporating Lanzmann's own bewilderment into the interviews, most directly when he converses with speakers of Hebrew, Polish, and Yiddish. Rejecting the common practice of dubbing or subtitling their comments into a language that the filmmaker's audience would understand (i.e. French, German, or English), Lanzmann instead shows himself speaking to his subjects through an intermediary who translates his questions into Hebrew, Polish, or Yiddish and their responses into French: a slow and cumbersome process which retards even the shortest

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and simplest exchanges. Although this warts-and-all approach to testimony initially seems to preserve the speakers' agency, the stress that Lanzmann places upon his decision to wring incommunicable emotions, instead of incontestable facts, from survivors who "were crazy and incapable of conveying anything" (Lanzmann 38) emphasizes the degree to which *Shoah*, no less than *Auschwitz*, has ventriloquized its witnesses to support an argument for an epistemological and ethical blindness before the Holocaust. By revealing mediation to be inseparable from historiography, the documentary imparts a heightened awareness that no single survivor or expert can encapsulate the enormity of the subject.

This incomplete, illegible historiography is further accentuated by the archival footage—or lack thereof. Recognizing the dearth of truly authentic footage of the *extermination* camps, and the plethora of propaganda about the *concentration* camps, Lanzmann worried that these "images without imagination" would desensitize viewers who had already seen them in countless other documentaries, thus misleading them about the (in)completeness of the historical archive and the (in)accessibility of history (40–41). Rather than construct *virtual images*, *Shoah* highlights historical discontinuities in lengthy shots of deserted barracks, empty fields, and derelict graveyards, not to mention the blank, unreadable faces of the survivors. These shots are profoundly affective, particularly one sequence that remains lodged in the memory of many viewers. After discovering that the Jewish prisoners who were trapped within the (now peaceful) church at Chelmno screamed for water, we try to reincarnate the wedding bells they hear in the background as a funeral march. Shortly thereafter, as the camera tracks down an empty road leading to the nearby (and now empty) killing fields, we hear about—and try to imagine—an accident in which a gas van tipped and spilled its dying victims onto the road.

To return to Deleuze, these moments are *optical images* which both *emphasize* and *eradicate* the passage of time, blurring "the real and the imaginary, the physical and the mental, the objective and the subjective, description and narration, *the actual and the virtual*" (45–46). Put more simply, these thin, enigmatic traces invite viewers to complete them by conjuring what Deleuze called *recollection-images*, or ghostly, dream-like impressions of the Holocaust, even as these traces register an irrecoverable absence that obviates these impressions, or renders them incomplete.⁸ Whereas the *virtual images* of *Auschwitz* bear the burden of reconstructing and interpreting the Holocaust, these *optical images* displace this responsibility onto viewers, annihilating the comfortable, reassuring pleasures of epistophilia which make it so easy to see genocide as a distant threat which has long since been suppressed. Because these images require more attentive watching and listening than the images in

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many expository documentaries, they leave behind what Laura U. Marks has called a “bodily repository [of] residual nonverbal knowledge” which resists containment and instrumentalization (71):

This appeal to olfactory, tactile, and other nonvisual bodily knowledges makes many participants uncomfortable, since these knowledges are little valued or cultivated in modern Western contexts. . . . Even if we respect them, we may not know how to make sense of them. In short, stirring up the hierarchy of the senses is not a chance to play dumb: in fact it’s quite exhausting (119).

These cinematic devices construct a non-archive characterized by absence, trauma, and uncertainty, and *Shoah* compounds these effects through its monumental nine-and-one-half hour runtime. By piling amnesias upon contradictions upon unanswered questions for such a long period of time—by thwarting all attempts to reconstruct a master history, the big picture that we glean from *Auschwitz*—*Shoah* complements the dawning realization that the Holocaust is incomprehensible with powerful bodily affects. Is it surprising, then, that *Shoah* exhausts viewers, both mentally and physically, so that many viewers cannot move, speak, think, or even feel for hours after the screening ends?⁹ As I have suggested, this exhaustion annihilates epistophilia: it overwhelms the documentary’s scant number of facts, ensuring that we learn next to nothing about the Holocaust. Far from stymieing conversations and contemplation about history, however, viewers recognize that the documentary’s capacity to mediate and explain the past has also been exhausted, a realization which then *encourages* frustrated viewers to look beyond visual and audio representation for new ways of seeing, thinking about, and feeling their way through the Holocaust, even as it underscores the impossibility of ever truly understanding it.

Though the documentary’s powers of exhaustion have appealed to viewers dissatisfied with the expository mode, historical continuity, and epistophilia—particularly to those scholars, survivors, and religious leaders who have collectively been responsible for the film’s enormous critical reputation in North American and Europe and its extraordinary influence upon Holocaust studies—they have all but guaranteed its commercial invisibility. *Shoah* only grossed \$729,000 in the United States—extraordinary for a nine-and-one-half hour documentary about a non-commercial subject but miniscule when compared to the \$96.1 million that *Schindler’s List* (1993) grossed eight years later (Talbot 57). In France, approximately 70,000 people watched *Shoah* during its theatrical release; by contrast, ten times as

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many people watched Marcel Ophuls' *The Sorrow and the Pity* (1974). In Italy, its television debut only attracted 640,000 viewers, or 2.74 percent of the market (Lichtner 177); similarly, very few German viewers watched the film in its entirety when it aired on national television (Knaap, "Germany" 77). As if its nine-and-one-half hour duration was not enough to discourage classroom and television screenings, its unorthodox historiography requires more contextualization than many instructors, theater programmers, and television producers can afford to provide. Thus, in addition to raising important questions about aesthetics, history, and narrative, *Shoah* raises yet another important question about audience—or rather, the absence of one. If the documentary remains unwatched, does it become a silent tree falling in the forest?

Lanzmann and his supporters have compensated for the film's commercial invisibility with overstated claims about the documentary's cinematic, ethical, and historical superiority and singularity. But downplaying *Shoah's* antithetical relationship to historical continuity risks monumentalizing the film as a modernist monolith that imposes iron-clad laws about what can and cannot be represented of the Holocaust. In this reading, *Shoah* stops disavowing the simplified historiography and deadened affects of historical continuity and starts being an officially sanctioned history that asserts as incontestable the idea that no incontestable "truth" about the Holocaust exists. By reassuring viewers that all they need to do is accept as a foregone conclusion the impossibility of a truly exhaustive historiography, these readings ironically promote the passive epistophilia that the documentary assaults. Thus, only by ignoring Lanzmann's pronouncements to the contrary and considering *Shoah* in conversation with the expository documentaries to which it responds can viewers feel the weight of history exhausting their capacity to bear it. Only then will they finally understand the full meaning—and feel the full impact—of the blindness which informed the film's creation.

Night and Fog, the Dialectical Documentary

These concerns about whether modernist documentaries can appeal to wide audiences bring us to Alain Resnais' classic half-hour documentary, *Night and Fog* (1955), which remains one of the most widely watched—and widely criticized—Holocaust films even sixty years after its release. As one of the first nonfiction films to be produced about the genocide, *Night and Fog* impressed many survivors, artists, intellectuals, and religious leaders (if not government officials) upon its release,

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many of whom later sponsored classroom, liturgical, theatrical, and television screenings in Europe and North America. However, starting in the early 1990s,¹⁰ the film's reputation suffered as objections mounted that the filmmakers' decisions to use archival footage and to equate the Holocaust with contemporary injustices, such as the Algerian War (1954–1962), had duped unsuspecting viewers into accepting a white-washed history absolving France of complicity with the Nazis: a rhetorical gesture which many believed to disrespect and marginalize the Holocaust's Jewish victims (Kerner 236–237). Claude Lanzmann, who cancelled at least one screening of *Shoah* after learning that it would share the bill with Resnais' documentary, helped to set the tenor of these critiques when he proclaimed: "There is and will be nothing with which Auschwitz and Treblinka can be compared. No one can mistake it, no one is so obscenely impudent as to deny the Holocaust its specific character . . . by burying it in a thesis of universal evil, by subsuming it under generalities such as 'the horrors of war' or 'the victims of fascism'" (28). Building upon recent reappraisals of *Night and Fog*, many of which have stressed the filmmakers' ambivalence about authenticating official history with supposedly "exhaustive" archival research,¹¹ this section of my paper shows how *Night and Fog* deconstructs the historical continuity that it tentatively embraces by juxtaposing past and present, presence and absence, certainty and doubt. This dialectical structure undermines the film's implicit promise to provide an authoritative and unmediated history, challenging epistophilia with more active, exhausting modes of spectatorship that invite viewers to reconsider their own desire to engage history at a distance, through the windows of their theaters and living rooms.

The documentary's dialectical historiography reflects the political climate in France during the early 1950s, at which time the Holocaust was little more than a footnote in the national narrative about World War II. In May 1955, the Comité d'histoire de la Seconde Guerre (World War II Historical Committee), a government organization, and the Réseau du Souvenir (Memorial Network), an organization founded by former political prisoners, commissioned Alain Resnais to direct a short documentary to commemorate the French "martyrs" who were imprisoned within concentration camps during the Nazi occupation (qtd. in Delage 131). This word, "martyr," locates these organizations' sympathies with politically-motivated *deportations* instead of the ethnically- and racially-motivated Holocaust: significantly, neither the proposed title, *Resistance and Deportation*, nor the final title, *Night and Fog*, reference the Final Solution. (Instead, the final title references the "Nacht und Nebel" decree of December 7, 1941, which deported suspected saboteurs and other agitators to concentration camps with-

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out informing friends or relatives of their whereabouts.) These organizations then asked Resnais to authenticate this history with an

iconographic part based on documents, supported with animated graphs or objects that form authentic reminders of the Deportation . . . a ‘montage’ part composed of footage culled from French and foreign film archives whose historical importance is beyond question . . . [and] a part with material newly recorded at key locations of the Deportation. (qtd. in Lindeperg, “Inventing” 77)

Yet Resnais was wary about using historical continuity to uncritically celebrate French “martyrs.” For one thing, this mandate conflicted with the leftwing commitments which had informed his previous short documentaries, *Guernica* (1950) and *Statues Also Die!* (1953), and would lead him to condemn the Algerian War later in 1955: this fear that French military governors were oppressing Algerians as much as the Nazis had oppressed their victims would eventually lead him to declare that the “whole point [of *Night and Fog*] was Algeria” (qtd. in Sanyal 165).¹² His skepticism about the French government aside, Resnais also worried that his lack of firsthand experience of concentration camps (he served out the war stationed in a military outpost in Northern Algeria) would compromise the documentary, and he only accepted the commission after Cayrol, a former internee in a satellite concentration camp near Mauthausen, agreed to write the voiceovers (Kerner 236).

In addition to ideological disagreements, several practical obstacles frustrated Resnais, the least of which was a strict deadline that afforded him fewer than seven months to research, write, film, edit, and score the documentary (Knaap, “Construction” 8). To save time, Resnais cribbed most of his historical research from the book, *Tragedy of the 1940-1945 Deportations: Testimonies of the Survivors of the German Concentration Camps*, which was written by his producers, Henri Michel and Olga Wormser. A product of the commemorative postwar climate, this book rarely distinguished Jews from political martyrs or concentration camps from extermination camps (16-22).¹³ Archival material posed additional problems. Although Resnais obtained some material from French, Belgian, Dutch, and Polish sources, his constrictive budget and production schedule, coupled with uncooperative bureaucrats, prevented him from visiting any American or British archives (Lindeperg, “History” 62-63). The paucity of material forced Resnais to juxtapose footage shot by perpetrators, victims, liberators, journalists, artists, and propagandists; however, this footage sickened Cayrol so much that he ultimately wrote

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most of the voiceover narration *outside* the editing room, in collaboration with Chris Marker, another civilian without any firsthand experience of concentration camps (Saxton 144–147). All told, these difficulties exacerbated Resnais' anxiety about the possibility of "exhausting" the archives: "I had the terrible feeling that we needed another year of research. . . . But we were up against a deadline, so we had to stop" (qtd. in Lindeperg, "Inventing" 76).

