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" THIS ISSUE OF NEBULA IS OUR LARGEST VOLUME TO DATE, SPANNING OVER TWO-HUNDRED AND THIRTY PAGES, INCLUDING NINETEEN ARTICLES BY EIGHTEEN DIFFERENT AUTHORS, WIDELY DIVERGENT TOPICS, THREE INDEPENDENT MENTIONS OF LAO TZU BY THREE UNRELATED AUTHORS, AND SOME RARE AND IMPRESSIVE SCHOLARSHIP ACROSS THE BOARD, NOT TO MENTION IMPECCABLE CREATIVE WORK... "

Samar Habib
Editor

Content

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The Gothic-postmodernist "Waste Land" of Ellowen Deeowen: Salman Rushdie's Nightmarish Visions of a Postmodern Metropolis.

By Maria Beville

To consider *The Satanic Verses* as a Gothic-postmodernist text, it is necessary to begin with a re-conceptualisation of both the Gothic and postmodernism, and to initially see that as a hybridised novel it does not conventionally operate as a schema of fantastic themes and devices which encapsulate the postmodern, postcolonial condition. Instead, as is clear from the perspective of this study, it challenges all attempts at ideological categorisation, in its own hybridity and in its own self-perception which blends the forms of the Gothic and postmodernist text to materialise its own individual style of literature. In this, it also challenges certain Western cultural ideologies based on wholeness and unity in relation to both perception and subjectivity. However, its central intelligence is in its appropriation of the Gothic mode to try to represent the violence and terror of postmodernity and this will be the focus of this essay, which will analyse the text parallel to T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land*, which can be regarded as a prototype of this type of literature.

Leading critic of the Gothic, Fred Botting has commented that throughout post- enlightenment literary history '[t]he Gothic existed in excess of and often within [contemporary] realist forms, both inhabiting and excluded from [their] homogenising representations of the world' (Botting 1996, 13). The liminal position of the genre can thus be identified as making some definitive moves toward literary centrality with the emergence of the chaotic and fabulous landscapes of postmodern fiction and the general movement in art away from concepts of 'reality' and toward ephemerality. This is supported by the commonly held view that the essence of postmodernism is in its pioneering attempt at putting forward the 'unrepresentable', referring to the disturbance of the subject in response to the Kantian notion of the sublime. The condition is one of exultation (as reason perceives totality) and terror (as the imagination fails to represent it). Jean Francois Lyotard extended this theory of the 'unrepresentable' by indicating that the faculties of reason and imagination are irreconcilable. Postmodernist art, according to this theory, has an 'obligation' to the

'unrepresentable', whereby it should celebrate the sublime and its effects of genuine heterogeneity on the subject (Lyotard 1991, 210). Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* is an illuminating example of postmodernism in this sense and its Gothic undertones and nuances serve to intensify this preoccupation with the unspeakable and therefore unimaginable terrors of postmodernity.

The Gothic concentration on the sublime faculty of the imagination as it stumbles upon the super-real or supernatural has long been the focus of interest for critics. According to Vijay Mishra '[t]he Gothic sublime brought a dangerous negative principle of nontrancendental subjectivity' (Mishra 1994, 4), noting how '[t]he mind turns inward and regresses into the labyrinths of unconscious' (Mishra 1994, 255) and hence the hallucinogenic feel and the mood of melancholy, mourning anxiety. I allude to Mishra because everything in the Gothic world of literature, as in the postmodernist, including the human and the monstrous is *both* real *and* fictional. This may be taken as the starting point of this analysis.

This realisation, to use the most ironic of terms was encountered by modernist writers early in the century, leading to the anguish of the fragmented subjects whose ghostly voices are heard in T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and the 'Horror!' and 'unspeakable rites' of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Moving forward from subsequent struggles with subjectivity and scientific rationality, postmodernist literature intensified the situation to the extremity of negation. This study posits to analyse Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses,* in order to explore the Gothic and postmodernist aspects of this negation, primarily because as a complex work, it can be regarded as articulating a celebration of terror and chaos in its refutation of modernism's return to wholeness and unity through the grande narratives of mythology, history and religion. However, as Rushdie maintains this articulation via the familiar nightmare or 'waste land' vision of contemporary modernity, his novel can be seen as a step forward in the generic evolution of the Gothic. From the springboard of Gothic modernist literature, it shifts toward a position in literature where it can attempt to voice the unspeakable terrors of metamorphosis in the postmodern subjective sphere of endless and beginingless nothings in which our existence is reduced to imagination and emotion.

In the context of the hyperreal, subjectivity is no longer a struggle. It is negated. It is impossible. I say this with reference to 'the impossible thing' that is detailed in *The Satanic Verses*:

> It was a figure out of a nightmare or a late-night TV movie, a figure covered in mud and ice and blood, the hairiest creature you ever saw, with the shanks and hoofs of a giant goat, a man's torso covered in goat's hair, human arms, and a horned, but otherwise human head covered in muck and grime and the beginnings of a beard. Alone and unobserved, the impossible thing pitched forward on to the floor and lay still (Rushdie 1998, 188).

At this early stage in Rushdie's narrative it is possible for the reader to understand that this 'impossible thing' is the demonised Saladin Chamcha, one of the many 'protagonists' in the novel. He is both human and monster as the description tells us, and a figure of fancy 'out of a nightmare or a late-night TV movie'. But he remains to be seen as the character we *know* as 'Spoono', 'Chamcha' from the early chapters that outlined his actual life, before the terrors that befell his poor soul after surviving the 'echo of tragedy' that

is falling from a hi-jacked plane.

On one of its most salient levels this novel is an exploration of the creation and subsequent loss of self in the context of a postmodern world in which existence 'means' guilt; transience; evanescence and heterogeneous identity; fragmentation, and the deconstruction of individual cultural moral standards. On many occasions direct philosophical references are made to the questions of self that arise out of Saladin Chamcha's demonisation. 'The question of the mutability of the essence of the self' is the central problem according to the wise but moderate to the extreme Haji Sufyan, who quotes from Lucretious: '*Quodcumque suis mutatum finibus exit, continuo hoc mors est illuis quod fuitante*, translated as: 'Whatever by its changing goes out of its frontiers… by doing so brings immediate death to its old self' (Rushdie 1998, 288). As a counterpoint to his initial argument he then poses a challenge from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*: '[a]s yielding wax… is stamped with new designs /And changes shape and seems not still the same /Yet it is indeed the same, even so our souls… Are still the same forever but adopt in their migrations ever-varying forms' (Rushdie 1998, 288). We can see in this a kind of existentialist philosophy whereby the ontology of self is the first and most significant problem. According to Paul Brians,

> one could derive from the book as sort of existentialist morality: there are no absolutes, but we are responsible for the choices we make, the alliances we forge, the relationships we enter into. Our choices define us. We cannot shift the responsibility of our actions to God or history. "What kind of an idea are you?" is a question addressed not only to immigrants, but to all of us. (Brians 2004, 89)

For Sufyan it is always Ovid over Lucretious, but '[h]e [Saladin] chose Lucretious over Ovid. The inconstant soul, the mutability of everything, das Ich, every last speck. A being going through life can become so other to himself as to *be another*, discrete, severed from history' (Rushdie 1998, 288). What results from this 'choice' to 'enter into his new self… to 'be what he had become' (Rushdie 1998, 289), is that Saladin achieves 'other' perspectives on reality than were previously available to him. He is afforded a condition of liminality and arguably occupies a concept of self that is mongrelised and uncontrollable. His old self is gone, and its loss is Hell for Saladin.

What is significant is that firstly, this preoccupation with the destruction of the subject and secondly, his new perspective on his own subjectivity is essentially Gothic, in many respects akin to that of Eliot in his poem *The Waste Land.* The 'reality' of death that concerns Eliot is not physical as much as spiritual and emotional. According to George Williamson '[d]eath is the ultimate meaning of *The Waste Land* for a people for whom its explanation is only a myth, for whom death is destructive rather than creative, and in whom the will to believe is frustrated by the fear of life' (Williamson 1974, 129). Death in Rushdie's kaleidoscopic textual universe is much the same. The 'unreal city' in which Saladin struggles to define himself impossibly is 'visible but unseen'; is effectively 'a city of ghosts and not men' as John Peter describes *The Waste Land* (Peter 1990, 249). As in *The Waste Land* the inhabitants are not truly awake to life; not aware of the cruelty of the modern world or of 'a dead sound on the final stroke of nine' (68). And so in this context we see that the demonised Saladin's new Gothic vision of self and of 'reality' is chaotic and

disturbing. What he conceives as 'self' is now the 'Devil's mirror-self' and what he perceives as 'other' is Gibreel, transformed into the simulacrum of an angel' (Rushdie 1998, 294).

> Looking in the mirror at his altered face, Chamcha attempted to remind himself of himself. I am a real man, he told the mirror, with a real history and a planned out future. I am a man to whom certain things are of importance: rigour; self-discipline; reason, the pursuit of what is noble without recourse to that old crutch, God. The ideal of beauty; the possibility of exalta-tion, the mind. I am: a married man. But in spite of his litany, perverse thoughts insisted on visiting him. A for instance: that the world did not exist beyond that beach down there, and, now, this house. That if he weren't careful, if he rushed matters, he would fall off the edge into clouds (Rushdie 1998, 136).

The illusion of self in psychoanalytic terms has long been a central concern of Gothic fiction. We might keep in mind Count Dracula's transcendence of the mirror stage[1] in having no reflection in this respect and also Dorian Gray's mysterious connection with his visual representation in the haunted painting of his artist-friend's creation. In this case, we see that Saladin is uncannily aware of the distortions of the mirror and tries to break the illusion by convincing himself that he is a real man: the ideal of beauty. It is quite interesting however that the mirror-stage is here reversed and that the mirror is offering him a monstrous and fragmented self-image, which he is struggling to conceive as whole. Unfortunately, in this struggle he is without success and it subsequently becomes clear that his vision of the world is an extension of his vision of self. *Ellowen Deeowen*, where he once saw 'attractively faded grandeur' (Rushdie 1998, 270), 'a refuge… without any of the self-congratulatory huddled masses rhetoric of the 'nation of immigrants' across the ocean.' (Rushdie 1998, 399), becomes 'transformed into Jahannum, Gehenna, Muspellheim', for '[y]es, this was Hell alright' (ibid.).

> From beneath the earth came tremors denoting the passage of huge subterranean worms that devoured and regurgitated human beings, and from the skies the thrum of choppers and the screech of higher, gleaming birds (Rushdie 1998, 254).

Saladin's *Waste Land* vision of the humanity of which he was a part but exists now on the borders of, is one entirely defined by metamorphosis. His friend Hyacinth Phillips has transformed into a vampire with the hair of Medusa and the body of a skeleton. Through his recollection of her he feels as though: 'a skeleton had seized him and was trying to drag him down into a grave; he could smell the freshly dug earth, the cloying scent of it, on her breath, on her lips… revulsion seized him' (Rushdie 1998, 255). His vision is a conventionally Gothic one, of reversal and inversion, for the living are now dead, reality is appearance, and angels are demons.

Similar questions postulating about the nature of perceived selves and realities are presented through Eliot's modernist philosophical pursuit through the dark labyrinthine world of fragmentation that is self-hood, but also the 'unreal city' of London. Eliot's preoccupation with 'death' as it pervades the modern metropolis and the mind of the modern individual is linked emphatically to the failure of language to

communicate introspective experience and by default to the concept of subjectivity. As a result, *The Waste Land* was used as a structural analogue by Lacan because of its putting forward of the 'unrepresentable': the mysterious desire for unity that the fictional, fragmented self can never achieve, in a form that is ultimately unified. The diminishing fragmented words and phrases which sustain the poem as a whole can be interpreted as a poetisation of Lacan's theory. In the final verse:

> If there were water
> And no rock
> If there were no rock And also water
> And water A spring
> A pool among the rock
> If there were the sound of water only (346-354)

We see that the language disintegrates in anticipation of achieving a purer sense of reality, of self. To reiterate: Lacan refers to this formulation of the subject as 'a drama whose internal thrust precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation' (Lacan 2001, 5). The current and content of *The Waste Land* could be accurately described in the same statement. Lacan however also maintains that the nightmare of fragmentation will persistently haunt the ego as a recollection of its fictionality (ibid.), an echo perhaps of Eliot's shattered and arguably Gothic concept of reality, in which people are ghosts of themselves, unable to speak, unable to see and unable to know anything (38-41).

Lacanian theory is quite relevant to many angles of interpretation on *The Waste Land.* In his early writing Lacan elaborated on the dislocations of Freudian theory by analysing how in poetry the perceiving 'I' of the narrative disappeared into the anonymous, decentred ego echoing the polyglossia of popular culture (Gelpi 1990, etext). His interest in *The Waste Land* was therefore centred on the struggle for structure and unity in the poem, but also on the day-dream or fantasy-like configuration through which language, identity and aesthetic order are explored. Lacan appropriated the main function of the day dream with reference to Freud as *Wunscherfullung* or wish-fulfilment (Lacan 2001, 160), in which our desires for unity, dominance and erotic power are accomplished. However, unity in *The Waste Land* is paradoxical. Although like most modernists, Eliot here exalts the imagination (though by now devoid of idealism) as 'the agency of coherence' which can 'decreate disordered experience into aesthetic order' (Gelpi 1990, etext), the ghostly voices that speak to us from unknown places, have no unified concept of self or reality. Like Rushdie's characters they seem to be adrift in a world of fragmentation and disorder. F.R Leavis refers to *The Waste Land* in this respect as 'the poetization of the unpoetical' (Leavis 1990, 166), in this case horror in the face of epistemological uncertainty, emotional sterility and loss of faith in humanity, and it all explodes in a Cubist vision that we can only refer to as Gothic modernism.

Williamson comments that to his own poetic standards Eliot makes the imagery of the sordid life of the great metropolis represent something much more than itself (Williamson 1974, 130). I would argue that Rushdie does the same in *The Satanic Verses*. If anything can be taken as 'clear' from Eliot's poem, it is that his perspective on modern 'reality' is effected through the Gothic imaginary at work on a number of

different levels supporting the theme of terror and linguistic frustration. A succession of hauntings provides the basic structure for the poem, hauntings that the reader cannot evade because of the loss of vocal unity and the disturbed and jumbled way in which the ghostly voices speak over each other trying to give account of their lives in the unreal city of London:

> "Trams and dusty trees.
> Highbury bore me. Richmond and Kew
> Undid me. By Richmond I raised my knees
> Supine on the floor of a narrow canoe"
>
> "My feet are at Moorgate, and my heart
> Under my feet. After the Event
> He wept. He promised 'a new start'
> I made no comment. What should I resent?"
>
> "On Margate Sands.
> I can connect
> Nothing with nothing.
> The broken fingernails of dirty hands.
> My people humble people who expect
> Nothing"
>   la la (292-306)

We don't know who these voices belong to or from where they are spoken. They are among other ghosts present in name only: Queen Elizabeth I and her lover; a young girl named Marie; a drowned Phoenician sailor, and their utterances are reduced eventually to a Beckettian murmuring, much like the nightingale whose once invigorating song is reduced to

> Twit twit twit
> Jug jug jug jug jug jug (203-4)

> or overpowered by 'the sound of horns and motors'(197).

Having said this, the poet's presence is itself ghostly, melting through time and literary history, melting through space and trans gender, much like the central figure Tiresias, who 'throbbing between two lives' (218), sees everything and knows everything and also, much like the enigmatic omnipresent narrator of *The Satanic Verses*. In *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie uses the Gothic concepts of terror, evil and metamorphosis to highlight the condition of the ghostly and dehumanised characters of the novel, who together in 'Babylondon' (Rushdie 1998, 459) form the 'walking corpses, great crowds of the dead, all of them refusing to admit they're done for' (Rushdie 1998, 458). This same image corresponds quite succinctly with Eliot's poem:

> Under the brown fog of a Winter dawn,
> A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
> I had not thought death had undone so many,
> Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
> And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
> Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
> To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
> With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine. (61-68)

In Rushdie's 'uncharted wasteland' (Rushdie 1998, 327), the reader is shown 'fear in a handful of dust', just as in *The Waste Land*, we are presented with the poem itself as a scorched pyre consisting of the ashes of the dead who have not been buried but consumed by the fire of earthly desires: lust vanity and greed.

> Burning burning burning burning
> O Lord Thou pluckest me out
> O Lord Thou pluckest
>
> burning (308-311)

We see that in both texts, terror is reaffirmed and the Gothic elements resurface in the form of 'red sullen faces' that 'sneer and snarl' (344), 'bat-winged imps sitting on corners of buildings made of deceits and glimpsed goblins oozing wormily through the broken tile-work of public urinals for men' (Rushdie 1998, 321), 'bats with baby faces in the violet light'(380-382), a hooded man 'Gliding wrapped in a brown mantle'(364), tumbled graves, rattling bones. It all becomes an imaginary, from which to view to emotional vampirism that seems to epitomise contemporary existence.

From this angle we can see that Rushdie is looking at postmodern, hyperreal existence and is reading it through the unique lens of Gothicism. In a sense his avatars, witches, vampires and lost souls are Gothic caricatures of our postmodern selves. 'The lost soul' that Gibreel encounters in 'the hellish maze' of London is a poignant example: 'It was young, male, tall and of extreme beauty, with a strikingly aquiline nose and longish black hair, oiled down and parted in the centre. Its teeth were made of gold' (Rushdie 1998, 322). What is immediately striking is that this description fits perfectly with that of Jonathan Harker's account of Dracula in Bram Stoker's Gothic novel of the same name (see: Stoker 2003, 24). Count Dracula, as is known from the novel, is an enigmatic character in that he has the ability to transcend subjectivity. He has no reflection and can therefore be seen as the ultimate subject, exceeding the mirror stage and attaining a surplus of identity from the sources of myth, history, and supernatural existence. What is also significant about this link is that 'the lost soul' has a photo of his body and is roaming the streets terrified and frantic, in the hope of finding it. The inclusion of the photograph is a reiteration (to refer back to Saladin's mirror reflection) and an ironic play on the notion of what we can truly know of our postmodern 'selves'. We see in a photo a distorted image; the symbolic; the alleged 'true' self or soul is radically dislocated from the body. Fragmentation on Lacan's terms can therefore be seen as occurring on

a number of different levels and the soul or self is represented as something like a splintered glass whose primal image can never be regenerated. In this we see that Salman Rushdie is taking Eliot's *Waste Land* vision to a new more radical level where, multiple worlds, multiple voices, and multiple selves abound in a sort of spectral existence that transcends time, death and desire. Angels, demons, avatars and ghosts are present in terms of hyperreality.

Many of Rushdie's ghosts, like the lost soul, can be seen as definitively postmodern. Alleluia Cone for example, is haunted by her dead sister via the glossy pages of a popular magazine in which she once featured as a model. The many voices or 'plurivocity' to use a Bakthinian term[2], present in the text through memory, radio jingles, advertising posters and biblical verses are haunting in the same way. Similarly, the inclusion of the internal voices of characters, manifested in the text in italic form appears to represent some unconscious or repressed self of the particular character. The Derridean concept of 'hauntology' is relevant here. The vaporous voices are manifest as separate from the rest of the text as a 'representation' or shadow of their 'real' existence, which is as empty as themselves; which is neither being nor non-being. The representation of this existence is furthermore contrasted with the 'real' noise of media sounds and phrases in the text, which bear something of a technological existence, and that clash with their ghostly whisperings in effect illustrating that their subjective linguistic existence is almost a presence in absence (see Derrida 1994). They 'are' in the sense of the indeterminate existence that is pre-linguistic and are not afforded the same existence in the narrative as, say for example our narrator. Subsequently, they may be seen as a sub- text, the presence of a darker side of identity struggling to create itself as it is haunted by it own otherness.

In the novel, this effects something similar to what is created in Eliot's poem, in which we see a multiplicity of realities, inhabited by spectral beings, but narrated by a watcher: Tiresias, who is a mirror to Gibreel, the visionary of the novel. In *The Satanic Verses*, Gibreel exclaims at one point that 'he understands now something of what omnipresence must be like, because he is moving through several stories at once' (Rushdie 1998, 457), namely: the one in which he mourns Alleluia Cone's betrayal, the one in which he hovers over the death bed of the Prophet, the one in which he watches over the pilgrimage to the Arabian sea, the one in which he waits for the moment at which he will reveal himself, and the meeting with his adversary in the form of the Devil's mirror-self: Saladin. In this we see again that Eliot's ideas are taken to new levels, as Rushdie creates of a series of ulterior 'realities', or from our perspective, fictions which according to Neill Cornwell prove to be 'equally phantasmoragic' (Cornwell 1990, 189), including hellish visions of humanity and monstrosity. These different levels of existence are manifest in terms of ancient, modern, dream, mythic and religious and are not only equally phantasmoragic, but equally Gothic. I say this because the phanasmoragia or delirium is specifically terrifying. Sublime terror is outlined on every level of the novel, in every world and every story. It is essentially the terror of subjectivity, the terror of losing one's identity, one's self, and finding that it has been replaced by something ghostly. The spectrality of the characters is emphasised continuously throughout the novel and there are many 'real' ghosts who contribute to the tale. Rekha Merchant, the shape-shifting djinn, who haunts Gibreel to his death, leading him to 'wonder if she is an emissary of the divine antagonist and not an inner guilt- produced shade' (Rushdie 1998, 324), comes to mind as does the ghost of explorer Maurice Wilson as seen by Allie Cone

at the penultimate sublime moment she experiences at the top of Mt. Everest. Rosa Diamond too is somewhat of a significant character in her spectrality among many others who make up the haunted metropolis of both Gibreel and Saladin's waking and dreaming states of mind.

Of Eliot's poetry, it is *The Waste Land* that is most haunted by the terrible 'realities' of self and therefore language and that in turn orchestrates a series of brutal tunings of 'the shapes of sound' and 'delicate and careful murderings' of vocal patterns (Cummings 1990, 51). In doing this Eliot seeks to push the limits of language closer to the subjective reality of modern existence. In the opening stanza we are introduced to the recurring Gothic motifs of memory and desire, which are stirred by the 'cruel' Spring as it forces life from the dead earth. This is immediately a reminder of Rushdie's central question: 'how does newness enter the world?'(Rushdie 1998, 272). For Eliot, the answer presents an immediate link between language and identity, as it does for Rushdie whose novel proclaims that '[t]o be born again first you have to die' (Rushdie 1998, 3). Of course this is a reference to the metaphysics of Lucretious and Ovid, and what stands out as significant is death and degeneration. Degeneration of self must precede regeneration according to Lucretious and also Eliot, who attempts to recreate the experience for the reader in his poem. In *The Waste Land* the ghosts of memory speak in a foreign tongue: 'Bin gar keine Russin, stamm'aus Litauen, echt deutsch' (12) and remind the speaker of a lively past that contrasts with a dead and sterile present: 'I read, much of the night, and go South in Winter' (18). It is quite obvious that the reader will be curious as to what the line in German means, but as Michael Edwards points out its significance lies in the fact that it is presented to us as foreign and other (Edwards 1990, 343). Effectively, this serves to estrange the reader in his or her own language, which of course problematises their knowledge of 'self' in the context of a language that is 'other'. This idea is developed in detail as an aspect of Salman Rushdie's Gothic-postmodernism in *The Satanic Verses* and also *Midnight's Children* where Hindi and Urdu languages are used fervently in an attempt to bring the reader to a perspective based on the concept of being 'other' and subsequently the temporary loss of 'self'. For both writers this technique functions to marginalise the reader through defamiliarisation and so dislocates the logocentrism inherent in identity and morality and conventionality espoused in the discourse of the text. Rushdie's does this to quite an extent in his *The Satanic Verses*, incessantly alluding to Indian and Pakistani tradition without clarification for his readers and also in his linguistic assimilation of words and experimentation with phonetics and alphabet 'Tchu Tche Tchin Tchow. No Matter. All in good time' (Rushdie 1998, 327). According to Paul Brians, this has the effect of 'startl[ing] the Western reader into realizing he/she is not the centre of all stories' (Brians 2004, 4).

From the perspective of this study however, it has a double effect, as it also operates to recreating the experience of postmodern alienation in the mind of the reader, in a sense effecting a role reversal and a shift in position where the reader now occupies a liminal textual space. As is clear from Eliot's poem this was also a central preoccupation of modernism and a crucial focus for literary exploration and sets a precedent for the terror that will be aroused by of the remainder of the text. This terror is one in which identity cannot be sustained. Voices and perspective constantly shift in the form of a disoriented and incessantly mutating protagonist, the modern man of the modern waste land.

Leavis has noted that Eliot's purposeful use of 'othered' languages serves in the creation of an aura of 'impersonality [and] transcendence of the individual self', which results in a world view which has lost its axiom (Leavis 1990, 167). Without an over- arching principle or philosophy we are left with an attempt by Eliot to reinstate a unifying philosophy via the fusion of Eastern and Western religious mythology. This is where Rushdie differs from Eliot and so firmly establishes himself as a postmodernist writer. While contemplating these ideas in literary terms, Rushdie muses through the character of Gibreel, over Blake's image of the Regenerated Man 'sitting naked and splay legged on a hill with the sun shining out of his rear end' (Rushdie 1998, 305). To compare this image for a second with Eliot's regenerated man: The Fisher King, we can see that instead of brooding over 'the fragments' 'shored against [his] ruins', Rushdie's regenerated man is a parodic messiah, revelling in the destruction and fragmentation that necessitated his being. His glorious presence is almost transgressive and makes it impossible for us to determine if such excess is 'good' or 'bad'. But of course, transgressive subjectivity is central to Gothic-postmodernist works.

Lyotard made an extremely significant point when he wrote:

> The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have given us as much terror as we can take. We have paid a high enough price for the nostalgia of the whole and the one, for the reconciliation of the concept and the sensible, of the transparent and the communicable experience. Under the general demand for slackening and for appeasement, we can hear the mutterings of the desire for a return of terror, for the realisation of the fantasy to seize reality (Lyotard 1984, 81-2).

Rushdie's challenging of our acceptance of identities such as 'human' and 'monster' through the exploration of the concept of dehumanisation is a reflection of this. Throughout history society's changing attitudes to 'morality' have necessitated changes in the Gothic mode of writing (Botting 1996 4). 'What kind of idea are you?' as I mentioned earlier is one of the central questions of Rushdie's Gothic-postmodernist work, and could be regarded as a central question of Gothic-postmodernism in general. This question is one that can arguably only be answered via the investigation of the mechanisms of obsessional neurosis, defined by post-structuralist theory as: inversion: isolation; reduplication; cancellation; displacement (Payne 1993, 5), and this in turn necessitates the 'frequent' and 'emphatic' 'crossing of boundaries into darkness' (Riquelme 2000, 391). Gothic-postmodernism, in crossing these boundaries into the realm of terror and anxiety however, encounters an experience of sublimity. It is arguably a waste land vision of identity and self. For Gibreel eventually loses 'the last traces of his humanity… as he became ethereal, woven of illumined air' (Rushdie 1998, 336). Kelly Hurley asserts that the: 'Gothic is centrally concerned with the horrific re-making of the human subject' (Hurley 1996, 5). I would argue that postmodernist art shares the same concern. In the context of *The Satanic Verses,* the Gothic can be seen as an intrinsic mode of interpretation, speculation and narration. As the spatio-temporal separation of past present and future is deconstructed in the dreamlike, schizophrenic sequences, subjectivity becomes unlimited and subject is 'told' as something of a Byronic Hero.

As a Gothic-postmodernist text, *The Satanic Verses* does not merely function as a system of motifs and

fictional scenarios that complete the picture of postmodern hyperreality; it poses a counterpoint for those scenarios in the radical and controversial mode in which they are represented. Jean Paul Riquelme has commented that the 'Gothic imaginary is frequently a vehicle for staging and challenging ideological thinking'. As a 'refusal of conventional limits and the critical questioning of cultural attitudes' (Riquelme 2000, 390) it is a definitive philosophy at work as part of Rushdie's broader literary approach. It may be just a coincidence that postmodern reality can easily be translated as a hellish nightmare and capitalism as vampirism on an economic level, but maybe there is something intrinsically Gothic about the profane postmodern realities that we so readily accept as our own. Maybe degeneracy is not to be replaced by regeneration. Maybe our 'selves' are horrifically monstrous. 'Do Devils suffer in Hell? Aren't they the ones with the pitch-forks?' (Rushdie 1998, 254). To the Gothic-postmodernist thinker, it is merely a matter of perspective.

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Notes

[1] Psychoanalytic theorist Jacques Lacan holds that the human ego is a fictive creation of 'the Mirror Stage'; that stage in the development of the young subject when it first sees its image reflected in a mirror. 'The mirror stage is a drama whose internal thrust precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation – and which manufactures for the subject… the succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented body image to a form of its totality' (Lacan 1995, 5).

2 Plurivocity is part of what Bakhtin would call heteroglossia in a text, whereby multiple subjects are given voice, consequently disputing any homogonous epistemological and ontological values in and outside the text and empowering the reader with a multiplicity of interpretations (Ryan 2001, 4).

Mobile Learning: the iPodification of Universities.

By Tara Brabazon

Is it just me, or is *Time Magazine* (again) confusing popularity with populism, and social and economic injustice with empowered digitized 'citizens'? Their 2006 'Person of the Year' was represented through a mirrored cover. The award went to 'You' – or the similarly vacuous word that teachers remove from first year undergraduate papers – 'Us.' 'We' won through the user-generated content 'movement.' This 'victory' for 'us' could have been predicted. In May 2006, *Time* listed Jimmy Wales as one of the '100 people who shaped our world.'[1] While *Time* termed his activities 'democratic,' he corrected their enthusiasm. He described himself – rather than 'us' – as 'anti-credentialist.'[2] The year 2006 will be remembered as a time when the mediocre, banal and self-confident discovered blogs, a medium through which they could no longer be ignored by the popular kids from high school, and grainy mobile phone footage of the embarrassing, humiliating and voyeuristic gained a new home – YouTube.

The pseudo-intellectual digi-literate found a confident label to justify the proliferation of irrelevances: Web 2.0. It is the active forgetting of Web 2.0 activists and critics that is the concern. 'You', ''We' and 'Us' are damaging words to use in web-based analyses. 'Everyone' is not online. 'Everyone' is not using online resources within the parameters specified by corporations, employers, governments and national laws. A far more useful approach – beyond the analogue 'end of History' - shapes a sociology of the web, asking who is using particular applications, how and why. For example not 'everyone' is downloading music. According to the British Phonographic Industry, 96 percent of the money spent on music downloads is derived from men, and nearly 40 percent of these men are aged between 35 and 44.[3] How such a sociological profile will transform online shopping, the music charts and the acts signed to recording companies is yet to be fully revealed. The pretence that 'everyone' is part of the downloading 'revolution' is not only mistaken, but damaging to the primary site of investigation for this paper: online learning initiatives and strategies.

This article assesses the consequences of im/mobility for education, using as a trigger the removal of Open University broadcasts from the BBC. The University has replaced 'static' broadcasting on television with time and space shifting DVDs and podcasts. Such a switch offers a challenge to teachers and students to re/evaluate the consequences of placing attention on access and content, rather than motivation and context. The tropes that punctuate our learning lives are changing. The 1970s were about empowerment. The 1980s were about student-centred learning. The 1990s were about flexibility. The 2000s are about

mobility. This paper, using the OU's shift from broadcasting to podcasting as a guide, tracks the cost of replacing motivation with mobility in m-learning.

Moving from Content to Context

The confusion between delivery mechanisms and learning goals could not have emerged at a more unfortunate time. December 2006 saw the end of the Open University's broadcasts on free-to-air television. Coursework is now sent out as DVDs or downloadable podcasts. The justification of this decision was that "all its 150,000 undergraduates now have access to the web."[4] Through such a statement, access is equated with literacy. Not mentioned in the affirmations of access is the 2006 report from the internet research firm Point Topic that located the ten highest regions for broadband density in London and the Home Counties. The ten lowest regions were in rural regions in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland.[5] Therefore 'access' to the web has different determinations not only technologically, but geographically.

Further, the OU's focus on 'students' belies the impact of their broadcasting on those not (currently) enrolled in their programmes. The benefits of free educational materials screening in the lounge rooms without examinations, assessments or commitments, has been forgotten. The role of education in building an informed, questioning citizenship has been masked. While OU staff still operate as 'experts' for programmes such as *Coast*, their function in public education, through creating an interest and awareness of learning and ideas for those who may never 'access' a University podcast, was unmentioned as the University broadcasted its last session.

The Open University was formed in 1969. Its role in making education accessible was pivotal. Sally Crompton, head of the OU's Open Broadcasting Unit, marked the loss of broadcasting from their media portfolio while underestimating its wide-ranging value beyond the formal curriculum.

> People understand it, for they have lived it, either as a former student, insomniac, night worker, or early channel surfers who had to get up, walk to the set and turn the channel selector between 1 and 3. They either took notes, stared at the eerie glow, mocked the presenters or were strangely drawn into a world of literature, art, physics, maths, or science.[6]

The question is how 'understood' or 'lived' education will transform now that broadcasting has been discarded as a learning platform. Broadcasting has particular advantages for community-based lifelong loss. While narrowcasting is useful when precise audiences/markets/students are defined, education to build citizenship cannot deploy unsubstantiated assumptions about digital access without profound costs and losses.

The great innovations of digitization are convergence and mobility, the capacity to move digital files with integrated visual and aural content through space. Through this expansive capacity, the key is to be precise

in the determination of the goals and objectives within a learning event or moment rather than allowing the strengths of the technological platform to either limit or decentre educational aims. The 'long tail' may guide e-commerce discussions, but is less effective when evaluating the relationship between students and the media. Much formal education is outside informal community structures and systems. The OU's role in broadcasting was important because it permitted a range of quality engagements with learning: from fully enrolled students through to an interested late night watcher gaining a blast of new ideas from university scholars. The loss of this service, so easily relinquished for podcasting and DVD, may be a success of Web 2.0 but a failure of education for citizenship, surely best embedded – retrospectively – as a bedrock of Web 1.0.

The productive relationship between the BBC and the OU lasted as long as words like broadcasting and citizenship had currency over user-generated content and consumerism. Both education and public broadcasting have changed. The BBC strategy for the 360 degrees dispersal of content – that all their material should be moved onto all platforms - is difficult to justify for education. Does mobility of content facilitate learning and encourage motivation, or blunt the tight alignment of content and context, motivation and time-specific media? The OU's strategy for audio cassettes was distinct from the current BBC strategy for sonic media. OU staff rarely moved lectures onto different platforms. Academics specifically recorded material for the cassettes and for television. Therefore, the multi-platform mobility of learning materials through the range of media has blunted a conscious reflection of how the media platform shapes and moulds content. In other words, instead of celebrating convergent i-lectures, webstreaming and podcasts – or m-learning – there must be more provisional questions about whether sonic materials should be moved through space and time, and how mobility impacts on student motivation. Two different responses to digitization and user-generated content have been offered as the BBC and the OU disconnected their relationship, with the BBC moving content through all platforms and the OU restricting the palette of media.

A pivotal choice for teachers and curriculum writers is not analogue versus digital, but synchronous versus asynchronous. The capacity to time shift media is the key to distance education. The Open University had a history of past innovations in this area. Gary Berg, in the 2001 edition of *WebNet* journal,[7] stressed the Open University's three nodes of innovation in the history of education: high quality content, student support and a strong research base. He stated that, "rather than dismissing traditional media such as television, they appreciate the use of traditional media in educational environments."[8] In avoiding the division between old and new media, mobility and immobility, technological platforms were chosen to suit learning goals, rather than allowing a fetishization with the new to trash the old.

One innovation underplayed by Berg was the special function of sound in education and the leadership of the OU in developing that proto-digital sonic literacy. A.W. Bates, in reviewing the historical successes of the Open University,[9] explored the significance of media selection in distance education, including the history of audio cassettes for OU courses. He stated that, "Audio cassettes are low cost; all students already have facilities at home; they are easy for academics to produce, and cheap and simple to distribute; students find them convenient to use; and, when designed properly, they encourage student activity. (UK OU audio-cassettes are rarely lectures.)"[10] There are lessons to be drawn from the Open University's

use of audio cassettes. They were chosen because they were low cost, accessible, able to be produced by academics without intervention from administrators or technicians, and convenient to use. Significantly, in terms of educational design, lectures were noted as inappropriate in developing effective sound-based OU educational strategies. The key imperative was that teaching technologies were inflected by other directives such as the student's home environment. Audio cassettes were cheap. Broadband, iPods and computers are not.

More detailed research is required on how particular courses and student cohorts require different media for distinct learning outcomes. Bates established a checklist of six criteria through which to assess educational technology.

Assessment of Educational Technology

Cost

Learning effectiveness

Availability to students

User friendliness

Place in the organizational environment

Recognition of international technological inequalities

Source: A.W. Bates, "Technology for distance education: A 10-year perspective," in A. Tait (ed.) *Key issues in open learning - a reader: An anthology from the journal 'Open learning' 1986-1992, (Harlow: Longman, 1993), p. 243*

Bates offered an important mechanism to evaluate technological choices, not only for distance education, but for all teaching and learning. The attention to 'effectiveness,' 'availability' and 'inequalities' is pivotal but underplayed within the quiet loss of broadcasting from options for educational delivery. Web 2.0 is part of this problem in generalizing and universalizing the availability and applicability of the online environment for all social groups. Within this ideology,[11] websites no long hold information but become a platform to connect applications with users. Once more, as occurred when the burst dot.com bubble transformed web designers from the new rock stars into digital street sweepers of cybertumbleweed, Web

2.0 needs "less noise [and] more signal."[12] As a phrase, it is not only buzzword, but increases the online profile, applications and advantages for those already online, ignoring those still excluded from Web 1.0. Within educational discourses, this initiates a costly confusion of participation with learning and mobility with motivation.

M-learning: from motivation to mobility

In the last ten years theories have seen **e** and **i** added to a range of nouns, rendering them – seemingly immediately – more fashionable, edgy and modern. 'M' is becoming a similar bandwagon letter onto which the trendy and aspirational hyphenate the dull, redundant and replaceable. The only distinction in this case is that mobility has been studied in methodical and innovative ways by John Urry[13] and his research colleagues at CeMoRe, the Centre for Mobility Research at the University of Lancaster. Their paradigmatic investigations have tempered mobile connectivity with mobile failure, and aligned transportation and communication systems with historical rigour. Terrorism has provided a caustic crucible for their work. When placing attention on how people, money and ideas move, mobility becomes a new marker of class and power. Those who hold power have a choice to move. Those who lack power are immobile. Through such a trope, globalization is configured through a distinct interpretative lens, where powerful companies, corporations and individuals are able to move through space and gain profit from exploiting an immobile labour force and then exporting the produced goods around the world.

This confluence between power and mobility is also revealed in transportation networks, where cars are infused with ideologies of individuality, critiquing the collectivity of public transportation. A train imposes a timetable over a person whereas the driver imposes a timetable over the car.[14] 'Decisions' about mobility are statements about power but have consequences on the environment. Yet the impact of mobility on and through education is under-researched. Distance education, and the complex media mix deployed to ensure a connection between learner and learning materials, 'manages' the disconnection of the teacher and student, attempting to assist non-standard scholars to create a context for learning. While convergent digitized media can assist such an aim, the mobility of print on paper is often forgotten. A dial up connection will inhibit the type and scale of material accessed online, and where and how it is interpreted and utilized. A difficulty confronting part-time and distance education students is where they can 'access' these learning materials that often require broadband. Businesses – even university workplaces – are increasingly blocking the downloading of podcasts or building firewalls to inhibit instant messaging to ensure 'efficiency' and 'concentration.' The mobility of content has limits.

The mobile media platforms that enfold into popular culture, like motor cars and iPods, are often nodes where humans encounter technology in their daily lives and affirm individuality, particularly the right of the individual to consume without consequences or restrictions. The goal in thinking about web-based education is to ensure that a mechanism for quality-control and evaluation is present, rather than low level celebrations of 'interactivity.' Much time and attention is required to evaluate the purpose of education,

and how we motivate our students out of their consumer-centric ideology. M-learning must be transformed – from signifying mobility to motivation. Moving ideas between media platforms is not helpful if a student does not have the context, framework or incentive to study.

From: becky[15]

Sent: Thursday, 20 April 2006 10:16 PM

To: Tara Brabazon

Subject: Hi Tara Hi Tara,

Thankyou for trying to help but i am not actually retarded or academically challenged, despite what my essay might suggest, i just gave up on that paper and upon realising that no amount of hours sitting in front of my computer were gonna make it any better, decided to just stop wasting my time and hand it in. And as much as it tears at my very soul to receive the lowest mark possible, i would rather that than cause myself unnecessary hours of stress and anxiety, something to which i have been all too familiar with in the last couple of years.

So please don't think that all my assignments are going to be as morbidly degenerate as that one. It was just my first assignment and i had two more which i had also forgotten about which were due the same week. I decided rather than wuss out and ask for an extension i would just accept my responsibilities and get used to it.

By the way sorry for just pinning it on your door, i was in a great hurry to get it in on time and i was still not entirely sure how to hand things in. It will not happen again now that I am clear.

Cheers.

ps. No, this email was <u>not </u>plagiarised.

pps. I'm sorry if this email offends you, I'm sure I'll regret it later. I know you're just trying to help and i do appreciate it alot, but i just didn't want you to expect that i need special treatment. Something else that i am very familiar with. I know it is hard for you to understand my attitude without knowing me at all and I apologise for my forward manner and aggressive defensiveness. I have a lot of trouble accepting help and generally being a nice, decent person. I will try to stop by your office soon though, if you're not totally disgusted at me.

This email is – simply – odd. Becky was unsuited to formal education at this time, finding a small assignment causing 'unnecessary stress and anxiety' and 'wasting' her time. This message was sent in response to my concern about her first assignment that was 'submitted' on my office door without a name, student number or course code, and eight hundred words short of its one thousand word target.

From: *"Tara Brabazon"* <*T.Brabazon@murdoch.edu.au*>

To: Becky Subject: *Hi Becky*

Date: *Sun, 16 Apr 2006 07:39:53 +0800*

Hi Becky –

I hope you are well. I'm just checking up on you. Your tutor just told me that the paper that was pinned to my office door was yours. No problem, we've got it. But all the other students in the course put it in the assignment box – where all the assignments go. I was so worried, because it wasn't stapled, had no assignment sheet attached to the front, and it could have been stolen while I was at my meeting.

I'm just so happy that we've got it and we've worked out what's going on.

Becky, my suggestion is that I see you weekly until the next assignment is due. Before each lecture and on an overhead, I always put up the hours each week that I can see students, and unfortunately I didn't see you for this assignment. I'm always happy to help in any way.

But can we make sure that I see you to discuss the course once a week, to make sure that all is well? I'm happy to see you at 10:30am every Tuesday through the rest of the semester. I'll make sure that this is your time and no one interrupts our session. Also, your tutor is in the office for her consultancy times straight after the lecture, and has been all semester And I know she would love to see you.

So please let me know what you would like us to do, to ensure that we can help you get a strong result this semester.

Be well

Tara.

The specific difficulty in the movement from Web 1.0 to 2.0 is that it blurs the relationship between leisure and work. It assumes that learning is convenient and flexible. Students such as Becky confuse discourses,

attitudes and institutions, saturating teachers who are trying to assist them with Oprah-fied self absorption. Emails to academics become another place to blog, to reveal half truths, self justifications and displace blame. Such a convergence has consequences for motivation and learning in context.

From: Phil[16]

Sent: Friday, 12 May 2006 3:34 AM To: Tara Brabazon

Subject: MCC106

My name is Phil and I am enrolled in MCC106. You would not know me, as even though I am enrolled I have not been coming to uni at all this semester. I have not submitted any work that has been due as honestly I had lost interest in university after some events that transpired in recent times in my life made it seem irrelevant. However, I now realise this has been a big mistake and I really want to complete this unit and therefore my course at the end of this year. I am very interested in completing this unit even though it is for credit points towards graduation. Is there any way that something can be worked out so I do not fail this unit?

I am eager to come in and see you at any time to discuss this [I am unavailable tomorrow Friday 12th due to work], which I think is the best thing to do. I just hope I have not left it too late. Can you please get back to me and advise me of anything that can be done?

Regards,

Phil

Mobile learning would have assisted Phil. It may have assisted Becky. However the capacity to time-shift their learning was the least of their worries. Motivation was their problem. To address such concerns, teachers need to select delivery platforms that not only align learning goals and outcomes, but develop productive scholarly behaviours, rather than denial, avoidance, displacement or blame.

While the iPod and MP3 players can be used for teaching and learning, a careful translation between discourses is required to avoid a culture of equivalence emerging between listening to a scholarly sonic session and popular music for pleasure. Ensuring a context of teaching and learning is difficult as it must reconfigure the already existing leisure-based compulsions of the platform. Dom Joly outlined the nature of this behaviour.

Every waking moment of my life is now spent in front of my laptop with a huge pile of CDs on

my right (not yet in) and an even huger pile on my left (in). Sometimes, on the rare occasions when I leave the house, Stacey cleans up and moves the piles. I come back and start divorce proceedings while wiping away the tears of frustration … Maybe I could just ignore these and move on quicker. But I can't, everything must be in my laptop, must … have … more … music. I'm up to 10 solid days' worth and I want a month at least.[17]

How curricula materials intervene in this compulsion is an intricate issue for educators to address. Educational podcasts become one more item to import onto the laptop. The context for the content is lost, as easily as the weak album tracks are cut away from a favourite single as it is loaded in the iPod.

An early techno-celebrationist welcomed the Web in education, believing that "we can learn virtually anything from the very source of the information."[18] Everything can be learnt from the web, except *how* to use it. Digital wallpaper has covered over the cracks of analogue injustice. It is necessary to remove the digital burqua and see those who are working in the adjacent analogue environment. When times are truly bad, we are drawn to the light, the frivolous and the stupid. This phenomenon – which could be called the Paris Hilton Effect – occurs where bored surfers fill their cursors and minds with irrelevancies. We lose the capacity to sift, discard and judge. Information is no longer for social good, but for sale. Democracy, let alone digitization, is not inevitable. Francis Fukuyama, in his movement away from Neo- Conservatism and his earlier arguments in *The End of History*, confirmed that democracy is not an inescapable byproduct of 'modernization' or 'progress.'

> This belief in the imminence of democratic change was based on two things. The first had to do with an interpretation of the underlying cross-cultural appeal of democracy and with the contagiousness of the democratic idea at the end of the twentieth century. The second had to do with their belief in the centrality of American power and, in particular, the view that Ronald Reagan's policies had been critical to the demise of the former Soviet Union … But a theory of democratic change emerging out of a broad process of modernization like the one laid out in The End of History suggests that democratic contagion can take a society only so far; if certain structural conditions are not met, instability and setbacks are in store.[19]

There have been many 'revolutions' and many information ages.[20] The mobility of paper-based print, the speed of the telegraph, the disruptions in the private sphere through the telephone, and the movements of sound and vision through space via the satellite, all transformed identity, community and nation. Yet more than hope and hype is required in aligning digitization with democracy.

Mobile learning in the pod

Recording lectures onto analogue cassettes was a poor use of sound in education. The Open University promoted other strategies and was successful. They realized that lectures are not only the sound of the

lecturer's voice: they include images, music, video, material culture like sporting equipment and fabric swatches, along with the corporeality of gestures and expression. Sound-based learning materials, often downloaded onto a platform used most frequently for leisure-time listening, should deploy the specific advantages of sonic media. For abstract ideas that require reflection, short sonic sessions can be of use and heard on the move.[21] Yet these must be written, targeted and bespoked for particular courses, approaches and student communities. Not every subject is best learnt through digitized, mobile sound.

Music platforms are central to the public visibility and consumption of particular technological platforms. Music is both part of identity and mobile, bleeding through spaces and creating barriers of sonic difference. The attraction of the iPod and MP3 players are clear: they integrate screen and sound through the potential of digitization. The ease of scrolling through a personal music collection means that hours can be spent satiated in an individual's greatest hits. Yet their use in education is much more arbitrary and ambivalent. The considered integration of sound in curriculum was underplayed in analogue education. The Open University offered best practice for its time. Digitization poses new challenges. Certainly, in the study of music and languages and the development of oral testimony and oral history, the iPod is incredibly useful. Yet there must be care in its use. Education is not a hobby to be slotted into a lifestyle. Without care in the construction of curriculum, the fun and flexibility of sonic mobility will crush the discipline required for motivated learning.

Notes

[1] C. Anderson, "Jimmy Wales," *Time Magazine*, May 8, 2006, http://www/time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1187286,00.html, accessed on June 3, 2006

[2] Wales in Anderson, *ibid.*

[3] These figures are reported by Lisa Bachelor in "Upbeat about downloading?" *The Observer*, May 1, 2005, p. 4

[4] J. Jowit, "No more late-night particle physics as OU broadcasts last programme," *The Observer*, December 10, 2006, p. 5.

[5] Jamie Doward cites the Point Topic research in "We're wired… but not connected," *The Observer Special Report*, December 10, 2006, p. 1.

[6] S. Crompton in Jowit, p. 5.

[7] G. Berg, "The British Invasion." WebNet Journal, January-March 2001, pp. 5-6.

[8] ibid., p. 6.

[9] A.W. Bates, "Technology for distance education: A 10-year perspective," in A. Tait (ed.) *Key issues in open learning - a reader: An anthology from the journal 'Open learning' 1986-1992*, (Harlow: Longman, 1993), pp. 241-265.

[10] *ibid.*, p. 242.

[11] Paul Boutin critiqued "Web 2.0," *Slate*, March 29, 2006, http://www.slate.com/id/2138951, when he affirmed "Just call it the Internet. That way, everyone will know what you mean."

[12] This phrase is part of a critique of Web 2.0 derived from Jeffrey Zeldman, "Web 3.0," http://www.alistapart.com/articles/web3point0, January 16, 2006, accessed on July 3, 2006.

[13] An example of this research includes John Urry's "The complexities of the global," published by the Department of Sociology, Lancaster University, Lancaster UK, http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/papers/urry-complexities-global.pdf, July 2, 2004.

[14] M. Featherstone, "Automobilities," *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 21, No. 4/5, 2004, p. 1-24.

[15] A borrowed name.

[16] A borrowed name.

[17] D. Joly, "How iTunes took over my life," *The Independent on Sunday*, December 10, 2006, p. 3.

[18] "Applications of learning," 2001, http://connectedteacher.classroom.com/tips/resources/communicating.htm, accessed on June 16, 2004.

[19] F. Fukuyama, *After the Neocons: America at the Crossroads*, (London: Profile, 2006) p. 57.

[20] J. Given, *Turning off the television: broadcasting's uncertain future*, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2003), p. 65.

[21] For a discussion of the development of sonic sessions, please refer to my article, "Socrates in earpods: the ipodification of education," *Fast Capitalism*, http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/2_1/brabazon.htm, Vol. 2, No. 1, July 2006.

Hyperreality, the Question of Agency, and the Phenomenon of Reality Television.

By Chung Chin-Yi

This paper examines concepts of hyperreality and agency as advanced by three theorists—Jacques Derrida, Jean Baudrillard and Paul Virilio—who argue for a decentred agency and a hyperreality that is artifactual and produced. The paper first examines these theories as they apply to broadcast cable news and reality television. Thereafter, I will explore the notion that the televisual spectator occupies a space between de-centred consumer of images and empowered voyeur. While the spectator cannot control or resist the flood of images politically aimed at diminishing his/her subjectivity and autonomy, as well as to think independently of events presented, the spectator is empowered in the sense of being granted a sense of omnipresence as voyeur, albeit a passive one. An active voyeur successfully navigates media through the intervention of his own agency. As Zizek in "How the Non-Duped Err" notes, the gaze at the same time denotes power (it enables us to exert control over the situation, to occupy the position of master) and impotence (as bearers of a gaze, we are reduced to the role of passive witness) (Zizek, 2). Derrida offers some solutions to this conundrum of a passive agent in works like *Echographies of Television*, urging us to be critical of a politics of memory and to celebrate the overcoming of the topopolitical boundaries that television enables. Again, this reminds us of Virilio's celebration of omnipresence and omnivoyance. Thus while it is certainly television's effect to de-centre and dissolve subjectivity, an awareness in the vein of Derrida's affords us some mastery over the image and offers us strategies of resistance and the reclamation of agency.

Reality television explodes the division between the hyperreal and the real, but what it ultimately represents is the triumph of the hyperreal and the manufactured image. Specifically, when a consciousness loses its ability to distinguish reality from fantasy, and begins to engage with the latter without understanding what it is doing, it has shifted into the world of the *hyperreal*. The nature of the hyperreal world is characterised by "enhancement" of reality. As Derrida argues, it is an "artifactuality" that is produced and made rather than a record. (*Echographies of Television*, 41). Record here means something that is an exact representation of events. It also serves to satisfy our thirst for voyeurism and invasion of privacy, for as Baudrillard states, it increases our fascination with the obscene (*Ecstasy of Communication*, 33). This is an

exercise of "desiring to be seen" and desiring the Other to return our gaze, as we desire the mock celebrity that reality television affords—for instance, the mock celebrity Anna Nicole, who rides more on instant fame than on a substantive career. In witnessing the privation of its participants through elimination rituals, we are also simultaneously celebrating our comforts, so that there is a sadistic element to taking pleasure in watching the sufferings of others at work as well. In coming across as "more real than real" and in our fascination with the hyperreal and manufactured image, Baudrillard's statement that we no longer watch television and that it is television watching us seems remarkably prophetic in the surge and success of reality television programmes (*Ecstasy*, 31). Reality television appeals to us because of its "live" element, its telepresence, and in Derrida's terms, the space it allows for the 'arrival' of an event, whose expectation is made of a 'nonexpectation.' In so doing, it offers a certain variety, diversity and spontaneity that we cannot find in scripted television programmes. Reality television, though scripted, offers the illusion of being spontaneous and undirected because it captures the "authentic" and often unsavoury aspects of characters onscreen. Derrida also argues for a "messianism" that guides the event, a promise of futurity: hence perhaps it is the open-ness and heightened anticipation in which we take pleasure (*Echographies of Television*, 13). There is also an element of "testimony" and truth to live television which separates it from more scripted programmes, like talk shows and sitcoms. As it happens only once in live real time, there is a precious singularity and uniqueness to the moment; Derrida once again explains that the seized moment captures the irreplaceable present and bears witness to the fact that "this was there" (*Echographies of Television*, 94). One might also argue that the addressee enjoys its status of "being addressed" in reality television, thus enabling the addressee to participate in production of meaning, as the confessional scenes in reality, as well as reporting in broadcast programmes, are directed towards engaging the audience in being "participants" of an event, as with audience voting on shows like "American Idol" or "Grease: You're the One That I want." There exists an ineluctable "reality effect" when the specters on television seem to be watching us (Derrida, 123). We appear to be gazing back when we vote in the results of the reality show competitions and when the reality television show participants directly address us in dialogue onscreen(note all the "confession" scenes in *Big Brother*).

Baudrillard and Reality TV

For Baudrillard, reality television signifies that what people deeply desire is a spectacle of banality. This spectacle of banality is today's true pornography and obscenity. It is the obscene spectacle of nullity (*nullité*), insignificance, and platitude. (*Dust Breeding*, 1) This stands as the complete opposite of the theater of cruelty, which is not cruelty in the sense of being violent, but the cruelty it takes for actors to strip away completely their masks and the cruelty of showing an audience a truth that they don't want to see. The text had been a tyrant over meaning, and there was a need for theatre made up of a unique language halfway-between thought and gesture to be conceptualized, at which point "reality television" intervened. But perhaps there is still a form of cruelty, at least a virtual one, attached to such a banality. At a time when television and the media in general are less and less capable of accounting for the world's (unbearable) events, they rediscover daily life. They discover existential banality as the deadliest event, as the most

violent piece of information: the very location of the perfect crime. People are fascinated (but terrified at the same time) by this indifferent "nothing- to-say" or "nothing-to-do," by the indifference of their own lives, as seen when the cast of *Big Brother* engages in idle gossip, mundane banter, and squabbles over trivial domestic issues. Contemplating the Perfect Crime—banality as the latest form of fatality—has become a genuine Olympic contest, the latest version of extreme sports. Indeed, as we see with a reality series such as *Big Brother*, it is existential banality and the boredom of our own lives that we desire as spectacle. Very little happens that would not take place outside the context of the indifference of our own lives. In elevating the banal to spectacle, we are elevating ourselves as media objects. For Debord, the spectacle is a tool of pacification and depoliticization; it is a "permanent opium war" which stupefies social subjects and distracts them from the most urgent task of real life—recovering the full range of human powers through revolutionary change (Debord, *Society of The Spectacle*, 44). In Debord's formulation, the concept of the spectacle is integrally connected to the concept of separation, for in passively consuming spectacles, one is disengaged from actively producing one's life. Capitalist society disconnects workers from the product of their labor, art from life, and spheres of production from consumption, which involve spectators passively observing the products of social life. We are allowing hyperreality to reign over reality and hence celebrate reality as interplay of signs and the collapse of the signified. Reality television demonstrates Baudrillard's thesis that the obscene lies in the fact that there is 'nothing to see' and that the spectator, rather than desiring difference from others, desires sameness with the subjects that witnessed on television. As Baudrillard notes in *The Ecstasy of Communication*, all that matters now is to resemble oneself, to find oneself everywhere, multiplied but loyal to one's formula. It is the universe of the fractal subject, dreaming of a formula to reproduce himself to infinity (*Ecstasy of Communication*, 41). Consequently, reality television incarnates our desire for sameness and our fascination with the obscenity or pornography of objective reality.

In *The Ecstasy of Communication*, Baudrillard once again reminds us that with the advent of television, as in hyperreality, the subject-object distinction collapses and we are immersed in its reality—"television becomes a control screen" (13). He uses the metaphor of driving to relate our relation to television—no longer controllers of a device, we are now subjected to its control, becoming a "computer at the wheel," not a "drunken demiurge of power" (13). He argues that television creates a space of hyperreality that overtakes reality and hence displaces metaphysics. Our subjectivities are dissolved—we are no longer 'subjects of interiority" (13) in control of television, but are instead subjected to the controls of multiple network satellites. Television becomes an intrusive actor in our domestic space, overtaking our lives from work, consumption, play, social relations and leisure. Baudrillard further explains that the hyperreal displaces the real and renders it useless, thus turning the spectatorship into one of simulation, as we become simulated according to television events. Social relationships within the home are destroyed as face-to-face and interpersonal communications are diminished. Reality is 'miniaturized'—television replaces our desire for human relationships or ideals and renders organic and real bodies and events superfluous (*Ecstasy,* 14). The obscene fascinates us, and replaces the organic with the machinic. In this regard, advertising also becomes an omnipresent reality–materializes its "obscenity"—monopolizing public life with its exhibition. This is also precisely what reality television shows are: Simulations and the triumph of the hyperreal and mediated reality over actuality, if this does in fact exist.

The most intimate processes of our lives become feeding grounds for the media (the Louds on television—a family which was put under camera surveillance—also might draw a parallel to the current phenomenon of Reality TV shows such as *Big Brother, Survivor, Temptation Island, The Bachelor*, and so on. These are produced by Fox, CBS, ABC, and Channel 4, among other networks. The Louds family was a popular American family which was put under 7 months of uninterrupted shooting. 300 hours of direct non- stop broadcasting, without script or scenario. They were broadcast live on television by an American broadcasting company in 1971. For them, and for us, all aspects of life are permeated and infiltrated by the media, subjecting everything to visibility, exposing everything to the inexorable light of communication. In Baudrillard's terms, we live in the "ecstasy of communication," which is obscene because it renders the private exposed, a pornography of information and communication. "The obscene is what does away with every mirror, every look, every image. The obscene puts an end to every representation. But it is not only the sexual that becomes obscene in pornography; today there is a whole pornography of information and communication....It is no longer the traditional obscenity of what is hidden, repressed, forbidden or obscure; on the contrary, it is the obscenity of the visible, of the all-too-visible, of the more-visible-than-the-visible. It is the obscenity of what no longer has any secret, of what dissolves completely in information and communication" (*Ecstasy of Communication*, 130-131).

