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Note on contributors

Moses Omoniyi Ayeomoni

Moses Omoniyi Ayeomoni received his Masters degree from the University of Lagos, Nigeria, and has recently completed his doctoral thesis at the University of Ibadan (also in Nigeria). His article “Pragmatic-stylistics analysis of General Ironsi’s maiden speech” is forthcoming in the *Journal of Language and Linguistics*. His main research interests involve linguistic and stylistic analysis of political speech and the politics of language in general. Moses is presently acting as lecturer at the Department of English at Obafemi Awolow University in Ile-Ife (Nigeria). In his contribution to *Nebula* Moses explores the rhetoric of various Nigerian politicians as they engage in several modes of persuasion and “crowd control.” Written in Nigerian English and interrogating various political speeches delivered in this form, the article always returns to the sociopolitical contexts relevant to the speeches and the continuing crisis of government in Nigeria.

David Carithers

After receiving a Masters in English at Western Carolina University for “Thomas Pynchon’s *The Crying of Lot 49*: The Novel as Open Discourse” David Carithers completed his PhD in 2004 at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. His thesis explored artistic responses to the attacks of September 11, 2001, by selected writers and the parallels between such responses and “Romantic/Pragmatic Rhetoric” (a term he uses to describe the combined philosophies of the American Romantics and the American Pragmatists of the nineteenth century). He has recently published an article on “Malcom X.” in *Men and Masculinities: A Cultural and Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa

Barbara: ABC-Clio Press, 2004). David has contributed two articles of work to *Nebula* 2.3. The first is a short conversational poem reminiscent of the informality of contemporary American poetry, whilst the second contribution is a lengthier piece taking us into the world of his doctoral dissertation. ‘*Come on and Rise Up*’: *Springsteen’s Experiential Art After 9/11* delivers a close reading of Bruce Springsteen’s musical and lyrical responses to the World Trade Centre attacks, whilst registering Springsteen’s interaction with a mass cultural reaction to the event.

Benjamin D. Carson

Benjamin Carson received his MA in Critical Theory in 1999 and acquired his PhD in May 2005 both from the University of Nebraska, where he has acted as Teaching Assistant for six consecutive years. Benjamin’s forthcoming publications include entries in the *Encyclopedia of Native American Authors* and *The Feminist Encyclopedia of African American Literature*. He has already published work on Edith Wharton in *Women’s Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (32: 2003), whilst an article on Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari was featured in *Rhizomes* (7: 2003). Benjamin’s article on “Flannery O’Connor, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and the Theologico-Political Implications of 9/11” was published by the *Online Journal of Education, Media and Health*. His research interests include African, Native, Asian and twentieth-century American Literatures, as well as an interest in women’s studies, Chicana/o Literature and Critical Theory. Adding to these interests and wide array of publications on variant topics, Carson’s contribution to *Nebula* comes in the (unexpected) form of the defense of Virginia Woolf’s modernism. In

his article *Darkness Beyond the Lighthouse...* Benjamin revisits the site at which modernism began to pale and postmodernism began to be ushered in as the new ruler of literary movement.

Alan Ramón Clinton

Alan Ramón Clinton Received his Masters in English at the University of Georgia in 1996, studying under Hugh Kenner, Margaret Dickie, and Antony Shuttleworth. Under their tutelage Alan fostered an interest in modernist literature and its political possibilities. In May 2002, he received his PhD in Literature at the University of Florida where he focused on the French avant-garde tradition: Mallarmé, Dadaism, Surrealism, the Situationists, and the Oulipo. Alan has recently published creative work in *Hunger Magazine*, *Pacific Review*, *Art*, *Portland Review*, *First Offense*, *Absinthe Literary Review*, and *No Exit*. Lee Ballentine of Ocean View Books has recently published his long poem “Skeleton Key to the Wilderness,” whilst his scholarly monograph *Mechanical Occult: Automatism, Modernism, and the Specter of Politics* was published with Peter Lang in 2004. Alan currently teaches writing at Northeastern University in Boston, whose English Department, he tells us, is a standard bearer of academic freedom. In his ficto-critical contribution to *Nebula* Clinton combines the methodology of critical and theoretical analysis with the ease and the creativity allowed by imaginative extrapolation, leaving us with a set of characters, situations and institutions that are imagined, but which uncomfortably possess the quality of the hyper-real.

Saddik Gohar

Saddik Gohar received his PhD and Masters in English Literature and Criticism from the University of Pennsylvania in Indiana (USA). He received his first BA in English language from Ain Shams University in Cairo University and another BA in English literature from Mansora University in Egypt. His “The Political Poetry of Le Roi Jones and Mdhaifa AlNawwab: A Comparative Perspective” is forthcoming in the fall volume of the Digest of Middle East Studies (Wisconsin University). His “Protest and Revolt: Afro-American and Arab Poets in Dialogue” was published in *Creativity in Exile* (New York: Rodopi, 2004). Saddik is interested in translation and has worked as a part-time translator for a considerable period of time. In his contribution to *Nebula* 2.3 Saddik provides a close comparative reading between Native American and Palestinian poetry, exploring narratives of dispossession, nostalgia and defiance which are closely linked to similar historical genealogies of invasion and destruction.

Christopher Kelen

Christopher Kelen is a well known Australian poet whose works have been widely published and broadcast since the mid seventies. The Oxford Companion to Australian Literature describes Kelen’s work as “typically innovative and intellectually sharp.” Kelen holds degrees in literature and linguistics from the University of Sydney and a doctorate on the teaching of the writing process from the University of Western Sydney in Nepean (Australia). Kelen’s first volume of poetry *The Naming of the Harbour and the Trees* won an Anne Elder Award in 1992. After winning

a number of significant poetry awards, Kelen's poetry/art collaboration with Carol Archer *Tai Mo Shan/Big Hat Mountain* was exhibited at the Montblanc Gallery in Hong Kong's Fringe Club in 2000. And again in 2001 another collaboration (essay and watercolour) titled *Shui Yi Meng/Sleep to Dream* was shown at the Montblanc Gallery. Kelen's fourth book of poems, *Republics*, dealing with the ethics of identity in millennial Australia, was published by Five Islands Press in 2000. A fifth volume, *New Territories*, a pilgrimage through Hong Kong, was published with the aid of the Hong Kong Arts Development Board in 2003. In 2004 Kelen's most recent chapbook *Wyoming Suite*, a North American sojourn, was released by VAC Publishing in Chicago. In 2005, Kelen's long poem "Macau" was short-listed for the prestigious Newcastle Poetry Prize and a re-edited version of "Tai Mo Shan" appeared in *Southerly*. Apart from poetry Kelen publishes in a range of theoretical areas including writing pedagogy, ethics, rhetoric, cultural and literary studies and various intersections of these. Kelen currently teaches Creative Writing and Children's Literature at the University of Macau in South China. In his contribution to *Nebula*, Kelen explores the intricate mysteries and ironies of a most loved Australian folk song – daring to suggest that the song may have involved, or been, an elaborate practical joke. For those of us (international readers) who are not sufficiently acquainted with the basics of the *Waltzing Matilda* saga, its lyrics and history of interpretation, the Australian National Library's *Waltzing Matilda* website <http://www.nla.gov.au/epubs/waltzing-matilda/> will prove to be an essential background reading on the subject.

Adam King

I am an aspiring writer influenced by Kafka, Salinger, Merton, Turgenev, and many others—my greatest desire is to save the world somehow with my stories, and it is the arrogance that I could actually believe that I have any idea of what the world needs which keeps me in a state of almost constant depression—that the world is crippled and requires my attention, this, coupled with my own hypocrisy, is the source of what comes out on the pages.

Adam's contribution to Nebula 2.3 comes in the form of Dead Souls, a short story which begins with a slow, naive, even mundane narration, when suddenly, instantly and unexpectedly, the mundane wields dreadful power through a stark language of symbolic logic.

Elisabetta Marino

Elisabetta Marino is assistant professor of English literature at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata". She has published a book on the figure of Tamerlane in English and American literature (Rome 2000) and has edited the volume of the proceedings of the 2001 Asia and the West Conference held at "Tor Vergata" (Rome, 2002). Together with Dr. Simal Gonzalez Elisabetta has edited a collection of essays entitled *Transnational, National, and Personal Voices: New Perspectives on Asian American and Asian Diasporic Women Writers* (Munster, 2004). She has published extensively on Italian American literature, Asian American and Asian British literature. In her contribution to *Nebula 2.3*, Elisabetta truly takes advantage of the

concept of the disembodied postmodern subject, by conducting a series of informal transcontinental and transatlantic discussions with well-known writer Theresa Maggio (*Mattanza; The Stone Boudoir*). The result of these meetings of minds is a structured interview based on a selected number of questions and answers.

Chineze Onyejekwe

Chineze J. Onyejekwe received her PhD in Sociology from the University of Ibadan (Nigeria) and what was formerly known as the University of Durban-Westville (South Africa). Chineze is currently involved in broad-based women empowerment issues and has contributed extensively to books as well as Journals, including *Nebula*, *Asian journal of Women's Studies*, *Quiet Mountain essays* and *Parallax: A Journal of Ethics and Globalization*. Her more recent publications include articles in *Journal of International Women's Studies* (6); the *Journal of Asian Women's Studies* (13) and the *Pakistan Journal of Women's Studies: Alam-e-Niswan* (11). Chineze is presently working on a manuscript exploring the relationship between women and small enterprise development in the developing world. In her third contribution to *Nebula* Chineze explores the dangers and drawbacks of the intersections between the internet and morally fraught aspects and practices which take place within the global pornography industry.

Kendal Smith

I am currently incarcerated in the Arkansas Department of Correction for manufacturing methamphetamine. I am sentenced to serve

seventy percent of a twenty-seven year sentence, unless I am granted clemency. I am now about to enter my sophomore year with a 4.0 GPA, and plan to continue to graduate school. My interests are in Asian economics and customs, and also in physics. My hopes and dreams are to get out of prison soon, earn a doctorate degree, and live on a sailboat on the coast of a country that can overlook past transgressions. I enjoy writing and I will be happy to answer any questions or correspondence anyone sends to:

Kendal Smith #122938
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In an intuitively postcolonial analysis of Empire and colonies, Smith takes us through the vicissitudes of what it means to live in the shadow of the post-industrial, trans-national and molecular colonialism of US-based globalisation.

Bill Stobb

William Stobb lives in La Crosse, Wisconsin, USA. His poems appear in such print journals as *American Poetry Review*, *Colorado Review*, *American Literary Review* and *Denver Quarterly*. His electronically published work can be found online at *Three Candles*, *PIF magazine*, and *Refractory*. *For Better Night Vision*, a chapbook of William's poems, was published in 2001 by the Black Rock Press at the University of Nevada. Bill has received prizes from the Academy of American Poets and the National Endowment for the Arts and is presently acting as Assistant Professor of English at Viterbo University (Wisconsin, USA). His contribution to *Nebula* comes in the form of a short poem with the digital title of "092804,"

whose allusions and references call on us to rummage through newspaper archives and memory recall in order to ascertain the exact nature of the events in question.

Jennifer Thompson

Jennifer Thompson received her PhD in comparative literature from the University of California, Irvine in May 2000 and received a University of California Faculty Fellowship the following year. She served as a Brittain Fellow at the Georgia Institute of Technology from 2001-2002, and is currently an assistant professor at Embry-Riddle University, where she teaches creative writing, mythology, western civilization, Holocaust studies, and world literature. In 2004 she produced a limited edition, signed chapbook with Florida artist Michael Siegenthaler, and read creative and critical work at the Poetry and Sexuality conference at the University of Stirling, Scotland. In August 2004 she published “‘Accept This Twofold Consolation, You Fainthearted Creatures’: St. Augustine’s Rhetoric of Rape” in *SIMILE* where she also acts as a peer reviewer. Her poetry has appeared in numerous journals, including *California Quarterly*, *Eclipse*, *The Lilliput Review*, and the *Absinthe Literary Review*. Most recently, she was the featured poet in *Sage of Consciousness* (2), which interrogated forms of love. She also produces a popular blog of poetry, philosophy and travel writing at <http://revoltandresignation.blogspot.com>. Jennifer’s contribution to *Nebula* comes in the form of “Target Greatland”, a poem which explores the greater world through the filter of the mundane.

His Masterpiece, Our Haunting: Banjo Paterson's Nation-Making Artefact.

By Christopher Kelen

This paper considers the late Victorian story of a late Victorian artefact, one with great resonance in contemporary Australia: the song which – though not the national anthem – happens to be that with which Australians most closely identify. As with the official anthem, ‘Advance Australia Fair’ (with which I dealt in a paper in *AJVS* Vol. 9) much of what interests the contemporary reader about ‘Waltzing Matilda’, concerns the twentieth century story of the nineteenth century song: how it achieved and retained its canonic status, how it has come and continues to embody the national ethos and pathos. Questions as to whether these songs might or might not represent Australia, officially or unofficially, are undoubtedly twentieth century questions.

As with my treatment of ‘Advance Australia Fair’, my aim here is to focus on a reading of the text in context. For the purposes of this paper, I shall forego some of the close reading of the lyrics developed elsewhere, in favour of historicizing the song, its story and their context. By context in this case I mean that of the song’s original composition and reception; in the Australia of those much less recent nineties. Specifically I wish to concern myself with the relationship between the song’s allegorical investment in the events of the decade leading up to Federation or putative Australian nationhood. While it will be necessary for these purposes to refer to the almost entirely twentieth century scholarship on the song, my aim in this paper is to focus on relevant events and non-events, texts and contexts, of the 1890’s.

The question of provenance

A first twentieth century question needing to be considered is that which has motivated most scholarly and pseudo-scholarly enquiry into the song, this being the question of provenance, both of lyrics and music. ‘Waltzing Matilda’ remains, despite its long history, a text of doubtful origin. The irony of the often folksy scholarship (especially that of Richard Magoffin, 1995, 1998a, 1998b, 2001) devoted to the song, is that

contention over the provenance of the lyrics and the tune has displaced the mystery which lies in the story that the singing buries.

What should there be to puzzle over – it's just a song after all? But there's been quite a bit of speculation over the years. According to *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore*:

'Waltzing Matilda' is probably the most continuously and heatedly debated single item of Australian folklore, there is virtually no aspect of the song's composition, provenance, arrangement and ownership that is not contentious in some way. (361)

Note that meaning doesn't rate a mention in this list, nor does the article go on to discuss the interpretation of the lyrics in any way. However, it is my view that the story of 'Waltzing Matilda' 'scholarship' and its failure to come to terms with the meaning of the song from the point of view of Australian identity and nationhood is instructive for the purposes of just such interpretation. Sublimated in the question of the song's origins looms the larger question, of the origins and orientation of those who sing it.

The song's origins have been much studied; its words and their meaning have gone largely unexamined. Oscar Mendelsohn, in the 'curtain raiser' to his 1966 book, *A Waltz with Matilda: On the trail of a song*, writes:

I could have made this book twice as long without padding, for I have put aside a pile of newspaper and magazine articles on the song that I have collected over the years, some of them quite amusing in their crackpottery. They will make an interesting gift to some public library or institution. (i)

The crackpottery and the folk scholarship are apt accompaniments to these tunes and these lyrics, which defy interpretation when they're not evading it altogether. To cut short a long and ongoing saga, there has been doubt over the authorship of the words and the music since the song's adoption in 1903 for the purposes of promoting Billy Tea.

Key players in the contention over provenance have been, in reverse chronological order: Magoffin, Mendelsohn, A.B. Paterson's biographer, Clement Semmler, Russell Ward, Sydney May (author of the 1944 work *The Story of Waltzing Matilda*, the first book length study of the subject) and Thomas Wood (an English tourist/musician whose 1934 work *Cobbers* helped to popularize the song).

The 'official' story is that A.B. Paterson wrote the words – probably in early 1895 – to fit music composed by Christina Macpherson, his host at Dagworth Station (near Kynuna, in Central Queensland). Backdrop to the composition was the violence of the shearers' strike/s of the early 1890's, these events culminating in what Richard Magoffin calls the 'Battle of Dagworth', in September of 1894. This is – in outline – the story told in any of Magoffin's numerous publications on the subject. Other accounts (Semmler, Radic, *Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore*) concur thus far. The questions of provenance are really about

how original the tune might be, what kinds of influences there might have been, and to what extent the lyrics or the story might have been influenced by or borrowed from anything Paterson had heard spoken or sung. The question of the authority of Paterson's claim is mainly related to the out-of-*oeuvre* nature of the lyric, and to Paterson's reluctance, when pressed, to engage with the question of its authorship. The question as to the priority of a particular score is complicated somewhat by the fact that there are two popular versions, commonly referred to as the Queensland (Macpherson's) and the Cowan (from Marie Cowan's 1903 song used in the advertisement for 'Billy Tea'). It's important to note that it's this latter – commercialised version – that Australians today generally recognize as the tune to 'Waltzing Matilda'¹.

Questions may well have been asked in the 1890's as to A.B. Paterson's role in the creation of the song; if so these questions only gained momentum with the popularity of the song, assured after the Great War and with the publication of various texts which investigated the song's origins. In brief, the positions of the key players in the last century's provenance debate are as follows: Mendelsohn believes A.B. Paterson did not write the song (5-6), Ward thinks it likely that the song has in it echoes of earlier work Paterson may have collected as a lad in the eighties,² for Wood the issue was never in question; all the rest defend Paterson from the sniping iconoclasm that things of national significance cannot but be subject to. Clement Semmler's argument is based on the defence of the Banjo's character. Semmler insists that Paterson must have written 'Waltzing Matilda' because 'he was a man of the highest integrity and honesty' who 'would never have allowed a lie to be perpetuated'; but Semmler goes on to present Paterson's actual claim to the authorship of the lyrics as weak and anecdotal and second hand (97).

From the Banjo's own pen

In fact it was A.B. Paterson himself, who, late in life, cast more doubt than anyone on his authorship of the lyrics. A key piece of evidence in the debate is a letter of 16th June, 1939 that Paterson wrote responding to an enquiry as to the origin of the song.

Dear Sir,

re your letter about the song 'Waltzing Matilda'.

I wrote it when traveling in Queensland. A Miss Macpherson afterwards Mrs McCall McCowan used to play a tune which she believed was an old Scottish tune but she did not know the name of it. I put words to it.

I am sorry to say that I do not know if it is in any of my books. My wife says it is not.

It may interest your literary circle to know that the tune is played in the Continent of Europe, as it is supposed to be the only existing Australian folk song. I have had enquiries from there

as to the origin of the tune but the lady who played it did not know who wrote it.

Yours truly

A B Paterson³

It's my intention to proceed from this and several related pieces of evidence to the conclusion that there is probably a hoax (or you could call it a reverse hoax) behind the authorship of the song. Let me begin by saying then that it's not implausible that Paterson felt some ambivalence over the issue of his authorship of a 'folk' song. How can a folk song be owned or authored in the conventional sense? Cultural capital looms large in the equation. This song was – as far as Paterson was concerned – the only song representing Australia as a folk song on the Continent of Europe, pride in its authorship might be tempered in the knowledge that the fact of authorship might threaten the folk status – and perhaps thus the popularity – of the song. So we see already how sundry ambivalences in the song and the version of authority it attests are matched, and necessarily, by the question of authority in provenance: if the author (A.B. Paterson) is who he is then the song isn't what it is (a folk song). By casting doubt on his own authorship, or better still by allowing others to cast such doubts, the heritage value of the people's artefact is guaranteed. Just as long as it gets a healthy enough start in life.