Nonetheless, Resnais appeared to carry out his contract to its exact specifications, giving his sponsors precisely what they demanded in the form of archival sequences which used photographs, films, and other documents to authenticate a supposedly nonpartisan account of the Holocaust as an important episode in the war between democracy and fascism (instead of a racial genocide). To this end, one representative sequence in the middle of the film disguises propaganda of the concentration camps shot by Allied and Nazi cameramen and two shots from the fictional drama, *The Last Stage* (1947), which Resnais obtained from director Wanda Jakubowska (another former internee), as authentic footage of a transport train arriving at Auschwitz; the rapid-fire montage (few shots last longer than three or four seconds) and authoritative voiceovers bestow enough authority and authenticity upon these images to discourage scrutiny.¹⁴

Yet these impressions of authority, objectivity, and exhaustiveness are undercut moments later when the film cuts from the black-and-white shots from *The Last Stage* to color tracking shots through the ruins of Auschwitz (filmed by Resnais in October 1955), as the narration becomes self-conscious and anxious about its inability to recover and explain history:

Today, along the same tracks, the sun shines. Go slowly along it, looking for what? For a trace of the corpses that fell out of the cars when the doors were opened? Or the footsteps of those first arrivals, driven toward camp at gunpoint while dogs barked, searchlights wheeled, and the incinerators flamed in the distance?

These visual and aural contrasts unsettle the guarantee of the archival sequences to provide a coherent, self-sufficient historiography. To return to Deleuze's terms, the *optical images* in the contemporary sequences exhaust the authoritative, apparently unmediated *virtual images* in the archival sequences by marking them as anxious, and ultimately futile, attempts to recover a vanished past: correspondingly, the more that viewers struggle to make sense out of these ghostly traces, the more that their epistophilia dissipates. By suddenly and unexpectedly stressing

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nonvisual, nonauditory knowledges that evoke the sum of what *cannot* be known about the Holocaust, *Night and Fog* cultivates a disorienting doubled consciousness in which viewers see not only history as it has been preserved and memorialized but also become conscious of what has been ignored and erased by dominant narratives.

This effect does not stem solely from the montage; the historical sequences sometimes undermine their own authority. For example, when the French censors objected that one photograph of a Vichy policeman overlooking a concentration camp would offend veterans, the French Ministry of Industry and Commerce withdrew the documentary from the 1956 Cannes Film Festival at the eleventh-hour (Dreyfus 38-39). Although they cited complaints from West German diplomats, many commentators, including Resnais and Cayrol, believed that the political implications of this photograph troubled the French government, with Cayrol complaining that “France hurriedly sweeps under the carpet those pages of history which it does not like anymore . . . it does not accept the greatest murder of all time other than in the form of a clandestine mystery” (Cayrol qtd. in Lichtner 34-35). After a censorship battle, Resnais chose *not* to delete the shot, as the censors would have preferred, but instead partially obscured the policeman’s *kepi* hat with a crude and hastily inserted black bar; at this point the government reentered *Night and Fog* into Cannes, albeit out of competition (Lichtner 35).¹⁵ Although this censorship received little sustained press attention at the time, the persistent scholarly interest in this photograph (most articles about the film mention it at least once) confirms its lasting power to unsettle viewers: because the sloppy black bar only partially obscures the policeman’s hat, even viewers who are unfamiliar with the film’s production notice that *something* has been concealed. Thus, although this crude censorship does not challenge orthodox history as directly as *Shoah* would do thirty years hence, it *does* subtly unsettle the authority, objectivity, and exhaustiveness of the official narrative (Saxton, “Concentrationary” 143).

Anticipating *Auschwitz* and *Shoah*, then, *Night and Fog* both cultivates epistophilia and reveals its limitations, confusing and exhausting viewers as powerfully as Lanzmann’s film. Yet the documentary’s dialectical historiography has challenged the parameters established for the film by a wide variety of screening contexts and interpretative frameworks. If *Night and Fog* is an expository documentary like *Auschwitz*, then why does it unsettle historical continuity and epistophilia? If it is a modernist documentary like *Shoah*, then why does it risk endorsing what it purports to scorn? These difficulties have resulted in countless disagreements about how to categorize, interpret, and respond to the film.¹⁶ In France, for example, its strong initial association

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with commemorative organizations distracted many viewers from its subversive allusions to the Algerian crisis and France's complicity with the Nazis, so that the film was most commonly seen as a memorial to fallen comrades. More recently, however, as fears about anti-Semitism have grown, Jewish organizations and special interests have used the documentary to prevent the Holocaust's recurrence, with the French government screening the documentary on all five national TV channels after Jewish cemeteries were desecrated in the early 1990s (Dreyfus 35-42). Far from discrediting *Night and Fog*, this plethora of interpretations spawned by the film underscores its subversive adaptability, which precludes the passive epistephilic pleasures that expository documentaries like *Auschwitz* and canonical masterpieces like *Shoah* risk promoting. Indeed, as I hope to have demonstrated, it is precisely by promising these pleasures that the documentary can undermine them, exhausting viewers and breaking their dependence upon epistephilia.

Ethical Suggestions for Filmmakers and Viewers in the 21st century

I caution my readers against enshrining *Night and Fog* and *Shoah* as ethical monoliths. Although powerful historical works, critics cannot fetishize these documentaries (not to mention other films which draw upon the experimental, modernist, posttraumatic, and/or self-reflexive modes of documentary historiography) without transforming them into new master narratives that rigidly uphold the critical axiom that the Holocaust eludes understanding. Though it is tempting to see the disreputable authority and exhaustiveness of *Auschwitz* as a warning about how *not* to adapt or historicize the Holocaust, the scholarly tendency to mystify and sacralize the Holocaust is equally short-sighted: if history cannot be understood, then why bother thinking about it at all? If ethical prescriptions about adapting the Holocaust forestall debate and discussion, then considering how the decision to exhaust the historical archive and/or the documentary form itself (a choice that everybody who documents history must make) generates particular cognitive and bodily affects may discourage filmmakers from settling into staid and stultifying ways of adapting history and would instead encourage them to honor the spirit (but not the letter) of Lanzmann's and Resnais' films by continuing to develop new representational strategies. Such a gesture would not make the Holocaust history, an academic subject which is confined to the pages of dusty textbooks, but a living present that each viewer must encounter and engage anew.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Thomas Leitch, Jason Middleton, Nina Morgan, Ashley Sheldon, and Sara Spinella for providing suggestions about various versions of this essay.
2. Nichols suggests that rhetorical continuity secures consent by asking viewers “This is so, isn’t it” (140)? Since historical documentaries in the expository mode construct rhetorical continuity in relation to history, I have modified this question accordingly.
3. Rees elaborates upon this goal in an interview with PBS, who rebroadcast the miniseries for American audiences: “One of the big problems history producers face is, why haven’t more young people watched what we do? I think we’ve improved in many ways the kind of program techniques we have. But we still find that it’s very hard to interest people under the age of about 30 in history. . . . I think crime is a subject that younger people can get hold of. We know they like watching crime movies and crime stories. So this approach, by trying to look at the perpetrators, hopefully offers a way of making it more attractive to high school students.”
4. Discussing similar moments in other expository documentaries, Aaron Kerner suggests that these documentaries stage a “ventriloquist act” in which “expert advice is given on behalf of the film” (183).
5. An enormous literature exists in praise of *Shoah*, including contributions by Elie Wiesel, Simone de Beauvoir, Jacques Derrida, Marcel Ophuls, and countless academics. Although most criticism is overwhelmingly positive, a few dissenters have worried about the documentary’s status as an ethical monolith. For instance, Dominick LaCapra worries that many critics “regard its viewing as a ceremonial event with respect to which criticism pales or even seems irrelevant” (191).
6. For more information about the debate surrounding archival images, please consult Libby Saxton’s book, *Haunted Images: Film, Ethics, Testimony and the Holocaust*.
7. Disagreements exist about that Lanzmann’s treatment of the historian. For instance, Shosana Felman characterizes Hilberg as a traumatized witness who cannot testify to the Holocaust (97), whereas Leon Wieseltier and Dominick LaCapra have painted him as an all-knowing expert who contextualizes the survivors’ traumas: the latter even calls Hilberg a privileged witness whose uncontested words deeply inform Lanzmann’s own view of the Holocaust as a “machine made up entirely of cogs with no motor” (216–217).
8. Lanzmann has witnessed this phenomenon firsthand: “I have met people who are convinced they saw images in the film, ones they hallucinated. The film forces the imagination to work. Someone wrote to me and, did so magnificently: ‘It was the first time I heard the cry of an infant in a gas chamber.’ That is how powerfully the sensation was evoked by words” (41). David Denby (75), Leon Wieseltier (91–92), Georges Didi-Huberman (“Site” 115), and Simone de Beauvoir (63), among others, have elaborated upon the documentary’s evoca-

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tion of the past within the present; by contrast, Fred Camper suggests that these moments frustrate viewers' access to history (105).

9. For more information about the phenomenological impact of the duration, please consult Leon Wieseltier, Fred Camper, and Timothy Garton Ash's essays in Stuart Liebman's volume, *Claude Lanzmann's Shoah*.

10. My comments here must generalize to some degree, as space considerations prevent me from detailing the film's complex international reception in popular and pedagogical contexts. In general, *Night and Fog* remains popular in European classrooms; however, English and American educators are more predisposed toward fictional dramas. For more information on that subject, please consult Ewout van der Knaap's collection, *Uncovering the Holocaust: The International Reception of Night and Fog*.

11. For praise of *Night and Fog*, please consult Joshua Hirsch's *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust*, Aaron Kerner's *Film and the Holocaust: New Perspectives on Dramas, Documentaries, and Experimental Films*, and the essays collected in Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman's volume, *Concentrationary Cinema: Aesthetics as Political Resistance in Alain Resnais' Night and Fog*.

12. Cayrol shared Resnais' conviction that the Algerian conflict recalled the Holocaust: "[*Night and Fog*] told a story that didn't only engage the Nazis, sweet Germany, but also our country, for we had no right to modestly avert our gaze before a drama that had contaminated us all" (qtd. in Sanyal 165).

13. Ewout van der Knaap notes that *Night and Fog* echoes the interpretations found within these historians' books, and that there are several structural similarities between text and documentary (16–22). Sylvie Lindeperg explains some of these structural similarities through the simple fact that Wormser and Michel wrote an earlier draft of the screenplay ("History" 58–59). See also Pollock and Silverman (35–36).

14. For more information about these shots, please consult Giacomo Lichtner (21), Sylvie Lindeperg ("History" 60), Aaron Kerner (237), and Libby Saxton ("Concentrationary" 145–147).

15. For more information about the complex history behind this shot, please consult Jean-Marc Dreyfus's "Censorship and Approval: The Reception of *Nuit et Brouillard* in France," and Giacomo Lichtner's *Film and the Shoah in France and Italy*.

16. For more information about the film's shifting international reputation, please consult Ewout van der Knaap's aforementioned volume.

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About the Author

Daniel Singleton completed his BA in English and film studies at Kennesaw State University and his MA in the same fields at the University of Rochester. He has taught college-level courses at St. John Fisher College and the University of Rochester. He is currently working toward a PhD in film and media studies at the University of Rochester. His research interests include the relationship between technologies and cinematic practice, including practices of adaptation and authorship. Email: daniel.singleton@rochester.edu.

Sigmund and Monotheism: God, Jokes, and Eloquent Silence in Terry Johnson's *Hysteria* and Mark St. Germain's *Freud's Last Session*

Thomas L. Cooksey

The Other is not the incarnation of God, but precisely by his face, in which he is disincarnate, is the manifestation of the height in which God is revealed.