It is the obscenity of the hidden that is suddenly overexposed and visible. Sex, scandal and gossip, once taboo, explode in public onscreen. In this dissolution of the exterior and the interior, Baudrillard likens the contemporary subject to the schizophrenic–a subject who cannot distinguish between inner and outer and who is subject to all the vagaries of the external world (*Ecstasy of Communication*, 14). The subject's sense of individuality and distinction from external objects is dissolved. He becomes obscene, as is the world he or she inhabits. The subject is the total prey of hyperreality, a pure screen, a switching center for all networks of influence. For Baudrillard, the body and the "self", both of which conform to images, can be divided and commodified, as governed by the capitalist/advertising code (*Ecstasy*, 42). To see the "self" as a technology possessed by the mediascape, as Baudrillard does, is to become schizophrenic oneself by splitting one's own subject between image and reality. Baudrillard's subject is therefore completely de-centred and dominated by the image. While hyperreality performs an act of de-centering and impinges on our identities, is there not some sense by which we derive identities (albeit simulated and virtual ones) from the virtual worlds we inhabit? Is it not possible that the hyperreal also functions as our ontological frame of reference, an interpretive framework from which we derive our sense of agency? I would argue that television in a way functions as an existential source of meaning, a source of agency for characters themselves and also for the subjects gazing upon them. While Baudrillard certainly does make a strong case for the destruction of subjectivity, we will see with Derrida that there is a possibility that we are in a position, via différance and selection, to appropriate and compose our perspective on images.

Derrida, Reality Television and Agency

In *Echographies of Television*, Derrida, contrary to Baudrillard, argues that the subject has never been

simply a passive viewer. Derrida occupies a middle position, arguing that while images have a politics that threaten to determine us, we are also in a position to have strategies of appropriation, selection, and critical thought with regards to the image. While it is a fantasy to believe that the consumer will completely reappropriate the images which come to him or her, Derrida states that the addressee does not become completely passive. A relative reappropriation is under way, what Derrida calls "exappropriation" (58).

According to Derrida, we are in a state of quasi-illiteracy with respect to the image. We must learn to discriminate, compose, paste and edit images to gain mastery over them. This is a skill that must be developed within and outside of schools. For Derrida, this strategy involves developing a new relation to the politics of memory. Derrida contends that any politics of memory would imply the intervention of the state–a state that legislates and acts with regard to nonfinite material to be stored (59). While today we can almost claim to archive everything, or keep a record of televisual events, Derrida wonders if it is ultimately the state that decides what is worthy of preservation, and will always privilege the national and the public over the private and personal. If we were to delegate this responsibility of the politics of memory to a state institution, then it will be a minority or a fraction of the nation rather than "integral" or "general will" (Rousseau) that preserves this memory. Although Derrida says that a politics of memory might exist, he also emphasizes that it is nevertheless necessary to educate citizens, subjects, or televisual audiences to be vigilant with regard to the politics of memory: to be alert that it was a particular politics, as well as essentially a politics, that intervenes in the viewer's experience of an event in a manner fashioned by the producers. One must simultaneously practice and be critical of a politics of memory (63). In Derrida's view, this means developing an awareness of selectivity, which he defines as "a re- appropriation of images" (63). Derrida argues that this awareness will never be a spectatorial critique, or a theoretical vigilance. To politicize these technical events alternatively and to democratize them, one must also be wary of politicization. Here, Derrida's reading of developing a critical stance towards a politics of memory proves to be immensely liberating in light of Baudrillard and Virilio's pessimistic assessments of the potential for agency with regards to television. His is the most optimistic reading of the three, fostering a meta-awareness of a politics of memory in order to politicize it alternatively.

Virilio: Reality and Subjectivity

Virilio's subjectivity comes close to Baudrillard's in being passive and manipulated, but he also argues that as voyeurs we are granted the powers of the divine, and that we are made partners in the propaganda that we choose to believe. Virilio also argues that the media authenticity which "real time" television seeks to promote is an illusion and a deception. Virilio provides the instance of the Gulf War and likens its media spectacle to theatrical production—arranged by directors of media channels (*Desert Screen*, 41). News channels skillfully construct the theatre of "real time"—we take as true the mediated reality of "real time" in place of live spectatorship. Virilio likens such a presentation of war to a game played in a stadium where audiences take sides, keeping track of goals scored between the two countries at war. He discusses the notion of "telepresence," where our positions as voyeurs allow us simultaneously to participate in events

that take place on screen. This phenomenon is similar to us being metamorphosed into divine beings, having gained powers of omniscience (*Desert Screen*, 42). Iraq 2007 replicates this theatrical production of images as we are consistently presented with spectacles that affirm and justify the war on CNN.

Television now controls public opinion and replaces the public space of politics as broadcast news becomes the medium for disseminating the "reality" of events as they unfold. It is the forum of all emotions and opinions. Interestingly, as Virilio explains, democracy takes place via television and incites one to vote–it is not accidental that these images are also controlled and manipulated. Hence, the entire world is under tele- surveillance and we become passive witnesses of an orchestrated production. As Virilio says, one does not discuss a live image, one undergoes it. Derrida, however, offers a solution to the hegemony of this artifactuality—by promoting, through discussion, education, and culture, occasions for preferring alternative productions in the consumers or addressees, who are beginning to participate in production and to undermine the politics of mainstream media. For instance, round-table discussions and forums should be held to discuss alternatives to the dominant ideology that is being perpetuated onscreen. Derrida terms this the "cultural exception"—the pursuit of singularity and identity against hegemony. This is the seeking of individual opinion against the grain of the slanted ideology of broadcast media.

Interestingly, the novelty of the war coverage is the communication with worldwide viewers by satellite—instantaneous retransmission in homes around the world. This development is novel because of the instantaneous communication of the event, for instance when we witness the Hussein lynching as caught by a cellphone and broadcast on YouTube, it has an immediacy that reaches us as if we were really present at the event. Tele-spectators are constantly being emotionally manipulated in what Virilio calls a "publicity clip" (*Desert Screen*, 51). As mentioned earlier, Virilio argues that mass communication possesses traditional attributes of the divine: omnivoyance and omnipresence. War is no longer a war of images but one of waves, war that takes place at the speed of light, this indirect light which illuminates and blinds the minds of a dumbfounded public. News channels alert the entire world to their version of real-time conflict, presenting their version of the truth of events (*Desert Screen*, 52). Thus, Virilio argues that we become victims of television. Virilio makes a convincing case, like Baudrillard, for de-centred agency being passive and manipulated by images which are deceptively produced and orchestrated by television networks. Finally, in the essay "Reality Gulf," Baudrillard states that the virtual war which takes place on television usurps the place of the actual war in our minds; it desensitizes us to the actual horror of war and replaces actual war in our minds (100). According to Virilio, television manipulates our ideological stance on events and perpetrates a theatrical reality rather than an actual one.

Big Brother: A Reading

Big Brother (Channel 4, 2000-2007) is a reality television show which is based on the concept of depriving participants of their usual comforts to be locked in a house and to witness slowly the politics of various participants' being evacuated until the most popular, or the most successful participant, is left in the house

and claims victory. Originally a Dutch programme launched in 1999, this successful show led to the development of an American clone in 2000. The show has done so well in the U.S. that there has even been the need for an All-Stars season (*Big Brother 7*, 2006). Mark Andrejevic, in *Reality TV, The Work of Being Watched*, discusses the premise of the U.S. version of *Big Brother*: it is a show of ten contestants, representing "a cross section of personalities, ethnicities, geographies, and sexual orientations" who "live together in a house constructed by the producers on a lot in Studio City, California" ("Reality TV," 118). To win the show's cash prizes ($500 000 grand prize), contestants agree not to leave the house and its small, attached garden until they are voted out by members of the audience. Each week, the 'houseguests'—as the show's producers call them—are allowed to nominate two of their housemates to be banished. The two or more houseguests who receive the highest number of nominations are then selected for potential banishment. Throughout the following week, viewers are urged to phone in their vote for who should be expelled. A week after, the nominations are announced, and one houseguest is selected to leave, based on the results of the audience vote the week before. The banishment process continues until there are only three houseguests left, and the audience decides who would win the first-, second-, and third-place prizes of $500 000, $100 000, and $50 000.

The promise of *Big Brother* lies in the fact that it grants access to reality via electronic surveillance. The viewers are put in the position of authenticating reality in the *Big Brother* house thanks to the extensive surveillance to which they have access. *Big Brother* represents the triumph of hyperreality which seems more real than real and our fascination with the obscenity of objective reality. Big Brother is exemplary of the hyperreal because of the mundanity and banality of its images. The heightened participation it allows in surveillance and telepresence is also part of its appeal. As Baudrillard clarifies, the obvious goal of this kind of reality television is to enslave the spectators, who are its victims. But the victims are quite willing. They are rejoicing at the pain and the shame they suffer, such as when reality television assaults us with the obscenity of its banality and the crudity of its dialogue. Everybody must abide by society's fundamental logic: interactive exclusion (*Dust Breeding*, 1). As defined by Baudrillard, interactive exclusion is the illusion of participation when one is really an outsider to an event.

Using an especially pertinent scene from this crucial Reality TV series, I would now like to examine the show's dynamics; in this scene, we encounter in the *Big Brother* house a gender conflict taking place that mimics the real-life struggle for power and respect between the sexes which cuts across all human cultures (*Big Brother 4*, 2003). The pleasure thus lies in witnessing the verisimilitude of events rather than an idealized depiction of unproblematic relations that we see in many television programmes, such as serials like *Desperate Housewives* or *Sex in the City*. We thus witness the desiring of sameness on television that Baudrillard points out, as well as the obscenity of objective reality. In this scene, taken from Episode 5 of the fourth season, the conflict lies in the struggle over food. Women are accustomed to a kind of privilege in domestic situations, being traditionally responsible for presiding over the scene of nourishment. Women are used to domestic privilege as men are the dominant bread-winners, and this surfaces in the women on *Big Brother* through their monopolizing the food in the refrigerator, which leads the men to complain. Jon complains to Nush that the women have been consuming all the milk, snacks on food in the refrigerator. As such the men complain nightly about their hunger and the women's selfish behavior. Nush in turn retorts

that she has hardly eaten anything from the refrigerator. Earlier in the day Nush and Jon had a similar heated discussion on the maternity benefits granted to women in the workplace, with Jon contending that women deserved lower salaries because they had to go on maternity leave and were less aggressive at the workplace. Nush had retorted that this was stereotypical and untrue. Could it also be that the participants, being aware of the camera, magnify their gender roles? Are they being exceptionally self-conscious about the performance of their gender onscreen? While the scene is certainly hyperreal because it is, after all, a staging of roles and performances before a camera that the participants are aware of, it does seem to possess a greater verisimilitude than the non-problematic and static gender relationships we see in many other television shows such as drama serials that do not depict the real-life power struggle between the sexes with their steady depiction of idealized romances that do not problematize gender inequality.

Hence the implosion of the "real" and "reel," as life and television dissolve into each other and we are simultaneously voyeurs and the subjects being watched by television. In other scenes, many arguments take place as characters grate on each others nerves due to excessive time together. For example, characters are offended by the idiosyncratic behaviours of certain housemates, such as Anouska's rampant flirting with the men that creates excessive sexual frissons in the household, and decide to complain about their behaviour onscreen. Jon, on the other hand, is opinionated and critical of housemates in each of his confessional scenes and reminds the producers of Big Brother to keep tabs on the items he had brought into the household, as he found it unfair that he had brought more than others, thus reflecting a certain calculative streak in his character. There does seem to be a greater realism than in most scripted television shows. The worst part of this obscene and indecent visibility is the forced enrollment, the automatic complicity of the spectator who has been blackmailed into participating. Yet there is a voyeuristic appeal at work in such programmes. Spectators are empowered as omnipresent voyeurs. Thus, these shows de-centre in the sense of exploding our sense of the real, but empower simultaneously by the omnivoyant gaze they grant us. While we are complicit with the images, our power as spectator is that of our omni-present, demiurgical gaze. The content of *Big Brother*, which documents rampant flirting, exhibitionism and sexual innuendos, even characters stripping their clothes off in front of the camera, demonstrates Baudrillard's thesis that obscenity and pornography are our fascination, as well as the fact that sexuality is a ritual of transparency (*Ecstasy of Communication*, 32). On *Big Brother*, Sexuality is over-exposed and overly visible rather than hidden, as in days of old when sex was taboo (the age of the *Brady Bunch* and wholesome family entertainment).

Images have become our true sex object. We exalt sex on a screen because we seek to reduce it into partial objects. Melanie Klein offered a profound revision of the Freudian theory of libidinal development by proposing a duality in the life and death instincts. She stressed the precocious nature of the superego and the subject undergoing an Oedipus complex. She claimed that the triangular structure of the Oedipus complex could be observed well before the beginning of the genital phase and before the child considered *total objects*, *partial objects* (breast, feces, penis) being the only objects having a role to play at this time. She also stressed the precocious modes of object relations, referring to them not as *phases* in libidinal organization, but as *positions*: the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position. We reduce sex to partial objects in reality television when we fetishize body parts in the many occasions of partial or

full nudity that occurs on reality television as participants decide to expose themselves in their desire to turn the programme into a near pornographic performance on their part. We fulfill desire in the technical sophistication of the body, which is a metastatic body (where desire has traveled from its origin to be sublimated secondarily in the body), a fractal body which can no longer hope for resurrection. In other words, sex is de-sublimated, objectified and made technologically consumable.

We have seen how television assaults our subjectivity and de-centres us by imploding the "real" and the "reel," as Baudrillard argues. Hyperreality threatens to dissolve subjectivity and to control minds; we are subjects of domination by the image and the politics that are encoded within it. The politics encoded in *Big Brother* is that of the popularity contest and the survival of the contestant who endures the show's tricky political intrigues to win the cash prize. The obscene, which is the pornography of banal images, and the spectacle of insignificance, which is the elevation of the banal to spectacle, finally triumph in these reality series. This obscenity also threatens to undermine agency, as real life and television morph into one another and the line between hyperreality and reality collapses. The only agency we are assured in these situations is that of omnipresence as a voyeur, but this is an impotent and passive subjectivity. However, the path out of this radical de-centredness, as Derrida argues, is an awareness and vigilance towards the politics of memory and the politicization events alternately in a way that conceptualizes the image and thought. To conceptualize differently is to reframe events politically and incorporate them into one's individual narrative rather than into a hegemonic one. Our only hope for reclaiming agency, hence, is the critical awareness and distance from the image for which Derrida argues.. While Baudrillard and Virilio argue for the triumph of the manufactured image that dominates and usurps us as simulacra, Derrida provides us hope for reclaiming agency by re- appropriating images and assigning an alternative political meaning to them, one that is different from hegemonic ideology.

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The Witch: Subversive, Heretic or Scapegoat?

By Danny Dawson

<div align="center">

Part I

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An Induced Misogyny: Why were women the disproportionate victims of the Great Witch- Hunt?

Witchcraft, it is true, had been punished as a crime in the past, but this was on a much smaller scale when compared to the prosecutions undertaken by the English, Scottish and most European hierarchies in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[1] This increased intensity is not only supported by comparing the numbers convicted of this felony throughout history, but also by the sharp rise in the proportion of females (the majority of the respective individual hierarchies' chosen scapegoats) found guilty of this crime between 1560-1650.

Before 1400, at most 50% to 60% of accused witches were women. A rise in the proportion of females prosecuted for this crime had taken place in the fifteenth century, increasing to between 60% and 70%, but during the time of the "witch craze", the preponderance of this sex was to be greater still. Assessing Europe as a whole, including England and Scotland, over 80% of all witch suspects were women.[2]

Table 1[3]
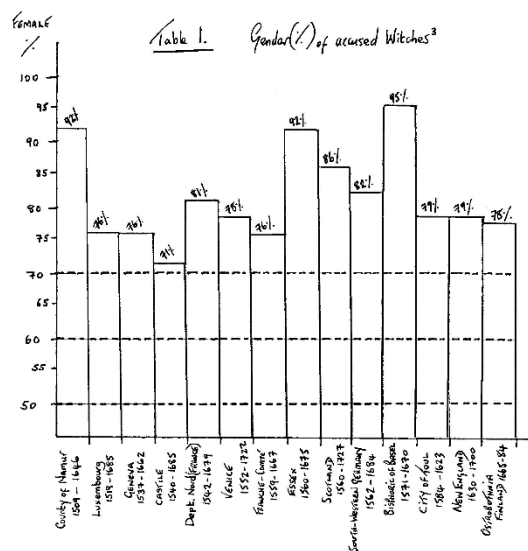
A tradition existed in English, Scottish and European society during the period 1560-1650 which had been prevalent amongst many cultures of times long past. Women were commonly held to be second class citizens or worse. This misogyny was fed by several sources including classical literature and the Hebrew religion. Furthermore Jean Bodin, the sixteenth century social commentator, was to define their supposed worth at the beginning of his work, *République.* When describing the order of a household, which he believed to be the prototype of all larger societies, he placed the wife in last place, behind the father, behind the children, behind the servants and behind the livestock.[4] Although women were commonly downtrodden and despised[5], this was not the paramount reason why this sex was to be disproportionately persecuted at this time. Primarily, most authorities apparently believed that females could undermine a regime, if they were not controlled and subordinated. This conviction was not absurd, when one considers it in the context of its medieval background. A constant theme during this period was that great men and rulers in history had recurringly been ruined by the nature of women. The experiences of Adam (*Genesis*: 3 [16] Solomon (*1 Kings:* 11 [3-4]) and Samson (*Judges:* 16) are excellent examples supporting this viewpoint.

Should the English, Scottish and the majority of European hierarchies have required further justification for their views and resulting behaviour, the most influential text of all the *Bible,* again defended their cause. It was repeatedly expressed that females were a manipulating distraction who deflected the rest of society from its Christian purpose by the use of their "womanly wiles". Did Jesus not warn against the dangers of 'lusting after a woman' in the 'Sermon on the Mount'? Even love between a man and a woman was wrong in certain circumstances, namely if too passionate and physical, as this supposedly adversely affected the individual's rational thought process.[6]

Too intimate an association with a woman, the majority of hierarchies considered, could accordingly cause male members of their respective populaces to transfer their allegiance away from the state and church where it was required to be focused by these regimes.

The majority of the hierarchies realised that the link between women and witchcraft had to be cemented in the minds of the lower orders, to further guarantee the protection of the status quo. The English, Scottish and most of the European regimes were consequently to publicise the view that women, owing to a deviant characteristic of their nature, had distracted many men, making it impossible for them to attain the standards of piety and social conformity which the regime demanded in this epoch. The 'gates of heaven', it was commonly believed, would remain closed to these moral under-achievers.

Most regimes were to express, however, that the labouring classes, in particular the male members, could still achieve a form of poetic justice. By bringing witches, the 'Enemies of God', to trial, not only was the hope of eternal salvation regained, but by accusing women of witchcraft, more significantly, their harmful influence could be repaid.

Female Sensuality

The majority of regimes were to publicise women's alleged obsession with sex and their highly sensual nature as the fundamental deviant feature of their make-up. This characteristic, these hierarchies considered, not only caused men numerous anxieties, but also, more notably, threatened to weaken the existing social structure. Most authorities were, accordingly, to issue propaganda to emphasise the evil purposes of women's sensuality, in an attempt to further encourage their populaces to link women, in particular, to witchcraft.

James I of England expressed the view, in his numerous texts on this subject, that females were intrinsically frailer than men, making it easier for them to be trapped by the Devil into doing his work. The Serpent's deceiving of Eve at the beginning, he asserted, had given Satan ready access to women ever since.[7] Henri Boguet, the notorious witch-hunting prosecutor of Franche-Comté, was to explore in greater detail, however, the heart of this issue. He explained,

> The Devil uses them so, because he knows that women love carnal pleasures, and he means to bind them to his allegiance by such agreeable provocations. Moreover, he adds, there is nothing which makes a woman more subject and loyal to a man, than that he should abuse her body.[8]

The English, Scottish and the majority of the European hierarchies had an honest fear of females and distrusted them, owing to their erotic and lascivious natures. These regimes had undertaken a campaign to degrade the fairer sex and portray them in a sinister light. With reference to statistics regarding witchcraft prosecutions during this period, it appears these hierarchies had successfully linked their labelled scapegoats to witchcraft, and, as effectively, were to associate woman's natural sensuality with subservience to the Devil, even though these elites were aware that there was no truth in either of their accusations. For the purposes of the elites, it was held to be essential in their view, that members of the labouring classes should, however, make these connections.

Figure 1. 'Making a Pact with the Devil' (adapted) by Francesco Maria Guazzo (1929); in J Kingston, *Witches and Witchcraft.*

As the ultimate deed of confirmation and abasement, the witch kisses the Devil's buttocks with the kiss of shame, the *osculum infame.*

To the satisfaction of the ruling classes, women had apparently graduated to the embodiment of depravity in the eyes of the public. Furthermore, women having allegedly entered into a pact, an agreement with Satan, and receiving intimate pleasure amongst other things as their reward, would not the Devil require certain subversive acts to be undertaken in return?

This consideration allowed the authorities to increasingly supply this 'manufactured intolerance' of women, which they had fed the remainder of the populace. They pointed to the new scourge of syphilis which had arisen. This linked female sensuality to an act of great evil against mankind. Here was an illness, painful and often fatal, caught through the agency of a woman. There was also, at this time, a startling increase everywhere in the amount of 'sexually deviant' crimes against morality, which were firmly placed by most establishments at the door of the female sex. The Parlement of Rouen, for example, began to hear frequent cases of adultery, buggery, sodomy and incest. This type of crime increased from less than 1% of the court's business in 1548-9 to 10% in 1604-6. In England and Scotland, females were seemingly as subversive. After 1600 English courts and justices of the peace were to conduct many trials of fornicators. Likewise, the Scottish Parliament, owing to the unprecedented rise in adultery and incest, was to make these capital offences in the 1560s.[9] Controlling the emotions of those involved in any kind of sexual act not acceptable to the regime in power, and for that reason clearly initiated by women, was evidently very difficult. These authorities could not afford to allow this passion to undermine the status quo.

Elitist embarrassment and feelings of subservience due to female sensuality also soared to new heights during the late sixteenth century and first few decades of the seventeenth century. Throughout history, the male of the species had sensed a certain degree of sexual inadequacy. The sexual act created the impression that women were insatiable, whereas man after ejaculation was exhausted and unable further to satisfy

his partner. Moreover, man lost control over his body even at the earliest stages of lovemaking. This loss of phallic control had always greatly reinforced this impression of feminine power and masculine weakness.[10]

Male insecurity concerning the sexual act, especially amongst the establishment and ruling classes, was betrayed, however, as never before, during this late medieval epoch. This was reflected by the obsession with codes of sexual honour, the unnatural emphasis of the codpiece in dress and literature, as well as the predominant, highly patriarchal family structure.[11]

In addition to raising terrible fears, the majority of authorities wanted women punished, as they brought to the fore feelings of embarrassment and inadequacy amongst them. The elite has also considered another advantage of this course of action. Should any amongst them feel unable, for any reason, to conform to these newly generalised standards of Christian sexual behaviour, this failure could be blamed on the female sex as a consequence of satanic intervention. This consideration alleviated or at least greatly reduced any sense of guilt a male could have.

The clergy were as content for women to be persecuted, however unfairly, for their sexuality, as the non-ecclesiastical members of their social class. Frustrations, sexual anxieties and guilt were daily problems to be faced by the clergy. Repressed sexuality sought vicarious expression, the death of a woman 'labelled as a witch' becoming a temporary symbol of victory against intolerable tormenting lust.[12]

Leading from the sexual act, which women dominated and used to influence others to the apparent extent that they could possibly direct the activities and thoughts of the community, in the elite's view, naturally arose the matter of childbirth.

Men obviously had no control over, or ability to supervise, any aspect of childbirth. This event was entirely the responsibility and preserve of the female sex. As Quaife remarks, 'Menstruation was a magical act that terrified the primitive male. Birth was a fundamental mystery denied him.' Most national authorities were accordingly to be equally disturbed by the same realisation. If they believed that women had the ability and will to influence and determine the workings of society through their sexual magnetism, could they not do this to a still greater extent, owing to their monopoly on the reproductive process? Is it not a common saying that, 'The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world!'[13] The scapegoating and persecution of women were apparently accelerated further as a consequence of the elite having grasped this eventuality. In conjunction with this undertaking, these authorities attempted to degrade the process of childbirth as they had the sexual act. According to the propaganda circulated by the hierarchies, menstruation and travail were to be equated with pollution. It was to be regarded as a time of disgrace, labour pains being a just punishment for indulging in the sins of the flesh. Lowering the tone of the most 'holy of procedures' was the authorities' attempt at controlling this function.[14]

The English, Scottish and the majority of the regimes within Europe, who adopted this 'labelling' policy during this period, were understandably not to limit themselves to persecuting a particular category of women. This is not to say that ladies with particular characteristics were not prosecuted more than others.

Elderly Victims

With reference to the few sample studies available, the majority of those females prosecuted as witches were old. In the four Swiss jurisdictions (Basle, Fribourg, Geneva and Neuchâtel) the median age was 60, and in the Nord 55. This conclusion is further supported when analysing the breakdown of the accused at the Essex Assizes during the notorious 'hunt' of 1645[15]:-

- 13% of the accused were between 40 and 49

- 20% of the accused were between 50 and 59

- 47% of the accused were between 60 and 69

- remarkably none were between 70 and 79

- 20% of the accused were between 80 and 89

Most authorities were to persecute this 'aged crone' as she represented the elite's ideal of a witch. Moreover, her characteristics were such that with a little adverse publicity, she could easily become the focal point of hatred within the community, inspiring feelings of anger and fear amongst the masses.

With age, there was understandably a decline in the ability of this woman to make a living. On average, in this epoch, females when working 'full time' received merely a third to a half of a male wage, the result being that they became yet another dependant of the village, subsequently being the butt of much antagonism from their neighbours.[16] Senility was also a by-product of the ageing process, affecting both personality traits and behaviour patterns, causing them very frequently to be at odds with community standards and expectations. The older woman often became depressed, talked to herself, grumbled and felt aggrieved by the world, which had turned against her. In addition, it is possible that this unacceptable conduct began amongst females during menopause – a gender-specific condition.[17] Reginald Scot was to remark on this very point, expressing the view that women came under village suspicion after 'the stopping of the monthly melancholic flux or issue of blood'. Furthermore, the old body was more likely to reveal what these ruling classes had designated to be the Devil or witch's mark than that of a young woman. This anaesthetic scar was commonly held by the public, owing to the elitist propaganda, to con-firm the alleged collusion with Satan, the labelled witch apparently having agreed to work as one of his agents to undermine society. Moreover, this elderly dame, being lonely, often sought companionship in the form of a domestic pet which was easily portrayed by those hierarchies who so desired as a 'familiar', a demon, who acted for the witch and who in turn was suckled by her.

Patriarchal society hoped and expected all women to be under the control and discipline of either a father

or a husband. An old woman would generally fall outside this community requirement, in turn diminishing greatly her ability to avoid group suspicion. Having no partner or family to support her, this female would be poor and live in isolation on the outskirts of the village. The remoteness and independence of this existence only served to further increase fear within the community of this alleged uncontrollable, embittered individual.

As a related aside, there had, in fact, been an alarming increase, from an authoritarian standpoint, in the proportion and numbers of never-married women, of all ages, in society. The early medieval average of one in twenty gave way to one in three in Sweden, for example. Similarly, the statistics available from Switzerland during this epoch support this trend. In rural locations 10% of women never married, whilst in urban centres this rose to 20%. This further fuelled misogynistic fears … members of the public readily accepted the likelihood that these maidens were also involved in evil practices, as they too were regarded as unusual, owing to their status, and not to be trusted.

Significantly, it could thus be argued that the pursuit of witches was in part a 'rearguard action' against the emergence of women as independent adults. Many of the women who were accused were those who challenged the patriarchal view of the ideal woman. They were accused not only by men, but also by other women, because apart from the ability to gain 'benefits', women who conformed to the male image of them felt threatened by any identification with those who did not.[18] Undoubtedly, mature females, however, produced the highest degree of concern amongst the ranks of the elite.   It was commonly believed by the majority of the hierarchies, that many of these women's passion had not subsided, but they found themselves without a partner for whatever reason.[19] These elderly females were, as a consequence, thought to lead young girls into lesbianism, for example, or enjoy the deflowering of innocent young maids by organising group orgies[20], simply to gain sensual satisfaction.

Selling the concept of the witch being generally 'an old woman' also enabled the establishment to strengthen the significant connection in the minds of the lower orders, between females, witches and the Devil. Would not many of these elderly dames, most authorities suggested, have become easy prey for Satan, readily turning to him, as he could supposedly satisfy their sexual appetites? The sexual act would have been degraded further by implication, the Devil having deliberately chosen the old and the ugly for his sexual pleasure.[21]

Figure 2. The Sabbath

Goya: Painting known as 'El aquelare' (The witches' Sabbath), in the Museo de la Fundación Lázaro Galdiano, Madrid.

Unrestricted Persecution

There were a number of categories of women who had none of the characteristics above, which made the 'old crone' so incessantly hunted, who were also to appear time and gain in court charged with the crime of witchcraft.

Women who were closely related to a female executed as a witch fell into this group. In particular,

daughters found themselves in a dangerous position, as the ability and will to work *maleficia* was widely believed amongst the populace, owing to the propaganda of the elite, to be passed on in families during these years. In deciding to burn Dorothea, wife of Burgi Hindremstein, the town councillors of Lucerne could justify their action by the fact that, years before, her mother had been burned.[22] Importantly, the authorities considered that any subversive tendencies inherited would also be destroyed.

The majority of the respective hierarchies, who enjoyed power in England, Scotland and Europe at this time, were also somewhat uncomfortable regarding the role of certain women in their professional capacities. Midwives were repeatedly to be persecuted as witches. This was owing to their seemingly mysterious skills in the taboo-ridden area of reproduction. The authorities did not attempt to hide in any format their distrust and apprehension which was caused by females who undertook this job, owing to their control over the process of childbirth. Frequently, these ladies were required to swear before God never to murder the newborn or to disguise maternity. Suspicions of malpractice always lurked just below the surface and when misfortune struck, most elite, by scapegoating the midwife as a witch, provided the public, as always, with the outlet they required for their anger and blame.[23]

'Wise women healers' were now to be regarded as witches. Professional associations, to which surgeons and physicians would automatically belong, as part of the establishment, looked with distaste at the part these women were playing in this caring vocation. There was to be much friction between those who had traditionally eased suffering without any formal qualifications and those establishment-endorsed 'modern' doctors. These qualified healers were to receive total support from the state, who acted on their behalf on several occasions to stop the amateurs and allow the monopoly over the physical wellbeing of a nation's inhabitants to be placed firmly in the hands of the ruling classes. Notably, for example, in 1641 in Edinburgh, an Act of Parliament was passed forbidding any who had not been duly approved by the surgeons from practising the surgical art. The surgeons were to have the power to seize all such persons and fine these Scots £20. The Act specifically referred to women practising unlawfully in the city and threatened them with prosecution under the Witchcraft Act, if they continued to practise.[24]

Furthermore, the clergy, the ecclesiastical branch of the establishment, were also to feel threatened by females, when they undertook caring responsibilities in the past. As an effective therapist, a 'women healer' undermined the intrinsic authority of the clergy.[25]

Woman – the 'perfect Witch'

The respective regimes in England, Scotland and the majority of Europe during this period had apparently produced an abundant supply of scapegoats for their own purposes. By concentrating on the female sex and the 'old crone' in particular, owing to her idiosyncrasies, the elite easily sold to the masses (the most likely source of social insurrection) the correctness of blaming this minority for social inadequacies. This ultimately resulted in the subsequent hate and distrust by the majority of the labouring classes of these

women.

Any female scapegoat chosen by the establishment was either feared or an 'easy target' (no power, no money, physical weakness etc.). The other characteristic shared by these 'labelled witches' was these authorities successfully made them acceptable victims to most of the general public by manipulation of facts and distortion of reality.

Part II

The Witch-Myth: Paranoia, Persecution, and Preservation of the status quo c. 1560-1650.

It is noteworthy that the actual term 'witch-hunting' evolved in the USA this century[26] and was given two meanings: first, the pursuit of persons, for their supposed characteristics or beliefs rather than for anything they have done; and second, the relentless pursuit of an individual by a group through artificial or contrived charges. This is a very apt definition when analysing the persecution of alleged witches in England, Scotland and the majority of Europe between 1560-1650.

It should be re-emphasised that, in reality, witches never existed in the true meaning of the word[27], in these regions during this period. The creation and persecution of this scapegoat, the witch, was simply considered by those authorities who undertook this practice, as an essential part of their strategy to ensure the protection of their respective status quos.

The fact that these regimes instigated and controlled the pursuit of witches in this epoch is undeniable. The English, Scottish and the majority of the European authorities had created an atmosphere within their nations which was conducive to the persecution of this scapegoat. Through propaganda, the members of the populace, in particular the labouring classes, were relentlessly made aware of the evil nature of the witch and, significantly, were encouraged to believe that support of this elitist policy would prove beneficial to themselves. In such circumstances, it was not difficult for the majority of regimes to misinterpret customs and traditions. For example, a belief formerly considered harmless by the authorities prior to the mid-sixteenth century, but which was later portrayed by the elite as a form of witchcraft, was held by the Benandanti. Innocently, this group believed their spirits participated in night-flights and fought against witches, who were trying to destroy the fertility of the crops and also to kill children.

Similarly, the effects of natural drugs, dreams, activities undertaken during menopause, senility, etc., could also be manipulated so that they appeared to be acts of witchcraft. Accordingly, owing to this convincing elitist publicity, not only did some individuals mistakenly accept the label of witch, but many others held the witch responsible for their problems.

Interestingly, the accusation of contributory negligence is difficult to deny when analysing the demise of

many of the individuals, who were labelled as witches. In truth, it is a very harsh indictment, however, as circumstances were against these victims of elitist policy. For many of this scapegoated class, the new standards of social conduct and piety required by the English, Scottish and the majority of European regimes were considered unattainable, as achieving these demands would have meant a mere existence, not a life. The undertaking of traditional activities by many of these scapegoats, which ultimately proved to be easily misrepresented by the authorities, is therefore understandable. It was a question of necessity, if life was to be made enjoyable.

Crimen Exceptum

These regimes, who saw the necessity to produce the witch-scapegoat to provide an outlet onto which any animosity felt by members of the lower classes towards the establishment could be deflected, were equally aware how significant a nation's legal procedures were as an aid to this persecution[28].
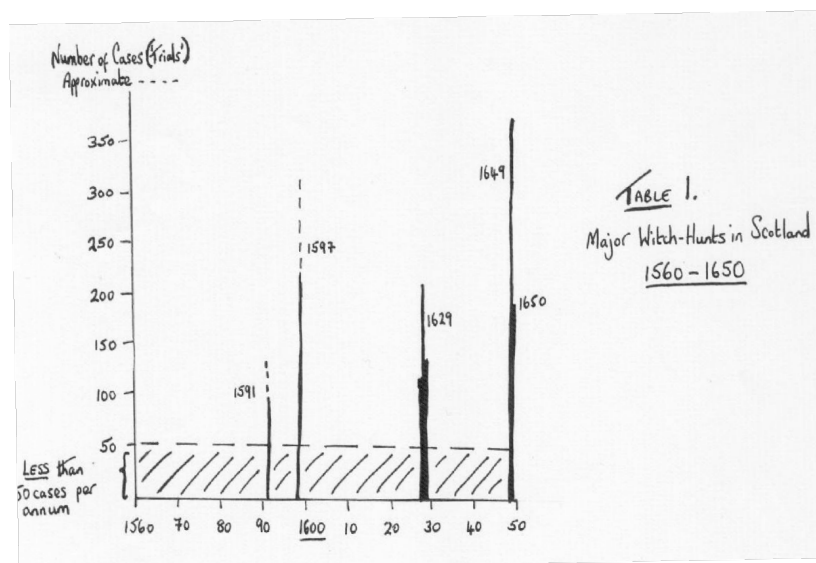
By design and adaptation, not chance, the diverse legal systems[29] of these respective nations had the capacity not only to prosecute the witch, but also to create endless suspects and to publicise this heinous crime. Clearly the legal factors outlined below were fundamental to this process:

1. Witchcraft, owing to the magical nature of the offence, was commonly regarded in England, Scotland and most of Europe as a *crimen exceptum*. The normal rules of law were not to apply to this felony, e.g. the *corpus delicti* did not have to be established, i.e., that a crime had actually been committed. Moreover, as the crime had the characteristic that the evidence was held to disappear with the act *(facti transeuntis),* anybody could be a witch. This was further emphasised by the fact that it was impossible to have a

verifiable alibi.

2. One of many procedural safeguards to be cast out or relaxed was that concerning witnesses. A much wider category of people were eligible to give a testimony in a witchcraft case when compared to another offence.

3. Again, different evidential requirements applied concerning this crime. In England, standards of indicia were lowered and the forms of material considered relevant increased. In Scotland and Europe, the ignoring of procedural safeguards was reflected in the breakdown of the Roman-canon law of proof. Habitually under this procedure, two eyewitnesses to the offence, or a confession by the suspect, were strictly required for conviction. Owing to the nature of the crime of witchcraft, however, it was not usual for eyewitnesses to come forward, which meant increased pressure was imposed on the prosecution, i.e., the authorities, to produce a confession.

4. The rules concerning torture, particularly in Scotland and most of Europe, were accordingly "extended", having been considered by these hierarchies as essential to ensure the production of the confession. Previously a suspect was allowed to be tortured on a maximum of three occasions depending on the specific rules of a particular nation. The "reformed" law concerning this issue, however, was not to mention restraint concerning the duration of torture, as it was to be regarded as the continuation of one process.

It should be emphasised that torture featured to a greater extent in Scotland and the majority of European countries concerning witchcraft, in comparison to England. This was not owing to the English regime's lack of express, legitimate right to impose coercion, as, where it was deemed necessary, the Privy Council issued torture warrants. The political nature of the crime of witchcraft was underlined by the subject of these particular cases. It is more probable, in fact, that this coercive form of evidence production was little used in England, as the authorities were fortunate enough not to have to rely on torture to make their scapegoating policy successful. The English courts did not demand such vigorous proofs for conviction as their European counterparts.

5. Witch-hunters were common in all these countries and had the effect of aiding the legal systems to prosecute witches. Although the respective ruling elites disassociated themselves from the manipulative practices of these individuals, they employed these pursuers of witches and did not enforce prohibitive measures against them, unless their hands were forced owing to public outcry. From a practical viewpoint, 'proofs' of diabolic pacts, etc., and the vast number of suspects they unearthed, were ideal propaganda material for the regimes to publicise.

These regimes were to introduce other comparable legal measures throughout this period to ensure that these 'criminals' received acceptable punishments for their 'crime'. 'Acceptable' refers not only to the requirements of the establishment, but also what the remainder of the populace demanded, who had digested the elitist propaganda concerning witchcraft. The English, Scottish and the majority of the European authorities additionally had to adapt their judicial systems to ensure that they could cope with

the increased number of trials of this nature. The possibility of massive conviction rates in certain districts had to be controlled.

The process of punishing those people convicted for the crime of witchcraft was to be suitably developed by three legal innovations in particular:-

1. The reform of existing statutes: England, Scotland and the majority of European nations were to introduce new witchcraft legislation during the period 1560-1650. These statutes were not only to widen the category of practices classified as witchcraft, but most also imposed harsher penalties for the various forms of this crime.

2. The movement from Church to State control: In England, Scotland and most continental countries, witchcraft had historically been a crime under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authorities, but by 1570 it had commonly become a secular governed offence. In England, the foundations were in place in the 1560s for a significant increase in accusations of witchcraft, as the accuser no longer had to pay the costs of bringing his grievance to trial, nor did he now have to suffer the inconveniences of the talion. Instead, the authorities were now to fund and supervise the case against the suspect. Witches were to be more aggressively pursued in every country which persecuted these labelled individuals, from the time when the secular authorities took charge of this crime. Not only was there now apparently a great chance of being accused of witchcraft, but the punishment for this crime was also to be generally much harsher. Unlike their ecclesiastical counterparts, the secular authorities could inflict bodily harm[30].

3. Devolution of power to prosecute witches: Local courts, during this period, received authority from their respective regimes to try those individuals suspected of witchcraft in their region. The demand for the prosecution of this scapegoat, both from local members of the establishment and amongst the labouring classes, was on occasion so relentless that the central authorities had found it difficult to cope with all the accusations from various districts.

Local courts, as a rule, were to produce a greater number of prosecutions when compared to how a central authority controlled an alleged outbreak of witchcraft. This is understandable as the source of the problem (non-conformist/anti-establishment activity) causing the persecution to take place was close to 'home', not at a distance. Accordingly, if the matter was not settled quickly, the consequences would probably directly affect the judiciary of the district, i.e., the local elite. In these areas, dramatic rises in convictions of 'witches' were, additionally, often owing to the members of these judicial bodies simply abusing their positions to further their own ambitions[31].

A manufactured scapegoat

Having introduced flexible legal procedures concerning the crime of witchcraft, the authorities did adjust

levels of persecution of this scapegoat within their nations to suit their needs. It appears a consistent trend that the levels of witch prosecutions, at any given time, did not depend upon the strength of the regime, but on the elites' confidence in their ability to maintain power. For example, there were large outbreaks of witch persecutions in Essex in 1645 and in Scotland in 1649, when the respective establishments felt their status quos were particularly under threat from revolutionary

tendencies, which needed to be distracted. Accepting that the creation of the witch, and the control of the labelling and scapegoating process surrounding this character, was governed by the English, Scottish and the majority of the European authorities within their respective nations during this period, significantly makes many previously unanswerable issues surrounding the subject of witchcraft more understandable. Notable examples include, 'why the witch-hunts took on such overwhelming proportions in some nations and not in others, and why they apparently disappeared for years in certain areas and then recommenced?'

Doubt is again reflected upon the reality of the witch by the observation; if witches had really existed at this time, surely there would have been consistently a more even representation of all social classes amongst those prosecuted (not just the weak, despised, or distrusted), including members of the elite? Moreover, if this deviant had been real, then members of the populace would have automatically denounced them to the authorities to protect themselves. The regimes, additionally, would not have considered it necessary to issue endless propaganda concerning the witch and to provide the members of the labouring classes with incentives to persecute this deviant, in the form of possible fame and fortune, etc.

Equally significant proofs remain, however, which further confirm that the witch never existed in England, Scotland and Europe during the period 1560-1650. Firstly, there is the remarkable realisation that no witch was ever caught *in flagrante crimine* (in the act)[32]. The authorities were apparently capable of dispersing meetings of other subversive groups, but not once did they successfully conduct a raid on a witches' coven[33]. More extraordinary however, is the fact that these witches, with all their alleged powers, never seemed able to escape from prison or from retribution by using magic and few were wealthy[34].

Figure 1

'Détail du Sabbat' by Michael Herz This representation of the infamous witch- gathering was taken from Roland Villeneuves's *Le Diable (*Érotologie *de Satan)* (Paris, 1963), p.206.

Contemporary writers, such as Johannes Nider and Spina[35] among others, also recognised that the witch was a 'myth'. They remarked on cases where women imagined themselves carried a long distance, but in reality remained immobile at home. This was not the only class of informed opinion to conclude that those labelled as witches were persecuted unfairly. Some with practical experience of trials in a professional capacity were ultimately to express their doubts as to the culpability of those prosecuted. One such individual was the Jesuit Friedrich von Spee, who for years acted as confessor to witches about to be executed. He asserted that he had never seen one who had really done the things to which she confessed[36]. Had not Alonso de Salazar Frias, the investigator deputised by the Suprema of the Basque witchcraft trials of 1610,

also concluded that the entire affair was 'nothing but a chimera'?[37] It is an unequivocal fact that, whenever impartial investigations, similar in nature to the Basque inquiry of 1610, were conducted into the alleged practice of witchcraft, they produced negative results.

Decline of the Witch-hunt: Post-period confirmation that the witch was a "myth"

Witches did not become extinct, or go away for some unknown reason, but instead the responsibility for their 'disappearance', as with their creation, should be linked to the attitude of the English, Scottish and the majority of the European hierarchies. Having been the manufactured product of the 'labelling and scapegoating' perspective of these regimes, this 'deviant' was to be increasingly considered unfashionable by the authorities after 1650, and consequently inadequate for strategies to protect their respective status quos.

Promoting the existence of witches had become intellectually disreputable by the mid-seventeenth century, as the 'new world view' made them figures of superstition. This new world view was a philosophical and religious revolution that changed the whole concept of the cosmos and how it worked. Descartes (1596-1650), who led the philosophical revolution, dismissed traditional mediaeval philosophy and argued for the existence of universal, observable, mechanical and describable laws of nature that made the activities of demons and witches unnecessary and illogical[38]. Cartesianism and similar belief systems which were rapidly spreading amongst the populace as part of the religious revolution, also promoted an orderly universe. Russell summarises succinctly this creed's view of witchcraft, 'God would have no wish to upset the laws he himself had established; much less would he give the Devil power to do so.'[39]

Times had changed, as had the consensus of progressive thought concerning witchcraft in the latter- half of the seventeenth century. The English, Scottish and the majority of the European authorities were becoming increasingly aware that there was no acceptable way of proving this crime in this philosophical climate. It was apparent they could no longer rely on the 'witch-scapegoat' to present an adequate distraction for members of the populace who harboured revolutionary tendencies.

The persecution of witches was accordingly abandoned by these regimes in a gradual fashion over the following few decades. For example, the last execution for witchcraft in England occurred in 1684, in Scotland in 1727, and in France in 1745. Trials became 'few and far between' approaching these dates. These authorities were, moreover, to adjust their judicial systems and legislation to bring about this final decline of witch-hunting within their nations, just as they had manipulated this procedure to commence the pursuit of these labelled individuals in an earlier epoch. Notably, there were three main judicial and legal developments which contributed to the decline of witchcraft: (1) the demand for conclusive evidence regarding the *maleficium* and the pact; (2) the adoption of stricter rules regarding the use of torture (particularly relevant in Scotland and Europe); and (3) the promulgation of decrees either restricting or eliminating prosecutions for witchcraft.[40]

Number Indicted

TABLE 2.
Witchcraft Prosecutions at the Assizes (Home Circuit) 1558 –
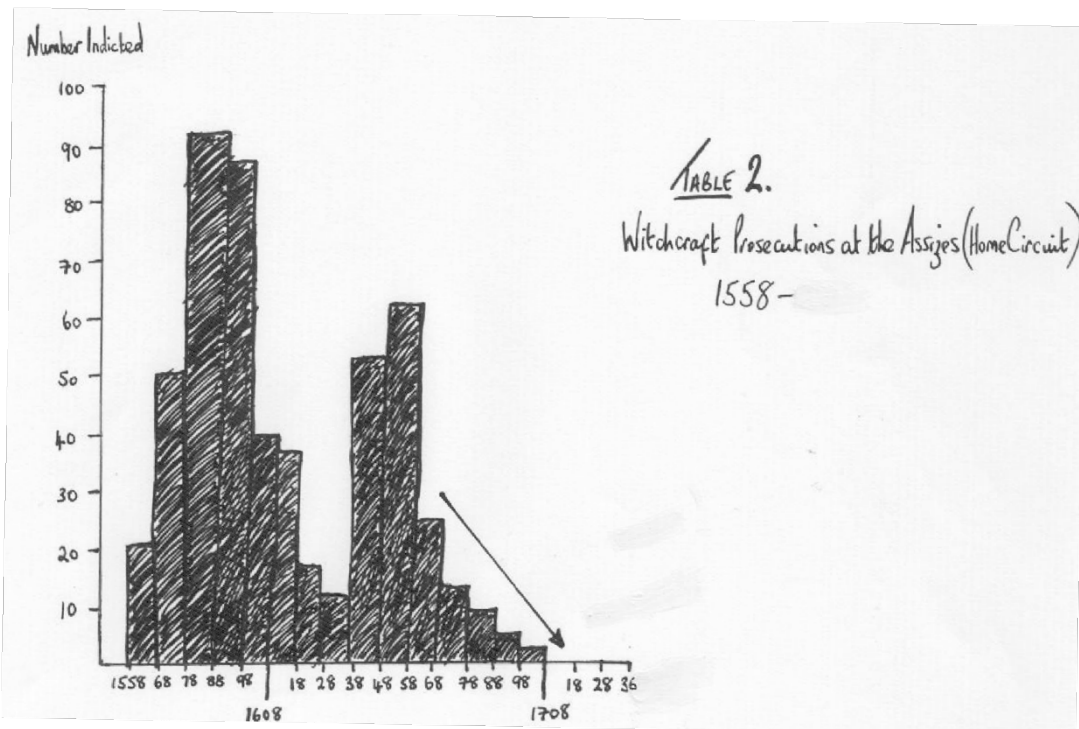
The majority of regimes considered they had to maintain their intellectual respectability by relentlessly distancing themselves from the witch-beliefs, which they had formerly promoted.[41] These hierarchies further realised the necessity of 'modifying their views' to reflect the new ideas, or they believed, they would find themselves unheard, their authority diminished and potentially regarded as replaceable.

There were, however, other connected factors which also influenced the Scottish regime and the majority of the European regimes, in particular, to cease persecuting witches in the second half of the seventeenth century. Many communities were literally rebelling against this measure. Over a century of the 'witch-craze' had taken its toll. There were several towns where the majority of females and numerous males had been sentenced to their deaths. Consequently, the fear of being accused of witchcraft and the possibility of being tortured were making life in many regions unbearable. Insufficient finances were another reason why some villages and towns were hesitant about continuing the witch-hunt. There had been earlier instances of witch-trials concluding prematurely, when a population, having used all its resources, could no longer support such a costly judicial extravagance, e.g., at Trier in the 1580s and 1590s. By the second half of the seventeenth century, so great had been these persistent demands on a community's coffers to support these trials and their related expenses, however, that some members of the populace had gradually become resentful and opposed the establishment's pursuit of witches. As Levack suggests,

> If one considers the number of suspects who were held in gaol at any one time during large with- hunts, the burden of prison maintenance <u>alone </u>becomes a plausible explanation for opposition to the continuation of the hunt.[42]

Significantly, members of the ruling elite were also increasingly to be accused of witchcraft during this period, as they were simply the only possible accomplices which remained in certain areas where 'witches' were notoriously active and had accordingly been harshly punished. This was especially true in Europe, where the 'inquisitional fires more frequently ran out of fuel'.

After 1650, not only was the persecution of witches becoming unfashionable and insupportable, but this procedure was increasingly to murder the elite, which was the class it sought to protect. Furthermore, it appeared to incite opposition to the authorities from sections of society which they desired as allies. In the case of one Scottish witch in 1661, who languished in prison for eight months at public charge, a <u>local laird</u> petitioned the Privy Council to have her either tried or set at liberty.

The respective authorities portrayed enlightened acceptance of the 'new world view', whilst secretly recognising their own best interests, which meant enacting statutes which in legal terms marked the death of the crime of witchcraft.

These statutes were also to confirm by their terminology that the witch never existed, in the true sense, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, the wide-ranging 1736[43] statute which repealed the statutes of Mary of Scotland (1563)[44], Elizabeth I (1563)[45], and James I and VI (1604)[46], denies reality to magical powers.

In Hindsight

The conclusion that the 'witch' was both created and killed off by the English, Scottish and the majority of the European authorities, when they considered it efficacious for their own aims, emphasises that this figure was simply a 'manufactured myth'. Furthermore, the view that the witch was the product of the labelling and scapegoating perspective undertaken by the regimes at this time, can clearly be consistently supported.

Notes

[1] Even though most hierarchies were to adopt this subtle strategy, it is emphasised that there was no international conspiracy.

[2] J Klaits, *The Servants of Satan* (Indiana, 1985), pp.58-9.

[3] Adapted from B Levack, *The Witch-hunt in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1987), p.124.

4 The significance of the patriarchal structure and the low regard for women at this time is further empha-sised by J Bodin, *Six Livres de la Republique* (Paris, 1576), in H Kamen, *European Society 1500-1700* (London, 1984), p.23.

5 Women in several respects were 'ideal' victims as they were vulnerable and were regarded as having little value to society.

6 See 2 *Samuel*:112-27 – David's lust for Bathsheba resulted in adultery and arranging the murder of Uzziah. See also *Matthew*: 141-12 – Herod's lust for Salome, the consequence of which was the request for John the Baptist's head on a plate.

7 Klaits, *Servants*, p.68.

8 Klaits, *Servants*, p.68.

9 Klaits, *Servants*, p.80.

10 G Quaife, *Godly Zeal and Furious Rage* (London, 1987), p.82

11 This situation was noticed by Klaits, *Servants*, amongst others.

12 Quaife, *Godly*, p.104

13 The subject of infanticide should also be considered, further supporting this argument.

14 Quaife, *Godly*, p.83. Inherent in such views was the denigration of nature. Men envied the female's natural creative role and tried to compensate for this inadequacy by a frenetic attempt to create and dom-inate in the political and cultural spheres. It can, accordingly, be argued that it is this dichotomy between nature and culture, which is the essential difference between female and male personalities and which is the fundamental factor to the understanding of misogyny.

15 Quaife, *Godly*, pp.162-3. See also A Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1970), p.161.

16 The very weakness of the social position of women, particularly widows or unmarried women, made it safer to accuse them of witchcraft than to accuse men, whose political, financial, legal and physical strength rendered the accuser more liable to reprisals. See J Russell, *A History of Witchcraft* (London, 1980). This reasoning was even more applicable to those women who were also elderly.

17 Quaife, *Godly*, p.163.

[18] C Larner, *Enemies of God* (Oxford, 1981), p.102.

[19] Levack, *The Witch-hunt* (London, 1987), p.130.

[20] Quaife, *Godly*, p.94

[21] Quaife, *Godly*, p.94

[22] N Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons* (London, 1975), p.248.

[23] Klaits, *Servants*, pp.96-9.

[24] C Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion* (Oxford, 1984), p.150.

[25] Quaife, *Godly*, p.11.

[26] C Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion* (Oxford, 1984), p.88.

[27] This view is confirmed by the terminology of the statute of 1736 (9 Geo.11v), which justified and signalled the end of witch-hunting in England and Scotland.

[28] This deflecting of anger onto witch-scapegoats and ultimately punishing them was clearly more prevalent when a ruling elite felt the status quo was particularly under threat from potential revolution, see Table 1.

[29] Legal procedures in Europe concerning witchcraft were based on the inquisitional process. In England, the accusatorial process was used. Scotland, although based on the inquisitional procedure, also shared many characteristics of the English system concerning this crime. The Scottish process was in many respects a 'half-way house'.

[30] In the past, had not ecclesiastical bodies in charge of witchcraft often handed those convicted of this crime over to their secular arm for punishment?

[31] It is emphasised, however, that the majority of central authorities were also unlikely to uphold many of the procedural safeguards which still remained concerning this crime.

[32] If witches were real, gatherings such as that portrayed in Figure 1 would not only have confirmed a participant's guilt, but would have been impossible to continuously conceal.

[33] B Levack, *The Witch-hunt in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1987), p.13.

[34] S Anglo, 'Reginald Scot's Discoverie of Witchcraft: Scepticism and Sadduceeism' in S Anglo, *The Damned Art – Essays in the Literature of Witchcraft* (Various) (London, 1977), p.126.

[35] See G Quaife, *Godly Zeal and Furious Rage* (London, 1987), p.201. Even though the remarks of Johannes Nider were made in the early fifteenth century and those of Spina in the early sixteenth century, they are equally relevant to the period c.1560-1750, as these imaginary journeys were still being described by deluded women in this later epoch.

[36] F Von Spee, *Cautio Criminalis* (Rinteln, 1631), in E Midelfort, *Witch-hunting in South-Western Germany 1562-1684* (Stanford, 1972), p.28.

[37] Levack, *The Witch-hunt*, p.13.

[38] A later development of this philosophy, 'scientific positivism', declared that only those phenomena which can be identified by scientific method can reasonably be said to exist.

[39] J Russell, *A History of Witchcraft* (London, 1980), p.124.

[40] See Levack, *Witch-hunt*, p.215.

[41] Table 2 clearly depicts how witchcraft prosecutions at the Assizes (Home Circuit) continuously decreased after c.1650. Statistics from the other English Assize Circuits portray a similar reduction in 'offenders'.

[42] Levack, *The Witch-hunt*, p.165.

[43] (9 Geo. 11v)

[44] (Mary, 9.)

[45] (5 Eliz. xvi)

[46] (1 Jas. Ixii)

Apophasis, Aletheia: William Faulkner's *The Hamlet*

By Owen Elmore

Abstract.

William Faulkner loved the South, and he feared many of the same social currents that

southerners have stereotypically feared: e.g., women's equality, the mingling of races and classes, and change of most any kind. Unlike most Southerners, however, Faulkner knew change *must* come for the life of the community to continue, so in his books he set about to make a flat, static, romanticized South a more open and dynamic one, not by seeking to wholly dismantle Southern historical misconceptions but by targeting specific areas and re-conceiving them through delicate and painstaking literary work. In *The Hamlet*, for example, Faulkner treats the areas of gender and class relations.

I

William Faulkner had a copy of Lao Tzu in his library (Blotner, *William Faulkner's*

Library 89), but he didn't need to go East for Eastern psychological theories, for such a sensibility exists at the foundations of Western culture in Heraclitus. Where Heraclitus found it is anybody's guess (although philosophies were probably traded with the stories and textiles along the ancient Silk Road, ca. 500 B.C.E), but nevertheless there it is. Richard Geldard recently retranslated and reinterpreted what little survives of Heraclitus, but first, in order that his readers may have the tools to approach non-binary philosophy, Geldard defines two Greek words: *apophasis* and *aletheia*. The first means "denial or negation" but "has the connotation of affirmation through negation. […] For the Greeks," explains Geldard, "apophatic theology involved disposing of the myths of the Olympian gods while affirming a revised vision of the Unknown God, the unreachable, unmanifest but immanent deity" (23). Myths tend to gather layers of interpretations and reinterpretations as the generations pass, and for the Greeks *apophasis* or Negative Theology served as a kind of washing process, stripping away the caked-on build-up so as to get back down to the kernels of meaning. Rather than soothe believers, as is usually the purpose of those encrustations, the intended effect on the population was one calculated for shock value, so as to restore a lately

sluggish and irresponsive community. A problem endemic to human organization (not to mention human being) is its tendency to become weighted down by itself over time. Rules and regulations, though all very appropriate and necessary at the time they were drawn up, multiply asexually and eventually become burdensome, having the effect of overly dulling the receptivity of the social body to the sudden needs of changing times.

The second word – "the Greek word for truth, *aletheia*, consists of the prefix *a*, not, and *lethe*, forgetfulness or forgetting" (24) – expresses a negative as well, but it is a negation that affirms without assuming special knowledge: "not-forgetting" as opposed to "knowing." It is a paradox, as it must be if one wants to prevent the perversion of reality by happy endings, letting humanity off life's hook with a sweet and false sense that its hunger is sated. Geldard interprets Heraclitus's statement "I searched my nature" as just such a negative affirmation; nature prefers to hide, and who are we to find it? The search is the thing, so the word "know" must go. Not-forgetting, on the other hand, denotes a non-linear or at least a non-progressive approach … and since the journey is all, where is there to hurry to anyway? *Aletheia* as well connotes that an understanding of nature may be something we *were* close to but that we have lost and continue to lose as we progress in life. The more you know, the less you understand, hence the attempt at reversing direction when you sense the loss beginning. And this will *feel* appropriate somehow, for

> genius rebels at received tradition, not because it is inherently wrong by being the tradition, but because we learn, as Ralph Waldo Emerson understood so well, not from instruction but from provocation. True teaching provokes in the student an intuition of the truth, but because it is provocation, there follows an aversive reaction in the one so provoked (Geldard 29) [,]

hopefully deterring a relapse into progressive thinking because, as Heraclitus warned, "Human beings are carried away by every new theory" (30). Geldard writes, "The attention which should be focused on knowing ourselves is whipped away by the attractions of new ideas and easy solutions to intractable problems" (30). Very few of us ever avoid this trap, as a look at a newspaper in any age proves.