I'll return to the nuance of this putative perhaps not-quite-a-train-of-thought of the Banjo's in a moment. For now I'd like to consider aspects of gender in the question of the truth in Paterson's account. Paterson tells us 'A Miss Macpherson afterwards Mrs McCall McCowan used to play a tune which she believed was an old Scottish tune but she did not know the name of it'. Now it wouldn't be too great a leap from here to suggest that if there were anything doubtful about the provenance of the lyrics, Paterson was, in this letter, deflecting attention from that possibility onto the question of the origin of the tune. The uncertainty on the musical side ('believed', 'did not know') is matched with flat assurance as to the lyrics, delivered by the ultimate authority, the author: 'I put words to it'. As for the Miss Macpherson in the picture, note that she starts out with the indefinite article but ends up being 'the lady who played it': 'The lady who played it did not know who wrote it'. Here we have an uncertain woman – a woman becoming a less definite presence in the text – who doesn't know what she's playing.

I'm not so much interested here in the question of whether Paterson was lying or not, as in the relationships established in this text – as in the song – between men and women and the truths, or otherwise, in which they participate. I think there's a remarkable similarity between the letter and the song in this regard (a similarity which would make me, if anything, wish to award the song's authorship to Paterson). In each case, doubtful women (Matilda, McPherson) are at the centre of a tale made doubtful, by their presence or absence, as the case the may be.

Let's follow the trail a little further into Paterson's letter. Who is the authority on the subject of where the song is to be found? The wife. The poet asks his wife whether a particular work of his has been published in a book or not, that particular work just happening to be his most famous, and, as he acknowledges, in

fact the only Australian folk song known on the Continent of Europe. There's not a lot of credibility here.

The publication story, as far as Paterson is concerned, is as follows: although the song was purportedly written in 1895, it wasn't published among Paterson's works until *Saltbush Bill J.P.* in 1917. This circumstance is in itself mysterious and we shall return to it. As far as Paterson's 1939 letter is concerned, it seems curious that twenty-two years after its *first* publication an author should have to ask his wife whether or not his most famous work – a work in which he has just expressed inordinate pride – has been published in a book or not. Back to women and men and truth and certainty or otherwise, it seems that the men are doing the talking but the women are landed with responsibility for doubt and dubious assertion and even straightforward lies. Banjo gets to be self-effacing, careless of his fame, while Mrs Banjo is to blame for his not knowing what's what. In the story of 'Waltzing Matilda', apocrypha and mis-assertion become the province of women.

There is a parallel here with what I would describe as the culpable absence of women in the song. The missing Matilda of this story suffices as metonymy for the violence in the song, which is passed along, continually finding a new victim and furnishing new euphemisms in the process.

To return to the suggestion of a hoax, my claim is simply that it is plausible Paterson made doubtful his own claim to authorship in order to promote the song. He felt – and rightly as it turned out – that the song would do better if associated, but not too definitely, with him, and likewise if there were some mystery associated with its origins. Now I think on the evidence so far presented, accepting this claim involves a fair stretch of the imagination. Or rather it would, were it not for the fact that A.B. Paterson left quite explicit instructions about the manner in which he believed the imagination ought to be stretched. A number of his more famous works laud *bullshitting* as an art. ⁴

Of Barcoo Jim and Greenhide Billy

The work to which I would like to draw your attention now is a short story entitled 'His Masterpiece', which first appeared in *The Bulletin* of 4th April, 1891. 'The Masterpiece' tells the story of Greenhide Billy, 'a stockman on the Clarence and admittedly the biggest liar in the district'.

Sometimes a youngster would timidly ask Greenhide Billy about the *terra incognita*: 'What sort of a place is it, Billy? How big are the properties? How many acres had you in the place you were on?'

'Acres be d---d!' Billy would scornfully reply; 'hear him talking about acres! D'ye think we were blanked cockatoo selectors! Out there we reckon country by the hundred miles. You orter say, "How many thousand miles of country?" and then I'd understand you.'

It's the Northern Territory that's being discussed here. And so it goes on: the rainfall is measured in yards not inches. Greenhide Billy is a man who has seen 'bigger droughts, better country, fatter cattle, faster horses and cleverer dogs' than any other man on the Clarence. The competitive claims tend to the gratuitous: Greenhide Billy 'had seen blackfellows who could jump at least three inches higher than anyone had ever seen a blackfellow jump, and every bushman has seen or personally known a blackfellow who could jump over six feet'.

The story to be told in this hyperbolic tone and setting – the 'masterpiece' of the title – is of Barcoo Jim, a drover who falls asleep by the campfire just before the narrator inadvertently causes a stampede of a thousand head of wild cattle: 'wretches that'd charge you on sight; they were that handy with their horns they could skewer a mosquito'. The charge is caused by Greenhide Billy throwing a stick from the fire at a possum that had startled him. And the charge is through the brigalow scrub, described in the following terms: 'saplings about as thick as a man's arm, and that close together a dog can't open his mouth to bark in 'em'. The narrator's heroic herd-saving-ride through the brigalow, is described in the following modest terms: "And how I wasn't killed in the scrub, goodness only knows; for a man couldn't ride in the daylight where I did in the dark".

The listener in the narrative at this point is moved to comment, "That was a wonderful bit of ridin' you done, Billy ... It's a wonder you wasn't killed. I suppose your clothes was pretty well tore off your back with the scrub?" The answer: "Never touched a twig," said Billy'.

The narrative contrariness is there throughout; the interlocutor must ask and in asking show his ignorance, that he hasn't understood how things are in the extreme and inaccessible place of legend. Or, as the narrator tells us: Greenhide Billy's 'motto was "No surrender;" he never abated one jot of his statements; if anyone chose to remark on them, he made them warmer and stronger, and absolutely flattened out the intruder'.

This is the tongue in cheek stuff of myth, of epic, of Mikhail Bakhtin's 'peak times' (183-4) having *the piss* taken out of them, the Augean stables cleared of their finest product, all in time honoured Rabelaisian manner. In the end of the tale, Barcoo Jimmy is not only unhurt by the thousand head of wild cattle passing over the log under the shelter of which he'd dozed off, the stampeding herd have also failed to wake him at all. It's at this revelation that the story concludes with the laconic line, 'Then the men knocked the ashes out of their pipes and went to bed'.

Greenhide Billy's key discursive strategy is hyperbole, Paterson's is litotes. Unbelievable things happened, it was nothing at all. These tropes are either end of the one see-saw. Where Greenhide Billy has to make himself and his exploits larger than life at every turn, Paterson's drive is to make himself – not quite invisible – but rather to arrange things so that he will be caught – or perhaps not quite caught – in a disappearing act. The effect of the understatement, for instance in that letter making his wife responsible,

is to leave the reader wondering whether as author he's coming or going.

So much for the comparison between Greenhide Billy's and the story of the song; to continue the comparison with the story in the song, the marvellous thing about 'Waltzing Matilda' is that though the tale is entirely lacking in credibility, it's a story told with a completely straight face. Told that way by millions and over a century.

All in all, I do not think it implausible to consider 'Waltzing Matilda' – the story inside and out – A. B. Paterson's masterpiece, and in just the terms he has described in the story of that title. It's in this sense we may consider the song the greatest hoax ever in Australian letters.

How jolly was our swagman?

If the story lacks credibility as such, then perhaps there's something ironically apt in that. The land of immense and unknowable emptiness yields tales stranger than fiction – and better still, it refuses to yield them. The silence of the unknown, unnamed place is eloquent. Absence is personified in the form of the outcast. The swagman is in fact a breaker of the silence of the bush; he brings language where it can't be understood. He speaks (or sings) to his billy boiling, to his bedroll, to the sheep he's stealing, slaughtering, devouring. He's talking to himself, he's singing. He's domesticating his environs with words, with a tune, he's making everything jolly. Making it all OK, but it's not.

Beckoned into the human circle again, his only words are of defiance presaging a death, his own. It's this death impending that justifies the ironic application – formally Australian we might call it – of the epithet 'jolly'. This swagman is jolly – yes because he's had a free feed of sheep – but more importantly because that happened to be his last supper. This swagman is jolly as a redhead is Blue. The nation devoted to the cause of progress and empire, to the enlightening of another dark continent, sings of itself – unofficially of course – through the allegory of its anathema. And this makes perfect sense if we understand the text as myth. The swagman is the character whose extinction would prove the advent of progress, of order, of nation in the Australian sense. His is the reign of Saturn, his the generation before the commencement of the law, before the kind of primal curse from which sins might be visited or peace become possible.

We might read Banjo Paterson's rhetoric here as foreshadowing epic self-sacrifice of the futile nation-making variety, such as will be seen at Gallipoli twenty years down the track. Poverty drowns itself that we might all enjoy a prosperous future. Logic, in the conventional sense, is quite unnecessary to the myth, which describes time prior to and enabling the onset of logic. The story's lack of credibility in the novelistic sense is a screen for its more serious allegorical lacks. The swagman – himself a figure of absence – needs to be read as a displacement of Aboriginal presence from the story. There's something to quieten the conscience in this. We're not singing the blacks away when we sing 'Waltzing Matilda', we assume they're already gone. It's *terra nullius* we're singing. Note though that this character, in 'drowning

himself' – if we accept that version – is behaving in just the self-expiating manner that settlers observed among 'the last of his tribe'. But the swagman isn't a darkie, he's the white man where the blackfellow was, the white man in walkabout mode, the figure of would have been seen as a doomed regression. When we sing 'Waltzing Matilda' we sing away the dark side of ourselves, the no-hoper, the misery-guts-Henry-Lawson side. We sing away that Caliban, whom we remember from Prospero's view as 'this thing of darkness I acknowledge mine'. In fact, it might be argued, we sing away our conscience of the facts, and especially of those facts entailed in our own presence.

This swagman is a curious figure in Australian folklore. Silent, bar in defiance or out of the community of speech, he is suggestive of the inscrutable terrain through which he passes. He and it both defy the allegorical readings into which they lead us. One can't help feeling just a hint of postmodernity here, of the *Waiting for Godot* kind. Everything in the swagman's landscape demands and refuses to mean. The silence begins in oils and daguerreotype; the figure has all but vanished by the time the talkies start, but as it turns out, there is a resurgence just at that moment, with the Great Depression.

A figure of modernity, or of the long odds outside? The habitus of the swagman carries a silence suggestive of the *bricoleur*, the *flanneur*, of various prototypical wanderers, quixotic yes and Rabelaisian too, as we've seen in the case of Greenhide Billy. We should remember that swagman is just the flipside of drover, a swagman is a drover down on his luck. Christopher Brennan's wanderer is evoked after the event; and well before we have Ulysses, Gilgamesh. The archetypal silence of the swagman – the figure of the track – provides us with a floating signifier in and of the landscape, but a very male kind of signifier. His progress makes it mean.

The great unwashed Australian Odysseus – an Odysseus of the inland, sarcastically enough – may be read as condensation of the explorer and the Aborigine, and so represents for us the first and last of his tribe, a figure we find in A.D. Hope's 'ultimate men' in his ironic anthem, 'Australia'. The swagman, opposite of progress' image, is the atavistic white man, fated to drift from society. He is the one with whom the vast wilderness of civilisation's outside has taken up. This man is a celebration of our fear. What makes him jolly is the terror of impending death in the loneliest of places.

Note that unnatural death in the wilderness – as elsewhere – is the result of human agency. But how do we come by – and to – this vastness which brings death, against all odds, precisely because it is possessed? As in Odysseus' case, the key to the rights and wrongs of the story, the clues that will lead us to detect crime and expect punishment, are all to do with hospitality, its ethos and its abuse.

How to read the landscape in terms of this ethical investment? The problem is that the condensation of the explorer and the indigene conflates the host and guest positions. A critique of this conflation would draw attention to some of the questions with which Australia remains as concerned today as it was at Federation: Who is welcome in Australia and who is not? Who is on the welcoming committee? By what rights does the nation include and exclude? By what ethical motions does the nation recognise itself or fail to recognise where it has been? Such questions should lead us to ask how jolly is this swagman-in-allegory

of ours. Such questions point to the radical ambivalence Australians sing, in the world-wide mode of self welcoming, when they represent themselves to themselves in this song.

This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine

Acknowledging the darkness, his own or anyone else's, was something at which Henry Lawson was much better than Banjo Paterson. Witness the situation he describes in his story 'The Drover's Wife', first published in 1892 in *While the Billy Boils*:

Only last week a gallows-faced swagman – having satisfied himself that there were no men in the place – threw his swag down on the veranda and demanded tucker. She gave him something to eat; he expressed his intention of staying for the night. It was sundown then, she got a batten from the sofa, loosened the dog, and confronted the stranger, holding the batten in one hand and the dog's collar with the other. 'Now you go!' she said. He looked at her and at the dog, said 'All right, mum,' in a cringing tone, and left. She was a determined looking woman... (in Davis and Stewart, 6)

Our swagman here (note gallows-faced) is more threat than victim (just ask your nearest sheep for confirmation). In fact he is like many of Lawson's characters – and like the drover's wife as well – both threat and victim. Lawson's gritty swagman, no more than a sketch, is a product of his objective conditions, a novelistic character with nothing epic about him. Conflict and its potential are clearly gendered in Lawson's story. The woman can be threatened by the man because she's a woman and he's a man.

Absence is a theme but Lawson's story is the third person account of a female protagonist for whom males are absent or to be made absent. No men around but you can see where they've been – there are the kids. There's the droving down on his luck husband, there's the swagman who imposes on her, there's the snake. One needn't be too much of a Freudian to see that this is a woman pursued by the phallus and haunted by its lack. The maleness is all one – the sundowner hassling her could easily be her own down on his luck husband. Is the husband importuning some other woman in like circumstances elsewhere?

There's nothing jolly about these circumstances which pit all comers – from the dog and the snake up – in a ceaseless and sordid struggle for a basic level of survival. Nor is Lawson's the only swagman's tale along these lines. Barbara Baynton's 1896 story 'The Chosen Vessel' is far grimmer, ending with the lonely woman's rape and murder. The tone and the generic investments of Baynton's and Lawson's swagmen are as far removed from Paterson's as they could be. Yet Paterson's anonymous wanderer retains the whiff of death. With this observation we recognise that 'Waltzing Matilda' is not so out-of-*oeuvre* for Paterson as it might seem. From 'A Bush Christening' to 'The Geebung Polo Club' and from the 'Cast-Iron Canvasser' to 'The Man from Ironbark' here was an author who was always jolly up the bush to jolly up Australia: a one-man morale machine.

In Baynton and in Lawson's bush something terrible is anticipated at any turn, or it's already happened. It may be forgotten within the frame of the story, but it won't be dismissed; that's what the story's for.

Bush all around – bush with no horizons for the country is flat. No ranges in the distance. The bush consists of stunted, rotten, native-apple trees. No undergrowth. Nothing to relieve the eye save the darker green of a few she-oaks which are sighing above the narrow, almost waterless creek. Nineteen miles to the nearest sign of civilisation – a shanty on the main road.
(in Davis & Stewart, 1)

That's Lawson's setting. What the drover's wife gives, she can ill afford to give – she gives under duress, in the hope that she might protect herself.

But what could there be to give in this landscape? Who could be generous to whom here? Extreme uncton for the swagman is in his drowning puddle. The billabong becomes a kind of vessel – chosen or not – from which he, the jinnee, sings. His ghost may terrify or delight those who pass by; it will not be released by them. Radical ambivalence is matched in the reciprocity of relations implied by the song: nor will the ghost release those who hear it.

Lawson's landscape is not devoid of power relations, but there is an absence of privilege, certainly. There are no other-than-alienated characters. It is lack, on the social scale, that places these characters where we find them. By contrast, in Paterson's story we are aware of a hierarchy of privilege. More important for our purposes though, in 'Waltzing Matilda' absence is privileged, or we should say rather there is a hierarchy of absences, inside and outside of the story, a hierarchy such as one might consider characteristic of a place founded on the twin evils of exile and dispossession. To be in these landscapes is to be in exile, to be absented from the story of civilisation. Inside the story, characters find themselves absented from the action as it proceeds; a sheep, a swagman give way, in the survival of the fittest, to their betters higher up the food chain. The ghost at last is the perfect expression of this ambivalence: a ghost is an absence *cum* presence, a present absence. Haunted is how you would feel were you to think too closely on this event. It's important to remember though that the characters *in* the story, however past the pale we may consider them, are nevertheless privileged by their presence in the story, privileged over women, Aborigines, native fauna.

In Paterson's as in Lawson's landscape, there's no hospitality and there's no mateship. Instead, there's miserable, lonely, meaningless death. What of the credibility problem we mentioned before, that the action isn't properly motivated? It hardly matters when there's no God overseeing the scene. There's just the existential terror of being nowhere, finding it fatal. But no, in 'Waltzing Matilda' we have a tale so devoid of sentiment that its principal event, the death it presents, is too sudden, too meaningless for terror. This lack of sentiment in the story as told is supremely ironic when we consider the cultural value of the story and the song for Australians.

How to ethically situate oneself among these revelations? I, for one, think it's a wonderful thing Australians

sing insensibly of the cold senselessness of their presence. It is apt of us to do so, if only we would think of it. Would that kind of attitude make me a patriot? Only, I hope, in the best and most perverse of Australian senses.

Truth is under the tale which haunts us; it is in lacks and absences made homely. If this song and its evocations are allowed their central place in defining Australian-ness then this signification seems to be an essentially ironic one. The unofficial song is taken – long after the event – as presaging the unconvincing nation. It reveals an ironic nationhood: nation installed in the absence of the signs of nation. We need the allegorical reading to get there but in Australia, ‘Waltzing Matilda’, the national song, presents itself as anti-allegory: the story of what did not happen. The techniques by which the song’s ironic investments are established rest on allegorical re/framing, on imagining truths outside of, and to which, the story can refer: an audience of people addressed or questioned or advised, a socio-legal reality in which crimes such as theft have meaning. At our souls’ peril we ignore the fact that the swagman’s theft is petty compared with the thefts on a grand scale which place him somewhere and give him something to steal. And so the anti-allegory points us in the direction of the anti-hoax - text and context implicate each other in a synecdochic progression. What’s inside is what’s outside, the merry-go-round of citation and doubtful authority goes creaking on. No one hops off to see that the hoax and/or anti-hoax concerns the nation sung; its illusions of mateship, of justice, of progress on the human scale. The point for the reader in 2004 being not so much that this song is representative of those other nation-making nineties, rather, that it’s through these symbolic means that millennial Australia chooses to represent the myth of its becoming.

The ‘Waltzing Matilda’ story needs to be examined/re-read precisely because the words in which it consists are regularly disappeared, because where they are recalled they are emptied of meaning and sung as merely conventional phrases, as formulae the purpose of which is to include and exclude listeners, and without being seen to do so.

Ghosts may be heard? But will they be? Is a ghost allowed to speak?