—Emmanuel Levinas (79)

Sigmund Freud is one of the major reference points of modern atheism, his commitment stretching from *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1904) to *Moses and Monotheism* (1939).¹ Grounded in nineteenth-century scientism and the materialist anthropology of Left Hegelian philosophers such as Ludwig Feuerbach, Freud saw himself merely adding a psychological dimension to the philosophical work of his predecessors (Freud, *Future* 60; see Bishop 48-50; see also Ricoeur 234, and Trauber 36, 219-226): “Religion would thus be the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity; like the obsessional neurosis of children, it arose out of the Oedipus Complex, out of the relationship to the father” (*Future* 71). At root, writes Paul Ricoeur, religion represents for Freud the shift from “private fantasy” to “public illusion” (Ricoeur 231). God is the displacement of the father, and with an oedipal twist, monotheism derives from feelings of guilt over the literal and psychological murder of the father.

In an ethical turn, Freud acknowledged the importance of religion in the development of civilization but argued that mature humankind, the inheritor of the Enlightenment, should stoically confront its illusions (see Rieff 300-328, Trauber 196-226): “Men cannot remain children forever,” he writes, “they must in the end go out into ‘hostile life’” (*Future* 81).

Even though Freud has little doubt about his own skepticism, he does acknowledge that his account does not exhaust the essential nature of religion. Psychoanalysis is a system of interpretation not metaphysics.

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It may find new arguments that subvert the truth-claims of religion, yet it is also equally applicable by the defenders of religion, “in order to give full value to the affective significance of religious doctrine” (Freud, *Future* 60). We should not, Paul Ricoeur warns, confuse psychoanalysis with Freud’s own “unbelief and agnosticism,” suggesting that “the ‘destruction’ of religion can be the counterpart of a faith purified of all idolatry” (Ricoeur 230). In other words, it remains open whether there is a “remainder” once the idols have been swept away (Ricoeur 235). While Freud looks at the persistence of monotheism as a “return of the repressed” (*Moses and Monotheism* 164), the essential fact is exactly the persistent return. Psychoanalysis leaves open the possibility of an alterity that persists, despite Freud’s repeated struggle to repress it.

Two contemporary plays, Terry Johnson’s surrealist farce *Hysteria* and Mark St. Germain’s *Freud’s Last Session* take up the invitation to “make use of psychoanalysis in order to give full value to the affective significance of religious doctrine” (Freud, *Future* 60), probing the limits of doubt, atheism, and the persistent return of the repressed in Freud’s thought. Both are set during his last days, living as an exile in London, confronting the imminent approach of a painful death from cancer, witnessing the start of World War II, and contemplating doubts about the veracity of his doctrine. In turn, both plays deploy Freud’s concept of the tendentious joke as a way of positing the possibility of the other, suggesting a contradiction at the heart of Freud’s skeptical project.

Much in the tone and spirit of Tom Stoppard’s *After Magritte* (1970) and *Travesties* (1974), Johnson’s *Hysteria* premiered in London in 1993 and was published in 1995. It centers on an encounter between Freud, the Surrealist painter Salvador Dali, who has come to worship the master, and Jessica, the daughter of a former patient, who has come to confront Freud over discrepancies in her mother’s case. (Historically Dali actually visited Freud²; Jessica is fictional.) The action is set entirely in Freud’s study, much of it involving Freud as a besieged *Ego*, trying to retain control of the chaos wrought by Dali and Jessica, versions of the *Id* and repressed memories, in order to keep them out of sight from Freud’s attending physician, Dr. Yahuda, the *Superego*.³ The plays opens and closes with Freud dozing alone in his study. Each time he awakens, he looks at his watch, listens to the silence and says, “If you are waiting for me to break the silence you will be deeply disappointed. The silence is yours alone, and is far more eloquent than you imagine” (Johnson 1). Each time the silence is soon interrupted by Jessica tapping at the glass of the French doors. The second time, however, takes on a new significance.

St. Germain’s *Freud’s Last Session* approaches its subject more naturalistically, imagining a (fictional) encounter between the eighty-

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three-year-old Freud and the forty-one-year-old C.S. Lewis, the Oxford scholar and Christian polemicist. St. Germain's work is inspired by Armand M. Nicholi's *The Question of God* (2002), and draws heavily on Lewis's autobiography, *Surprised by Joy* (1952). Also set entirely in Freud's study, the play takes place on the morning of September 3, 1939, the start of World II. As with *Hysteria*, *Session* also ends where it begins: in this case Freud is alone listening to the radio. As with *Hysteria*, this repetition also marks a new significance.

Both plays foreground Freud's last work, the controversial *Moses and Monotheism* (1937) as the touchstone of Freud's atheism. Here he had applied the oedipal model to the foundation of Jewish (and by extension Christian) monotheism, arguing that it derived from repressed guilt over the actual murder of an Egyptian father/lawgiver, Moses. The persistence of monotheism represents the recurrence of the guilt that the *Ego* has tried to repress. "All phenomena of symptom-formation," Freud declares, "can be fairly described as 'the return of the repressed'" (*Moses* 164). Also foregrounded in both plays is Freud's early book, *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905), his treatise on the relationship between "joke-work" and "dream-work," with their shared psychological strategies of displacement, double meaning, substitution, indirection, and condensation (See Wolheim 98-109; Ricoeur 167, 168; Lacan 30-34; Douglas 91-96). On the surface each play alludes to *Jokes* as part of a throwaway gag directed at Freud's lack of humor. "If you were going to analyze jokes," says Jessica, "you might have chosen a couple that were funny" (Johnson 9). Lewis is blunter: "Your jokes. They weren't funny" (St. Germain 19). In each case the indignant Freud responds in a manner that seems to confirm the criticism. On a deeper level, though, *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* is the abiding spirit for both plays, not only because of the kind of humor they both use, but because they draw on two central concepts: first, the joke as unintended discovery, and second, the role of the third person in what Freud classifies "the tendentious joke." To appreciate what Johnson and St. Germain are doing, it is useful to elaborate briefly on Freud's theory of the joke.

The essence and pleasure of the joke, according to Freud, is in its surprise. "The comic arises in the first instance," he writes, "as an unintended discovery derived from human social relations" (Freud, *Jokes* 234). Joke-work is about confronting and subverting psychic repressions, resulting in a discharge of psychic energy in the form of pleasure. The various strategies of displacement, double meaning, and so forth are subconscious diversions that protect the joke from the dissipating effect of critical reason (190). The joke in its very nature is a

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psychic means of getting around reason and bringing the repressed into consciousness.

Freud distinguishes two broad classes of jokes, the innocent or abstract joke, and the hostile or tendentious. The purpose of the former is about itself, the play of language for its own sake, while that of the latter is about aggression, satire, or defense (150). In Freud's economy of the joke, the first kind requires just a teller and an auditor, while the second kind requires three people: the teller, the person who is the object of the aggression, and the third, "in whom the joke's aim of producing pleasure is fulfilled" (118). The laughter of the "other" person is the objective confirmation that the joke-work was successful in getting around the repression (176). The laughter of the third person acknowledges an appreciation of the joke that allows the teller to laugh as well, completing the cycle and fulfilling the discharge of pleasure (191). What is significant here is that the joke requires "exposure," a risk on the part of the third person (177), a willingness to open up, to lift the veil of social and psychological inhibitions, a shared smile of complicity (183). At a deeper level this implies a desire to connect with the other; indeed, the presence of the other is essential for the success of the joke.

With these concepts in mind, the recurrent motif of Freud's lack of humor in both *Hysteria* and *Session* becomes thematically significant. Both plays are about unintended discoveries, surprises in which Freud realizes that he is the butt of the joke. First, Freud is surprised to find himself in the ironic position of the surrogate god/father of *Moses and Monotheism*, the projection of a would-be lawgiver/savior, challenged by the doubts of his surrogate children. Second, both plays expose the irony behind Freud's resistance to the unconscious, his desire to impose a controlling reason.⁴ This is dramatized by Freud's recurrent attempts to control and repress the objects of his unconscious, which, especially in *Hysteria*, keep jumping out of closets or crashing through doors to surprise and disrupt his silence. In *Session* this is enacted in terms of Freud's need to explain things rationally, in his suspicion of joy, and in his resistance to music, representing unconscious emotions beyond his control. But at a more fundamental level, both plays open the possibility of God in silence, surprise, and the unconscious, the presence of the other as the necessary third person of the tendentious joke.

As mentioned above, both plays explicitly reference *Moses and Monotheism*. In *Hysteria*, Dr. Yahuda has been shown a copy of the manuscript and worries about the need for Jews to show solidarity in the face of Nazism. In *Session*, it is the jumping off place for Lewis's argument for God. More significantly, however, both dramatize it with

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Freud in the ironic position of Moses, the father/savior challenged by his children/disciples.

Session sets Lewis's relationship to Freud against the pattern of the son/disciple who has overthrown the father/savior, but who in an expression of guilt, needs to explain himself. The murder is symbolically enacted in Lewis's rejection of atheism and conversion to Christianity, and in his satirical attack of Freud in the figure of Sigismund Enlightenment in his 1932 allegory, *Pilgrim's Regress*.⁵ When Freud presses him to explain his beliefs in relation to *Moses and Monotheism*, Lewis says, "that there is a God. That a man doesn't have to be an imbecile to believe in Him. And we feeble-minded who do are not, as you claim, suffering from a pathetic 'obsessional neurosis'" (9). Freud mordantly replies that he had not read Lewis's book.

At the same time Lewis admits in near Freudian terms that his own initial atheism grew out of his anger and alienation from his father. (See also Downing 31.) Sensing the irony, and glancing at the famous psychoanalytic couch, Lewis says, "there's no avoiding this, is there?" insisting that he was not seeking an ideal father, but no father at all: "It was his faith that drove me away from religion. I was confirmed in total disbelief because I feared my father as much as I detested him" (15). To this Freud congratulates Lewis that he has learned from his books after all. In a moment of unintended insight, Lewis realizes he is both disciple and murderer of the father.

In *Hysteria*, Salvador Dali functions as the oedipal disciple slaying the savior/father. The symbolic murder of the father occurs in the middle of the play. Jessica wants Freud to reenact the psychoanalytic session recorded in her mother's diaries. Freud refuses, so she drafts Dali, who is delighted to assume the position of the master. "I am to be the fraud of the great Freud, yes?" says Dali in his broken English (41). Freud himself is not amused by this bit of word play. It hints at an unintended irony that he would rather repress. But this joke takes on a further dimension near the end of the play, when Dali asks Freud for his honest assessment of his paintings: "Can you see the unconscious?" Freud answers, "Oh Mr. Dali. When I look at a Rembrandt, or a classical landscape or a still life by Vermeer, I see a world of unconscious activity. A fountain of hidden dreams." He then adds, "But when I look at your work I'm afraid all I see is what is conscious. Your ideas, your conceit, your meticulous technique. The conscious rendition of conscious thoughts" (64). Dali is crestfallen.

Freud tries to comfort him, hoping he has not offended him. Dali replies, "No, no, no—Is just the Death of the Surrealist Movement, is all" (64).⁶ When Freud finally says he should not abandon art, Dali immediately cheers up: "No. Alright, I shall continue. You and me, we

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know is shit. But the world is a whore, she will buy the shit. I shall buy a small island” (65). Incredulous, Freud asks if he could devote his life to something he no longer believes, Dali declares, “Oh yes, no problem” (65). While Freud has figuratively slain the Surrealist Movement, Dali’s response unintentionally murders the father/savior by willingly embracing the identity of fraud-Freud, a position that forces Freud to confront his deepest anxieties about the credibility of his theories and his own authority, that he too may be advocating a position he no longer fully believes, indeed that he is the Freud-fraud.