If you are a writer looking to apply Lao Tzu, Emerson, or Heraclitus to your novels in conscious hope of slowing a constant depletionary cultural crop rotation in your own community, what would you have us not-forget? How would you prevent your arable community from becoming a Waste Land? First, you need a negative affirmation, a lack at the center so to speak, thus allowing you to get the separating of the wheat from the chaff begun but not to think you have got it separated yourself, which is simply a providing of solutions that only become part of the problem. A book that had been around in Faulkner's thinking and manuscripts for fifteen years needed just such a Negative Theology, an Unknown God as its anti-thesis for all things Snopes – but it still had to *be* Snopes, right? That decenteredless book was called *Father Abraham* in skeletal form, but it took on flesh over the years in the form of added short stories and characters, and ideas for lacing this new meat to the original bone. Still, it would not live. A conscience and a spirit were eventually brought in (Eula) but it needed that missing heart, for in Negative Theological operations, viable contrivances must have *had* a heart once to have lived or to discover the possibility of living again because "was" is compost, manure, the quickening nutrients and minerals necessary to life.

That heart proved to be Colonel Sartoris (Sarty) Snopes in a story called "Barn Burning." It is a story of an anti-Snopes Snopes not-burning, of Sarty at least not-burning either a barn or his moral conscience as Snopeses are often, if not caught doing, at least reasonably accused of doing. Sarty is a quick kernel Faulkner places into the book's ancestral dust, a dormant Southern Superego located geographically, given physical presence, a name, and a non-action. Sarty is the apophatic heart of the book, the superego searching. Later, Eula Varner Snopes is introduced as the book's aletheic spirit, the id not forgetting, and V. K. Ratliff is its conscience on the move: the beachcombing ego's ever-mobile mediating between the heart's summons to abdication and the spirit's insistent past-pull. Ratliff moves methodically to and fro on his sewing-machine buckboard, tilling topsoil with sand and irrigating the lot. From the reader's air, and as the buzzard sees it, *The Hamlet* forms a kind of tessellate mosaic pattern shimmering in the sun like cut and shaped pieces of marble, hard stone, colored glass, terra-cotta, mother-of-pearl and enamel cross-plowed in thin strips and then cut into gold and silver cubes: gilded glassine slabs of pale shades with gold and silver leaf. There is a deliberate Byzantine irregularity to the painted surface, as there was in Crete and on the Greek mainland during the Bronze Age when water-worn pebbles were used to decorate floors in subtle, multicolored designs. Ratliff's design appears to live, shimmering in the solar heated air like fields of parti-colored wheat. But it is more like a surgical graftage, where, at book's beginning, the heart (Sarty) is gone unsearched for, and the spirit (Eula) is wounded – which to the artist and to Ratliff simply means the compost is ripe and planting time nears.

At the end of Eula's chapter, after Ratliff glimpses her leaving in the buggy for her Texas honeymoon, the movement around him blurs into a stereoptic vision of time itself, and he is able to see beyond the harness of animal regret everyone else in Frenchman's Bend is locked into like trace-galled mules or their testosterone-galled riders keeping watch at the Varner house the summer previous. Images of wagon wheels spanning their serviceable existences provide V. K. an objective sense of calm beyond time's predatorial reach. He lets "the reins loose in one hand," seeing everything circle-spin before him in a reverie, a slow-turning epiphany. And a story emerges, of Flem cheating the devil out of Hell. Catherine D. Holmes reads a direct ironic allusion or two and attributes some quite specific wording in this scene to George Bernard Shaw's 1903 play *Man and Superman* (Holmes 101). This may be as close a clue as Faulkner gives to indicating a regenerative purpose, for in the allusions to and borrowed wording from Shaw's drama we discover that V. K.'s social function as his creator saw it is best explained by Don Juan in Act III, spoken to the Devil:

> I tell you that as long as I can conceive something better than myself I cannot be easy unless I am striving to bring it into existence or clearing the way for it. That is the law of my life. That is the working within me of Life's incessant aspiration to higher organization, wider, deeper, intenser self-consciousness, and clearer self-understanding. [...] It is in absence of this instinct in you that makes you that strange monster called a Devil. It is the success with which you have diverted the attention of men from their real purpose [...] that has earned you the name of the Tempter. It is the fact that they are [...] drifting with your want of will, instead of doing their own, that makes them the uncomfortable, false, restless, artificial, petulant, wretched creatures they are. [...] [B]eauty, purity, respectability, religion, morality, art,

patriotism, bravery and the rest are nothing but words which I or anyone else can turn inside out like a glove [...], mere words used for duping barbarians into adopting civilization, or the civilized poor into submitting to be robbed and enslaved. [...] [But] the philosopher is in the grip of the Life Force. This Life Force says to him 'I have done a thousand wonderful things unconsciously by merely willing to live and following the line of least resistance: now I want to know myself and my destination, and choose my path; so I have made a special brain – a philosopher's brain – to grasp this knowledge for me. [...] And this' says the Life Force to the philosopher, 'must thou strive to do for me until thou diest, when I will make another brain and another philosopher to carry on the work.' [...] [M]y brain is the organ by which Nature tries to understand itself. [...] Does a ship sail to its destination no better than a log drifts nowhither? The philosopher is Nature's pilot. And there you have our difference: to be in hell is to drift: to be in heaven is to steer. (Shaw 368-71)

This speech touches upon so many of the moral situations and incidents in *The Hamlet* (and there are further connections to the larger action in the play as well: the theme of male subjugation to the feminine) that I am drawn to see the relationship between the two as exemplum (Faulkner's novel) and formal statement of creative intention (Shaw's play). It could be said that Faulkner's placing of Flem in hell in stead for Don Juan makes the book a parody of the play, but it must be remembered that it is Jack Tanner telling the story of Don Juan in Hell, just as Ratliff tells this story of Flem; the key is the teller and the allusion, not the stories told, for both in relation to the teller are meant to convey a feeling of psychological impotence. Tanner will work that out, finally understanding there to be no contradiction between his masculine idealism and his subsequent dedication to the feminine by marriage, and V. K. too will find a way to serve the feminine – though by speaking and acting for feminine principles rather than in marriage – but the story in itself is right now insolvable: Where did Flem's soul get to? Well, where is Colonel Sartoris Snopes?

The free-playing language of the second and third quarters of *The Hamlet* constitutes Faulkner's least constrained, possibly best and most beautiful poetry-prose ever, and it is the carnival that sets it free, as if he had dragged each pre-*Absalom* book into the hall of mirrors at the Lafayette County Fair one dry September day. Were Faulkner's entire body of work a typhoon, the second half of *The Hamlet* would be its quiet eye, enabling the senses to experience *all* of what the thunder said before Pound's red pen began circumcising the saying, hearing metamorphic yarns of interspecies eros as parodic mirror to familial betrayal, and seeing the spotted horses as they turn another mirror onto the mirror the way "dawn's rosy miniatures" in Book Three, Chapter One curve out in tiny detail the cosmic theme of the universal Book: the putrification of social status gained by money no matter how socially acceptable the method for gain may be and the fecund purity of happiness attained by love no matter how socially taboo the method for attainment may be. And as always, everything connects outwardly from the text too, not only with other Faulkner work (as we've just seen) but with other literature. *The Hamlet* ends with a reworking of "Lizards in Jamshyd's Courtyard," which, as Mary Flowers Braswell clearly shows, parallels thematically Chaucer's ending of his *Canterbury Tales* (Taylor 66-70). And the book's connections go still deeper back.

The Genesis story shares an archetypal motif with Chaucer's *Tale of the Wife of Bath*— but the latter tale

leaves off the Curse as a result of the fall of humanity; indeed, in Celtic mythology it is as if "she's the one" (as Faulkner wrote of Woman in *The Hamlet*) God made in His image, as if she's the hero of the tale, not Man. Chaucer's and Faulkner's recurrent utilization of this theme are not isolated and are certainly no coincidence, for the same mythological motif recurs in culture after culture, age after age— though its reference, as in Genesis, often becomes marginalized. As the myths do, Chaucer and Faulkner embed the archetype within current social dialectical forms so that it is pertinent and accessible. In Faulkner's dialectic, an ambitious young entrepreneur (Flem Snopes amounts to less ethically than the sum of his parts might suggest, just as the knight in Chaucer's tale does not equal his armor and rank) has selfishly taken into captivity a young maid. The community, though uneasy, has neither regard nor inkling for what the maid might herself desire; they are impotent to act, and so the maid's captor could care even less. Conversely, Chaucer's knight is sentenced to search out the answer for what a woman desires, for the order of Arthur's court sets a jury of the victim's peers as his judges. He finds different answers but never does one suffice. Then, as he is returning to Arthur's court in despair, he spies a magical circle of dancing beauties. They disappear at his approach but remaining there stands an old and ugly hag. She will give the knight the answer he needs but only after he promises to grant her any favor; he agrees and so she does and soon they stand together before Arthur *and* Guinevere where the knight repeats the words the hag gave him: "Wommen desiren to have sovereynetee / As wel over hir housband as hir love, / And for to been in maistrie hym above" (IIID 1038-40). No woman in the court can disagree with these words, and so the knight is freed. The hag cashes in her debt, however, and, to the knight's horror, marries him. That night, as the newlyweds lie in the marriage bed, the knight cannot bring himself to the task of consummation. The hag reprimands him for his failure, but then allows him a choice: either take her as she is and have a faithful wife or take her ever-beautiful and ever-young but ever-unfaithful. The knight, breaking completely beneath these limited choices, gives the decision over to the hag. But due to this ability to admit his helplessness and give over control to the hag, she rewards the knight with the best of both worlds, transfiguring into a young woman of faithful beauty. "And whan the knyght saugh verraily al this, / That she so fair was, and so yong therto, / For joye he hente hire in his armes two, / His herte bathed in a bath of blisse" (IIID 1250-53).

In Faulkner's *The Hamlet*, feminine principles and characteristics are of the same importance as in Chaucer, and though stated communal values may still reflect this, there has occurred a chemical imbalance in the soil of Southern culture so to speak, making coming to the defense of Woman nearly impossible. In general, men are afraid to appear feminine in any way these days, and that includes being accused by other men of holding feminine principles. A misinterpretation/misapplication of Feminism within the larger culture has contributed to this. In seeking political and economic equality for women, one of Feminism's goals was to revise the goddess/whore archetypal stereotype prevalent in Western myth. This revision was and still is essential to the growth of our culture, but demythologizing has proven to be a less than simple operation. The old male impulse to hold a door for a woman is indicative of an unconscious psychological respect for what women represent: the trans-temporal endurance of verities like compassion, nurturance, and home. This is an unfair standard for any individual woman to try and embody, just as it is unfair to expect any man to try and become the emotionless protector and servant of Woman. But, for the sake of community, we are all acculturated to subsume our ego to these founding myths, and when

you make people cynical of their foundational myths you make them cynical of everything, including the prosthetic humanist values we have fashioned to take their place. The mind, fortunately or unfortunately, has not proven to be a test tube that we can drain of mythic poison and refill with our antidote. The result of the attempt has created a people without a past and without a present, left with nothing but their own self-serving impulses to guide them. The only way to regenerate a system of mythical acculturation is to work carefully within that system, as Faulkner attempts.

The difference between the Medieval romance and the Modern novel is the level of realism the author of the latter brings to the treatment of the issue of the imbalanced culture, in order to find a more viable solution. And such a regenerative end *is* reached by Faulkner. Indeed, we do not even have to wait for it: even before it happens, we know that Snopes "would not possess her but merely own her by […] the dead power of money," and the code Eula represents will remain "the fine land rich and fecund and foul and eternal and impervious to him who claimed title to it, oblivious, drawing to itself tenfold the quantity of living seed its owner's whole life could have secreted and compounded, producing a thousand fold the harvest he could ever hope to gather and save" (840). This is Labove divining Eula's future, not because he knew Flem's impotence specifically but because he intuited all men's ineffectuality before the "supreme primal uterus" (835). It sounds funny, for even feminists today have devalued the feminine ethic in order to, they believe, best defend themselves against the many forms of rape men perpetrate against women, but men do it in a vain effort at canceling out their insecurities when they juxtapose themselves against women's equal if not superior powers of reasoning, fortitude, nurturance, and morality. Labove fears what he might do in response to his emasculative feelings – not afraid for Eula but for himself "because there is nothing I nor any man could do to her that would hurt her. It's because of what it will do to me" (841).

Faulkner once wrote that he did not believe insult "a very sound method of teaching anybody anything, or persuading anyone to think or act as the insulter believes they should" (Utley 263). But (as he noted in that same letter to a Memphis newspaper) since "the only alternative to change is death," what tool or strategy might better persuade than an insult? Insult amounts to violent outside imposition, like a sudden and forceful push inward from without when you try to answer a knock at the front door: your first reaction is to slam the door closed. Faulkner knew Southerners preferred to bar the door shut after such an insult, for Faulkner knew himself and had worked through his trouble with the necessity of change. He had saved himself by opening himself up to the sun and wind outside, but how to convince his community? Such convincing must be cultivated from the barren soil itself, just as he had done in himself. The new stuff must be tilled into the old so a molecular reaction can occur; new without old is like sowing seed in pure fertilizer: the seeds burn up. What's required is a balance of tension – what Heraclitus termed a *palintropos* – between old and new: an "opposing coherence" like a back-stretched bow or stringed musical instrument, or "[j]ust as the earth hurtles through space away from the sun, so it is drawn back into the sun and as a result maintains its harmonious motion, held in orbit by that tension. The warfare between flying away and falling inward results in an eternal (relatively speaking) movement" (Geldard 39). James Gray Watson notes (as others have) that in the Snopes trilogy "principled opposition to amoral aggression is sustained as the basis for structural and thematic unity," but Faulkner made clear that that this tension is sustained for larger purposes than structure and theme:

No, the impulse to eradicate Snopes is in my opinion so strong that it selects its champions when the crisis comes. […] It doesn't mean that they will get rid of Snopes or the impulse which produces Snopes, but always there's something in man that don't like Snopes and objects to Snopes and if necessary will step in to keep Snopes from doing some irreparable harm. Whatever it is that keeps us still trying to paint the pictures, to make the music, to write the books […]. (Watson 34)

In *The Hamlet*, "Snopes" – Flem Snopes in particular – represents not just animality but an animality far less humane than the animals display. It is a humanity degenerated to such a degree as to be more animal than human, a humanity degenerated by a single- minded pursuit for the fulfillment of animal appetites, as if human beings were no more than the sum of their physical desires. It is not a mindless pursuit, for Flem uses more mind than most to effect his purposes, but it is a consciousless and even incognizant quest which is what makes it animal. It is founded upon a false presumption that what makes us worthy is our over-large brains when in fact it is the existence of that "something in man" which tames the brain, yokes it in and focuses its meta(human)physicality into plowing seed rows. Ratliff hasn't much luck directing Flem, but for the tension of life to exist and so move he must only try not succeed. And it is joyful, this trying, for Faulkner imagines his Sisyphus happy. Upon the occasion of Albert Camus's death, Faulkner wrote:

At the very instant [Camus] struck the tree [and died], he was still searching and demanding of himself; I do not believe in that bright instant he found them. I do not believe they [answers only God knows] are to be found. I believe they are only to be searched for, constantly, by some fragile member of the human absurdity. Of which there are never many, but always somewhere at least one, and one will always be enough. (Utley 248)

And here, I think, is the key to understanding V. K.'s role (and probably to understanding how Faulkner understood himself) in reincorporating Sarty – the Hillman, the departed organ – back into the larger community: The use V. K. can be is not the Mother Teresa sort of useful, to be the heart himself (he will fail that test anyway), rather more the Modernist kind of use. Amid the ruins and emptiness of the Waste Land he must continue to blow the dust from his eyes and plow; keep to his center and not rein in his impulse toward passion and compassion; keep the unbridled courage to turn over the apophatic dust and till an aletheic seedbed, to play his role to its fullest despite the infectious impotence of the community around him. It is not for such a one as he – Ratliff, the artist— to harvest the future, but meanwhile difficult and necessary seeds must be sown for the man in the hills to bring his work back down into town.

Flem Snopes is a working-class man with a dream to be master of a plantation estate, which represents, for Flem, freedom – or, more exactly, Flem's definition of freedom which is money and power: the ability for him to now be rich and powerful. Flem's dream comes true and he is, for the time being, happy. The estate is got at the expense of the Bartleby-esque lives lived by the more humane county people and by procuring a wife into living death, both of which turn out to be none too compromising for Flem and certainly worth the time and gray hair it takes to liquidate his humanity into property. But V. K. Ratliff, named for a Russian, a brother in commerce and teller of stories, takes no pleasure in Flem's sort of happiness; it tastes

sour and unripe to him. But the bitterness mixes with V. K.'s saliva and begins a chemical reaction that even as he feels Flem swallowing up everything and everyone in Frenchman's Bend, feeling swallowed up by all the impudence and idleness of the strong and by the complacent paralysis that fear and risk and pain-of-any-kind avoidance brings on to steal their souls from them one at a time. V. K. realizes that that stolen soul is as necessary to life as the food they eat, and he wonders what they are all waiting for, waiting because they've bartered the guts to live, chasing after dream-horses to draw their attention away from the reality of their immobile lives. That might end the story, but there is more, for V. K. begins to understand that the spirit of the uncorrupted Hillman – a grown Sarty, kin to the Tall Convict in "Old Man" – will never be owned by Flem; that spirit will stay young, strong, in good heart and never tire of doing good. The Hillman is the intuition that if life has any meaning and purpose, that meaning and purpose certainly isn't in his material happiness but in something deeper. True, the Hillman would not even care to try to grasp much of anything V. K. might think, nor would he consciously do much of anything "good" really … unless, of course, it is "good" that he runs his farm and affairs as deftly as ever. The impudence and idleness of the strong in Frenchman's Bend and the purifying ignorance and bestiality of the weak is a paradoxically-drawn binary, to be sure, as if a magical hex had been thrown on the country people, and another over that one keeping them from noticing the first. V. K.'s epiphany is the breaking of the latter spell on himself, freeing his (in)sight though leaving him powerless to break the former hex of inaction, spell of emasculation even, like the one on the spotted-horse chasers.

Sarty's spirit never reappears in the flesh in *The Hamlet*, but, V. K. knows, the idealized Hillman stands somewhere on a threshold, with a winnowing fan, busy in the noble pursuit of separating the aletheic wheat from the apophatic chaff. He might be fortyish, tall or stout, long-haired or not, more like a professor or artist than a landowner, but definitely strong – though lacking a lust for power and money or even self-awareness of most any kind. He is content to work hard, happy to swap stories, and barely notices going dirt-ridden for days in front of his Grail-Maiden-esque wife, she of the enigmatic Mona Lisa smile. He is Sarty, the heart of the country, who didn't leave after all; he just stayed up in the hills, sometimes going by the name McCallum, sometimes by Grier. Though he does not, *cannot* return in the flesh to *The Hamlet* (Faulkner hadn't much hope for the immediate future of the South, believing as he did in the ascendancy of Snopeses), the eventual future-hope that the Hillman represents fills the book; *The Hamlet*'s analysis of Snopes-ism clearly concludes that Snopes would not, in the end, win, and as the progeny of the slave-mongers had forfeited any blood-right of their own, it was left to the meek to inherit the earth – the resourceful, suffering, honest, simple people who had no urge to migrate town-ward: they met all Faulkner's requirements. And it was at this time, during the re-structuring of the short-stories that would become *The Hamlet* that he recognized this future-hope. Just as he had addressed gender in the previous book (*If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*) and would take his biggest step by addressing race with the next (*Go Down, Moses*), *The Hamlet* book settled Faulkner's mind and heart regarding class. For thematic reasons (the short-term supremacy of Snopeses) the Hillman could not make it into this book and would not belong in the next one (though he does filter out from the big woods to lay claim to their share of Old Ben), but outside and after *The Hamlet*, as soon as Faulkner gave him flesh, the Hillman began to flourish, appearing in a handful of short stories written together as early as 1942 and as late as *The Rievers*.

In the end, V. K. Ratliff can only hope the as-yet-un-enchanted Hillman might stay un-enchanted and alert to the malaise, the collective hypnosis of Frenchman's Bend. But he cannot be blamed for this state of inactive hope any more than those at the Alamo can be blamed for being besieged. V. K.'s refusal to transcend a state of inactive repudiation (Harry Wilbourne's state of grieving was similar, and Isaac McCaslin's repudiation of his inheritance is almost exactly the same) is a kind of positive negation, like civil disobedience is: first, do no harm to your cause, particularly when one is unsure how to ameliorate a situation at its combustible apogee. What V. K. and Harry (and Isaac and the resurrected Quentin Compson) manage to do (as no other Faulkner creation had been able to do before the second Quentin) is to attenuate the possibility for regeneration by presenting the reins of future action *to the reader*, until we at some unknown future time can fulfill that possibility. Faulkner cannot in good faith write resolutions, for an action on a realistic, truthful unregenerate situation by a fictional protagonist would only allow his fiction to slip over the edge into romance, absolving readers of their very real regenerative capabilities by making them a part of the fiction. That is, Romance alleviates the reader of the burden of conscience but by leaving his moral narration incomplete – that is, by leaving Sarty, the moral center, out of the tale proper – Faulkner disallows such alleviation.

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Home Sweet Roadhouse.

By Matt Ferrence

I admit it here: against better judgment and contrary to prior experience, I occasionally tuck into a steak at Texas Roadhouse. Maybe it's the rolls and their wicked cinnamon butter that draws me in, maybe something else. It can't really be the rest of the food, since Texas Roadhouse, like any of the many interchangeable chain restaurants (Casual Dining, they like to call themselves), offers mediocre eating at above average price, coupled with long waits and, at least on my last visit, close proximity to a robust man enamored with the use of a walkie talkie.

Toward the end of our meal on that last visit, a young woman whisked by, stopping long enough to lean in and ask, "How was everything tonight?" My wife and I hardly had time to realize her managerial status, nor to even glance up from our basket of rolls, before she flittered away to the next table, offering the same sort-of question to another table. The message, though, was clear enough: the manager had neither truly cared about her question nor our answer. And why would she? Not her restaurant. Just her job.

This moment of feigned interest turned my thoughts to Paris, where we lived before, and to the corner pizza shop in our residential quarter. At least once a week, my wife and I checked in for *deux pizzas margueritas, deux Cocas, et une demi-bouteille de San Pellegrino*. At first, our presence was acknowledged, if not welcomed, by the half-scowled greeting of the owner. Later, after repeat visits proved our commitment, he began to recognize us, and our status slowly shifted toward the Regular. Once so-designated, the owner and his wait staff rewarded our visits with free seasoned olives, free before-dinner *kir*, free chilled Limoncello. The owner's scowl became a warm scowl, our presence a moment for real greeting, and in turn we gladly dropped a hundred Euros a month on his pizza, even though we liked the food better at a shop nearer our apartment. We pledged our fidelity to this pizza shop because the owner offered authentic care and affection toward us, his Regulars, even if capital exchange lay beneath the relationship.

At the Texas Roadhouse, the brief visit of the manager served as a façade of that authentic care, as a moment clarifying that only capital exchange governed our encounter. Her actions lacked an underlying authenticity of intent, and as such functioned as a Baudrillardian simulation of Regular status, as empty gestures intended to evoke the feeling of a caring owner-patron-relationship in the cause of finance.

Care, of course, lies at the heart of the declared Texas Roadhouse mission. They offer Legendary Food, Legendary Serviceâ, a concept so integral to the chain that Texas Roadhouse had it legally registered. The manager, then, serves as the de facto owner dedicated to displaying the level of her commitment to her diners. Bound by the standards of Legendary Service, she must stop by to check our pleasure level. She is compelled to ensure that our visit to Texas Roadhouse has created the proper effect of care and

down-home service.

Yet, as her brief stopover and failed eye contact revealed, the manager's commitment is not genuine. Her feigned interest, instead, serves as a moment designed to convince us of the replication of an owner who would, in other circumstances, actually care. Or, as Jean Baudrillard writes, her visit "is no longer a question of imitation, nor of reduplication, nor even of parody. It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself" (170). The manager offers a signified moment of Legendary Service, which works as a referent to some other experience of authentic care that cannot be found beneath the neon sign of Texas Roadhouse.

Certainly, the flitting manager cannot act alone in this simulation, as the body of Texas Roadhouses—all 200 of them—works to support the simulated experience of a local steak joint. The supporting cast around our faux-owner/manager includes peanuts, line-dancing, and Indian paintings: waiting customers get a bucket of peanuts to crack and munch and—best of all— discard on the floor in a physical homage to backwoods honky tonk; periodically, ecstatic waitresses break out in spontaneous fits of line-dancing; a giant painted Indian head creates a Western décor as big as Texas, as wild as the cowboys. Together, these images work to convince hungry patrons that the restaurant offers more than the sterility of a corporate chain. Further, by simulating the intimacy of a local dive, Texas Roadhouse can tap into the fuzzy scripts of familiarity that Americans enjoy following. In a type of restorative nostalgia that Svetlana Boym calls "modern myth-making of history by means of a return to national symbols" (41), Texas Roadhouse plays to an American desire for locality, frankness, and personal identity: A simpler time—that doubtfully ever existed—when people knew each other and lived in greater community. We all want to be liked, known, welcomed as Regulars. So Texas Roadhouse, the corporate entity that simulates the corner restaurant, turns everyone into a "Regular," even on his or her first visit to the restaurant.

A crucial portion of this transformation comes via a careful Texas Roadhouse vocabulary, designed like ad slogans to create demand for a product. Steaks are not steaks; they are Hand Cut Steaks. Rolls are Freshly Baked Rolls or Made From Scratch Rolls. Side orders are Home Made Sides. Remarkably, wait staff follows such scripting to the point of ridiculousness, repeating the designed phraseology every time the item bears mention: Shucks, I dropped your Hand Cut Steak on the floor.

In this feat of vocabulary, the staff of Texas Roadhouse raises menu items to iconic status. They commodify food with the empty language of advertising, language that Baudrillard calls "full of signification and empty of meaning" ("The System of Object" 20). At Texas Roadhouse, nostalgic signs of vocabulary align food with symbolic sites of Americana. A steak is Hand Cut, like the steak of an old-time butcher, and is therefore better than a non-Hand Cut Steak. Home Made sides suggest grandma in the kitchen, out on the farm, where and when food was wholesome and pure. But, as Baudrillard points out, in these cases the vocabulary offers only an emptiness of meaning, since the Homes that make the Sides are actually the kitchens of 200 identical Texas Roadhouses.

Further, the dedication to these terms suggests careful and complete employee training, no doubt reflected

in the corporate training manuals used at the restaurants. So, naturally, I sought out those manuals for textual analysis. I first called the local manager, the faux-owner who likely spends much of her time training new wait staff. Pleased at my inquiry, she nonetheless deferred me to the national office: she lacked authority to release or comment on company documents. One the phone with corporate headquarters, I spent most of my time on hold, listening to recorded corporate propaganda about how Texas Roadhouse is Willie Nelson's favorite restaurant, which is why I'll find a Willie's Corner in every Texas Roadhouse. I can buy Willie Nelson junk in Willie's corner, which might explain why he likes the restaurants so much.

Eventually, I was ushered through several levels of Texas Roadhouse hierarchy to the director of training, who agreed to answer my questions on training, so long as none of the questions were about the actual training of employees. No chance to see the manual, since all in- house documents are confidential, I was told. The training director did, however, confirm that Texas Roadhouse is "down home," appeals "to anyone who loves good food at reasonable prices," and that each staff is really more like a family than a work group. As for the name Texas Roadhouse, despite the company's origins in Clarksville, Indiana, she assured me, "It's just a name," chosen in her view for aesthetic reasons: "Great lookin' flag. Good lookin' neon. Good lookin' building." She cited Outback Steakhouse in her company's defense, that they were actually from Texas, despite the Australian tie-ins.

That Outback Steakhouse actually started in Tampa is neither crucial to what the director had to say, nor easily avoided in considering Texas Roadhouse, simulation, and Casual Dining in general. Tampa, Texas, anyone could make the error, but a name is never "just a name" when something is being sold. The guys who started Outback, granddaddy of chain Casual Dining restaurants, chose an Australian theme to cash in on then-popular Crocodile Dundee (Overfelt). For Texas Roadhouse, someone in the state of Indiana thought about steak, and cows, and how cows and steak seem to just fit with an image of Texas. Cowpunchers, Indians, cattle drives, good home cookin'. Texas just sounds steakly, so it fits perfectly when you want to sell some meat. Theme your restaurant after Indiana, and you don't get the same image. Though, oddly, a popular chain restaurant in Paris, a kind of French Casual Dining place, takes the name Indiana Café.

But the training director, well, maybe she believes that Texas Roadhouse is just a name, that Texas Roadhouse makes a lot of money because their servers are a "family," that the steaks really are better because they are Hand Cut. At some level, though, her evasive answers reveal the extensive scripting of Legendary Service, which might in fact be aimed not so much at customers as employees. The Texas Roadhouse simulacrum, then, might be governed by Foucault's social panopticon. From store manager to corporate executive, no one really wants to risk violating the unseen power structure. No one wants to risk letting loose corporate information that, despite its seeming innocence, could nonetheless anger the vague but real power structure of Texas Roadhouse. Nor does anyone want to accidentally refer to a steak as just a steak, to break the script of the company.

Imagine, then, my poor local Texas Roadhouse manager. There she is, forced to simulate her concern for every customer, to simulate her existence as a local owner, and not just a corporate cog. All that, and she

still lacks power. She might be able to set shifts for the servers, maybe hire and fire a bit, maybe keep tabs on when the Hand Cut steaks are running low, but she doesn't have anything like the power and autonomy of the local restaurant owner she simulates. She might get to act like our French pizza maker, but she can't really act as he does. She lacks the power to differentiate between regulars and casual diners, because everyone at Texas Roadhouse is a Casual Diner and a Regular. Or, rather, everyone assumes the role Casual Diner, assumes signified presence as Regular.

In a broader sense, consider the training director's Texas icons—the flag, the neon, the building—each cited in defending the name choice. Only the flag has anything to do with Texas itself, and in the context of the restaurant is appropriated for reasons far different than the actual historical-cultural resonance of the image. As for the neon and the building, they have far more to do with Casual Dining than Texas. The hill where my Texas Roadhouse sits glows at night from the accumulated neon of other chain restaurants, each with building designs carefully forged to suggest Texas, or Italy, or a seaside fish shack. Yet at the same time, these disembodied signifiers function within the dining culture to produce a transferred locality. Texas Roadhouse is annually voted best place for a steak in this town, beating out long-lived, authentically local spots. In the same fashion, Applebee's restaurants successfully run tear-jerking TV ads that assign it status as the neighborhood grill—staying open late for the high school football team; putting a picture of a different local coach on the wall—and many of these chains adopt locality by tacking up décor based on hometown teams and artifacts. In the end, the accumulation of signs convinces a culture to adopt the empty as the authentic, hence the long-lines on weekend evenings, the Texas Roadhouse success in local dining competitions, and the growing difficulty of finding actual local businesses in middle America. Texas and neon, in this light, become legitimate signs of big commerce, though their perception remains infused with the American nostalgia that draws in customers attracted by the image of national culture. Yet at the same time, the national culture itself has been successfully replaced by the meaningless signs of places like Texas Roadhouse. Neon does suggest Texas, in the end, because Texas, the state, has been transformed into a sign for Texas Roadhouse, and now exists culturally only as a means to attract commerce. Becoming a Regular, in such a situation, merely demands that a person be a customer of this transferred national identity, to be a patron of commerce itself. So while becoming a Regular at a local pizza joint in Paris demands repeat visits and an earned relationship between owner and patron, becoming a Regular at Texas Roadhouse is predetermined by membership in the transferred American culture. It matters little, in the end, whether the manager actually asks or cares how everything was with a meal, because the fidelity of Regularity has been predetermined by the mere act of entering into the empty cultural space of Casual Dining.

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The Rhetoric of Love.

By Karen Heise

I was furious! Words—damn them all! I drove out of the parking lot in a spray of exhaust, tires screeching on the pavement, and shot into the feeder lane. My eyes glanced over and over at the pink piece of paper I had flung onto the seat, the cause of my anger: "We regret to inform you that the company will be downsizing due to the downturn in economic factors in the technology sector. You may pick up your severance packet on Friday. We wish you the best of luck in your next employment endeavor." How about, "We're going broke, so we have to lay you off. See ya!"?

I was jolted out of my rage by more screeching tires and honking horns. I had just sailed through a stoplight at one of the busiest intersections in town! I narrowly missed colliding with two cars—one on either side—and hadn't even touched the brakes. Now it was time for me to pull over.

I whipped into a convenience store and parked on the side of the building, hung my head in my hands and cried. It wasn't so much for the job—well, maybe it was—but for the shock of what had just happened to me. I could have been injured or killed, or seriously harmed someone else, all because I wasn't paying attention. I had to get a grip before I continued home—and home, unfortunately, was across town, a good 45-minute drive in passable rush-hour traffic.

I was startled by a tap on my window. An old guy in a flannel shirt and jeans was looking at me. I rolled my window down just enough to see what he wanted. I was embarrassed.

"Hey, miss, can you spare some change?"

"Uh, no. I'm sorry," I said, wiping away the tears as fast as I could and rolled up the window so he would go away. When I looked at the severance note the tears just started all over again, so I crumpled it up and got out of the car to throw it in the trash. There goes my nice 50k a year salary. Here come the collection agencies. Hell, my car still smelled new. So much for the "dot-bomb" revolution. I was beginning to get a little sick of being a casualty to revolutions and wars.

I finally joined the traffic again, paying better attention. Why can't people just say what they mean and mean what they say? *You hypocrite!* my mind assailed me. *You didn't do a very good job of that in your marriage, did you?* If I had, I would have just said to the man relentlessly pursuing me, "Look, I think I'm gay, and until I get this worked out, we'd better not consider this at all." Instead, I said the stupidest words possible, under pressure to do the "right" thing: "I do."

I stepped through the door of Kindred Spirits, my favorite bar. K. D. Lang was blaring, a tune called "Save Me," a sultry, lush slow-dancing tempter of a song. I immediately felt better. In the dim light I homed in on a place at the bar and ordered a beer. The place wasn't full, but since it was a Thursday—I had to push away the reality of my Friday—I knew the bar would be packed by ten or eleven. I was pleased to hear they were apparently playing cuts from Lang's *Ingenue* album. *Why hurt yourself/Can your mind conceal what the mind of love reveals?* she sang. Damn good question. I surely didn't have the answer.

As I nursed my beer I noticed a woman two stools on my right. She appeared to be alone, too. She was pretty in a sort of plain way, her shoulder-length blondish hair framing a square but serene-looking face, as much as I could see. I hoped we could eventually strike up some kind of conversation, but for now I preferred to just sit quietly instead of engaging in the typical do-you- come-here-often banter. But K. D. Lang wasn't helping one bit.

I was about to order another beer when the barkeep slid one in front of me, nodding at the lady to my right. She'd just bought me a drink. This might shape up to be a great evening after all.

I caught her eye, nodded my appreciation, and pointed to the chair between us. She wanted me to move, and I was happy to oblige. I stuck out my hand. "I'm Diane. Thanks for the beer. Next one's on me."

"Okay, and you're welcome. I'm Trish."

Her touch was a welcome balm on my aching soul. The conversation died and I wanted to revive it before it moved beyond saving; I searched frantically for something to say.

"Looks like you've had a rough day," she said, relieving the silence.

"Yeah. I got canned today; the Internet consulting firm I work—*worked*—for just went belly-up."

"Mmm. What are you going to do?"

"I don't know. I came here to sort of hash it out, I guess."

She nodded, then asked what it was I did, exactly. I had to think about that one.

"I sort of wrote copy, built pages, checked platform programming, helped get other businesses up and running—a little of everything."

"Sort of?"

I looked into her eyes for the first time. They were steady, gray, and safe. "Well, I guess I did do all that, huh."

"Sounds like it to me."

K.D. Lang's "Constant Craving" had begun. The music was getting louder, a perfect soundtrack for my soul. Where had the time gone? Trish shouted near my ear, "Let's get a table." We left the bar and found a spot in the corner. She set a large black briefcase into the empty chair. I wondered what was in it and why she didn't leave it in her car. I asked her what she did for a living.

"I teach over at Rawlings. New this year."

It struck me as strange that a community college teacher would be hanging out in a lesbian bar, but then, why not? *Maybe a great magnet pulls/All souls towards truth* Lang's clear voice belted out. I found it increasingly hard to sit still. "What do you teach?"

"Rhetoric."

"What is that?" I'd heard the word before, vaguely sure of what it meant, but had no idea anyone would actually want to teach it.

"Well," she said, leaning back her chair, "I guess at its simplest definition it's the art of persuasion ... but I've never been quite satisfied with that."

My mind hung on "the art of persuasion"; I became both excited and disturbed by the thought that this intriguing woman could teach persuasion. For what cause? To whom? For what outcome?

"What do you mean?"

"Well, it's so much more than that. It is persuasion, but also a way of getting at the real truth of things— which has been at the core of the dispute forever. Our notions of truth keep changing."

I was becoming fairly enthralled both by her and the subject matter. Melissa Etheridge's "If I Only Wanted To" began to hammer relentlessly, persuasion personified. I motioned for her to continue.

"What's been argued, among other things, is can we know truth—is it "out there," or is it the product of our behavior. In other words, is truth an absolute, or is it conditional?" She had leaned forward across the table, but stopped suddenly, smiling. "Sorry. I don't mean to hold class. I'm off work, after all, but I just get carried away."

I assured her it was fine. "I did ask you, and I really don't know much about the use of words, and nothing about rhetoric." Then I waved down a waitress for a new round of drinks and excused myself to the bathroom. The bar was already filling up. My errand took longer than I expected, and a sudden fear seized me that she would be gone when I got back. I searched frantically over the swirling mass of women's faces

and found hers at last. I was happy to be wrong.

"So, what's your version of truth?" Trish asked. "Tell me, and then I'll shut up about my job."

I told her I'd never really thought about it. "The use of words, I mean, the incorrect use of them ... no, now I sound like an English teacher! I mean to say that I wish words were just used in a direct way—" and then I remembered my own previous use of them, destined to forever dog me, and it made me a little sick.

"They're malleable, for sure!" Trish laughed. I had the distinct impression that she'd seen the cloud cover my face, because she then beckoned me wordlessly toward the half-full dance floor. Rescued from the mire of words, we danced and joked the rest of the night away. The next thing I knew, it was 2 a.m. and the bar was closing. We made our way out into the parking lot, which by now was mostly empty.

"It's been great, really great," she said, taking my hands in hers.

"Me, too," I said. Words seemed destined to forever fail me when I needed them most. From somewhere across the city, the vague sound of a siren reached us.

"I'd like to see you again," Trish said.

"So would I."

We both laughed and she pulled me into her arms. Our hug was long and intense, as only two women can give. We made plans to meet again over the weekend, then went to our cars with the utmost effort. Gradually, we each eased out onto the feeder, parting in opposite directions. As I drove home, the glaring light of the city gave way to the steady dark of the countryside. I had the feeling (vague though it was) that I was on the verge of something incredible. I would have called it the discovery of new body of truth, but I didn't know that then.

As I reached home, I stopped by my mailbox out near the highway and dropped the pile of bills and advertisements on the passenger's seat. A small envelope fell to the floorboard. I picked it up and glanced at the return address: Michael Jamison. I was tempted to throw it out the window and let the wind do the rest, but hauled it inside instead, burying it under the pile of mail. I simply couldn't deal with it just then, and went to bed, my head spinning slightly from the beer. Two hours later, my mind was still walking the tightrope question: What *was* my version of truth, anyway—and why did it take a rhetoric instructor to make me wonder?

* * *

The night air was sultry, mist-filled, and orange. The intricate silhouettes of oil derricks glowed eerily through the trees and just over the horizon. Their flickering flames made the night sky undulate; apart from

the booze and the weed, I thought the entire world was on some kind of power surge, then power shortage. Occasionally, the roar of those immense fires reached us like some beast breathing. My clothes stuck to my body, my hair hung limp and half-wet. Our laughter and talking punctuated the quiet lapping of the lake to shore, backed by music blaring from one of the cars and the shattering of glass on the roadside.

Three of my friends and their dates, along with my childhood "boyfriend" had made a rendezvous to celebrate the near-end of our college lives. I was giddy with the thought of nearly being finished. I felt electric, and though I was technically "odd girl out," I didn't feel alone. I felt autonomous, proud, on the edge, and crazy, like anything could happen. I was sure before the night was over that it would.

Two of the couples wandered off around the lake, one in one direction and one in the other, and my closest friend, Laurie, and her beaux drifted over to their car. I could see their darkened shapes merge against the burnt orange of the sky. I looked at the lake instead.

"How do you think you'll do on your finals?" my old friend asked me.

"I think I'll do fine. The Linux programming class turned out to be a bitch, though. It was tougher than I expected."

"Really? You've always been such a whiz at that stuff. I'm glad I stuck to Drama."

"Yeah? And how do you think you'll do?"

He drew hard on the joint he'd just lit, then passed it to me. "Okay, I guess," he croaked. I laughed out loud at his attempt to converse and hold in the drag, which made him explode with laughter, too. He wanted to know why I usually managed to make him lose his hit; I honestly didn't know, and laughed even harder at the question and my answer, the way marijuana usually made me do. We vowed that we would quit smoking weed when we "grew up," then regained our equilibrium slowly, lapsing into chuckles.

"So, what do you think is really going on over there?" he motioned in a general way toward the glowing sky.

"Well, it's the blowout from oil rigs. Excess gas, right?"

"Maybe," he said quietly. "What if they really are tapping into hell—you know, going right down there?"

The thought gave me the creeps. "Stop it."

"Well ...?" He wandered over to the car to change the tape. I hoped he would put in something fast and happy and he obliged, reading my mind, I imagined. It occurred to me that I really did sort of like this guy, even if he leaned a bit too close to the philosophical and dramatic at times. I guess that's why we had

stuck together all these years. He'd been the "boy next door" while I was growing up, but never in the dorky or romantic way—just sort of a sympathetic listener and person to hang out with when I needed it. The long-standing rumor was that we were dating, but the truth was he'd never asked me, and I'd been both curious and relieved; I wondered if he was gay, as I was beginning then to believe I was. It seemed unfair—guys were just assumed to be gay, girls were just assumed to be ugly. Throughout my high school and college years I had steadfastly resisted any appearances of either accusation—not that I had that many chances to do otherwise. Guys were strange to me. I never really knew what they were thinking, no matter how straightforward they appeared to be ... except for the person walking toward me then, a cold beer in his hand for me, opened, no less. I hoped fervently that our friendship would never change.

He settled down close beside me on the fallen tree we used as a bench. I could literally feel his body heat coming to me in the darkness. I'd spent a lot of time in the sun earlier, and I was sunburned; my own skin radiated heat like a clay pot just out of the kiln. A particularly bright flash lit up the sky just then, actually illuminating briefly the color of his eyes, followed by a muffled boom. I couldn't help it, but I shrank back from the flash and its sonic signifier.

"Big one," he said, and I felt his arm encircle my back loosely. "Extra big hole, lots of demons got out on that one."

"Geez!" I bolted from the bench and headed for the trees.

"Where are you going?" He bounded after me.

Words froze in my throat and I kept running, harder and harder, faster and faster into the woods. Branches scraped my face, legs, and jabbed indiscriminately into my chest and crotch. I knew I could get my eyes poked out but couldn't stop running. My legs seemed to accelerate all on their own.

"Diane! Hold on! Stop!"

I sensed that he was gaining on me and ran that much harder. The music faded away and all I could hear was our desperate breathing, the cracking of branches, and some other sound that I couldn't name, and still can't to this day.

"Diane—!"

Suddenly, my foot caught on a root and pitched me forward. I fell and fell, finally splashing face-first in a muddy stream. The fall knocked the wind out of me, and the last of my energy and bravery as well. I burst into tears, gasping desperately for breath.

In seconds he had scrambled down the bank to me, grabbing me in his arms and apologizing a hundred times. I simply couldn't get my composure and I cried and cried on his shoulder. I don't know how long

it lasted, but it was long enough for our combined body heat to partially dry the front of my shirt.

"Are you bleeding? Let me see," he said gently, easing us apart. The woods had blocked the glow so completely that we were two silhouettes. His hand gently traced the outlines of my face, my neck, my arms.

Finding nothing, he rocked me quietly, offering up a new round of apologies. "You told me to stop, and I didn't."

"Something just ... came over me. I don't know what."

"Yeah. I guess I should know when to shut up about certain things."

Gradually, I began to hear the musical trickle of the little stream, and I knew I needed to move. I pulled away, but he only let me go so far. I looked into his eyes, even though it was too dark to see them. I knew by the steadiness of his breathing and the growing fierceness of his grip that he had other ideas.

"I have to tell you," he said, his voice choked with emotion, "that I love you, Diane. I've waited long enough—too long, actually—to say it. Now is probably not the best time, but since I don't know when that will ever be—" He kissed me gently on the forehead, the first time he'd ever even dared to be so close—"now's as good a time as any, I guess."

I didn't say a word, but struggled to my feet. As we walked out into the open orange-misty glow of the countryside, the smell of sulfur was sickening. Jeers and hoots greeted us. I fancied briefly they were the catcalls of little demons in their hellish land. I knew he was blushing. I, on the other hand, was a mixture of pain, fear, and grief: pain from my fall, fear that it might be over between us as simple friends, and grief in knowing it was so.

Yes, I thought, *you should know when to shut up about certain things.*

I woke with a start. Bright sun streamed through my window. I was late for work ... right. I robotted my way though my routine and wondered what I'd find on my desk today, or if I could even go to my desk, or if I even had a desk to go to. My dream came back to me in a hard rush in the shower, pulled forward into my consciousness by my examination of an old scar; the hot water had turned it aggrevatedly red ... a scar from an old fall. Suddenly Michael Jamison seemed as near as the steamy heat. As I dressed and walked out the door, I was careful not to even look at the pile of mail that concealed the paper catalyst for my discomfort.

I made sure we didn't meet up after our college days. It was, in fact, at our ten-year high school class reunion that I next saw him. He'd heard about my marriage, and I haltingly spoke of its self-destruction, leaving out the part I was sure he knew. In a thirty-minute conversation, filled mostly with chit-chat, I realized things hadn't changed one bit for him in the years since that night, though he never verbalized it.

I left the reunion early, feeling disoriented and slightly helpless. That was nearly a year ago.

If I knew my mind/Like the back of my hand/Gold in the rainbow/Nothing panned out as I'd planned sang Emily Saliers as I eased into the parking lot. I saw people I knew being escorted out by security guards. The dazed looks on their faces told me all I needed to know. I waved a workmate over as I got out of the car.

"It's like a morgue in there. Just get your crap and get out, you know?" she said, then hurried into her car, about to cry. *Been there, done that, sweetie.* My stomach knotted, and in two minutes I was back in my own running car, staring at my severance pay, mouth open. It was much more than I expected, and I was tempted to go back inside and ask if there was a mistake, but drove away instead. By the time I hit the second traffic light, I was convinced they owed it to me for being so evasive in their wording.

Over the din at Kindred Spirits, I heard my name. Trish waved to me from the other end of the bar. The place was so packed I hadn't even seen her, something that shocked and dismayed me. She bid a farewell to the woman next to her and suggested we find another spot. As we threaded our way through the crowd I grew more and more happy I came. No, I couldn't really afford it (even with the check), but I couldn't afford not to, either. Call it therapy. I determined tonight to ask Trish why she carried that huge briefcase with her, then waved down a waitress. After we ordered drinks, we settled in.

"So, is it over?" she asked.

"Oh, yeah. There probably won't be one thing left in that building by Monday morning. It just amazes me how a business can put up a wall of supposed integrity and competence one day and hand out pink slips the next!"

"I know what you mean. Sounds a lot like relationships in general, doesn't it?"

I felt the world darken just a notch, but hoped it didn't show. "Yeah. Only it's a lot easier to find another job." Even as we laughed, I hoped this was true.

"Well," Trish said, as our drinks arrived, "I'm glad I didn't run you off with my blabbing on and on about rhetoric."

"What? No, not at all. In fact, I've been thinking about it, mostly subconsciously, I think."

She nodded. "This is a good sign." Her smile lit the dark corner of the room. "I'll let you do the leading, okay? Ask whatever you want, and if I go off on a tangent, please stop me. I mean that."

"Okay. I will." But as we fell into a comfortable silence, I couldn't imagine stopping her. We nursed our drinks for a bit and eventually had to make our way to the dance floor, energy being useful only as it is

used. As we danced progressively longer and longer sessions, I became curious about the role of music in influence and wondered where in rhetoric it might fall; why does that particular style of guitar get to me? What about that voice? So when we finally sat down, laughing and sweating, I ventured to ask.

"It's amazingly persuasive, I agree." she said, "but I don't know exactly. You know, the idea that one could be persuaded by language alone was—oops, I'm letting you lead."

I nodded for her to continue.

"—well, that idea is, I think, still a fairly startling conclusion for some modern thinkers."

"Why? That seems so common-sense."

"Yes, but we're sitting here in a bar in the twenty-first century. I suppose music would be a fairly close analogy to classical rhetoric. Where we used to convince others and convey knowledge by oratory, with or without ornamentation—fancy language, in other words—now I suppose we do it with music. It's certainly an oral medium."

She was tracking with me. Could she read my mind? "And aural," I added, pointing to my ear.

"Nice job!" she said, laughing heartily, "But music is all just wordplay, designed to persuade the listener."

Her use of the term "wordplay" was as melodious as it was mischievous. I remembered the old adage *you learn well what you must teach* and wondered again how well she could collude her words and their meanings.

"Consider this." She leaned forward across the table. "The concept of being raped, so to speak, by language is quite old—well over two-thousand years—and we're still wrestling with that very problem. Just look in the workplace at all the flap about what is and what is not sexual harassment. The definition is getting murkier all the time."

I heartily agreed.

"And what about 900-numbers? And yet, it depends on the viewpoint of the recipient or the one inflicting the damage. Rape by language is still around, alive and well. But what the original author of that concept was saying was, hey, you really can't blame anyone who may have been raped by language. Words, said just the right way at the right time, are strong stuff."

I had to agree again, but wondered aloud, "Are you trying to say language can't be resisted?"

"Yes, in some cases. But the particulars depend on each person."

I studied her, wondering if I should ask what I was about to, and then overcame my fear; better to lose her earlier than later: "Do you think you could say something I might not be able to resist—rhetorically speaking, of course?"

Her eyes narrowed slightly but a slight smile spread on her lips. "Before I answer that, we'd better do some dancing."

Faith must have a reason/Why else endure the season/Of hollow soul ... Lang was at it again. The dance floor was so full we could only sway in place. It was invigorating and nearly too much to bear. Trish's hands pressed gently into my back, guiding me expertly in such a tight spot. After three intense, sultry, and agonizing songs, we pushed our way to the table. The dance floor remained packed solid no matter what was playing. The night's desire, now steeped to its heady best, shone luminous on every woman's face.

"Let's get out of here," I ventured. The heat, inner and outer, was about to make me faint. Meticulously we pushed our way out into the cool, clear night. It was like walking through a glass of water. The near-full moon glided among the trees; instinctively, we both let out a long, satisfied sigh.

"I live three miles outside of town. Want to stop by? I've got a great deck that overlooks the creek."

Trish nodded.

We reached our cars in silence, but this silence wasn't the lapsing of conversation, but instead, the listening of comrades. I kept an eye on her headlights in my rearview, and when we reached the house I was nearly beside myself with joy.

We tossed our things on the couch, made a round of drinks in the kitchen, and then headed toward the deck. I turned the stereo on just loud enough for the music to visit us there. The moon was almost dead overhead now, beautifully sharp in its outline, floating alone in the sky. Below us, the creek, partially shrouded by trees, sounded like the applause of a small audience.

"Big improvement from the bar, huh?"

"Absolutely." She didn't look at me, but instead studied the creek. "Has this place ever flooded?"

"I don't know. I haven't lived here long enough."

"Bound to, then. What is that line Any Rae says, *'You built by the river/It's pretty but you'll pay'?"*

"That's the one."

"Yeah, but what a deal." She walked to the end of the deck. "Some things are just worth the chance."

I couldn't have agreed with her more. "It looks totally different depending on the day, and sometimes the time of day."

She looked at me from where she stood. "I don't doubt it. You have a copia of views, Diane. You're rich."

I laughed at the pronouncement and motioned for her to take a chair. "Glad to know it. Now, how do I get all these riches to translate into the things that make for life?"

She shook her head at me, smiling. "You have them. No need to translate them into something else." She fell silent, and I considered this. She was right. As the silvery light on the deck dimmed slightly, our eyes were both drawn upward to the moon as a single cloud sliced it in half.

Quietly, she asked, "How would you describe that?"

I wanted to oblige, but suddenly couldn't think of anything to say beyond the banal.

"Here's a trick. Take the simplest way of describing that event—say, 'A cloud covered the moon,'—and literally begin by substituting a word in place of those in the sentence. For instance, for 'cloud' you'd say 'film' and for 'covered' you'd say 'obscured,' and so on, until you're done. Try it now."

"Okay ... a film obscured the heavenly orb."

"Yes, that's it. Maybe you've heard of Erasmus? Well, it doesn't matter, really. Anyway, he was very playful with language, and could take a sentence and restate it a couple hundred ways. He just could explode language into so many different things."

"That actually sounds like fun. Can you add words?"

"Yes, and you can rearrange the parts. Just don't change the original meaning."

I thought briefly. "The knife of a cloud slid across the whetstone of the moon." I was surprised at my eloquence.

She made a low whistle, her gaze riveted to me. She looked ethereal, as did everything on the deck, and the entire countryside. She sighed and murmured, "That was great. We'll make a rhetorician out of you yet. Try again."

The strains of Tom Barabas's *Sedonia Suite* drifted onto the deck. As I watched the light and dark slide subtly over each other, I suddenly felt as though I were floating high above the Earth. "The dark lacey cloud ..." I struggled, but the words had evaporated.

" ... cupped the white, smooth breast of the moon," she supplied.

I forced myself to look at Trish. This little game could get dangerous for us both. So I said, "Would you like to dance?"

"Sure."

We swayed slowly there on my deck, relaxing into each other's arms. How much time passed, I couldn't begin to say. It felt like the pinnacle moment out of the last seven years of my life, but I didn't know how to say it, or if it should be said. What's a feeling good for?

"Kiss me."

Startled slightly, I looked at her beautiful face, just inches from mine, and did just that. Suddenly I knew the answer to the question I had so glibly asked earlier in the bar. How on earth could I have been innocent enough to think otherwise?

That was the beginning of a long, languid and intense summer. The streets seemed busier, the temperature hotter, the night air thicker, and the aching in my heart sharper. I'd gotten so used to it that it became a sort of chronic pain, but then again, seeing Trish was like becoming *aware* in a way I hadn't felt since ... well, since my college days.

As fate would have it, she helped me locate a job at Rawlings' shipping department. It paid enough to keep me hanging on, but hanging on took on so much more purpose. We spent a lot of time at the bar at first, but by summer's end we grew tired of the crowds, smoke, and noise, preferring either my house or hers. I wanted desperately to finish crossing the erotic threshold in our relationship. She, on the other hand, held me back—steadily, resolutely, and (as I see it now) compassionately. I continued to be fascinated by what she had to say about language, persuasion, and the history of our thoughts on knowledge; she joked once that we'd have a test at the end of the summer to see what I had learned. That wasn't exactly the kind of test I longed to take. She even loaned me a book, a huge black thing, called *A Survey of Rhetoric.* I examined (slowly!) the writers she pointed out: Burke, Toulmin, Booth, and one I liked in particular, Gloria Anzaldua, admittedly because she was a lesbian. I was a willing pupil, not just because of the intellectual stimulus, I had to darkly admit. This, Trish knew. I felt a nagging impatience growing in me and decided to talk to her about it.

One night near the end of summer, after a long evening boulder-hopping session on the creek, we laid down on a blanket in the pastureland between the creek and the deck. No moon graced the skies this time, but the millions of bright-pointed stars—some dense as clouds— sprawled overhead.... *Trying to read the Greek upon the stars/The alphabet of feeling ...* the "Language or the Kiss," indeed.

I lay there thinking about a word that had lately come to mean much to me, identity, and wondered out

loud if what I thought I read of Burke was correct.

"What do you think he's saying?" she asked without taking her eyes from the heavens.

"I'm not quite sure, but I think it's that he's changing the definition, no, that's not it ... the *reason* for persuasion. I think he's saying that what we really want to do is not to persuade others, but to belong somewhere, maybe to identify with a group."

She turned on her side to face me. "You're correct. I'm impressed. What else are you thinking?"

"Well, I'm remembering that he says opposites tend to move toward each other, or else groups of people start on one end of a spectrum and sort of move toward the other end ... in an effort to belong, really. Is that right?"

"Yes. It really casts a different light on what we all strive for as humans. You're right— persuasion isn't so much to change people's minds, he says, as much as to help us fit somewhere."

"The whole gay movement, in a way."

"Umm hmm."

We looked at the stars and she pointed out a satellite—*spewing words so that we can belong,* I thought—as it arced across the glitter. We watched it until it disappeared over the horizon.

"When did you first realize you might be gay?" she asked. "Sometime in early high school, I think."

"How did you know?"

"Well, I began to wonder about women, other girls ... you know. There was just some kind of feeling, I guess."

"Did guys ever ask you out?"

"Occasionally." I remembered Michael Jamison, and the unopened letter I had thrown into the desk drawer months ago.

Trish was silent, thinking. "Have you read any Toulmin yet?"

"Yes. I like what little I can understand of him."

"I have found his approach interesting, too. He's been good at helping me sort of get at the bottom of

things."

I was searching hard to get at the bottom of Toulmin just then. "He's the guy who said something about data and claims, right?"

"Yes. He's after the "warrant" or the real reason behind the claims we make and the data we use to back those claims up."

I considered this in light of the question of sexual orientation. Something began to bother me, like a fly walking across my mind somewhere. She saw my distress. "Would you like to try applying some Toulmin?"

I agreed hesitantly.

"Olay." She sat up. "You're a lesbian. How do you know that?"

"Well, let's see ... because I've felt this way a long time. Because I'm attracted to women. Because I'm not sure of men. Because I've never been able to figure them out. Because they scare me, some. How's that?"

"Pretty good. But these are strictly evidences—and only evidences—right now."

I was surprised. "They are?"

"Sure. They are all *outward* evidences. Toulmin, if he were here, would say, 'Well and good, but what drives those claims?' He'd want to know what's really behind the claims you make and the evidences you bring forward." Trish propped her head on her knees. "Do you know?"

Her question forced me to think hard; I felt like a pupil. If the evidences themselves were not enough, then what else could I possibly say? The answer formed itself in my mind and landed near my tongue, but I couldn't let it out. So I said, "I don't know right now," which was a cop-out, but I just couldn't discuss it any more. I glanced off toward the creek; I wanted desperately to talk about something concrete, something I could quantify and count—something real.

"Have we finally overdosed you on rhetoric?"

Though I wouldn't look at her face, I knew she was smiling, which irritated me. I forced myself to turn and look at her, hard and long. "I want to talk about something I know about for sure." My voice had a hard edge to it that I neither wanted nor could remove.

"Okay. What's that?"

"I've fallen in love with you, Trish. Can't you tell? You've maintained a pretty even distance, so far, but I want you to know how serious this has become for me. Can we change that distance? I'm ready to do it." I felt raw and exposed and crazy with fear and desire; suddenly, I wanted more than ever for the teacher-pupil bond to disappear.

A thoughtful look came over her, and she said quietly, "I very much enjoy your company. I have from the beginning. That's still true. When we kiss, I know without a doubt how you feel about me, and I hope you can sense my desire. But you're right, I have been holding you back—and myself, I want you to know—but it's not to play head games with you. It's been for my protection, and possibly yours. I want you to think about something." She moved beside me and put her arm around me. "Those cultural and personal warrants of Toulmin's are actually very useful tools. Culturally speaking, I think you know why you've chosen the lifestyle you have. Personally speaking, I'm not sure it's so."