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Notes

¹ Oscar Mendelsohn's account of the Billy Tea connection is as follows:

About 1906 a Sydney firm of tea merchants called Inglis commenced to give away printed copies of the song as a 'free' gift with packets of their 'Billy' brand of tea. The words were acknowledged as by A.B. Paterson and the music was designated 'as arranged by Marie Cowan.' At the foot appears 'Price 1/6 nett. Printed and published for the proprietors by Turner and Henderson, Litho., Sydney.' The accountant of the Inglis firm was named Cowan and Marie Cowan was his wife. (2)

² Speculating on the veracity of various claims as to the provenance of the song and the likelihood of getting to the bottom of things, Russell Ward told his audiences (at the ANU and the University of Melbourne) in a 1954 Commonwealth Literary Fund Lecture:

...the note of social protest is basic in the folk ballads as it is in Lawson, Furphy and much other and later Australian literary work, but except in 'Waltzing Matilda' and 'A Bushman's Song', it is conspicuously absent from most of Paterson's published verse. For him all bushmen, as such, are noble and romantic, or at least appealing figures. The villains are city people – unemployed on the Domain, or absentee graziers who live upon the work of bushmen without sharing any of their hardships. When Salt Bush Bill, the bullocky, fights with the squatter's minions for the grass to feed his beasts, the story is told humorously and there is no real bitterness in the quarrel. Yet the jolly swagman's defiance of the squatter and the troopers is just as bitter – in the same off handedly laconic way – as was the defiance of Bold Jack Donahoe or the Wild Colonial Boy.

Ward reckons that there would be nothing odd about this were we to suppose that Paterson based 'Waltzing Matilda' on an old bush ballad that he had picked up along the way. Ward takes seriously some contemporary suggestions that there had been a folk version of 'Waltzing Matilda' current in the outback in 1870's

and 1880's:

If there was, Paterson may well have heard it once or twice during his boyhood on the Monaro Tableland and retained it shadowily in his sub-conscious mind. When, as a young man of twenty-six, he heard the tune again, he would have been reminded of the forgotten bush ballad. In writing down the words after a lapse of so many years, he might well have been uncertain how much he remembered and how much he improvised on the spot but, being an honest man, he took no steps to publish the song as his own. (Cited from a carbon copy of the lecture sent by Ward to Mendelsohn, in Mendelsohn's papers, held in the Mitchell Library.)

³ Copy of this letter is held at the State Library of New South Wales, Mitchell Library branch; original in possession of Mr L. Copping, A.C.T., 1970; ML document ML MSS 6000.

⁴ A nice prose example is 'The Cast Iron Canvasser' (Davis and Stewart, 96-105).

Darkness Beyond the Lighthouse: Virginia Woolf, Charles Baudelaire, and Literary Modernism.

By Benjamin D. Carson

“A work of art is abundant, spills out, gets drunk, sits up with you all night and forgets to close the curtains, dries your tears, is your friend, offers you a disguise, a difference, a pose. Cut and cut it through and there is still a diamond at the core. Skim the top and it is rich. The inexhaustible energy of art is transfusion for a worn-out world. When I read Virginia Woolf she is to my spirit, waterfall and wine.”

—Jeanette Winterson¹

“The world is ugly. / And the people are sad.”

—Wallace Stevens²

In Virginia Woolf’s worn-out world—a world that “hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light, / nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain” (Arnold 136)—the “inexhaustible energy of art [was],” for her, “transfusion” (Winterson 65). It was in and through art that Woolf found solace—solace from modern life, a life that was too fast for her, and a world in which, as Cam Ramsay suggests, “There is no God” (Woolf 207). It was through art that Woolf was able to stave off despair for as long as she did; for she, like the old man in Hemingway’s well-lighted café, knew that “[life] was all a nothing and a man [sic] was nothing too . . . it was all *nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada*” (Hemingway 291). She knew “we perished, each alone” (Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* 207).³ So like Baudelaire, in the midst of a universe in which, as Marx said, “all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned” (Marx 83), Woolf became her “own king, priest and God” (Baudelaire, “Exhibition” 122). And finding the world “all in scraps and fragments” (Woolf, *TTL* 90), she “raised a [pen]: swung it high in air” (91) and forged something “eternal

and ... immovable” from the “transient, the fleeting, the contingent” (Baudelaire, “Painter” 403).

Though a number of postmodern critics, including Toril Moi and Pamela Caughie, have claimed Woolf as one of their own, it is my contention that *To the Lighthouse* is quintessentially modern, and that the lens through which *To the Lighthouse* is best illuminated is provided by Baudelaire in his important essay “The Painter of Modern Life.” There Baudelaire argues, “Modernity is the transient, the fleeting, the contingent; it is one half of art, the other being the eternal and the immovable” (403).⁴ Modern life, as Woolf understood, is “not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end” (Woolf, “Modern” 189). And it is from, by and through this “luminous halo” that we abstract “Truth”—reality behind the appearance, the “eternal and the immovable.” But the existence of *a priori* Truth has been called into question by postmodernism; and what distinguishes postmodernists, in all their various guises, from modernists is the latter’s inexorable “pursuit of truth” (Woolf, *TTL* 32).

While Woolf sought the eternal and the immovable in fleeting moments of being, postmodernists simply abandon the search for a fundamental, ahistorical Truth, what Jean-Francois Lyotard calls a “grand narrative” (xxiii). Postmodernists, in effect, cut Baudelaire’s definition of modernity in half, opting only for “the transient, the fleeting, the contingent.” Through art, Woolf, like Lily Briscoe and Mrs. Ramsay, attempted to recover the “unity of the whole,” to subdue the chaos loosed upon the world by capitalist modernity (Woolf, *TTL* 53). In the interim years between World War I and World War II, hypersensitive artists like Woolf felt the “sea [was] eating the ground we stand on” (*TTL* 44).

By focusing too narrowly on the novel’s textual level or its form, critics who see in Woolf’s work as proto-postmodernist, tend to ignore the importance that the “pursuit of truth” held for her (32). It is Woolf’s “pursuit” that is important here.⁵ In such uncertain times, a Prufrockian time of “alienation,” of “political anxiety,” of “moral bottomlessness,” a time in which the “foundations of religion and ethics, the integrity of governments and selves, the survival of a redemptive culture” were all being called into question (Levenson 5), a center—or Truth—was needed, something in which one could believe, something which would quell such pervasive anxiety. As Derrida argued in “Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” it is the concept of a centered structure, or a “full presence which is beyond play,” that provides a sense of stability, a solid, untouchable refuge from the hungry sea (279). He writes,

the concept of a centered structure is in fact the concept of a play based on a fundamental ground, a play constituted on the basis of a fundamental immobility and a reassuring certitude, which itself is beyond the reach of play. And on the basis of this certitude anxiety can be mastered, for anxiety is invariably the result of a certain mode of being implicated in the game, of being caught by the game, of being as it were at stake in the game from the outset. (279)

Through Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe in *To the Lighthouse* we get a glimpse of Woolf trying to master anxiety. As Keith May rightfully argues, the central theme of *To the Lighthouse* is the “creation of order out of confusion” (91); and for there to be order there must be a center, something around which all else

can be organized.

What makes *To the Lighthouse* a representative text of literary modernism is its unrelenting quest for something solid, something that doesn't, in Marx's words, "melt into air." In *Sexual/ Textual Politics* Toril Moi argues that "Woolf ... seems to practice what we might now call a 'deconstructive' form of writing, one that engages with and thereby exposes the duplicitous nature of discourse. In her own textual practice, Woolf exposes the way in which language refuses to be pinned down to an underlying essential meaning" (9). By focusing too narrowly on language, though, and the "moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when, in the absence of a center or origin, everything became discourse" (Derrida 280), Moi ignores Woolf's need for something stable, something solid—"something to base her vision on" (Woolf, *TTL* 181). Yes, the "vision must be perpetually remade," and therein lies the "pursuit." But that on which "her vision" is based must be eternal and immovable. As Cam Ramsay saw, as the waves ate up the "ground we stand on ... The Lighthouse became immovable, and the line of the distant shore became fixed" (44, 183). While Woolf does "[seem] to practice what we might now call a 'deconstructive' form of writing," it is, in my mind, a mistake to ignore the ways in which Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe, in *To the Lighthouse*, struggle to give shape to their worlds. If the central theme of the novel is the attempt to make order out of chaos, to reconstruct a whole out of fragments, then to relegate Mrs. Ramsay and Lily to an irreparable world, a world out of which no order can be made, is to exile them to Barth's Funhouse—"a place of fear and confusion" (Barth 32).

Like Moi, Herbert and Caughie see Woolf as a postmodern writer. Herbert oxymoronically refers to Woolf as a "postmodern modernist" (Herbert 10), while Caughie argues that Woolf's "works are susceptible to analysis by means of this [postmodern] category" (Caughie 21). While these arguments are useful, and even marginally persuasive, it seems to me that a more appropriate way of reading *To the Lighthouse* is by way of Baudelaire, whose definition of modernity most effectively illuminates the central tension of the novel, the need for order and the reality of chaos.

"How could any Lord have made this world?" Mrs. Ramsay asks, early in the novel (64). "With her mind she had always seized the fact that there is no reason, order, justice: but suffering, death, the poor. There was no treachery too base for the world to commit; she knew that. No happiness lasted; she knew that. She knitted with firm composure ..." (64). There is no God in Mrs. Ramsay's life, certainly no benevolent God. She "called life terrible, hostile, and quick to pounce on you if you gave it a chance" (60). So Mrs. Ramsay, not unlike the speaker in "Dover Beach," takes refuge in a relationship. While her relationship with Mr. Ramsay is loveless, it functions as a buffer to the knowledge that "we perished, each alone" (191).⁶ Mrs. Ramsay's marriage, her children, especially James and Cam, shelter her from the "intensity of [her] isolation and the waste of the ages and the perishing of the stars" (36). And though she is well aware of the fact that this shelter is permeable, that "no happiness lasted," she encourages Minta to marry: "... Minta must, they all must marry, since in the whole world whatever laurels might be tossed to her ... or triumphs won by her ... and here she saddened, darkened, and came back to her chair, there could be no disputing this: an unmarried woman ... an unmarried woman has missed the best of life" (49). It is Mrs. Ramsay's hope that Minta's marriage will be happier than her own, though it's clear that that probably won't be the case.

One evening, as Mrs. Ramsay sits knitting (an act of creation, however seemingly insignificant), she “felt, one helped oneself out of solitude reluctantly by laying hold of some little odd or end, some sound, some sight. She listened ...there was only the sound of the sea She saw the light again She looked at the *steady light*” (64-65; emphasis mine). In her world, a world with “no reason, order, justice” (64), a world where all is transient and in flux (a flux represented by the “sound of the sea,” the “rough waves”), the light from the lighthouse provides something “steady,” an intimation of immutability. As Mrs. Ramsay watched the light, “she felt, It is enough! It is enough!” (65). The light from the lighthouse is not unlike the light of Hemingway’s clean, well-lighted café. For Mrs. Ramsay, as for the old man who “like[s] to stay late at the café,” the light is enough; it *must* be enough amidst “a nothing [she] knew too well” (Hemingway 291). Ironically, in a very different context, Woolf, in an attempt to explain the significance of the lighthouse, wrote, “I meant *nothing* by The Lighthouse. One has to have a central line down the middle of the book to hold the design together” (qtd. in Caramagno 95). In other words, without a center there is no “intelligible order” (95), even if that center is, ultimately, *nothing*. And, like Woolf, what Mrs. Ramsay wants is order. It was “unity that she desired” (Woolf, *TTL* 51). However unsatisfactory her marriage, it was within the confines of her life with Mr. Ramsay and her children that she attempts to find order and, finally, meaning.

It is through Lily that we come to see and understand Mrs. Ramsay’s impulse to make life whole; and it is *because of* Mrs. Ramsay that Lily attempts to make her life whole: to make life like a work of art; to capture the eternal and the immovable in the transient, the fleeting; to make order out of chaos; and to prevent all that is solid from melting into air. In an epiphanous moment, Lily asks herself, “What is the meaning of life?” Her answer is of paramount importance:

That was all—a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years. The great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark; here was one. This, that, and the other; herself and Charles Tansley and the breaking wave; Mrs. Ramsay bringing them together; Mrs. Ramsay saying, ‘Life stand still here’; Mrs. Ramsay *making of the moment something permanent* (as in another sphere Lily herself tried to make of the moment something permanent)—this was of the nature of a revelation. In the midst of chaos there was shape; this eternal passing and flowing (she looked at the clouds going and the leaves shaking) was struck into stability. Life stand still here, Mrs. Ramsay said. ‘Mrs. Ramsay! Mrs. Ramsay!’ she repeated. She owed it all to her. (161; emphasis mine)

As Lily’s response suggests, it is through art, or life as art, that the eternal can be found, found in the “passing and flowing,” the “little separate incidents” of modern life:

And what was even more exciting, she felt, too, as she saw Mr. Ramsay bearing down and retreating, and Mrs. Ramsay sitting with James in the window and the cloud moving and the tree bending, how life, from being made up of little separate incidents which one lived one by one, became curled and *whole* like a wave which bore one up with it and threw one down with it, there, with a dash on the beach. (47; emphasis mine)

Like Mrs. Ramsay, Lily sought balance, and she sought that balance through art, through painting. She modeled herself after Mrs. Ramsay, and when Mrs. Ramsay died Lily was set adrift. “Really, she was angry with Mrs. Ramsay” (149). Without Mrs. Ramsay to distract Mr. Ramsay, she was left “to ward off Mr. Ramsay and his exactingness” by herself (149). And his presence distracted her. He kept her from finishing her painting, and more importantly, from completing her vision. This is deeply troubling to Lily, because it is through art that she seeks and ultimately finds balance. But “for whatever reason she could not achieve that razor edge of balance between two opposite forces; Mr. Ramsay and the picture” (193). Mr. Ramsay, the paragon of rationalism, is consumed by the fact that “he reached Q” but will never get to R (33): “A shutter, like a leathern eyelid of a lizard, flickered over the intensity of his gaze and obscured the letter R. In that flash of darkness he heard people saying—he was a failure—that R was beyond him. He would never reach R. On to R, once more. R—” (34). (Here one hears an echo of Prufrock: “I should have been a pair of ragged claws / Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.”) Such extreme rationalism, Jürgen Habermas argues, is indicative of the “project of modernity formulated in the 18th century by the philosophers of the Enlightenment” (9).

This over valuation of rationalism, along with “objective science, universal morality and law” (Habermas 9), and “constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production” (Marx 83), increases the threat that “the life world, whose traditional substance has already been devalued, will become more and more impoverished” (Habermas 9). Mr. Ramsay’s rationalism has effectively alienated him from his family— especially James, who, at one point, thinks, “had there been an axe handy, or a poker, any weapon that would have gashed a hole in his father’s breast and killed him, there and then, [he] would have seized it” (4). While Mrs. Ramsay is “a sponge sopped full of human emotions,” Mr. Ramsay is an unfeeling “lizard” (though his own loneliness, admittedly, betrays at every turn the blind optimism of rationalist, enlightenment thinking) (32). The dehumanization that follows from Mr. Ramsay’s kind of thinking, caused in no small measure by the revolutionizing of the instruments of production, is one of the characteristics of capitalist modernity. The elevation of “reason” above all other human faculties, Mrs. Ramsay would agree, leads to an “astonishing lack of consideration for other people’s feelings[;] to rend the thin veils of civilisation so wantonly, so brutally, was to her so horrible an outrage of human decency ...” (32).⁷

It is useful to think here of Mr. Ramsay as the “one half of art” in Baudelaire’s formulation of modernity, the “transient, the fleeting, the contingent” (Baudelaire 403). Lily’s picture, then, represents the other half of art—the “eternal and the immovable” (403). These are the “two opposite forces,” “those masses,” Lily—and I’d argue, Woolf—is trying to “balance” (Woolf, *TTL* 193, 148). And while “the art of painting represents all forms of art” in *To the Lighthouse*, it is important to compare briefly the way the narrative works and the way painting functions in the novel (May 91).

Narratives move in time, and though a good period of time passes during which Lily is completing her painting (ten years), the urge and urgency to complete the painting is grounded in a desire to stop time. It is a desire for unity, to make something whole out of the fragments, life’s “little separate incidents” (Woolf, *TTL* 47). Lily’s act of painting in *To the Lighthouse* parallels Woolf’s act of writing. In other words, painting and narrating in this novel collapse into one another. Lily paints for the same reason (and

at the same time as) Woolf writes: to create order out of chaos; to find the eternal and immutable in the “transient and the fleeting”; to make life stand still. In “The Lighthouse” Lily is reminiscing, looking back nostalgically and reliving past moments spent with the Ramsays, before, that is, Mrs. Ramsay, Andrew and Prue all died. In a passage that echoes a line from Eliot’s “Prufrock”—“I have measured out my life with coffee spoons”—Lily thinks, “How aimless it was, how chaotic, how unreal it was . . . looking at her empty coffee cup. Mrs. Ramsay dead; Andrew killed; Prue dead too— repeat it as she might, it roused no feeling in her” (146). She then remembers her unfinished painting: “When she had sat there last ten years ago there had been a little sprig or leaf pattern on the table-cloth, which she had looked at in a moment of revelation. There had been a problem about a foreground of a picture. Move the tree to the middle, she had said. She had never finished that picture. She would paint that picture now” (147).

It is in and through painting—by “remembering, repeating, working through”—that Lily brings shape to her life (Brooks 298): “Repetition, remembering, reenactment,” Peter Brooks argues, “are the ways in which we replay time, so that it may not be lost. We are thus always trying to work back through time to that transcendent home, knowing of course that we cannot. All we can do is subvert or, perhaps better, pervert time: which is what narrative does” (298). For Lily, as for Woolf, it is through art that one “pervert[s] time,” and pursues “truth,” “that transcendent home” (298). It is through art that one balances the transient, contingent and fleeting forces of modern life with the eternal and the immovable. Lily, like Woolf, takes her art seriously. She didn’t like “playing at painting, playing at the one thing one did not play at,” art (Woolf, *TTL* 149). While for Woolf it was the pen, for Lily “a brush” was the “one dependable thing in a world of strife, ruin, chaos” (150). Throughout the course of the novel Lily comes to terms with the fact that, while people die, art endures. Lily “looked at her picture. That would have been his [Mr. Carmichael’s] answer, presumably—how ‘you’ and ‘I’ and ‘she’ pass and vanish; nothing stays; all changes; but not words, not paint” (179).

It was in a “moment of insight” (Steinberg 162), whether Mrs. Ramsay’s moment while serving Boeuf en Daube or Lily’s “catching sight of the salt cellar on the pattern,” that Woolf felt something real could be found (Woolf, *TTL* 102). In “A Sketch of the Past” Woolf wrote that each shock or moment of insight “is a token of some real thing behind appearances; and I make it real by putting it into words . . . make it whole” (qtd. in Steinberg 162). Lily transmuted her “moment of revelation” by putting it on canvas (Woolf, *TTL* 147). She took the transient, the fleeting, the contingent and “ma[d]e it whole.” She made it into something that will endure.⁸

In *To the Lighthouse* art—the art of Lily Briscoe, and of Mrs. Ramsay, whose “life [is] a work of art”—functions as an equalizing force, a way of balancing (a “razor edge of balance” no less) “two opposite forces,” the transient and the eternal (161, 193). In a world where “There is no God” (207), in a “*place of fear and confusion*,” art is of paramount importance (Barth 32). Art, like the light from the lighthouse, like the light in Hemingway’s café, is the only light in all this darkness, a world of chaos, a “world of misery” (Woolf, *TTL* 47). What writing was for Woolf, and what painting is for Lily, is what music is for Sonny, in Baldwin’s “Sonny’s Blues”:

All I know about music is that not many people ever really hear it. And even then, on the rare occasions when something opens within, and the music enters, what we mainly hear, or hear corroborated, are personal, private, vanishing evocations. *But the man who creates the music is hearing something else, is dealing with the roar rising from the void and imposing order on it as it hits the air.* What is evoked in him, then, is of another order, more terrible because it has no words, and triumphant, too, for that same reason. And his triumph, when he triumphs, is ours. (137; emphasis mine)

Music, like painting and writing, like all Art, *attempts* to “triumph over life,” to express a Truth or some primal understanding or awareness about life that is necessary when confronted with a reality that is cold and often hard to bear. As Sonny puts it, “it’s not so much to *play*. It’s to *stand* it, to be able to make it at all. On any level ... In order to keep from shaking to pieces” (Baldwin 131; emphasis original). Like Sonny, Lily paints to impose order on an existential universe. And while Lily knows that her art—like Shakespeare’s dramas or Callimachus’s “handiwork,” in Yeats’ “Lapis Lazuli” (294)— may be “hung in the attics” or “rolled up and flung under a sofa” (Woolf, *TTL* 179), the desire, the need to capture an eternal, immutable truth through art will endure. Lily understands that “All things fall and are built again” (Yeats 294); she understands that “the vision must be perpetually remade” (Woolf, *TTL* 181). Yet, the speaker in Yeats’ great poem, “Lapis Lazuli,” would have us believe “those that build them again are gay” (295).