Jessica is more explicit about the Freud-fraud. She observes that her mother’s therapy occurred during the fateful period from 1897 to 1898, the same time that Freud confessed to his confidant, Wilhelm Fleiss, his doubts about this theory of hysteria (September 21, 1897). During this period his conception of hysteria shifted from a psychic response to guilt over an actual sexual trauma to one grounded in oedipal fantasies, based on the observation that the unconscious cannot distinguish between truth and fiction (Freud, *Complete* 264). She accuses Freud of misdiagnosing her mother, leading to her eventual suicide, out of the horror of blaming his own father of perversion as well as his anxiety about his own daughter.⁷ She confesses that she herself had been sexually abused by her mother’s father, her grandfather, as her mother had earlier; but in her case the oedipal fantasy would not apply, so her mother’s neurosis truly was about the recovery of psychic trauma and not fantasy. Freud must confront the possibility that his misdiagnosis may have forced Jessica’s mother to deny her very real sexual abuse, contributing to her very real suicide. The observation that the unconscious cannot distinguish between truth and fiction must cut both ways: while the guilt could have its origins in fantasy, it could equally have a basis in fact. The very nature of the unconscious leaves open the possibility of a real other. Jessica is an unwelcome surprise, a return of the repressed.

Delving more deeply, both plays glance briefly but suggestively at the erotic implications of the parent-child relationship. At their most explicit, both plays glance ironically at the possible oedipal dimensions of the relationship between Freud and his daughter, Anna. In 1939, Anna Freud, who never married, would have been 43 years old. In each play, she exists as a voice, a disembodied presence. In *Hysteria* she is a voice on an intercom, periodically checking in on her father. In *Session*, she is a voice on the telephone, as the anxious Freud tries to connect with her while she is off delivering a lecture. In both plays Anna has assumed the position of authority, becoming her father’s protector, reversing the role of parent and child. *Hysteria* plays comically on this when Yahuda repeatedly scolds Freud as if he were a child, threatening

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to tell Anna when he will not cooperate. In *Session*, Anna the lecturer has become the spokesman for her father's work, the surrogate parent of psychoanalysis, even as Freud desperately tries to retain control and preserve his identity as father-protector.

Session also looks briefly at the erotic dimension of the parent-child relationship. Lewis ties to explain his relationship with Janie Moore, an older woman he was living with, the mother of a friend who had been killed in the war. Noticing Lewis's discomfort with the topic, Freud pursues: "Did you think Janie an attractive woman when you met?" When Lewis expresses his resentment at this intrusion into his personal life, Freud pounces: "Your conversion is [my concern]. Many men who lose their mothers at an early age are drawn to mature women. Now, you are still with her but proclaim your sexual abstinence. So I would like to know whether your conversion caused this newfound virginity" (St. Germain 29). Lewis refuses to respond and Freud backs off, soon interrupted by a telephone call from Anna. The tables are later turned, when Lewis wonders why Anna had not married, reminding Freud of his own words about bisexuality. Freud replies that she has no time because of her teaching and psychoanalytic practice. To which Lewis then adds, "Except for you. You've very fortunate. Especially considering she's the only person you permit to touch your mouth" (30), reminding Freud that only Anna was allowed to help her father with the oral prosthetic that he must wear because of his cancer. Freud also admits that he and Anna have psychoanalyzed each other. When Freud asks if Lewis has any more questions, he replies, "Oh yes. But I won't presume to ask them. I will only remind you of your earlier observation. What people say is less important than what they cannot" (30). To this "unintended discovery," Freud's only response is to turn on the radio.

Session also explores Freud's fear of the unconsciousness and loss of control. Here, however, it is explored most fully in Freud's resistance to music and his mistrust of joy. Throughout the play Freud turns on the radio to monitor the news, only to shut it off whenever it changes to music. When Lewis asks why, Freud asks if he likes music. When Lewis responds that music gives him great "joy," Freud responds: "Sacred music, no doubt?" Lewis answers negatively: "Actually, I hate hymns," explaining that he finds them "cloying" (31).⁸ To this surprising confession, Freud opens up and speaks of his own aversion to music: "Works of art have a powerful effect on me, but music mystifies me, something rebels against being moved by a thing without knowing why it moves me" (31).⁹ Lewis observes that the attraction of music is its appeal to the emotions rather than the brain, adding that Freud seems fearful of what he cannot explain, and by extension control. Freud demurs that he objects to the manipulation of his emotions, but Lewis replies that

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his own hatred of hymns is not about manipulation, but the trivialization of emotions. He then adds, "I think you're afraid to feel them at all" (32).

Oliver Sacks has glossed Freud's "resistance" to music as an inability to "let go": "One wishes that Freud might have been able, on occasion, to abandon himself to something as delightful, and (one would think) as unthreatening as music" (Sacks 293). Sacks, however, misses an important point; the issue is not just the abandonment of emotional control. More fundamentally, what is signified by that loss of control is that these emotions point to the influence of a fundamental alterity, the objective possibility of something beyond the mediation of the ego, a real presence that remains outside the comfort zone of Freud's categories. Like Lewis's "joy," the emotions of music point to the influence of something larger than one's self. What is most important for Lewis's experience, and what is so unsettling for Freud, is not just the "joy" *per se*, but the *surprise*, to be blindsided by something outside the realm of intention, expectation, or control.

Freud's privileging of literature and the plastic arts over music is significant (see note 9). He can, so to speak, suspend time and contemplate the verbal and visual arts because they exist spatially. Music, however, exists temporally. The suspension of music in time is silence, a silence that leaves open whether the "object of contemplation" exists. In other words, silence may signify absence, the presence of nothing, or it may signify stillness, the suspension of noise by something that is nevertheless still present (a position that St. Augustine would fully appreciate [Cooksey 37, 38; 41, 42]). By extension, death, also a suspension of the temporal, confronts the reason with an irresolvable ambiguity: the silence following the annihilation of the ego, or a quiet presence, a pause in the music. Analogously, in terms of the tendentious joke, silence signifies either the absence of an auditor, or the failure of the joke to connect. Troubled with these irresolvable ambiguities, Freud resists and represses the pleasures of music, much as he resists the surprises of the unconscious.

Freud's aversion to music is the converse of Lewis's famous experience of "Joy" in his autobiography *Surprised by Joy*.¹⁰ Early in *Session* Lewis tries to explain his return to Christianity in terms of this experience, which he describes as "a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy." Freud volunteers the German "Sehnsucht" (16).¹¹ In his own writings, Lewis distinguishes "joy" from pleasure on the ground that "Joy is never in our power and pleasure often is" (Lewis, *Surprised* 18). He argues that while some confuse pleasure for joy, no one would confuse joy for pleasure. This conception of joy resembles Freud's notion of pleasure in the tendentious joke to the degree that each represents

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a desire whose object is outside the control of the subject, depending either on the validating laughter of the third person, or the intimation of God in the other.

At the play's climax, Lewis asks Freud, "Where is your 'joy'? Have you ever felt it? Have you found it through anyone, anything, in your entire life?" (32). When Freud angrily responds, asking for his diagnosis, Lewis says, "You lie to yourself, thinking you can control death like you control your world and your daughter. You think you can out-think your fear by hiding behind your desk of dead gods, but the truth is that you're terrified" (32). Referring to an earlier scene, during an air raid warning, Lewis asks Freud what happened to his stoic acceptance of death when he had scrambled for his gas masks. "As did you!" Freud adds furiously. "What did you believe in at that moment, God or death? Your faith vanished as quickly as your precious 'joy' . . ." (32). Here the exasperated Freud begins to cough and then choke on the prosthesis, which he has been bothering him throughout the interview. In the crisis Lewis must reach into Freud's mouth and wrench it out to prevent him from coking to death. This crisis is immediately followed by their mutual awareness of airplanes overhead, getting louder and louder. They are relieved to discover that the planes are British transports. This double scare clears the tension and both men admit to their mutual fears.

Much in the spirit of the third man of the tendentious joke, this shared crisis and scare has momentarily lifted the inhibitions that separated them, exposing their shared vulnerability and need for the care of others. This episode goes to the core of Freud's repression of the unconscious and the essence of his atheism. His aversion to music is akin to the consciousness represented in Dali's paintings, the product of a conscious rational mind seeking to avoid the unconscious by covering it with a well-crafted artifice. By contrast, it is the opposite of Lewis's experience of joy, and ironically Freud's conception of the necessary and validating third man.

All of this brings us back to humor and Freud's treatment of the joke. As noted above, the lack of explicit humor evinced by Freud touches on the themes of repression, fear of the unconsciousness, surprise, and otherness. It further underlines the irony of Freud's situation, because he conceives the joke exactly in terms of such revelations. The essence of the joke, Mary Douglas remarks is "an attack on control" (95), exactly what Freud seeks to avoid in his world. While *Hysteria* is a veritable casebook in Freudian humor throughout, *Session* dwells explicitly on two jokes, ostensibly drawn from *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*. It is relevant to linger on these.

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When Lewis asserts that the jokes in Freud's book are not funny, Freud insists that they represent "classic examples of skeptical witicism." Lewis recalls one: "Two Jews meet in a train station. Where are you going, asks the first? To Cracow, says the second. Now I know you're a liar, the first tells him. When you say you're going to Cracow you want me to believe that you're really going to Lemberg! That's the joke" (St. Germain 20). Trying to justify the humor, Freud explains, "What is funny is that the second Jew is called a liar because he's traveling to Cracow, which is his real goal, but the first Jew, who believes he is being modest, cannot accept it!" (20). This joke is more significant than first impressions might indicate.

The specific joke that Lewis cites appears in Freud's analysis of the "tendentious joke," discussed above. With regard to the specific joke about the two Jews, Freud writes that they work the technique of "representation by the opposite, for according to the contradicted assertion of the first Jew, the second is lying when he tells the truth and is telling the truth by means of a lie" (Freud, *Jokes* 138). Such jokes, Freud suggests, go straight to the problem of truth and what determines it. Thus is something true if we describe it without considering whether the auditor will understand, or does general truth involve taking the auditor's comprehension into account, and trying to make him understand as we understand? "What [these jokes] are attacking," Freud writes, "is not a person or an institution but certainty of our knowledge itself, one of our speculative possessions. The appropriate name for them would therefore be 'skeptical' jokes" (138). The issue here is not about the veracity of the knowledge, but our disposition toward it.

Recalling the structure of the tendentious joke, both the teller and the third person must comprehend each other, must expose themselves, and acknowledge a ground of shared interests or anxieties. In effect the teller must accept and accommodate himself to the alterity of the third person in order for the joke to work and the teller to receive his pleasure or ultimately joy. Failure to do so will result in ambiguous silence. Paradoxically, a dogmatic certainty implies a disposition of complete control over the knowledge that rejects any concern for trying to be comprehended; it rejects trying to accommodate the third person, thereby sabotaging the success of the joke. Only in relaxing that disposition of certainty, in willingly suspending control by acknowledging and accommodating the other, does one actually open the possibility for pleasure or joy. Freud's skepticism, his refusal to acknowledge the possibility of the other, whether in the third person or something greater, subverts his own project.

St. Germain reinforces the point at the end of the play when Freud recalls another joke.¹² The village atheist also happens to be an insur-

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ance agent. On his death bed, he summons the local pastor to make a call. The pastor and the atheist insurance agent quarrel all night. In the morning the pastor stumbles from the home and the agent dies, still an atheist. "But the pastor was fully insured" (34). Lewis enthusiastically declares, "[n]ow that is funny." He immediately adds, "If only there were such a thing" (34). Freud asks if he means "humor." In his parting word, Lewis says, "[i]nsurance." This joke is emblematic of the play. Freud is of course the dying insurance agent, who remains an atheist to the end, and Lewis is the pastor who leaves the dead man fully insured. Lewis admits that there is no insurance in the sense of absolute certainty; nevertheless in exposing himself, in trying to confront the other, he leaves with an appreciation of the joke, and for that very reason, he leaves with a deeper sense of security in the possibility of being surprised by joy.