I felt as though I'd just lost my footing, somehow. "Why do you say that?"

She sighed, for once at a loss for words. "I wish I could tell you why I think that about you. But I don't know the answer—mostly, I suspect because I haven't known you long enough to put my finger on the source of my doubts. I'm very attracted to you, frankly, but I'm afraid for all your eagerness to learn some of these things, there are places you haven't examined in yourself, and maybe other ways of looking at the truths of your life. As I see it, this is too dangerous a patch of ground for either of us to build a more intense relationship on, at least for now. I think you need to do some tilling."

I felt as though I was being hit with a hammer, or scolded for failing an assignment, and yet I knew in my heart she wasn't out to hurt me. "Are you saying we have no future?"

"No, no. Don't misunderstand me. I'm saying that I believe there are many ways to test everything. The danger comes—at least for me—when I won't apply all the tests I know I can, and believe me, I've been guilty of that very thing not so long ago. I'm concerned that it's a like danger for you, too." She kissed me gently. "Until you can do more work, I'm too afraid to proceed. It's just that simple, and it's not that I don't want to, believe me. I have to say this."

Later, as I watched her taillights disappear along my driveway, that nagging thing returned. I sat down outside, but the now too-cool air drove me inside. I sat at the desk and opened the rhetoric text, searching through its pages, for what exactly I didn't know. Because I liked Gloria Anzaldua and could most easily identify with her, I skimmed her section.

Near the end, this line jumped out at me: "The answer to the problem between ... males and females ... lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundations of our lives...." She had also listed the black/white and Mexican/Chicana dichotomies, but my eye kept focussing on the "male and female" part. Here was a lesbian writer claiming—admitting!—that there was a fundamental split between the two genders that possibly could be healed. I sat back in the chair, flummoxed. That possibility had never even occurred

to me before. Anzaldua's piece on living in "borderlands"—hung between so many worlds—was even more spellbinding as I gave it a second and more careful reading.

I finally closed the book, turned out the light, and sat in the darkened living room. Anzaldua seemed quite adept at pushing against all the boundaries she knew in a frantic search for a way to calm her "psychic unrest." If she could do it, why couldn't I? I had to grudgingly admit that Trish was right. There was a test I steadfastly refused to take. I simply didn't want to. The unspoken words I wouldn't say earlier issued from my mouth into the darkness: I'm afraid of losing my identity.

It took a long time, but slowly my eyes fastened and fixed on the drawer. I thought about Trish, about the real possibility of having a life with her, how sweet and powerful it would be, even as I realized there really are no guarantees in life. I knew then and there that I needed to, as she put it, "do some tilling." I needed to take my fate—whatever it was—into my own two hands and live with the consequences ... or the rewards.

I turned on the light, opened the drawer, and in the thunderous silence of the night, tore the letter open.

Nietzsche's Jesus.

By Robert Hull

> Nietzsche does seem at times in *The Antichrist* to be writing one more life of Jesus to add to the pile he is simultaneously rejecting in principle. If Jesus is properly a blank page in semiotic history then why does Nietzsche provide us with his vivid sketch of a blissful naïf?...But this would be a truncated reading of Nietzsche's argument. It is the semiotic rather than the biographical thematic which takes priority in *The Antichrist*.[1]

> Gary Shapiro, *Nietzschean Narratives*

In this essay I argue that in *The Antichrist* Nietzsche provides a narrative portrait of Jesus that personifies what he calls the "psychological character of the redeemer."[2] (*A* #29; *6* 205) This portrait yields a Jesus whose actions and teachings are those of a "*frohe Botshafter*" (*A* #29; *6* 206), or a 'bringer of joyful tidings.' Nietzsche uses this representation of Jesus to criticize as unevangelic traditions that attribute to Jesus belief in sin, guilt, punishment, a Last Judgment, eternal life in heaven (or hell), and other Christian themes and values. This critique of Christianity is not intended to depend on whether he could know with certainty that his portrayals of Jesus and his disciples are historically accurate, although he does use, *inter alia,* what he thought to be plausible conjecture regarding human motivation to present them. Rather, Nietzsche intended his account of Jesus an internal critique of Christianity: it reveals that the Gospels contain two highly antithetical representations of Jesus, that a chasm yawns between essential Christian theological traditions and the evangelic portrait of Jesus Nietzsche attempts to bring into relief. Convinced that scholarship cannot produce a representation of Jesus' life that we can know to be historically accurate, Nietzsche reads the Gospels as if they were a messy novel, written by multiple authors, whose central character is drawn sometimes convincingly as, and sometimes as the antithesis of, an *euangelion* [3]

In making this argument I will also critique a position on *The Antichrist* that is at odds with this interpretation. The reading that I critique is what I will refer to as a hermeneuticist interpretation of *The Antichrist,* an increasingly fashionable approach to this and other signal problems in Nietzsche scholarship. A hermeneuticist reading of Nietzsche makes a constellation of issues in textual interpretation philosophically primitive in Nietzsche's thought. I refer to this interpretive strategy as *hermeneuticist* because the issues it foregrounds pertain to reading, writing, and interpreting texts, the politics of textual production, appropriation, and defacement, and a number of problems in semiotics. Of course, earlier Nietzsche scholars, going back to Walter Kauffman, have recognized that these problems were of interest to Nietzsche. What makes this approach to Nietzsche innovative is that in it such concerns are viewed as constitutive of the very issues Nietzsche is addressing and of the philosophical and rhetorical strategies Nietzsche deploys in addressing them. As a consequence of this, what were once widely regarded as crucial, substantive

components of Nietzsche's attempt at criticizing religious or moral traditions are revealed to be occasions for making claims about issues in hermeneutics.

In a prominent example of this trend, Gary Shapiro in *Nietzschean Narratives* has argued that in *The Antichrist* Nietzsche is actually offering a performative, asymptotic demonstration of the limits of historical narration, and that *this* demonstration is to be seen as that work's substantive means to a transvaluation of values. Once we recognize the semiotic objectives of Nietzsche's discussions of Jesus, nineteenth century biblical scholarship, and Judaism and early Christianity, we see that the biographical content of the portrait of Jesus that Nietzsche offers in *The Antichrist* is actually intended to suggest obliquely the limits of historical narration. The precise story of Jesus that account suggests, and the values Nietzsche ascribes to it, are consequently not to be regarded in themselves as improvements on other accounts. For Shapiro, Nietzsche's Jesus is a "floating signifier" whose life story invites multiple iterations, and recognizing this is a hermeneutical prolegomena to a transvaluation of values.[4] However, as I will argue, this approach to understanding Nietzsche overemphasizes hermeneutical issues while failing to assign sufficient weight to the biographical content of Nietzsche's alternative story of Jesus.

Taking his cue from remarks made by Nietzsche that his ideal readers have a "predestination for the labyrinth" and "new ears for new music," (*A* Preface; *6* 168) in *Nietzschean Narratives* Gary Shapiro claims that *The Antichrist* is

> concerned with those very questions of how it is to be read and how it exists as a piece of writing which we are supposed to think of as derivative and external interests of the critic and historian.[5]

Part of Shapiro's project is to contest emotivist readings of Nietzsche's *Antichrist*, readings that can't get past the shrieking, vituperative tone of the work and that contend that nothing new can be found in it. Rather than a rehashing of well-worn ideas punctuated by intemperate howls, Shapiro sees a book intensely focused on a variety of philological issues concerned with "the way in which the Bible was successively produced, edited, re-edited, interpreted and criticized."[6] According to Shapiro, in *The Antichrist* Nietzsche accepts many of the results of nineteenth century biblical scholarship regarding the history of Judaism, from the epoch of warriors, prophets, and kings of pre-exilic Israel through the emergence of Judaism as a religion of law and ritual. However, Nietzsche's account breaks sharply with tradition when it approaches the figure of Jesus. While Nietzsche's contemporaries and earlier scholars assumed that Jesus' life must be depicted in a narrative account, "Nietzsche proposes an ahistorical and non-narrative psychology of the redeemer, according to which Jesus was, in our everyday language, blissed out."[7] According to Shapiro, this Jesus is ahistorical because his life is without any episodic development, whether secular or religious. Nietzsche's Jesus is symbolist whose various actions, proverbs, and parables are meant to point to an insight whose significance can only be realized in immediate experience. When Jesus says that we must 'become as children,' this is meant to suggest that the kingdom of God is at hand, here and now, in a life immersed in love, a life lived without opposition, struggle, or enmity. But it is not the moral message of the 'glad tidings,' but the nature of the symbolism that Jesus uses to communicate that message, that is

at the center of Nietzsche's reflections on Jesus.

The point of Nietzsche's portrait of Jesus is semiotic because this Jesus is a symbolist whose words and actions are signs for what cannot be expressed using ordinary discourse. For Nietzsche, such a symbolist

> Stands outside of all religion, all conceptions of divine worship, all history, all natural science, all experience of the world, all acquirements, all politics, all psychology, all books, all art – his 'knowledge' is precisely the pure folly that anything of this kind exists. (A # 32; *6* 205)

According to Shapiro, in traditional Christian semiotics, one assumes that the history of Christianity is a series of signs and interpretations that reaches back through the tradition to Paul and ultimately to Jesus. Nietzsche's non-narrative depiction of Jesus as a symbolist challenges this tradition by providing an alternative semiotic history wherein the sign chain leads back to an absence, rather than a fullness, of meaning. Thus Nietzsche

> accepts a historical Jesus who is historically relevant only because his actual presence was that of a radically ambiguous sign capable of indefinite interpretation.[8]

Shapiro argues that Nietzsche's Jesus is more akin to Robert Rauschenberg's erased de Kooning painting than David Strauss' *Life of Jesus*. One can convey the impossibility of a successful narrative, and do so without contradiction, only indirectly. Just as in the Rauschenberg painting, Shapiro reasons, where erasure is the technique the painter uses to suggest the limits of visual expression, Nietzsche's depiction of Jesus is intended to suggest indirectly our inability to find the real Jesus underneath all the interpretations of his life. Nietzsche accomplishes this by providing a portrait of Jesus as a figure for whom only inner realities exist and whose constant use of symbolism is meant to suggest the resistance of his life to ordinary, non-symbolic narration. Consequently, the central objectives of *The Antichrist* are achieved through what Shapiro calls a semiotics of suspicion.

While Renan's Jesus is a central concern of *The Antichrist,* that concern is not in fact focused on to what extent Renan was attempting an historically accurate account. Neither is it concerned with the relation(s) between Renan's narrative and other placeholders in the 'sign chain' of Christian semiotics. It *is* intensely concerned with the character of various moral and psychological profiles of Jesus, including Renan's. Renan's *Life of Jesus*, we recall, concedes the historicity, but not the divinity, of Jesus, and its narration freely makes use of imaginative details that would not bear historical scrutiny.[9] It attempts a poetic recreation of that life, structured as a play and embellished with lyrical details that aim at profound reverential adoration but tend to manage only preciousness. As Albert Schweitzer put it, "The gentle Jesus, the beautiful Mary, the fair Galileans who formed the retinue of the 'amiable carpenter,' might have been taken over in a body from the shop-window of an ecclesiastical art emporium in the Place St. Sulpice."[10] Even the mule Jesus rides on has long eyelashes and big, brown eyes. But it is the moral and psychological content of Renan's portrait of Jesus, and not its muddled historiography or affected aesthetics, that Nietzsche excoriates:

> Monsieur Renan, that buffoon in *psychologicis,* has appropriated for his explication of the type
> Jesus the two most *inapplicable* concepts possible in this case: the concept of the *genius* and
> the the concept of the *hero.* But if anything is unevangelic it is the concept hero. (A 29; *6* 198)

Nietzsche's approach to the New Testament is to assume that Jesus was not divine, that he performed no miracles, and that we cannot know *with certainty* which actions and sayings can be attributed to him. On Shapiro's account in *The Antichrist,* this realization is the beginning of a meditation on hermeneutical issues that culminates with Jesus who, as a 'floating signifier,' represents the limits of Christian semiotics. But were this reading correct, Nietzsche would have blasted Renan's obvious shortcomings as an historian, he would not have provided the episodic narrative account of Jesus that we find in *The Antichrist,* and he wouldn't have created or used that account as he did.

Nietzsche used a conception of *euangelion*, the 'bringer of joyful news,' certain views regarding human psychology, what we know about Jesus' historical epoch, plus a rule of biographical coherence, to create a narrative illustration of "the psychological character of the redeemer." Such a type

> *could* be contained in the Gospels in spite of the Gospels, however much mutilated and over-
> loaded with foreign traits: as that of Francis of Assisi is contained in the legends about him
> in spite of the legends. *Not* the truth about what he did, what he said, how he really died: but
> the question whether this type is still conceivable at all, whether it has been handed down by
> tradition. (A #29; *6* 205)

In *The Antichrist* Nietzsche does not discuss the nature of symbolism as a form of expression, the semiotic issues that might arise from this, and how this might be relevant to his portrait of Jesus and to the Christian tradition. It is true that Nietzsche admits that one can't in principle rule out that the historical Jesus had characteristics ascribed to him by Paul and others.[11] He calls the "*Geschichicten von Heiligen"* the "*zwei-deutigste"* – the most ambiguous—literature in existence. (*A* #28; *6* 205) But his reasons for this reflect concerns native to traditional historiography: for example, the absence of reliable corroborating sources, and secular assumptions about human desires, wishes, and motivation. His real concern is the moral and psychological meaning of 'redeemer,' 'savior,' 'evangel,' and other allied terms, and what the implications of this may be for reading the Gospels. Most importantly, he will use his life of Jesus to suggest the *dys*angelic character of some of the most influential accounts of Jesus found in the Gospels.

Nietzsche finds in the Gospels two utterly contradictory narratives of Jesus' life and death. One of them describes a person who lived, and died, beyond judgment, sin, guilt, hatred, a life of "blessedness in peace, in gentleness, in the inability for enmity."(A 29; 6 205) *This* is the redemptive Jesus for whom the kingdom of God exists here and now and in a life lived in love. This Jesus personifies the moral and psychological traits that suggest to Nietzsche an *euangelion*, and in his account Nietzsche brings into relief those actions and words in the Gospels that are of a piece with such a 'bringer of joyful tidings.' Above all, Nietzsche's Jesus endures his trial and crucifixion in fealty to his teaching, and thus bequeaths to us the image of an authentic Christian practice:

> The 'bringer of glad tidings' died as he *taught* ---*not* to redeem mankind but to demonstrate how one ought to live. What he bequeathed to mankind is his *practice*: his bearing before the judges, before the guards, before the accusers and every kind of calumny and mockery—his bearing on the *Cross.* (A #37; *6* 210)

Nietzsche considers it an irony of *world-historical* proportions that Christianity has subsequently embraced a Jesus whose teachings and actions are diametrically opposed to this portrait of the Evangel. It is as if, in a world culturally dominated by the stories of the *Iliad,* lessons belonging to Leo Buscalia had been attributed to Achilles: we might not know who Achilles really was, but we would recognize the attribution as unheroic. In the case of Jesus the antithetical notions include guilt, sin, hell, eternal life in a Kingdom of Heaven beyond death, the Last Judgment, and any form of doctrinal theology whatsoever. If one keeps in mind the portrait of Jesus outlined above, we can understand Nietzsche's caustic sarcasm regarding New Testament verses that have become prominent features of Christian faith:

> 'And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.' (Mark ix, 42) – How evangelic!....

> 'Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall Not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with Power.' (Mark ix, 1) – Well *lied*, lion…. (*A* 45; *6* 215)

Only the lie of personal immortality could attract and retain the faithful, and Nietzsche speculates about how this representation of Jesus' message began to take hold. To make sense of Jesus' death the disciples interpreted the crucifixion as an event that was a meaningful and reasonable necessity. To this end they convinced themselves it was fated, and they insisted, with the fanaticism Nietzsche considered the natural soil of disciples, that Jesus was the Messiah. With that, all the cultural components necessary for a second, very different Jesus were in place--- judgment, retribution, punishment, the sacrificial innocent, otherworldly rewards. Subsequently, early Christian writers toil as the propagandists of the new religion, with rewards of a decidedly earthly character on the line.

Recent scholarship has attempted to reconstrue Nietzsche's Jesus as a reverential account, but this is a mistake.[12] An aversion to all enmity, to all resistance, and an allied immersion in a religion of blessedness and love seem to Nietzsche irredeemably hedonistic, and reflective of a world-weary hypersensitivity to suffering. Having split the Gospels into a schizophrenic contradiction, Nietzsche uses diagnostic strategies familiar from his earlier work to label Jesus a decadent. Clearly, an interpretation of *The Antichrist* like Shapiro's would need to marshal considerable independent argument to reconcile the 'blank slate' or 'floating signifier' reading of Jesus with this psychological profile. Furthermore, underplaying the significance of the biographical thematic in Nietzsche's alternative Jesus vitiates the point Nietzsche attempts to make about the moral incoherence in the Gospels' Jesus: that fundamental traditions in Christianity could themselves be criticized as *unevangelic,* and so criticized on the basis of an account of Jesus created from

essential components of the Gospels.

"*Sehen wir uns ins Gesicht,*" Nietzsche says at the very beginning of *The Antichrist. "Wir sind Hyperborean."* –"Let us look one another in the face. We are Hyperboreans." (*A # 1*; *6* 169). In the final analysis, setting aside whether they can be part of a coherently drawn Jesus, why are moral judgment, punishment and reward, sin, justice, and the Kingdom of Heaven unevangelic, the bad tidings of a dysangel? Nietzsche believed that the world plunges along without any moral or divine purpose, without any unifying *telos*. Judgments about the world inevitably find it wanting, and for Nietzsche are always propped up by theories that would "substitute the mere shadow of a man for a man of flesh and blood,"[13] and doctrinal Christianity is merely an egregious example of this. Such a world would seem to have found an ally in one who would preach the loving acceptance of everything, without addition or subtraction. But Nietzschean affirmation always got its intensity from the gaze into the abyss, from its perpetual meditation on the dead ends of the Western philosophical tradition. Only a 'Hyperborean' will have the new ears needed for Nietzsche's music, and thus is Jesus excluded from Nietzsche's choir.

Notes

[1] Gary Shapiro, *Nietzschean Narratives* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989) p. 136. The most influential biblical scholarship in the 19th and early 20th century combines secular philological and historical interpretive strategies with liberal, humanist values. In their writings about Jesus, such thinkers as David Strauss and Ernest Renan, and later Albert Schweitzer, were attempting a kind of moral-philological retrieval. Writing in an academic milieu wherein belief in the supernatural was considered indicative of superstition and naïve credulity, Renan and Strauss ultimately produce what amount to fanciful recreations of Jesus' life guided by liberal moral principles. The scriptures would be salvaged but their religious significance would be completely altered. According to Strauss et. al., the disciples and later chroniclers gave Jesus' life, teachings, and works interpretations that reflected the religious and political realities of the day. In the view of the new secularist historians, whatever early documents we might have regarding Jesus are inherently polemical. Furthermore, differences among the early accounts of Jesus regarding fact plus scant corroborating archaeological evidence convinced these biblical scholars that Gospels could not be read as accounts that document accurately the true facts of Jesus' life and teachings. By the standards of historical evidence embraced by 19th century scholars a factually veracious account of Jesus was no longer available. In *The Antichrist* Nietzsche accepts the secular philological strategies used by earlier thinkers, but he is sharply critical of the values that they use to construct a moral narrative of Jesus. Until fairly recently, *The Antichrist* has been written of as derivative and overly emotional, most notably by Walter Kaufmann and Arthur Danto. But recent scholarship, including Shapiro's *Nietzschean Narratives* and Tim Murphy's *Nietzsche, Metaphor, Religion* (State University of New York Press, 2001), has resisted this view.

[2] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*. Trans. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1989). References to *The Antichrist* are given as follows: (*A #1*; *3* p. 250). The first citation refers to the section quoted from

Hollingdale's translation of *The Antichrist*, while the second refers to the volume and page number of Friedrich Nietzsche, *Samtliche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe,* hrsg: Colli and Montinari (Munchen: Walter de Gruyter, 1980). I indicate in the text where I diverge from Hollingdale's translation. In the quotation preceding the second endnote I translate "character" for *Typus.*

[3] This is the Greek term from which "Evangel" and other words are derived. It combines the prefix *eu* with *angelion* which connotes "message" or messenger."

[4] This is in general terms what Shapiro does in "The Text as Graffito: Historical Semiotics" in *Nietzschean Narratives,* pp. 124-141. Timothy Murphy's *Nietzsche, Metaphor, Religion* (State University of New York Press, 2001) is a book-length example of this approach to *The Antichrist.* A detailed survey of this approach is beyond the scope of this paper.

[5] Shapiro, *Nietzschean Narratives,* p.126.

[6] Shapiro, p. 128.

[7] Shapiro, p.131.

[8] Shapiro, p.131.

[9] Schweitzer's *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1948) has influenced this section of my paper. According to Schweitzer, Renan's narration of Jesus' life produces a portrait of Jesus that is "precious" or what we might today call "Disneyesque." Regarding Renan's awkward blending of scientific history, Christian faith, and dramatized psychobiography, Schweitzer approvingly quotes Ernst Luthardt: "It lacks conscience…..There is a kind of insincerity in the book from beginning to end." Schweitzer, p. 191.

[10] Schweitzer, p. 182.

[11] He makes this point at (*A* #36; *6* 240)

[12] See for example Thomas Altizer, *The Contemporary Jesus,* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), p.154, and John Evans, "Nietzsche on Christ *vs.* Christianity," *Soundings* vol. 78 1995, p. 573.

[13] Albert Camus, *The Rebel,* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991) p. 67. Camus' excellent short general essay in *The Rebel*, "Absolute Affirmation" has influenced my essay. According to Camus, Nietzsche wrote as a philosophical diagnostician who believed that the Western philosophical tradition must confront nihilism, the crisis that the tradition's most influential values had lost their relevance and meaning. Camus believed that Nietzsche sought an affirmation of life in his intense interrogation of Western values, and that this affirmation ended in a deification of the world that could be used to justify injustice. Camus' discussion

of Nietzsche's Jesus differs from mine in that it fails to account for Nietzsche's view that a religion of blessedness and an aversion to all enmity suggests decadence. Camus claimed that Nietzsche's critique of Christianity left Jesus alone (Camus, *The Rebel,* p. 67), but this is not so. I address Nietzsche's discussion of Western values and nihilism in "Epistemology and the Autodevaluation of Morality: Toward an Atheoretical Nietzsche," *Southwestern Philosophy Review*, January 1992, pp. 119-125, and in "Skepticism, Enigma and Integrity: Horizons of Affirmation in Nietzsche's Philosophy," *Man and World*, Fall-Winter 1990, pp. 375-391.

Lao Tzu at the border.

By Christopher Kelen

for my brother, Steve
with thanks to Chad Hansen

> Endless, the series of things without name
> On the way back to where there is nothing.
>
> *Tao Te Ching*, Chapter 14

One of the privileges of fiction – usually too obvious to mention – is that of not having to tell the truth. In fact it's more than a privilege, it's a responsibility. If all you do in a story is tell the truth, tell that is what is already known and verifiable, then you don't have a story at all. Or rather you might have a journalist's story, but you don't have a story in the fictional sense.

Is the writer of fiction dishonest then? One is inclined to hedge the question. Dishonest is a word that carries a heavy moral load and it implies a certain amount of black and white distinction. When you say someone's been dishonest, you're already implying that they might have been honest. In other words you're already in the realm of the hypothetical, which is exactly where fiction happens to be. Rather than chase the tail any further, let's just say that it's not necessary to consider the writer of fiction as dishonest, and that if one *were* to consider the writer of fiction in that light then the same pall would need to be cast over anyone who had ever imagined things as other than they are--would need to be cast over anyone who had ever used what the Romantics called the faculty of the imagination.

The hope of the fiction maker is usually to get to deeper truths by portraying people we haven't *exactly* met, events which haven't *quite* happened. The idea that truth is 'layered' is one many black and white thinkers would like to resist. It is nevertheless fundamental to the principle and to the pleasure of fiction.

How, as Danté put it, to furnish the beautiful lie revealing the truth? The methods are many and various and these are what the art of fiction is all about. One such method is anachronism: putting together places and events which shouldn't or couldn't under normal – true – circumstances, have come together. The cannons in *Hamlet*. Shakespeare was happy to meet the historical contexts of his dramas half way. Perhaps in doing so he was merely acknowledging that in practice this is difficult to avoid. We are creatures of our own times and conditions; when we touch the past we can't help but remake it in our own image, or at least to some extent…

In the dim mists of the past where record runs into legend, one can perhaps be forgiven for running the characters of one dynasty or kingdom into those, from our point of view, proximate. When one deals with characters who may already be fictional or mythical, characters whose deeds are done and yet remain open to interpretation, then one's licence is even further enlarged. On the basis of this train of fictional reasoning, I hope that the reader will indulge the liberties I have taken with the truth below.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Legend has it Lao Tzu wanted to leave China. It's not difficult to speculate as to why this may have been so. He might have had any number (or any combination) of good reasons to get out of the Middle Kingdom. The difficult job for philosophy's chroniclers is to narrow his range of possible motives. If we knew with any certainty why it was the great sage felt he had to leave China, then light might be cast on many of the original mysteries of Daoism, a system of belief widely regarded as inscrutable by observers east and west.

Such at least was the resignedness of the conventional wisdom on Lao Tzu and the *Tao Te Ching* until the recent discovery of the still little known text you see translated below. The torn and incomplete scroll is purportedly in the hand of one of the border guards who had been expressly charged with the duty of preventing the sage's leaving China, but who apparently was persuaded to his doctrine in the course of his encounter. Even since the publication of this fragment there remain scholars who continue to doubt the historical veracity of some details. Still others maintain the old skepticism that there ever lived a sage named Lao Tzu. I leave it to the reader to judge whether tales of this nature may be constructed from fragments of truth and figments far otherwise, or whether rather their verisimilitude gives credence to the belief they inspire.

Lao Tzu you'll recall is famous for a great many sayings, these not necessarily in the four character style of later received wisdom. The first of these which I transliterate here

> *dao ke dao fei chang dao*
> *ming ke ming fei chang ming*

one might regard as the most translated – or rather the most widely interpreted, the most contentious – lines of thought which ever came from one language into another. Lao Tzu – whether you regard him as historical personage or confabulation – was certainly a character of great profundity and as well a character of profound influence on that fifth and more of the world's population which has for the last two and a half millennia found itself under the spell of a 'Confucian Heritage'. As in the case of Jesus and Buddha, we have to guess at the man and the life hidden behind the text and the interpretation and the doctrine and dogma that came after. Even a man of Lao Tzu's originality and insight can be reduced to cliché of the desk calendar variety: 'the road of a thousand *li* begins with a single step.'

This is a story about the single most difficult step Lao Tzu took on his journey out of China. It is told in

the voice of one charged with the duty of preventing the sage from taking that step.

<div style="text-align:center">***</div>

The Old Master (Lao Tzu) had wanted to leave China because of the unbearable pressure brought upon him by the moralists (Confucians). We were sent to the pass for this reason, that we might guard it bodily against his passing, and that, schooled in the truths of the Great Master (Confucius or Kungzi), we might gently dissuade him from passing beyond the world, and at once learn how he had fallen into error. We were easily guided and provisioned *en route* because disciples of the tall man (Confucius) were everywhere. In the kingdoms we passed through there seemed to be few men who had not sat at the master's knee.

Our mission was to return to the capital with the sage or failing that, with a record of his wisdom set down in his own hand. The Old Master was long known to have magical powers; who could say how he might evade us? Though he was rumoured rarely to speak, his oratorical powers were legend. Who had met him? The tall man had, or there were none to contradict him if he said he had, and he did say so. We brothers had been chosen for the task of apprehending the Old Master because we had long training and experience in the arts of magic and in resisting evasive speech and seductive inducements, and because as brothers we thought with one mind. When one of us slept the other would be wide awake. No one could slip between us when we were charged with the duty of watching. Our orders were the emperor's. The emperor was unsure how dangerous or how valuable this man might be, to him, or indeed to someone else. He must be watched, not lost. The emperor had samples of the sage's calligraphy and would trust nothing written in another hand to represent the sage's truth. There had at that time recently been many famous cases of forgery. Our motive, as you must know, was pain of death should we fail. Should we succeed, the eternal gratitude of the kingdom would be ours. The wisdom of the Old Master would be preserved, harnessed for the benefit of the empire.

Days and months we had followed him – staying out of sight and out of earshot where possible – as he lumbered through the western provinces, *li* by slow *li* on his laborious ox. His progress – and ours – had been erratic, confused. Often he would appear ahead of us when we were sure we had moved into the lead and when we were sure that he had no way around our path. Was his progress magical – like of that of the sacred tortoise in the western legend – or was it merely the case that at his prodigious age the seer had an intimate knowledge of these parts which were foreign to us? Had he been in these strange places before, even in remote antiquity? Perhaps it was the case that he never slept. But then neither, between us, did we. Or did we? A thousand years might pass in the blinking of an eye, might it not? His hours were not the ones we knew.

At last we came to the pass he could not avoid: the way from the world you might think it, but to the people we encountered on our way there, the pass was just a rumour. What they saw on their western horizon, or never saw but had heard told, was a wall of stone none passed, an impenetrable mountain fastness.

A maze of ridges leads to the pass. But the pass itself is unmistakable. It cannot be missed should you, that is, survive through the maze of stone to come to it. Years it might take you and the only noodles you'd eat would be the ones you'd carried with you on your back. Time and again, tracks turn back on themselves, away from the only true passage. There's no way around the pass itself though. Not even Lao Tzu can bluff his way through a solid rock face. The ridges rise so high above us the sun can only be seen for a few minutes each day.

To the pass we came and there we waited.

Picture the scene if you will. We are within hours of him, ahead now, but alert always, having lost his trail so many times before. Should we lose him here, should he pass us… – but it is impossible! – then we must follow him into the perilous void beyond. Our fears are founded in what no one knows. Such is the heart/ mind with which we attend what will be.

The Old Master comes sidling up to the border on his fat ox, as if it were the most natural thing in the world. Squat, slow steps of the beast, like he's a peasant and he does this every day. As if he were making his way to a neighbour's farm. But this man is no farmer, and our fear is that the world is about to be broken, its limit taken down. There was no silk road then, by land or by sea. China was the world, you can imagine how difficult it is leave the world. Remember the cautionary tales? O soul come back! The north is full of ice, the sea boils in the south, monsters mountain high to the east and in the west the moving sands stretch away for thousands of *li*. These were tales told to keep you at home, as if there were in every direction a limit to what humans might endure.[1] Even since then very few have passed beyond the borders of the kingdom.

Indeed, we were at one of the limits foretold in the poem. It was thunder's chasm to which we had come, the chasm in the west, the eyrie of certain malevolent deities, or so we had been schooled by all who directed our steps, all that is except for the Old Master. To him we had not yet spoken. Yet neither could we believe that he had been unaware of our movements behind and before him. The moment of the encounter was upon us.

Now we know there are other worlds, we didn't know then. The word 'border' is misleading here because this moment is the invention.

***

The Old Master comes slowly through the pass. These eyes the eyes of a farmer, an ox. But we know, he knows. He sees us, sees through us. When I say 'us', I do not mean that he saw us both. Our strategy was to avoid that possibility by never appearing before him together. He was to think we were the one man, the one guard. We were to intimidate him with our vigilance, our ferocious mien, by the glint of halberd, by the thickness of our beards. So we were commanded and so the empire would appear invincible. Vain hope that was! Before ever we set out from the city, he must have known we were brothers, known the

story of our family back beyond its beginnings, known all.

The first words, do we trust our recollection of them? We had been warned about the 'wordless teaching'. The first words are ours. They are as commanded. Do we understand even them?

'Great Sage, Old Master. Kungzi says you are a great teacher. Mozi says great teachings must not be wasted. The emperor commands us that you must not leave this world without recording your *dao*. And so – though we are worthless and your way is great – yet we must detain you.'

'So the kingdom has got underneath me.'

We were prepared for tricks, his riddle could not move us. We were silent till he spoke again.

'Fine words demanding words, these.'

'You must write your *dao* before you pass. So we are commanded.'

'The way that can be told is not…'

We ask him if it his intention to pass beyond us, but he will not answer. Which way is he headed? But again, 'The way that can be told is not…'

'What is it you mean when you say this?'

'The names that can be named are not…'

'Can you write this, in your own hand?'

'The names that can be named…'

He was, after these first moments, convivial with us, disarmingly so. Nothing I write now can capture his manner. He spoke of the things about us, with us. What he said made easy sense. He spoke of the road as any wayfarer might, of the way he and we had come. That night he cooked a tiny fish in our honour, mine or my brother's, I can't remember. Whenever we asked him to write, the riddling resumed as it had begun. Or, it seemed like riddling to us. It seemed to us he wanted to go on and that there was nowhere ahead. We thought he was weak in the head. He said, 'In *dao* the only motion is returning.' Then why should he set his face into the nothing, into deaf stone?

But then he was our friend, companion of the way, a man as I am, more knowledged in the world, having come farther, yet a man. A fund of stories. There were times we laughed loudly in the first days. We did not mean to show disrespect, there were times we thought he was joking, had to be.

He would have written nothing had we not insisted upon the gravity of our commission. And yet one feels now there was no need of insisting on what he already knew. He wrote for us a line at a time. After each line we would have questions. We wanted to get to the truth of his meaning. But each question – each word we spoke – led us further from… truth, from where it was we wished to be. How much must we bring back to the emperor? How many characters would suffice? How long is a man's *dao*? Ridiculous, all ridiculous questions. What choice had we but to pursue them?

Of course the document left at the border consists of what was written in the hand of the sage, none of the dialogue was recorded until now[2]. Nor were the comments and explanations, the interpolations, unwillingly given by the Old Master.

The talk and the scribble, the fire under the pot, the pot filled miraculously as if out of air. There were I think months of this. At least the ice grew round us, the ice melted away. For weeks at a time we would feel our knowledge growing. But what was this knowledge we were coming into now? Words and more words.

'Words and things, words and things,' he would roar at us. 'You wish to know why it is I avoid the use of words? Words regulate the roar of things! How could that be wise or well? Things that can be spoken are already said…' And so on. It would not be possible for me to recover the discussion in any detail. Expect from this account no more than some of the memorable points of the encounter, delivered by one whose understanding is yet – and shall remain – feeble.

Words I think he meant were only as useful as what they could bring about it in the world. Knowledge as we understood it was only of words. *Dao*, his *dao* was what had brought him. How could that be spoken? A memory or a set of directions is not the way. The way is in steps left behind. To look for it is to seek the beams of the burnt house in its ashes.

And what could he hope to achieve by standing here talking to us through a blizzard, pretending with us, I now understand, that two were one, when he knew all along. He was a shrinking man, a man dwarfed by his years. There seemed to be less of him each day. We were young then, our halberds were heavy, we were several times his size, or so we felt. Why should he stand here with us dealing out words when words were nothing to him, when only – so he schooled us – only a practical purpose could justify their use?

We had furnished him with inkstone, brush, paper. A folding table and stool we provided for him. Of course we kept the chapter he had written each day. And yet, many times we imagined we would be best to start again. Had we left the pages with him, would he have destroyed them, left them to the tearing winds? This was a risk we could never run, because doom would overtake us should we return empty handed. Besides, the seer was so frail: were he not, as rumoured, immortal, then any day might be his last, and likewise any stroke of the brush. All that he wrote was precious, the palace scholars would interpret it later.

Truly we believed to begin that this place would mark his passage from the world. Daily we expected that he would vanish before our eyes. Would he turn to ashes? Would he rise and fly from us, fold silver wings

high over the dark cliffs? These were mere fantasies and yet each of these notions was right in its way. He would go and with it his *dao*. What if the palace scholars were to sift through his words and whisper to the emperor that the *dao* was not there, was lost, would have to be cut from our flesh? And so daily we begged him to write what he meant. And so daily he obliged us.

So slight and yet speaking, he would shield his eyes as if the sun were there, as if he could see through the walls of stone which held us. He would shuffle his feet. Later, when we brothers spoke we could confirm with each other, that listening to him, we felt we were always looking at him sideways, we were always shifting our footing to follow his meaning. It retreated as we approached, *dao* – what *dao* did he mean?

Dao. Where was it? It was everywhere. How could we follow it? What difference would it make? How can you follow where you have already been? You might as well follow the air, follow nothing. Is *dao* something or nothing, a thing or the source of things. Every day we placed upon him the same demand to interpret. Every day the same answer, 'I've said what I can; there's nothing more. To mystify it increases mystery. You need to know *dao* to interpret *dao*.'

'*Dao*, *dao*. Is it one or are there many *daos*?' he would say. 'How did you get here? That was only one way. Where you will go is also only one way. But that is a way you cannot follow – because you cannot miss it. You have many to choose from, but none is constant except the one you will choose.'

This we could confirm with him, so duplicitous were we. 'Through the maze there is a way.'

'Then how is it you did not see me come? Was there one step that brought you, brought me?' He rarely answered with questions like this. 'Each of us comes by a different way, such is our love. Your family field is in weeds while you stay.'

'But my brother…' I might have said. I said nothing. Whether in questions or in answers, in bold statements or in asides, his words – it seemed to us then – had many meanings, and so his meaning seemed obscure, wise beyond our ken, wide of our understanding. When we shook our heads he knew where we were lost. 'More than one is never none,' he would say.

Could there be an unchanging *dao*? He confided in us when we asked that he hoped to meet another sage, a mortal/immortal man of a thousand lives – not a man – but one who has been before, will come again. He was worried that there might be impostors. Might he himself be one? When, in the first days, we had told him of our mission, he had asked us why we would risk everything to return to face judgement, when here we were safe, free? Were we not satisfied with who, with what, we were? Here we had paused in time and nothing could harm us. It was obvious to us then our work was unfinished, our mission yet incomplete. Would we know more if we travelled back? Weren't we learning more just by going nowhere? One felt clumsy to argue at times like this.

But we never ceased to dog him with questions about *dao*. To these he spoke of presence, of the

here-and-now. 'There isn't even one step is there? I catch the arrow in my hand. That's what words do. Do they? Can they? Where is the illusion? Heaven's way is like the bending [of the bow.'

And we would ask again after his meaning. And patiently, so patiently, he would return with, 'Always more words you're after. You want to understand, but you want words and words lead you further and further into error.'

We would protest at this that we wished for the true words, the words that would guide us. That, he would say, was not their *dao*. Where were the words once they were spoken? It was at such cues as this we would ask him to write. Then the stool and the table would be prepared for him. And still the sideways glance, still we would shift our ground, as we listened, as we read.

Where were words once gone? In other minds, in other mouths, so we thought. Were they not constant in their function between us? The border – this border between world and not – he would tell us it could be forward half a *li*, back some paces. But we would look into the solid rock and nod our heads, uncomprehending. Yet he went on insisting his only purpose with words and names was to make things, to make things happen. Should we abandon names then? He never said so but told us to abandon knowing. How could we know how not to know? He merely raised his eyebrows until that seemed to be all there was of him. 'To know when one does not know is best,' he said. We felt like fools then. Still, we would ask him how things should be, what to do, how to do it. But everything 'depended' with him. Without circumstances there could be no way. Words and the ways they told could never be immutable. We had been asking him as we might have asked the tall man. We expected tricks – irony, paradox – where the words merely were what they were. Inadequate perhaps, but with no more magic than any words have. We had tricked ourselves with expecting more. It was what was not there that confused us.

Even the words on the paper he gave us, he told us would shift with the wind. We stared hard at them then, as if our eyes could fix them. The words meant what they meant when he meant them, but in another eye, another mouth, surely they would mean otherwise. How could words mean in a town or a palace how they meant here in this cleft between rocks, between worlds. The words he said were less constant than the sky. We would look up when he spoke thus and see that high above the cliffs the pale firmament was all in changes.

It is true there were times he would write in the rain and the characters would be washed from the paper just as soon as they were formed… I was ashamed to admit that I could remember nothing of what was lost in this way… The sun would dry these sham traces of thought. How inconstant the world we would think then. How much less constant the way of words, the naming of the world and all it consists in.

We were dizzy now, dizzy with the arguments, with his sideways bird glancing at us. Sometimes we felt we were becoming birds ourselves. *Dao* was something we might peck at. We knew then that knowledge was how to do, neither more nor less. We had not yet learned how to need not to do, how to abandon ourselves, by abandoning knowledge. And yet we had begun to know how little we knew. The lessening

had begun.

Then he was gone, vanished as we knew he would. But neither of us saw the vanishing. Too simple a paradox. Or was he gone? We must wait. And in the waiting time we persuaded ourselves this was a trick, or rather that it wasn't, but that he would return, that his absence would then make sense, that if we began down the mountain through the maze of stone that he would be standing back at the pass, his bird's head tilting us sideways to listen, dizzying us with his words. So we believed, so we imagined. He could not have gone on so he must have gone back. Did we believe that? Was he with us still, now merely invisible?

We waited a full month and then we finally resigned ourselves to our fate. We would return to the capital with all of his words. By these we would be judged. Heroes or criminals we would be, or both by turns, who could tell? The scholars would know, so we reasoned. If Lao Tzu were back in the capital then we would be returning with a record of his *dao*; others might pursue him for whatever detail or interpretation we had failed to glean. All would be well. If not, well, had we not proved that the kingdom was big enough to contain him?

And so we started down the mountain, just as we had come, together, alone. We remembered the turnings of the maze though it had been an age since our arrival. We knew though that the way back is never the same, for instance it's always more rapid returning. But everything was familiar. Or so it seemed, before we knew we were lost.

We had come without losing our way. And now… Was that because his spirit had guided us before, was now leading us astray? Months had passed now since the pass, since our setting out. Was he back at the court, back at the pass? Was our failure – were even our deaths – old news? And then, when we had given ourselves up for lost, we found the tracks of his ox again. The tracks led us from the mountain. When we came out of the maze at last the village at the entrance was no longer there. Instead, we were met with a strange writing neither of us recognized. Was this his spell, the magic of which we had heard but never seen practised?

And now, out of the mountains, we see the sun is setting in the east. We gasp at this demonstration of the power of *dao*. He has turned the world around. Now we are walking on the floor of heaven. In the villages and towns we come to, no one can understand us. Nor can we follow them. Have so many centuries passed since we went into the mountain? Should we stop to learn the language? In every place it is different. The people too have changed. Their skins are different, everything. Perhaps time has passed backwards; people eat with their hands.

A full further month of travel into stranger and stranger lands it takes us to know what we hadn't known, to recognize how simple *dao* is, his, ours. He hasn't turned the world round, only us. East is still east, west west. Our *dao* is onward, direction the same. West is where we've been headed this last month and more. No one will praise us or doom us, no one will know us. We are in India. His sideways bird manner had turned us around.

And so we begin to ask ourselves, what kind of limit was this border. You cannot go on forever to keep up with one man. Had we not chosen this place thinking it already was something we had made it: border or end of the world?

When we come to the court of the Buddha, the Old Master is already gone.

We sat down at the feet of the Great One. That is where I have left my brother. Long before the scriptures ever came to China, he was disciple, boddhisatva, arhat.

I went on. I have not found the Old Master, I no longer pretend I am pursuing him. Some of his words we left at the border. Some I have with me still. The terrain on both sides of the border is much the same, I now know. We had found our way out of the maze following the tracks of his ox on into the west.

<div align="center">***</div>

What am I but a chronicler? I am enrolled in the classes of Epicurus now, an old man and much younger than me. I have learned of the soul, of mind's quiet. I spend my life finding words when I should find my way from them… I am pursuing…what? The *dao*, not *the*… a disappearance. There are bodies and there is a void. The soul's knowledge is sensation. Should I dedicate myself to passing beyond this limit? Nothing comes from nothing, nothing passes there. I will stay here in the city of the goddess.

Editor's note:

The last fragments of the journal are mere poetry:

the city is white, of heaven torn

the dawn pink marble

the moon's horns, the star held

I have lost count of the sandals that brought me

sturdy hours I spend in love of wisdom, of the getting there, *dao*

the atoms in every thing; the soul, its stillness

but we have wives here too
from birth yet pleasure

ever dissolving
constant, inconstant as the wine dark sea

<div align="center">***</div>

The final fragment breaks off here.

The translator notes the notorious unreliability of certain of the terms, their inadequacy to deal with the nuances of classical thought. Foremost among these inadequate terms are philosophy and truth. To replace them with more effective glosses would however have the effect of rendering the text unintelligible to the modern reader, and so they are retained.

Notes

[1] The poem referred to is Chu Tzu's 'The Summons of the Soul'.

[2] Editor's note: We now, in what survives as the *Tao Te Ching*, have only fragments of what was undoubtedly a much longer work in antiquity.

Playing with the Dao de Jing

By Christopher Kelen (Poems and pictures)
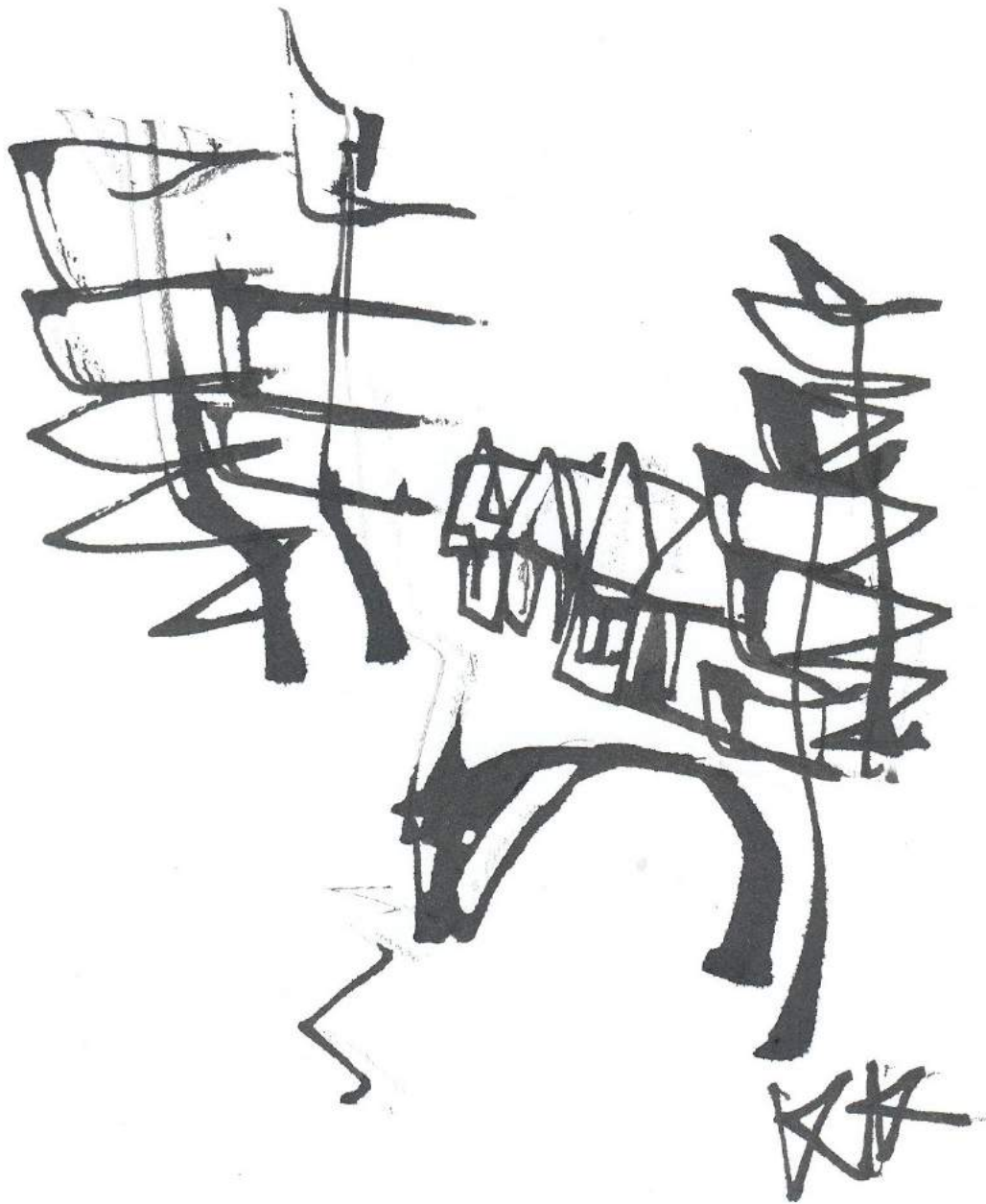
just a little *dao* will do

1
we haven't worked out
which way to go
but with a little luck
you know
we'll work it out
on the way

4
now you see it
no, you didn't

an empty vessel now
of course – when
everything's from there

how could a thing
be left behind?

11
spokes at the hub
and nothing to go on

unclutter the mind
and then thought is useful

only from nothing
find the way on

22
what lightning strikes
is never a target

best words the emptiest
how the heart fills

43
teach a wordless track
through the forest of verbiage

behind this door
a world lies locked

49
the sage has the people
by heart
down pat

76
hard and soft
the one organ
the voice by turns

78
than water
what more yielding?
what more persisting?
what can replace it?

breaks down what is hard
scours away the soft edges

all this
just flowing
not thinking

everyone knows it
but who makes use of it?

so the sage says
take on misfortunes
they make you a king

on Laozi

why all of these characters
for a way that can't be written
for names that won't be known?

because they stopped you at the border
and you'd run out of jokes to tell

and if you'd not dipped brush in ink
then your cover would have been blown

Christian Communication in the Popular Cinema: Cross Imagery, Cruciform Poses and Pieta Stances.

By Anton Karl Kozlovic

Abstract

Numerous Christian references exist within the popular cinema, but they are frequently ignored, dismissed or under-utilised by educational and ecclesiastical institutions, despite feature films being the *lingua franca* of contemporary Western society and the most persuasive of modern art forms. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the professions in this post-Millennial period to raise the public's consciousness and treat them, and the art of video exegesis, as legitimate extra- ecclesiastical tools for religious education, communication research and cultural studies. Using textually-based, humanist film criticism as the analytical lens, the critical film and religion literature was reviewed and the popular Hollywood cinema scanned to explicate the following three Christian focuses, namely: (a) cross imagery, (b) cruciform poses and (c) Pieta stances. It was concluded that these three taxonomic categories are legitimate and entertaining pop culture phenomena whose pedagogic utility looks promising for the classroom, home and pulpit. Further research into the emerging and exciting interdisciplinary field of religion-and-film was recommended.

Keywords: Religion-and-Film, Popular Film, Popular Culture, Popular Communication, Christian Cinema, Applied Cinema

Introduction

The popular cinema[1] is the technological heir of the industrial revolution and a prime aesthetic bearer of 21st century Western civilisation. As a pervasive, potent and entrenched form of popular communication, it has become one of the most entertaining mass means of transmitting religious stories today. Thus, truly

making this the "Age of Hollywood" (Paglia, 1994, 12) and the reign of moving image culture that has helped foster the current ascendancy of religion-and- film (aka sacred cinema, spiritual cinema, holy film, cinematic theology, cinematheology, theo-film, celluloid religion, film-and-faith, film-faith dialogue).

Given these techno-social facts and the pervasiveness of Christianity worldwide, it is not too surprising to find that the popular Hollywood cinema[2] is full of sacred stories and holy subtexts. These are themselves replete with religious iconography, symbolism, allusions, analogues, metaphors, artefacts, behaviours etc., but which may not always be appreciated by audiences at first glance. For example, Diane M. Borden (1993) provided insightful examples of Christian iconography within two ostensibly non-religious films, Alan Parker's *Birdy* and Paul Schrader's *American Gigolo*. The former film alluded to the Holy Spirit, used bird's-eye/God's-eye points of view, and explored sexuality as a means of spiritual transcendence via its mental patient protagonist, Birdy (Matthew Modine). The latter film explored the link between the holy and the erotic, the rites of sacred prostitution, and the eventual redemption of its Beverly Hills gigolo, Julian (Richard Gere). These sorts of Christian references are easy to detect by those who have eyes to see, ears to hear (Ezek. 44:5)[3] and are willing to seek them out. Indeed, enough hidden Christian references have been detected within the field to date to foster a small cottage industry in its own right (e.g., Baugh, 1997; Kreitzer, 1993, 2002; Reinhartz, 1999).

Their existence (whether overtly or covertly embedded) is due to at least three basic facts. Firstly, the religion-film interrelationship is relatively long, complex and honourable, if not always well-known, understood or appreciated by scholars, the laity or the public (see Lindvall, 2001). Secondly, popular films were a dominant communications medium of the 20th (and now 21st) century, and thus intrinsically worthy of scholarly investigation because of their aesthetic and cultural contributions to society, art and world civilisation. Indeed, "more than just media inundation, we have come to live in a *media-mediated* culture, where our understanding of life, reality and our own experience is filtered through video frames" (Mercadante, 2001, 3). Thirdly, popular films have become the *lingua franca* of contemporary society, the "Tenth Muse...[that] has driven the other nine right off Olympus - or off the peak, anyway" (Vidal, 1993, 2-3). This fact alone warrants serious professional recognition, let alone the pedagogic application of commercial feature films as a legitimate, extra-ecclesiastical form of Christian communication, that is, movies as the stained glass windows of contemporary electronic culture.

Popular Film as Religious Pedagogy: The Hollywood Hermeneutic

Commercial feature films and the attendant art of video exegesis (i.e., religious exegesis, Hollywood style) can be a very innovative form of education about the Bible and religion, in addition to its contributions to film studies, communication research and cultural analysis. Why even bother with celluloid religion when biblical exegesis, history and archaeology have sufficed in the past? Because this Hollywood hermeneutic is a viable research tool that can add layers of meaning, knowledge and insight into traditional religious puzzles. It achieves this result during the very process of filmmaking when directors have to

make *explicit* what may only be *implicit* within the Holy Scriptures. Herein lays an exciting world of factual diversity, selective interpretation, and interpolative probabilities whose "forced" consideration by filmmakers can be a proverbial breath of fresh air in a research field bogged down by traditional, but well-worn methodologies.

To see old problems with new eyes is the unique gift that the popular cinema can provide today's religious scholars, as admirably demonstrated by Mark Goodacre's (2000) solving of the synoptic problem through contemporary Jesus films. As Les Casson (2002, 12) pointed out: "Film both reflects and shapes our world; it is the currency by which meanings, values and mythologies are traded. If we are to live and speak meaningfully in these times, then we had best learn the language." One can only agree with him wholeheartedly, and urge the utilisation of popular film within the classroom, home and pulpit as soon as practicable. Indeed, precisely because of films' worldwide popularity, cultural pervasiveness and profound influence upon the mass mind, it would be short-sighted and extremely churlish of the Church to deny the cinema its proper place under the sun. Besides, for "many people today, especially the young, popular culture *is* culture, and theology, to remain true to its calling, must take such cultural expressions seriously" (Simmons, 2003, 254).

It is also prudent for the profession to explore, analyse, and deploy video frames as a deliberate act of applied cinema; and not dismissively relegate them to the realms of diversionary entertainment, visual aide or student pacification purposes. That is, to employ commercial feature films as a legitimate tool for religious education simply because it fits closely the current needs of our postmodern, post-print and increasingly post-Christian society. This suggestion may cause anxiety, jealousy or disdain amongst those who have not developed complementary audiovisual skills to supplement their book skills. This is regrettable, but nevertheless in need of urgent change for as Brian Douglas (2003) counselled, there are sound religious reasons for upgrading the religion professions' academic skill base:

"Oh yes", I hear you saying, "just put on another video and fill up the religious education time slot in the timetable. It keeps the kids happy and it makes it very easy for the teacher". True I suppose, it does fill up the space but if this is all we do then we are failing to meet the spiritual need and we are failing in our duty as teachers and spiritual guides (3).

Moreover, who would want to be guilty of these two basic failings? Unfortunately, generations of bias against film culture, let alone its religious application, is common amongst the churches and other ecclesiastical communities. As *Commonweal* movie critic Richard Alleva (1999) lamented:

All my life I had been told by teachers that reading was greater than movie-going because you had to work at reading, had to decipher the words, turn them into images in your mind, had to work at understanding what the author had to say, and it was the work of reading that consecrated that activity and made literature a greater form than film, which was scarcely art at all, since movies just flowed in front of your eyes and did all your imagining for you. [Not so!]…To truly watch a movie was to read it, i.e. to see all that was put before you and to question yourself about what was shown (468).

This makes movie-watching just as consecrated an activity as book-reading, if not more so given its triple data stream (i.e., textual, audio, visual) and their complex interrelationships. Of course, there is more to appreciating popular communication, film studies and the emerging discipline of religion-and-film than just looking passively at flickering screens, as the detractors of cinema would contend.

Popular Film and Consciousness Raising

A necessary first step upon the suggested pedagogic path is to raise the public's consciousness by pointing out the numerous Christian references embedded within the popular cinema. This act of identification-cum-revelation can provide layers of insight into films hitherto unappreciated, and it may even radically change the entire meaning of a film from that traditionally perceived. A good example of this transformative possibility is the 1951 science fiction (SF) classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. Many interpreted this film as a UFO/alien/invasion film (Donkin and Fisher-Johnson, 1999), or a robot film (Telotte, 1995), or a monster film (Stacy and Syversten, 1983), while the more astute viewers saw it as an American political allegory about nuclear politics and associated anxieties during the dawning of the atomic age (Hendershot, 1999).

True and valid as these interpretations are, few viewers realised that the film is *fundamentally* a religious film, specifically, a Christ-cycle film, that is, an SF retelling of Jesus Christ's adult life with the spaceman Klaatu/Mr. Carpenter (Michael Rennie) deliberately constructed as an alien Messiah (Etherden, 2005; Kozlovic, 2001). This Messianic interpretation is *not* the wishful thinking of a culturally besieged Christianity desperate to see faith anywhere and everywhere, but rather, it was the *deliberate* narrative engineering of yesteryear's faith-filled filmmakers. The screenwriter of *The Day the Earth Stood Still*:

…Edmund H. North himself admitted that the parallels between the story of Christ and *Day* were intentional: from Klaatu's earthly name of Carpenter, to the betrayal by Tom Stevens, and finally to his resurrection and ascent into the heavens at *Day*'s end. "It was my private little joke. I never discussed this angle with [producer Julian] Blaustein or [director Robert] Wise because I didn't want it expressed. I had originally hoped that the Christ comparison would be subliminal (von Gunden and Stock, 1982, 44).

Moreover, as North confessed elsewhere: "I didn't honestly expect audiences to pick up the allusion…I never wanted it to be a conscious thing, but I thought it had value being there" (Warren and Thomas, 1982, 26). One contends that this Christic subtext is the prime reason for its powerful emotive effect and its enduring reputation as an SF classic thereafter.

On the other hand, unlike sacred subtexts and their sometimes-obtuse Christic patternings, holy artefacts (aka religious artefacts; sacred artefacts) are overt manifestations of religiosity, whether subtly, artfully or boldly done. Very few people misunderstand their religious nature, utilisation, or referential status. One merely searches the popular cinema in archaeological fashion for religious artefacts, sacred accoutrements

or holy paraphernalia for subsequent identification, categorisation and analysis. For example, this research method can consist of seeking on-screen churches, sacred spaces, divine raiments, votive candles, saint statues, holy water etc. (e.g., Beavis, 2003; Kreitzer, 1997; Lindvall, 1993). Included in this material listing that has already been show-cased within the Hollywood cinema is the Ark of the Covenant (*The Librarian: Quest for the Spear*; *Raiders of the Lost Ark*; *The Ten Commandments*), the Holy Grail (*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*; *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*; *The Silver Chalice*), the robe of Jesus (*Demetrius and the Gladiators*; *The Robe*), and the Spear of Destiny (aka the Spear of Longinus) that was used to pierce the crucified Christ in the side to accelerate his death (*Constantine*; *Future Hunters*; *Hellboy*; *The Librarian: Quest for the Spear*).