But the reality is that Woolf, an artist who spent her life making and remaking her vision, finally committed suicide. Woolf, like T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden, Evelyn Waugh and Oscar Wilde, abandoned the view that the light from the Lighthouse, the light of the café, the music from Sonny’s piano, or the music from the pipe of the Chinaman in Yeats’ “Lapis Lazuli,” were “enough!” (Woolf, *TTL* 65). Baudelaire saw art as a precarious balance between two opposing forces, the fleeting and the eternal. Eliot’s conversion to Anglicanism, like the religious conversions of Auden, Waugh, and Wilde,⁹ can be read, then, as a failure of art to “triumph over life.” It can be read as Eliot et al. opting for the “other” half of art—the eternal and the immovable—over the fleeting, the transient, the contingent.

When the belief in Art as a sufficient replacement for God (or an Absolute)—as a sufficient mechanism by which some measure of certainty can be attained—began to break down, Woolf bowed out all together; unlike Auden, Waugh, Eliot and, inexplicably, Wilde. The latter four, including Wilde on his deathbed, opted for the eternal and the immutable found in Christian faith. The feeling of *nausea* brought on by the realization that “things are entirely what they appear to be—and behind them ... there is nothing” (Sartre 131) became too strong, and so they took the “leap of faith” that Kierkegaard argued, in *The Concept of Anxiety* and later in *The Sickness Unto Death*, is the only cure for dread. Woolf was unable to make this leap. When the transient, fleeting and contingent side of modernity simply overpowered Eliot’s, Wilde’s, Waugh’s, and Auden’s artistic sensibility; when the belief that art serves as a sufficient bulwark against the tide of modernity could no longer be sustained, they turned toward a religious system grounded in the eternal. Capitalist modernity and the concomitant affects of rationalism and industrialization, in effect, prevailed over the belief in the power of art to tap into Truth, precluding the possibility of finding in art that which is immutable. So religion became their refuge, their clean, well-lighted café. These poets could no

longer imagine the three Chinamen of “Lapis Lazuli” happy, content to create art—capturing the eternal in the temporal (art) being the source of that happiness—in the midst of war and ruin, and the flux of the modern world.

In *The Creation of Value*, Irving Singer asks, do philosophers, poets, writers, or artists, what he calls “great achievers” (13), do they not “reveal how [life] can be turned into a work of art—not a comedy perhaps, or even a melodrama that has a happy ending, but a tragedy that plumbs the depths? Tragedies impose mythic and aesthetic coordinates upon some particular reality chosen for imaginative re-creation” (13). In the face of a tragic post-WWI world, and WWII looming on the horizon, Virginia Woolf, suffering deeply from ontological anxiety, was unable to make the “leap of faith”, and lost the energy to imaginatively re-create life as art. “Since the world arises out of nothing and will someday return to it,” as philosophers like Heidegger, in *Being and Time*, and Sartre, in *Nausea*, maintained, “nothing really matters” (Singer 74). If art no longer mattered, then for Woolf, neither did life.

What we now call postmodernism can be characterized by the abandonment of what Baudelaire called the “other” half of art, “the eternal and the immovable.” Postmodern artists do what Eliot, Waugh, Auden, Wilde and Woolf were unable to do. They’ve abandoned what Derrida calls “the concept of centered structure,” and have, one is lead to believe, learned to be comfortable with their anxiety, the uncertainty that comes with the transient, the fleeting and the contingent. Postmodern artists have given up the search for a whole, having given up the notion that there ever was a whole that, through the vicissitudes of modernization—the constant revolutionizing of the instruments of productions—became fragmented.

In *To the Lighthouse* we see Lily, and by extension, Woolf, struggling to find a center, struggling “in the midst of chaos” to find “shape,” a stable place on which to stand (161). It is through her painting that Lily is able to stave off the darkness: “With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision” (209). The intimation here is that this vision, though it captures the eternal and the immovable, “would be destroyed” (208). Like the darkness that awaits the old man outside the clean, well-lighted café, there is darkness beyond the lighthouse. But with this knowledge, indeed *despite* this knowledge, “one must force it on” (193), one must take up the brush, or the pen, “the one dependable thing in a world of strife, ruin, chaos” (150), and build again. As with Camus’ Sisyphus, one must imagine Lily happy.¹⁰

Such a vision, while certainly bleak, contains a modicum of hope. The point of the proverbial journey, as the saying goes, is not to arrive. Meaning, for modernists, is found in the search. It is found in the quest to re-fashion a whole out of an impossible number of “scraps and fragments” (Woolf, *TTL* 90).¹¹ It is found in the precarious balance between the fleeting and the eternal. To abandon the search, to abandon the journey *to* the Lighthouse, is either to accept the anxiety that comes with not having “something to base [a] vision on,” as postmodernists have done, or it is to embrace the Lighthouse and say, “It is enough!” And it is through Lily Briscoe’s, Mrs. Ramsay’s and ultimately Woolf’s search for something eternal and immutable *in* the transient, the fleeting, and the contingent that Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse* has become a

seminal work of literary modernism, and in its awful beauty, a transfusion for a worn-out world.

Notes

¹ See “A Gift of Wings (with reference to *Orlando*)” in Winterson’s *Art Objects: Essays on Ecstasy and Effrontery* (1995).

² From “Gubbinal,” in *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* (1990).

³ Hereafter, *To the Lighthouse* will be abbreviated *TTL*.

⁴ Though Baudelaire doesn’t make this distinction, I understand literary modernism to be a response to capitalist modernity. For an account of this important distinction, see Chapter Two, “Modernity and modernism,” in David Harvey’s *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1990), as well as Chapter Two, “Modernity and Modernism: 1900-1912,” in Malcolm Bradbury’s *The Modern American Novel* (1992).

⁵ According to Brian McHale, “the dominant of modernist fiction is *epistemological*” (9). Modernist novels, then, ask epistemological questions such as “How can I interpret this world of which I am a part? And what am I in it” (Higgins 101). One of the hallmarks of modernist novels is the search for answers to these questions, that is, the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. Not only do we see Lily and Mrs. Ramsay struggling to make sense of their worlds, but we witness Mr. Ramsey desperately trying to get to “R.” Other characteristic modernist devices deployed by Woolf are: “the multiplication and juxtaposition of perspectives, the focalization of all the evidence through a single ‘center of consciousness’ ..., virtuoso variants on interior monologue ..., and so on” (McHale 9).

⁶ Mrs. Ramsay has much in common with Mrs. Bridge in Evan S. Connell’s gorgeous and underappreciated novel *Mrs. Bridge* (1959). A comparative reading of these two novels could prove illuminating.

⁷ As Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer argued in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947), the elevation of instrumental reason above all other human faculties leads to Auschwitz.

⁸ In Woody Allen’s film *Interiors* (1978), Renata (Diane Keaton), a successful writer, begins to wonder if immortality through art is enough to make her life (and death) meaningful. It is easy to see in Renata the kind of doubt one imagines haunting Eliot, Auden, Waugh, and Wilde.

⁹ In the final chapter of his magisterial biography of Oscar Wilde, Richard Ellmann recounts the last moments of Wilde’s life, and his being received into the Church. On November 30, 1900, Robert Ross asked Wilde, who lay dying, if he wished to see Father Cuthbert Dunne. Wilde, unable to speak, simply held up his hand, which Ross interpreted as “yes.” “Dunne asked [Wilde] if he wished to be received [into

the church] and he once more held up his hand. On this sign Dunne gave him conditional baptism, and absolved and anointed him” (Ellmann 584). Once Robert Ross “fervently declared that Catholicism was true” (583), to which Wilde responded, “No Robbie, it isn’t true” (qtd. in Ellmann 583). However, Wilde did, in fact, at one point, say that “Catholicism is the only religion to die in” (583), and three weeks before his death he told a *Daily Chronicle* correspondent that “I intend to be received [into the Catholic Church] before long” (583). The story of T.S. Eliot’s unexpected conversion to Anglicanism is a long and well documented one. Eliot’s early poetry, certainly up to *The Waste Land*, betrayed an allegiance to art, not religion. But with “Journey of the Magi,” “the poem of a convert” (Ackroyd 164), “Salutation,” and the sequence *Ash-Wednesday*, it was clear the direction of his poetry was changing. Like so many modernists, as Peter Ackroyd writes, Eliot was “aware of what he called ‘the void’ in all human affairs – the disorder, meaninglessness and futility which he found in his own experience; it was inexplicable intellectually (his own skepticism had taught him that) and could only be understood or endured by means of a larger faith” (160). Prayer, he once told Constantine FitzGibbon, “can give misery an apparent meaning” (qtd. in Ackroyd 161). And Stephen Spender tells how Eliot, “in the company of Virginia Woolf, tried to impart the significance of prayer, the attempt ‘to concentrate, to forget self, to attain union with God’” (qtd. in Ackroyd 161). But Woolf would have nothing to do with Eliot’s religious turn. In a letter to a friend, dated 11 February 1928, Woolf writes, “I have had the most shameful and distressing interview with dear Tom Eliot, who may be called dead to us all from this day forward. He has become an Anglo-Catholic believer in God and immortality, and goes to Church...there’s something obscene in a living person sitting by the fire and believing in God” (qtd. in Pearce, *Literary* 131). Woolf also “said that [Eliot] had less credibility than a corpse” (Ackroyd 172). In 1934, Woolf openly denounced *The Rock*, Eliot’s religiously themed verse drama, and argued “violently with him about his religious convictions” (219). Later, she told Spender “that Eliot seemed to be turning into a priest” (220). Like Eliot’s, Evelyn Waugh’s conversion from what he called the “absurd caricature” (qtd. in Pearce, “Waugh”) of modernity to the “real world” of Catholicism was, Joseph Pearce writes, “greeted with astonishment by the literary world and caused a sensation in the media” (“Waugh”). In novels like *Vile Bodies*, published in 1930, the same year, incidentally, as his reception into the Catholic Church, he seemed openly to celebrate literary modernism. Indeed, *Vile Bodies* was dubbed “the ultramodern novel” (“Waugh”). Given the controversy surrounding his decision, Waugh succinctly explained the reasons for his conversion in his essay, “Converted to Rome: Why It Has Happened to Me” (1930). There, Pearce writes, he suggested that “the modern world was facing a choice between ‘Christianity and Chaos’” (“Waugh”). Reminiscent of Baudelaire’s formulation of modernity, for Waugh one had to choose between the eternal and the immutable or the transient, fleeting, and contingent. Like Eliot, Auden, and Wilde, Waugh chose the eternal and the immutable found in Christianity. In the final passages of *Brideshead Revisited*, a novel of redemption, we see what can be read as the narrator’s second conversion; and at the same time, we see Waugh subtly renouncing the idea that art will lead us to paradise. In his youth, W.H. Auden was interested in Freudian psychoanalysis and Marxism, an interest that waned with age. According to a Web page sponsored by the Academy of American Poets, while Auden never entirely abandoned these early interests, by the 1940s Christianity, and especially Protestant theology, had become a primary preoccupation (“W.H. Auden”). The best book length study of literary figures who converted to or were influenced by Christianity is Joseph Pearce’s *Literary Converts: Spiritual Inspiration in an Age of Unbelief* (1999).

¹⁰ The final two sentences of Albert Camus' "The Myth of Sisyphus" read: "The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy" (123).

¹¹ Like Lily and Mrs. Ramsay, Janie Crawford, in another important modernist novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, attempts to put the fragments of modern life together, and find, in the process, "a jewel down inside herself" (90). Zora Neale Hurston writes, "Most humans didn't love one another nohow, and this mislove was so strong that even common blood couldn't overcome it all the time. She had found a jewel down inside herself and she had wanted to walk where people could see her and gleam it around. But she had been set in the market-place to sell. Been set for still-bait. When God had made The Man, he made him out of stuff that sung all the time and glittered all over. Then after that some angels got jealous and chopped him into millions of pieces, but still he glittered and hummed. So they beat him down to nothing but sparks had a shine and a song. So they covered each one over with mud. And the lonesomeness in the sparks make them hunt for one another, but the mud is deaf and dumb. Like all the other tumbling mud- balls, Janie had tried to show her shine" (90).

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Frontiers of Violence and Fear: A Study of Native American and Palestinian Intifada Poetry.

By Saddik M. Gohar

This paper critically examines social, historical and human zones of contact between contemporary Native American poets and the Palestinian Intifada poets in order to illuminate issues of common interest that characterize the poetic discourse of both sides. Exploring political and textual spaces in these two poetic traditions, the paper illustrates the attitude toward native land, identity, struggle and other motifs that penetrate the poetic narrative of Palestinian and Native American poets. The paper argues that in their attempt to undermine the imperialistic and hegemonic discourse that seeks to banish their colonized nations out of human history, Palestinian and native American poets have developed a counter poetics which affirms the values of resistance and struggle at crucial times, particularly when their homelands and identities are in danger. The paper also demonstrates that while the anti-colonial Palestinian Intifada poetry engages revolution and resistance as a means to regain one's homeland and national identity, contemporary Native American poetry is characterized by nostalgia and a longing for return to a pre-frontier/pre-imperialistic past which exists only in the imagination of the poets.

In a poem entitled "Their Fathers", the Afro-American poet, Nikki Giovanni expresses her concern for the plight of the Palestinian people who are equated in their historical pain with other victimized and colonized races such as the Red Indians and the Africans. In her poem, Giovanni also draws an analogy between the Nazi holocaust of European Jews and the suffering of the Palestinian people at the hands of the Zionist/Israeli army. Approaching the suffering of the Jews and the plight of the Palestinians and the Red Indians as part of the cycle of violence and fear that has afflicted the modern world Giovanni says:

undoubtedly there are those
who are so unfeeling
they cannot represent mental
or emotional health
we have seen the Germans
and the Israeli reaction

and the Palestinian response
in our own time
we know the truth
of the Africans and Indians
we know we have only begun
the horror that is waiting
south of our borders
and south of our latitude
blood perhaps should not
all ways be the answer
but perhaps it always is (Giovanni 1970:49).

The analogy between the Palestinians and the Native Americans, regardless of the wide cultural, religious, ethnic, geographical and historical differences between the two peoples, is striking in the sense that both of them have been subjected to genocide and persecution at the hands of imperialistic and hegemonic forces that aimed to banish them outside human history. The conditions of Native Americans, isolated in reservations within the boundaries of their native land are similar, to a great extent, to the current situation of Palestinians who are forced to stay in refugee camps and Arab ghettos inside the borders of historical Palestine, not to mention how similar those circumstances are to those experienced by pre-Israel, lower class Jews living in Europe. The unequal confrontations—on the frontiers of Gaza and the West Bank—between Palestinian children armed with stones and the Zionist/Israeli military, which is equipped with American war technology, recalls to mind the confrontations on the Western frontier between the native inhabitants of America and the European colonizers who usurped their land and history.

Furthermore, the white American and Zionist narratives of their conflicts with the colonized nations (the Red Indians and the Palestinians) are similar in the context that both narratives are based on imperialistic and racial myths that ignore the existence of the colonized peoples, viewing them as savages/terrorists who must be eradicated for the sake of a better world. In “The Gift Outright”, Robert Frost depicts the conflict between the white European colonizers and Native Americans over the land from a hegemonic imperialistic perspective:

The land was ours before we were the land's
she was our land more than a hundred years
before we were her people. She was ours
in Massachusetts, in Virginia,
but we were England's, still colonials,
possessing what we still were possessed by,
possessed by what we now no more possessed.
Something we were withholding made us weak
until we found out that it was ourselves
we were withholding from our land of living,

and forthwith found salvation in surrender.
 Such as we were we gave ourselves outright
 (the deed of gift was many deeds of war)
 to the land vaguely realizing westward,
 but still unstoried, artless, unenchanted,
 such as she was, such as she would become (Untermeyer 1962: 255).

In Frost's poem, America is depicted as a gift given by God to the European colonizers. The promised/virgin land myth, which is created by the European colonizers on the frontier, is manipulated in the poem to justify colonization: "The land was ours before we were the land's / she was our land more than a hundred years / before we were her people". Obviously, the Promised Land mythology is part of the colonial discourse which characterizes American poetry about the frontier experience. This kind of discourse unfortunately ignores the existence of the Red Indians, the indigenous people of America, dismissing them outside historical memory.

In *The Mountain Muse*, Daniel Bryan, an eighteenth century American poet, reveals a racist/colonial ideology similar in form to the ideology that is partly responsible for the persecution and genocide of the Red Indians:

where naught but beasts and bloody Indians
 dwelt throughout the mighty waste, and cruelty
 and death and superstition, triple leagued
 held there their horrid reign and imperious sway,
 the guardian seraphs of benign reform
 with keen prophetic glance, the worth beheld
 of the immense expanse, its future scales
 of freedom, science, and religious truth
 when by refinement's civilizing hand
 its roughness shall all be smoothed away
 O Yes; companions in the joys of bliss;
 we will refine, exalt and humanize
 the uncivilized Barbarians of the West (Bryan 1986: 365).

The poem depicts the native inhabitants of America as beasts and cruel "barbarians" who must be eradicated without mercy. While the Red Indians, the colonized, are delineated, in Bryan's epic poem, as savages, "the uncivilized barbarians of the West", the European colonizers emerge as prophets and guardians of democracy and freedom. Their mission is to "refine, exalt and humanize" the savage colonized people on the frontier. The colonizers' narrative of the conflict contradicts with historical facts which affirm that the Red Indians were the victims of aggressive colonialist politics that aimed at eradicating their existence. In 1866, during the last decades of the frontier wars, General Sherman ordered his White American troops to eliminate the Red Indian tribes at any cost: "We must act with vindictive earnestness

against the Sioux even to their extermination, men, women and children” (cited in Drinnon 1980: 329). The hostile attitude toward the Red Indians undermines Bryant’s colonial discourse which views the European invaders of America as “seraphs of benign reform” and carriers of the banners of civilization.