Freud's Last Session closes where it opened, though with a sense of difference. Lewis has left and Freud, now alone, once more turns on the radio to catch the news. Listening to the concluding remarks of the King's speech, he wearily sighs at the invocation of God's help and blessings. The radio program is about to turn to a musical, and Freud rises to turn it off, but then hesitates, and turns it louder. St. Germain's stage directions read, "Freud sits, staring at the radio as if trying to decipher the music. Lights fade" (34). Confronting the darkness of war and the ultimate darkness of death, Freud seeks to open himself to the possibility of experiencing something outside his control, something other than himself.

Hysteria also ends where it began, and also with a difference; again, a dozing Freud awakes, looks at his watch, and then after a long pause repeats the words that began the play: "If you are waiting for me to break the silence you will be deeply disappointed. The silence is yours alone, and is for more eloquent than you imagine" (Freud has just received an injection of morphine for his pain from Dr. Yahuda, who warns him that he may experience hallucinations). Again the silence is broken by the appearance of Jessica, tapping on the glass of the French doors. Johnson's directions read, "Freud looks at her. Closes his eyes, too tired to go through all this again, but knowing he may have to. Jessica continued to tap as the lights fade" (Johnson 80). The silence is again broken by the surprise of the other, the eternal return of the repressed. Now, however, the eloquent silence suggests not nothingness, but meaningful presence of something.

Notes

1. Biographer Ernest Jones summarizes Freud's contributions on the subject of religion (Jones 3: 349-374). He claims that Freud was a natural atheist, that he

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had never believed in the supernatural, and never felt the emotional need for such belief (3: 351). Philp remains a good, if critical summary of Freud's view on religion. See also Rieff 257-200, and Hans Küng 96-102.

2. Johnson draws freely on Dali's and Freud's respective accounts of the meeting. The Surrealist Movement adopted Freud as a patron saint. Painter Salvador Dali had tried unsuccessfully to visit Freud in Vienna. Later over escargot in France, Dali had the epiphany, "Freud's cranium is a snail! His brain is in the form of a spiral—to be extracted with a needle! This discovery strongly influenced the portrait drawing which I later made from life, a year before his death." Dali added that Raphael's skull is exactly the opposite of Freud's; it is octagonal like a carved gem . . ." (Dali 23).

Dali was finally successful in his quest, visiting Freud in London on July 19, 1938 through the good offices of novelist Stefan Zweig. Dali had hoped to interest Freud in an article he had published on paranoia: "Contrary to my hope we spoke little, but we devoured each other with our eyes. Freud knew nothing about me except my painting, which he admired, but suddenly I had the whim of trying to appear in his eyes as a kind of dandy of 'universal intellectualism.' I learned later that the effect I produced was exactly the opposite" (Dali 25).

The following day, Freud wrote Zweig, "I really owe you thanks for bringing yesterday's visitor. For until now I have been inclined to regard the surrealists, who apparently have adopted me as their patron saint, as complete fools (let us say 95%, as with alcohol). That young Spaniard, with his candid fanatical eyes and his undeniable technical mastery, has changed my estimate. It would indeed be very interesting to investigate analytically how he came to create that picture" (Jones 3: 235).

3. Johnson conflates Freud's actual attending physician, Dr. Max Schur, with Abraham Shalom Yahuda (1877-1951), the historian, linguist, and Bible scholar. Yahuda, an authority on the linguistic relations between ancient Hebrew and Egyptian, had begged Freud not to publish *Moses and Monotheism*, and later published a critique of it (Jones 3: 234, 370).

4. Freud's concept of the unconscious, *das Unbewusste*, first appeared in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). Later in *The Ego and the Id*, he wrote that "the repressed is the prototype of the unconscious for us" (quoted, Götde 261). Günter Götde distinguishes three "historico-philosophical tradition-lines" that shape Freud's thinking: The first is the unconscious as mental content below the threshold of consciousness, a line that runs from Leibniz and Johann Friedrich Herbart, through Gustav Theodor Fechner and Theodor Lipps. (Freud draws significantly from Lipps for *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*.) The second is the unconscious as the emotional, irrational dimension of human experience, that which falls outside the domain of reason, a line that runs from Hamann and Goethe through Carl Gustav Carus. The third is the unconscious as will, drive, and desire, a line that runs from Schopenhauer to Eduard von Hartmann and Nietzsche (Götde 262-264).

5. "Sigismund Enlightenment" means literally, son of the Enlightenment, suggesting Lewis's sense of Freud as the logical extension of Enlightenment

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materialism, but casting him in an oedipal relationship with his intellectual fathers. *Pilgrim's Regress* (1932) was Lewis's first published fiction after his conversion, playing on Bunyan's famous allegorical narrative *Pilgrim's Progress*. Lewis was also engaged at the same time in the research for his book *Allegory of Love* (1936). David Jasper points out that at this time Lewis is still struggling to find an appropriate mode for Christian narrative, leaving "the reader caught between the suspension of disbelief and intellectual deciphering" (226). The work plays with a double sense of Freudian regression. The hero, John/Jack (C.S. "Jack" Lewis) dreams of a pilgrimage in which he leaves the home of his father to find a joyful island, to "regress" from the realm of worldly sophistication (Puritania) to the realm of childlike spontaneity and joy (*Sehnsucht*) by unlearning culture and history. In the end he must "regress" back to his mature state, back to his "father's" house, but with a difference.

At one point John encounters a giant: "Mr. Enlightenment,' said John at last. 'Is it really you?'" The other eventually explains, "That must have been my father old Mr. Enlightenment. He is a vain and ignorant old man, almost a Puritanian, and we never mention in the family. I am Sigismund Enlightenment and I have long since quarreled with my father" (Lewis, *Pilgrim's* 58). Sigismund explains to John that there is no escape, because where he is has been created by the wish-fulfillment of his imagination. When John tries to cover his eyes "like a terrified child," "Mr. Enlightenment tore his hands away and forced his face round and made him see the Spirit of the Age . . ." (60). Sigismund then casts John into a dungeon. While ultimately seeking to transcend the Freudian paradigm, both John and Sigismund allegorically recapitulate it.

6. Again, Johnson plays freely on Dali's reflections on his visit with Freud: "The day I went to visit Sigmund Freud in his London exile, on the eve of his death, I understood by the lesson of classic tradition of his old age how many things were at last ended in Europe with the imminent end of his life. He said to me, 'In classic paintings, I look for the sub-conscious—in a surrealist painting, for the conscious.' "This," Dali concluded, "was the pronouncement of a death sentence on surrealism as a doctrine, as a sect, as an 'ism.' But it confirmed the reality of its tradition as a 'state of the spirit'; it was the same as in Leonardo At this moment Freud was occupying himself mainly with 'religious phenomena and Moses.' And I remember with what fervor he uttered the word 'sublimation' on several occasions. 'Moses is flesh of sublimation.' The individual sciences of our epoch have become specialized in these three eternal vital constants—the sexual instinct, the sense of death, and the space-time anguish. After their analysis, after the experimental specialization, it again becomes necessary to sublimate them. The sexual instinct must be sublimated in esthetics; the sense of death in love; and the space-time anguish in metaphysics and religion" (Dali 398).

7. In a letter dated May 31, 1897, Freud wrote Fliess, "[r]ecently I dreamed of [having] over affectionate feelings for Mathilde, only she was called Hella." Freud explained that Mathilde was enthralled by classical mythology. He added, "The dream of course shows the fulfillment of my wish to catch a *Pater* as the originator of neurosis and thus [the dream] puts an end to *my ever-*

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recurring doubts [my emphasis]" (Freud, *Complete* 249). Mathilde Freud (1887-1978) would have been ten years old at this time.

8. In *Surprised by Joy* Lewis writes that "[h]ymns were (and are) extremely disagreeable to me. Of all musical instruments I liked (and like) the organ least" (234). That said, Lewis found much music profound, characterizing his experience of Wagner in terms of joy, something qualitatively beyond his previous experiences with music (75).

9. In an introductory remark to his 1914 essay, "The Moses of Michelangelo," Freud confesses that he is "no connoisseur in art, but simply a layman." By this he means that his appreciation of art pertains to the subject matter and not to its formal and technical properties. (Freud 257). He then indicates that he is more profoundly moved by literature and sculpture than by music. He observes that he can spend a long time contemplating a work of sculpture or literature until he can *explain* the effect on him. With regard to music, however, he is, "almost incapable of obtaining any pleasure. Some rationalistic, or perhaps analytic, turn of mind in me rebels against being moved by a thing without knowing why I am thus affected and what it is that affects me" (257). This observation leads him to the "paradoxical fact" that "precisely some of the grandest and most overwhelming creations of art are still unsolved riddles to our understanding. We admire them, we feel overawed by them, but we are unable to say what they represent to us" (257, 258).

10. In *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis famously describes Joy as sharing with Happiness and Pleasure the desire to be repeated, but differing from them in that it is also a kind of "unhappiness or grief," but of a kind that we want: "I doubt whether anyone who has tasted it would ever, if both [pleasure and joy] were in his power, exchange it for all the pleasures in the world. But then Joy is never in our power and pleasure often is" (Lewis, *Surprised* 18; See also Terry Lindvall). Later describing the Joy related to his religious transformation, he writes, "Inexorably Joy proclaimed, 'You want—I myself am your want of—something other, outside, not you nor any state of you'" (221). Fundamentally, the experience of joy is about something outside or unmediated by the self, "with something which, by refusing to identify with any object of the senses, or anything where of we have biological or social need, or anything imagined, or any state of our own minds, proclaims itself sheerly objective" (221). In short, joy for Lewis is the experience of an otherness that is beyond the self, the intimation of the presence of God.

11. While Lewis uses the term "Sehnsucht" (*Surprised* 7), Nicholi points out that Freud also uses the term (47). See, for instance, his 1899 essay "Frame Memories." For both Freud and Lewis it derives from nostalgia for a lost childhood experience. For Lewis, however, it betokens a more fundamental experience.

12. This joke does not appear in *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*. St. Germain may, however, have taken inspiration from a joke that Freud attributes to Heinrich Heine. It appears prior to the discussion of "The Two Jews in the Railway Train": "Heine is said to have made a definitely blasphemous joke on his death-bed. When a friendly priest reminded him of God's mercy and gave him hope that God would forgive him his sins, he is said to have

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replied, 'Bien sûr qu'il me pardonnera: c'est son métier [Of course he'll forgive me: that's his job]' (Freud, *Jokes* 137).

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About the Author

Thomas L. Cooksey, recently retired, was a Professor of English and Philosophy at Armstrong State University, Savannah, GA, from which he recently retired after 28 years. He now lives in Portland, Oregon. His most recent book is *Plato's Symposium: A Reader's Guide* (2010), Continuum. He is currently working on the trickster in world literature. Email: thomas.cooksey@armstrong.edu.

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Early African American Print Culture. Edited by Lara Langer Cohen and Jordan Alexander Stein. 2012. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, in cooperation with the Library Company of Philadelphia, 2014. vii + 422 pp. \$24.95 (cloth).

The now-widespread paperback availability of Phillis Wheatley's *Poems* (1773), Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* (1789), William Wells Brown's *Clotel* (1853), Hannah Crafts's *Bondwoman's Narrative* (ca. 1855), and Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig* (1859) reflects the significant incorporation of African American texts into the scholarly and curricular scope of early American studies since the 1960s and especially since the 1980s. Yet the canonization of early African American literary authors has coincided with a deepening uncertainty throughout literary studies about the evidentiary value of literary canons and an awareness of the forms of expression that are occluded by a narrow attention to "authorship." It is no longer obvious that the most interesting, useful, or important objects of interpretive attention are extended imaginative texts written in a stable voice by a single individual. The recent flourishing of early American print culture studies represents a welcome engagement on the part of literary scholars with the ephemeral, the communal, the anonymous, the derivative, and the otherwise extraliterary material that makes up the vast majority of texts that readers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries actually engaged. Yet the structural barriers impeding African American access to print in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (slavery, racism, poverty) mean that early American print culture can look very, very white.