Not surprisingly, the popular cinema is full of religious artefacts, and thus equally worthy of investigation and explication because of it. In fact, religious artefacts and sacred subtexts are so common today that they are frequently taken for granted (i.e., "invisible"), and thus automatically dismissed in many a viewer's mind because of their ubiquitousness. However, the time is now ripe to make the invisible, visible, and elevate its reputation beyond its current screen-fill status by exploring, identifying and documenting the depth, range and diversity of this valid pop culture phenomenon.

For the purposes of this work, the critical film and religion literature was reviewed and integrated into the text to enhance narrative coherence (albeit, with a strong reportage flavour). Using textually-based, humanist film criticism as the analytical lens (i.e., examining the textual world *inside* the frame, but not the world *outside* the frame—Bywater and Sobchack, 1989; Telotte, 2001), a preliminary scan of the popular cinema reveal three iconic areas of Christian focus, namely: (a) cross imagery, (b) cruciform poses and (c) Pieta stances. The following is an introductory explication of these taxonomic categories utilising copious inter-genre film exemplars to demonstrate its diversity and richness.

A. Cross Imagery: The Sign of the Boss

A particular Hollywood favourite is the Christian cross, that undeniable calling card of that heavenly boss, Jesus Christ. Christian symbol hunters actively seek out these religious images, artefacts and associated paraphernalia for consideration because it is the iconic signature sign of the Divine, even if only tangentially related to the storyline of the film. For example, Neil Hurley (1993) noted the subtle deployment of crosses in many Alfred Hitchcock films. For example:

Take *Notorious* (1946). We meet a U.S. secret agent Cary Grant at a Miami party with a dissolute Ingrid Bergman acting as the hostess in a teasing striped blouse. Behind him is a lighting fixture clearly giving the impression of a cross…As another instance of surprising cross allusion, take *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* (1940), a frothy screwball-type romantic comedy with Carole Lombard and Robert Montgomery. Reviewing the film some fifty-two years after my first viewing upon its release, I was astonished to spot a crucifix on a dresser in the bedroom where Lombard sleeps…In *Torn Curtain* [1966], Hitch uses the Red Cross symbol

as a hidden sacred, uniting red for Communism with Christianity, an ironic visual (138-139).

Regarding the historical film *The Mission*, Peter Fraser (1998) noted that:

The cross recurs significantly in more than contextual sequences. The narrative…begins with the images of the first missionary priest tied to a wooden cross…The dropping of the priest and cross into the river suggests both self-sacrifice and baptism, especially in the spectacular image of the cross dropping upside down through the spray of the falls. When Father Gabriel [Jeremy Irons] reaches the top of the falls in his first journey up, he consciously makes the sign of the cross…[and] it is a cross which Gabriel gives to Mendoza [Robert De Niro] when he asks for a blessing on the mission's defenders, and the cross he gives him is that worn by the martyred priest… (83-84).

This repeated infusion of crosses is of course understandable given that *The Mission* is ostensibly a priest movie about Jesuits doing missionary work in South America, and where crosses are literally the tools of their trade. Not only did the upside down cross in the opening scene signify Jesus Christ, but it also alluded to Jesus' faithful disciple, the Apostle Peter. He is traditionally associated with dying upon an upside down cross, appropriately named, St. Peter's cross (Matthews, 1990, 50).

Crosses can also occur in different forms in more mundane settings and under less expected circumstances. For example, Geoffrey Hill (1992) saw significant crosses and its imagery in *The Graduate* starring Benjamin "Ben" Braddock (Dustin Hoffman). As he explained regarding the scene where Elaine (Katharine Ross) is giving her wedding vows in the church, and Ben is locked outside desperately trying to stop the ceremony and reunite with his true love:

From the nave below, Ben's image outside the glass upstairs presents him as an icon of the crucified Christ, with outstretched arms, as if he were a stained glass figure of the gospel passion. At both sides of this dying savior we see the shape of crosses made by the support bars of the windows, as if to represent the two criminals who died on each side of Jesus [aka Luke 23:32-33, 39-43] (209).

There is also the more obvious physical cross used to bar the church door during Ben and Elaine's frantic escape near films end. Ironically, this desperate act implied that the cross of Jesus was holding back the older generation by trapping them within the confines of the church (literally and symbolically). Yet, at the same time, it allowed freedom for the newer generation if only they could step outside its boundaries and harness his sacred power more appropriately, if unconventionally, and not let the older generation overwhelm them in the process!

In the World War 1 drama *A Farewell to Arms*: "A bandaged soldier stands in a slanted doorway, behind which is a large Red Cross symbol, and stretches his arms out to appear as Christ. A graveyard of hundreds of crosses lingers on the screen. Telephone and electrical poles cast a shadowed 'T' over a wartorn landscape" (Fraser, 1998, 93). The "T" image being another variant of the Christian cross known as a "Tau (also called the Egyptian cross, or the cross of St. Anthony)" (Matthews, 1990, 50). At films end in the

prison film *Cool Hand Luke*, "the camera withdraws from the place where Luke's disciples are working, providing a helicopter view of a crossroad's inverted cross" (May, 1991, 90), thereby, tagging the heroic Luke (Paul Newman) as the film's Christ-figure via an innovative use of this sacred sign. The screen image was particularly apt because the "cross can also be understood as a sign for the crossroads, as the place where the paths of the living and the dead cross" (Matthews, 1990, 50). The filmmakers had artistically fused an actual crossroad with a cross image as seen from a heavenly, God-like point of view and linked it with Luke, the Christ-figure, at the very time of his unjust death. Filmmakers can be very canny and innovative in the deployment of Christian imagery when they want to be.

In *Jesus of Montreal*, both the on-screen and off-screen audiences leisurely watched the dramatic re-en-actment of Jesus'/Daniel Colombe's (Lothaire Bluteau's) crucifixion upon an aesthetically pleasing cross, which the camera lovingly lingered upon. Later, the physical cross supporting Daniel toppled over with disastrous medical consequences for himself, thus demonstrating its intrinsic death-dealing function once again, but this time in vivid postmodern terms. In the West German road movie *Kings of the Road*, "the hope for redemption is reflected in an object found along the road: a crucifix with a Jesus figure that seems to be flying upward. When one of the protagonists raises his arms in imitation of the gesture of the Jesus figure, he implicitly relates to the religious context" (Hasenberg, 1997, 55), as would the bulk of the Christians in the audience.

The cross is of course a necessary religious accoutrement in all sacred servant movies dealing with Christian priests, nuns, saints etc. (Kozlovic, 2002, 2004). Who could forget the elderly and embittered Father Ellerton (James Ellis) who used a huge crucifix as a battering ram against the Bishop's leaded parlour window in *Priest*? Alternatively, the medieval Dominican monks carrying their crucified Christ through the streets followed by praying penitents and ecstatic flagellants in *The Seventh Seal* or the wailing Jesus on the cross (Paul Hipp) during the brutal rape on the church altar of the exasperatingly forgiving nun (Frankie Thorn) in *Bad Lieutenant*? Then of course there is Christ at the Golgotha execution site in the numerous Jesus films ranging from DeMille's *The King of Kings* to Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*.

The cross is also a crucial plot point and holy prop within numerous vampire films, particularly the cross-happy *Captain Kronos, Vampire Hunter* and its famous iconic forebear *Dracula* (Kreitzer, 1997; O'Donnell, 2000). On a comical note, the relationship between crosses and vampires was delightfully done *in absentia* within *Dance of the Vampires* (aka *The Fearless Vampire Killers*). A Jewish vampire is faced with a crucifix-waving peasant girl and wittily replied to her: "Oy yoy…have you got the wrong vampire!" (Gaiman and Newman, 1985, 231). Conversely, in *Love at First Bite*, Count Vladimir Dracula (George Hamilton) was forced to leave Transylvania and live in New York City. During a classic good-versus-evil confrontation, Dr. Jeffery Rosenberg (Richard Benjamin), a biological descendent of the famous vampire hunting van Helsing, dramatically pulled out what he thinks is a Christian cross with which to repel the evil one. Dracula is initially terrified at this impending possibility. However, when Rosenberg pounced, his Christian cross mistakenly turned out to be a Jewish Star of David, and so not fearing it, Dracula gave a cocky retort instead and lived to bite another day! Apparently, the expulsive power of Jewish religious

symbols is not as powerful as those of Christianity.

Indeed, the entire vampire genre can be seen as a *de facto* recruitment agency for Christianity because the cross can defeat serious evil when all else fails, including resorts to the scientific, the rational and mundane violence. The potency of the cross (and by default Christianity) is especially strong considering that:

…vampirism remains the most physical, the least spiritual of all supernatural manifestations. It records the triumph of sex over death, of flesh over spirit, of the corporeal over the invisible. It denies almost everything other than the gratification of the senses by physical means. It is the most materialistic of all possible cosmologies (Pirie, 1984, 6).

On the other hand, it is particularly disturbing to see Christian crosses associated with mentally unstable or undesirable persons throughout the Hollywood cinema. For example, the sadistic, leg-breaking nurse Annie Wilkes (Kathy Bates) wore one in *Misery*, just like the rapist Robert Dood (Kiefer Sutherland) in *Eye for an Eye*. The psychotic killer Max Cady (Robert De Niro) in the remake of *Cape Fear* had a cross tattooed on his back, and he frequently quoted the Bible in between his criminal acts. The sociopath serial killer John Doe (Kevin Spacey) in *Se7en* had a neon cross above his bed, in addition to a room filled with religious paraphernalia, such as Bibles and empty holy water containers. This murderer killed so as to sermonize in blood each of the seven deadly sins, which he claimed the world had forgotten about, thus prompting his murderous spree.

Interestingly, John Doe's room is similar to the house of the psychotic Margaret (Piper Laurie) in *Carrie*, which is also filled with crosses and other religious paraphernalia to the point of unhealthy obsession. Here the semiotic association between crosses, Christianity and mental illness is very stark and another indirect form of character assassination of the faith and the faithful. The image of the cross was also:

…used for torture, as in the St. Andrew's Cross of the 1923 version of the *Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Sometimes it was used for religious and sexual symbolism (as well as bondage) by American producers of the scale of [Cecil B.] de Mille, while [Sergei] Eisenstein used it for anti-religious propaganda in the cause of Bolshevism (Philips, 1975, 88).

In the cyber film *Johnny Mnemonic*, the Jesus look-alike assassin called Street Preacher (Dolph Lundgren) is an evangelical extremist who killed his victims, crucifixion-style using a huge crucifix that is actually a concealed dagger. It was a deadly object similar to Don Jaime's (Fernando Rey's) small, jewel-encrusted crucifix in *Viridiana*, which turned out to be the handle of a concealed dagger. The next step in this cross-as-weapon theme was taken in the supernatural thriller *Constantine*. Its demon-fighting anti-hero John Constantine (Keanu Reeves) fought the denizens of Hell using a holy shotgun with a large cross as its barrel, a cross-shaped gun site and other holy relics as anti-evil attachments. Thus, providing further semiotic messages about physical death hidden within the symbol for eternal life, which itself was bought and paid for by the gruesome death of Jesus Christ upon the cross. However, all these deadly film examples are more illustrative of the manipulation of Christianity's symbols and holy status rather than the inherent

corrupting power of Christianity itself, especially Luis Bunuel's screen war against Roman Catholicism.

One of the strangest Christian crosses was the Y-shaped table of the Last Supper in the historical Jesus film *King of Kings*. As director Nicholas Ray reported: "I took a cross and broke it in such a way that the horizontal arm did not meet. Then I placed Jesus at the head of the cross" (Baugh, 1997, 244). It was done this way to imitate the counterculture peace symbol, thus, further reinforcing the construction of Ray's Jesus as a counterculture hippie, or as this feature film was cheekily called in the industry: "I Was a Teenage Jesus" (Fraser, 1998, 166). However, one wonders if Ray was aware that this "Y" cross is also known as the thief's cross (Matthews, 1990, 50), and thus indicative of a deeper unspoken message that Ray may have been making to his audiences.

B. Cruciform Poses: Re-Enacting the Crucifixion

Other film commentators and Christian symbol hunters were more interested in finding cruciform poses (aka the "pectoral pose") rather than crucifixes, crosses or cross imagery *per se*. This focus is concerned more with the suffering personage of Jesus Christ than the Roman instrument of his torture and death, and so not surprisingly, the popular Hollywood cinema is filled with many poignant scenes of this ilk. As Adele Reinhartz (1999) reported:

The classic example is *Cool Hand Luke* upon whom the camera lingers as he [Luke (Paul Newman)] lies in cruciform position in a semi-comatose state after ingesting fifty eggs in the space of an hour. Another example is Matthew Ponselet [Sean Penn] in *Dead Man Walking*, who is strapped onto the execution table with arms outreached, and then tipped upright and flanked by two officers [visually representing the Roman soldiers – John 19:23, or even the good and bad thief – Luke 23:32-33, 39-43] as he says his final words to the parents of his victims (8).

Another, if unexpected cruciform scene is the street execution of Klaatu/Mr. Carpenter (Michael Rennie) in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. When this friendly and noble alien is machine-gunned to death by a panicking military, he falls to the ground. However, he does not land in a dishevelled heap, as you would expect, rather, he falls on his back and strikes a classic cruciform pose, complete with appropriately bent knee! Similarly, Jett Rink (James Dean) in the Americana film *Giant* is:

…a victim, though anything but sympathetic, [who] rests his arms on a rifle slung over his shoulders and bows his head, in a precise visual reference to Christ crucified. A young Elizabeth Taylor [playing Leslie Benedict] kneeling at his feet and looking up at him [Mary Magdalene-like] completes this peculiar Calvary-image (Baugh, 1997, 221).

The defeated Jake La Motta (Robert De Niro) in *Raging Bull* strikes a cruciform pose on the boxing ring ropes in the film's "exploration of an extreme form of Catholic sado-masochism" (Elley, 1994, 736).

The formerly Ramboesque Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) in *Aliens3* engineered her postmodern *auto-da-fe* by outstretching her arms and diving backwards into the iron foundry's bubbling cauldron of hot metal. She had calmly sacrificed herself, Christ-like, for the good of the prison community and the future of the human species. This scene was visually reminiscent of the doomed priest on the wooden cross going upside down over the waterfall in *The Mission*. Thematically speaking, Ripley's death resonated intertextually with the fiery self- sacrifice of the "good" T-800 Terminator (Arnold Schwarzenegger) in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*. This cyborg Messiah from the future was deliberately lowered into a boiling foundry furnace to destroy the advanced computer chip built inside of him, thus protecting humanity from the future extermination programme initiated by the rogue Cyberdine computer coupled to Skynet (Kozlovic, 2001). Then there is Truman Burbank (Jim Carrey) near the end of *The Truman Show* who was "lying spreadeagled on the boat, as if *crucified*, looking for all the world as if he is dead" (Baker, 2002, 105). Only to rise again, walk on water and then discover a whole new world of freedom as he literally stepped into the heavenly void-cum-exit door of the giant TV studio.

One of the most gruesome cruciform poses occurred in the visceral cop thriller *Resurrection*. The psychotic serial killer and religious fanatic called the Numbers Killer/Demus (Robert Joy) is a zealous murderer who steals parts of his victim's bodies to physically reconstruct the crucified body of Christ in time for Easter. In addition to the bloody cruciform pose, each victim was found on a Friday, was a male, thirty-three years old, had the name of an Apostle, and did a job that was derivative of what their namesake did 2000 years ago. They all bleed to death when their limbs were removed for the bizarre Jesus reconstruction-cum-hoped for resurrection that only a psychotic mind could conceive.

Cruciform poses and bleeding bodies was also central to the French cop film *The Crimson Rivers*. The story was about a serial killer, and a psychotic twin sister, Judith Herault (Nadia Fares) who took painful revenge upon three perpetrators of an illegal Nazi eugenics experiment by removing their eyes and hands before killing them. Her third grisly victim, Dr. Bernard Cherneze (Jean-Pierre Cassel) was painfully mutilated and left hanging in a cruciform pose with blood slowly running from his mutilated eye sockets. The cryptic inscription written in blood above his head read: "I will track the source of the crimson rivers" [subtitle translation].

Its sequel, *Crimson Rivers: Angels of the Apocalypse* was also a religious thriller replete with crucifixes and cruciform poses. For example, a full-sized sculpture of the crucified Jesus was located in the garden of the Abbaye de Labaudieu (Lorraine), while smaller devotional versions were placed on tables and nailed to cloister walls throughout the film. An evil monk also adopted the cruciform pose prior to diving backwards from a high building to escape a pursuing police officer. Furthermore, gruesome dead bodies were laid to rest in cruciform poses behind a bricked-up monastery wall, behind sealed doors in an underground tunnel, laid out on a table for display, as if just removed from the cross, and set on fire and burnt on an X-shaped cross in front of a police station. Bodies were also nailed-gunned to an office wall, artfully positioned on the bloody floor of a supermarket aisle, and dramatically pinned to an altar by several death-dealing arrows all fired simultaneously.

As in *Resurrection*, these ritual murder victims had names like the twelve Apostles (e.g., Philippe, Barthelemy, Andrew, Thomas, Judas, Simon) and did similar jobs to their biblical correlates (e.g., Thomas was a mason; Matthew was a customers officer; Bartholomew was an administrator; others were fishermen). Some of them had the historical cross symbols of their corresponding Apostles located near their final resting places (e.g., the cross and two loaves for Philippe; the square and lance for Thomas; two daggers for Bartholomew). To uprate their religious quotient even further, the evil, German Montanist monks lead by Heinrich von Garten (Christopher Lee), the Minister of Culture and Cultural Affairs (Berlin), were hunting for Lothaire II's Vatican treasure, which contained the secret Gospel written by Jesus himself. This great sacred book was missing for centuries but was about to be revealed on the exact day of the apocalypse, as calculated by a phantasmagorical translation of the Montanist's three-letter seal, namely, "J" plus a backwards "E" (actually the number "3") and "O" meaning 730, thus 73,730 days from Jesus' crucifixion on the 7th April, 30 AD. This computation resulted in the date 27th of November; the very day and year that it was deciphered by the police and dramatically acted upon!

Furthermore, a photograph of the recreation of the Last Supper made by the victims prior to their deaths was taken, as in *Viridiana*, and the Jesus-looking character was positioned in the traditional Jesus spot and called, very appropriately, "Jesus" (Augustin Legrand). (Sometimes filmmakers are not so canny or innovative in their Christic constructions). Not only did this on- screen Jesus cry out "Father" for help, but he rambled on about biblical topics such as the four horsemen, the angels of the apocalypse, the breaking of the 5th seal, the Last Judgement, and the Sermon on the Mount. To further cement the Christ association, this Jesus survived his deadly ordeal to live another day while wearing a clean, white gown (the symbol of holiness), and bathed in a bright white light (a metaphor for the Divine) whilst inside a hospital ward (metaphorically, Jesus' tomb). He was also in the physical company of the religiously trained, cross-wearing police officer Marie (Camille Natta) and her two professional associates who were also visiting Jesus (Augustin Legrand) in his cave-like hospital room (metaphorically, Mary Magdalene and Apostles visiting Christ's tomb).

In the religious horror film *The Unholy*, Father Michael (Ben Cross) was charged by Archbishop Mosely (Hal Holbrook) with the task of casting out a powerful demon known as Daesidarius, or The Unholy, from a New Orleans church. This demon was responsible for the horrific death of numerous Catholic priests, especially when disguised as a sexy, semi-nude female (Nicole Fortier). She confronted, seduced and then murdered the priests in the act of sinning (e.g., kissing) and then quickly sent their souls to Hell. In due course, Father Michael encountered a bloody body hanging upside down in a cruciform pose inside the church, and in another scene, an upside down crucified skeleton was depicted. During his inevitable fight with the demon and her two small helpers, Father Michael is physically crucified himself. The two demons grab and position him before the altar then bang nails through the palms of his hands pinning him to a wooden beam, Jesus-like. He eventually freed himself and defeated these forces of evil by evoking the power of Jesus and literally rising through the air to challenge them before casting the dog-like demon into the fiery pit of Hell.

Interestingly, Bruce Marchiano played Christ in the historical Jesus film *Matthew* and he went through

the obligatory crucifixion scene, which he found physically taxing. However, it also gave him a profound spiritual insight. As he recalled: "I can't describe the panic that goes through a man's heart when you see a nail fixed on your hand…I believe every Christian should hang on a cross for at least 30 seconds. Their lives will never be the same" (Guell, 1995, 6).

C. Pieta Stances: Aesthetic and Emotive Effects

Pieta stances and associated imagery is another Christian favourite within the popular Hollywood cinema, and despite Joseph Marty's (1997, 140) concern that: "a mother who holds the body of her son is not inevitably a Pieta…Discernment is necessary in order not to "baptize" hurriedly every allusion or every symbol, all the more so because it is today that they flourish, and publicity makes reference to them for purposes other than evangelizing!" Marty was absolutely right. Many popular films have been baptised in this way by filmmakers and critics for commercial, scholarly and religious advocacy reasons. For example, Charles B. Ketcham (1992) saw a fleeting Pieta in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* concerning the prisoner-cum-mental asylum patient-cum-Christ-figure, Randle Patrick McMurphy (Jack Nicholson). As he argued:

"Crucified" by lobotomy...[and] returned to the ward admist rumors that he had escaped and other reports that he was "upstairs, meek as a lamb" [aka Jesus, the "Lamb of God" – John 1:29]. Chief Bromden [Will Sampson], seeing the stigmata, holds McMurphy in a position reminiscent of the Pieta. Saying, "You're coming with me,"… (152).

In *Jesus of Montreal*, after leaving the hospital without being medically attended, the cross- injured Daniel (Lothaire Bluteau), along with Mireille (Catherine Wilkening) and Constance (Johanne-Marie Tremblay) wandered the streets at night before descended into a subway where Daniel eventually dies of his physical wounds. For Bart Testa (1995, 108), this deathly sojourn was interpreted as "an inversion of the *via dolorosa* up to Calvary." Before Daniel died, he gave a delirious pseudo-apocalyptic discourse (aka Mark 13) with "Mireille cradling his head in her lap, forming the unequivocal visual analogue of a 'Pieta'" (Baugh, 1997, 277).

Donna Bowman (2001) considered the Brazilian film *Central Station* to be a compelling religious allegory of the Christian mythos that contained a distinctive Pieta scene. She considered Dora (Fernando Montenegro) to be analogous to the Virgin Mary and the young Josue (Vinicius de Oliveira) to be analogous to the child Jesus, therefore, when "Dora [is] sleeping on a sidewalk with her head in Josue's lap, a gender-inverted *Pieta*" (ibid, 4) had occurred.

Peter Malone (1988, 79) considered that Agnes (Harriet Anderson) in *Cries and Whispers* was a female Christ-figure who also re-enacted this holy bonding scene. Her harrowing "death affects her proud and selfish sisters and her maid who, like an earth mother, cradles her corpse as a dead Christ in Pieta-fashion." Another variation of the Pieta occurred in *On the Waterfront* where "crucifixion and resurrection are

spelled out in the brutal terms of New Jersey waterfront" (Ketcham, 1968, 363) in this decidedly "twenti-eth-century passion play" (Malone and Pacatte, 2003, 68). As Neil Hurley (1992) put it:

After a battle royal with the dock boss Johnny Friendly [Lee J. Cobb], Terry Malloy (Marlon Brando) lies beaten to a pulp, but in no way defeated. Supported by Father Barry (Karl Malden) and his girlfriend Edie (Eva Marie Saint)–a variation on the *Pieta*–he will rise from his muted crucifixion and lead the intimidated dockworkers onto the pier in revolt against the "pistol local" (102).

Similarly, Diane M. Borden (1993) saw a profound Pieta in the Vietnam War trauma film *Birdy*. As she claimed:

An extraordinary pieta is imaged when Al [Columbato (Nicolas Cage)], seated on the floor in an upright position in the hospital cell, holds the head of the "dying" Birdy [Matthew Modine]. Bars and cruciform lines, along with diagonal lighting, enhance the conflicted tenderness and tragedy of the fraternal bond. [Alan] Parker's configuration of devotional love at the point of death and consummation stands behind such other great cinematic pietas as those of Terry Malloy and his girlfriend in Elisa Kazan's *On the Waterfront* and of the maid and Esther in Ingmar Berman's *Cries and Whispers* (446).

If one wanted to look even harder, Pietas can be found in even stranger places. For example, in the SF classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, its alien Messiah, Klaatu/Mr. Carpenter is killed by a panicked military and his body is temporarily stored in a local prison. Later, his bullet-pierced body is retrieved from the cave-like cell by his mechanical companion Gort (Lock Martin). This imposing eight foot robot carried Klaatu's dead body, Pieta-like, back to their spaceship where he is miraculously resurrected in "a science fiction version of the Ascension" (Saleh, 1979, 41). However, Gort is not meant to be a cinematic analogue of the Virgin Mary, rather, he was used that way to underscore the Christic nature of Klaatu; the visitor who came from the stars and was rejected, pursued, killed, resurrected and then returned home into the heavens once his earthly mission was complete (i.e., the Christ cycle).

Even Cecil B. DeMille evoked a Christological resonance in his Old Testament film *The Ten Commandments* by using a reversed variant of New Testament Pieta imagery. This occurred in the muddy brick pits scene when Moses-as-lowly-Hebrew-worker (Charlton Heston) comforted an old dying man, Simon (Francis J. McDonald) by holding him Pieta-like. The old man does not realise that his comforter is actually an incognito Prince Moses, the God-chosen Deliverer of his oppressed people who will eventually lead them to freedom as Moses-the-lawgiver, the proto-Christ-like deliver of his people. Indeed, the Pieta image has become a *de facto* icon for an entire profession—nursing. As Ludmilla Jordanova (1995) noted regarding the British film, *The White Angel*:

The 1936 bio-picture about [Florence] Nightingale developed sentimentalism into a high art, and includes scenes reminiscent of the Virgin Mary attending to the dying Christ. Nurses could identify with the image and feel themselves as the *mater dolorosa* [Sorrowing Mother]. Patients, by the same token could imag-ine themselves the recipients of such devoted tenderness [just like Jesus Christ who was also pained and

sacrificed to make a better world] (216).

Not only was Florence Nightingale a much-loved icon for both the nursing profession and Hollywood filmmakers (Jones, 1988), but her heavenly, angelic qualities were encoded in the very title of the film itself, thus, further typecasting her "divine" image and legendary nursing reputation alongside that other archetypal helper of humankind—the Virgin Mary (i.e., sanctity by association).

At other times, the power of the Pieta as a Christian symbol can be so overpowering that it can dramatically affect actors playing biblical roles. For example, Italian director Franco Zeffirelli discovered this psycho-religious effect during the making of his historical Jesus mini-series- cum-movie *Jesus of Nazareth*. As he reported:

…when we filmed the Pieta, she [Virgin Mary (Olivia Hussey)] became so transported that without instruction or help she threw herself forward and lifted the recumbent body of Christ [Robert Powell], a seventy-kilo man!…Olivia was shaking and weeping, and after the filming we had to carry her away… When they called Olivia the tension was such that she fell to the ground and began screaming as if possessed…She was laughing hysterically, stumbling and shouting. Appalled, Ann Bancroft [playing Mary of Magdala] walked up and slapped her in order to end the hysteria…But really it was beyond the poor girl. She hadn't been acting, she had been living the part, and all we could do was to drape her over the dead Christ, to whom she clung as if drowning. Awesomely, when I saw the rushes, this image of the Mother of God clasping her dead Son to her was so moving I knew at once that it had to be in the film (Zeffirelli, 1986, 280-281).

Apparently, Olivia Hussey had experienced the same sort of emotional panic that Bruce Marchiano felt in *Matthew* when he played Jesus about to be nailed to the cross.

Conclusion

The range of Christian references within the popular cinema is breathtaking. It is also testimony to the power of popular communications to entertain, disturb and still speak meaningfully to contemporary audiences two thousand years after the biblical events it purports to represent. As such, it is a potent extra-ecclesiastical resource crying out to be utilised in the classroom, home and pulpit. These three Christian cinematic focuses are a valid pop culture phenomenon whose future looks promising as legitimate postmodern resources for religious education, communication research and cultural studies. It is argued that a closer, more sympathetic examination of the popular cinema using these taxonomic categories (and others) will yield many more insights and delights unappreciated to date. Further research into the emerging and exciting interdisciplinary field of religion-and-film is warranted, recommended and certainly long overdue, whether as education, entertainment or spiritual edification.

Notes

[1] Although there are real ontological differences between "cinema," "film," "movie," "video," "TV movie," "CD," "VCD," "DVD," "Mpeg-4," "Internet movie" etc., they all deal with audiovisual images and will be treated herein as essentially interchangeable.

[2] The term "Hollywood cinema" is used herein as a shorthand code for Western, primarily English-speaking cinema that conforms to the classical Hollywood narrative tradition, whether actually made in America or not (see Bordwell & Thompson, 2001, 76-78).

[3] The Authorized King James Version of the Bible (KJV aka AV) will be used throughout, unless quoting other translations, because most of "the biblical phrases that are embedded in our culture are from the King James Version" (Taylor, 1992, ix) and it is "the most widely used English translation of the Bible" (Taylor, 1992, 71).

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Filmography

A Farewell to Arms (1932, dir. Frank Borzage)

Aliens³ (1992, dir. David Fincher)

American Gigolo (1980, dir. Paul Schrader)

Bad Lieutenant (1992, dir. Abel Ferrara)

Birdy (1984, dir. Alan Parker)

Cape Fear (1991, dir. Martin Scorsese)

Captain Kronos, Vampire Hunter (1973, dir. Brian Clemens)

Carrie (1976, dir. Brian De Palma)

Central Station (*Centro do Brasil*) (1998, dir. Walter Salles)

Constantine (2005, dir. Francis Lawrence)

Cool Hand Luke (1967, dir. Stuart Rosenberg)

Cries and Whispers (*Viskningar Och Rop*) (1972, dir. Ingmar Bergman)

The Crimson Rivers (*Les Rivieres Pourpres*) (2000, dir. Mathieu Kassovitz)

Crimson Rivers: Angels of the Apocalypse (*Les Rivières Pourpres II - Les Anges de L'apocalypse* (2004, dir. Olivier Dahan)

Dance of the Vampires (aka *The Fearless Vampire Killers*) (1967, dir. Roman Polanski)

The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951, dir. Robert Wise)

Dead Man Walking (1995, dir. Tim Robbins)

Demetrius and the Gladiators (1954, dir. Delmer Daves)

Dracula (1931, dir. Tod Browning)

Eye for an Eye (1996, dir. John Schlesinger)

The Fearless Vampire Killers (aka *Dance of the Vampires*) (1967, dir. Roman Polanski)

Future Hunters (aka *Spear of Destiny*) (1986, dir. Cirio H. Santiago)

Giant (1956, dir. George Stevens)

The Graduate (1967, dir. Mike Nichols)

Hellboy (2004, dir. Guillermo del Toro)

Hunchback of Notre Dame (1923, dir. Wallace Worsley)

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade (1989, dir. Steven Spielberg)

Jesus of Montreal (1989, dir. Denys Arcand)

Jesus of Nazareth (1977, dir. Franco Zeffirelli)

Johnny Mnemonic (1995, dir. Robert Longo)

The King of Kings (1927, dir. Cecil B. DeMille)

King of Kings (1961, dir. Nicholas Ray)

Kings of the Road (*Im Lauf der Zeit*) (1976, dir. Wim Wenders)

The Librarian: Quest for the Spear (2004, dir. Peter Winther)

Love at First Bite (1979, dir. Stan Dragoti)

Matthew (1993, dir. Reghardt van den Bergh)

Misery (1990, dir. Rob Reiner)

The Mission (1986, dir. Roland Joffe)

Monty Python and the Holy Grail (1975, dir. Terry Gilliam)

Mr. and Mrs. Smith (1940, dir. Alfred Hitchcock)

Notorious (1946, dir. Alfred Hitchcock)

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975, dir. Milos Forman)

On the Waterfront (1954, dir. Elia Kazan)

The Passion of the Christ (2004, dir. Mel Gibson)

Priest (1995, dir. Antonia Bird)

Raging Bull (1980, dir. Martin Scorsese)

Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981, dir. Steven Spielberg)

Resurrection (1999, dir. Russell Mulcahy)

The Robe (1953, dir. Henry Koster)

Se7en (aka *Seven*) (1995, dir. David Fincher)

The Seventh Seal (1956, dir. Ingmar Bergman)

The Silver Chalice (1954, dir. Victor Saville)

The Ten Commandments (1956, dir. Cecil B. DeMille)

Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991, dir. James Cameron)

Torn Curtain (1966, dir. Alfred Hitchcock)

The Truman Show (1998, dir. Peter Weir)

The Unholy (1988, dir. Camilo Vila)

Viridiana (1961, dir. Luis Bunuel)

The White Angel (1936, dir. William Dieterle)

Franks' Effect on Islamic Spirit, Religious and Cultural Characters in Medieval Syria

By Hatim Mahamid

This study will follow the phenomena of the Franks/ Crusaders in late Medieval Syria, after the Crusade invasions in 1099 and their occupation of different parts of Syria. It focuses on the changes in the Islamic spirit and Muslim institutions in light of the Franks' activities and interactions. In addition to the political and economic effects of the Franks on the Muslim lands, the Islamic spirit and educational character were significantly affected too. The impact of the different historical circumstances on the different regions of Medieval Syria (*Bilad al-Sham*) can be discerned in the different trends, developments and sizes of the intellectual class, resulting in the establishment of different kinds of Islamic institutions.[1] Typical of the cities in the north and inner parts of Syria, which were directly affected by the Mongols, Damascus can be contrasted with Jerusalem, which was typical of cities in the south and coastal area that fell under the Franks' (*Ifranj/Firanja*) domain. In all probability, all of the factors mentioned above had direct and indirect effects on the immigration of intellectuals, *'ulama*, religious figures in Syria during the late Middle Ages.

Immigration of 'Ulama and High Ranking Muslims[2]

As a result of the Franks' conquest of Jerusalem in 492H/1099AC, many of the *'ulama*, sufis and other renowned Muslims were killed, while many became refugees who flocked into Damascus and Baghdad. A group of *'ulama*, sufis, merchants and other high ranking people from Palestine crowded into Baghdad, accompanied by the judge Abu Sa'd al-Harawi, to seek aid and support from the Abbasid caliph al-Mustazhir (r. 478- 512/1094-1118) and the Seljukid sultan Barkiyaruq (478-499/1094-1105). Furthermore, in 501/1108, another mission from Tripoli, led by the judge Fakhr al-Mulk Ibn 'Ammar, arrived in Baghdad seeking help and trying to convince the caliph and Muslim leaders to act against the Crusaders.[3]

After the forceful immigration due to the Frankish Crusaders, many of the *'ulama* and their descendants,

who originated in Jerusalem, became well-known in Damascus and other regions in the Islamic world, particularly, in Greater Syria, Egypt and Iraq. They were known by the title *al-Maqdisi*/*al-Maqadisa* or by their specific origins, such as *al-Nabulsi*, *al-Mardawi*, *al-Sili*, *al-Jamma'ili* and others. Those scholars and *'ulama* contributed significantly in the fields of education and religion there. They were prominent as founders of various educational and religious institutions, and also as teachers and functionaries, such judges and preachers.

The sons of Abu Shama emigrated from Jerusalem to Damascus at the time of the Crusader conquest when their father was killed in 492/1099. One of Abu Shama's descendants, Shihab al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman bin Isma'il, known as Abu Shama al- Maqdisi (d. 665/1267), gained renown as a historian and teacher in Damascus.[4] Likewise, the sons and descendants of Abu al-Faraj al-Shirazi, of Persian origin, emigrated from Jerusalem to Damascus due to the Crusader conquest. These descendants of al-Shirazi did much to strengthen the Hanbali school of Islamic law, both in the Jerusalem area and in Damascus.[5]

The main migration of Jerusalem's *'ulama* as a result of Crusader pressure was in the year 551/1156, which saw a mass immigration of the Hanbalite Banu Qudama from the village of Jamma'il (Jamma'in today) adjacent to Nablus. They were forced to emigrate, and chose Damascus as their destination. There was a similar migration of the educated elite from the nearby villages of Marda, al-Sila, Yasuf, al-Deir and others. Banu Qudama left for Damascus accompanied by their families, at a time of turmoil created by the Crusader presence.[6]

As the Banu Qudama were adherents of the Hanbali school, their most prominent scholars went on to Iraq to study there with Sheikh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d. 561/1165). One of these was 'Abd al-Ghani ibn Surur al-Maqdisi who, accompanied by his relatives, traveled to Baghdad in 560/1164, to study under al-Jilani. After four years of studies in Iraq and the East, he returned to Damascus where he commenced teaching *hadith* (the laws and traditions concerning the life and sayings of the Prophet) at the Umayyad mosque in the city.[7]

Damascus attracted numerous migrating followers of the Hanbali school, thus turning that city into the Hanbali centre in Syria. As previously mentioned, the Banu Qudama had emigrated from the Jerusalem area to Damascus due to the unfavorable conditions resulting from the Crusaders' conquest. In Damascus they established a religious-educational system and living accommodations designated for the followers of the Hanbali school. They settled on Mount Qasyun outside the city limits where they built the first houses of the *al-Salihiyya* neighborhood, which later became part of Damascus. Besides contributing to the building of *al-Salihiyya*, Banu Qudama contributed other religious and educational institutions such as the Hanbalite mosque (*Jami' al-Hanabila*) and the renowned madrasas including *al-'Umariyya* and *al-Diya'iyya* as well as other institutions in Damascus.[8]

When the Hanbali Qudama family moved to Damascus in 551/1156, no separate *mihrab* existed for the Hanbali adherents in Umayyad mosque until 617/1220. Their educational and religious activities were conducted in a separate location, known as the Hanbali hall (*riwaq/halaqa*). Sheikh Hasan bin Mismar

al-Hilali (d. 546/1151) conducted the Hanbali prayers and lessons in a separate circle inside the mosque, but without a *mihrab*.[9] As the Hanbalis got more powerful in Damascus after the immigration of Banu Qudama from Palestine, a separate *mihrab* in the Umayyad mosque was assigned to them, for prayers, sermons, lectures and studies. This *mihrab* was built in 617/1220 in the third western hall of the mosque, which had formerly been used as an unofficial gathering place of the Hanbalis.

Despite the growing opposition to allocating this *mihrab* in the mosque, several Ayyubid emirs assisted the Hanbalis, such as Emir Rukn al-Din al-Mu'azzami.[10] The permanent circle (*halaqa*) developed in the Hanbalis' *mihrab* that held every Tuesday, and thus became named by historians, *halaqat al-Thulatha'*. This circle served as an important institution for higher education, with leading Hanbali teachers and *'ulama* teaching there during the Mamluk period.[11]

During the Ayyubid period, particularly after the renewal of the Crusader threat, apparently numerous *'ulama* emigrated from Jerusalem to Damascus. For example, the sheikh of the *al-Salahiyya* madrasa in Jerusalem, Taqiyy al-Din Ibn al-Salah (d. 643/1245), fled Jerusalem in anticipation of a Crusader invasion and immigrated to Damascus after Sultan al-Mu'azzam 'Isa (d. 624/1226) tore down Jerusalem's walls in 616/1219, rendering it vulnerable to the Crusaders' attacks. Ibn al-Salah was forced to emigrate to Damascus despite his holding the highest position in the field of education in Jerusalem at that time and being known by the title "*shaykh al-Islam*". After relocating to Damascus, Ibn al-Salah was appointed teacher in the *al-Rawahiyya* madrasa.[12] Likewise, Ibn 'Urwa al-Musili (d. 620/1223) relocated from Jerusalem to Damascus for similar reasons. In the year of his death, he managed to erect an institution for the study of *hadith* in the courtyard of the Damascus Umayyad mosque. This institution later became known as *Dar al-Hadith al-'Urwiyya.*[13]

The growth and development of *al-Salihiyya* as the centres of the Hanbalis in Syria was at the expense of the other major Hanbali centres in the Jerusalem and Nablus areas that were under Crusader influence. The Hanbali rite in the Jerusalem area began to gain strength during the Fatimid period and continued to do so under the Crusaders, when the Hanbali Abu al-Faraj al-Shirazi (d. 486/1093) immigrated to the city from Persia.

The immigration of Banu Qudama from Jerusalem and the rural area near Nablus resulted in a weakening of the Hanbali adherents' base in the Jerusalem area. Mujir al-Din al-Hanbali al-'Ulaymi made note of this weakness in his work "*Al-'Uns al-Jalil…*" Al- 'Ulaymi's version describes how, in the year 841/1437, at the end of the reign of the Mamluk sultan, Barsbay, a Hanbali judge was appointed after a period of nineteen years during which there was not a single Hanbali judge in Jerusalem. According to al-'Ulaymi, this position of Hanbali judge also remained vacant at the end of the 15th century, because no suitable candidate could be found, and due to the small number of Hanbalis in the city.[14] Thus, in al-'Ulaymi's essay which was written towards the end of the 15th century, the Hanbalis constitute only 4% of Jerusalem's scholars.[15]

Al-Salihiyya quarter near Damascus became a locus of attraction for Hanbali adherents not only from various regions within Syria but also from the East – mainly from the al-Jazira region, Persia and Iraq.

The wealthy families who migrated to Damascus established themselves in the most prominent positions in the field of education and jurisprudence, and as the supervisors of the *waqf* for the educational and religious institutions belonging to the Hanbali School. These families made significant contributions to the establishment of various educational and religious institutions, especially in Damascus. The Banu Qudama retained their superior status as administrators of the educational and judicial affairs of the Hanbali School's adherents. The *al-'Umariyya* madrasa built by the family's patriarch, Abu 'Umar al-Maqdisi (d. 607/1210), was one of the largest and most important in Syria, and it remained under the administration of his descendants throughout the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods.[16]

The Banu al-Shirazi, who also moved from Jerusalem to Damascus as a result of Crusader influence, were the first to build a madrasa in Damascus for the Hanbali adherents. A madrasa which was known by the name *al-Hanbaliyya* was built for 'Abd al-Wahhab ibn al-Shirazi (d. 536/1141). Another member of this family, Nasih al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman al-Shirazi (d. 634/1236), established the *al-Sahiba* madrasa. Other descendants of this family held high-ranking positions as teachers and preachers. They followed in the steps of their father, Abu al-Faraj, who was considered one of the major propagators and stalwarts of the Hanbali school in Syria.[17]

The burgeoning status of the Hanbalis based in the *al-Salihiyya* neighborhood of Damascus brought about a corresponding increase in the Hanbali community and its educational institutions. A review of the data presented by the Syrian historian, al-Nu'aymi, in his essay "*Al-Daris fi Tarikh al-Madaris*", regarding the scholars of Damascus, indicates that the Hanbalis were the second most powerful group after the Shafi'is. They constituted 20% of the total number of educators mentioned by this author. In comparison, their numbers in Jerusalem dwindled as a result of their increased migration to Damascus during the occupation of the city by Crusaders.

On the other hand, the Spaniards in Muslim Spain (Andalusia), who also were given the name *Firanja* (Franks) by the Medieval Muslim sources, left their influence, indirectly, on the situation in Syria by the immigration of *'ulama* and high ranking Muslims from Andalusia to Syria and the Muslim East. Since the beginning of the 6th/12th century, the Spaniard effect, compelling *'ulama* and the established classes among the Muslim population to leave the Maghrib and Andalusia and head eastward gradually grew stronger.[18]

The continued Maghribi immigration to Syria resulted in a gradual increase in their numbers in the major cities of the region. The large concentrations of Maghribis in these cities depended on the attractions of each city, such as employment opportunities and available positions, proximity to holy sites, etc. Damascus, Aleppo, and Jerusalem absorbed the largest number of immigrants. Calculations based on the essays of al-Nu'aymi and al-'Ulaymi show that the Maghribi community in Jerusalem continued to expand throughout the last Mamluk period. The Andalusians and Maghribis in Syria worked on developing and flourishing their Maliki School of Law and institutions for their service in the main Syrian cities by the support of the Ayyubid and Mamluk rulers.[19]

Frank and Muslim Institutions in Syria: Changes and Interactions:

Although varied motives were behind the dedication of religious institutions or renovation of old ones by the Muslim rulers and other endowers, the religious drive was always made public. Thus, for example, Sultan Nur al-Din ibn Zangi maintained a visibly religious character, both in theory and practice. He was an adherent of the 1anafi school and received a broad religious education; he promulgated religious policies in Syria, the purpose of which were to perpetuate the Sunni Islam and encourage acts of holy war (*jihad*) against the Franks.

The policy of Sultan Nur al-Din himself was guided by religious law and he made it one of his priorities to deepen religious sentiment. He maintained close relationships with religious leaders and held regularly scheduled meetings with them. The Sultan saw in the *'ulama* a means of strengthening his rule, and through them he was able to implement his policies. One of the highlights of Nur al-Din's policy was his emphasis on religious education, which grew stronger during his reign due to the endowment of *waqfs* as well as educational and religious institutions all over Syria.[20] Throughout the 6th/12th century, the Zangid rulers built their institutions to reinforce the foundations of orthodox religious education, to counter the Shi'i holdouts remaining from the Fatimids in Syria, and also to strengthen religious sentiment and the spirit of the holy war against the Crusaders. It should be noted that during this period Jerusalem and the coastal areas of Greater Syria were under Crusader rule.

The conflict with the Crusaders in the areas of Syria helped, directly or indirectly, in the development of educational and religious institutions, from the time of the Zangids on. The Zangids and their heirs, the Ayyubids and the Mamluks, made efforts to expel the Crusaders from Syrian territory. These circumstances had a strong impact on religious spirit and education in Syria, as manifested in the increase in number of educational institutions of all types. The Holy War fought by the sultans, Nur al-Din ibn Zangi, the Ayyubid Salah al-Din and the first Mamluk sultans, such as Baybars, contributed to the reinforcement of religious fervour in the Syrian populace and increased Sunni educational activity, which worked to unite everyone against the Crusader conquest of the region.[21]

The holy status of Jerusalem in Islam, and the establishment there of educational and religious institutions nurtured the city's growth and development. The Muslim custom of visiting the holy sites in Jerusalem, especially after the pilgrimage to Mecca, increased the numbers of visitors to the city during this period. Many among the intellectuals and religious scholars came to Jerusalem initially as visitors, but preferred to remain close to the holy sites for religious reasons (*mujawara*). The biographies of religious scholars and intellectuals abound with examples of individuals who came to Syria with the objective of visiting Jerusalem. Sheikh Qutb al-Din al-Naysaburi (d. 578/1182), for example, came to visit the city while it was under Crusader rule. Later, he returned to Aleppo to hold various religious and educational positions there.[22]

It is noticeable that a reawakening of the spirit of Islam was expressed in the literature of this period in the form of counterpropaganda to the Crusaders. Some compositions and treatises appeared in the form of

historical books while others were poetry compositions, such as those of Abu Shama al-Maqdisi, al-'Imad al-Katib al- Asbahani, Ibn Wasil, Ibn al-Athir and many others, who praised the Muslim leaders and their confrontation with the Crusaders. Many Muslim literary compositions flourished in form of merits (*fada'il*) to emphasize the importance of the Muslim holy places, particularly those which were under the Crusader occupation or influence in Syria. The merits aroused the advantages and values of all kinds of visits to the holy sites of Islam. New Muslim literary urged the visits to the holy cities and shrines for getting religious rewards. Al-'Asali concluded that more than half of the books and treatises composed regarding the merits of Jerusalem and the holy places were written after restoring the city from the Crusaders.[23]

Many treatises, guidebooks and compositions appeared to display and explain the importance of Jerusalem and other places in Syria for the Muslim people. Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1201), a Baghdadi historian, wrote his composition "*Fada'il al-Quds*" (The merits of Jerusalem); Al-'Imad al-Asbahani (d. 597/1201) wrote "*Al-Fath al-Qudsi*" (The conquest of Jerusalem) and "*Al-Barq al-Shami*" (The light of Syria); Diya' al-Din al-Maqdisi (643/1245) wrote "*Fada'il Bayt al-Maqdis*" (The merits of Jerusalem); Burhan al-Din Ibn al-Firkah (d. 729/1329) wrote "*Al-I'lam fi Fada'il al-Sham*" (Informing about the merits of Syria); Ibn Surur al-Maqdisi (765/1364) wrote his book entitled "*Muthir al- Gharam fi Ziyarat al-Quds wal-Sham*" (Arousing love for visiting Jerusalem and Damascus/Syria); Taj al-Din Ishaq al-Tadmuri (d. 833/1429) wrote "*Muthir al-Gharam li-Ziyarat al-Khalil 'alayhi al-Salam*" (Arousing love to visit the friend of God /Abraham, peace be upon him); Muhammad Ibn Tulun (953/1546) also wrote a book titled "*Fada'il Bayt al-Maqdis*" (The merits of Jerusalem).[24]

In the pre-Ayyubid period, when Jerusalem was under Crusader occupation, no new establishments of Islamic educational institutions were erected in the city. Therefore, the development of educational institutions began only with the restoration of the city from the Crusaders by Sultan Salah al-Din. The development process of educational institutions in Jerusalem and in the coastal cities of Syria was different from that in other cities in the region, especially those between Damascus and Aleppo, which were not affected directly by the Crusader conquest. Most of the educational establishments in Jerusalem were founded during the first Mamluk period. Forty-seven institutions of every type were built from the beginning of the Mamluk rule until the Mongolian conquest of Syria in 803/1400.[25]

Despite restoring the Islamic rule to Jerusalem by the Ayyubids, the threat of a renewed Crusader conquest was still present. Taking action to restore the Islamic character of the city, Salah al-Din effected a purification by removal of the Christian symbols remaining on the al-Aqsa and al-Sakhra mosques. He revived the religious- educational activities in these mosques immediately following the first Friday prayer after the Ayyubid conquest. Salah al-Din appointed the judge Muhyi al-Din Muhammad ibn al-Zaki to serve as the Friday sermon preacher of the al-Aqsa mosque and Zayn al- Din ibn Naja as preacher delivering the weekday sermons (*wa'z*).[26]

Furthermore, Salah al-Din saw to the establishment of educational and religious institutions to serve the Muslim population, notably several institutions, which came to bear his name afterwards: *al-Madrasa al-Salahiyya,* which served the adherents of the Shafi'i School of Law, and the khanqah *al-Salahiyya* for

the sufis. In addition to these, Salah al-Din endowed *al-Khitaniyya* zawiya and a hospital that likewise came to bear his name: *al-Maristan al-Salahi*.[27]

In order to strengthen the Islamic character of these institutions, Salah al-Din allocated a considerable quantity of *waqf* producing generous revenues, which were intended to serve as a base and continuing source of the institutions' funding. The primary feature characterizing most of these endowments was their being based on properties belonging to the State Treasury in the form of acts of charity. The endowments designated for the institutions of Salah al-Din were primarily in Jerusalem and adjacent regions, including one-third of the State-owned estates in the city of Nablus.[28] Sultan Salah al-Din set up his endowments in Jerusalem as a means of winning the support of religious figures in the city as well as in the countryside.[29]

The political circumstances in the region of Syria in general and in Jerusalem in particular during the Ayyubid period, left their mark on developments in the city not only in matters of politics per se, but also on the educational-religious sphere. Sultan al- Mu'azzam 'Isa, the son of Salah al-Din, apprehensive that the Crusaders might renew their hold on Jerusalem, was compelled to destroy the walls of the city in the year 616/1219. The impending threat of a renewed Crusader conquest of Jerusalem continued until this became a reality in 626/1228-1229. This new occupation lasted until 642/1244, when the Ayyubid sultan al-Malik al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub effected the city's liberation. Najm al-Din Ayyub visited Jerusalem in 645/1247 and ordered the rebuilding of the walls and that the city be fortified anew.[30]

These circumstances had a profound influence on Jerusalem and resulted in instability and a lack of security in the city. This situation was reflected in the educational system there, both by the low number of institutions established and the immigration of *'ulama* and intellectuals. Only eleven educational institutions were founded in Jerusalem during the Ayyubid period, and these primarily after Salah al-Din's restoration of the city in 583/1187 and up until 616/1219 when the fears of a renewed Crusader conquest of the city began to spread.[31]

The Crusaders' renewed occupation of Jerusalem in the year 626/1228-1229 brought about not only the immigration of *'ulama* and members of the educated class and many of the Muslim and Jewish communities from the city, but also a partial cessation of the *waqf* incomes that funded educational institutions there. These incomes, in addition to the appointment of positions associated with Jerusalem, were relocated to the city of Damascus. The emir 'Izz al-Din Aybak al-Mu'azzami (d. 645/1247) who was the secretary (*'ustadar*) to the Ayyubid sultan al- Mu'azzam 'Isa, transferred to Damascus the income of his *waqf* which had previously been dedicated to his madrasa in Jerusalem. 'Izz al-Din Aybak rededicated this endowment in 626/1228 toward the expenses of holding lessons at the Umayyad mosque in Damascus. The conversion of this *waqf* and its conditions to funding the madrasa he established in the Umayyad mosque would continue in this format until Jerusalem would be relieved of the threat of Crusader occupation. This madrasa came to bear his name: *al-'Izziyya al-Hanafiyya*.[32] In addition to this, there were two more institutions of the Emir 'Izz al-Din Aybak in Damascus with his name: *al-'Izziya al-Barraniyya* and *al-'Izziyya al-Juwwaniyya*.

The Crusader control of Jerusalem during this period brought the Ayyubid ruler al-Nasir Dawud to take step in naming Shams al-Din Yusuf Sibt ibn al-Jawzi to the position of weekday sermon preacher in the Umayyad mosque in Damascus. Ibn al-Jawzi underscores the high degree of interest in Jerusalem evinced by the Ayyubid rulers, and the exploitation of the city's holiness for their own political aims. Ibn al-Jawzi also preached to the Muslims regarding Jerusalem's importance to Islam, thus effecting a strengthening of religious sentiment in calling for the liberation of the city from Crusader hands.[33]

Despite the renewed restoration of Jerusalem by the Ayyubid sultan Najm al-Din Ayyub in 642/1244, an atmosphere of threat prevailed in the region, emanating both from the Crusaders and from the Mongolians, who began launching attacks against Syrian areas until their defeat in 658/1260. A state of relative political stability prevailed with the advent of the Mamluk rule in Syria, after they had triumphed over the Mongolian army in that same year and expelled the Crusaders from Syria in 690/1291. This period of stability brought about massive development of educational and religious institutions in Jerusalem and the southern and coastal cities of Greater Syria (Bilad al-Sham), such as Tripoli on the coast, Safed, Gaza and Hebron in the southern regions of Bilad al-Sham, which had previously been under Crusader influence.[34]

The policy of converting Syrian churches into Islamic religious and educational institutions during this period was also a means of demonstrating the power and prestige of the Muslims over the Crusaders from one side and as a revenge on the other. Since religious and educational institutions were symbols of the government and of the ruler's status, the Zangids and the Ayyubids promulgated the policy of adopting Sunni Islam and weakening the Shi'is and the Crusaders. During the first few years of the Franks conquest of the coastal areas of Syria, they widened their influence even throughout the inner parts of the region, from Diyar Bakir and Mardin in the north to Gaza in the south. The Crusaders built many cathedrals and castles along the coastal areas of Syria on the sites of earlier Christian churches and Muslim sites as well.[35] The Crusaders upheld the policy of neglecting the mosques under their control or transforming them into churches and Christian institutions, as they did with al-Aqsa and al-Sakhra mosques in Jerusalem. As a result of the Franks' raids, the Muslims suffered a bad situation and humiliating treatment.[36]

The Crusaders' destruction of mosques and Islamic holy places in Jerusalem and other areas of Syria during their conquest caused the rulers of Syria, whether Zangid, Ayyubid or Mamluk, to launch acts of retaliation against Christian institutions. For instance, in their raid on Aleppo in 518/1124, the Crusaders brought tremendous death and destruction on the city, plundering property and decimating it. As revenge, after consulting with the military leaders and getting their approval, Ibn al-Khashshab, the judge of Aleppo, ruled that all the Christian churches in the city should be turned into mosques, some of which later became madrasas. The largest church in Aleppo was transformed into a mosque named *al-Sarrajin* and later into a madrasa by the name of *al- lalawiyya*. The church *al-laddadin* became a madrasa known by the same name, and another church was used as ibn al-Muqaddam's madrasa, named *al-Muqaddami-yya*. Nevertheless, Ibn al-Khashshab left two churches untouched, for use by the local Christian residents of Aleppo.[37]

Revenge actions continued to take place in the area as part of the Muslim-Franks conflict. At one of the

Franks' raids on Damascus and its surroundings in 553/1158, they (the Franks/Crusaders) burned and destroyed the houses of Darya near Damascus, including its mosque and the shrine of the holy sheikh Abu Sulayman al-Darani. These institutions stayed ruined until 565/1169, when the sultan Nur al-Din ibn Zangi acted to repair them.[38]

As mentioned above, after the year 583/1187, Sultan Salah al-Din repaired, refurbished and renewed the operation of the mosques that had been damaged or deserted during the Crusader period. Salah al-Din ordered his people to restore the Islamic character to al-Aqsa and al-Sakhra mosques, and operate them as orthodox Islamic institutions for prayer, education and teaching.[39] During the period of Sultan Salah al-Din's war against the Crusaders, he continued to dedicate new educational and religious institutions, renovate abandoned mosques and turn existing churches into mosques or madrasas. It is important to note that many of these institutions were established by converting existing Christian buildings in Jerusalem. After consulting with the *'ulama*, Salah al-Din decided to dedicate three institutions in Jerusalem and change them to suit Islamic requirements. The church known as the Sepulchre of Santa Anna (Saint Anne) next to the Lion's Gate (*Bab al-Asbat*) was turned into the Shafi'i madrasa *al-Salahiyya*. The home of the Jerusalem patriarch, close to the Holy Sepulcher, became a Sufi hostel (*khanqah*) named *al-Salahiyya* too, for the use of Sufis; another nearby church was transformed into a hospital named *al-Maristan al-Salahi*.[40] The sultan also ordered the renovation of the White Mosque (*al-Abyad*) in Ramla, in 586/1190, and ordered the destruction of the church in Lod in 587/1191.[41]

The Mamluk rulers followed the Ayyubid lead, and continued to use abandoned churches as educational and religious institutions, or re-used the building stones of abandoned and ruined churches in the construction of new madrasas or mosques. Many Islamic educational and religious institutions in Jerusalem were built on the remains of churches, among them: the madrasa *al-Maymuniyya, al-Jaharkasiyya, al-Darkah, al-Qalandariyya, al-Yunisiyya*, the Zawiya of Sheikh Khadr, and the Zawiya of Sheikh Ya'qub.[42]

After the Crusaders were expelled from Syria in 690/1291 by the Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf Khalil ibn Qalawun, the Mamluk rulers made changes in some of the Christian religious institutions so that they could be used as Islamic educational and religious institutions. In Beirut, the church of Mar Yuhanna was transformed into a mosque.[43] In Tripoli, which had previously been a Crusader stronghold, the *al-Mansuri* mosque was built on the ruins of a church in 694/1294-1295, five years after the city was conquered from Crusader hands. Other Islamic educational and religious institutions in the city were also founded on the remnants of the Christian churches, which had served the Crusaders, among them the *Taynal/ Taylan* mosque, founded in 736/1335 and *al-'Attar* mosque, founded in 751/1350.[44]

The Mamluk sultan, al-Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun also promulgated aggressive policies towards both Christians and Jews, who were accused of deviant acts against Muslims and their institutions. In 705/1305, the sultan tried to transform the Monastery of the Cross (*al-Musallabiyya*) in Jerusalem into a mosque, but rescinded his order after the intervention of the Byzantine emperor, allowing the church to continue to serve the Christian community in the city.[45] In 721/1321, Ibn Qalawun issued a decree, to turn the synagogue in Damascus into a mosque, after the Jews were accused of burning the Umayyad mosque.[46] In

Aleppo, in 727/1326, the sultan ordered that a church named Mithqal be turned into a mosque. A minaret was constructed, and the place was subsequently used as a madrasa to teach *Hadith*. Historians referred to it as *al-Nasiriyya* mosque or madrasa, named for the sultan al-Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun.[47]

Religious devotion was also a primary driving force behind the building of mosques by the Ayyubid rulers; these were erected in places that lacked a proper mosque, or in regions that had been under Crusader control. The goal of this policy was to destroy any traces of Crusader influence, whether by erecting new institutions or by transforming churches into mosques.