In the poems of Frost and Bryant there is an obvious distortion of history which is a basic feature of some colonial narratives. Both poems, deeply rooted in colonial myth, reflect the tendency of the white colonizers to obliterate the history of the colonized nation. By ignoring the pre-colonial civilization of the Indians, the white colonizers’ narrative seeks to dismiss them outside the realm of human history. Such colonial ideology considers the history of the colonized Indians, prior to the European invasion of America, as inconsequential, therefore, it gives priority to the colonizers, as a superior race, destined to dominate the land of the “barbarians of the West”. The same ideology which advocates racism as a historical fact and affirms the superiority of the White European colonizers has provided a legitimate basis for the extermination and persecution of the Red Indians, the native inhabitants of the American continent.

While the Manifest Destiny myth implies that White Americans are ordained by God to humanize “the barbarians of the West” and bring European civilization to the American continent, the Zionist colonial myth seeks to dismiss Palestinians out of their homeland in order to establish a Zionist state which is an extension of Western democracy. The Zionist version of the frontier myth identifies the European colonizers of Palestine as God’s chosen people, dismissing Palestinians as savage Bedouins or vicious terrorists. In *The Haj*, for example, Leon Uris depicts the Arab Palestinians, the colonized, as dirty, ignorant and nomadic people living in barns and sleeping “on goatskin” (Uris 1985: 9). Uris also points out that the colonized Palestinians are wicked Bedouins living in a society dominated by the desert law where the only way to achieve one’s ambitions is “to destroy the man above and dominate the men below (Uris 1985: 17). He argues: “The Bedouin was thief, assassin, and raider and hard work [for him] was immoral. Despite his raggedness and destitution, the Bedouin remained the Arab ideal” (17).

While the colonized people of Palestine are presented as wicked and dirty assassins, the Zionist colonizer and Hagana fighter, Gideon Ash, the protagonist of the novel, is depicted as a good-looking man with “a neat blond beard and blue eyes” who came to modernize Palestine (Uris 1985: 20). In reality Gideon Ash establishes a militia of Zionist colonizers to terrorize the Palestinian citizens and dismiss them out of their homes: “A small elite force of Jewish night fighters given a free hand to strike where and when necessary without written orders” (Uris 1985: 69). According to Uris’s colonial narrative, the Zionist colonizers “will always be surrounded by tens of millions of hostile and unforgiving Arabs. If you are to survive you must establish the principle of retaliation” (Uris 1985: 70). This hostile attitude toward the native inhabitants of Palestine paved the ways for the mass-murder of thousands of Palestinian citizens at the hands of Zionist militias particularly in the 1940’s and 1950’s. The aggressive policy of the Zionist colonizers toward the armless citizens of Palestine was basically responsible for the refugee problem. Tens of thousands of Palestinians were forced to leave their homeland in northern Palestine and were marginalized in refugee camps in southern Palestine or in neighboring Arab countries. In the worse case scenarios, like in Lebanon, Palestinian refugees were denied citizenship and were massacred indiscriminately (men, women and children) at the hands of some Lebanese factions in the seventies and eighties.

In his comment on the consequences of the Deir Yasin massacre, in 1948, Yigal Allon, a former Israeli cabinet member states: “We saw a need to clean the inner Galilee and to create Jewish territorial succession in the entire area of the upper Galilee. We, therefore, looked for means which did not force us into employing forces, in order to cause the tens of thousands of sulky Arabs who remained in Galilee to flee” (cited in Khalidi 1971: 42). In *Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries*, Rosemary Sayigh argues that the massacre of the Deir Yasin village in 1948 —when more than three hundred Palestinian civilians were brutally slaughtered by the Zionist militias—aimed to cause a mass exodus of Palestinians. “After the massacre, Israeli radio stations and loudspeaker cars made use of the emotive words ‘Deir Yasin’ to panic villages about to be attacked”, says Sayigh. She adds: “once an atmosphere of terror had been created, it was easy to exploit it, to swell the exodus, with minimal losses to the attackers” (Sayigh 1979: 76).

In spite of the atrocities committed against the Red Indians and the Palestinians by hostile colonial forces, there has been an ardent attempt to falsify the history of colonization on both sides. Integrated in similar hegemonic policies, both the Euro-American and Zionist/Israeli narratives of their conflicts with the Red Indians and the Palestinians have used colonial mythology as a means to justify the persecution and genocide of their victims. The colonial discourse that characterizes the American narrative of the frontier wars and the contemporary Zionist literature about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict seeks either to depict the colonized people as savages/terrorists or ignore their existence. In *The Haj*, Uris advocates Theodore Herzl’s argument that there is a people without a country (the Zionists/Israelis) and there is a country without a people (Palestine) and the problem of the Zionist European colonizers could be solved by transporting “the landless people into the un-peopled land” (cited in Goldman 1955: 6). Ignoring the right of existence of the Palestinians on their native land, Uris claims that when the Zionist European colonizers came to Palestine by the end of the nineteenth century they found a land “which is neither fish nor fowl, neither Syrian nor Ottoman, neither Arab nor Jewish, but a no man’s land, hemorrhaging to death” (Uris 1985: 21).

Uris’s treatment of the Palestinian-Israeli issue reflects what Edward Said calls “the moral epistemology of imperialism” (Said 1980 : 18). In *The Question of Palestine*, Said discusses the colonial attitude toward the people of Palestine. He argues:

Both the British imperialist and the Zionist vision are united in playing down and even canceling out the Arabs in Palestine as somehow secondary and negligible. Both raise the moral importance of the vision very far above the mere presence of natives on a piece of immensely significant territory. And both visions belong fundamentally to the ethos of European mission civilisatrice—nineteenth-century, colonialist, racist even—built on notions about the inequality of men, races, and civilizations, an inequality allowing the most extreme forms of self-aggrandizing projections and the most extreme forms of punitive discipline toward the unfortunate natives whose existence paradoxically was denied (Said 1980: 19).

Moreover, the approved history of colonialist nations such as Israel, the United States, Australia and South Africa, started with what Said called a “blotting out from knowledge” of the native people or the making of them into “people without history”. In *The Question of Palestine*, Said affirms:

Between 1922 and 1947 the great issue witnessed by the world in Palestine was not, as a Palestinian would like to imagine, the struggle between natives and new colonists, but a struggle presented as being between Britain and the Zionists. The full irony of this remarkable epistemological achievement—and I use the philosophical term because there is no other one adequate to expressing the sheer blotting out from knowledge of almost a million natives—is enhanced when we remember that in 1948, at the moment that Israel declared itself a state, it legally owned a little more than 6 percent of the land of Palestine and its population of Jews consisted of a fraction of the total Palestinian population” (Said 1980: 23).

It is obvious that once the native Palestinians are banished from collective memory, at least as a people of cultural heritage, the Zionist colonizers’ moral and intellectual right to conquest is claimed to be established without question. The perverted colonial perspective of the invaders considers the Arab existence in Palestine prior to the Zionist colonization as inconsequential. Such colonial ideology provides a pre-text for the extermination of all the native Arabs in Palestine because they are seen as a threat to the Zionist pioneers and the emerging Zionist state. The same colonial discourse overestimates the colonizers, viewing them as carriers of Western civilization and at the same time it degrades the colonized Palestinians portraying them as agents of evil and barbarism.

In response to such a colonial discourse, both Palestinian and Native American poets have developed a counter poetics of resistance that aimed to subvert the imperialist hegemonic narrative and provide an insight into the brutal nature of colonization and its impact upon the colonized peoples. Contemporary poets, on both sides, explore issues such as identity, struggle and the loss of one’s homeland and its consequences on the collective consciousness of the colonized nations. While the Native American poetry, in this context, is characterized by deep feelings of nostalgia for a pre-frontier past and a paradise that is lost forever, the Palestinian Intifada poetry is dominated by anger, revolution and a burning desire to restore what has been lost using all possible means of resistance and struggle. Unlike academic poets who isolate the poetic text from the complex network of conditions which makes its creation possible “by way of brutally yanking it from the very history and materiality of its production” (Ahmad 1992: 32), Palestinian and Native American poets engage poetry and politics. They write poems that challenge colonial hegemony, poems that have the potential for manipulating the masses as material forces and instruments of social change.

By writing poems of resistance or what Le Roi Jones calls “poems that shoot guns”(Jones 1969: 116), contemporary Palestinian poets are able to control popular and national consciousness and urge the masses, including Palestinian children in the refugee camps, to take action against the colonizers. In this context, the Palestinian Intifada poetry constitutes a counter-hegemonic dynamics of resistance that seeks to undermine the Zionist/Israeli narrative about the Intifada as a terrorist activity. Instead, the Palestinian poets have created a poetics of social change aiming to revolutionize the entire Palestinian people; encouraging them to intensify their struggle against the colonizers. Using the poem as “a bullet” or “a stone”, the Intifada poets are able to change poetry into a material force in the battle for independence. Due to the bloody confrontations with the Israeli army on the borders of Gaza and the West Bank, the Palestinian

poets have written poems which seek to historicize the Intifada, locating it in its appropriate social and political context as a popular/national movement of a colonized people dreaming of independence. Thus, the poetry of the first Intifada seeks to depict the unequal confrontations between the Palestinian refugees and the Zionist war machine on the frontiers of Gaza and the West Bank. On the borders of violence and fear that separate between the Palestinian refugee camps (the habitation of Arab “barbarians” and “terrorists”) and the modern Israeli state (the Promised Land of the European colonizers) Palestinian refugees have been killed in confrontations with the Israeli army.

Both the Palestinian and the Red Indian borders/frontiers have been historically subjected to imperialist/hegemonic expansion that aimed to marginalize the natives into refugee camps and reservations. Unlike the perverted colonial narrative that identifies the frontier as “a new field of opportunity, a gate of escape from the bondage of the past” (Turner 1962: 4), or as a location for “romance, mythology and adventure” (Spiller 1956: 15), the Palestinian and Red Indian frontiers have been associated with mass-murder and military aggression. Historically, borders/frontiers have been imposed by the colonizers to contain, control and crush the colonized, as in the history of Indian and Palestinian removal and dispossession. For Native American and Palestinian poets, the borderland/ the frontier that is created inside their native territories by the colonizers implies more than a political/geographic reality because it is related to their attitudes toward their history, homeland and identity. For instance the land for the Palestinians is the site of oppression, colonization, displacement and relocation. In the Intifada poetry, the native land, therefore, turns out to be the location of exile and revolution. This land-based struggle is integral to Palestinian poetry about the Intifada, which attempts to resist the expansionist policy of the Zionist colonizers.

Like the Palestinian Intifada poets, the Native American poet, Joy Harjo is also concerned with the issue of the land. In “Autobiography”, she laments the fate of her own people “whose sacred land was stolen” (Harjo 1990: 14) by the European invaders. In spite of the differences between their histories, geographical locations and concepts of border/frontier, both Palestinian and Native American poets have been concerned with the issues of land and identity in their poetry. In their attempt to resist imperialistic forces that seek to remove them outside history, they developed a counter-hegemonic poetic mechanism urging their peoples to continue their struggle against representatives of colonialism and oppression. In Palestinian poetry, the dialectic of land and identity is given priority, suggesting that identity emanates from the land and that to reclaim the land is to restore one’s identity. In order to express the dialectic of land and identity, the poets who wrote about the Palestinian Intifada have glorified the Palestinian children who were killed on daily basis as they challenged the Israeli war machine by throwing stones at tanks and soldiers. The first Palestinian Intifada is called “the Intifada of the stones” and the Palestinian poets used in their poems a new language of resistance which was called “the language of the stones”. For example, Shawki Abdul-Amir expresses his desire to be transformed into “a stone in the hands of a Palestinian boy” involved in the Intifada: “I know the Palestinian stone will open new horizons / I want to be a stone / The dead bodies of the martyrs turned into stones / The land is covered with blood and stones / Dear poets, you should write your poems with stones / Dear children of the Intifada , your stones are covered with blood and your blood turns into stones / covering our borders , our desert and caravans of camels / Put a word upon a word / a silence upon a silence / a martyr upon a martyr / and a stone upon a stone / Fill your bags with stones and

continue your struggle “(cited in Al-Makaleh 1992 :146-47).The stone as an emblem of the Palestinian Intifada is given hyperbolic implications in the poetry of Abdulla Alsaykhan :”The Palestinian stone is the master of the world , the master of the United Nations / I am proud of the stone which challenges the American Veto “ (cited in Al- Makaleh 1992: 160).Further , Ahmad Al-Hardelo express his admiration of the heroism of the Palestinian children “ armed with stones “ who are able to confront the Israeli war machine: “ Children of Israel , it is your fate to confront our children / striking you with stones of fire / during the revolution of the stone / They confront you like death , like floods , like fate / They will establish a homeland of stones” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992:185).Obviously” the stone” as a symbol is aesthetically articulated by different poets in the preceding lines to create a complex pattern of implications. Integrated in the intersection of homeland, identity and struggle, “the language of the stones” as expressed by different poets is not a location of discursive resistance but it is a concrete/material struggle, because language in the Intifada poetry is dialectically associated with the land. In other words “the language of the stones” that characterizes the Intifada poetry is a crucial site of struggle aiming to restore the Palestinian occupied territory and establish a Palestinian independent state.

The conflict over territory is the major obstacle, not only in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as the pro-Israeli critic, Edith Kurzweil argues (1992: 423), but also in other contexts. Historically, the native land of the colonized nations constitutes the basic target of the colonizers. Henri Lefebvre argues that colonial “capitalism has taken possession of the land and mobilized it to the point where this sector has become central” (Lefebvre 1991: 335). In Palestinian and Native American poetry, there is a focus on the question of native land, the land which has been occupied, plundered, usurped and exploited under the Promised Land myth in Palestine and the Manifest Destiny myth in America. Due to the capitalist logic of colonialism or the colonialist logic of Zionism, the Native American and Palestinian territories have been exploited and destroyed in a variety of ways. In Palestine, the indigenous people were forced to live in refugee camps inside their own native land after the occupation of their villages and the destruction of their fields. The Palestinian orange and olive fields have been systematically and exclusively destroyed since 1948 by the Zionists for the sake of building new settlements for the colonizers, or as they are better known in western media, “settlers”.

Like the Palestinians, Native Americans have historically suffered from territorial colonialism since the European conquest of their land. In America, the Indian Territory was occupied, and the Indians, after being persecuted, were marginalized in the extreme West or in reservations for a long period of time. In “A Post-colonial Tale”, Joy Harjo refers to an Indian land that is “sprinkled with the bodies of my own relatives” (Harjo 1994: 19). Therefore, in Native American and Palestinian poetry, land has been the location of both persecution and resistance of oppression. In Palestinian poetry, the Intifada is a means of restoring the land and achieving the national dream of independence. In Native American poetry, poets like Joy Harjo, Simon Ortiz and others, have explored thematics of land, displacement, identity and resistance, in order to reconstruct power relations in favor of the colonized and the displaced. Expressing the burden of exile in her own land, Harjo articulates aesthetically the feeling of a Native American who is metamorphosed into a stranger in America. This feeling would turn into revolution and protest “of love turned into activism” (Harjo 1990: 24).

Since the European invasion of America, the simple and peaceful life of the native inhabitants of the land has turned into chaos and anarchy. When the first European colonizers reached American shores, the life of the natives turned into a nightmare and they became strangers in their own land:

They came from the East when they arrived,
came the beginning of our misery
the beginning of church dues,
the beginning of strife with blow-guns,
the beginning of strife by trampling on people,
the beginning of debts enforced by false testimony,
a beginning of vexation. (cited in Bierhorst 1974: 148).

Like the Palestinian frontiers which have been invaded by waves of Zionist colonizers coming from alien lands, the Red Indian frontiers were subjected to similar aggressive invasions. Waves of European settlers driven out of old Europe for different reasons, swept the Indian frontier, violating its natural laws and disrupting its traditions. Like the Zionist invasion of Palestine, the European colonization of the Red Indian territories brought misery and pain to the native inhabitants of the land. Chronicling the history of the frontier and evoking the painful memories of the European invasion of America, Harjo says:

waking from sleep
remember dreams of my other world
as an antlered female deer
on grass and leaves I'd graze
from the mountainside I'd graze
but I, Clouding Woman
my man, Howling White
and now a Shyela, a Cheyenne, draws me near
and speaks a name no one can hear
 "Deer Eye"
 "Deer Eye"
twice he said
now I know Clouding Woman is dead
 now
 you've used
 our home as your junkheap
 taken our memories
 taken our eyes (Harjo 1979: 149).

On the frontier, Native American women like Palestinian women in the refugee camps, were targets for the attacks and exploitation of the colonizers. From the beginning, the American frontier movement was associated with violence, bloodshed and anarchy. Mark Gerzon draws an analogy between violence and

frontier wars:

for generations, we lived with violence and bloodshed. For generations we pushed the Indians farther and farther west. And for generations we portrayed the triumph of white over red as a validation of our national manhood (Gerzon 1982: 19).

On the frontier, reckless frontiersmen ignored the social laws and moral ethics of the Indians as they moved from East to West bringing ruin and damage to the native people and their land. Like the Zionist colonizers who demolished thousands of houses and removed thousands of acres planted with olive and orange trees, slaughtering Palestinian women and children, the European colonizers mercilessly massacred native families, killing their animals and eliminating their forests as they rushed along the Indian frontier in successive waves:

The whole world is coming,
a nation is coming, a nation is coming,
the Eagle has brought the message to the tribe,
the father says so, the father says so
over the whole earth they are coming
the crow has brought the message to the tribe
the father says so, the father says so (cited in Thornton 1987: 142).

In an angry tone, Carol Lee Sanchez evokes the frontier memory condemning American cultural mythologies such as the Manifest Destiny myth, employed to justify the colonization of Indian territories. Sanchez, in "Conversations", criticized the frontier mentality of the rugged European colonizers who wrought havoc upon the Indian land, denouncing old Europe: "Father Europe / I divorce you / from this tierra indigena". In the same poem, Sanchez expresses her nostalgia for her lost native land which was raped and plundered by the European colonizers:

to me
this land filled with
tradition
long before your
displaced dropouts
began the rape and plunder
of what was already ordered
this sacred altar
still holds the bones
of who I was
those roots of me that
ache for knowledge of
who I might have been

before your Manifest Destiny
robbed my flesh
and diluted my blood (Sanchez 1978: 242).

In response to the frontier experience which is recalled in Sanchez's poem, the poet affirms her identity as a Native American emphasizing that America is an Indian land:

Father Europe:
I dispossess you! Take back my birthright
with the force of
my being
this America
belongs to
my people (Sanchez 1978: 243)

The recalling of the frontier experience in Native American poetry is often associated with feelings of nostalgia for a pre-frontier paradise; a Utopian homeland which exists only in the imagination of the Native American poet. For example, Ray Young Bear reveals nostalgia for an Indian past, prior to the European conquest:

you know we'd like to be there
standing beside our grandfathers
being ourselves
without the frailty
and insignificance of the worlds
we suffer and balance (Young Bear 1980: 118).

The same feeling is expressed by Simon Ortiz who longs for a pre-frontier paradise, free from the ecological pollution caused by the European invaders:

I just want to cross the next hill
through that clump of trees
and come out the other side
and see a clean river,
the whole earth new
and hear the noise it makes
at birth (Ortiz 1976: 62).

The Native American poet dreams of a pre-frontier past because of his inability to live in a hostile American environment. For Indians, born and raised in reservations, American society becomes a place of dislocation and exile:

the lights,
the cars,
the deadened glares
tear my heart
and close my mind
I see me walking in sleep
down streets, down streets gray with cement
and glaring glass and oily wind,
armed with a pint of wine
I cheated my children to buy
I am lonely for hills
I am lonely for myself (Ortiz 1976: 37-38).