Early African American Print Culture goes a long way toward establishing that it shouldn't look that way. This outstanding volume of essays, edited by Lara Langer Cohen and Jordan Alexander Stein, not only outlines "the sheer breadth and diversity" (3) of African American engagements with print in colonial and antebellum America, but also exemplifies and theorizes how to read those textual engagements, which frequently confound and unsettle familiar critical categories. The book is a field-defining achievement in bringing African American literary studies and print culture studies into conversation with each other.

Departing from the first-person book-length imaginative texts of Wheatley, Equiano, Frederick Douglass, and other texts in the in-

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creasingly canonized literature of African American “masculinist life writing” (95) presents special challenges. For example, Jeannine Marie DeLombard’s essay in this volume concerns the broadside-printed confessions of black criminals in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America—highly formulaic ephemeral texts that are hard to take as meaningful evidence about black subjectivity, especially since any of them might have been composed by carceral and religious authorities rather than the black subjects to which they attribute themselves. Rather than assaying their problematic authenticity, DeLombard approaches these texts from the perspective of their circulation and reading, showing how they foregrounded a fundamental tension in the ideology of slavery: enslaved Africans were bought and sold as chattel property, but they were punished as morally liable persons. Becoming confessedly criminal was one of the few ways that African Americans could appear as “legal persons” in public, and “print parlayed legal liability into civic presence” (106). Although “black gallows literature” literally kills off its nominally black speaking subject, it irreducibly publicizes the “legal personhood” of blacks in a way that conspicuously virtuously black literature (Wheatley’s poetry, for example) does not.

On the other hand, Wheatley and the two or three other eighteenth-century black writers who published “books” (that is, titles meant to be bound on their own) had a unique significance in their world. As Joseph Rezek shows in a penetrating essay, the dozens of eighteenth-century newspapers, pamphlets, and broadsides containing work by black writers attracted little attention compared to the explosive interest generated by the bound books of Wheatley, Equiano, and the Afro-British essayist Ignatius Sancho. In a way that other black-authored print materials did not, books stood for people as representative “specimens” (22) of black subjectivity, stimulating debate not just about their individual authors but about black people in general. Rezek’s essay helpfully historicizes a “politics of format” (23) that many of the volume’s historical sources accept, challenge, or otherwise engage with considerable self-consciousness.

Meredith McGill’s essay about Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, the nineteenth century’s foremost African American poet, exemplifies the contributors’ careful attention to African Americans’ strategic deployment of materials ranked lower than books on the material hierarchy of print. Late in her career, Harper’s print output hews to familiar norms of literary value, with books that foreground their author-function via facsimile signatures, author portraits, physical bulk, and cloth bindings. But in the antebellum period, Harper seems to be up to something quite different, issuing her works in stab-sewn pamphlets closely linked to the reformist meetings in which she per-

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formed her poetry orally. In terms of genre, her print output looks continuous: it's all books of poetry. But in terms of physical format, her work divides into a late bookish/authorial phase and earlier phase that seeks "to conjure or return the reader to scenes of collective listening" (62), with titles that physically resemble other texts "indexed to oral performance or that seek to contribute to the advancement of knowledge just outside of sanctioned institutions" (60), like sermons, addresses, and lectures.

One of *Early African American Print Culture's* recurring motifs is that by rejecting values like individuality, originality, and coherence, such counter-authorial texts work to envision alternative kinds of publics. In his essay about the first anthology of African American poetry—a French-language volume called *Les Cenelles* issued in New Orleans in 1845—Lloyd Pratt argues that the book turns away from lyric poetry's basic invitation that the reader "cross a divide of understanding" (256) and identify with the poet. Instead, *Les Cenelles* asserts its readers' and writers' irreducible "specificity" (270) and difference from each other. Although Pratt's reading hangs on somewhat thin rhetorical evidence, his essay raises intriguing possibilities about antebellum resistance to the Stoweian model of universalizing sympathy that dominated institutional abolitionism from the 1840s.

Lara Langer Cohen's essay on *Clotel*, the first novel published by an African American, also illustrates the alternative social possibilities imaginable outside of conventional individualist authorship. Critics who look for "authorial" behavior can have a hard time finding it in William Wells Brown's resolutely unoriginal and "citational" (161) text, which relies heavily on verbatim copying from a host of other texts, generally without any apparent satirical, "signifyin'," or ironic program. Cohen sees the book as a guided tour through its own self-curated archive of texts about rebellion and social movements. Building its own vision of revolutionary alternatives for a racist America out of the scraps of other texts, *Clotel* "insists that its story is immanent in the archive, even if the archive has not told it until now" (177).

Cohen's is one of several essays in *Early African American Print Culture* that reveal seemingly "unoriginal" acts of writing and performance as in fact intricate instances of critique. Strong essays by Daniel Hack, Derrick Spires, and Susanna Ashton elucidate the ideologically complex work done by African American textual deployments of predominantly white institutions like the English literary canon, deliberative political conventions, and copyright. And Cohen is right to point out that Brown's "patchwork aesthetic" (164) is far more common in nineteenth-century African (and other) American literature than the authorially oriented canon would suggest. Holly Jackson's essay about

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Pauline Hopkins's novel *Hagar's Daughter* drives this point home: the 1901 novel contains a famous scene lifted verbatim from *Clotel*, which itself took the scene from an 1842 newspaper article. Jackson reads this duplication not as homage or plagiarism, but as a thematization of the "tragic loop" (193) in which African Americans were caught as Reconstruction failed to produce meaningful racial equality. *Hagar's Daughter* rejects textual originality in order to bemoan the "recursivity" (194) of African American history.

Early African American Print Culture amply illustrates how a print culture orientation can help clarify the interventions made by African American literary texts. But the volume's most exciting essays also reveal the significance of African Americans in the conceptual architecture of print culture at large. One fascinating essay, by Jonathan Senchyne, shows how the color of print was ideologically intertwined with the color of skin, noting that the nineteenth century became increasingly obsessed with producing whiter and whiter paper. Senchyne astutely finds the interrelated color ideologies of paper and race in contact (and conflict) with each other in illustrations of light-skinned slaves such as *Clotel's* title character and *Uncle Tom's Cabin's* Eliza Harris, whose illustrators had to choose between representing the characters' visual whiteness and their social blackness.

The volume's final essay, by Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, makes the strongest claims about how early African American print materials should call basic assumptions about print culture into question. Dillon argues against Jürgen Habermas's influential account of the print public sphere as an essentially rational domain in which ideas, detached from their embodied subjects, rise or fall according to their self-evident truth or falsity. Dillon's inspired essay is built around an incident in the 1785 *Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black* in which the author-narrator intends a conspicuously irrational, nonsensical public intervention: on a dare, he enters a hall where the famous evangelist George Whitefield is preaching, planning to disrupt the meeting by tooting a French horn that he happens to be carrying. Instead, Marrant is the one interrupted by a clarion call: Whitefield's words, which formerly seemed like mere "hallooing" (320), suddenly acquire potent personal meaning; Marrant shrieks, faints, and is converted on the spot. The episode suggests how the rationalist, anonymous discourse of the Habermasian public sphere was only one among many conflicting systems for structuring what counts as meaning and what counts as noise or nonsense in early America. African American print sometimes conformed to the individualist Enlightenment norms of the Habermasian public sphere, as polite authors like Wheatley and Sancho exemplify. But just as often

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(or perhaps far more often), African American print rejected those norms, aiming at an embodied, performative, collective, or “illogical” public engagement. *Early African American Print Culture* powerfully demonstrates the value of taking that engagement seriously.

Tim Cassedy

Assistant professor of English at Southern Methodist University. His research focuses on the cultural history of reading. He is completing his first book, *Language Makes the Difference: A History of Linguistic Identity, 1775–1825*. Email: tcassedy@smu.edu.

Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London. By Judith R. Walkowitz. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012. xiv + 414 pp. \$40.00 (cloth).

Judith R. Walkowitz's *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* is a marvelous journey through Soho, central London's unruly and worldly district, from the 1890s to the 1940s. In eight fascinating chapters, we come to know a variety of protagonists who embodied or enacted Soho's cosmopolitan experience and a series of places that grounded its cultural, political, and erotic possibilities. This narrative advances original and provocative arguments about the centrality of dance and performance, the connection between culture and consumption, and the contingent nature of cosmopolitanism. Walkowitz offers "Soho's cosmopolitan past as one historical precedent of the challenges and pleasures of living with difference" (303).

This past began to take its modern shape during the second half of the nineteenth century, as Soho's earlier French presence broadened into a more diverse immigrant population and its peripheries were transformed, especially with the expansion of theaters to the west and south and the rise of department stores along the north. Chapter One traces how Soho's economy and population changed in tandem with rising demand for services, from food to fashion and more, emanating from these adjacent areas of development. The district began to acquire an image of difference and a set of boundaries, even though it came to depend on people and goods regularly crossing its borders. By 1907, writers like Arthur Ransome and Joseph Conrad were locating bohemian retreats and radical threats in Soho. Already the Soho difference was entangled with matters of sexuality and the body. As Chapter Two shows, the Alhambra Theatre and the Empire Theatre of Varieties in Leicester Square provided the stage for a clash in 1894 between the cause of social purity and women's rights led by the dress reformer Mrs.

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Laura Ormiston Chant and the massed forces of gentlemen, clerks, and *Punch* cartoonists. Her objections to the conduct of men and women at the back of the music hall became part of a long-running controversy around erotic display and sexual contact on and off the stage, but Walkowitz argues that this dispute was not reducible to male pleasure-seekers and feminist puritans. When a new cohort of women's suffragists put on Elizabeth Robins's play "Votes for Women" in 1907, they were happy to theatricalize politics as well as politicize theater. Chapter Three demonstrates how avant-garde dance created opportunities for women to participate in cosmopolitan life. No sooner had the London County Council prohibited "Living Pictures," with their revealing poses by seemingly nude, statuesque women, than the Palace Theatre engaged the American Maud Allen in 1908 to offer dance performances in the free style of François Delsarte. Her interpretation of Salome drew women as well as queer men into her audiences and helped make visible a "modern female sexual subjectivity" (84) in the prewar years. In the bitter last year of the First World War, the notorious "cult of the clitoris" libel case lost by Allen exposed the high stakes of cosmopolitanism at a time when the limits of national and racial belonging were sharpening in Britain.

The interwar decades witnessed the rise of new kinds of cosmopolitan consumption in Soho. Chapter Four examines the Italians behind the popularity of Franco-Italian cuisine among sophisticated diners. The stories of Peppino Leoni, the Fascist restaurateur of Quo Vadis and patron to English avant-garde artists, Emidio Recchioni, the anarchist proprietor of the King Bomba provision store, and the radical anti-Fascist couple Sylvia Pankhurst and Silvio Corio capture the divided nature of the Italian community before Britain and Italy went to war in June 1940. When the authorities interned Italian men, anti- as well as pro-Fascist, and crowds attacked Italian establishments in the Soho, the way was opened for French, Greek, and other restaurateurs. Chapter Five turns to Jewish Sohoites, purveyors to the style- and price-conscious masses in Berwick Street Market. While the figure of the schlepper who drew business to stalls and stores was sometimes represented in anti-Semitic ways, these young men and women, together with the female shoppers who came for French- or American- inspired flapper fashions, were engaged in a "social and bodily transformation of modern femininity" (158) in the 1920s. Unlike its Italian neighbors, the Jewish community openly protested persecution in Germany and mobilized around Popular Front politics in the 1930s. Walkowitz uses writers like Virginia Woolf and Storm Jameson, the photographer László Moholy-Nagy, and the journalist Mary Benedetta to depict the exchanges in Berwick Street. Not so far from the schleppers and shoppers, she finds the spivs and sex workers on the informal margins of the marketplace.