Safed also developed as an educational centre during the Mamluk period, particularly during the fourteenth century, in the period of post Crusaders. The city was restored from the Crusaders conquest in 584/1188 by Sultan Salah al-Din, after the battle of Hittin. There is no information on the establishment of educational institutions in the city or its environs during the Ayyubid period, except for the khanqah constructed by Salah al-Din in the village of Hittin near Tiberias.[48] The conflicts that erupted between the Ayyubid rulers over territories in Syria caused Safed to weaken, and it again fell to the Crusaders in 638/1240. They continued to hold the city until its liberation by the Mamluk sultan al-Zahir Baybars in 664/1265-1266. From the time of its liberation by the Mamluks, Safed saw the development of educational and religious institutions inspired and sponsored by the Mamluk rulers. Due to Safed's strategic position, Baybars took energetic steps to reinforce it by constructing various institutions and facilities. He established two mosques in the city, both named for him. The first was established in the city and named *al-Zahir*; the second inside the fortress and known as *Jami' al-Qal'a* (the Fortress' Mosque).[49]

Conclusion: While there were negative influences in the Muslim lands in Syria, politically and economically, Muslim education flourished, directly or indirectly, as a result of the Crusading phenomena. Despite the flows of immigrating *'ulama* and other Muslims from the Crusader occupied territories, the spirit of strong Muslim resistance reinforced religious education represented by religious and literary writings regarding the Muslim holy places, dedicating *waqf*, sermons and preaching (*wa'z*), erecting different kinds of Muslim institutions and even converting Christian institutions and churches to Islamic uses. This Muslim educational and cultural flow continued much more in the post Crusader era, during the Ayyubid and Mamluk Periods.

Notes:

[1] Zacour deals with the different impacts of the Crusaders on Muslim lands, politically, economically and on religious fields. See: N. P. Zacour; H. W. Hazard, ed. (1985), *The Impact of the Crusaders on the Near East*, (A History of the Crusaders, vol. V), (Madison, Wisconsin), 33-58. For more information on the Muslim-Franks conflict and the impact of the Crusaders on the Near East, see: Robert Betts, (1979), *Christians in the Arab East*, (London); Goddard Hugh, (2000), *A History of Christians-Muslim Relations*, (Edinburgh), 79-141; Maya Shatzmiller, (1993), *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth Century*

Syria, (Leiden); P. M. Holts, (1986), *The Age of the Crusaders*, (London and New York).

[2] See the effect of the immigration phenomena in Syria: Bo'az Shoshan, (1992) "Jerusalemite *'Ulama* and their role in the Mamluk Empire*"* in Joseph Drory ed. (in Hebrew), *Palestine in the Mamluk Period*, (Jerusalem), 86-97; Hatim Mahamid, (1999) "Al-'Ulama' al-Maqadisa wa-Dawruhum al-Thaqafi fi Dimashq fi al-'Asr al-Wasit" in Khalil 'Uda (ed.), *Yawm al-Quds* 5, (Nablus), 44-64.

[3] Regarding these events, see: Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi, *Mir'at al-Zaman fi Tarikh al-A'yan*, (Hayderabad, 1951), 3; 'Izz al-Din 'Ali bin Muhammad ibn al-Athir, (1983), *Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*, (Beirut), 8: 189, 250-251.

[4] See the biography of Abu Shama regarding the migration of the first members of his family from Jerusalem to Damascus: Shihab al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman al-Maqdisi / abu Shama, (1991), *'Uyun al-Rawdatayn fi Akhbar al-Dawlatayn: al-Nuriyya wa-al-Salahiyya*, (Damascus), 1: 70-73.

[5] See the biography of Abu al-Faraj al-Shirazi (d. 486/1093) and his family: 'Abd al-Qadir bin Muhammad Al-Nu'aymi, (1988), *Al-Daris fi Tarikh al-Madaris*, (Beirut), 2: 64-73, 79-86, 112-113; 'Imad al-Din abu al-Fida' Isma'il ibn Kathir, (undated)*, Al-Bidaya wa-al-Nihaya fi al-Tarikh*, (Aleppo), 12: 248; Ibid, 13: 34-35, 91, 116, 132, 154; Taqiyy al-Din Muhammad ibn Rafi' al-Sulami, (1982) Al-Wafayat, (Beirut), 2: 135-136; Muhammad bin 'Abdallah al-Hanbali al-Najdi, (1989), *Al-Suhub al-Wabila 'ala Dara'ih al-Hanabila*, (Mecca), 499; Shihab al-Din Ahmad ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, (1993), *Al-Durar al-Kamina fi A'yan al-Mi'at al-Thamina*, (Beirut), 4: 480; Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Tulun, (1979), *Al-Qala'id al-Jawhariyya fi Tarikh al-Salihiyya*, (Damascus), 2: 113, 143, 286, 340.

[6] See regarding the migration of the Banu Qudama family from the region of Jerusalem and Nablus to Damascus: Ibn Kathir, 13: 37-38, 71; Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Tulun, (1981), *Al-Qala'id al-Jawhariyya fi Tarikh al-Salihiyya*, (Damascus), 1: 7, 68- 83; Muhammad Ahmad Dahman, (1982), *fi Rihab Dimashq,* (Damascus), 35-44.

[7] See the biography of Ibn Surur: Ibn Kathir, 13: 37; Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id…*, 2: 439-441.

[8] About these institutions, see al-Nu'aymi, 2: 91-99, 100, 435-438; Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id…*, 1: 130-140, 248-273; Ibn Kathir, 13: 55-56; Dahman, 44-55, 57-59; Muhammad Kurd 'Ali, (1928), *Khitat al-Sham*, (Damascus), 6: 63, 99-100.

[9] Al-Nu'aymi, 2: 114, 121-122; Ibn Kathir, 13: 84.

[10] Ibn Kathir, 13: 84; Al-Nu'aymi, 2: 121-122, 395; Muhammad Adib al-Hisani, (1979) *Muntakhabat al-Tarikh li-Dimashq*, (Beirut), 1022-1027.

[11] On the biographies of these *'ulama*, see: Al-Nu'aymi, 2: 107; Ahmad bin 'Abd al-Rahim abu Zara'a Ibn al-'Iraqi, (1989) *Al-Dhayl 'ala al-'Ibar fi Khabar man 'Abar*, (Beirut), 2: 294-295; Ibn Kathir, 14: 240.

[12] Ibn Kathir, 13: 152, 155; Al-Nu'aymi, 1: 20; Regarding the renewed control of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, see: Ibn al-Athir, 9: 378.

[13] Al-Nu'aymi, 1: 82; Regarding the *Dar al-Hadith al-'Urwiyya* institution, see ibid, 82-89; Regarding the *'ulama* of Jerusalem during the period of the migrations, see: Shoshan, "Jerusalemite *'Ulama…*"; Mahamid, "Al-'Ulama'*…*", 44-64.

[14] Mujir al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad al-Hanbali al-'Ulaymi, (1973), *Al-'Uns al-Jalil bi-Tarikh al-Quds wal-Khalil*, (Amman), 2: 32, 263.

[15] Al-'Ulaymi notes that at the end of the 15th century, there was a lack of Hanbali *'ulama* in Jerusalem, which brought about the neglect of the position of Imam for worshippers of this school, and they had to appoint an unqualified person to this position. See: Al-'Ulaymi, 2: 32. For comparing between the strength of the adherents of the different Muslim Schools of Law in Damascus and Jerusalem, see Table 6 in: Hatim Mahamid, (1999) "Islamic Education in Syria in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Periods, 569-922/1173-1516", (in Hebrew), Thesis Submitted for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy, (Tel-Aviv University), 44; See also regarding to Jerusalem: Hatim Mahamid, (2003) "Developments and Changes in the Establishment of the Islamic Educational Institutions in Medieval Jerusalem" in *Annales Islamologiques*, 37, 346.

[16] Regarding the al-'Umariyya Madrasa, see: Al-Nu'aymi, 2: 100; Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id…,* 1: 248-273; Dahman ,44-55.

[17] See the examples of *'ulama* of the al-Shirazi family: Al-Nu'aymi, 2: 64-73, 84, 113; Ibn Tulun, *al-Qala'id …*, 2: 415, 427, 574-576; Ibn al-'Imad al-Hanbali, (1979), *Shadharat al-Dhahab fi Akhbar man Dhahab*, (Beirut), 4: 113, 143, 286, 340; *Ibid*, 5: 85, 125, 325, 340

[18] According to the medieval sources, the term "*Maghariba*" included also the Andalusians, who immigrated eastward from Muslim Spain. See regarding the immigration of Andalusians to Syria as a result of Spaniards' pressure during the late Middle Ages: Ali Ahmad, (1989), *Al-Andalusiyyun wal-Maghariba fi Bilad al-Sham*, (Damascus), 84-91, 102-108.

[19] Regarding the Maghribis in Jerusalem: their community and endowments, for instance, see: Huda Lutfi, (1985), *Al-Quds al-Mamlukiyya (Mamluk Jerusalem)*, (Berlin), 235-236; Gideon J. Weigert, (2001) "On the Endowment of Abu Madyan the Maghribi in Jerusalem" (in Hebrew), *Cathedra*, 58 , 25-34; Mahamid, "Developments…", 345-346. Al-'Ulaymi, 2: 46, 252, 254, 364.

[20] See: Abu Shama, 1: 258-259, 369. See also there on page 288, the rhyming form of the poem in which al-'Imad al-Katib praised the undertakings of Sultan Nur al-Din ibn Zangi in these contexts.

[21] For more details about the early Muslim reactions to the Crusaders, see: Emmanuel Sivan, (1968), *L'Islam et la Croisade*, (Paris), 28-35.

22 Abu Shama, 1: 376.

23 Most of the literary of merits appeared during the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries. See: Kamil Jamil al-'Asali, (1984), *Makhtutat Fada'il Bayt al-Maqdis*, (Amman), 1-16.

24 See: Zacour, 36-38; for more details about books and compositions written about the merits of Jerusalem, see: Al-'Asali, *Makhtutat…,* 25-124.

25 For more details regarding the developments and changes in endowing Islamic institutions in Medieval Jerusalem, see: Mahamid, "Developments…", 329-354.

26 Al-'Ulaymi, 1: 332-339. See there regarding the sermon delivered by the Ibn al-Zaki in the al-Aqsa mosque on the first Friday following the liberation of Jerusalem by the sultan Salah al-Din; Ibid, 2: 256.

27 See al-'Ulaymi, 1: 340-341; Ibid, 2: 41, 47.

28 28) Nasir al-Din Muhammad ibn al-Furat, (1967), *Tarikh ibn al-Furat*, (Basra), 4, part 2: 88-89, 92-93. See regarding the waqf of Sultan Salah al-Din for his institutions in Jerusalem: Ibn al-Athir, 9: 186, 222; Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn Wasil al-Hamawi, (1957), *Mufarrij al-Kurub fi Akhbar bani Ayyub*, (Cairo), 2: 230, 407, 408; Ibn Kathir, 12: 351-352, 377; 'Imad al-Din Isma'il abu al-Fida', (undated), *Al-Mukhtasar fi Akhbar al-Bashar*, (Beirut), 83; Jamal al-Din Yusuf ibn Taghribardi, (1958), *Al-Nujum al-Zahira fi Muluk Misr wal-Qahira*, (Cairo), 6: 54, 55, 59, 99; Al-Nu'aymi, 1: 332-333; Muhammad Absharli and Muhammad al-Tamimi, (1982), *Awqaf wa-Amlak al-Muslimin fi Falastin*, (Istanbul), 31, 32, 35, 45; Al-'Asali, (1983), *Watha'iq Maqdisiyya*, (Amman), 1: 91-95.

29 Several researchers have discussed the use of *waqf* as a political instrument, see: Ira Lapidus, (1967) *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages*, (Cambridge), 73-113; Oded Peri, (1988) "The Waqf as an Instrument to Increase and Consolidate Political Power", *Asian and African Studies*, 17, 47-62.

30 Ibn Kathir, 13: 77, 156; Ibn al-Athir, 9: 378.

31 See Tables 1 and 2: Mahamid, "Developments…", 335, 341. Regarding the Islamic education and institutions in Medieval Jerusalem in the shadow of the Muslim-Crusader conflict, see: Ibid, 330-335.

32 Al-Nu'aymi, 1: 557-558.

33 Hamza bin 'Umar ibn Sabat, (1993), *Tarikh ibn Sabat (Sidq al-Akhbar)*, (Tripoli), 1: 296.

34 See regarding the development of Islamic and educational institutions in these cities: Mahamid, "Islamic Education…*",* 191-201.

[35] See: Zacour, 42-44.

[36] See regarding the changes and additions that the Crusaders made to the al-Aqsa and Dome of the Rock mosques: Al-'Ulaymi, 1: 331, 339-340. Regarding the cruel and humiliating treatments of the Crusaders towards Muslims in the Syrian regions, see: Abu Shama, 1: 186-189. Zacour says that the Crusader impact on Muslim lands had its negative economic effect in the form of destruction of life and property, see: Zacour, 38.

[37] 41) See: Kamal al-Din 'Umar ibn al-'Adim, (1968), *Zubdat al-Halab min Tarikh Halab,* (Damascus), 2: 113, 210, 215, 242, 293-294; Muhammad bin 'Ali ibn Shaddad, (1991), *Al-A'laq al-Khatira fi Dhikr 'Umara' al-Sham wal-Jazira*, (Damascus), 1: 241, 244, 264-271, 273-277; Muhammad ibn al-Shahna, (1984), *Al-Durr al-Muntakhab fi Tarikh Mamlakat Halab,* (Damascus), 118; Abu al-Wafa' bin 'Umar al-'Urdi, (1992), *Ma'adin al-Dhahab fi al-A'yan al-Musharrafa bi-him Halab*, (Amman), 160-161, 170, 185; Muhammad Raghib Al-Tabbakh, (1989), *Anba' al-'Ulama' bi-Tarikh Halab al-Shahba'*, (Aleppo), 4: 237-241, 461-469.

[38] See, Abu Shama, 1: 247, 296.

[39] Al-'Ulaymi, 1: 331, 332, 339-340; See also the new formulation arranged by the judge Muhyi al-Din ibn al-Zaki: Ibid, 332-339.

[40] See: Al-'Ulaymi, 1: 340-341; Ibid, 2: 41, 47. Al-'Ulaymi argues there that Salah al-Din even ordered the closure of the Holy Sepulchre and prevented the Christians from visiting it. See also regarding Salah al-Din's enterprises in Jerusalem: Kamil Jamil al-'Asali, (1981), *Ma'ahid al-'Ilm fi Bayt al-Maqdis,* (Amman), 61-64, 294, 331; 'Abd al-Jalil Hasan 'Abd al-Mahdi,, (1981), *Al-Madaris fi Bayt al-Maqdis*, (Amman,), 1: 181, 343, 403.

[41] See: Al-'Ulaymi, 2: 69, 71; Regarding the destruction of the church in Lod, see: Ibn al-Athir, 9: 216; Ibn Kathir, 12: 372; Ibn Sabat, _:___.

[42] See: Al-'Ulaymi, 2: 44, 47, 48, 64-65; Al-'Asali, *Ma'ahid…*, 207, 282, 294, 331, 343, 344, 347, 361, 364.

[43] Ibn Sabat, _:___.

[44] See: Nahdi Subhi al-Himsi, (1986), *Tarikh Tarablus*, (Beirut,), 67-69. Al-Nabulsi thinks that the al-Mansuri mosque had been a church and was transformed into a mosque after the conquest of the Crusaders. See: 'Abd al-Ghani bin Isma'il al-Nabulsi, (1971), *Al-tuhfa al-Nabulsiyya fi al-Rihla al-Tarabulsiyya*, (Beirut), 72; See also regarding the mosque and the educational institutions that developed in the city during the period under discussion: Yahya ibn abi al-Safa ibn Mahasin, (1981), *Al-Manazil al-Mahasiniyya fi al Rihla al-Tarabulsiyya,* (Beirut), 81; Kurd 'Ali, 6: 53, 128-129; 'Umar Tadmuri, (1974), *Tarikh wa-Athar*

Masajid wa-Madaris Tarablus, (Tripoli), 57.

[45] Al-'Ulaymi, 2: 51.

[46] Muhammad ibn Sasra, (1963), *Al-Durra al-Mudi'a fi al-Dawlat al-Zahiriyya*, (Berkley and Los Angeles), 126-127.

[47] Ibn al-Shahna, *Al-durr…*, 72-73; Al-Tabbakh, 4: 267-268; Al-'Urdi maintains that the madrasa had previously been a Jewish synagogue, see: Al-'Urdi, 164.

[48] See: Salah al-Din Khalil ibn Aybak al-Safadi, (1961), *Al-Wafi bi-al-Wafayat*, (Wiesbaden), 3: 165; Kurd 'Ali, 6: 152; Taha al-Thalji al-Tarawna, (1982), *Mamlakat Safad fi 'Ahd al-Mamalik*, (Beirut), 262. Possibly, this khanqah was the one known as the *al-Salahi* mosque in Hittin. The khanqah continued to function during the Mamluk period as well, as can be understood from the biography of the Sufi sheikh Shams al-Din Muhammad bin Talib/ Sheikh al-Rabwa who died in Safed in 727/1326. See: Ibn Hajar, *Al-Durar…*, 3: 458-459.

[49] Al-Tarawna contends that the *al-Zahir* mosque in Safed is the *al-Ahmar* mosque, but from the waqf documents published by Absharli and al-Tamimi, it turns out that they are two separate mosques. See: Al-Tarawna, 259-260; Absharli and al-Tamimi, pp. 60, 63.

The Agricultural Sector and Nigeria's Development: Comparative Perspectives from the Brazilian Agro-Industrial Economy, 1960-1995.

By Olukoya Ogen

Abstract

A strong and an efficient agricultural sector would enable a country to feed its growing population, generate employment, earn foreign exchange and provide raw materials for industries. The agricultural sector has a multiplier effect on any nation's socio-economic and industrial fabric because of the multifunctional nature of agriculture.

This paper, therefore, emphasizes the fact that the agricultural sector is the engine of growth in virtually all developed economies. Specifically, the work limits itself to the important role of the agricultural sector in engendering sustainable development and a significant level of poverty reduction in Brazil. Of course the scenario in Brazil is in contradistinction to that of Nigeria where it would seem that successive Nigerian governments have only been paying lip service to agricultural development. Thus, the essence of this comparison is to reiterate the fact that Nigeria and other Third World countries need to urgently develop their monumental agricultural potentials if they are to achieve rapid industrial and economic development.

Introduction

The study of economic history provides us with ample evidence that an agricultural revolution is a fundamental pre-condition for economic development (Eicher and Witt, 1964: 239; Oluwasanmi, 1966:7-15; Jones and Woolf, 1969:123). The agricultural sector has the potential to be the industrial and economic springboard from which a country's development can take off. Indeed, more often than not, agricultural activities are usually concentrated in the less-developed rural areas where there is a critical need for rural transformation, redistribution, poverty alleviation and socio-economic development (Stewart, 2000:1). The central hypothesis of this work, therefore, is that a productive agricultural sector lies at the root of the stupendous economic advancement of Brazil.

The Brazilian experience is, of course, a striking example of how agriculture can advance beyond its primary function of supplying food and fibre. The agricultural sector has the potential to shape the landscape, provide environmental benefits such as land conservation, guarantee the sustainable management of renewable natural resources, preserve biodiversity and contribute to the viability of many rural areas (Humbert, 2000:1-3). In fact, through its different spheres of activities at both the macro and micro levels, the agricultural sector is strategically positioned to have a high multiplier effect on any nation's quests for socio-economic and industrial development. It is indubitable that a sustained agricultural growth has been highly instrumental to Brazil's rapid rural transformation, the empowerment of Brazilian peasants and the alleviation of abject poverty.

Interestingly, the Nigerian economy, like that of Brazil, during the first decade after independence could reasonably be described as an agricultural economy because agriculture served as the engine of growth of the overall economy (Ogen, 2003:231-234). From the standpoint of occupational distribution and contribution to the GDP, agriculture was the leading sector. During this period Nigeria was the world's second largest producer of cocoa, largest exporter of palm kernel and largest producer and exporter of palm oil. Nigeria was also a leading exporter of other major commodities such as cotton, groundnut, rubber and hides and skins (Alkali, 197:15-16). The agricultural sector contributed over 60% of the GDP in the 1960s and despite the reliance of Nigerian peasant farmers on traditional tools and indigenous farming methods, these farmers produced 70% of Nigeria's exports and 95% of its food needs (Lawal, 1997:195).

However, the agricultural sector suffered neglect during the hey-days of the oil boom in the 1970s. Ever since then Nigeria has been witnessing extreme poverty and the insufficiency of basic food items. Historically, the roots of the crisis in the Nigerian economy lie in the neglect of agriculture and the increased dependence on a mono-cultural economy based on oil. The agricultural sector now accounts for less than 5% of Nigeria's GDP (Olagbaju and Falola, 1996:263).

It is against this backdrop that this paper sets out to draw comparative lessons from the Brazilian experience for possible replication in Nigeria. Such an approach is particularly feasible given the fact that Nigeria shares so much in common with Brazil in terms of a highly conducive agricultural climate, huge and diverse population as well as the availability of immense natural resources.

For the purpose of analysis, the paper is divided into five major sub-divisions, the first part introduces the discussion by stating the rationale, objectives and significance of the study. Part two examines the historical origins of the Brazilian agricultural sector while the third part focuses on the contributions of the agricultural sector to the Brazilian economy in terms of its income and employment generating capacities among other micro/macro- economic indices. This part also analyses the socio-economic impact of agricultural growth on poverty eradication and sustainable social development in Brazil. The fourth part concentrates on the present state of Nigerian agriculture and recommends possible policies that could be adopted by Nigerian policy makers from the Brazilian agricultural policy environment. The last part concludes the essay.

The Historical Origins of the Brazilian Agricultural Sector

Brazil is South America's largest nation, in fact, it borders every nation on the continent except Chile and Ecuador, and covers about 4,772 km from the north-south, and 4,331 km from east-west. Brazil may also be divided into the Brazilian Highlands or Plateau, in the south, and the Amazon River Basin in the north. More than a third of Brazil is drained by the Amazon and its more than 200 tributaries (Hudson, 1977). Brazil's current population figure is estimated at 188,078,227 (CIA's World Fact Book, 2007). This figure makes Brazil the world's sixth most populous country. Understandably, Brazil's fertile agricultural lands and its enormous population were decisive in its momentous agricultural growth.

From the earliest years of the colonial era, agriculture has held centre stage in Brazil's economy. Plantation agriculture was the country's link to the world economy. The agrarian economy was based on large holdings dedicated to a single export crop and dependent on slave labour for its production. Beginning with sugar cultivation in the 16th century, the country's economic trends have been susceptible to a series of "boom-bust" agricultural cycles. Cotton, cocoa, rubber, and coffee followed sugar (Brown, 2000:159-172).

The key primary food crops produced are bananas, barley, cocoa beans, coconuts, coffee, maize, potatoes, rice, soybeans, sugar cane and wheat. The primary meat products are, beef, chicken, duck, goat, horsemeat, mutton, pork, rabbit and turkey (Graham, Gauthier and de Barros, 1987). Starting from the 1940s, Brazil vigorously pursued an aggressive agricultural development policy and the resultant effects which will be analysed shortly were quite phenomenal.

Brazilian Agricultural Policy Environment

A notable feature of Brazilian agriculture is the state interventionist and protectionist policies on the one hand, and private sector participation on the other. From the purview of political economy, it could be observed that even military intervention in Brazilian politics had its imprint not only on the agricultural

sector but also on the overall economy. The policy of 'Import Substitution Industrialization' (ISI) which was introduced in the 1980s articulated the development of a domestic productive capacity for several initially imported products including processed agricultural products (Akinbobola, 2001:10).

Thus, the 1980s saw a general rise in the number of agricultural products exported. Soybeans outpaced Brazil's traditional agricultural earners – coffee, cocoa and sugar. The volume, value and variety of semi-processed and manufactured agricultural products increased substantially, largely as a result of government incentives favouring processed goods over raw crops (Akinbobola, 2001:11). Agriculture in the 1980s continued to play a significant role in the country's economy. Through fiscal incentives and special credit facilities, the Federal Government strongly promoted greater efficiency in rural areas. Furthermore, efforts were made to alter the movement of people from rural communities to urban areas by extending equal social benefits, establishing rational schemes for agrarian reforms, stimulating hitherto uneconomical small holdings and, in general, improving the quality of life in areas that are quite remote from the main centres. The policies highlighted above, if implemented by Nigeria, will go a long way in assisting Nigeria to stem its worsening rural-urban migration and all its attendant adverse socio-economic consequences for overall national development.

It is important to mention that the trauma of the first and second petroleum crises of the 1970s and 1980s made Brazil look inward to the effective diversification of its agricultural sector. For instance, Brazil discovered that ethyl alcohol (ethanol) which comes from molasses (a by-product of sugarcane) could be mixed with petroleum derivatives to produce a brand of fuel known as gasohol / alcogas or green petrol for motor vehicles (Brown, 1997:172). This kind of automobile fuel is economically attractive given the fact that sugar, unlike petroleum, is a renewable source of energy and it is environment friendly. Consequently, Brazil pioneered this new field and established the largest gasohol production plant in the world. In fact, by the late 1980s gasohol accounted for about half of the fuel consumption of Brazilian motorists (Ogen, 2002:31-43). This further reduced Brazil's reliance on imported fuel, and it saved her much-needed foreign exchange and consolidated the sugar industry's role in the energy sector. For a nation plagued with endemic fuel scarcity and chaotic fuel queues in spite of its oil producing status, this is another area where Nigeria stands to benefit from the Brazilian experience.

Agriculture and Economic Development in Brazil

Brazil's phenomenal agricultural growth has been the backbone of the nation's economy throughout much of its history. This important factor coupled with its rich mineral deposits, have also helped Brazil to become one of the world's leading manufacturing nations. Today Brazil possesses large and well-developed agricultural, mining, manufacturing, and service sectors. Brazil's economy outweighs that of all other South American countries and is expanding its presence in world markets (Brown, 2000:172).

In 1977, for the first time, manufactured products accounted for more than 50% of the value of Brazil's

exports. Manufacturing now accounts for about 27% of Brazil's Gross National Product (GNP) and employs about 17% of the nation's workers. Today, Brazil ranks among the world's major automobile producers, manufacturing more than 900,000 cars a year. It also has Latin America's largest iron and steel plant (Brown, 2000:172). These impressive records could not have been set without the development of a vibrant and well- diversified agricultural sector. Indeed, there is no gainsaying the fact that sustained agricultural development played a pivotal role in the rapid industrialisation of the Brazilian economy.

Interestingly, massive industrial development has also been going on alongside increased agricultural productivity, This suggests that Brazil's continues to develop her agricultural sector in spite of its current status as a Newly Industrialised Country (NIC). Indeed, Brazil is one of the world's top producers of no fewer than twenty-eight different agricultural commodities. It has been the biggest producer of coffee for more than a century and also leads in oranges, orange juice concentrates, alcohol, sisal, cassava and bananas. It has the planet's largest commercial cattle herd, and comes second only to the United States in soybean production and to India in sugarcane output. Brazil is the world's largest exporter of soybean oil, second in the exports of whole soybean and a major exporter of poultry. Brazil offers considerable competition to the United States in soybean, tobacco, poultry, and beef product exports, this is despite the fact that the United States is a major exporter of these agricultural products (Graham, Gauthier and de Barros, 1987; FAO, 2003).

Furthermore, agriculture and agro-business account for about 27 per cent of GDP, with 19.4% corresponding to inputs, processing and distribution, 4.0% to livestock and 3.6% to agriculture. There is no such thing as a typical Brazilian farm. Sizes, land prices and sophistication vary hugely around the country. According to Carneiro as cited by Akinbobola (2001:37):

> Foreign visitors to most farms in the south, south-east and centre-west expecting to see "Third World" technology and practices will be taken aback by the degree of efficiency and mechanization in these farms. Soya yields per hectare in the centre-west for example are unsurpassed anywhere in the world.

Brazilian agriculture responded positively to the opening of the domestic economy in the 1990s, which sparked a race to introduce modern technology and mechanisation. Cutting production costs remains a priority and there are plentiful opportunities for foreign companies interested in technology transfer projects and joint ventures. Several important foreign companies are presently prospering in Brazil. Amongst them are, Parmalat (Italy) in dairy products, Monsanto (USA) in seeds and biotechnology, R&D and Doux (France) in the poultry sector. The British presence includes the Vestey Group which owns a number of farms in the south-east and centre-west and Unilever with a strong presence in the processed food sector ((CIA's World Fact Book, 2007).

Current State of Nigerian Agriculture and Policy Recommendations

As noted earlier, the neglect of the agricultural sector and the dependence of Nigeria on a mono-cultural, crude oil-based economy have not augured well for the well-being of the Nigerian economy. In a bid to address this drift, the Nigerian government as from 1975 became directly involved in the commercial production of food crops. Several large scale agricultural projects specialising in the production of grains, livestock, dairies and animal feeds, to mention but a few were established (Fasipe, 1990: 129-130). Sugar factories were also established at Numan, Lafiagi and Sunti (Lawal, 1997: 196). The Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB) was established in 1973 as part of government's effort to inject oil wealth into the agricultural sector through the provision of credit facilities to support agriculture and agro-allied businesses (Olagunju, 2000: 98).

In spite of these efforts, it is heartrending to note that as from the mid 70s, Nigeria became a net importer of various agricultural products. In 1982 alone, Nigeria imported 153,000mt tons of palm oil at the cost of 92 million USD and 55,000mt tons of cotton valued at 92 million USD (Alkali, 1997:10). Between 1973 and 1980, a total of 7.07 million tons of wheat, 1.62 million tons of rice and 431,000 tons of maize were imported. Thus, from N47.8 million in the 60s, the cost of food imports in Nigeria rose to N88.2 million in 1970 and N1, 027.0 million in 1988 (Alkali, 1997:19-21). Since the 1990s and until the recent ban on rice importation, Nigeria has been spending an average of 60 million USD on the importation of rice annually. Indeed, in 1994, the agricultural sector performed below the projected 7.2 per cent of budgetary output (Lawal, 1997: 197-198).

Between 1995 and 1998 the government further embarked on the reformation of the lending policies of the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS) for easier access to agricultural credit schemes. It also established the Calabar Export Processing Zone (EPZ) and initiated the Enugu, Kaduna, Jos, and Lagos EPZs with each specialising in specific food and export crops. In fact, the National Rolling Plan for 1996-1998 assumed that by year 2000, Nigeria would have been able to feed its population, develop the capacity to process agricultural raw materials both for local industries and for export and significantly increase the contributions of the agricultural sector to the GDP (Lawal, 1997:198). These lofty objectives have turned out to be a mirage mainly because of official corruption and lack of commitment on the part of those saddled with the responsibility of implementing the government's agricultural policies. In order to get out of this doldrums, Nigerian policy makers need to be wary of development economists who assign a relatively minor role to agriculture in economic development and fervently believe that industrialisation is synonymous with economic development (Ogen, 2002:27 and 40 n4; Ogundipe, 1998: 135-138).

The Brazilian experience is a pointer to the important role of the agricultural sector in ensuring sustainable social development. Indeed, there are some comparative lessons that could be drawn by Nigeria from the structure of Brazilian agriculture. For instance, the Nigerian government needs to actively promote the establishment of the kind of agro-based industries that are capable of processing Nigeria's agricultural raw-materials in a most efficient manner. Thus, the emphasis should be on the local processing of raw crops for local industries as well as for export. This will create more employment opportunities and

additional income will be generated.

The provision of agricultural subsidies for fertilizer, farm implements and equipment would also boost agricultural production. In addition, there is the need to put in place an agricultural tariff regime that would protect Nigeria's agricultural produce from unbridled foreign imports and competition.

There is also the need for the provision of replanting grants to cash crop farmers so that they can replace their old trees with newer varieties. It has been observed that in spite of the fact that these newer varieties are high-yielding and relatively easy to maintain with a shorter maturation period, most farmers are reluctant to do away with their old plantations because of the high cost of replanting new ones (Ogen, 2004:135).

It is equally important to provide special welfare schemes for farmers that will form part of a social policy to alleviate rural poverty and the redistribution of income in favour of the rural poor. Government should also strive to promote greater efficiency in the rural areas by extending equal social benefits; establishing rational schemes for agrarian reforms and improving the quality of life in areas that are quite remote from the main centres so as to alter the movement of people from rural communities to urban areas.

Furthermore, the resuscitation and development of the critically ailing Nigerian sugar industry and its bye-product especially ethyl alcohol (ethanol) which comes from molasses (a by-product of sugarcane) is of an urgent and critical necessity. Given the intractable and embarrassing problem of fuel queues in Nigeria, ethanol could be used to produce a brand of automobile fuel known as alcogas or green petrol. Apart from being a renewable source of energy, and unlike fossil fuels, alcogas has little or no adverse effect on the environment. In fact, with alcogas Nigeria will be able to reduce her dependence on imported fuel and save additional foreign exchange for capital projects (Ogen, 2004:133-135).

The above policies as well as the other steps taken by Brazil - which have been analysed in this paper - to achieve its enviable status must be carefully studied by Nigerian agricultural policy makers for possible implementation.

Conclusion

This paper underscores the historical primacy of the agricultural sector in the economy of Brazil. The study further reiterates the fundamental role of agriculture in any nation's quest for economic development and argues that an efficient agricultural system paved the way for the remarkable economic advancement of Brazil. The paper is of the view that the bitter and frustrating experiences of Nigeria since the early 1960s in its fervent attempts to develop, underline the need to redirect attention to the agricultural sector to ensure sustainable development and food security. The role of agriculture deserves prominence since agricultural development provides the foundation for economic development. A strong and an efficient

agricultural sector would enable a country to feed its growing population, generate employment and foreign exchange, and provide raw materials for industries and a market for industrial products. It has been shown in this piece that Brazil towed this line and was able to change its hitherto under-developed status to that of a Newly Industrialised Country (NIC).

It is hoped that with time, a country like Nigeria which is also blessed with immense natural and human resources will take a cue from the Brazilian experience and exploit the immense benefits accruable from a well-developed agricultural sector. The need for an urgent diversification of the Nigerian economy, coupled with the quest for rural development and poverty eradication make this move a critical necessity.

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A Long Term Voyage.

By Federico Sabatini

Ageing is not worthy, he thinks. What about dying young. Too painful for my mother. He always thinks of his mother when he feels sad. Or guilty. Thinks she would suffer more than him in sensing him suffering. He thinks he only wants to be happy to make his mother happy. Wants to be beautiful to please his mother. His mother's only creation.

He wants to be beautiful when the world is too ugly. People are too ugly. He is too ugly. I am ugly too.

He takes off his hat while walking fast along linear streets. He is alone. But can still hear the voice of the people he's left at the table. Without listening. He has shaved his head. Off. Is this forever. You should slow down your pace. Try to see this new town. It grows threatening. At once. How can I watch if everybody is looking at me. It's not true. Mere exaggeration. Or unbalancing proportions. And perceptions.

Keep suffering in a very quiet, very polite way. "Le bon-ton de la souffrance". Should laugh at this. Could have laughed, once. But not now. Now the inconsistency has taken over. It seems. It's true. I don't see anything anymore. I know I am going to the disco. It's not me though.

Is this really pain, he keeps asking while walking. He feels the world is still, while walking. He can't stop. People are frozen while they move. Some of them sing while sitting on the floor with bottles in their hands. They look very young. But they are probably my age. He puts his hat on. Touches his skin. It is dry.

Tiredness. Infinite. Enclosed in blood vessels. Closed. Mysteriously.

Memories of a former bohemian writer. Then writer. Then bohemian. Only. I don't like this. This is not right. This was not supposed to happen. Like so many things in my life. Too many things, maybe. And this me is still going to the disco. Walking a long way along marvellous baroque. Unable to see.

I still don't know why my inner voice is now speaking two languages. It's shame. Cannot hear such and such in my own language. It is obvious. My twin voice comes from years I spent in another country. Another country. It is my only heritage. All the rest has vanished apart from a very few blurred spots of unreal images. That I could have easily dreamt. And, instead, I'm dreaming of death. Again. Killing or be killed seem to equal. *Ormai*. I see myself dead and it's not painful as it was before. I see myself dying and I think of my mother. How can I be loved if I can't love. I can't love for I can't see. I want to see, so very much. Even these unreal images. But flashing inside my eyes. Inside. Or insight. No, kein insight my friend, he said to me once. Neither sight, nor insight. This is only your reverie. Your only reverie.

I sit on a bench, again. Old people talk about music. They are elegant, they are real. They have lived. Spent years of daily sensations. If only I could love everybody as I am loving them now. This bench is not helping though. It makes me feel my weight against it against the floor. There is always something depriving my loves. This unreal city. Have I really chosen. Or was I driven by excess of lucidity. It is like madness, after all. Admit this. My lucidity is my madness.

These buildings are extraordinary, his best friend said. Royal, he thinks. Immaculate marble. It smells of clean. You want to touch. Or caress. Sophisticated facades wrap my feelings. In a square. With theatre. Café. Bookshop. Librerie française. Shakespeare. Deorsola. What are you doing, fool. You are not the only one. I know, I am only the last one. But definitely the less capable. Maybe the most sensitive. Intuition is not enough you know. My thoughts have to breathe. To rest in peace. Silence. I have written this. Already. It means I have lived it. Was it really on my skin. Or was it theatrical. Experiencing ideas as on a stage. With no audience. Grotesque, maybe. Useless pathos. I have told this to my wife millions of times. Useless pathos. Wasted contortions. Wasted emotions. Which disappear. And leave scars, I used to say. But they only leave changes. And time, in my empty and spacious hands.

Where have I landed. Or ended. Have I really ended. Like in a movie. But with a curtain. Opera, maybe. Or maybe, only operetta. Stop denigrating your life. Think of the intensity of your lives, my wife said. It's hard, I mumbled. Think of your capacity for feelings, my friend said. It's very sad, I thought. You're better than many people around you. Yes, I am. But what counts if I am just older than them. So much older.

I see this city as if I have come back to it from a long term voyage. And, yet, it's a new city. A city I don't know at all. And I feel so much alone when I don't know things. Lonely, also. Withdrawn from others' lives. I can't draw people nearer. Have I really become this, I can't help asking. So very aged all of a sudden.

I'm just writing out of sadness. Or lust. My sentences have become my ejaculations. With no orgasm though. This is the only truth. With no other meaning concealed. No veil to be taken off.

Here I am. Still, smoking another cigarette before entering. Even if I have just smoked. Even if my tongue is still burning. I need to smoke another one. And to look at this luminous entrance. At these sparkling mouths smiling at my blindness.

I am not liking these people. I don't fancy them. But I need to have sex. I still hear the voices of the people I left at the table. Blurring with my own inconsistent one. I know beyond that door there will be tormenting music. Contorted movements. Blazing alcohol in the air.

It feels I have walked for a second. I have been sitting for ages. With nobody around.

As If: The Construction of a Practical Fiction in D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow*.

By Jordan Sanderson

"There was a look in the eyes of the Brangwens as if they were expecting something unknown," writes D. H. Lawrence in the second paragraph of Chapter One, "How Tom Brangwen Married a Polish Lady" (*Rainbow* 9). Not only does the line offer an impression of the Brangwens, it also introduces a stylistic device, the use of "as if," that pervades the novel and clarifies Lawrence's relationship with the "modern world," highlighting his role in constructing a practical fiction as theorized by Hans Vaihinger. Lawrence, like the Brangwens, lived in a rapidly changing England: suburbs threatened the countryside[1], technological progress destabilized the dogmas of the land[2], gender roles quaked, and materiality took precedence over the inner life of the individual, all of which forced people to address the kinds of ontological questions Lawrence seeks to answer in *The Rainbow*. Through the use of "as if," Lawrence writes a practical, modern fiction that resurrects the "unknown" in humanity and gestures towards a balance of Law and Love.

Hans Vaihinger's *The Philosophy of 'As If'* rests on the premise that we can never know reality; rather, we construct fictions that point toward reality and function as guides. He writes, "the object of the world of ideas as a whole is not the portrayal of reality – this would be an utterly impossible task – but rather to provide us with an *instrument for finding our way about more easily in this world*" (15). Thus, all ideas are fictitious. Vaihinger argues that "ideational shifts" occur in which fictions progress first to the level of hypothesis, then to the level of dogma; the process, then reverses itself, and the idea arrives back at the level of fiction(). It takes a supreme mind, Vaihinger claims, to avoid positing one's fiction as a hypothesis or elevating it to the level of dogma.

Lawrence writes *The Rainbow* from the rifts in an ideational shift in which conventional religious dogmas ceased to encompass human consciousness, finally arriving at their original status as fictions. The dissolving of the supremacy of traditional religious fictions created the need for new fictions. George Lukacs charts how this ideational shift destroyed the epic and identifies the novel as the appropriate form for modern human consciousness. In *The Rainbow*, Lawrence does not merely portray the exposed consciousness

of modernity, but creates a new fiction to help human beings navigate the world.

Vaihinger sketches the use of "as if" as follows: "This formula…states that reality as given, the particular, is compared with something whose impossibility and unreality is at the same time admitted" (93). Later he simplifies the device, claiming that "as" sets up an equation between two things, and "if" "affirms that the condition is an unreal or impossible one" (258). Vaihinger locates the value of using "as if" in the fact that it allows human beings to act; it allows people to act "as if" a certain fiction were true.

Lawrence's primary objective is to construct a state of being in which Law and Love not only exist on equal planes but are also ultimately synthesized. Lawrence asserts in *The Study of Thomas Hardy*, "It seems as if the history of humanity were divided into two Epochs: The Epoch of Law and the Epoch of Love," concluding that "what remains is to reconcile the two"[3] (123). Already Lawrence uses "as if" to introduce the terms of his theory, marking it as a fiction of the history of humanity. However, creating a fiction that synthesizes Law and Love directs humanity towards an organic state. The use of "as if" carries over into *The Rainbow*, establishing new grounds on which people can act.

When Tom Brangwen saw Lydia Lensky for the first time, he "felt as if he were walking again in a far world, not Cossethay, a far world, the fragile reality" (29). On one level, a Brangwen's quest for reality begins; on another level, Law begins its pursuit of Love. As action happens in the physical world, metaphysical elements react; as the drama of the novel unfolds, so do Lawrence's metaphysics. Lawrence places Cossethay and "reality" on the same plane, but leaves a "far" distance between them. Tom can come to understand his world in terms of this reality, but the inhabitation of that world remains impossible. The fiction, however, propels Tom along through the world, and the Epoch of Love continues towards the Epoch of Law.

After Tom finally met Lydia, "a daze had come over his mind" (38). Lawrence describes the feeling: "It was as if a strong light were burning there, and he was blind within it, unable to know anything, except that this transfiguration burned between him and her, connecting them, like a secret power" (38). He compares the feeling to a strong light, which allows him to name the "connection" between Tom and Lydia a "transfiguration," one of the central tropes of *The Rainbow*. If a "strong light" were burning inside Tom's head, then transfiguration would be possible, and he *acts* as if it is true. Lawrence enters the realm of the impossible when he uses "as if," yet this impossibility transfigures humanity on a metaphysical level.

Lawrence also acknowledges Tom's usual world as a fiction in the days before the wedding. Tom "lived in suspense, as if only half his faculties worked, until the wedding" (55). Without Lydia, Tom lives "as if"; he also lives "as if" when he is with her. Tom Brangwen, therefore, lives between two fictions, one in which he feels incomplete and one in which he feels complete. Lawrence's emphasis on feeling instead of action highlights the fact that the novel tracks the characters' "being," not what they do in the world but how they are in the world. Michael Bell claims that the language of *The Rainbow* has "an ontological subtlety" (51) that "always highlights the 'subjective' ontology of feeling that underlies 'external' description (55).

Tom and Lydia's marriage initially problematizes the synthesis between themselves and between Law and Love. In an argument, Lydia declares to Tom, "You come to me as if it were for nothing, as if I was nothing there," to which he replies, "You make me feel as if *I* was nothing" (89). Instead of becoming whole, both Tom and Lydia are desolated by the physical proximity of each other. The masculine and feminine principles seem to emerge only when the male and female approach each other. Love comes to depend on the presence of Law, and vice versa, for existence. Instead of Love retaining the effects of Law when the male leaves, it recedes, making Tom feel as if he "was nothing"; neither does Law retain the effects of Love in the absence of the male. The principles cannibalize each other in the same way that Tom and Lydia cannibalize each other in the early days of their marriage. Of course, Tom and Lydia feel "as if" this is the case. "Nothingness" is a state of being, a phase in the process of becoming. The desolation is necessary for synthesis; the two fictions, Love and Law, attract each other too strongly initially. No balance exists between the two, so they collide and disintegrate. From these fragments, Lawrence starts building his new fiction.

Anna embodies the next phase of Lawrence's construction of the modern fiction, and the usage of "as if" increases in the context of her character. Though she was raised a Roman Catholic, "the English dogma never reached" Anna (97). Lawrence writes, "It was as if she worshipped God as a Mystery, never seeking in the least to define what He was" (97). Anna seeks to "experience" God without defining Him, but she cannot attain that reality. The avoidance of the conventional fiction (English dogma) leads to the construction of another fiction in which God is a Mystery. Though Anna does not seek to define God, she still labels him a "Mystery." The speech act, as far as speech and ideas are related, produces fiction. The fiction of God as Mystery emerges as Lawrence writes it.

The narrator later claims that Anna "hated to hear things expressed, put into words" (99). The act of expression interrupts the experience of sensations, of reality, and fictionalizes them. "Whilst the religious feelings were inside (Anna), they were passionately moving. In the mouth of the clergymen, they were false, indecent," Lawrence observes (99). Things, however, must be expressed. Otherwise, human beings exist in a chaos of subjectivity and become completely inert. Lawrence's metaphysics demand a simultaneity of movement and stillness; thus, Anna must put things into words. Inert beings cannot synthesize; language produces the necessary movement to accomplish synthesis, but it simultaneously produces a fiction. Anna Brangwen needs the fiction to complete herself.

Charles L. Ross identifies "scenic echoing" as "the great and pervasive technical innovation of (*The Rainbow*)" (82). Lawrence echoes the scene in which Tom and Lydia first meet in the context of Anna and Will, using "as if" to further develop the ontological fiction. After Will left Anna at her parents' house, his heart felt "fierce as if he felt something balking at him," and he "wanted to smash through something" (108). One will remember that Tom felt "dazed," "as if a strong light were burning" in his head (38). The violence of Will's fiction resembles Tom's, but the violent force "balks" at him from outside, whereas Tom felt the light inside of himself. Several critics claim that *The Rainbow* is about "breaking through" to a kind of "ontological core."[4] Though both Tom and Will experience the urge to reach the ontological core, the "Law" part of human nature, neither of them succeed in reaching it. The desire to "break through"

emanates from the principle of "Love," which seeks its completion in "Law."

In the chapter "Anna Victrix," it seems that Will and Anna finally succeed in casting away the "rind" of the world and marrying Love and Law. Lawrence, however, sets up the scene with "as if": "The next day, he was with her, as remote from the world as if the two of them were buried like a seed in darkness" (135). After introducing the fiction of the buried seed, Lawrence dramatizes Anna's and Will's states of being, tracking the internal transformations that result from acting as if the fiction were true. Will is "shed naked and glistening on to a soft fecund earth, leaving behind him the hard rind of worldly knowledge and experience" (135). Lawrence, then, attempts to unify motion and stillness: "Inside, in the softness and stillness of the room, was the naked kernel, that palpitated in silent activity, absorbed in reality" (135). In the Room of Law, the "kernel" of Love "palpitates," reconciling the paradox of motion and stillness. Anna and Will, then, perceive themselves in "a core of living eternity," a life not subject to the laws of time. To illustrate this state of being, Lawrence uses wheel imagery, placing Anna and Will at the "centre" and the rest of the world "at the rim" (135).

Lawrence, though, reminds his readers that this scene is a part of the fiction; he writes,

> it was as if they were at the very centre of all the slow wheeling of space and the rapid agitation of life, deep, deep inside them all, at the centre where there is utter radiance, and eternal being, and the silence absorbed in praise: the steady core of all movements, the unawakened sleep of all wakefulness. (135)

Anna and Will, ultimately, return from this state and count "the strokes of the bell" outside of their room. Lawrence still clearly demarcates the external world and the internal state of being, but allows the "inner reality" to "temper" Will and Anna, leaving them "unalterably glad," at least for the moment (135). The importance of the scene lies in the development of the fiction of being that started with Tom and Lydia. Anna and Will's intercourse echoes that of Tom and Lydia, but Lawrence describes their internal states much more extravagantly and desperately than he does the joining of Tom and Lydia. Lawrence intensifies the echoing scene. This acceleration into the stillness of being begins to solidify the fiction and establish its practical value: thinking of intercourse in the terms that Lawrence uses, the language of being, allows Anna and Will to enter external reality "unalterably glad." Thus, the effects of the fiction emerge more clearly in the new generation of Brangwens, and it draws the "something unknown" that they expect in the first chapter closer to them. The experience of inner realities increases, but the consummation of internal and external realities does not occur.

Anna and Will come to depend on each other in much the same way that Tom and Lydia depend on each other and fear each other's absence. Lawrence writes, "If he should leave her? That would destroy her" (155), and claims that Anna "knew she was immutable, unchangeable, she was not afraid of her own being. She was only afraid of all that was not herself" (155). Anna embodies the principle of Law, the principle of the inert. Her relationship with Will (who embodies the principle of Love, of movement), however, makes her instable, and she frets "over the lack of instability" (156). Lawrence dramatizes the interaction

of Law and Love, of internal and external, of female and male, but does not yet locate them in the same being. Anna, and by extension Law, depends on Will (Love) for her wholeness. At times, Will lends her motion and she feels complete, and she lends him stillness, which temporarily completes him; however when they withdraw from each other, they fail to maintain this sense of wholeness. Ultimately, Anna and Will live either in temporality or eternity, but they do not achieve the synthesis of the temporal and the eternal, which function as distinct fictions. Lawrence strives to synthesize the two fictions.

After Ursula's birth, Will feels "attended by a sense of something more, something further, which gave him absolute being. It was as if now he existed in Eternity, let Time be what it might" (179). Here, Will follows the pathway of Anna into the eternal, but loses his sense of Time. Synthesis of the two fictions in one being, again, fails. Vaihinger argues that the eternal or infinite "owes its origin entirely to the imaginative faculty and possesses no objective value whatsoever" (62). Will's entry into the internal fiction severs his relationship with the fiction of the external. Regarding the fictitious nature of time, Vaihinger writes,

> The strongest proof of the subjectivity of time and space lies in their being infinite, and the ordinary concepts of space and time are thus unmasked as fictional, as mere auxiliary ideas, helpful pictures, developed by the logical function to bring order into reality and to understand it. (62)

Ultimately, the two fictions must be realized together. Will and Anna, however, cannot achieve this synthesis. To achieve his desired synthesis, Lawrence must allow a single character to understand the fiction of infinity and the fiction of time simultaneously and independently of anyone else.

The character in whom Lawrence tries to achieve the simultaneity of internal and external, Law and Love, is Ursula. Her birth marks the next phase of the fiction of being, and *The Rainbow* shifts its focus to her for the last half of the book. Spatially, Lawrence devotes roughly one quarter of the novel to Tom and Lydia and another quarter to Anna and Will, leaving the rest of the novel to attempt the realization of his fiction of being in a single character, a member of the new generation of Brangwens. Lawrence writes in the chapter "The Widening Circle" that the child Ursula

> lived a dual life, one where the facts of daily life encompassed everything, being legion, and the other wherein the facts of daily life were superseded by eternal truth. So utterly did she desire the Sons of God should come to the daughters of men; and she believed more in her desire and its fulfillment than in the obvious facts of life. (257) Ursula, here, is "confused, but not denied" (257). Nor is Lawrence denied in his quest for the fulfillment of his fiction of synthesis in Ursula.

It is no coincidence that the use of "as if" becomes most prolific in connection with Ursula. Lawrence shifts the proximity of Law and Love by placing Ursula, female and so the natural embodiment of the feminine principle, "with her father" (256), who embodies the principle of Love. Like him, she admires the mystery of the architecture of the church, hearing the voice of "the visionary world" there. She feels "as

if the church itself were a shell that still spoke the language of creation" (256). The church, referred to in the Bible as the bride of Christ, symbolizes the feminine principle, which the creative voice, symbolizing the male principle, penetrates. Thus, Ursula acts as if synthesis already exists in the world of the church, yet she relegates that world to a separate realm from the "facts of daily life," which creates the dual world in which she lives. The rest of the novel concerns itself with reconciling the duality in Ursula and goes to great stylistic lengths to achieve this synthesis.

The Chapter "First Love" contains more instances of the use of "as if" than any other chapter in *The Rainbow*. In the opening paragraphs of the chapter, the world of the church becomes for Ursula a "myth, an illusion, which, however much one might assert it to be true in historical fact, one knew was not trueÑat least, for this present-day life of ours" (263). Ursula concludes, "The Sunday world was not real, or at least, not actual. And one lived by action" (263). By separating the duality and emphasizing the value of action, Lawrence establishes the framework in which his new fiction must exist. Vaihinger argues,

> Aesthetic fictions serve the purpose of awakening within us certain uplifting or otherwise important feelings. Like the scientific, they are not an end in themselves but a means for the attainment of higher ends…Just as the introduction of scientific fictions gave rise to a violent controversy, both in general and as regards particular concepts, so in the case of the aesthetic fiction…there has been a bitter conflict. (82-83)

Vaihinger further argues that the value of an aesthetic fiction lies in its "practical value" (83). Therefore to make his fiction of being valuable in the modern world in which Ursula lives, Lawrence must make the "Sunday world" practical. His treatment of it as a fiction allows him to treat the "week-day world" as a separate fiction. Lawrence's ultimate goal is not to reify an old religious fiction in a factual, technological reality, but to construct a new fiction in which the spiritual and the physical co-exist, enabling human being to act "as if," which guides them toward reality proper.

Lawrence begins this phase of the new fiction in his usual manner, by sparking a romantic relationship. The scene in which Ursula meets Skrebensky echoes the previous scenes during which Tom and Lydia met and Anna and Will met. Lawrence writes, "It was as if she were set on a hill and could feel, vaguely, the whole world lying spread before her" (269). She awakens to something outside of herself as Will did when he met Anna. However, the violence that both Will and Tom experienced does not manifest itself in Ursula. The other world lies "spread before her"; it neither blinds her nor balks at her. This world invites entry.

Another difference between Ursula and Skrebensky's courtship and the others' lies in the effect he has on her. Some unknown force draws Tom and Lydia and Anna and Will together, a desire that no degree of nearness can sate; in fact, the closer they get to each other, the closer they want to be. Lawrence writes of Ursula, "It excited her to feel the press of him upon her, as if his being were urging her to something" (275). Prior to this exciting repellation, Lawrence shows Ursula in a world in which "Everything seemed wonderful, if dreadful, to her, the world tumbling into ruins, and she and he clambering unhurt, lawless over the face of it" (275). Ursula remains unharmed, fully intact, unlike the earlier Brangwens who seem

threatened by annihilation as their relationships develop. The world, here, tumbles into ruins, the kind of destruction in which begins possibilities. Lawrence's use of "lawless" highlights the metaphysical implications of the scene. The feminine principle is absent in spite of Ursula's presence, and no inertia anchors the couple. Ursula and Skrebensky reach a state of pure motion, but like magnets approaching each other with the same charge, he repels her. Only the masculine principle acts in the scene, and similar poles do not attract. In Ursula's fiction, Skrebensky repels her both into herself and into the world.

After Skrebensky and Ursula make out for the first time, she feels "as if she were supported off her feet, as if her feet were light as little breezes in motion" (278), and goes to bed "feeling all warm with electric warmth, as if the gush of dawn were within her, upholding her" (278). Ursula continues to embody the masculine principle of Love (motion), but she begins to merge with the natural world. Generally, people have feminized the natural world when personifying it, and while Lawrence does not so much personify the world as he naturalizes Ursula, nature (breezes and dawn) function as the feminine principle. Lawrence's use of similes in which he compares Ursula to nature inserts the principle of Law in her, so she moves towards acting as an embodiment of both Law and Love, independent of Skrebensky. Lawrence also gestures towards joining the modern, technological world with the natural world when he progresses from "electric warmth" to "the gush of dawn." His fiction moves towards including the "week-day world" and the "Sunday world."

Later, Ursula feels "rich and augmented" by Skrebensky's presence, "as if she were the positive attraction and he the flow towards her" (280). Lawrence feminizes Skrebensky in this inversion, erecting Ursula as the positive (male) attraction that creates motion towards it. His literal gender "augments" Ursula, reinforcing her metaphysical position as the principle of Love. The two of them go outside and "play at kisses." The narrator asks, "And after all, what could either of them get from such a passion but a sense of his or her own maximum self, in contradistinction to all the rest of life?" (281). In the act of love, Ursula approaches her "maximum self," which is female, "infinitely desirable and infinitely strong" (281). So already embodying the masculine principle, Ursula approaches her femaleness.

The next day, she and Skrebensky take a walk and enter the church where Ursula attains the same kind of dominance over Skrebensky that her mother attains over Will in the chapter "Anna Victrix." The scene echoes the scene in which the pregnant Anna dances. Lawrence writes, "And radiant as an angel she went with him out of the church, as if her feet were beams of light that walked on flowers for footsteps" (282). Skrebensky's reaction to this angelic scene closely resembles Will's reaction to discovering Anna dancing nude, and he finds her radiance "bitter." The rapidity with which Ursula achieves dominance over Skrebensky demonstrates the manner in which Lawrence intensifies the echoing scenes, propelling the construction of a fiction of synthesis to further degrees each time.

Garrett Stewart calls Lawrence's language in *The Rainbow* a "process prose" (222), which works against the "crippling limitations on our ideas of unity and oneness" (225). Each time Lawrence establishes a boundary, he crosses it in an echoing scene. Neither Tom and Lydia nor Anna and Will retain the effects of the other in the absence of the other, though they come not to need each other constantly as their

relationships develop. Ursula does not need Skrebensky almost from the moment they meet, and when he goes away, she does not see him go because "a light, which was of him" fills her (284). She possesses the pieces of him she needs for completion without needing him. She has her "oneness" and her liberty, and Lawrence writes, "She was happiest running on by herself" (284). Upon Skrebensky's return for a wedding, he feels confused, "as if he were losing himself and becoming all vague, undefined, inchoate" (286). Ursula's presence imposes on him in such a way that it blurs his very identity. Although Anna may have been victorious, she never achieves the ontological stature that Ursula wields without much of an attempt.

When she and Skrebensky happen upon a barge, she boards it, and the man watches "her as if she were a strange being, as if she lit up his face" (292). This description functions to establish Ursula as the central character of the new fiction of being, "a strange being" who boards a stranger's barge and inspires them to name their child after her. As she an Skrebensky leave, she feels that he has "created a deadness around her, a sterility, as if the world were ashes" (294). Skrebensky envies the man because he "communed" with Ursula with his body and soul, whereas his desire is completely physical. These feelings persist until they arrive home for supper.

The fire-lit night at the party after dinner makes Ursula feel she is "a new being" (294), the "quarry" and the "hound" (295). This self-pursuit leads Ursula to want to flee the "chaos of people" to "the hill and the moon" (296). She wants "consummation" with the moon (296). She experiences Skrebensky as "the dross" (296), but finally acquiesces and the two of them dance. Ursula, however, treats the dance as "a kind of waiting, of using up some of the time that intervened between her and her pure being" (297). Not only does Skrebensky not complete Ursula or urge her towards completion anymore, but he actually interferes with "her and her pure being." Thereafter, she remains rather indifferent to Skrebensky; he goes off to war, and the turn of the century finds Ursula transitioning from dependence on her parents to pursuing a career as a school teacher, hoping to gain financial independence.