Ortiz criticizes aspects of European civilization brought to his native land by the invaders: “streets gray with cement / glaring glass and oil wind”, he laments the aggressive attempts of the colonizers to destroy ecology and nature and cause damage to the “botanic, animal and human worlds” (Schein 1992: 231). In this context, Ortiz compares the materialistic values of the colonizers with the moral ethics of the Indian ancestors. According to him, the basic problem that the modern world encounters is to be found in America’s isolation from Mother Earth and from fellow human beings. Ortiz also attacks the American urge for domination which is rooted in the American frontier mentality and could be traced to colonial “capitalism’s quest for profit” (Ortiz 1992: 29).

This perverted frontier ethics, in Ortiz’s view, would lead to the destruction of America and the world: “The American political-economic system was mainly interested in control and exploitation and it didn’t matter how it was achieved” (Ortiz 1992: 31). Observing the exploitation and destruction of Indian territories for a long time by American capitalists just to achieve profit, Ortiz longs for a pre-colonial past where his indigenous people lived in harmony with nature. On this basis, Ortiz’s poetry, according to Gregg Graber, serves “to provide context as well understanding of the racism that exists against Indians, the continued pressure by corporate America to exploit the remaining Indian lands, and the role that many Indian cultures could fill in saving the people and the land if allowed” (Graber 2000: 19). In *The Indians Won*, Ortiz overcomes his feelings of nostalgia for a lost past and discusses the plight of his people who were isolated for a long time in reservations or what he calls “jail- houses”. Ortiz points out that even when his own people were released they found themselves in “a bigger jail”—that being modern American society (Ortiz 1981: 303).

Like Ortiz, Joy Harjo poetically articulates the alienation of the Native American in modern American society where s/he survives as an alien in the American metropolis, living on the memories of the ancestors and a past that can never be restored. In *Secrets from the Center of the World*, Harjo acknowledges the existence of a dominating Anglo-American civilization—telephone/electricity poles, power plant waste and modern highways—which intensifies the feeling of nostalgia for a Red Indian heritage echoing through the American city and “lying under the earth”. Observing that the spirit of the ancestors is still

haunting the American territory, Harjo affirms that “the landscape forms the mind” and “stories are our wealth” (Harjo 1989: 24). Only through recalling ancestral stories and memories of a pre-colonial past is the Native American poet able to survive in a hostile world.

Living within memories of the native land, Harjo is not attracted to a civilization which is associated with modern American cities like New York because for her, “my house is the red earth; it could be the center of the world” (Harjo 1989: 2). Juxtaposing her memories of a pre-colonial past against a life dominated by recurrent frustrations and disillusionments in modern American society, Harjo underlines the painful attempt of the Native American to survive as a stranger in a hostile Anglo-American world. In “Waking-Up Thoughts”, Harjo visualizes an image of a pre-frontier America lost at the frontier. Harjo’s vision engages a union between the poet and “the night”, “the forest”, “the sun” and the luxury of a pre-colonial paradise:

I breathe as the night breathes
I live as the forest life lives
the soft leaves and wet grass
are my protectors
behind me in the sleep dead world
is Pipe woman, my mother time?
and Tall Man, my father earth
and Deer Eye, my sister dawn
the village sleepers stand beside my dream
giving comfort through the silent trials
of early rising suns
the sleeping ones are my friends
my heart’s song is to the sleeping ones (Harjo 1979: 145).

In addition to her pre-frontier/ escapist poetry, Joy Harjo, like Simon Ortiz, is a Native American poet who considers herself a member of a community of poetic voices standing as representatives of groups and minorities, which are excluded from the mainstream literary canon in America. In an interview with Stephanie Smith, she points out:

I have been especially involved in the struggles of my Indian peoples to maintain a place and culture in this precarious age. My poetry has everything to do with this. I came into writing at a poignant historical moment. I was lucky to be a part of a major multicultural movement with other writers (Smith 1993: 24).

Like Harjo, Native American poet Duane BigEagle writes lyrics characterized by feelings of nostalgia for a pre-colonial Indian country. Her poem “My Father’s Country” recreates an image of a pre-frontier America which embodies the native poet’s mythic desire to restore a Utopian world that is lost forever:

father, let us walk again

as our grandfathers did
if need be we will make new bodies of this earth
eat only memories
drink only liquid split in our dreams
take shelter
in our love
in the vastness of this land
we need only the songs its spirits teach us
and to sing!
always to sing (BigEagle 1979: 144).

The romantic longing and nostalgia for the other America, lost at the frontier, which dominates the poetry of Harjo, Ortiz and other Native American poets, disappears in the poetry of Linda Hogan, Wendy Rose and Carter Revard. In Hogan's "Heritage", the pre-frontier past, with its luxuries and myths, is approached as a part of an Indian history that dies and can never be restored or revived. The poet acknowledges that in the post-frontier era, Indians suffered from exile, persecution and displacement:

and grandmother, blue-eyed woman
told me how our tribe has always followed a stick
that pointed west
that pointed east
from my family I have learnt the secrets
of never having home (Hogan 1984: 165).

In Wendy Rose's poem "to some few Hopi Ancestors", the poet who suffers from the dramatic consequences of living in a post-frontier America, criticizes her ancestors and their Indian heritage which they failed to protect from colonial plundering and hegemony:

your songs have changed
they have
become thin willow whispers
that take us by the ankle
and tangle
us up with the red mesa stone
you have engraved yourself (Rose 1979: 381)

In the same poem Rose expresses her anger toward the ancestors, revealing a deep identity crisis experienced by Native American poets who are torn between the dreams of a Utopian past that is lost forever and the nightmares of a present dominated by the same imperialistic forces that massacred their grandfathers and sought to dehumanize the remnants of the Indian nation once more.

In the same vein, the Native American poet, Carter Revard, denounces the European colonizers who are responsible for the misery of his own people and the destruction of nature and environment in the Indian territory on the frontier. In “Discovery of the new world”, the poet uses science fiction allusions, as he describes the brutal behavior of the European invaders toward the Red Indians on the frontier. Underlining the brutalities committed by the colonizers and their insistence on their cultural and social superiority over the Red Indian race, Revard points out : “The creatures that we met this morning / marveled at our green skins and scarlet eyes / they lack antennae”(44). The poem continues in a manner which aims to draw the attention of the reader to the greedy nature of the European conquest of America by blending science fiction with Manifest Destiny mythology exploiting allusions to narratives of life on other planets:

It is our destiny to asterize this planet,
and they will not be asterized,
so they must be wiped out.
we need their space and nitrogen
which they do not know how to use (Revard 1980: 44).

The above-cited lines are revelations of the hostile and racist nature of the colonialist project, which aims to rob the colonized peoples of their history and humanity . The categorization of the colonized Indians as a primitive people living outside human history provides a pre-text for their genocide : “ they must be wiped out” and the eventual domination of their land and natural resources : “ we need their space and nitrogen / which they do not know how to use”. Rooted in narratives of racism and superiority the colonialist ideology is responsible for the misery of the native people of America. The same aggressive frontier mentality, which is responsible for the annihilation of the Red Indians, is echoed in the imperialistic spirit which encourages the European Zionists to maintain their genocide of the Palestinian people. During the second Intifada, which started in 2000 , the Israeli troops, armed with the most sophisticated military arsenal in the Middle East are confronted by Palestinian children in the refugee camps defending themselves with stones. Describing one day of the siege of the Palestinian refugee camp in Jenin (October 2002) , Annie Higgins states:

The Israeli soldiers begin by prowling the streets at half past seven when students from kindergarten through university are making their way to school The children and young adults are heading toward school. The hunters head toward the children. They find them in the streets, in the school yard, on the bus, and in their classrooms. The tanks’ rumble is audible from a distance and is terrifying, but the children walk at a leisurely pace, having learnt to gauge the tank’s distance by the sound. The tanks emit a thick, acrid smoke that cloaks them from full visibility. These are large, clumsy machines, not terribly fast, but terribly forceful. They make the rounds of Jenin’s many schools, trying to enforce a prohibition on school attendance. Children, teachers and staff continue to make a difference. Since 1 September, school has been in session for a maximum of fourteen days. When they shoot at the children in school, class is interrupted. This is not new, but it is still alarming. Here is today’s harvest of students caught by the brave hunters in their tanks (Higgins 2002: 1).

Salim Tamari and Remma Hammami also observed the dramatic consequences of the escalation of violence during the second Palestinian Intifada:

The young men armed with stones facing the mightiest army in the Middle East, the grieving mothers, the nationalist symbols unfurled at martyrs' funerals seemed like a restaging of the same events twelve years earlier. Even the parades of the masked youth carrying guns recall the final days of the first Intifada. This time, however, the episodes were more condensed, the killings more brutal, the reactions swifter, and the media coverage more intense. Within a matter of weeks, the language of the Uprising had become the idiom of everyday life (Tamari and Hammami 2001:1).

Apparently, the Palestinian Uprisings / Intifadas are the direct result of the Israeli occupation and policies of violence and aggression that include demolition of houses, destruction of olive fields and the building of the Wall of Separation which cuts into Palestinian territory and prevents some Palestinian farmers to access their fields. On this basis the entire world sees the Palestinian Intifada as a minimum form of resistance against the colonizers, except for the American mainstream media, which views the Intifada as part of global terrorism. Jonathan Schanzer argues that the Palestinian Uprisings against the British occupation in the 1930's and their counterparts in 1988 and 2000 have brought havoc to Palestinian society, including the "mass-murder of children and the rise of radical organizations and terrorism as well as what he calls "the intra-Palestinian violence" (Schanzer 2002: 5). In the same context, Kenneth Stein points out that the Palestinian Uprisings proved that "the Palestinian Arabs could not be trusted as equals in the future administration of Palestine or portions of it." Stein continues:

Over the last several years, Palestinian Arabs engaged in civil disobedience and political violence in different parts of the holy land. A political stalemate was impending, while Jewish presence continued to envelop Palestinians. Religiously, the shared disillusionment among many Palestinian Muslims infused an Islamic component into the ardor. The religious philosophy that was posited included a pronounced rejection of the West, the adoption of a militant course of political action through armed struggle, and a keen desire to expel the influence and presence of the great power and the Jewish invaders (Stein 1991: 3).

Obviously, the interference of militant religious organizations such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the second Palestinian Intifada, has intensified Western and American hostilities toward the Palestinians. However, the militarization of the second Intifada, which erupted in 2000, is partly the result of the hypocritical and double-standard policies adopted by successive US governments toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By advocating the Zionist/Israeli narrative about the conflict, American policy makers have turned deaf ears to the atrocities committed by the Israeli war machine, on a daily basis, against Palestinian, stone-throwing children. According to the American version of the conflict, the Zionist army is authorized to slaughter Palestinian refugees who constitute a nation of terrorists. On this basis, the Israeli brutalities against the refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank are tolerated in the United States and are viewed as part of a self-defensive, pre-emptive war against terrorism, while Palestinian resistance is

viewed as acts of terrorism.

Obliterating the lines between legitimate resistance against the colonizers and global terrorism, the Zionist and American narrative of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, seeks to vilify and demonize the image of the Palestinian people. The hegemonic/ colonial plan of the Zionist culture machine to demonize the Palestinian victims in the refugee camps, and impose the image of terrorism on their resistance, is an attempt to justify the military operations of the Israeli army against the Palestinian people. Therefore, the aroma of respect associated with the Israeli military activities against the refugee camps, as depicted in US media, is part of the colonial/hegemonic attempt to distort history by viewing the resistance of the colonized as aberrant violence and presenting the brutalities of the colonizer as anti-terrorism activities.

According to the American narrative of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Israeli soldiers who kill women and children on a daily basis are portrayed as pioneers protecting the frontiers that separate between a representative of Western civilization—the Israeli government—and the Palestinian barbarians. The same colonial narrative views the Palestinian Intifada fighters struggling for independence as “Red Indian savages” representing an imminent danger to the Zionists who claim Jewish statehood on the Palestinian land. In this context, the American colonial narrative of the Intifada reinforces the racist Israeli policy that aims to uproot the Palestinian savages and isolate them in reservations (“refugee camps”) surrounded by Zionist settlements which are in turn protected by an occupying force armed with the most advanced US war technology.

In response to the hegemonic discourse advocated by the Zionist colonizers and their US allies, the Palestinian and Arab poets who have dealt with the first Palestinian Intifada “the Intifada of the Stones”, developed a poetics to enhance the resistance culture among the Palestinian people. In their poetry they seek to subvert the Zionist narrative of the Intifada. They also attempt to undermine the policy of submission and indifference advocated by the officials of Arab governments toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In order to subvert the Zionist/colonial discourse about the Intifada, the poets examined in the study, have exploited the power of words to present their own narrative. Nevertheless, when they attempted to render the Intifada into poetry they felt that words could not express the greatness of the Palestinian children, confronting the Israeli army with just stones in their hands. Thus, the poets seek the emotional depths of the readers, exploring the heroic acts of unarmed children facing an aggressive war machine.

The resistance activity of the Palestinian children is depicted as an embodiment of the suffering and agony of a colonized people fighting to save its dignity and the remains of a shattered homeland. The poetry that chronicles the first Palestinian Intifada constitutes part of the attempt to resist “the culture of tyranny”, advocated by the Zionist colonizers and the culture of submission and hypocrisy adopted by Arab governments. In an interview with Afif Ismail, the Palestinian poet Mureed Albarghouthi points out that “in all ages along history, there have been two cultures: the culture of tyranny and the culture of freedom. Today, humanity is in dire need of free intellectuals who should establish a unified front, a counter culture, that is able to confront the Pentagon culture with its oppression, injustice, racism, scorn of international law, and its adoption of the radical and hegemonic ideologies of both Zionists and new conservatives, those who

want to build an American empire at the expense of humanity (cited by Ismail 2003: 5)¹

The Palestinian Intifada poetry challenges “the culture of tyranny” advocated by the colonizers and their allies, and laments the absence of a unified attitude against the Zionist policy that seeks to eliminate the Palestinians. Using Palestinian cultural symbols such as the Kufiyya “traditional head dress” and the olive tree and linking the Intifada of the stones with prior Uprisings, the poets aim to record the history of that significant event, emphasizing its profound ramifications on the entire world. In order to historicize the first Intifada, the poets created a poetics of anger, not a poetics of nostalgia, because the latter, according to Albarghouthi, “is an indication of romantic impotence unable to confront colonial aggression and hegemony” (5). Albarghouthi explains: “Your enemy imposed his will on you, seeking to marginalize you, to crush you and remove you out of your homeland, your birthplace. Your enemy aims to negate your relationship with your land in terms of place and time. Consequently, you should not surrender expressing your sadness and woes at your loss but you should be angry. It is natural to be angry because your anger would eventually lead to steadfastness and effective struggle, whereas nostalgia is a signifier of romantic impotence” (cited by Ismail 2003: 5).

Being deprived of any kind of military support, the Palestinian people, living in the refugee camps inside the occupied territories, had nothing to use against the Israeli war machine except the stones of their own land. Expressing his pride in the resistance activities carried out by the Palestinian children, Hatem Al-Sakr writes: “A moon walking on earth/ the youngsters of our homeland/ standing like swords/ making us hear another language” (Al-Sakr 1989:27). Emphasizing the political significance of the first Palestinian Uprising at this crucial moment in the history of Palestinian struggle, Al-Sakr hails the stone-throwing children as heroes. He implores them to “draw a rising moon on our wasteland/ A banner of victory/ Be our coming thunder/ A messenger of rain”. The use of wasteland images in addition to the resurrection and fertility allusions, embedded in the “coming thunder” and “rain”, expose the deplorable condition of the Arab World in the early 1990s after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and emphasize the dire need for a savior to guide the Arabs to the way of salvation and redemption. Since there is no savior or Christ-figure among the Arab rulers, who, without exception, have turned into puppets in the hands of Israel and America, “the game today is in the hands of a Palestinian child who says “no/ who raises the banners of our glory/ the glory of the stone” (Al-Sakr 1989: 28).

Apparently, the Palestinian poet, mentioned above, compares the high spirit and vitality of the unarmed Palestinian children, confronting a brutal military machine, with the rulers of Arab countries whose castrated and impotent armies have given the Arab peoples nothing but recurrent defeats: “In the past, the game was in the hands of decadent tribes/ speaking a language full of lies/ depending on horses which have fallen down/ in the darkness of the prairie of fear”. Al-Sakr argues that the Arab rulers as well as the Arab armies should be ashamed of themselves, because they have left the Palestinian children alone to face the savage Zionist regime in the occupied territories. The Arab rulers according to the poem, “are doing nothing except talking” and “today they seek the help of a Palestinian child carrying some stones”(28).

One of the Palestinian children fighting the Zionist soldiers, on behalf of the sleeping Arab rulers, is

immortalized in Saadi Yousef's poem "Yahya". The famous Iraqi poet portrays his fictional protagonist "Yahya", a Palestinian refugee child who is killed during the Intifada against the Israeli occupied forces, as a national hero. In the poem, Yahya uses his stones to face the Israeli tanks the same way a professional soldier uses his machine gun: "The banners of Yahya/ His clothes which are full of bullets' holes/ Yahya in the refugee camp/ is collecting stones to shoot them/ in the face of fire" (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 32). In the third stanza of the poem, Yahya becomes a symbol of the Palestinian struggle and revolution: "Yahya walks in the streets/ his armor is a speckled Palestinian Kufiyya/ my son - you are a king raising his green banners/ Palestine is your kingdom/ Take whatever you like from Palestine, take all the streets of Palestine/ Take the land of God—take us if you wish" (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 34). The references to the child's clothes "which are full of bullets' holes" is a signifier of the brutality of the Israeli army. However, the allusions to the Palestinian Kufiyya, a famous Palestinian symbol since the 1930's, and "the green banners" of Yahya, underline the continuity of the Palestinian struggle, regardless of Arab indifference toward the plight of the Palestinian people. Yahya's olive branch, a Palestinian icon integral to the Palestinian dream that seeks to restore their land, or part of it, affirms the insistence of the Palestinians to have a homeland of their own, in spite of US and Western alliance with Israel.

The Intifada erupted partly because of the US's double policy toward the Palestinian issue which reached a zenith after the events of September 11, 2001. Akbar Ahmed points out that "when America's war on terrorism unfolded after the events of September 11th, the Palestinians were pushed against the wall and the spiral of killing and violence increased dramatically" (Ahmed 2001: 11) in the West Bank and Gaza. Illuminating the Western double policy in regards to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Asma Barlas argues that in Western perspective "the Jewish struggle that resulted in Israel's existence is represented almost universally as a nationalist struggle, even though the Jewish claim to Palestine is theological not political in nature, dc in as much as it arises in a covenant with God". However, "the Palestinians' struggle for their own state is represented almost universally as a holy war (a kind of terrorism) rather than as a nationalist and anti-colonial struggle, even though it arises in a political claim to land and is not based upon arguments about religious rights" (Barlas 2003: 53). Dealing with the Palestinian Intifada as a kind of terrorism, the US culture machine, according to Charles Smith, ignored the fact that "the Jewish Hagana, Irgum and Stern gangs [not the Palestinians] were those who began the practice of bombing gathering places and crowded Arab areas in order to terrorize the Arab community" (Smith 1992: 140). To the Jews, Smith continues, the members of these groups were not considered as terrorists but they were glorified as "patriots whose exploits enabled the founding of Israel and Menachem Begin", the Stern gang's leader became a prime minister of the Jewish state during the 1970's (Smith 1992:140).