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From the jazz age to the blitz, there was Soho at night. The spatial and social distances that regulated cosmopolitanism in the daytime shrank in the nighttime. Chapter Six takes us out to dance halls like the Astoria Theatre and Dance Salon, where young Jewish women and men sought a space to escape their elders, defy the anti-Semites, and display their mastery of the foxtrot or the tango. Attending to the relationship between pleasure and commerce, she highlights the labors of paid professional dance partners and the smartly uniformed waitresses—the Nippies—at the Lyons' Corner Houses, whose evening customers came not just from the dance halls but from across London's homosexual and heterosexual worlds. Together and yet apart at Lyons', "Jews, Nippies, and queers maintained distinct identities and spatial enclaves" even as their stylish appearances demonstrated their collective "capacity for modern self-fashioning" (207). Chapter Seven takes us deeper into the night, to Soho's 1920s speakeasies, such as Mrs. Kate Meyrick's 43 Club, 1930s "bottle party" and black jazz clubs, like Ike Hatch and Jack Isow's Shim Sham Club, and wartime clubs catering to black soldiers from the empire and the U.S. The bright young things, dance hostesses, plainclothes police, and gangsters gave way for a few years to a more diverse mix of women and men in the black clubs' "innovative spaces of musical and political culture" (252). This anti-Fascist and internationalist moment left its ambiguous traces in journalistic *frisson* and official anxieties around interracial companionship and sex.

The recuperation of Britishness and eroticism, the subject of Chapter Eight, brings us to Laura Henderson and Vivian Van Damm's Windmill Theatre. Presented as nude embodiments of a safe and pleasing femininity, the Windmill Girls withstood not only their cold-blooded British male audiences but also the arrival of American striptease in the Coronation year of 1937 and then the Lord Chamberlain's suppression of anti-Nazi humor in the appeasement years of 1938 and 1939. Their finest hour came during the blitz, when the increasingly daring showgirls became symbols of British home-front pluck and enjoyed the high-spirited admiration of young Allied soldiers. Walkowitz is careful to show that the Windmill was always a racialized space in a cosmopolitan district. The entertainment featured Orientalist and colonialist themes and only white Americans GIs were welcome. Thus "the Windmill sustained a political imaginary of the British people as democratic and homogeneous, and also white" (285). The Windmill and its rivals pointed to the postwar expansion of the sex industry in Soho. In the Epilogue, Walkowitz surveys the district's changing fortunes as property developers and speculators, sex-industrial entrepreneurs, police, politicians, and preservationists struggled until Soho emerged as a gentrified, gay-friendly quarter of neoliberal London in the 1990s.

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Nights Out is a superb contribution to historical and cultural studies of London and the wider literature on urban modernities in the twentieth century. Beautifully written as well as deeply researched, it can be read at one level as a rich and scintillating narrative of Soho and Sohoites and at another level as extended, theoretically sophisticated explorations of the kinesthetic realm of dance and the uneven possibilities of cosmopolitanism. I was intrigued by dance as a stage performance to be observed and as a social activity to take part in, particularly in the latter case by the immediacy of engagement with sexual and other forms of difference. Walkowitz sees cosmopolitanism as a situation, not an ideal. This makes me wonder about other places where people met, mixed, and negotiated what they desired of each other. In E.A. Dupont's *Piccadilly* (1929), a film about life in a nightclub on the edge of Soho, the character Shosho (a scullery maid turned dancer, played by Anna May Wong) takes her employer and lover Valentine Wilmot (played by Jameson Thomas) home one night to Limehouse. In an extraordinary scene, we enter a saloon bar full of people—men, women, workers, immigrants, cockneys, Jews, Africans, Asians—drinking, dancing, or watching the spectacle around them, in ways *not quite* like the gents and ladies seen earlier at the nightclub. Shosho tells Wilmot, “You see, this is *our* Piccadilly.” When a white woman begins dancing with a black man, the proprietor moves in to break it up and the patrons take sides in the ensuing uproar. The woman leaves, but not before speaking her mind. Shosho and Wilmot depart as well, leaving us with tantalizing images on the screen of a contested cosmopolitanism. Perhaps this was the vision of a slumming camera eye, but it may also have been the shadows of a world that more viewers recognized and identified with in 1929 than we can fully appreciate now.

Ian Christopher Fletcher

Associate professor of history at Georgia State University. His research focuses on social movements, contentious politics, and imperial culture in the Edwardian era. He is a co-editor of *Women's Suffrage in the British Empire: Citizenship, Nation, and Race* (Routledge, 2000). Email: icfletcher@gsu.edu.

Banished: Common Law and the Rhetoric of Social Exclusion in Early New England. By Nan Goodman. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. vi + 206 pp. \$59.95 (cloth).

Nan Goodman's *Banished: Common Law and the Rhetoric of Exclusion in Early New England* is an informed, engaging, and important study of the “banishment narrative as a rhetorical device for shaping communi-

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ty" (28) in the early colonial period. At just over 206 pages (including notes, introduction, and conclusion), the book is concise and focused. It weaves its sophisticated theoretical concerns with community into a coherent study of the practices of inclusion and exclusion in seventeenth-century New England and of the literary works in which these practices are documented, developed, and tested.

Goodman's overarching theory is that "communities depend on the distinction between inside and outside to make and keep members" (142). Goodman does not rest, however, on this now familiar approach to the study of community but argues convincingly that the inside and the outside of community were not fixed but "always being renegotiated" (143). Banishment narratives not only provide a record of that renegotiation in early New England but were themselves implicated in its processes.

The first chapter of the book is "To Entertain Strangers," and it offers a necessary examination of the practices and policies of inclusion and, especially, hospitality. Hospitality was "like banishment, a key site within the struggle in New England over what kind of law . . . the colonists were ultimately bound by" (34). Banishment was viewed by many Puritan authorities (John Winthrop, for example) as a less practical way of building community than regulating inclusion in the first place, but, as Goodman points out, the practice of exclusion collided with a number of other customs and laws. Hospitality was expected of the English rural gentry but often viewed as an ostentation by the mostly middle-class colonists, who, moreover, discouraged the practice for its potential to introduce unknown or unwanted persons into the community. The reception of strangers in New England was, Goodman shows, caught up in tensions involving social class, religious conviction, and community regulation. The chapter is particularly valuable in contextualizing the famous banishment cases of Thomas Morton and Anne Hutchinson in terms of these tensions. Specifically, Goodman shows that Morton's and Hutchinson's conflicts with the colonial government had much to do with their willingness to act as hosts in accordance with their roots in the rural gentry and with their convictions about community membership. The alternative communities their hospitality nurtured, Goodman suggests, pitted common practices against "official pronouncements" with regard to inclusion (55).

The book transitions deftly (and let not Goodman's elegant style be overlooked in a review that focuses on content) into a study of homogeneity, a condition that Goodman shows to be threatened and not preserved by banishment and restrictions on hospitality. The title of this second chapter, "The 'Predicament of Ubi,'" derives from a decision in *Calvin's Case* of 1608 that granted Scots citizens born after the acces-

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sion of James VI and I rights as English subjects but that also implied a “disarticulation of geography and subject status” (62). Goodman grants that *Calvin’s Case* reasserted royal power by ruling that “the allegiance the subject owed to the sovereign and by extension to the laws of the jurisdiction over which he ruled could not be determined by geography alone” (62), but she also suggests the decision was more radical—“that people all over, including the colonists of Massachusetts Bay or other English colonies, could live in diverse circumstances, according to diverse laws, and still call themselves subjects of the same king and nation” (62-3). It is in the context of this nuanced case that Goodman revisits the banishment of Roger Williams and frames it as conflict between an English legal system tending toward heterogeneity (in which membership in a geographically dispersed English nation could accommodate differences in laws and community practices) and a Puritan society that “privileged homogeneity” (64) and sought to preserve it. The chapter closely reads the debate between Williams and John Cotton and argues that the case challenged Puritan authorities “to reassess their recourse to banishment, for ridding the community of any visible religious difference would not address the question Williams raised, which was how to deal with difference in an inevitably diverse civil sphere” (84-5).

The third chapter, “To Test Their Bloody Laws,” deals with Puritan responses to the Quaker “invasion” (86) from 1656-1661. Those responses involved not only banishment but threats of death and actual executions. This chapter extends a quietly invaluable aspect of this book, which is Goodman’s insistence on continuity between practices in New England and events in old England. The Quaker “invasion” revealed threats to Congregationalism that were growing within the English reformed community worldwide, and Quaker communications across the Atlantic exposed Puritan “hierarchical practices” (90) in New England to controversies back home. Goodman presents a searching analysis of the rationale and effects of Quaker responses to Puritan legal aggression, concluding that the Quaker presence in New England nudged the colonies toward a “neighborhood” model of community characterized by diversity, contention, and “the elision of inside and outside” (113).

The final chapter, “Deer Island,” brings the discussion of banishment full circle to address the question of community membership. The chapter focuses on the Indians within the Bay Colony and, in particular, those “praying Indians” (116) sent to Deer Island during King Philip’s War. The status of the Indians with regard to English common law had always been ambiguous, Goodman notes, because of their membership in communities that were recognized (although not always consistently) as separate and sovereign. The removal of several hundred resident,

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Christianized Indians to Deer Island, a territory within the jurisdiction of the Bay Colony, resulted *de facto* in those Indians becoming “deteritorialized” (117) subjects of the common law. While they were confined to a separate, designated place within the Bay Colony, they were nevertheless *within* the community. Goodman argues that their removal acknowledged that community membership could be based on personal agency and not birthright—that participation in the community practices of the Bay Colony could provide a basis for inclusion regardless of what other communities the people in question were also part. Goodman concludes the book by connecting her study of banishment “in the period of its most frenzied use” (142) with contemporary practices of inclusion and exclusion, which are ostensibly “more regulated, more streamlined” (142). There is, she suggests, an essential “messiness” about the practice of banishment in the seventeenth century that reveals ambiguities in the concepts of “space” and “sovereignty” (142), which transcend the particulars of colonial New England. As Goodman moves her discussion into twentieth-century concerns about community as a function of national borders and cosmopolitanism as model for accommodating diversity, these early banishment controversies are revealed as part of a continuum stretching into the present, wherein community as a product of legal inclusion and exclusion vies with community as an expression of everyday practice. In early Puritan New England, *Banished* demonstrates, this competition was magnified by the constant reconfiguration of community through the enforcement of the distinction between inside and outside but no less in response to the complexities and limitations of enforcing this distinction.

The book is, overall, inspired and inspiring. It is unpretentiously written and cleanly edited, and it offers the reader a smart and focused reintroduction to some central characters and works of the early colonial period. The care Goodman takes in repositioning these characters and works within the context of banishment results in a study that does more than take its place immediately as a valuable work on community formation in early New England. *Banished* transcends the topic of banishment and tells a fresh, rigorous, and yet refreshingly readable story of the cultural history, legal systems, and literature of the colonies that sheds important new light on the controversies continuing to surround the practices of community formation.

Adam N. McKeown

Associate professor at Tulane University. His scholarship and teaching focus on 16th- and 17th-century English and Trans-Atlantic literature. Email: amckeown@tulane.edu.

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Teaching Comics and Graphic Narratives: Essays on Theory, Strategy and Practice. Edited by Lan Dong. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2012. viii + 272 pp. \$45.00 (paper).

In the United States, comics have historically been stigmatized as cheap drivel for immature adolescent boys fixated on sex, gore, and melodramatic superhero theatrics. However, with the new golden age of graphic narratives inaugurated in the 1990s, the medium of graphic narration has landed with a resounding KASPLASH! on the literary scene and from there has found its way into the classroom, where new and innovative graphic applications of fiction and non-fiction have pushed aside the once-reviled *Classics Illustrated* and made sophisticated narratives like Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis I and II*, Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and Art Spiegelman's *Maus I and II* classics in the study of history, autobiography, and narration.