Lawrence uses "as if" only occasionally in "The Man's World," the chapter during which Ursula takes a job teaching and learns to acclimate herself to a world much different from the one in which she grew up. Lawrence writes, "She was nobody, there was no reality in herself, the reality was all outside of her, and she must apply herself to it" (347). Ursula, here, finds herself at the other extreme of being. Her inner being ceases to manifest itself, and external reality demands that she adapt herself to it. The most logical explanation for the near complete absence of "as if" in "The Man's World" is that the chapter approaches the world from its usual fiction in which the inner reality cannot exist in the modern world. Lawrence plunges readers back into the either/or of modernity. One must choose between two realities: a religious one or a secular one. The problem is that neither choice allows humanity to reach its apex of being. This is the world Marvin Mudrick envisions when he argues that Lawrence's intent was to write a novel that "would encompass and illustrate in the lives of a family the great social and psychological changes of our century" (28). "The Man's World," however, is the only chapter that unfolds almost exclusively in the external world. The chapter functions as a tipping of the scales towards the material on the fulcrum of being.

On Ursula's last day at the school, she feels " as if the walls of the school were going to melt away" (392), which marks the continuation of the quest to join inner and outer realities. Ursula joins her family in Scarborough after her first year of college. As she looks out over the sea, thinking, "There are so many dawns that have not yet risen" (401), she feels "as if, from over the edge of the sea, all the unrisen dawns were appealing to her, all her unborn soul was crying for the unrisen dawns" (401). Lawrence places Ursula on the brink of becoming in this scene. Already she has experienced all of the transformations her parents and grandparents experienced, worked for her own living, and entered the academy, a once completely male institution. In this scene, the natural world again beckons to Ursula, and she feels as if "all the unrisen dawns" have entered her. This state of being differs greatly from the previous state in which she felt the dawn inside of her. Her current state exceeds the earlier one in magnitude, she feels multiple dawns in this scene though they appeal to her from outside of herself, and in orient\ation. These dawns have never been before; they are "unrisen." Ursula's future lies buried in the dawns yet to come, and she pursues this future throughout the rest of the novel.

After her experience at Scarborough, Ursula reaches a crisis of being in which she experiences modernity in all of its gravity. Ursula sees "Always the shining doorway ahead: and then, upon approach, always the shining doorway was a gate into another ugly yard, dirty and active and dead" (404). The narrator comments that Ursula "seemed always negative in her action" (405), then, offers extended commentary on her nature and her relationship to the modern world, a passage worth quoting at length:

> That which she was, positively, was dark and unrevealed, it could not come forth. It was like a seed buried in dry ash. This world in which she lived was like a circle lighted by a lamp. This lighted area, lit up by man's complete consciousness, she thought was all the world: that here all was disclosed for ever. Yet all the time, within the darkness she had been aware of points of light, like the eyes of wild beasts, gleaming, penetrating, vanishing. And her soul had acknowledged in a great heave of terror, only the outer darkness. The inner circle of light in which she lived and moved, wherein the trains rushed and the factories ground out their machine-produce and the plants and the animals worked by the light of science and knowledge, suddenly it seemed like the area under an arc-lamp, wherein the moths and children played in the security of blinding light, not even knowing there was any darkness, because they stayed in the light. (405)

This passage, more than any other, illustrates the modern condition in which Ursula has come to live. The dark/light binary described here does not warrant the use of "as if" because it simply, though effectively, encapsulates the ontology of modernity; these are the ashes from which Ursula and, by extension, Lawrence's fiction must rise.

Upon Skrebensky's return, Ursula becomes indifferent to the world of light and turns again to the darkness of herself and recognizes the darkness in the world. She thinks that London "rests upon the unlimited darkness, like a gleam of coloured oil on dark water" (415), and the people remind her of "the Invisible Man, who was a piece of darkness made visible only by his clothes" (415). At home, Ursula experiences

"a sense of freedom among them all, of the under-current of darkness among them all" (417). She enters "the dark fields of immortality" (418) and develops "another, stronger self that knew the darkness" (418). Lawrence writes, "As for her temporal, social self, she let it look after itself" (418). In her supreme, dark self, Ursula is untouchable, inviolable by either "the young man of the world, Skrebensky," or anyone else.

As the above quoted passages evince, Lawrence elides "as if" from the descriptions of Ursula's latest exploration of the darkness. Lawrence does not use "as if" when he explores a single pole of a binary, all of which he categorizes under the Love/Law binary. The new fiction must include the darkness in the light; the two must merge. At this point in the novel, the "minor" syntheses of the older Brangwens have occurred in Ursula, and she has traversed the pole of modernity, represented by light; she turns, now, to the opposite pole, the pole of immortality, of the infinite, of the Self, which Lawrence represents with darkness.

It is in Rouen that Ursula experiences, albeit briefly, the new synthesis and tries living according the new fiction. Prior to arriving in Rouen, she "began to think she was really queen of the whole universe, of the old world as well as of the new" (422). After enjoying the novelty of Paris, Ursula "must call in Rouen" (422); Lawrence writes, "It was as if she wanted to try its effect on her" (422). It should be remembered, here, that Vaihinger designates practicality as the test of the value of aesthetic fictions, and this is precisely what Ursula is doing. She goes to Rouen to test the new fiction, to see if she can live as if the old world and new are one. Ursula turns to the cathedral in the modern city "as if to something she had forgotten, and wanted" (422). In the manner he uses throughout the novel, Lawrence marks the transition with "as if," and the passage that follows extends from that usage. Lawrence writes, "This was now the reality: this great stone cathedral slumbering there in its mass, which knew no transience nor heard any denial. It was majestic in its stability, its splendid absoluteness" (422). Ursula sees the absolute in the modern, the darkness of the infinite in the transient light of the city, and the two co-exist in her fiction while she and Skrebensky are in Rouen.

Skrebensky fails to perceive the absolute in Rouen and has "a cold feeling of death" (422). After returning to London, Skrebensky experiences his own crisis. Lawrence writes:

> He was as if mad. The horror of the brick buildings, of the tram-car, of the ashen-grey people in the street made him reeling and blind as if drunk. He went mad. He had lived with her in a close, living, pulsing world, where everything pulsed with rich being. Now rigidity, dead walls and mechanical traffic, and creeping, spectre-like people. The life was extinct, only ash moved and stirred or stood rigid, there was a horrible, clattering activity, a rattle like the falling of dry slag, cold, and sterile. It was as if the sunshine that fell were unnatural light exposing the ash of the town, as if the lights at night were the sinister gleam of decomposition. (423)

And thus ends Skrebensky's life with Ursula. His lives according to a fiction that is incompatible with Ursula's. Whereas she experiences the absolute in Rouen's architecture, he only experiences decomposition and horror in the building of London. The modern world seizes Skrebensky, and he lives as if the

world were "only ash." No dark seed lies covered there for him as it does for Ursula. Though they remain in contact for a while afterwards, Skrebensky's adoption of a fiction of ash reduces him to a mere gate through which Ursula passes. She turns against him and "all (his) old, dead things" (428), and the "sense of helplessness, as if he were a mere figure that did not exist vitally, (makes) him mad, beside himself" (428). Indeed, Skrebensky does not "exist vitally."

Skrebensky becomes a "screen" for Ursula (430). Lawrence writes, "She took him, she clasped him, clenched him close, but her eyes were open looking at the stars, it was as if the stars were lying with her and entering the unfathomable darkness of her womb, fathoming her at last. It was not him" (430-31). Light and dark merge in Ursula. The "points of light" enter into her darkness, and Lawrence tags this synthesis with "as if." The next line is "The dawn came" (431). One of the "unrisen" dawns that called to Ursula in Scarborough appears after her consummation with the stars, and the beauty of the scene causes Ursula to cry: "Her face was wet with tears, very bright, like a transfiguration in the refulgent light," writes Lawrence (431- 32). Lawrence's use of simile ("like a transfiguration") extends from the use of "as if," marking the scene as a part of Ursula's fiction of synthesis. The light mixes with the dark moisture of Ursula's tears transfiguring her; light and darkness merge to form her new being.

Ursula tells Skrebensky she thinks she never wants to marry (432), a revelation that perpetuates his own fiction of ash in which nothingness merges with materiality. The possibility of being with Ursula is the only thing that allows him to maintain a degree of control, and the loss of her leaves him "crying blind and twisted as if something were broken which kept him in control" (433). As Ursula's fiction of being solidifies and propels her into a new, functional state of being, Anton Skrebensky's fiction threatens him with "non-being." He possesses not the darkness necessary for transfiguration; he lives completely in a world of light that turns to ash all that it touches. Ursula was his only hope for redemption, but Lawrence ends the cycle of joining male and female in order to join masculine and feminine principles. Rather, he removes the male and marries masculine and feminine principles in Ursula alone.

The crisis of being trampled by the horses constitutes the final phase of the construction of the new fiction, and in that way resembles William James' theories on enlightenment.[5] Lawrence, furthermore uses traditional enlightenment imagery in the scene, which echoes no other scene in the novel. As the horses thunder towards Ursula, she hesitates "as if seized by lightning" (452). The horses reduce Ursula to a state of powerlessness. In the aftermath, she begins the construction of what will be the final stage of the new fiction of being. Lawrence writes:

> As she sat there, spent, time and the flux of change passed away from her, she lay as if unconscious upon the bed of a stream, like a stone, unconscious, unchanging, unchangeable, whilst everything rolled by in transience, leaving her there, a stone at rest on the bed of the stream, inalterable and passive, sunk to the bottom of all change. (454)

Lawrence joins motion and stability in this image. Ursula rests amid the flow of the stream, at the bottom of it, and she remains unmoved. The image proceeds from the premise that the stone and water co-exist

in the streambed; the two exist independently of one another, but are joined together in the bed to form a wholeness, inhabited by both movement and stillness. Of course, this scenario is not reality, but a state of being elaborated around "as if," which clears the way for Ursula to eventually act upon it.

As she lies in her bed at home, Ursula repeats to herself:

> I have no father nor mother nor lover, I have no allocated place in the world of things, I do not belong to Beldover nor to Nottingham nor to England nor to this world, they none of them exist, I am trammeled and entangled in them, but they are all unreal. I must break out of it, like a nut from its shell which is an unreality. (456)

This mantra extends from the stone imagery and operates in multiple ways: it disconnects Ursula from the external world and from the legacy of her family, it parallels the external world with the horses (a parallel already hinted at), and it re-establishes the seed imagery that has functioned as a symbol of becoming throughout the novel. Ursula emerges from the ash of the past, and becomes "the naked, clear kernel thrusting forth the clear, powerful shoot" (456). The world becomes a "bygone winter, discarded, her mother and father and Anton, and college and all her friends" are "cast off like a year that has gone by" (456). Ursula becomes "the kernel…free and naked and striving to take new root, *to create a new knowledge of Eternity in the flux of Time*" (456)(emphasis added). The kernel image "transfigures" the stone imagery; the kernel becomes a plant both rooted *and growing*. It remains stable in the "flux of time." Ursula creates a fiction in which the eternal is present in the temporal, Law in Love, darkness in light.

Lawrence installs the last "as if" after Ursula's realizations, categorizing them as fictions. He writes, "When she woke at last it seemed as if a new day had come on the earth" (457). She no longer needs anyone. Furthermore, she lost the child that connected her to Skrebensky, which sharpens the edges of her identity.[6] She avoids defining herself according to her ability to reproduce as Anna does. Ursula's identity emerges within herself, independent of children, parents, or lovers. She awakens to a state of being that depends solely on her.

Lawrence continues by examining the viability of the "new day" (read "new fiction") through Ursula. He writes, "As she grew better, she sat to watch a new creation" (457). The word "grew" alludes to the kernel imagery and suggests that Ursula is living by her fiction, acting "as if" a "new day had come" bringing with it "a new creation." Ursula sees "the new germination" through the husk of the world, recognizing that "the confidence of the women" would "break quickly to reveal the strength of the new germination" (458). Watching the urban sprawl and advancing industry nauseates Ursula. Then, she sees "a band of faint iridescence colouring in faint colours a portion of the hill" (458). She sees the rainbow, "its pedestals luminous in the corruption of new houses on the low hill, its arch the top of heaven" (458). The landscape recalls Ursula's face when the dawn light intermingled with her tears, transfiguring her. Light and darkness interact to form the rainbow; light must pass through moisture to create a rainbow, so it is a phenomenon of both darkness and brilliance.

Lawrence writes, "And the rainbow stood on the earth" (458), which leads Ursula to believe the "sordid people" will "cast off their horny covering of disintegration, that new, clean, naked bodies would issue to a new germination, to a new growth" (459). The rainbow also yields visions of "earth's new architecture, the old brittle, corruption of factories swept away, the world built up in a living fabric of Truth, fitting to the over-arching heaven" (459). The factories and houses remain, but their "brittle corruption" is "swept away." The rainbow destroys neither the earth nor urbanity nor modernity; rather, it transfigures it. Heaven manifest itself on the earth, in the factories and houses. Darkness exists in light. The fiction of new being, symbolized by the rainbow, includes modernity and the infinite, which allows human beings to reach the apex of being in a world of accelerated flux. The fiction of the rainbow allows people to act as if the modern world has been transfigured.

Renowned Lawrence scholar Mark Kinkead-Weekes argues,

> Consciousness in time, in flux, in history, must always, for Lawrence, be married to, and transfigured by, consciousness of the timeless, the archetypal, and eternalÑor man will perish from inadequate conception of his nature and his world. (38)

He further claims that "*The Rainbow* seeks also to recover a new language for 'God' out of the old scriptures" (33). The urgent need to experience both time and eternity produced *The Rainbow*; the novel conceives the nature of man (ironically in Ursula) and the world in new terms because the old terms ceased to function. Scientific and philosophical developments (also fictions) exposed the fictitious nature of conventional, Christian narratives, ringing the death knell for God; thus, Kinkead-Weekes places God in quotation marks. Lawrence's language, some of it indeed recovered "out of the old scriptures," does not reinstate God in the universe, but it maps a path to the phenomena once labeled "God" in Christian mythology. Lawrence, however, does not undercut the value of the modern world at the end of *The Rainbow*; both modernity and eternity are necessary to create the rainbow.

Hans Vaihinger's life ended before he was able to fully examine the general role of language in fictions. However when his critics charged him with neglecting the role of language, he replied, "To language, thenÑto language aloneÑit is that fictitious entities owe their existence; their impossible, yet indispensable existence" (vi). This assertion recognizes the value of "a new language for 'God'" and implies that the fate of a fiction relates directly to the fate of the language. As the old language in which the grand narrative of Christianity was rendered grew brittle, so did the narrative. *The Rainbow* offers us a new language with which to order our existence. The prolific use of "as if" acknowledges the metaphysics of the novel as "impossible" and "indispensable." The dogmatized fiction has no value because it represents itself as reality instead of as a guide to reality; practitioners become disciples, and the dogma obscures reality.

Diane S. Bonds, in her deconstructionist treatment of Lawrence, argues,

> If the Brangwen quest for wholeness is intimately linked to an increasing degree of articulateness, as the women's yearning toward the spoken world beyond implies, then the wholeness,

like the ideal state of *balance* of which Lawrence writes in his study of Hardy is 'never to be found.' (54)

Bonds asserts that *The Rainbow* resists difference and attempts to unify signifier and signified, symbolically linking the two with the rainbow. The novel does not try to articulate wholeness, nor does the rainbow link signified and signifier. The language of the novel depends on its status as sign to accomplish its ends. Lawrence focuses on enabling people to *act* in truth, not speak the truth, and his study of Hardy suggests this. The old fiction (structure) fell with its signifiers; Lawrence recognizes that the signified has never changed. The signifiers simply lost the ability to point to the signified. The very act of writing a new fiction recognizes the gap between signifier and signified, treating the signifiers as arrows that direct action.

Vaihinger rejects the "principle of Pragmatism," which claims, "An idea which is found to be useful in practice proves thereby that it is also true in theory, and the fruitful is thus always true" (viii). Vaihinger, rather, adheres to the principle of Fictionalism, which he defines as "An idea whose theoretical untruth or incorrectness, and therewith its falsity, is admitted, is not for that reason practically valueless and useless; for such an idea, in spite of its theoretical nullity may have great practical importance" (viii).[7] The novel, then, seems the most logical place for modern peoples to turn for a guide according to which they may navigate their world.

Georg Lukacs claims in *The Theory of the Novel* that "the incongruence of interiority and the conventional world leads to a denial of the latter" (144) in the "novel of disillusionment." The novel of disillusionment, of course, is a phenomenon of Romanticism and concerns itself almost exclusively with "interiorities." The Abstract Idealist concerns himself with action, and the Humanist "demands a balance between activity and contemplation, between wanting to mould the world and being purely receptive towards it" (135). In these terms, *The Rainbow* is a Humanist novel. Lukacs, however, continues to lament the loss of the totality that produced epics and does not see the novel as an effective tool in restoring totality. He writes,

> This world is the sphere of pure soul-reality in which man exists as man, neither as a social being nor as an isolated, unique, pure, and therefore abstract interiority. If ever this world should come into being as something natural and simply experienced, as the only true reality, a new complete totality could be built out of all its substances and relationships. (152)

Lukacs' lust for totality would erect a new dogma, and "the only true reality" would not be a reality at all but a fiction mistaken for a reality. A totality is simply a universalized dogma, which is a perversion of a fiction.

The Rainbow does not fall for the illusion of totality. Lawrence writes a novel in which man can act as if he exists as both social being and abstract interiority simultaneously. The shattered totality of the epic no longer enabled man to act, and Lawrence recognized this impotence. Either human beings could, essentially, live in a state of psychosis, or they could live in a world with no meaning beyond the temporal world. The

novel is the appropriate form for the new fiction because it does not depend on a totality for its usefulness.

The Rainbow succeeds in guiding humanity towards an inner state of being that does not depend on religious dogmas and towards a stable core in the flux of the industrialized world. It succeeds because it does not seek to mimic modern consciousness or reality. Lawrence's novel provides the handrails that steady humanity in its quest for reality, but it does not purport to be that reality. People can, however, act as if "the rainbow stood on the earth," as Ursula does, and discover a state of being that yields a sense of fulfillment.

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Notes

[1] In *The Composition of* The Rainbow *and* Women in Love*: A History*, Charles Ross observes Lawrence revising the novel to emphasize "the hellishness of modern industry and the complete disappearance of the compromise between rural England and the collieries that he had described in (earlier texts)" (79). He claims Lawrence employs a technique in which he repeats "a sort of checklist of evocative adjectives, like 'amorphous,' 'chaotic,' 'rigid,' and 'mathematical'" (79) to render the modern, industrial world.

[2] Georg Lukacs' *Theory of the Novel* addresses this problem in aesthetic terms.

[3] It should be noted that Lawrence identifies Law as a feminine principle and Love as a masculine principle.

[4] See Stewart Garrett's "Lawrence, 'Being,' and the Allotropic Style" and Michael Bell's study, *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being*.

[5] James argues that some tragedy or crisis, a devastating event, precipitates most spiritual enlightenments. The tragedy produces a psychological effect that allows the individual to reconcile herself to the world and create a narrative by which to understand her existence; i.e., the tragedy allows her to act "as if" her life were a path to spiritual enlightenment, which parallels Vaihinger's *Philosophy of 'As If.'* Though Vaihinger does not posit that a tragedy is necessary to construct of fiction by which to live, he does treat these fictions as means through which one comes to understand her life.

[6] Freud argues that loss often plays a significant role in the construction of identity. Generally, these losses occur during childhood, so the fact the Ursula loses a child drenches the situation in irony.

[7] The distinction for which Vaihinger calls closely resembles I. A. Richards' plea in "Poetry and Beliefs" that scientific language and poetic language be divorced. Richards, too, recognizes the value of poetry in creating a "whole" or "balanced" human being; he simply thinks poetic (belief) faculties should be allowed to develop independently of scientific knowledge. It should be emphasized that neither Richards nor Vaihinger undermine the value of fiction and poetry.

Language, Ideology and Power Relations in Nigerian Newspaper Headlines.

By Rotimi Taiwo

Abstract

This study is a Critical Discourse Analysis of Nigerian newspaper headlines. Three hundred Nigerian newspaper headlines were randomly selected from six Nigerian newspapers and they were examined for peculiarity in the vocabulary and rhetorical, devices used in order to identify the ideologies that lie behind their constructions. The study generated two typologies of headlines based on the theme addressed and the surface structures. A critical study of the headlines revealed that the headlines have hidden ideological meanings, being divided along some ideological lines reflecting the views of those whose interest is being served and those whose interest is being undermined. The study concludes that headlines are emotion-inducing strategy in the hands of the editor used to initiate, sustain discourse and shape the views of the readers on national issues.

1. Introduction.

Linguists' interest in discourse in recent times is gradually shifting from the traditional focus on the linguistic structure of text to how texts figure in the social process. An understanding of grammar, morphology, semantics and phonology of a text does not necessarily constitute understanding of the text. The rhetoric intent, the coherence and the worldview that the author and receptor bring to the text are equally essential (Kaplan, 1990). Language, therefore, is no longer seen as merely reflecting our reality, but as central to creating reality. Our words are never neutral, they carry the power that reflects the interests of those who speak or write (see Fiske, 1994; Fowler, et.al., 1979).

Opinion leaders, courts, government, newspaper editors, *etc*, play a crucial role in shaping issues in the society and setting the boundaries of what is talked about and how it is talked about (Henry and Tator,

2002). Newspapers are particularly known to lead in the initiation of discourse on key national issues by picking on statements and actions of prominent national figures, celebrities and happenings around the nation and exposing them to their readership. The initiation, advancement and sustenance of discourse by newspapers are not often devoid of some embellishments, determined by their own angle of the story.

This paper is an attempt to look at how language is used in news tabloids, particularly in headlines to reflect specific societal ideologies and power relations. The role headlines play as precursors to the news makes them to be constructed in such a way that they usually evoke readers' emotions. Most editors ensure that the choice of expressions in headlines reflects the feelings, opinions and attitudes of people about issues in the news.

2. Critical Discourse Analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a method of Discourse Analysis that reveals the way discourses are used everyday for signification, power relations and development of new knowledge. Words, whether spoken or written have power (see Luke, 1997). CDA is concerned with studying and analysing words used in discourses to reveal the source of power, abuse, dominance, inequality and bias and how these sources are initiated, maintained, reproduced and transformed within specific social, economic, political and historical contexts (Van Dijk, 1988).

This approach is often called "critical linguistics" 'an interdisciplinary approach to language study with critical point of view for the purpose of studying language behaviour in natural speech situations of social relevance' (Wodak, 1989). Fairclough (2000) identifies three central tenets of CDA namely: social structure (class, status, age, ethnic identity and gender); culture (the generally accepted norms of behaviour in the society); and discourse (the words we use). The goal of CDA is to determine the relationship between these three central tenets. Our discourses reflect the societal norms and beliefs, *ie*, we say things in conformity with the way they should normally be said in our society, and there are certain things we do not say because the society has constrained us not to say them. Likewise, our identity in the social structure is shown in the way we think, act and speak. A text is a record of communication, which involves the presentation of facts, beliefs and the construction of identities of participants. It is produced by socially-situated speakers. It is therefore more than just words spoken or written on the pages of books, but how such words are used in particular social context (Huckin, 1997). McGregor (2003) identifies an aspect of CDA, which she calls the "discursive practices". These are rules, norms and mental models of socially acceptable behaviour in specific roles or relationships used to produce, receive, and interpret the message. Discursive practices then, are the processes involved in speaking, writing, hearing and reading texts.

One domain of discourse to which CDA has been applied so much in recent times is the media. The critical use of Discourse Analysis in Applied Linguistics is leading to the development of a different approach to understanding media messages (Kaplan, 1990). Some of the CDA researches carried out on the media

include: the roles news reports play in ethnic relations (van Dijk, 1991); how news reports are used to serve the interest of the dominant forces in the society (McGregor, 2003); how journalists adopt particular ideological-discursive structure to express the values of an ideological system (Kress, 1990); and how mental illnesses are portrayed in the media (Greg, 1996). Most of the earlier studies address the content of news reports.

This study examines the headlines of some Nigerian newspapers and the social contexts from which they emerge and identifies the various uses editors make of the linguistic resources to portray the various existing societal ideological postures and power relations.

3. Language and Ideology in the Mass Media.

The basic claim of CDA is that all human usage encodes ideological patterns, *ie*, language is not just a transparent medium of communication about the objective world, but a constantly operative part of the social process (see Malkmkjaer, 1991: 89). CDA therefore, analyses discourse to find the hidden meanings (McGregor, 2003). In most interactions, users bring with them different dispositions towards language, which are closely related to their social positioning. Kress (1990) stresses that the defined and delimited set of statements that constitute a discourse are themselves expressive of, and organised by a specific ideology. Language, therefore, can never appear by itself - it always appears as the representative of a system of linguistic terms, which themselves reflect the prevailing discursive and ideological systems.

Ideology is used in many disciplines with different, but overlapping shades of meaning. Our task in this paper however, is to define the term within the context of its relevance to language use. Ideology simply refers to attitudes, set of beliefs, values and doctrines with reference to religious, political, social and economic life, which shape the individual's and group's perception and through which reality is constructed and interpreted.

No news report is ideologically neutral, transparent or 'innocent'. According to Olowe (1993),

> the editor and his reporters on the one hand and their audience constitute an ideological empire. The newspaper subjects all newsworthy events that constantly come up in social life to rigorous linguistic manipulation to make them suit the ideological expectation of the audience

(p.8)

Regular aspects of media messages such as news reports, headlines, advertisements, editorials, features, *etc* are often subjected to linguistic manipulations. News reporters, editors, copywriters and feature writers work on societal values, conception of the world and symbolic systems in order to create their messages.

Olowe (1993) looks at the interplay of language and ideology in Nigerian English-medium newspapers. Focusing on editorials, on nationally important issues of religion, labour relations and politics, Olowe identified the various linguistic devices used by these newspapers in projecting their ideological view-points, such as thematization, pasivization and nominalization.

Though this present study examines language and ideology, they are being examined in the context of newspaper headlines. Sometimes, they draw attention to some prevailing societal issues such as power imbalance, social inequalities, non-democratic practices and other injustices. For instance, the view of many Nigerians is that the President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo is authoritarian and that there is a carry-over of his military background that believes in force into governance in a democratic setting. This is often reinforced by the Nigerian press through their headlines, *eg*:

H1.   Another Fuel Hike: Is Obasanjo a sadist?

Nigerian Tribune June 9, 2004 (p.6)

H2   Obasanjo rejects National Confab

The Guardian May 11, 2004 (p.2)

H3.   Obasanjo must calm down to succeed

Sunday Punch August 22, 2004 (p. 6)

H4.   Fuel Price : FG Adamant

This Day June 5, 2004 (front page)

The ideological postures in these headlines selected from four different national newspapers, portray the president as unyielding, authoritarian and insensitive to the plight of the people. This appears like some ordinary men on the street are saying. The choice of words such as *sadist* (H1), *reject* (H2), *calm down* (H3), and *adamant* (H4) clearly paints the picture of who people think Obasanjo is.

4. Newspaper Headlines.

Newspaper headlines act as forerunners to news reports. They particularly, reveal the social, cultural and national representations circulating in a society at any given time. They reach an audience considerably wider than those who read the news story. As vendors display their newspapers, several people, including passersby and casual readers are able to have a glimpse of the headlines, which may later become the

subject of discussion in their offices, at home or any other domain. This is particularly true of front- page headlines, which are more carefully chosen to evoke some emotions in the reader. Newspaper editors deliberately go for eye-catching expressions. According to Taiwo (2004: 324), headlines are strategically used by the editor, who chooses emotive vocabulary, rhetorical and graphological devices to make an impact on the readership.

Newspaper headlines are rich source of information about the field of cultural reference and they can be sometimes difficult to understand especially when the reader cannot recognise the field, allusions, issues and cultural references necessary to decode the content. The reader must understand enough about what has been going on recently in the setting of the news, *ie*, the reality that is assumed to be widespread in the society at that particular time. For instance, let us consider the following headlines from our corpus:

> H5.   Victory against Polio
>
> > *Tell* August 9, 2004 (p. 51)
>
> H6.   Okija: Confusion over Register
>
> … as more priests go underground
>
> > *Sunday* Punch August 15, 2004 (p. 9)
>
> H7.   IBB speaks on June 12
>
> SORRY MY FOOT!
>
> > *Daily Sun* August 26, 2004 (front page)
>
> H8.   SNC, No Task for N/Assembly - Enahoro
>
> > *This Day* June 3, 2004 (p.2)

The headlines above presuppose certain stock of knowledge and anybody who is not familiar with the field of cultural references will not be able to decode the messages. For instance, it takes a person who has been following the politics of polio vaccine in the northern part of Nigeria to understand H5. A national health policy seeking to eradicate polio in the northern Nigeria, where it is most rampant, was viewed with suspicion by the beneficiaries. Through political mischief, some religious leaders in the north made the common man in the north to believe that the polio vaccine contained anti-fertility agents and that it causes HIV/AIDS. They were also made to believe that the vaccine is part of the Western plot to depopulate the Nigerian moslems. This, of course, has an historical background. The religious setting in the country is that in which the North is largely dominated by moslems, while the South by Christian. Several issues are

naturally woven around this dichotomy, which could precipitate religious riots at the slightest opportunity. Northern religious leaders are also quick to interpret any move that is not in the interest of moslems as part of the Western agenda to undermine Islam. This makes every move by a southerner in government to be viewed against this background of political rivalry between the north and the south.

For H6 and H7, some forms of national identification are used, for instance, references to specific historical events, *eg*, *June 12* (H7); reference to locally-coined acronyms, such as *IBB* (H.7)*, SNC* (H.6); the use of presupposed elements of discourse, such as *Okija* (H.6). To decode H.6, the reader needs to know what *Okija* signifies and what is the connection between *register, Okija* and *priest*. The reader is expected to know these presupposed items and the connection between them. The press is particularly known to use a lot of these references and presuppositions. Some others acronyms or terms commonly used in Nigerian newspaper headlines are:

Coined Acronyms:	*OBJ* (Obasanjo); *OGD* (Otunba Gbenga Daniel); *SFG* (Secretary to the Government) *FG* (Federal Government); *IGP* (Inspector General of Police
Historical Events:	*June 12*, *Orkar Coup, Biafran War*, *etc*.
Presupposed Elements:	*2007*, *Reform*, *fuel price*, *Kano*, *cultism*, *etc*.

Historical events and presupposed elements are often used as pointers in headlines, as we shall soon see in the paper.

5. METHODOLOGY

The corpus for this work consists of 300 headlines collected from six Nigerian newspapers. These papers were published between March and August 2004. Four of the papers were daily newspapers (***The Sun, Nigerian Tribune, This Day, and The Guardian***), while two were weekly newspapers (***Tell*** and ***Newswatch***).

The headlines were placed into two categories according to the issues addressed and according to their surface structures. We also did a critical study of the headlines to identify their ideological leanings and how they reflect power play within the Nigerian society especially between those whose interest is being served and those whose interest is being undermined. Below are the categories of headlines.

Thematic Classification of Headlines

1. Headlines on Communal/Religious Crises

Nigeria faces a lot of problems associated with her multi-cultural multi-religious and multi-ethnic nature. Hundred of lives are lost to ethnic and religious conflicts from time to time. Whenever these crises occur, they naturally attract the attention of pressmen, who present them from different ideological viewpoints in their headlines. Two major religious riots that were widely reported occurred within the period of our data collection: the Kano and Plateau riots. Likewise, incessant communal riots were widely reported at different parts of the country: the Niger Delta, Benue and Jos. Below are some of the headlines on these crises.

(a)   Communal Crises

H9.   Fresh Crisis erupts in Benue town, houses torched

> ***The Guardian on Sunday*** May 2, 2004 (p.17)

H9.   Fresh Strife in Ogoni, 15 Houses razed

> ***The Guardian*** March 31, 2004 (p.4)

(b)   Religious Riots

H10.   Again, Kano Explodes

> ***Sunday Punch*** May 16, 2004 (p.7)

H11.   Terror in Kano as Hoodlums plan showdown

> ***Sunday Tribune*** May 15, 2004 (front page)

2. Headlines on Petroleum Issues

Petroleum is the major source of income for Nigeria. It is a constant focus of discussion on daily basis in most domains of discourse. Since the economy of the country depends largely on it, issues that surround its pricing both at the local and the international markets are naturally of concern to an average Nigerian. The press knows the importance of petroleum in the life of Nigerians and they always present captivating headlines on it, *eg*:

H12.   Fuel Hike: This Insult can't stand

Saturday Tribune June 5, 2004 (front page)

H13.   Fuel Price: NLC issues ultimatum to Govt

The Guardian May 30, 2004 (front page)

3. Headlines on Corruption and Crime

Crime is a subject that attracts the attention of the press anywhere in the world. Stories on crime usually find ready columns in the front pages of newspapers. The recent crusade of the government against corruption makes it a regular thing being addressed in headlines. Four subcategories of headlines on crime and corruption are identified and they exemplified below.

(a)   Headlines on Corruption

H14.   This Govt rewards Corrupt People, says Oshiomole

This Day August 11, 2004 (p.2)

H15.   World Bank, IDB say Need to do more to fight corruption

This Day May 26, 2004 (p.25)

(b)   Headlines on Robbery/Theft/Fraud

H. 16. Robbers kill 2, injure one in Benin

The Guardian May 25, 2004 (p.4)

H17.   American Lands in 'wash wash' scam, loses $2m to Nigerian fraudsters

Sunday Sun August 29, 2004

(c)   Headlines on Human Rights Violations

H17.   Human Trafficking Thrives in Lagos

The Guardian July 25, 2004 (p.6)

H18.   Women Trafficking: Nigeria on US Watch

This Day August 11, 2004 (p.14)

(d) Headlines on Assassinations and Cultism

H19.   A litany of Violence and Political Assassinations

Newswatch March 17, 2004 (p.32)

H20.   Cultists Threaten Deputy Speaker

This Day May 15, 2004 (p.10)

4. Headline on Health Issues

In recent times, with the concern the government is showing on the heath sector, matters concerned with people's health became very important and newsworthy. Such matters include drug peddling, drug abuse and fake drugs. The recent 'revolution' in the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration (NAFDAC) brought about by Dora Akunyili, particularly draws attention to fake products. Other health issues that attract attention during the period of this research coverage are some diseases that increase mortality rate in the country, such as polio, HIV/AIDS, meningitis and malaria. Examples of headlines that address these issues are given below:

(a)   Headlines on Polio

H21.   Again, the politics of polio vaccine

Sunday Punch May 7, 2004 (p.19)

H23.   Mass Turn out as Bauchi begins Polio Vaccination

The Guardian March 29, 2004 (p.5)

(b)   Headlines on Fake Drugs/Drug Abuse/Drug Peddling

H23.   NAFDAC alerts on Toxic Toothpaste

The Guardian May 30, 2004 (p.14)

H24.   1695 Drug Suspects Awaiting Trial - NDLEA

Saturday Punch August 21, 2004 (p.100)

(c)   Headlines on HIV/AIDS

H27.   HIV now WMD in Nigeria

This Day May 26, 2004 (p. 2)

H28.   Stigmatisation of people with HIV unhelpful, says Red Cross

The Guardian May 11, 2004 (p.20)

(d)   Headlines on Other Diseases

H29.   Meningitis claims 407 lives

This Day May 26, 2004

H30.   Don seeks Aid for Sickle Cell Patients

This Day August 13, 2004 (p.7)

5. Headlines on Politics

Since Nigeria's return to democratic rule on May 29, 1999, political issues have taken the front burner

in the Nigerian press. These include the June 12 issue and the man at the centre of it all, the dividends of democracy, power shift/rotational presidency, political reforms, 2007 elections, Sovereign National Conference, *etc*. These issues are particularly newsworthy because they bother on the current political setting and how the key players involved demonstrate power play. The headlines on politics, which is the largest in number in our data is divided into five categories based on the topics addressed.

(a)   Headlines on IBB and June 12

H31.   IBB speaks on June 12

SORRY MY FOOT!

> ***Daily Sun*** August 26, 2004 (front page)

H32.   Soyinka asks IBB to apologise on June 12

> ***The Guardian*** July 28, 2004 (front page)

(b)   Headlines on IBB and 2007

H33.   2007: Campaigners affirm IBB's readiness

> ***This Day*** May 18, 2004 (p.4)

H.34.   Yoruba 'll reject IBB - Fasehun

> ***This Day*** August 6, 2004 (p.27)

(c)   Headlines on Power Shift and Rotational Presidency

H35.   Makarfi insists on Northern President

> ***The Guardian*** May 14, 2004 (back page)

H36.   2007 Presidency: Arewa vs Ohaneze, No Retreat, No Surrender

> ***Sunday Sun*** February 1, 2004 (p.11)

(d)   Headlines on Government's Reforms

H37.   No going back on Labour Reforms - Minister

This Day August 13 2004 (p.6)

H38.   Civil Service is committed to Reforms **-** HOS

This Day August 13, 2004 (p.3)

(e)   Headlines on Sovereign National Conference

H. 39. Obasanjo rejects National Confab

The Guardian may 11, 2004 (p.2)

H40.   SNC Not solution to our problems - Daniel

This Day May 25, 2004 (p.3)

6. Headlines on Education

Several issues bothering on the educational sector have also attracted the attention of the press. These range from corrupt practices such as examination malpractice, indecent dressing among students and sexual harassment to other issues such as funding.

H41.   UNAAB bans indecent dressing

Nigerian Tribune July 23, 2004 (back page)

H42.   VCs urge adequate funding of Varsities

The Guardian July 28, 2004 (p.7)

7. Headlines on Labour Matters

Labour disputes have been quite rampant in the country. The labour unions are always at loggerheads with their employers on salary payment and deductions made from their salaries. The central labour union the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) from time to time leads workers' union to national strikes, usually on issues that bother on petroleum price hike. This is usually met with stiff resistance from the government, knowing the implications on the nation's economy.

H43.   NLC orders strike, Mass Action

> *This Day* June 9, 2004 (front page)

H44.   Police set for Battle

> *Sunday Punch* August 22, 2004 (p.9)

Below is Table1 showing the categorisation of the headlines according to the issues addressed.

Table 1: Classification of Headlines According to the Issues Addressed

TYPE OF HEADLINE	NO	%
Headlines on Petroleum-related Issues	**35**	**11.66**
Headlines on Crime and Corruption	**36**	**12.00**
Headlines on Communal and Religious Crises	**69**	**23.00**
Headlines on Corruption and Crime	**28**	**9.33**
Headlines on Labour Matters	**17**	**5.67**
Headlines on Politics	**93**	**31.00**
Headlines on Education	**32**	**10.67**
TOTAL	**300**	

The headlines were also categorised according to their surface structure into 4 major types: Each of these types are discussed briefly.

Surface Structural Categorization

1. Plain Headlines

These are headlines that express a single idea or more. They are couched in simple statements and they often use distinct and short words, usually monosyllabic, *eg:*

H45.   NANS vows to expose cult backers

The Guardian May 30, 2004 (p.6)

H46.   Religious Bodies declare war on AIDS

This Day August 11, 2004 (p.8)

2. Speech as Headline

This type of headline uses either direct or reported speech of a person and the name is put in front to show the person who made the statement, *eg:*

H47.   I am ready to reconcile with Uba - Ngige

This Day June 22, 2004 (front page)

H48.   We're not disciplined in PDP - Obasanjo

Nigeria Tribune June 9, 2004 (front page)

3. Headlines with Pointer

These are headlines that have one or more words that create in the reader the awareness of the context in which the comments that follow are being made. There are two parts to the headline – the given information and the comment that follows (see Taiwo, 2004: 326).

H49.   Fuel Price: NLC issues Ultimatum to Govt.

The Guardian May 25, 2004 (front page)

H50. Plateau: 2 Killed, 20 Houses razed in fresh fighting

This Day August 6, 2004 (front page)

4. Question as Headlines

These are headlines couched in form of questions meant to arouse the readers' emotion about the issue addressed.

H51. Another Fuel Price Hike. Is Obasanjo a Sadist?

Nigerian Tribune June 9, 2004 (p.6)

H52. Who benefits from Rising oil Prices?

This Day May 18, 2004 (p.29)

Below is a table showing the types of headlines according to their surface structure.

Table 2: Categorisation of Headlines According to Surface Structure

TYPE OF HEADLINE	NO	%
Plain Headlines	147	49.00
Speech as Headlines	97	32.33
Headlines with Pointers	47	15.67
Question as Headlines	09	3.00
TOTAL	300	

The table above shows a preponderance of Plain Headlines (147: 49%) and this is followed by Speech as Headlines (97: 32.33%). The least used category is Question as Headlines (09: 3%). Plain Headlines are conventional and equally short. This justifies why editors have preference for them. The conciseness satisfies his constrain for space. The other categories are more dramatic and used often to create sensation in news.

6. Findings and discussion.

From the analysis of the data, a large percentage of the headlines were on political matters (93 : 31.00%). This is not surprising if one understands the nature of the country at the present time. Nigeria had experienced many years of military rule and the current democratic dispensation is coming with a lot of issues generating discussion across the nation. Such issues include elections-related issues, such as June 12, 2007, power shift, call for a Sovereign National Conference, *etc*. Next in number to politics are headlines on Crime and Corruption (69 : 23%). The crusade against corruption makes it a major focus in the news. Other social devices always highlighted in headlines are robbery, theft, fraud (419), human rights abuses, assassinations, cultism, *etc*.

It was observed that the use of speech as headlines is very significant. Since news is woven around personalities, the speeches of these personalities matter to the press because they can be used for sensational news. Sometimes, they are paraphrased and used to arouse negative feelings towards unpopular leaders. For instance Nigerians have long awaited General Ibrahim Babangida's (IBB's) explanation on why he scuttled a free and fair democratic process in 1993 (this is usually referred to as June 12 - the date the presidential election was held). Also, recently, there have been calls from various quarters that IBB should apologise to Nigerians for annulling the election. These two issues woven around IBB, couple with his ambition to rule Nigeria again are used to enrich the Nigerian news discourse. For instance the following headlines show the two different extremes on the call for apology from IBB.

H52.   Soyinka asks Babangida to apologise on June 12

The Guardian July 28, 2004 (front page)

H31.   IBB speaks on June 12

SORRY MY FOOT!

Daily Sun August 8, 2004 (front page)

The response of IBB to the call for apology as presented in H31 is definitely a sensational version of whatever he might have said and the goal is to further arouse negative feelings of those who are aggrieved by the annulment.

Some headlines are observed to be confrontational. They appear as blunt as the writers feel, for example:

H53.   Open Letter to Thieves in Power

This Day August 9, 2004 (back page)

H54.   This Govt is wicked

Tell July 5, 2004 (front page)

H55.   This Govt rewards corrupt people, says Oshiomole

This Day August 11, 2004 (p.2)

H56.   Obasanjo's Regime of Poverty and Anguish

Sunday Tribune June 20, 2004 (p.37)

The tone of the headlines above is provocative. It reveals the way people feel about the government and its policies. Words like "wicked" (H54), "thieves" (H53), "poverty" (H56) paint the picture of how the editors feel about the government. This is also a reflection of the feelings of the society.

Sensationalism is sometimes carried to the extent of revealing in clear terms the writer's angle of judgement to an issue. In this case, the judgment is not hidden, but clearly displayed using a unique graphological device (writing system) of putting the angle of judgement in bold and upper case letters, *eg*:

H57.   **P - I - T - Y**, 419 Suspect Amaka Anajemba is ashamed of her handcuffs

Sunday Sun July 15, 2004 (p.38)

H58.   **DEMONIC** - Another ritualist nabbed … with human parts

Sunday Sun August 8, 2004 (front page)

H59.   **SHOCKING** : TUC backs Obasanjo over Labour Bill

Daily Sun August 26, 2004 (p.10)

The words in bold and upper case do not just represent the writers' angle of judgement, they also reflect how he wants the reader to see the issue. It was however noticed that this display of writer's angle of judgement is common in one of the six newspapers used for this research - *Sunday Sun* and its sister publication, *Daily Sun* known to contain a lot of sensational news.

There are usually at least two views to most issues: the views of those whose interests are being served and that of those whose interests are being undermined. This is reflected clearly in most of the headlines,

where the former, clamour for continuity and the latter, for a change in policies. This ideological division brings in power relations, where the two parties involved are depicted as either powerful or powerless. For instance, the government sometimes talks tough on some issues to show that they are in charge and that the status quo on their policies must be maintained, while the people often counter whatever the government says or acts contrary to government's directives. Some of the issues where this power play is demonstrated are presented in below showing the two extreme views portrayed in them.

Miracle Broadcast

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Miracle Broadcast	Miracle Broadcast: court asked to stop NBC's Directive *This Day* May 18, 2004 (p.7)	Halting advertising of miracles: A stitch in time - Rev Fr. Osu *The Guardian* on Sunday May 30, 2004 (p.24)

Advertising of miracles by religious groups became a subject of national debate at a point in Nigeria. The National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) issued a warning to radio and television stations to stop such broadcasts. While some Nigerians supported the NBC's stand, many others, mostly, those whose religious groups were directly affected felt the ban would be an infringement on their religious rights.

State of Emergence

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
State of Emergency	The president was right on emergency rule - Olujinmi *This Day* May 25, 2004 (p.40)	State of Emergency, You are Wrong! FRA tell Obasanjo *Sunday Punch* may 23, 2004 (front page)

Plateau State, one of the states in the middle belt region of Nigeria was engulfed in a religious crisis, which led to the declaration of a state of emergency by the president and the appointment of a sole administrator to replace the elected governor. This declaration became a subject of controversy between the government and its supporters and some human rights activists and lawyers. The latter did not only condemn the act, but also contested it in court.

Obasanjo's Government Performance

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Obasanjo's Government's Performance	Obasanjo: The Moses of our time *Sunday Tribune* June 20, 2004 (p.12)	Obasanjo's Regime of Poverty and anguish *Sunday Tribune* June 20, 2004 (p.37)

After a few years of Obasanjo's presidency, Nigerians started appraising his government, and the general feeling was that he had failed to meet their aspirations. They hinged their support on the recurrent petroleum products price hike, increasing corruption, incessant political, ethnic and civil crises and increasing poverty. While the government continued to defend itself and justified its policies, the public continued to condemn the policies.

Fuel Price

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Fuel Price	Deregulation will ensure efficient fuel supply – Total MD *Nigerian Tribune* July 23, 2004 (p.31)	OPC deplores fuel price increase *This Day* June 5, 2004 (p.7)

In order to reduce her spending, and promote efficiency in the petroleum sector, the government adopted the policy of deregulation, which allowed the market forces to determine prices of goods and services. The extension of this policy to petroleum supply drew negative criticisms from the public because since its adoption, prices of petroleum products have been soaring. All efforts by the government to use propaganda to persuade the public to accept the policy of deregulation have met with little success.

Government Reforms

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Government 's Reforms	Why NLC must be reformed - Obasanjo *The Punch* July19,2004 (p.8)	Labour Reforms: NLC sues FG *Saturday Punch* August 28, 2004 (p.9)

President Obasanjo's second term started with a lot of reforms, which covered almost every aspect of life. All the groups adversely affected by these reforms particularly the labour unions, have been criticizing them.

Dress Code

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Dress Code	UNILAG students ignore New Dress Code *The Guardian* July 25, 2004 (p.4)	UNAAB bans indecent dressing *Nigerian Tribune* July 23, 2004 (back page)

The manner of dressing of students in higher institutions became a source of concern for the authorities of these institutions ands the various governing boards brought out 'dress codes' specifying the acceptable dressing on campuses. The idea of 'dress code' has been drawing criticisms and legal contests from some Nigerians.

Dollar Pay

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Dollar Pay	Obasanjo asks Court to dismiss Fawehinmi's suit over minister's dollar pay *The Guardian* May 25, 2004 (back page)	Dollar Pay: Gani reiterates Rights of Action *This Day* may 21, 2004 (p.3)

Many Nigerians have been questioning the rationale for paying some Political officers in the US dollars, while others are paid in the national currency – naira. The officers – the Finance Minister and the Foreign Affairs Minister, were both working for international organisations before their appointment. Despite government's defence of this action, many Nigerians felt it is unjust.

Sovereign National Conference

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Sovereign National Conference	SNC, not solution to our problem - Daniel *This Day* may 25, 2004 (p.3)	1999 Constitution is a time bomb and it'll explode unless we have a National Conference - Kunle Olajide *Sunday Punch* June 6, 2004 (p. 18)

Since the return to democracy in 1999, after several years of military rule, Nigerians have been clamouring for a national conference, which would discuss the issues central to the corporate existence of the nation. The opposition parties have been in the forefront of this call. The government however, felt such conference would not be needed since there were elected legislators.

Soyinka's call for Obasanjo's Resignation

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Soyinka's Call for Obasanjo's Resignation	Group Decries call for President's Resignation *This Day*, May 24, 2004 (p.8)	Soyinka asks Obasnjo to resign. Wants National Unity Govt *This Day* May 18, 2004 (front page)

The public outcry against the government made some prominent Nigerians to ask him to resign. Wole, Soyinka, a playwright and a Nobel Laureate was one of the Nigerians in the forefront of this call for the president's resignation.

Power Shift

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Power Shift	2007: North should produce the next president *This Day* may 24, 2004 (p.8)	It will be unjust to deny Ndigbo presidency in 2007 - Shehu Sani *Saturday Sun* August 21, 2004 (p.11)

Since independence in 1960, the idea of where who rules Nigeria comes from has been a crucial on. This became an issue when it was perceived that there has been monopoly of power by a section of the country. This call for 'power shift' became intensified as ethnic groups in the country continued to protest their marginalisation in the mainstream of national politics. The Igbo of eastern Nigeria are in the forefront of this protest against marginalisation.

Okija Shrine

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
Okija Shrine	Nobody can destroy Ogwugwu - Okija People *Saturday Punch* August 21, 2004 (p.8)	Okija issue is criminal - Igbo Professionals *Saturday Punch* August 21, 2004 (p.9)

In the middle of 2004, newspapers reported the activities of some shrines at a village in the eastern Nigeria called Okija. The shrines were places people went to seek legal redress due to their loss of confidence in the judiciary. Pictures of the surroundings of the shrine showed decomposing human bodies, which the priests of the shrine claimed were corpses of people who failed to abide by the oath they took at the shrine. There was a general condemnation of the practices at the shrine by some Nigerians, while some rose to defend the activities.

IBB and the Yoruba People

ISSUE	REACTION A	REACTION B
IBB and the Yoruba	IBB's men dare Yoruba • The whole of S/ west cannot stop Babangida *Saturday Sun* August 21, 2004 (front page)	2007 - Yoruba'll reject IBB - Fasehun *This Day* August 6, 2004 (p. 27)

The Yoruba people of the South-west Nigeria felt aggrieved about the annulment of June 12, 1993 election, because it was won by a Yoruba man – Chief M.K.O. Abiola. Ibrahim Babangida, the then military president who annulled the election believed to be the most peaceful and credible election ever conducted in the country was 0making moves to come back to power. Some Nigerians felt he should apologise to the Yoruba for the annulment, while his supporters felt it was unnecessary.

The presentations above show that on most issues generating controversy in the nation, people are clearly divided along two ideological lines: perpetuity and change. However, it is important to put this caveat that on very few rare occasions, these ideological lines disappear or are not as clearly reflected as shown here. This happens when almost the whole society seem to be united on an issue, usually issues that will foster nationalism. Such issues include the time Nigeria was asked to cede Bakassi, an oil rich peninsula,

which used to be part of Nigeria, to Cameroon by the World Court. At such times there is no divergent ideological postures reflected in headlines. All newspapers sing the same tune because the interest of the nation is being undermined. Then, the Government is blamed for not being tactical in handling the issue.

The barrage of criticisms against Obasanjo's regime is constructed in different ways in headlines to criticize his quick temper and authoritarian posture. Some come in form of advice or minor statement, *eg:*

H60.   Mr. President, let's reason together

This Day June 12, 2004 (back page)

H61.   Obasanjo must calm down to succeed

Sunday Punch may 25, 2004 (p.6)

H62.   A President and His Temper

This Day May 25, 2004 (p.17)

H63.   A President's Appetite for Power

Tell Jan 26, 2004 (p.51)

These headlines presuppose certain things which are known to those who are familiar with some historical events in which President Obasanjo had been adamant on some issues and times he had lost his temper and spoken or did things in manners he ought no to.

6. Conclusion.

This study examines how ideology plays a vital role on the construction of newspaper headline. Working within the discipline of Critical Discourse Analysis, our findings show clearly that beyond the generally observed rhetorical and graphological devices employed in newspaper headlines, there are also hidden ideological meanings behind those written words. The type of headlines that dominate the Nigerian newspapers studied within the period of this study – headlines on politics shows clearly that the country is in a period of democratizing. Editors also favour the use of plain headlines more than the other types because they are short and conventional. This study also shows that these ideological meanings are clearly expressions of the representation of opinions of the people in the society – that is those whose interests are being served and those whose interests are being undermined. We also observed that on some rare occasions, the people may be united ideologically especially on issues that fosters nationalism. On such occasions,

almost all the newspaper headlines are singing the same tune, since they have to reflect the views of the society. It also reveals that headlines are used to initiate, sustain and shape discourse on the views of readers on national issues.

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Sex and the City: Perpetual Adolescence Gendered Feminine?

By Stephen Gennaro

Gendered Media Messages

This essay examines the marketing discourse of "perpetual adolescence," which trains both young and old to be consumers of "youth" in a marketplace that privileges adolescence over adulthood. The main purveyor of this discourse is the media, and even more specifically, television, which de-stabilizes identity formation by over-saturating the individual with images and identities for possible ownership and consumption. One of the problems with examining televisual representations of perpetual adolescence is that the televisual discourse is typically gendered masculine (and white, hetero, middle-class masculine), which means that the lifestyles that are continually privileged become so widely distributed that we view them as "natural" and "normal" and the standard against which we judge all other lifestyles. In television sitcoms, the lifestyles that are most often replicated and privileged have historically centered on a "Leave it To Beaver" model, which includes a nuclear family unit with a working father, a stay at home mother, two or more children, and a house in the suburbs. Tied into these representations are gendered expectations of what are consider socially accepted male and female roles (that men should work and women should stay home), and a variety of stereotypical characteristics that we associate with being either masculine or feminine traits (such as: men are supposed to be strong, silent, detached, decisive, etc., and women are supposed to be sensitive, emotional, collaborative, etc.). Even more recent sitcoms, which do not center around the nuclear family unit, such as "Friends," still participate in re-enforcing gendered stereotypes through the traits associated with each of the main characters. For example, on *Friends*, women are represented by Monica, an obsessive cleaner and gourmet chef, Rachel, a waitress fixated on shopping and fashion, and Pheobe, a spacey and compassionate folk singer, and men are represented by Joey, a macho and promiscuous actor, Chandler, a funny and insightful businessman, and Ross, an intellectual and dorky anthropologist. As Marx and Engels critiqued in "The Ruling Class & Ruling Ideas," at any moment in society, the ruling ideas of that society are the offspring of the ruling class.[1] Or to put it even more simply: the dominant ideology of a society reflects the interests of those with the most power and those who have the most power are those who have access to the prevailing system of production. Therefore, what they

produce focuses on their desires, dreams, hopes, and aspirations for society and reinforces their powerbase by replicating their lifestyle as what is "normal." Those who do not have access to the system of production are left to accept the images, ideas, and objects of the dominant class as normal even when it does not reflect their real lives, but instead works to keep them subjected to poverty, domination, and subordination. In short, those who control what Marx called the means of material production (for example, the making of things), also control the system of intellectual production (or the making of ideas) because objects carry ideas and ideologies with them.

This essay is particularly interested in examples of the marketing discourse of perpetual adolescence that are gendered feminine. How does analyzing media discourse that is gendered feminine alter the notion of "perpetual adolescence": Does it make it stronger, weaker, or alter it into non-existence? This essay examines the HBO series *Sex and the City* (1998-2004) as a case study for the existence of a "perpetual adolescence" gendered feminine. *Sex and the City* followed the lives of four single New York women, in their thirties, through their pursuit of love, companionship, and a good time. HBO described the series and its characters in language that aimed to allow the show's audience to connect to one or more of its characters:

> Carrie Bradshaw writes a column about sex and relationships in New York City. With three of her closest friends Samantha Jones, a big time publicist who is more interested on being "on the spot" than in a long term relationship; Miranda Hobbs, a cynic lawyer, who refuses to accept the possibility of being single and fights society against the social pre-concepts to keep a relationship alive and Charlotte McDougal, an art gallery curator who is a bit prudish when it comes to sex, but hasn't yet lost her faith in finding true love.[2]

Ultimately, what we discover is that *Sex and the City* offers a dualism that both stands as a critique of social norms at the same time as reinforcement for those same norms it is critiquing. This dualism is often associated with postfeminism and the television sitcom. In *Sex and The City* this dualism occurs around issues of competing sexual identities, which is, according to adolescent psychology, a hallmark of adolescence, as well as around the consumption of commodities in order to establish a particular identity and lifestyle—areas of youth culture targeted by big business since the inception of "teenagers" as a niche category.[3] Over the last half-century, a major focus of the advertising agency has been young people, either as a gateway to adult consumer spending or as young consumers in their own right. As baby boomers became teenagers in the 1950s and 1960s, advertising appeared in tune with baby boomers and many ad campaigns moved their focus towards the billion dollar "youth market" and its disposable income.[4] When the baby boomers became thirty-somethings, and then forty-somethings, and even grandparents, advertisements always seemed to move step-by-step with the boomers in the aging process, with one key feature: the faces and focus of the ads got older (from O-Pee-Chee Baseball Cards to Rolaids), but the idea of "youth" and being "youthful" never left. This appeal to "youthfulness" in advertising is part of what I call the marketing discourse of "perpetual adolescence" in that advertisers appeal to the youthful sensibilities of the adult consumer by selling "youth" itself as a lifestyle and tie-in commodity to whatever else the ad is pitching. The discourse of perpetual adolescence is not a recent phenomenon; instead, it is a discourse

that emerged in the late 1940s, when theories from social psychology and the critique of mass society zeroed in on lifecycle, identity development, peer influence, and group behavior and both regimes of thought began to appear inside the advertising agency, where they were used specifically to help increase sales within the growing youth market.

Perpetual Adolescence, Postfeminism, and *Sex and the City*

In *Purchasing the Teenage Canadian Identity: ICTs, American Media, and Brand Name Consumption* (2005), I speculated that North American society in the new millennium (due to a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, those in the article's title) had placed itself in a situation where the traditional lines of distinction between adulthood and adolescence had been erased.[5] More specifically, the paper discussed the ways in which the culture industries fragmented the marketplace throughout the twentieth century to create niche markets to which advertisers could market and sell specific brand-name commodities; the most notable niche has been the "teenage" market. Here, the term "culture industries" is used in a similar fashion to Adorno and Horkheimer, who employ the term to refer to all of the industries involved in the appropriation and de-politicizing of art, through its mass production and sale for profit.[6] I suggested that the emergence of a fragmented marketplace was the result of a merger between American big business and the culture industries, beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, and was in part due to technological advancements in information and communication technologies (beginning with the railroad, until the present day). I concluded with the assertion that the culture industries and media conglomerates of the new millennium had begun the quest to re-unify the market place to a pre-railroad state where all consumers, although members of smaller targeted niche markets, are part of one dominant market ideology. This ideology would be that of the consumer with an adult wallet and youthful sensibilities, also known as the perpetual adolescent.