In order to undermine the colonial discourse which depicts Palestinian resistance as terrorism, the Intifada poets present the Palestinian resistance through the image of Palestinian children carrying stones and confronting the most powerful military machine in the Middle East. In "The Song of the Stones", Suleiman Al-Eissa describes a confrontation between a group of Palestinian children armed only with stones and an Israeli tank. The Palestinian poet addresses the Israeli officer on board the tank: "Why are you so scared sir? / Are you afraid of the Palestinian children? / Are you afraid of children living in the tents of the refugee camps / since you usurped their food and their land? / Are you still scared of little children stoning

your tank?" (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 40). The poet then refers to the Palestinian palm tree which is a symbol of life and survival, affirming that the Palestinian people, like the palm trees, are deeply rooted in their homeland. In spite of decades of oppression and brutal massacres, the Palestinian people have never been isolated from their land or from their olive orchards and palm trees:

Our palm tree is still growing
it gives us its dates
our children live under its shades
our ancestors died under its shades (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 40).

Afterwards, Al-Eissa addresses the Israeli officer on board the tank using a sarcastic tone: "Our children have nothing except their stones / but when an assassin like you showers their fragile bodies / with the bullets of death / They suddenly turn into an earthquake / driving you to madness / why are you so scared of them sir? / They only carry stones". In the preceding lines, the courage of the Palestinian children, who defend themselves with stones, is juxtaposed with the cowardice of the Israeli officer who is armed with a tank. The Israeli officer is scared of the unarmed children because he is aware of the fact that he is a colonizer usurping Palestinian territory. Being aware of their right to defend their dignity and their occupied homeland, the Palestinian children, unlike the Israeli officer, are ready to die for their just cause. They turn the Intifada into an earthquake which horrifies the colonizer in spite of the power of his military machine. As lovers of the land, the Palestinian children, engaged in the revolutionary Uprising against the Israelis, were able to give birth to a new Arab Renaissance: "They said the Arab World is dead / and it will never come back to life / They said the Arab World has been Americanized / but a new spirit is coming back throughout our children / Throughout the remains of the stone song / I am telling all the poets: this is the era of the stone epic" (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 41).

The stone, as a symbol of struggle, also pervades one of Mamdouh Odwan's poems, written in response to the first Intifada, which is associated with the revolution of the Palestinians against an occupation that has lasted for more than fifty years. In "The Stone", the Palestinian poet Mamdouh Odwan celebrates the Intifada which breaks the silence of a world that has turned its back on Palestinian suffering. Odwan reveals that for years, the Palestinians have been waiting for a savior to put an end to their misery, but that all their efforts to terminate their tragedy proved futile. Thus, in "The Stone", The Palestinians under occupation become tired of waiting: "The shades in the middle of the summer die / as a result of waiting and boredom / the swords in the battlefield die out of waiting and boredom". Nevertheless, the "stones Uprising" ushers in a new era: "This is the time of the stone / the water in the rivers turns into a stone / If you want to live in dignity be a stone / carry a stone / throw a stone in the face of the enemy" (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 42).

In Odwan's poem, the stone is used to connote different meanings. It is not only a symbol of the Palestinian struggle and revolution against an oppressive regime, but it is also used to signify the current Arab situation that characterizes the Arab-Israeli relationship just before the breaking up of the Uprising. For instance, when the poet refers to what he calls "the stony time", he indicates the state of political stagnation and

military immobility which characterizes the Palestinian-Israeli conflict prior to the first Intifada. Speaking of the shameful condition of sterility and impotence dominating the Arab World, which partly leads to the popular Uprising in Palestine in 1988, the poet uses the images of “dying trees”, “sterile wind” and “frozen rain” as wasteland symbols to signify a state of futility and hopelessness: “In winter, the rain is frozen / and the wind is ashamed of itself / as the winter season always comes without rain / the wind is a blade cutting the trees / shattering the trunks of the dying palms” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 43).

This condition of sterility which dominates the Arab world comes to an end with the emergence of the Intifada and the use of the stone as a weapon of resistance: “The leaves of the trees turn into stones”, says the poet. Thus, the stone becomes a central symbol of revolution and struggle: “A stone secretly carrying its fire / whispering its secrets to a boy / full of anger and bitterness / If there is an enemy / there is always a stone / and the rivers of courage flow with stones / and stones pour down like showers of rain” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 45). By the end of the poem, Odwan advises the Arab nation to “learn the lesson given to us by a Palestinian boy / in the era of the stone”. He equally urges the Palestinian people living as refugees in their own land to intensify their struggle against the enemy because they have nothing to lose: “We have nothing to lose / be a stone / we have been dehumanized / be a stone / We are not afraid of death anymore / be a stone / They have taken our homeland / be a stone / If you have no weapon carry a stone / scream, scream and your / voice becomes a stone / there is no more fear / no more relieving tears / as we see a crying boy turning into a stone” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 46).

The stone as a complex and subtle symbol, signifying a variety of meanings and ideas, is also used by Kadhem Al-Sammawi in his poem “Stones, Stones”. In this poem, Al-Sammawi not only criticizes Zionist invaders but also attacks the Arab rulers for their submissive policies in relation to the Palestinian cause. The poet demonstrates that Arab rulers who have betrayed the Palestinian people have nothing to give to the Palestinians simply because they represent worn-out governments and castrated regimes that take orders from both the White House and the Israeli Parliament. Therefore, the stone-throwing children in Al-Sammawi’s poem represent a threat not only to the Israeli colonizers but also to fossilized Arab rulers who are afraid of the revolutionary spirit triggered by the Intifada: “A stone for a stony age / A stone for the Israeli assassin / A stone for a stony throne / A stone for the stony rulers / A stone for every Arab summit / and when they come to the summit / the Arab rulers turn into stones / A stone for those who / break their promises / A stone for the man with the Arabian cloak / A stone for the traitors / A stone for the stony regimes / A stone for the stony League / A stone for a stony conscience / A stone for a stony honor” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 181).

The word “stone” is aesthetically articulated in the text of the poem at different levels to connote a multiplicity of meanings. On one level, it refers to the state of moral bankruptcy in the Arab World and the indifference of Arab rulers toward the Palestinian tragedy: “A stone for a stony age / A stone for the man with the Arabian cloak”. On another level, the word “stone” signifies a worn-out Arab political system that lives outside history and time: “A stone for a stony throne”. It is also used as a means to attack the impotent policies of the Arab League and poke fun at the Arab rulers who turn “literally” into stones during Arab summits. The poet indicates that the spark of the Intifada of the stones should be extended

to include every part of the Arab World. On this basis, the poet aims to revolutionize the masses in every Arab country in order to urge them to eliminate all the puppet rulers who have betrayed their people. The poem, as a whole, urges the Arab people to take the Palestinian children engaged in the Intifada, as an example of revolutionary struggle that must be extended to include every Arab country. Al-Sammawi also calls for the elimination of all Arab regimes that have tyrannized their people and the puppet rulers who betrayed the Palestinian cause and who served the interests of imperialistic countries. The poet also calls for the obliteration of all organizations and institutions that have failed to play a vital role in supporting the Palestinian struggle, particularly the Arab League: “A stone for the stony League”.

Like Al-Sammawi, Ahmad Dahbour uses the stone motif as a metaphor for Palestinian struggle and revolution. In “The Stone of our Homeland”, Dahbour sarcastically compares the functional and revolutionary activities of the Intifada with the sterility and impotence of all Arab summits, which have been transformed into ceremonies where Arab rulers enjoy entertainment and physical relaxation. During Arab summits devoted to explore the Palestinian issue, all the rulers of the Arab countries are accustomed to becoming involved in social formalities and exchanging kisses and greetings; therefore, they do not usually have time to discuss the Palestinian / Israeli conflict or the fate of the Palestinian refugees. Inevitably the breaking up of the Palestinian Intifada puts an end to “the diplomatic nonsense” of the Arab summits: “This is the stone season/ The stone is flying in the horizon/ It is shining in the day light / Oh stones of our land/ Come, come like torrents of rain” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 115).

Like other Intifada poets, Dahbour utilizes the stone as a symbol of salvation, heralding the beginning of a new era of liberation and independence. According to the poet, the revolution of the stones (the first Intifada) will inevitably bring resurrection to the wasteland of the Arab World. The blood of “the children carrying stones” will map out the way of salvation for the Palestinian people who do not need the empty rhetoric of Arab summits or Arab political propaganda any longer. Like Dahbour, Shawki Abdul-Amir glorifies the Intifada fighters who challenge the Israeli military machine and insist on the Palestinians’ right to exist as a free nation. In Abdul-Amir’s Intifada poetry, the Palestinian stone becomes an emblem of the historical struggle against the forces of occupation: “We immortalize the history of our struggle in the past/ by writing it on the leaves of our trees/ our future is immortalized as it is written on the Palestinian stones/ If the Zionist invaders know/ how to occupy our land and play with history/ our children know how to occupy history and play with stones” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 148).

The significant role played by the Palestinian Intifada in contemporary Arab and Palestinian history and literature is also emphasized in the poetry of Ahmad Al-Hardello who addresses the Israeli policy-makers, alluding to the Zionist dream of establishing a Jewish state extending from the river Nile in Egypt to the Euphrates in Iraq: “your armed soldiers who come to transform Arab land into an Israeli plantation/ extending from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean / are scared of a child carrying a stone”. Al-Hardello also uses the word “stone” in different contexts to emphasize the relentless and persistent intentions of Palestinians to continue their struggle and revolution against a brutal enemy: “Our children will keep shooting you with deadly stones/ They will draw on the blackboards of our schools a country made of stones/ they will write in their notebooks about a nation of stones/ they will play in the alleys of

Jerusalem with Palestinian stones/ when the universe falls into slumber/ they move around carrying their stones/ For us the whole world is nothing except a child throwing a stone” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 185). The repetition of the word “stone”, in the preceding lines, enhances the revolutionary message of the poem which reaches a climax when the Palestinian children are seen playing with stones in the streets and alleys of the occupied city of Jerusalem.

Because of its strategic and vital role as a symbol of struggle during the first Palestinian Uprising, the stone motif is overloaded with a multiplicity of connotations and allusions in the Intifada poetry. The stone image is also used extensively as a complex symbol carrying oppositional implications. From a semantic perspective, this is the first time in the history of Arabic language that the word “stone” is given all these meanings. Obviously, the Palestinian Uprising has radically changed many things including the meaning of words. In this context, Renato Rosaldo has observed, in “Politics, Patriarchs and Laughter”, the strong relationship between struggle and creativity (Rosaldo 1987: 67). Due to the Palestinian heroic struggle during the Intifada, Arab and Palestinian poets were inspired to create new poetic images and use language in a highly creative manner. In the same context, the Native American poet, Joy Harjo, illustrates the importance of creative and revolutionary poetry for marginalized peoples such as the Palestinians and the Native Americans. Harjo addresses all oppressed races, urging them to write poetry and render their struggle into words: “Speak, speak, your silence will not protect you” (Coltelli 1990: 58). On this basis, the Intifada poetry not only becomes an instrument of revolution and socio-political change but also “a public act” (Wong 1979: 5), challenging the hegemonic and imperialistic discourse of the colonizers.

Indicating that the stone is more powerful than the bullet, Bandar Abdul-Hamid says: “A bullet collides with a stone/ The bullet changes its direction/ and the stone falls apart/ turning into pieces of sand blinding the eyes of the invaders”. Then the poet refers to the brutality and cowardice of the Zionist soldiers who are not ashamed of fighting Palestinian children defending themselves with stones: “when they hear that his elder brother teaches him how to throw stones/ the enemy patrol-wagons siege the house/ The enemy patrol officers set an ambush to trap and arrest a child/ who has been fed on the milk of the revolution/ when he is taken to an Israeli prison/ the child laughs and mocks his enemies” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 222). The poet also indicates that Palestinians are not only living under siege in the occupied territory but they have always been subjected to police investigations in neighboring Arab countries and elsewhere: “We are sieged in our homeland and we are also sieged outside our country”. In spite of the continuity of internal siege and external police interrogations “the stone revolution is going on”, says the poet.

Abdul-Hamid argues that as the Intifada rages on against Israeli occupation and the brutal assaults against Palestinian children (claiming hundreds of lives and thousands of casualties), the Arab rulers turn their backs on the tragic realities of Palestinian life. As the Intifada goes on, says the poet, “the endless misery” not of the Palestinians but “of the Arab people, goes on”. In a desperate attempt, the poet sarcastically seeks to awaken the Arab rulers from their sleep telling them: “Hi, hi Arabs / the Palestinian children are fighting our colonizers only with stones” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 222). Like Abdul-Hamid, the Tunisian poetess Samira Al-Kasrawi attacks the Arab rulers who turned their backs on the Palestinian Uprising. In “The Song of the Stones and the Pomegranate Buds” she criticizes the passive attitude of the

Arab rulers toward the plight of the Palestinian people: “you / sick Arabs / the Arabs who are obsessed with accumulating wealth and gold / the Arabs who are interested in empty sermons / the Arabs seeking crowns and thrones / now it is time for the fire of anger / the fire of the stone / this fire will certainly eat up everything” (Al-Makhaleh 1992: 263).

In the above-cited same poem, Al-Kasrawi starts with the following lines: “The beautiful rose may dream of rain / the rose may whisper to the eyes of the moon / the trees grow out of their wounds / and the floods of stones grow out of anger” (cited in Al-Makaleh, 1992: 262). Affirming the fact that the first Palestinian Uprising is born out of Palestinian suffering and the dire need to have an independent homeland, the poetess addresses the Palestinian child, the icon of the popular Uprising (the first Intifada): “Get into the horizons of history / and give us your wisdom / embrace our land and pick up your stones / the banners of your victory / the dead body of the Palestinian martyr is a minaret / beaming into the darkness of our time” (cited in Al-Makaleh 1992: 263). In Al-Kasrawi’s poem, the Palestinian child, engaged in the Intifada, is able to confront the army of “the invaders” and the “Yankee ships” which carry military support to the Israeli colonizers. The Palestinian child fights the colonizers and their imperialistic allies until he dies, winning the honor and dignity of martyrdom: “your brave steps take you into the middle of explosions / your blood embroiders the stone you hold in your hand / as you sleep in comfort in the dust of our land” (263).

The preceding lines refer to the Palestinian ritual of placing a stone in the hands of the Intifada children killed during confrontations with the Israeli army as the Palestinian people carry their dead bodies for burial. In addition to the symbolic implications of the stone indicated in the above-cited lines, Al-Kasrawi employs other symbols such as “the David Star” signifying the Israeli army machine and “the Palestinian orange fields”, suggesting Palestinian land and identity. She indicates how the Israeli tanks marked with “the David Star” are brutally employed to eliminate the national Palestinian symbols represented by the Palestinian orange trees and olive orchards. However the Lebanese poetess, Huda Al- Noamani points out that the Israeli army can never put an end to the Palestinian dream of having an independent homeland because of the inevitable continuity of the Palestinian resistance and struggle. She characterizes the Intifada not only as a significant resistance movement but also as part of the Palestinian struggle initiated by Fatah—the military wing of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in the pre-Oslo agreement era. In a poem entitled, “The Fatah Connection”, Al-Noamani describes the Palestinian children engaged in the Intifada as: “Children of fire, the Fatah connection / they bravely enter into every castle / they enter into the caves of all mountains / looking for stones / They kindle the sparks of the Intifada / when the fire turns into ashes / they burst into flames” (cited in Al-Makaleh, 1992: 269).

In his poem, “A Daily Scene”, the revolutionary Palestinian poet, Mureed Albarghouthi depicts the Intifada in a new context using shattered rhythms and broken cadences “freezing the poetic language” of his poems and selecting appropriate words different from what he calls “the pompous language of false heroism”, used by the Arab tyrants (cited by Ismail 2003: 4). In “A Daily Scene”, Albarghouthi penetrates inside a Palestinian refugee camp and visualizes an image of “a room with a broken window”. In this location, “there is no barrier between the clouds in the sky / and the rotten edge of the rag in the room”, says the

poet. Then the poet takes the reader to another corner in the room where “a tired mother is suckling her baby”. Inside the room the persona of the poem stands behind the window watching a routine scene taking place outside: “young boys loading their slings with stones / and sounds of cheering crowds carrying banners / and soldiers proudly shooting at children” (Albarghouthi 2002: 196). As a result of the chaos, created by the Israeli soldiers, “one boy was killed and another martyr / was still bleeding on the asphalt” (Albarghouthi 2002: 197). The poem that starts with “soft is this winter day” ends with scenes of Palestinian blood on the asphalt and daily scenes of crowds carrying banners and dead bodies for burial, all of which had become an integral part of Palestinian collective memory and historical record of pain and suffering.

In “My Grandmother’s Box”, Albarghouthi speaks about “our collective funeral procession moving under the rain” evoking significant episodes from the Palestinian history of displacement and agony using the grandmother’s box as an objective correlative. The grandmother’s box contains “the letters of her loved ones which still carry the smell of the tears she has been shedding after their departure” and “the picture of one of her grandsons who was killed in Beirut” in addition to the “pictures of her new neighbors”. The speaker in the poem hints that his grandmother always has new neighbors, an indication of the never-ending displacement and Diaspora of the Palestinian people who move from one exile into another and from one massacre into another. The most important things in the grandmother’s box are an old key of her house in Al-Leddah, an address of a house in one of the suburbs of Jerusalem city and a copy of a recent lease of a small house in Damascus” (Albarghouthi 2002: 200). The reference to the grandmother’s key is significant because after the 1948 defeat, which resulted in the displacement of thousands of Palestinian families, the Palestinians were told that they would definitely return to their houses and villages after a short period of time in neighboring Arab countries. Therefore, they were carrying the keys to their houses and some are still keeping them until now. Ghada Karmi says that in the refugee camps on the borders of Israel,

Palestinian parents told their children every detail of the villages and towns they had come from, showed them the keys of the houses they had been forced to abandon, recounted stories of their past lives, such that in years to come these children knew Palestine as if they themselves had lived there (Karmi 1999: 4).

The grandmother persona, who still carries the key to her Jerusalem house, is the centre of Albarghouthi’s poem. Like Palestinian women, she has accepted willingly the death of two of her sons who died in two successive nights. The theme of death pervading “My Grandmother’s Box” becomes a leitmotif in “Where Are You Going on a Night Like this?” written within the context of the Palestinian Intifada, as thousands of Palestinians were killed and maimed. On this basis, Albarghouthi’s death poem becomes a cry of anger in the face of death itself. The poet urges death to stop reaping the souls and lives of the Palestinian people: “I was about to cry: You death, go away from here / and take the lives of other people / seek others, search for others / who are ready to give you a sanctuary / leave our children alone, let other people hold your deadly arm / as you walk across crowded roads” (cited by Abdul-Aziz 2004: 3). Then, Albarghouthi advises death to stay at home and not to go outside, because it may be targeted by Israeli snipers and helicopter gunships: “Where are you going on a night like this? / who is ready to protect you from October’s

cold / or from the eyes of smart airplanes / or stealth bombers / or the looks of snipers hidden in corners / whose bullets are able to kill anything moving even partners lying in bed?" (4).