Teaching Comics and Graphic Narratives: Essays on Theory, Strategy and Practice aims to combine theoretical and practical perspectives about graphic narratives as medium and multimodal learning tools. As Texas Tech University librarian and author of *Marvel Graphic Novels: An Annotated Guide* Robert G. Weiner succinctly summarizes in the foreword, there are several good reasons why graphic novels used as textbooks provide an innovative approach to teaching. Graphic narratives grab students' attention and challenge their critical thinking skills in ways prose texts generally do not. The reading of comics is a complex process of understanding, connecting, and interpreting information presented simultaneously in words and images. The graphic medium opens up perspectives on visual learning styles that are highly relevant to the current generation of students who, unlike previous generations, conduct a large part of their social and intellectual activities in virtual spaces that use both visual imagery and text to convey meaning. However, despite students' enthusiastic engagement with the graphic medium, they are not necessarily apt in the critical thinking skills that will help them interpret, analyze, and apply the concepts and content presented in graphic narrative form. The educational potential of graphic narratives rather than the medium's historical marginalization and stigmatization as lowbrow art is therefore the focus of this collection of essays.

Teaching Comics and Graphic Narratives is deftly edited by Lan Dong, associate professor of English at the University of Illinois, Springfield. Like Stephen Tabachnick's *Teaching the Graphic Novel* (2009), *Teaching Comics and Graphic Narratives* originates in a Modern Language Association forum. Dong has collected essays originating in a special session entitled "Teaching Graphic Novels in Literature Classrooms" at an MLA annual convention in San Francisco and or-

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ganized them into six chapters according to (inter)disciplinary fields: “American Studies,” “Ethnic Studies,” “Women’s and Gender Studies,” “Cultural Studies,” “Genre Studies,” and “Composition, Rhetoric, and Communication.” There are three or four essays in each chapter, each with its own notes and works cited directly following the essay. This format makes it easy to peruse the references and keep track of the notes. Biographical notes on the contributors are collected at the back of the book, where there is also a combined author and subject index.

The majority of the essays offer practical approaches to the pedagogy and methodology of using graphic narratives as textbooks in college and university classrooms. Many of the contributors discuss specific assignments and student learning outcomes for their classes. The contributors’ terminology reflects their disciplinary fields and does not always adhere to the same choice of vocabulary: some prefer “comics” (singular) to “graphic novels,” while others discuss “graphic narratives.” The multi-various understandings of the graphic medium in this collection produce a very interesting discussion, which allows the readers to explore, as Dong states in the introduction, “the intimate connection between graphic narratives and literary genres, themes, criticism, and theories” (5). The essays are consistently strong, well edited, and well researched, bringing to the fore the influences of such artist-scholars as Will Eisner, Scott McCloud, and Art Spiegelman alongside the scholarly investigations of the comics medium by (among others) Hillary Chute, Marianne Hirsch, Rocco Versaci, and Joseph Witek.

Although it is hardly the intention of the editor and the contributors, it can be argued that when read in the contemporary context of professional assessment, student learning outcomes, and—for the humanities and social sciences—the looming budget cuts in favor of STEM disciplines, *Teaching Comics and Graphic Novels* offers inspiration and ideas for innovation in the classroom. It is particularly inspiring to see how the contributors use graphic narratives to grapple with thorny social, historical, and political issues such as gay rights, racism, misogyny, terrorism, and traumatizing episodes of violence to teach content material that normally is not associated with the graphic medium. For example, Christina Meyer discusses her use of 9/11 graphic narratives to teach visual literacy, while Judith Richards and Cynthia M. Williams juxtapose the reading of Satrapi’s *Persepolis* with an examination of Shirin Neshat’s photography to demystify and challenge Orientalist images of the Middle East. Alla Gadassik and Sarah Henstra use Joe Sacco’s *Palestine* (2001) to teach journalism and media students the importance of “scrutinizing genre distinctions, deconstructing reading practices, articulating professional standards, mapping the rhetorical scene, and demythologizing notions of objectivity and neutrality”

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(243). Daniel Stein makes a distinction between mainstream funnies cartoons and “serious” political cartoons by examining the rhetoric of African American characters in *The Boondocks* and *The K Chronicles* within the context of 9/11. The politics of representation of race and gender is indeed the focus of many of the essays as the graphic medium obviously provokes strong reactions with its uses of visual markers and its deep history of producing and reinforcing stereotypes. Anne Cong-Huyen and Caroline Kyungah Hong contextualize Gene Luen Yang’s *American Born Chinese* (2006) with such pop culture phenomena as *American Idol* contestant William Hung’s unforgettable rendition of “She Bangs” and the YouTube-famous Chinese students Wei Wei and Huang Yixin, who under the name “Back Dorm Boys” lip-sync hits by Backstreet Boys. Cong-Huyen and Hong demonstrate how far from a “post-race” era we are, and how texts like *American Born Chinese* and *Secret Identities: The Asian American Superhero Anthology* (2009) are effective pedagogical tools in creating a dialogic forum for critical thinking and writing in the classroom.

The majority of the course materials discussed in *Teaching Comics and Graphic Narratives* are literary graphic narratives that have garnered critical accolades and scholarly attention. The superhero and hyperviolent action comics that often dominate anthologies on graphic narratives are in the minority here. On the one hand, this helps legitimize the medium as a “serious” and valid pedagogical tool in the college classroom. On the other hand, it energizes the study of literary genres and visual media to apply discipline-specific approaches to graphic literature, both as fiction and non-fiction, and to broaden the comics spectrum to include unexpected multicultural gems like Marguerite Abouet’s graphic novel of manners from Ivory Coast, *Aya* (2007), and Jason Lutes’ *Berlin City of Stones* (2000). Alexander Starre argues in his essay on teaching *McSweeney’s Quarterly Concern* 13 that “the analytical toolbox of literary studies in fact holds the appropriate instruments to explore context through text” (42). Indeed, with its well-chosen illustrations and well-rounded insights into the possibilities of incorporating graphic narratives into the classroom, *Teaching Comics and Graphic Narratives* offers valuable insights, hands-on suggestions, and theoretical perspectives for students and educators alike.

Kirsten Møllegaard

Associate professor and chair of English at University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. She teaches courses in film, literature, myth, folklore, and graphic narratives. Her recent conference and publication activities focus on the pedagogy of teaching graphic novels as literature and on the adaptation of myth and fairy tale to film. E-mail: mollegaa@hawaii.edu.

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The Modern Portrait Poem: From Dante Gabriel Rossetti to Ezra Pound. By Frances Dickey. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press. 2012. x + 260 pp. \$45.00 (cloth); \$36.00 (e-book).

The Modern Portrait Poem uses the genre of the portrait poem to examine the changes undertaken by poets during the early decades of the twentieth century, their engagement with tropes of visual art, and their negotiation of questions of identity and representation. Dickey divides her study into two parts—the portrait poem before 1912, and from 1912-1922. She begins in the 1860s, examining the ways that portrait poems engage with questions about identity similar to those driving painting's shift from an illusion of depth to an aesthetic of surface and pattern. The driving questions of these paintings and poems include the self's negotiation of interior and exterior, relationships of appearance and character, means of representing a person beyond mere appearances, uncertainty about what constitutes a person, and how viewers/readers are asked to engage (or not) with the subject of a portrait. Dickey notes "a distinct shift marked at the year 1912" (11), though she never satisfactorily explains her decision to end in 1922. "From 1912-1922," she notes, "poets who had learned their craft under the influence of Aestheticism experimented with changing the features of the portrait poem," and in the book she explores three kinds of change—contraction, expansion, and pastoral modulation (114). Grappling also with relationships between portraiture and such other poetic genres as epigram and sonnet, Dickey makes clear that the genre of the portrait poem does not exclude other specific poetic forms and the associations they bring, and the shifts she notes from sonnet to epigram help to mark distinctions between Victorian and Modernist poetry. Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and William Carlos Williams figure significantly in the study, while Dickey devotes a coda to E. E. Cummings's *Tulips and Chimneys* (1923), and assorted works by such writers as Edwin Arlington Robinson, Amy Lowell, Edgar Lee Masters, Arthur Davison Ficke, and Witter Bynner.

The Modern Portrait Poem effectively uses the genre of the portrait poem to trace the changing aesthetics of Modernist poetry. Of real value in this study is the way that Dickey highlights the Rossettian influence on Pound's Modernism. Despite the importance of Rossetti and his fellow pre-Raphaelites on Pound's early poetics, the American poet would denounce these predecessors in favor of Browning and even earlier influences and echoes. Dickey's tight focus on portrait poems reveals Pound's clear aesthetic debt. While many readers of Pound have acknowledged the pre-Raphaelite quality of his most early verse, Dickey's study demonstrates that that influ-

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ence persists much longer, into such well-known modernist works as "Portrait d'une Femme" (1912). Similarly, her reading of the first lines of "A Game of Chess" from Eliot's *The Waste Land* in conversation with painted images of women at their dressing tables illuminates a non-literary influence for this scene usually read in conversation with Alexander Pope's "Rape of the Lock" and Henry James's "In the Cage." Dickey's study of Pound's process of revision for "Portrait from 'La Mère Inconnue'" (1909) confirms the importance of the portrait genre to Pound, and of his development of this poem within that generic conversation. And Dickey's examination of the changing expectations of portraiture in light of such avant-garde movements as Cubism, Futurism, and Vorticism helps to illuminate the ways in which Modernist poetry engaged with contemporary visual art and shifted in reaction to its demands.

Dickey acknowledges the difficulty of delimiting the genre of the portrait poem, recognizing that without specific boundaries, "it would be possible to argue that every poem about a single figure is a portrait," which would "render the object of study too vague" (10). Consequently, she limits her study to "portraits so designated by their authors, whether in the title of the work, or in the title of the sequence or list in which the poem appears" (9). Such a delimiting necessarily, for instance, eliminates such poems as H.D.'s "Helen," even though it presents a very portrait-like description of Helen's face, grappling with the disparities between her physical beauty and the way she is seen by reviling Greeks. (It remains unclear to this reader how "Helen" is less portrait-like than Pound's "To Whistler, American": yes, that latter poem addresses Whistler's own portraits, but it reads as more of a direct address than a portrait.) Dickey likewise excludes Gertrude Stein's portraits: as Dickey notes, most of these (written from 1908-1946) are in prose, and Dickey's makes a case for keeping prose distinct from poetry, even though she devotes some pages to Pound's prose portrait *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir* (1916). One wonders, though, whether the real issue is the degree to which Stein challenges the genre of the portrait; safer are the writings of Pound, Eliot, and Williams, which seek "not to overturn but to modify the existing genre and its means for representing an individual" (11). After all, Stein's "If I Told Him: A Completed Portrait of Picasso" (1924) is in verse, and while it falls outside the tightly delimited years of Dickey's study by a couple of years, its inclusion would open up her study in useful ways. These omissions are a shame. Dickey acknowledges that portraits are traditionally made of women by men, but by excluding works like these, and including only works by women writers that adhere to the generic qualities established by male poets, she sticks

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too closely to these traditional limits, missing out on the ways that modernist women poets challenged the genre of portraiture through poetry. We further lose the opportunity to consider why some poets might be more inclined to work within the confines of the portrait genre, while others prefer to demolish it from within.

Catherine E. Paul

Professor Emerita of English at Clemson University. She is author of *Fascist Poetics: Ezra Pound and Italian Cultural Nationalism* (Clemson UP, forthcoming 2016) and *Poetry in the Museums of Modernism: Yeats, Pound, Moore, Stein* (U Michigan P, 2002). She is co-editor of W. B. Yeats's *A Vision: The Original 1925 Version* (2008), and W. B. Yeats's *A Vision: The Revised 1937 Version* (2015), in Scribner's Collected Works series. Email: cpaul@clemson.edu.