The history of perpetual adolescence as a marketing discourse is also the history of the creation of a youth consumer market and is therefore intertwined with the advertising industry and its growth in the United States. The term "youth consumer market" has a double meaning in that it refers to the creation of a destabilized youth identity based on an over-saturation of images and identities for consumption by the culture industries, but it also refers to the valorization and idealization of youth sensibilities by adults. Perpetual adolescence then is a marketing discourse targeted both to the old and to the young. Although media images would suggest otherwise, one is not either adult or perpetual adolescent. It is important to note that these are not hard lines (adulthood and childhood), nor are they binary distinctions. Rather, in our current post-millennial society, the barriers between adulthood and adolescence are fluid and permeable, causing people to move back and forth between a desire to "grow-up" and a desire to "stay young" continually throughout their entire life. As people move in and out of perpetual adolescence the culture industries are always trying to sell them newer and flashier images of youth for possible ownership and consumption to bring them back to perpetual adolescence.

Postfeminism is one of those dangerous terms that academics often try to avoid using since it can have a multiplicity of meanings. In this piece, the term postfeminism will be used similarly to the ways Angela McRobbie uses the term in her piece "Postfeminism and Popular Culture," in which she uses it to speak about a doubleentanglement. This double-entanglement "comprises the co-existence of neoconservative values in relation to gender, sexuality, and family life…with processes of liberalization in regard to choice and diversity in domestic, sexual, and kinship relations."[7] McRobbie's definition of double-entanglement is especially important in explaining how *Sex and The City* works like a traditional sitcom by both acting as a site of resistance for heteronormative sexual practices through the girls' discourse of their sex in the city and at the same time reinforcing the social norms it critiques by placing such a heavy influence on finding the right guy to settle down with and marry. Jane Gerhard in her 2005 article "Sex and The City: Carrie Bradshaw's Queer Postfeminism" says that "[t]o see Carrie Bradshaw's queer postfeminism, then, is to see her sex life as a product of a longer representational history of women, feminist or not, who sought sexual freedom or freer expression of female sexuality."[8] Queer postfeminism refers to the connection between postfeminism and queer theory, which suggests that identities are not fixed and do not dictate who we are (the world is more complex than "straight" and "gay") and proposes that we deliberately challenge all notions of fixed identity politics. According to queer theory, "sexuality is a complex array of social codes and forces, forms of individual activity and institutional power, which interact to shape the ideas of what is normative and what is deviant at any particular moment, and which then operate under the rubric of what is 'natural, essential, biological or god-given' and this needs to be challenged."[9] Queer postfeminism seeks to problematize these neo-conservative ideals about sexuality by highlighting the choices and diversity available in the lives of women with regards to all types of relationships. The double-entanglement of postfeminism can be seen in *Sex and the City* through how at the same time that Carrie Bradshaw connects to the earlier feminist movements in episodes such as season one's "Valley of the Twenty-Something Guys" where Carrie, a thirty-something lady, enjoys the traditionally masculine practice of dating a younger partner and discusses the taboo of a thirty-something lady doing so, she also distances herself from those same movements by continually searching for "the one" and having the traditional husband-wife relationship as the end goal or overarching theme of the entire sitcom. It is through this double-entanglement that the issues of sexuality and consumption, which comprise the marketing discourse of perpetual adolescence gendered feminine, are dealt with on *Sex and The City*.

The Dialogical Sitcom

The type of television programming that this paper will examine, namely *Sex and The City,* is part of a hybrid television genre that I have termed the "dialogical sitcom"—i.e., a genre situated somewhere among sitcom, soap opera, and reality television (other titles in this genre include *Fat Actress* or *So NoTORIous*). Although all sitcoms involve dialogue, in the dialogical sitcom the movement in the show happens completely through its dialogue: the dialogue is the action. The setting of the sitcom is used simply to house dialogue: the brownstone, the store, the restaurant, the coffee shop, et al. are all used not primarily as settings for action, but instead as spaces in which dialogue is to take place. Therefore, when we see the girls

at the Yankees baseball game in the season two episode "Take Me Out to The Ballgame," the episode is not concerned with the outcome of the baseball game (this piece of information is inconsequential to the episode or its main themes); rather, the Yankee game is simply the space where the girls engage in the dialogue about men and dating around which the episode is framed. In this way, the dialogical sitcom is similar to reality television (like *Trading Spaces* or *Survivor*) which relies heavily on dialogue for action. A typical episode of *Sex and the City* usually involves a monologue by Carrie in her apartment, which sets up dialogue between herself and her girlfriends at any of the following: coffee shop, restaurant, lounge, bar, store, or New York City street. All of the show's movement and action takes place by one of these conversations introducing the next.

The show *Sex and The City* is a sitcom in the most literal definition of the genre title: it is a situational comedy. The show takes on a theme or issue and seeks to work through it over the course of the show's length and always tries to end with a resolution of the issue, even when the resolution is not a happy ending (although more times than not it ends happily). As Bonnie Dow illustrates in her pieces on *Murphy Brown* and *Designing Women* in her book *Prime Time Feminism: Television, Media Culture, and the Women's Movement Since 1970*, the sitcom is a site for both resistance and for reinforcement of social norms. As Dow says, "There is a doubleness to the perceived meaning of the sitcom; it is discussed at once, as an affirmation of women's progress and as a reminder of the problems such progress has created."[10] *Sex and The City* takes part in each of these practices. For example, Sex in the City acts as an affirmation of women's progress in episodes such as Season Four's "What's Sex got to do With It," in which Miranda, who is unhappy with her string of bad dates, decides that she is going on a sex strike, and takes control of her own sex life. However, at the same time, *Sex in the City* acts as a reminder of the problems such progress has created, as demonstrated by the Season Four episode "All that Glitters," in which Miranda is forced to hide her pregnancy from her coworkers because she is fearful of not making partner and being pigeonholed at work if they view her as a mother instead of as a lawyer.

The show *Sex and The City* also resembles reality television through its use of "real dialogue." *Sex and The City* provides the viewer with what are presented as real female conversations about issues of sex in a fashion that has typically been a place for female silence on television. Although shows such as *The Golden Girls* or *Designing Women*. used humour as a way of dialoguing about female sexuality, they did so without the explicitness of *Sex and the City*, which attempted to construct an authentic type of dialogue similar to that heard in reality television. This "real" dialogue allowed for conversations like the one between Carrie and Samantha that takes place in the bathroom of Miranda's apartment during her son Brady's first birthday party in the Season Six episode "One," during which Samantha is complaining to Carrie about the appearance of grey pubic hairs with the comment, "No one wants to fuck grandma's pussy." Although *The Golden Girls* may have alluded to the subject, *Sex and the City* took a reality television approach to dialogue in explicitly stating the issue. As Jane Arthurs argues in "*Sex and the City* and Consumer Culture: Remediating Postfeminist Drama," "the novelty of *Sex and The City*…lies in the migration of a women-centred and explicit sexual discourse into television drama."[11] Furthermore, issues that arise each episode are more times than not resolved though dialogue, rather than action. For example, Carrie dialogues with her girlfriends in order to solve her issues regarding Mr. Big's lack of commitment,

and Carrie subsequently dialogues with the viewer through the voice-over synopsis at the end of each episode to bring closure to each show.

Sex and The City also borrows characteristics from the genre of the soap opera. For example, the show's plot tends to focus on the rapidly changing sexual partners and relationships of its characters. Often the viewer is introduced to the episode's plot through the introduction of a crisis. The ensuing crisis mentality brought on by the episodic circumstances often appears to be unrealistic, such as in the Season Four episode "Just Say Yes," when Carrie seeks to find a down payment to buy a flat but cannot find the money and wonders where all of her cash has disappeared to over the years. When she realizes that she has spent her money on articles of clothing and currently owns hundreds of pair of shoes, more specifically Blahniks, instead of having invested in a savings account, she asks the self-reflexive and rhetorical question of whether or not she might actually become "the old woman who lives in her shoes." Furthermore, *Sex and The City* has a unique fan-type relationship with its viewers who find themselves tuning in every week, heavily invested in the sexual enterprises of these four Manhattan women. In many ways, the four characters stand-in for the audience. Their discussions of sexual promiscuity act as a way for the audience to partake in those same experiences voyeuristically. Finally, the familiarity of the plot and its continual focus on "sex" and "the city" provides the ability for the viewer to watch episodes in non-chronological order and to join into the story line at any point of the six seasons as if they have never missed an episode even if weeks, or years, have passed between episode viewings. This of course is one of the core characteristics of the soap opera genre, that although the details of the plot changes daily to keep the viewer interested in the show, the themes are repetitive and the characters fluctuate very little so as to maintain familiarity with the viewer, even if an episode is missed.

It is important to note that situational comedies, soap operas, and reality television are not the only media genres that *Sex and The City* embodies. The television show *Sex and The City* is primarily based on Candace Bushnell's 1997 book by the same title, which housed a collection of articles from the weekly sex advice and lifestyle column that Bushnell wrote in the <u>New York Observer</u>. Bushnell based the column on the adventures of the New York "in-crowd" that included herself, her socialite friends and their "searches for true love...or at least someone to go home with at the end of the night."[12] One could even argue that both the book and television show are based on Helen Gurley Brown's 1962 book *Sex and The Single Girl*, or even the "Cosmo Girl" identity, which represented "a sexualized symbol of pink collar femininity" that Brown later helped establish at *Cosmopolitan* magazine.[13] "The Cosmo Girl, [is] the fictionalized woman [Brown] invented to characterize the magazine's imagined 18-34 year old female reader."[14] As the age bracket of adolescence has been extended through perpetual adolescence, one could argue that the Cosmo Girl identity is one that marketing discourses in the new millennium display as one that is sought after by women of all ages. There appears to be a link between *Sex and The City* and films such as *Bridget Jones Diary*, which also began in print as a newspaper column, and similarly appears to reinforce these same images of pink collar femininity. Finally, works by Feminist Media Scholars such as Jane Arthurs and Deborah Phillips suggest that *Sex and The City* can also be seen to be connected, through its focus on consumption and sexuality, to both the glossy women's magazine and single woman novels of the twentieth century, which had their roots in the earlier works of authors like Jane Austen.[15]

Finally, the fact that the show first aired on the HBO network is also significant, since as a pay-for-use network the same lines of censorship did not apply as with similar shows on cable television. Therefore, the show *Sex and The City* was provided great leeway in its discussions of sex and sexuality. Being on a non-cable channel allows for the inclusion of content usually reserved for movies and a rating higher than PG due to extreme violence, nudity, sexual content, etc. This lack of censorship in part helps to explain some of the popularity of HBO sitcoms and dramas over the last decade, including *The Sopranos, Six Feet Under or Deadwood*. Furthermore, since HBO is a commercial-free network, the commercialism, advertising of commodities, and marketing discourse of perpetual adolescence took place within the episodes of *Sex and The City* through the ways in which the characters themselves consumed men, food, shoes, and glitter. The show itself was the commercial. Even though there were no separate commercials, "the audience is [still a] commodity manufactured and sold by media corporations to advertisers."[16] *Sex and The City* advertised the latest fashions, giving credibility and importance to a woman purchasing Chanel, Gucci, Manolo Blahnik, Dolce & Gabbana, and Ralph Lauren, at the same time as it advertised the hottest restaurants, coffee shops, night clubs, and "in" spots in New York City. In fact, in addition to the explicit advertising of commodities of fashion, the show also is a advertisement for New York City itself. The show *Sex and the City* has been used a large scale promotional vehicle for tourism in New York by promoting restaurants and bars, tourist attractions, and shopping. A visit to the HBO website for *Sex and the City* reveals that with one click you can get a map of all the hot spots in New York visited by the *Sex and The City* girls to use for planning your own vacation.[17] At the same time, it is also implicitly advertising life for the "in-crowd" in New York City. Embedded in these advertisements is the implicit ideology that there is cultural capital to be gained by being seen wearing the right products at the hottest "in" spots. The show is promoting a particular type of lifestyle of youth and playfulness for consumption by women of all ages.

Competing Sexual Identities & Commodity Consumption

One of the main themes throughout all six seasons of *Sex and The City* is the theme of competing sexual identities. Each episode of *Sex and The City* is focused almost exclusively on making sense of "sex" and "the city" by focusing on the creation, maintenance, and often the conclusion of multiple sexual relationships. "Sex in this context becomes like shopping – a marker of identity, a source of pleasure- knowing how to choose the right goods is crucial."[18] Is this a site of power for feminist discourse since the girls control their own sexuality? This question is in line with discussions of postfeminism, since it asks if a sense of agency has replaced a sense of activism, or as Ellen Riorden states: "While I do believe that individual empowerment in women can help foster collective agency, it more often has the effect of stunting women, encouraging them to work only for themselves in the immediate moment…[w]ithout a doubt, it is necessary for women to feel some sort of power, but as this article suggests, when it is commodified, empowerment can come at the expense of actual change"[19] Of course this quote relates to the earlier discussion of double-entanglement and the television sitcom, where there are two competing (and supposedly contradictory) ideologies (one of female empowerment and one of neoconservative ideals about gender) existing simultaneously.

What Riordan is suggesting is very similar to Adorno and Horkheimer's ideas about how entertainment takes the agency out of people.[20] According to Adorno and Horkhiemer, to be entertained means to be in agreement and agreement always means putting things out of your mind, and forgetting suffering (even when it is on display). At the root of agreement and entertainment is powerlessness because agreeable entertainment provides an escape – but not from the intrusive thoughts of reality but instead from the thoughts of resisting reality. The liberation that amusement promises is from thinking! A commodified feminism has similar consequences.

In this light, *Sex and The City* is also a discourse on perpetual adolescence in that one of the main goals of adolescence from a psychological perspective is making sense of competing sexual identities. According to the theory of perpetual adolescence, the processes that have been attributed by psychologists to the stage of development in the individual's life referred to as adolescence – i.e,, a desire for increased intimacy, emotional trial and turbulence, separation from parents and authority, and the formation of a positive self-identity– are now life-long processes.[21] Furthermore, what had previously been seen as the symbols of the completion of adolescence –the ability to maintain a healthy, mature relationship with a member of the opposite sex, the ability to control sexual and violent urges, the ability to distinguish rationally between fact and fiction, and the ability to balance out the competing "selves" of an individual's identity–are now life-long struggles.[22] These many facets of adolescence appeared weekly as themes and titles of *Sex and the City* episodes between 1998 and 2004, during each of the six seasons that the show aired on HBO. Ultimately, the show's conclusion (which will be discussed at greater length later in this essay) ends with a resolution of these competing sexual tensions and selves, much in the same way the adolescent psychology proposes that the completion of adolescence comes about with a similar resolution on the individual level.

Angela R. Record explains in her piece on the creation of the female teenage consumer, "Born to Shop: Teenage Women and the Marketplace in the Post-War United States," that since the end of World War Two, the American Culture Industries have worked to create a niche market for teenagers that was different from adulthood.[23] Furthermore, within this teenage marketplace, there were two marketing discourses, one for females and commodities targeted to them, and likewise one for males and their respective commodities. The discourse behind the female teenage marketplace was in many ways a continuation of the female marketing discourse of the 1920s that set out to equate the role of the housewife with that of the purchaser of household goods.[24] Likewise, the marketing discourse of the 1950s and magazines such as *Seventeen* aimed to return women to domestic roles, and to offer them advice to help them beautify themselves so that in turn they might be able to find themselves a good husband. As we noted earlier, the Cosmo Girl was another example of such marketing discourses targeted at young women. Furthermore, as Daniel Cook Tomas illuminates in *The Commodification of Childhood: The Children's Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer*, young girls began to be viewed as a separate category for marketing by department stores as early as the 1930s.[25] The point here is not to suggest a great similarity between these discourses but rather to that a gendered marketing discourse that seeks to tie female teenage identity to consumption has existed for almost a century. The theory of perpetual adolescence simply connects this marketing discourse to all women with purchasing power, not just those who fit the traditional female teenager demographic. As long as there has been a teenage market, there has been a both a female and a

male teenage market and separate marketing discourses to sell consumption practices to these two groups.

The story of *Sex and The City* is on one level about sexual identities, but as we see, even the sexual practices of the characters constitute a story about consumption. Deborah Phillips in her piece "Shopping for Men: The Single Women Narrative" claims that in the genre of "single women novels", "their [single women's] pleasure in consumption is not limited to fashion and beauty goods for their own adornment, but extends to the consumption of men themselves."[26] Other examples of this type of novel include Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones,* Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*, and, supremely, Jane Austen novels like *Sense and Sensibility.* The heroines in *Sex and the City* partake in these same consumption practices. Here we see a connection and a disconnection from the female teenage marketing discourse of the past, with the show acting as both a site of social resistance at the same time as it reinforces the social norms it critiques. On one level, the message that *Sex and The City* offers its viewers is one of sexual freedom, especially in relationships, as illustrated by Charlotte's sexual relationship with her overweight, bald, hairy, Jewish divorce lawyer, or by Samantha's promiscuity and brief encounter with lesbianism. Other examples include: Carrie sleeping with her ex-boyfriend Mr.Big even after he is married, or dating a guy in a mental institution; interracial dating, such as when Miranda dates Robert, the black doctor, or Miranda's relationship with her vibrator that she is insistent on maintaining even when her cleaning lady disapproves. All of these examples offer a space for discourse on relationships that goes against the narrative of heteronormativity dominating mainstream media: these women might be heterosexual, but they certainly aren't "normal" or "normative"! On the other hand, the narrative of the show (and Carries's newspaper column in the show) over the course of the six seasons seems to suggest that if a girl follows the rules, consumes the right products, and makes herself pretty and available, she can find the right man and catch herself a husband, much like the marketing discourse of *Seventeen* magazine half a century earlier How else do we make sense of the drastic content shift in Season Six, which moves the themes of *Sex and the City* from a story of the single girl to a desire for all the characters to find closure, which represents finding one partner of the opposite sex to settle down with? For example, Carrie appears to pick Alexander, her latest boyfriend, over her long romance with Mr. Big and follows Alexander in his move to Paris in the Season Six episode "An American Girl in Paris" by leaving her girl friends in New York; yet even though Carrie then leaves Alexander for Mr. Big in the show's final episode, she still selects the lifestyle of settling down with one partner. Miranda in the Season Six episode "One" chooses to return to Steve, her ex-boyfriend and baby's father, ending the inter-racial romance she had been involved in with Robert, the black doctor; even though they appeared to have a strong relationship, she still selects the lifestyle of a heteronormative and "racionormative" family. In the Season Six episode "Great Sexpectations," Charlotte announces her decision to convert to Judaism so that she can marry Harry her Jewish divorce lawyer, choosing to select the lifestyle of a single-religion marriage, thus removing a cultural taboo from the relationship, while Samantha gives up her promiscuous ways and agrees not only to hold Smith's hand, as we see in the Season Six episode "The Domino Effect" but also settles down with one man, also selecting a monogamous lifestyle. In *Sex and The City*, a "consumer lifestyle is presented not as a series of commodities to be bought, but as an integrated lifestyle to be emulated.

What gendered perpetual adolescence looks like: Examining episodes of Sex and The City

In light of recent works of feminist critiques of the media, this paper sets forth to analyze the ways in which the marketing discourse of *perpetual adolescence*, that is, the selling of youth sensibilities to adults, can be viewed to be gendered feminine, as illustrated in the dialogical sitcom *Sex and The City*. I propose to explore these issues by looking at three episodes of *Sex and The City* from three different seasons: "They Shoot Single Women, Don't They?" from Season Two, "The Agony And The 'Ex'-tacy" from Season Four, and "A Woman's Right To Shoes" from Season Six. In what ways are these episodes and their messages offering spaces for resistance? In what ways are they re-enforcing social norms? The two main areas of resistance and re-enforcement to examine are the issues of competing sexual identities and the consumption of commodities. Ultimately, these episodes act as examples of the ways in which *Sex and The City* illustrates that the marketing discourse of perpetual adolescence exists as a commodified experience gendered feminine.

The Season Two episode "They Shoot Single Women, Don't They?" examines the issue of authenticity in sexual relationships and is an excellent example of the multiple sexual partners and competing sexual identities that the girls deal with in each and every episode. One of the trademarks of the narrative of a *Sex and the City* episode is that it begins with a clever title that is also the theme for that episode. In this episode, the title is a pun on a 1969 Hollywood film "They Shoot Horses, Don't They?" (Sydney Pollack), in which the theme is that people are the ultimate spectacle. The film looks at the popularity of dance marathons during the Depression as desperate people competed for prize money. The most popular scene from the movie is "The Derby," a heel-and-toe race around the dance floor which appears to go on to no end. In this episode, Carrie and the girls also appear to be participating in a heel-and-toe race around Manhattan in search of happiness in a relationship. This spectacle of looking for a man also takes on the qualities of the "Great Depression" so much so that the title implies that Carrie herself questions her own existence and value in the same way that Jane Fonda, the lead actress in the film, does when she asks Michael Sarrazin to shoot her, since she feels to be of no value, asking, "They shoot horses, don't they?"

A trademark of the narrative of a *Sex and The City* episode is that each episode's theme is then explored through the lives of each of the four main characters individually, and then shared among the four collectively through dialogue that usually takes place over a meal. Woven in and out of our main story and four sub-stories is an overdub dialogue provided by Carrie, which is also the copy for the story she is working on that week for her column "Sex and the City." in the imaginary newspaper the *New York Star*. In this episode, Carrie is asking the question "Is it better to fake it than be alone?" Faking it becomes the topic not only for dialogue in the restaurants and on the telephone, but becomes the subject of each of the four character's sub-plots. As the show progresses, each of the four women partake in a relationship endeavor, Charlotte with a handyman to whom she fakes an intimate connection, Samantha with a club owner who fakes a long term interest in her so that she'll sleep with him, Miranda with a former boyfriend for whom she is faking her orgasms, and Carrie who is asking herself if she has been faking it to herself that she is happy being single. Carrie's overdub tells us this much, when she asks herself depressingly: "As I walked home I couldn't help but wonder, when did being alone become the modern day equivalent of being a

leper? Will Manhattan restaurants soon be divided up into sections smoking/non smoking, single/non-single? Then I had a frightening thought, maybe I was the one who was faking it, all these years faking to myself that I was happy being single."

In the opening scene of the episode, all four of the heroines, Carrie, Miranda, Charlotte, and Samantha, are out at a salsa club, at a point when none of the women are in a committed relationship. The women collectively do a shot of tequila and toast to life without men. Charlotte warns the group that if she ends up old and alone she will hold them accountable, to which Samantha replies, "We are all alone, honey, even when we are with men...My advice to you is to go through life enjoying men but not expecting them to fill you up." Their dialogue reflects how *Sex and the City* is thematically centered around competing sexual identities and consumption (as well as practices—slugging tequila, getting filled up, etc.). In this scene, for example, men are viewed as something to be consumed for pleasure, much like the tequila shooters the girls are throwing back. Is this a new sensibility? Furthermore, the sexuality of dialogue and the ways in which the four single girls inhabit the bar atmosphere and shoot tequila while talking about sex suggests that being a cosmopolitan woman (a "cosmopolitan" martini being the drink of choice of the heroines) at the turn of the Millennium allows them to interact in a male-type fashion in spaces where those types of actions had previously only been available to men.. "For postfeminists like Carrie and her friends, gender differences, such as wanting to look sexy and flirt, are playful, stylistic, and unrelated to the operations of social power and authority. Women if they choose, can work, talk, and have sex 'like men' [straight men] while still maintaining all the privileges associated with being an attractive women."[27] This dichotomy becomes even more evident when a club owner approaches the girls offering to buy them drinks, or through the openness of the women to dance together, a practice often only reserved for women or homosexual men. It is a rare sight indeed to see two straight men dancing together in a night club. An interesting comparison would be to compare how straight men interact in the space of a club in a film such as the *Saturday Night Fever* (John Badham, 1977)

The heart of this episode's story line revolves around a photo shoot that Carrie takes part in for a popular New York magazine The photo shoot is being shot by Stanford's (Carrie's closest male, and gay, confidant) new boyfriend and is supposed to be called "Single and Fabulous!" However, when the article is printed, the exclamation point is replaced with a question mark and instead reads "Single and Fabulous?" Over lunch the next day, the girls discuss the magazine article and its contents. Charlotte reads, "Single was fun at 20, but you want to ask these women how fun will it be being out all night club hopping at 40?" to which Charlotte replies, "Who's out all night?" Samantha's wry answer: "Who's forty?" What is interesting is Miranda's reply of "Fuck the exclamation point," which is met by an emphatic "Fuck them" from both Samantha and the usually timid Charlotte. The girls are very defensive about being pigeonholed into a category of single womanhood, which this magazine article portrays as the promise of unhappiness and solitude. A third trademark of the narrative of a *Sex and The City* episode is that it always aims to close on a happy note. Much like the sitcom and its adolescence, the goal is always to end with resolution to the issues of the episode. The closure to "They Shoot Single Women, Don't They?" comes anecdotally, as Carrie's voice-over tells the viewer that "Over the next week, things pretty much returned to normal." We learn that Miranda, Charlotte, and Samantha all vacate the relationships they experienced during the

episode to return to the same state at which they were when the episode began: singleness. Carrie finds solitude by having a glass of wine alone on a restaurant patio. This glass of wine serves as her affirmation that it is okay to be a single woman and after a crazy twenty-five minutes of man-chasing in the hopes of finding Mr. right, the girls resign themselves to the fact that it is better to be alone than to fake it.

A closer look at the Season Four episode "The Agony and the 'Ex'tacy" is beneficial to this paper since it helps to clarify the important role that friends and "sisterhood' play in *Sex and The City*. Of course for adolescence, the acceptance by a peer group is one of the key features in defining one's own identity. Often adolescents struggle in their identity formation as they search to separate themselves from their attachment with their parents and gain inclusion within a social peer group. Certainly the girls are already separated form their parents, none of whom we ever see throughout the six years, but they do participate in this idea that the value of one's identity is found through acceptance by a peer group. Interestingly enough, the only parents we interact with in *Sex and the City* are always portrayed in a negative light. For example, Steve's mom is portrayed as a ridiculous alcoholic, who both pays for a clown to open the door and take people's coats at her grandson's first birthday, and brings her own beer to the event, as seen in the Season Six episode "One"; additionally, Tre's attachment to his mother is seen as one of the main reasons why Charlotte's marriage to him is unsuccessful, as it ultimately crumbles in the Season Four episode "All That Glitters.". Tre's mother is portrayed through out Seasons Four and Five as an overbearing, domineering, crazy woman. Ultimately, it is Tre's mother with whom Charlotte must negotiate the divorce settlement, until Tre in the Season Five episode "Critical Condition" ends the negotiation by sending a fax to all the involved parties that states that he believes that Charlotte is entitled to anything that she would like in the divorce settlement.

In "The Agony and the 'Ex'tacy," Carrie is struggling with turning thirty-five. The episode opens with a montage of each of the girls leaving their house for a Saturday night on the town, allowing the viewer to catch a glimpse into each of their personalities: Carrie ensures she has her cigarettes, Samantha packs a condom, Charlotte packs her lipstick into a Chanel purse, while Miranda grabs her keys from the bowl at the front door where they sit next to her Palm Pilot. Carrie's voice-over begins the episode, stating "If you are single, there is one thing you should always take with you when you go out on Saturday night, your friends." True to the format of *Sex and The City* episodes, the majority of the discourse in this episode occurs over the consumption of food. There is something extremely sexual about the consumption of food and in many ways the focus of this show revolves around the consumption of food, dialogue, relationships, and commodities- all in a way that is highly sexualized. This sexualization of consumption can be linked to bell hooks' notion of "eating the other " (although without the racial overtones), whereby the consuming of the single, non-normative lifestyle is used as a stand- in acceptance for its existence—however not in a way that allows for an understanding and real acceptance of it, but rather in a way that appropriates it for the straight, and dominant group.[28] This is why we see episodes where the girls partake in a non-hetero experience, such as Miranda in the Season Two episode "Bay of Married Pigs," where her co-worker mistakes her for a lesbian and tries to set her up with another woman and she obliges, or Samantha in the Season Four episode "Defining Moments," who enters into a lesbian relationship that lasts for a couple of episodes. Even the generally prude Charlotte in the Season One episode "Three's a Crowd" agrees to

take a women home to partake in a threesome. The single girl narrative and narratives that challenge het-eronormative social roles are so prevalent in *Sex and the City*,- not because it is being consumed, and not to appreciate those lifestyles, but rather to appropriate and "digest" them.

The lunch-time discussion in this episode revolves around the Aristophanean concern of whether or not there is one soul mate for each person. At one end of the spectrum lies Charlotte, who feels that there is only one, whereas at the other end lies Carrie, who feels that you have many, and if you miss one another comes right along- just like taxi cabs. Miranda objects to the whole discussion based on the idea that either way, a woman has to look elsewhere to find happiness. The next day at a different coffee shop, after what Carrie describes as a less than perfect birthday (because she is man-less), Carrie proclaims to her girlfriends, "I am 35 and alone…It felt really sad not to have a man in my life who cares for me…no god damn soul mate," to which Charlotte replies consolingly, "Maybe we could be each others' soul mates and then we could let men be these great, nice guys to have fun with." The happy ending to this episode comes when Big's limo pulls up in front of Carrie's apartment. Big invites Carrie into the limo where they share a glass of champagne. He leaves and Carrie's voice-over closes the show with the concluding narrative statement that is required for the sitcom to have its closure: "Having three soul mates [referring to her girlfriends] already makes it easier to spot those nice guys to have fun with."

The third and final episode examined here is from the final season, "A Woman's Right to Shoes." The episode begins with Stanford and Carrie attending a baby shower for their friends Kyra and Chuck. They have been asked to remove their shoes at the front door, and Carrie is heartbroken, since she views the shoes as an essential part of the entire outfit and suggests that she would have worn a hat had she known she had to remove her shoes! As they take the elevator up to Kyra and Chuck's apartment, a competition ensues between Stanford and Carrie as to who has purchased the better gift Even before they arrive at the baby shower, Stanford and Carrie have a discussion about which gifts from the baby gift registry (even the babies in *Sex and the City* are centered around consumption by having baby shower registries at designer stores!) and the struggles which they went through to purchase these gifts.. Stanford has purchased the Peter Rabbit baby dish set with matching bib, to which Carrie jealously huffs, "Dang, you snagged that. Thanks to you I was left with the Little Me Chair." Stanford is clearly the winner since his purchase is of a much "cooler" gift than Carrie's, thus signifying that the child will certainly like Stanford better. Consumption here is linked to the acceptance of adults by children.

When it's time to leave, Carrie notices that her shoes are missing. After a series of uncomfortable con-versations, Kyra finally offers to pay for Carrie's shoes, only to rescind her offer when Carrie informs her that the shoes were $485, quipping, "That's insane, I'll give you $200. I'm sorry; I just think it's crazy to spend that kind of money on shoes." When Carrie responds that they are the same designer shoes that Kyra herself used to wear, Kyra responds by shoe shaming Carrie: "Sure, before I had a real life… I really don't think I should have to pay for your extravagant lifestyle…they're just shoes." Of course, what Kyra's shoe shaming highlights is the role that shoes and consumption play for the girls of *Sex and The City*. "A designer stiletto shoe, Carrie's trademark obsession, is different [than a relationship with a man]. It's always there, to be possessed, offering a fetish substitute for the satisfactions denied by men.

The autoeroticism legitimated by the narcissistic structure of the look in consumer culture offers the possibility of doing without men at all."[29] As Carrie says herself in a Season Four episode, Manolo Blahnik's are her real soul mate

The episode "A Woman's Right to Shoes" is one of the best written episodes in all of the six seasons, asking some perturbing questions about the consumption patterns of a heteronormative society. The theme of this episode asks the question of whether choosing to purchase commodified goods for one's self provides the single person with equal cultural capital and happiness as a having heteronormative family. Carrie's voice-over asks plaintively: "Is it bad that my life is filled with shoes instead of children?" Samantha asks this question differently over lunch, when she saucily fumes, "If you gave a party and told her to leave her baby outside in the hall and her baby was missing at the end of the night, believe me there would be pay back." The title of the episode suggests that a women's right to shoes provides equal value to a women's life as having children. There is also an encoded violence here that is using shoes as a mirror for children in the discussion of not only a woman's right to have children but also a woman's right to have an abortion. The double-entanglement of postfeminism can also be found it the title of this episode, where from one perspective, the title makes a bold statement about a women's right to choice, but then devalues that same choice by comparing it to the right to buy shoes.

After Carrie is shoe shamed, she complains first to Miranda via the telephone and then over ice cream with Charlotte. During her ice cream social with Charlotte, Carrie has a moment of clarity and what follows is one of the most engaging monologues of the show's six seasons:

"I did a little mental addition, and over the years I have bought Kyra an engagement gift, a wedding gift, then there was the trip to Maine for the wedding, three baby gifts. In total, I have spent over $2300 celebrating her life choices." Charlotte responds that Kyra would do the same, to which Carrie says, "and if I don't ever get married or have a baby, what? I get bubkiss? Think about it, if you are single after graduation there isn't one occasion where people celebrate you…Hallmark does not make a 'Congratulations, you didn't marry the wrong guy' card and 'Where is the flatware for going on vacations by yourself?'" Of course, even a diatribe as strong as this is neutralized when Carrie finishes it by asking how Charlotte's pistachio ice cream tastes and then asking for a taste of it for herself. Consumption of food here gives the body the pleasures that it lost through purchasing gifts for someone else's consumption

This episode also ends with a happy ending. The show concludes with Carrie calling Kyra and leaving a message that she is engaged to be married to herself and registered at Manolo Blahnik. When Kyra goes to the store there is only one item on the registry, the exact pair of shoes that were taken at Kyra's house the week before. When Carrie reads the card it says, "We are so happy for you and you". Carrie responds "It was my very first wedding present" with an optimism that suggests that it hopefully will not be her last.

Consuming Gendered Media Discourse

As a social text of popular culture encoded with dominant ideologies of sexuality and consumption, *Sex and the City* works on multiple levels – simultaneously as a site of resistance and as a site of reproduction. Throughout the six seasons it aired on the non-cable channel HBO (1998-2004), the dialogical sitcom *Sex and the City* acted as site of resistance to dominant heteronormative sexual ideologies through the presentation of the four main characters and all of their sexual escapades as a viable and acceptable lifestyle for the single woman. It validated the life choices of the single girl who chose to consume men, dialogue, food, and commodities instead of settling-down to marry and start a family. However, at the same time as it challenged social norms, *Sex and the City* also worked as a space of or site of reproduction where the dominant ideology of a heteronormative family lifestyle was portrayed as the overarching goal of each of the characters and the resolution point of the entire series as Season Six came to a close. It is this double-entanglement around the girl's sexualities in the show that highlights the queer postfeminism of *Sex and the City* as a cultural text.

Of even greater significance is the idea that *Sex and The City* worked as a commercial for a particular representation of a gendered, adolescent lifestyle typified by the single girl narrative, whereby this lifestyle is presented as glamorous, extravagant, and socially acceptable. The glorification of this single girl narrative is highlighted by her right to choose to consume items such as men, food, dialogue, and commodities, and the pleasure she receives from those acts of consumption. In doing so, *Sex and the City* was also reinforcing a larger marketing discourse of perpetual adolescence that seeks to maintain the destabilized identities of adolescence throughout adults' entire lives by privileging youth and youthful sensibilities in advertisements. *Sex and the City* provides an excellent example of what the marketing discourse of perpetual adolescence looks like when it is gendered feminine, but unfortunately it offers little insight into the dangers of glorifying such a discourse or the available spaces for resistance where one can appropriate perpetual adolescence for subversive and political means. Does such resistance matter? Boy, is the show entertaining and agreeable, which is exactly what the culture industry is all about.

Notes

[1] Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels . "The Ruling Class & Ruling Ideas" in *Media & Cultural Studies: Key Works*. Eds. Douglas Kellner and Meenakshi Gigi Durham. London: Routledge, 2006.

[2] http://www.hbo.com/city/#.

[3] For more information on adolescent psychology, see Norman A. Sprinthall and W. Andrew Collins, eds., *Adolescent Psychology: A Developmental View*, Third Edition. (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1995), or Daniel Offer, Eric Ostrov, Kenneth Howard, and Robert Atkinson, eds., *The Teenage World: Adolescent's Self-Image in Ten Countries* (New York: Plenum Medical Book Company, 1988). For more information

on adolescents and the media, from a medical perspective, see Victor C Strasburger, *Adolescents and the Media: Medical and Psychological Impact* Volume 33 Developmental Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

[4] In 1959, the youth market held an estimated purchasing power of over $9.5 billion, which is more than four times the amount from 1945. Edward K. Spann, *Democracy's Children: The Young Rebels of the 1960s and the Power of Ideals* (Wilmington, Del: Scholarly Resources, 2003), 25.

[5] Stephen Gennaro, "Purchasing the Teenage Canadian Identity: ICTs, American Media, and Brand Name Consumption" in *International Social Science Review* (Volume 80, 2005, Numbers 3 & 4).

[6]. Theodor Adorno and Max. "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by John Cumming. London: Verso, 1991.

[7] Angela McRobbie., "Postfeminism and Popular Culture" in *Feminist Media Studies* Vol.4 No. 3, 2004, p.256.

[8] Jane Gerhard. "*Sex and the City*: Carrie Bradshaw's Queer Postfeminism" in *Feminist Media Studies* Vol.5 No. 1, 2005, p.38.

[9] www.colorado.edu/english.engl2012klages

[10] Bonnie Dow. *Prime Time Feminism: Television, Media Culture, and the Women's Movement Since 1970*. Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania Press: 1996. p. 139.

[11] Jane Arthurs. "*Sex and the City* and Consumer Culture: Remediating Postfeminist Drama" in

Feminist Media Studies, Vol. 3, No.1, p. 83.

[12] www.candicebusnell.com

[13] Laurie Ouellette, "Inventing the Cosmo Girl: Class Identity and Girl-Style American Dreams" in *Media, Culture & Society* 21 (3), p. 363.

[14] Ouellette, "Inventing the Cosmo Girl," p. 359.

[15] For more information on the connection between glossy women's magazines and *Sex and the City* see Jane Arthur, "Sex and the City and Consumer Culture: Remediaitng Postfeminist Drama." For more information on the connection between single women novels and *Sex and the City*, see Deborah Phillips' "Shopping for Men: The Single Women Narrative" in *Women: A Cultural Review* Vol. 11 No. 3.

[16] Ellen Riordan, "Commodified Agents and Empowered Girls: Consuming and Producing Feminism," in *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 25:3 (July 2001), p. 280.

[17] http://www.hbo.com/city/#

[18] Arthurs, "*Sex and the City*," p. 94.

[19] Riorden, "Commodified Agents," p. 295.

[20] Adorno and Horkheimer, "The Culture Industry."

[21] Gennaro, "Teenage Canadian Identity."

[22] Norman A. Sprinthall and W. Andrew Collins, eds., *Adolescent Psychology: A Developmental View*, Third Edition. (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1995),

[23] Angela R. Record. "Born to Shop: Teenage Women and the Marketplace in the Post War United States," in *Sex & Money: Feminism and Political Economy in the Media*. Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press: 2002. pp. 181-195.

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[25] Daniel Thomas Cook. *The Commodification of Childhood: the Children's Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

[26] Phillips "Shopping for Men," p. 240.

[27] Gerhard, "Carrie Bradshaw's Queer Postfeminism," p.38.

[28] bell hooks. "Eating the Other" in *Media & Cultural Studies: Key Works*. Eds. Douglas Kellner and Meenakshi Gigi Durham. London: Routledge, 2006.

[29] Arthurs, "*Sex and the City*," p. 93.

Credible News Measures: A Medium's Integrity.

By Jendele Hungbo

Introduction

The growing need for development in all parts of the world has continued to throw up a great number of challenges in the communications world. These challenges affect all media of communication ranging from the traditional to the modern. Traditional means of communication, in this sense, will include what Melkote (1991: 201) describes as 'products of the local culture' which serves the community as a vehicle for the exchange of information and ideas crucial to the overall development of its people. The modern, on the other hand appropriates all such media which are driven by literacy in content and execution of the means by which information and ideas are circulated within a particular community and beyond. It is a fact taken for granted that no society can develop without a properly structured communication system which, among other things guarantees access to news for the people. A lot of the decisions people make are based on information available to them, through the media; hence the serious attention which the media enjoys today in various forms of discourse having to do with social relations and development.

The process of globalization that is taking on the entire world as one unit at the moment has equally made the place of the media a very crucial one in human and societal development. When Marshal McLuhan brought up the concept of a "global village" through enhanced communication, little did he envisage the world was going to fast become less than a village as we now have it. Through the impact of communication and faster information dissemination the world today has moved on beyond what Agbese (2006:68) describes as "a borderless town". Beyond this the world today is, more or less, a global hut. The power of information and communication technology (ICT) has become so overwhelming on the human race to such an extent that most people now live their lives around contraptions thrown up by these technologies.

One area where this kind of impact is most noticeable is in the news media. Numerous scholars, within and outside the sphere of media studies, have also shown an appreciation of this fact. For instance, McQuail (2005:4) contends that:

> Whatever changes are underway, there is no doubting the significance of mass media in contemporary society, in the spheres of politics, culture, everyday social life and economics. (p.4)

The role of the media stands out in the area of the mobilization of the populace for participation in all the needed spheres of influence which may contribute, in a way, to the reduction of conflict in society and by extension expand the possibilities of attaining a point of reckon in the development agenda. The platform for this mobilization through the media is usually found in the content of the media.

News as media content

The issue of content has always attracted enormous attention in both the electronic and the print media. In the electronic media, however, the hoopla is often more intense mainly because of the increasing rate of awareness among the viewing or listening public mainly of events and happenings going on around them. In addition to this, the level of literacy appears to be increasing even among people in rural communities in such a way that they are more able to interrogate information received by them. And one of the common ways by which information get to the people is through news in either the print or the electronic media. There have been several attempts at defining news. It is therefore difficult to regard any particular one as the canonical definition of the concept. In one of such numerous attempts, MacBride (1980:156-7) identifies the major qualities that must be present in news:

> ….it must be circulated quickly after the event, be of wide interest, contain information which the reader or listener has not received before, represent a departure from the everyday pattern of life and contain information that is useful in reaching decisions. (pp.156-7)

From the foregoing, it becomes apparent that authenticity, significance and timelines are tripodal to the acceptance of a programme or material as news.

We can therefore conclude that news is new information of any kind about specific and timely events. In other words, it is the reporting of current events usually by local, regional or mass media in the form or newspapers, television and radio programmes, or sites on the web. The art of news reporting, therefore, becomes a form of journalism with its own peculiar style. If the content of news is significant enough, it eventually becomes history. In today's world, a lot of attention is paid to news in the media especially because people require access to information quite more frequently than in the past. The contending forces in the lives of individuals and corporate agencies have increased tremendously such that information is being sought after from time to time in order to make informed choices. In making these choices, decisions must be based on news items which provide the public with factual and accurate information. With varying degrees of development across the globe news has moved from the idea of 'what people care about' to 'what we [journalists] tell them it is' (Silvia, 2001:3) and eventually to a major information source for people who regard it with a lot of caution. News is often expected to be a non-fictional account of happenings around us. Therefore, a medium gains considerable degree of respect based on the reliability of information it dishes out to the public. Though the demand of the audience or viewership these days is turning towards a satisfaction of emotions (laughter, fear, violence etc) or what is generally referred to as

entertainment programmes, the demand for news is such that the people are almost sure to want to listen to credible stories.

The search for credibility

One of the major content -related challenges facing the media today is the issue of credibility. This is so even in spite of the seeming democratization of the media space and the multiplicity of media organizations the world over. People who are interested in news from the media are always in search of what is accurate and reliable. Credibility therefore becomes the unique selling point (USP) for media organizations to stand out and command the needed respect from the public. It is in realization of the importance of credibility that Agbese (2006) contends that:

> …the challenge of the news media even in the face of the relentless march of globalization is the same challenge that has always confronted them. this is the challenge of providing accurate and reliable information. (p.68)

For a medium to become acceptable to its consumers credibility becomes a key factor. This is given credence by Schweiger (2000) as he points out that credibility becomes "an important heuristic for content selection" (p.38).

In addition to its influence on the journalistic success of a medium, credibility also contributes in no small measure to the commercial success of the media. In Nigeria for instance, there is stiff competition among the electronic media in the area of newscasts. This competition can only be won by those stations who regard credibility as the first rule. In other words, it should serve a station in good stead if its listeners or viewers do not have to wait for another medium to make up their minds whether or not to believe a news items, which they have received through it.

Credibility is a major news value and various scholars and researchers have used a variety of measures and statistical procedures to foster an understanding of media credibility. Bivariate and multivariate approaches have been used alongside regression analysis and factor analysis as observed by Abdulla et al (2002:8) . While many researchers have used traditional data collection methods such as telephone surveys, laboratory and field experiments, others have gone as far as employing new technologies such as online surveys and the like to measure the credibility of news stories. In all these attempts it has become clear that believability, accuracy and depth of information are major ingredients, which combine to confer credibility on news items.

The idea of creating a set of credibility standards is gradually becoming a recurring decimal in the media world. In one instance, it grew out of a panel discussion at a 1998 conference sponsored by the project for Excellence in Journalism and Pew Charitable Trusts. Though the major concern of the conference was

on online news or news on the web the proceedings and the outcome reflect the fact that the postulations on the issue of credibility can be universally applied. In a similar vein, a recent news media credibility assessment study conducted by the Centre for Media Studies (CMS) in New Delhi showed that though viewership of television news channels has gone up "credibility of their hastily put together news bulletins has not"[1].

Despite the diversity of scales, the various scale items in measuring news credibility developed by media researchers are highly similar and measure the same underlying dimensions. These scale items generally point at trustworthiness, fairness, accuracy and believability as key elements in the process. Rather than searching for a single scale, researchers often create ad hoc scales to tap into hypothesized dimensions of credibility.

In the field of broadcast journalism the higher a station gets on the overall credibility scale, the better for it and its owners. In the words of Adedire (2000:60) credibility is "the ultimate credential of a news bulletin". This credential is not just desirable for a broadcast medium to remain relevant, it is equally vital for the sustenance of this relevance because:

> A credible news bulletin will attract believability, authenticity and respect. Any news bulletin that is deficient of these attributes is a disgrace to the broadcasting station involved (Adedire 2000:61).

The convergence in the media world today is also one major reason for which every broadcast station must be ready to address the issue of credibility with utmost seriousness. The combination of broadcasting, the Internet and telephony has made news verification an easier task for media consumers.

Credibility: the GTV experience

Since its establishment by the Ogun State Government in 1981 Ogun State Television (OGTV) recently rechristened Gateway Television (GTV) has been disseminating news stories to its viewers with great passion and commitment. A lot of changes have also taken place in the packaging and presentation of the stations news bulletins all aimed at achieving greater acceptability among the station's viewers. In order to reach the grassroots further the television station also offers two translated versions of its news bulletins in Yoruba and Egun languages.

Today, television news is a major source of information for the Nigerian public. This trend is a reflection of the contention of Gormly (2004:11) that "television carries more emotionalism than print" because of the existence of sights and sounds. This reliance on television news has made the job of packaging information more challenging. Gateway Television has been trying hard to fulfill the central purpose of journalism which is to provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need in order to take

certain decisions on major issues affecting their lives. Some of the landmark achievements in this regard will include the coverage of the 1983 presidential campaigns of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), the coverage of the Progressive Governors meeting in the early 80s, the coverage of the presidential campaign of Bashorun M.K.O Abiola of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the coverage of the resultant crises following the annulment of the June 1993 Presidential elections in Nigeria.

During these epochal coverages the profile of the station rose as viewers hungered for its news and waited impatiently for 8.30pm, which was the time that the major news bulletin for the day was relayed. The continuation of military rule after the electoral annulment seemed to have a negative impact on the quality of newscasts of the station as it did to most other government owned broadcast media in the country. The incursion of private broadcast stations into the scene in 1994 also threw greater challenges. Since the return of civil rule in 1999, there has been a major battle to remain as relevant and credible as in the periods mentioned earlier. Interestingly, most of the news materials seen on air these days border heavily on the political. The sensitive nature of most situations and the need to manage government as an institution has remained a great challenge in achieving the desirable level of credibility in the packaging and presentation of news. In the search for a safe haven, Gateway Television has found a way out. Like most stations in Nigeria today, news values now thrive on prominence of individuals (who is involved). Often times, who said what becomes more important than what was said, thereby making the maker of the news more important than the news itself.

This approach indeed marginalizes the people and the community (Omenugha, 2005). Should this trend also continue, there is great wonder how close Gateway Television is to the expectation of development communication in which case television "can be made socially relevant and responsible where and when concern and respect for the viewer is the pre-eminent criterion for its programming and content" (Soola, 2002:24). The new trend smacks of a resort to persuasive news and too much attempt to persuade dents the credibility of news. At an excessive level, persuasion may produce *astroturf* news, that is, news that looks like a grassroots material but is a fibre loaded with fabrications and manipulations.

Conclusion

The question of how to come to a consensus on credibility issues will always remain a tricky one. Transparency in the media is a key requirement. The world has also moved on. This explains the recent emergence of citizens' journalism or glogosphere which is an internet based response to public dissatisfaction with mainstream media. With millions of such sites on the web today mainstream journalism is facing yet another potent challenge. It should be noted that a medium's reputation is on the line each time a story is published or broadcast. Voluntary credibility standards, which imply a deliberate decision to remain committed to that which is factually credible, can help a medium to determine its popularity rating. To achieve this the news medium must be able to jettison biases and political considerations, which can have far reaching negative impact on its work especially in the face of alternative media sources which

now compete with mainstream media in the information business. In other words, a medium is ultimately responsible for its own reputation and eventual rating on the overall credibility scale.

The time has come for the media to put in place credibility reinforcing strategies towards strengthening their integrity. Credible news measures are a responsibility of both the media organizations and the individual reporters, sub-editors, editors, managers and even media owners who are all stakeholders in the industry. There is an urgent need for all of these stakeholders to "start digging tunnels" (Traber, 2006) which will provide the outlet from the ideological prison of self-censorship which has continued to do a great damage to news and by extension impinged on the integrity of our media and their employees.

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Notes

[1] CMS Credibility Tracking Study press release available online at http://www.cmsindia.org/cms/events/credibility.pdf

Iran: the 2006 Elections and the Making of Authoritarian Democracy.

By Babak Rahimi

It is now a well-known fact that post-revolutionary Iranian politics has undergone several dramatic changes since its inception when the Islamist government replaced the Pahlavi Monarchy in 1979. Divided into four different historical stages, the politics of the post-revolutionary period first experienced a constitutional moment, when the original founders of the republic created a legal order that was based on the Islamic law (*sharia*), interpreted and sanctioned by the Shi'i ulama, and modeled after a parliamentarian system of government with a weak executive office. In such a legal establishment, the spiritual leader or the *valyat-e faqih* (or "the guardianship of the jurisconsult") would have the ultimate authority in the state apparatus; the *valyat-e faqih* would be the soul of the nation and the representative of the Hidden Imam, Mahdi, who will return at the end of time.

The death of the spiritual leader and founder of the republic, Ayatollah Khomeini, in 1989, led the way to the second stage, when the power of the unelected institution of *valyat-e faqih* was enhanced in an attempt to bequest greater state authority to the hands of the official clerical class of the government. Much of the attempt to bolster the office was to centralize power as the state faced major economic and political problems after the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). The move was also made to expand the office of *valyat-e faqih*, which, after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, had lost some of its prestige and religious aura. The appointment of Khamenei as the new supreme jurist ruler in 1989 introduced a new phase in the development of the office of velyat-e faqih, with an enhanced executive powers backed by the revised constitution.

In contrast to the previous stages, the third episode began when in 1997 Iranians, especially the young, elected moderate Mohammad Khatami to the presidency with the aim that he would bring much needed political and social reforms to a country overtaken by clerical authoritarian government. Khatami's reformist agenda from 1997 to 2005 brought to light a new popular will for change that in many ways resembled Poland's "Solidarity" movement in the late 1980's. Although his reformist platform eventually failed to introduce any significant changes, Khatami managed to start a new momentum for change. Likewise, his name is associated with concepts such as "civil society" or "democracy," signifying the development of

democratic consciousness in the country. This third stage can be best described as a moment in post-revolutionary history that gave new life to democratic rule, mainly advanced by young Iranians (both male and female) who make up nearly 70% of the population.

The fourth stage, also known as the era of "conservative consolidation," began a period of hardline backlash against the initial years of the reformists' attempt to move Iran in the direction of democratization and openness in the third stage of the postrevolutionary period.[1] Made up of former revolutionary guards (like the current president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad), militant volunteer corps (*besiji*), hard-line clerics based in cities like Isfahan and Qum, and backed by the spiritual leader, Ayatollah Khamenie, the "conservative consolidation" began to take form with the 2004 parliamentary elections, when the Guardian Council rejected the candidacy of a number of prominent reformist politicians in place of conservative candidates. This electoral coup enabled those who favored the unelected institutions of the state to enhance their authority and to prevent the reformist from any major political office.

The 2005 presidential election, which introduced Ahmadinjad as a prominent political contender and the new president of the republic, further advanced the project of conservative consolidation with the full backing of Ayatollah Khamenei and ideologically-charged Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, whose organization is independent of Iran's state military forces. This fourth stage can be best described as the most authoritarian period in the republic's political history, coupled with its failure in the "liberalization" of the country and its expansion of state economic projects originally initiated under Ayatollah Ali-Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's two-term presidency (1988- 97). The failure to follow through Rafsanjani's economic policy is mainly due to an attempt by the hardliner faction of the Iranian government to consolidate power through the sole support of the Revolutionary Guard, which has consistently controlled and dominated market competition through the private sector since the late 1990s. For the most part, the political force behind any revolution dictates an eventual process of bureaucratization, statization and, eventually, stagnation after years of fading revolutionary momentum. But the process of "statization" also entails a process towards greater authoritarianism, which requires a post-revolutionary state to maintain authority by centralizing power and hardening its initial ideological zeal. But the fourth stage of the post-revolutionary Iran includes a unique and added feature, which is absent in a number of different revolutionary processes in modern history. In contrast to the former Soviet Union, People's Republic of China and Cuba, elections play a central role in further consolidating the conservative leadership which is tied together by militant zeal and Islamist values.

On December 15th 2006 the Islamic Republic of Iran witnessed an unprecedented event in the course of the conservative consolidation. For the first time in the post- revolutionary era, Iranian voters participated in both local council and the Assembly of Experts elections on a single election day. The event marked a significant change in the electoral process with the advancement of two inherently opposing institutions: one democratic and the other oligarchic.

The local council elections were originally institutionalized under the former reformist president, Mohammad Khatami, in 1999 in a way to introduce local governance in a country with a long history of

centralized power. The municipal assemblies aim to empower the local citizenry by enabling them to voice their concerns, interests and opinions through a locally elected body of representatives. These councils are democratic in nature since they involve the reconfirmation of two basic themes of democratic rule: accountability and self-determination.

The Assembly of Experts, however, is an institution with the function of maintaining a political system that is inherently unaccountable. It compromises a body of 86 senior clerics who are responsible for monitoring Iran's supreme leader and choosing his successor. It is a non-transparent institution since the assembly never reveals its topic of discussion or account of what its members discuss. But most importantly, it directly supports the unelected institution of *valyat-e faqih*, the office maintained by a male cleric of a high ranking stature as the head of the Islamic state until the return of the Hidden Imam, whose second coming is expected at the end of time. Thus far, the Assembly of Experts, has been under the control of the conservatives, particularly those hardliner clerics who are fiercely loyal to the Supreme Leader. In fact, it was the Assembly of Experts that was responsible for electing Khameini into office after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989. The Assembly of Experts can be described as an oligarchic institution, composed of a selected body, the ulama or religious clerical class.

The main reason for simultaneously holding these two elections is two-fold. First, at a domestic level, there appears to be an attempt by the conservative authorities, who came to dominate the government since 2004, to give more popular legitimacy to the Assembly of Experts by correlating the re-election of its members with the municipal council elections, as though the two are inherently one and the same. Likewise, since the Assembly of Experts is directly responsible for the selection of the *valyat-e faqih* , the move is made in a way to make Ayatollah Khamenei look as if he is actually an elected member of the government.

There is something curious in the making here. With the successful marginalization of the reformist camp since the 2004 parliamentary elections, the conservatives seem to be promoting a culture of accountability and transparency through popular elections. This was the sort of policy that was once advanced by the reformists under Khatami. But the hardliners are now cunningly promoting democratic practices such as elections for the objective of advancing an undemocratic political system. In other words, elections serve the promotion of the authoritarian political order.

But there is a second consideration here which should also be borne in mind, and that is a foreign policy issue. Undoubtedly, the elections were devised in mobilizing popular support for the state's nuclear project, so passionately advocated by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad since his election to office in 2005. Although the outcome of the elections is also seen as a referendum on Ahmadinejad's performance in his first 18 months in office, the main purpose for these simultaneous elections is to show popular support for the government's controversial nuclear policy which faces growing international pressure. As the U.S. and its allies continue to put pressure on China and Russia to agree to place sanctions on Iran, Ahmadinejad and the conservative factions (both the pragmatists and the hardliners) are working hard to strengthen their ideological case for an indigenous nuclear program, which surely would promise them power and prestige

on both domestic and international levels. In this respect, the elections serve the objective of marshalling mass support in legitimizing the development of the regime's nuclear program for greater influence in the region. Popular support remains central to the government's nuclear policy, and in this regard elections play a key role.

Historically speaking, the level of participation in non-presidential elections has always remained low since the 1979 Islamic revolution. Most voters have always focused on the parliamentary and the presidential elections, disregarding these two elections as either irrelevant (local councils) or beyond their reach of power (Assembly of Experts). But the December 15th 2006 elections were an exception. For the most part, both of these elections were greeted with unprecedented enthusiasm. With 3,150 polling stations and 9,450 ballot boxes across the country, many Iranians cast their votes in crowded polling stations, making these elections some of the most popular since the 1997 presidential elections when Khatami established the first reformist government in the post- revolutionary era.

In the capital city, Tehran, streets and squares were covered with posters and placards of candidates running for office. Cell phones were flooded with text messages about the candidates. One text-message advertised the following: "Vote for Ahmad Masjed Jamei, the former minister of culture under Khatami." "Our national destiny is in the municipal elections," read another large slogan posted in a major square of the city. On the day of the elections, I visited many mosques and schools where the elections took place. The mood at the polling stations was festive and happy. Unmarried young men and women intermingled while older voters discussed politics and social issues as they waited in long lines. I spoke to a number of voters, especially the youth, about the elections. "It's fun," a teenager enthusiastically told me. A middle-aged high school teacher explained as he held his wife's hand on this cold, mid-December night, "It is my national duty. I vote so I tell America that I support my government, even if I am not free here."

There is a correlation between the uses of the two terms "National duty" and "government" that is not accidental. The elections, in a sense, create a collective sentiment of solidarity for the government as the embodiment of the national identity, despite the *un*democratic nature of most of the governmental institutions. What the regime has successfully done since making the nuclear program a central tenant of its foreign policy agenda is to represent *itself*, the government of the clerics as a national and popular entity, the sort that would require the collective support of the Iranian people against the supposed malicious "conspiracies" of foreign regimes. The elections represent a set of practices that bolster state power. The polling stations have become more than a place where elections take place; they are sites of nationalistic rites of passage (especially for the young), emotive and symbolic spaces in creating a collective sense of national solidarity against a perceived foreign threat.

On December 15th many Iranians cast their votes as a means to participating in a democratic process, but unwittingly also to solidify a political system that advances the electoral process to maintain an authoritarian regime. Such is the tragedy of elections under authoritarian rule. These four stages of the post-revolutionary era underline the complicated series of events that has led to the current political situation in Iran. Both domestic and foreign factors have contributed to the transformation of the Iranian state,

especially the rise of the conservatives to power after 2004. The long-term project of the "conservative consolidation" may well last a long time, but it can never be permanent. In a significant way to jump-start reform and to challenge authoritarianism, Iranians, especially the young, should begin to realize that failure to show up for elections is a sure way to challenge authoritarian rule and, ironically, a way to bring democracy to their country.

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Notes

[1] See Gheissari, Ali & Nasr, Vali, "The Conservative Consolidation in Iran," *Survival,* vol. 47 no. 2 Summer 2005, pp. 175-190.

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