In "A Night that Has no Equal", Albarghouthi creates an image of Muhammad Al-Dura, the famous Palestinian child who was brutally killed during the Intifada by an Israeli tank; the murder scene was televised by a reporter's camera and it was broadcast to the whole world. The poem depicts Al-Dura as if he were coming back at night to visit his family: "He stepped into his room / his picture is still there near the small bed / He knocks the doors of all the rooms in the house to awaken his family / he wants to ask them about their life under the heavy shelling / and they want to ask him about his whereabouts after his death". Then the language of the poem becomes more emotional and touching as it explores the unfulfilled wishes and shattered dreams of the child and his poor family: "He wishes he could ask all of them about their life under the night shelling / They wish they could ask him if he has already taken his dinner / If he has ever suffered from the cold of the night as he lies in his tomb / and whether the dust covering his dead body/ is sufficient enough to protect him from the cold of the grave/ they wish they could also ask him if the doctors have succeeded in removing the bullet of fear from his heart/ and whether he is still frightened or not?" (cited in Abdul-Aziz 2004: 5).

The fictional dialogue between Al-Dura and his family is highly revealing, because it captures the horrible moments prior to his death as they appear in the television news bulletins, when he was trembling out of fear, under the shelling of the Israeli tanks and machine guns, attempting to protect himself by hiding behind his father's back. Albarghouthi skillfully visualizes Al-Dura's visit to his family, using words that reveal their profound sadness and the parents' inability to believe that their little son is dead. The poet, however, affirms the death of Al-Dura by referring to the talk of the neighbors, who whisper that the story about the return of Muhammad Al-Dura is just a fantasy, because he has already left behind him a testimony of his death: "His school bag and his notebooks". The poem emphasizes the death of Al-Dura by emphasizing that his bed is still empty and by referring to his school bag which is full of bullet holes. The holes in the bag constitute a witness to the brutality of the enemy, whose bullets penetrated both the thin body of the child and his schoolbag. The child's bag, pierced by the bullets, is not the only evidence of his death but the colors of his notebooks have also faded away. Moreover, his mother is still in the company of the mourners and those who come to express their condolences after his death.

Like the poetry of other Palestinian and Arab poets, discussed in this paper, Albarghouthi's impressive poems were inspired by the Intifada of a colonized people fighting alone, using stones and the bodies of its young people in its struggle against a vicious invader, armed with a sophisticated military machine. In this context, Al-Barghouthi's poetry, like the poetry of other Intifada poets, turns into an instrument of resistance, a weapon aiming to disrupt the hegemonic boundaries imposed on the Palestinian people by submissive Arab rulers and imperialistic/racist enemies. While Native American poets have tried to maintain a protective boundary as a way of asserting and defending their cultural integrity, the Palestinian Intifada poets seek to smash all boundaries—geographical, political, military and psychological—that may prevent them from restoring their homeland. Like Native American poets who defend their tribal sovereignty and reservation lands against the capitalist policy of recurrent American governments, the

Intifada poets seek to defend Palestinian land and identity, affirming the values of struggle and the right of existence, in an independent homeland, for all the Palestinians, including those who live either in Diaspora or refugee camps.

Like all oppressed peoples, Palestinians and Native Americans have been engaged in struggle against colonial and oppressive forces that seek to banish them outside the realm of human history. On this basis, the Palestinian and Native American poetry dealt with in this study, is a reflection of indigenous struggle and protest against hegemonic and colonial forces. Written under conditions imposed by the policies of imperialist domination, the counter-hegemonic poetry of Native American and Palestinian Intifada poets personifies a challenge to hegemonic forces that seek to obliterate their existence and identity. Using poetry as an instrument of struggle, Native American and Palestinian poets aim not only to resurrect what colonialism has demolished, but also target social change through resistance. Rewriting the history of colonization from the perspective of the colonized, contemporary Palestinian and Native American poets seek to undermine the perverted narrative of the colonizers and recover their identities and historical rights to exist as independent nations, even if they are surrounded by the frontiers of violence and fear, imposed by the invaders.

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Notes

¹ All translations of Arabic poetry and prose are my own.

The Internet and the Commercialization of Sex: A Gender Perspective.

By **Chineze J. Onyejekwe**

Abstract

This paper analyzes the unique role of the Internet in the spread of pornography and links it with violence against women. Continuous efforts at tackling this problem, for example, through the policing of the Internet are also discussed.

Key words: The Internet, pornography and violence against women

Recent technological advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs) have resulted in the emergence of many new forms of media such as videotapes, DVDs. Of all these forms of new media, the Internet is considered the most addictive medium after television. In the United States, for example, this is the case for a large proportion of the 160 million users of the medium (Rishad Tobaccowala to Robin Hafitz, 13 January 2003). In China, the most populous country in the world, the country's online population has grown rapidly that it is now the second largest Internet Market in the world after the United States (Independent Online Newspaper [heretofore IOL], 28 May 2005; REUTERS, 22 July 2005).

Furthermore, there is the recognition that the positive aspects of the Internet are many and that women have also benefited from these developments. For example, the Internet has been empowering for women by bringing employment gains to them. According to the United Nations (UN Fact Sheet No. 10, January 2002), increasing numbers of women have gained access to computer technology particularly in countries where access to computers is available. For example, from 1995 to 1998, women's online engagements were estimated to have increased from 8.1 to 30.1 million globally, and were expected to reach 43.3

million in 2000. The development of electronic mail has also allowed women to disseminate information in a faster and less expensive way, enabling them to network, organize and mobilize more effectively. Furthermore, the Internet can be used in a way to leverage issues and try to generate change. For example, one of its unique aspects is shown in how easy it would be for law enforcement agencies to track down traffickers such as through their credit card information. Despite these positive aspects of the Internet, it has also brought many problems such as exacerbating the commercialization of sex – and the spread of pornography (del Nevo 2000).

Catharine MacKinnon defines pornography as:

The graphic sexually explicit subordination of women through pictures or words that also include women dehumanized as sexual objects, things, or commodities, enjoying pain or humiliation or rape, being tied up, cut up, mutilated, bruised, or physically hurt, in postures of sexual submission or severity or display, reduced to body parts, penetrated by objects or animals, or presented in scenarios of degradation, injury, torture, shown as filthy or inferior, bleeding, bruised, or hurt in a context that makes conditions sexual” (cited in Jennifer Nash, 2002).

The past century witnessed a sale on flesh unequal in history. Worldwide, there has been a widespread increase of pornographic and wanton violence in the media. Books and magazines, recordings, the cinema, the theater, television, videocassettes, advertising displays and even telecommunications, frequently offer a representation of violent behavior or of permissiveness in sexual activity (Pontifical Council for Social Communications, Vatican City, 7 May, 1982, 23rd World Communications Day). Internet advertising, for example, is growing bigger by the day and the medium is increasing the opportunities for pornography greatly.

In its 11th May 2005 Report on sex trade’s reliance on forced labor, the International Labor Organization noted, that technological developments such as the Internet, as well as the proliferation of tourism, escort agencies, human trafficking, pornography, and media outlets that advertise sexual services, have contributed to the growing demand for commercial sex.

The commercialization of vice has always thrived on women’s bodies, from skimpily clad cocktail waitresses to the iconic images of showgirls. As Indhu Rajagopal with Nis Bojin (2004) point out, with “increasing potential for dissemination of pornographic materials, the Internet has become a powerful purveyor of prurient pictures and messages. In this process, the voyeur becomes at once a prying observer and also a participant in actively degrading human beings, particularly through the commodification of women and children.”

Reflecting on this problem James Atlas (*Sunday Times Lifestyle* [South Africa], 30 May 2000, p. 20) observed earlier on, that pornography used to be a preserve of sleazy shops but by the end of the last millennium, it became embraced in the respected halls of academia. (For more on pornography and the

politics of gender see Judith Butler 1993, Part 1, Chapters 1 and 2). Its mainstreaming can be traced to the market-led nature of the media. The link between pornography and advertising is also becoming increasingly blurred. References to obscenity and indecency cited in many codes of conduct or selfregulatory guidelines are no longer applicable, as pornographic images can be downloaded from the Internet at the click of a mouse (del Nevo 2000).

Moreover, Internet sites often result in increased percentage of violent, misogynistic images. Virtual violence is readily available on the Internet and the Danish-licensed website: <http://www.slavefarm.com> is a classic example of web sites that promote violence against women.

Feminists analyzing women and media issues argue that pornography thrives on violence against women. They describe it as oppression against women. While feminists such as Wendy McElroy 1993 and Nadine Strossen (1995), for example, view pornography as an expression of a woman's right, Zillah Eisenstein (in her 1998 book titled: *Global Obscenities: Patriarchy, Capitalism, and the Lure of Cyber fantasy*) seems to attack it. Katrien Jacobs (2000) has however criticized Eisenstein's book for not giving a critical analysis of Internet pornography and cybersex but instead focusing on "a raw and angry book, a passionate attack against American capitalism, the Clinton administration, privatized telecommunications and Internet companies that manufacture 'global obscenities.'" Jacobs therefore concludes that Eisenstein's book does not cover pornography as mediated sexual scenes. Contrarily, other feminist critics of pornography such as Catherine Mackinnon (1982; 1993) and Diana Russell (1995) assert that pornography glamorizes and incites violence against women and children. Not all pornography glamorizes violence.

Pornography comes in different forms and some of these are not necessarily aggressive. Magazines such as playboy and Penthouse are not always aggressive in their approach. They just combine sensational stories about crime with "soft-core" porn. Other forms of pornography include cartoons, comics, joke books, sensational newspapers and political satire. These forms of pornography differ from that of the sex industry in particular. In contrast, the sex industry's major focus seems to be on "sex" alone whilst at the same time being insensitive to the negative consequences associated with its aggressive pornography—a pornography which portrays violent sexual acts (such as rape and murder) particularly against women, and children. This is a problem exacerbated by the Internet.

It has been problematic linking violence in the Internet (or the media in general) to violence against women. The Report of the United States Attorney General Commission on Pornography (Section 5.2.1 Sexually Violent Material) however links violence against women to the consumption of pornography (MacKinnon cited in Nash 2002). This report is supported by the Kriegel Commission report (November 2002) set up by the French government to look into the broadcasting standards of violent or pornographic images. This report also found that there is a link between the broadcast of violent scenes and the behavior of young people. According to the Kriegel report (IOL, 14 November 2002), the short-term emotional effects of exposure to televised violence are reactions of fear, anxiety and distress. According to the article, the report states that on pornography: "The visual representation in a brutal or repeated fashion of pornographic scenes at too young an age can create an emotion capable of influencing the normal

development of the brain and leaving a lasting imprint on a person's conception of sexuality" (IOL, 14 November 2002).

The negative effects of pornography are many. It is not difficult to conceptualize the possibility that in instances of prolonged exposure, certain dubious elements of the pseudo-sexuality may become integrated within the perceptual framework of some receivers. The main issue regarding pornography is according to Andre van Deventer (1995: 5-6), not the short-term and perceivable behavioral effects on the individual as such, whether positive or negative, but rather on the long-term affective and cognitive effects on the development of mass culture – such as violence against women – (*emphasis mine*).

There have also been calls for a tougher stand on indecency, for example, censorship defined, as any means by which ideas and works of art that express views not in accord with the dominant ideology are prevented from reaching their intended audience (Tax et al. 2003). Such works may be seized, banned, ignored, defamed, diminished, or misinterpreted. Feminists consider censorship as a form of the exercise of power such as based on gender, class or nation. It is, therefore, seen as one of the most effective means of repressive patriarchal structures within society and the home. Apart from this reason, the question of whether something is pornography or not has also been debatable in the sense that some consider it as art.

In gender terms, various artists have for ages painted pictures of women, especially in the nude. This nudity is however examined in terms of the shape, beauty and the texture of the female form. Some of these arts are also meant to be overtly sexual but not necessarily pornographic -- erotic art. Edouard Manet's *Olympia* (1863-65, Musee d'Orsay, Paris, France), and Dominique Ingre's *Grande Odalisque* (1814, Musee du Louvre [III], also in France) respectively are good examples.

On a different level, the *Kama Sutra*, an ancient Indian text of erotic love, believed to have been written sometime in the third century by a sage known as Vatsyayana, depicts figures of loving couples in various sexual forms. The popularity of the original translation of this text in Great Britain by Sir Richard Burton (in 1876) was associated by what was termed at the time, as Hindu pornography. Moreover, the translated text seemed to express all things in terms of the patriarchal/male-dominated perspective. The current translation of the text by Wendy Doniger and Sudhir Kakar and known, as *Kamasutra* offers a more gender-balanced version. It analyzes its attitudes toward gender and sexual violence, offers mutuality between men and women, and sets it in the context of ancient Indian social theory, scientific method, and sexual ethics (Sensua Organics 2005).

The general observation that the lines between what is considered art, erotic art and pornography seem to be less rigid in the art world. In erotic art, however, the object of desire is a recognizable human individual – the subject (person in the art) - examined not in terms of exciting titillation. In pornography, the opposite seems to be the case. The main occupation is with the sex act alone. With women mostly presented as objects of sexual desire, pornography can, therefore, rightly be accused of objectifying them and consequently exposing them to gender-based violence.

Violence against women is a simple phrase that encompasses a horrifying list of abusive behavior both physically and psychologically that ranges from violence in the home, sexual harassment at school and work, rape and defilement, sexual violence including conflict situations, and enforcement of gender-bias laws. From the above list, one cannot but reflect on the ways and means by which the international community and domestic laws can address this serious problem of gender injustice. Some countries are currently making efforts to combat this menace. The police in the United Kingdom are, for example, contacting other forces worldwide in an attempt to close down websites with sexually violent content (BBC News, 2 May 2004 located at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-2/hi/uk_news/3460855.stm).

Recently, China is also initiating moves to police Chinese-run websites including commercial, government and personal sites (Elaine Kurtenbach, IOL, 7 June 2005). In 2004, for example, the country shut down 12 000 Internet Cafes. The reasons for these moves are many. While some of the cafes were closed because of the lack of registration others were closed because they allowed access to unethical, illegal and inhumane pornography.

These efforts, though commendable, have fallen short of what is needed as further calls for the increase in the use of software that restricts what is sent to people via the Internet (censor ware) has also been met with serious but mixed concerns. As Katrien Jacobs clearly puts it: “Pornography as sexually explicit electronic traffic and a bubbling entertainment industry has pervaded the Internet from its very infancy, and is now causing fear and headaches amongst citizens and rightwing organizations. While porn consumers are frantically buying access to state-of-the-art sites, the unwieldy empire of the senses is stirring up new modes of chaotic conservatism and censorship legislation” (Jacobs 2000). Censoring what can be seen over the Internet can be limiting. Individuality is supreme in this regard. Feminists Against Censorship such as Carol Avedon (1993) assert that censorship will not reduce crime. A submission by Feminists Against Censorship to the [UK] Home Affairs Inquiry into Computer Pornography (1994), also emphasizes that research into the background and behavior of serious sex offenders has revealed that the causes of abusive/violent behavior are found in early childhood and generally pre-date exposure to pornographic materials. Moreover, most of the debate concerning the Internet has focused on commercial sites but the Internet has more than one set of consequences. Other sources of sexual material also abound. These include person-to-person file exchanges, unsolicited e-mail, Web cameras and chat rooms (Roussouw 2002).

The Internet is a public place. It will therefore be counterproductive to rely on absolutist views and approaches to the above problems. Any attempt at blocking programmes by law enforcement can be circumvented. Over-reliance solely on a particular method can only lead to a false sense of security.

A critical tool in addressing these problems is systematic research on gender on the Internet. This will help to put pressure on governments (and even on a global level) to start taking gender seriously. Similar research will also be required in order to raise consciousness about the issues, as well as effectively monitor progress in the future.

Conclusion

Women's bodies are the most popular playthings in famous international amusement/entertainment strips such as Las Vegas, as strippers adorn the glitzy postmodern spectacle that they provide. No country is immune to this problem. While formulating and applying ethical codes for the communications media, might go a long way in promoting respect and common good, particularly for the Internet which beams homogeneous images around the world, confronting the negative effects of the Internet on women requires focusing not exclusively on violence but on the entire spectrum of media representations that limit, demean or degrade women.

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Eyes Without a Face: Ramón à Clef.

By Alan Clinton

I'm not sure, but I believe that I may have one time worked in a silo. The reason I'm not sure is because if I did, it was a virtual silo, or more properly, a silo culture. And also, as Diamond, Stein, and Allcorn explain in "Organizational Silos: Horizontal Organizational Fragmentation," "Silos, with their built-in 'barriers,' are more often than not solutions to problems we can scarcely articulate (what we call autistic organizational artifacts)—because they are embedded in American culture and, therefore, unconsciously driven."¹ I can say that I have definitely had intuitions of working in a silo, however, and can articulate the events precipitating the most tangible feelings. In doing so, much like an analyst attempting to understand latent structures by examining manifest contents, I may be able to shed light on my particular situation. Since my middle name is Ramón, I've decided to call this attempt a "ramón à clef," but will conduct my narrative with the same optimism an analyst brings to a case study—that the contours of the general can be discovered in the rocky fragments of the particular.

Like many young scholars, I have migrated across state institutions that share many of the same unconscious silos, artifacts that repeat with variation inasmuch as they arise from a shared culture. But in one place in particular, I found the silo effect especially strong and equally incomprehensible. I cannot say whether I was right or wrong in the surrounding events because assigning blame per se is not the goal of analysis, and I am not sure whether this essay will look more like the product of Freud or Dr. Schreber, or some oscillation between the two. Perhaps every product of "knowledge" should submit to the possibility that it arises from a doctor who is mad also. There is so little I know about the events I wish to analyze, which I believe is built into the silo effect itself. It is to the institution's advantage if its employees cannot see far beyond their particular silos—it knows all too well the power of the gaze.

I distinctly recall, one winter afternoon, gazing into someone else's mailbox: "Good, I thought, he has received the materials he asked for; the recommendation will be forthcoming." But then a familiar, uncanny shape in the shadow, lay there. I picked up the book, from someone else's otherwise empty mailbox: *Story of the Eye* by Georges Bataille, the City Lights edition. On the back of the book—I knew what quotes were there—Jean Paul Sartre writes, "Bataille denudes himself, exposes himself ... [and] has survived the death of God," while Susan Sontag affirms that Bataille "indicated the aesthetic possibilities of pornography as an art form: *Story of the Eye* being the most accomplished artistically of all pornographic prose I've read." For those who do not already know, *Story of the Eye* is a sort of Bonnie and Clyde narrative.

Its most notorious scene involves Simone, an unnamed male ingenue who narrates the novel, and a priest whose murdered body becomes Simone's sexual toy:

Simone gazed at the absurdity and finally took [the priest's eye] in her hand, completely distraught; yet she had no qualms, and instantly amused herself by fondling the depth of her thighs and inserting this apparently fluid object. The caress of the eye over the skin is so utterly, so extraordinarily gentle, and the sensation is so bizarre that it has something of a rooster's horrible crowing. Simone meanwhile amused herself by slipping the eye into the profound crevice of her ass, she tried to keep the eye there simply by squeezing the buttocks together. But all at once, it zoomed out like a pit squooshed from a cherry, and dropped on the thin belly of the corpse, an inch or so from the cock.²

I find this passage, from the standpoint of the university, compelling for several reasons. First, it attacks traditional models of wholeness, through the anatomical metaphor, that traditional knowledge relies upon. Here the body is torn apart, rearranged, reinvented through play. Thus, the passage anticipates postmodernism's concept of knowledge as invention rather than as revelation of pre-existing verities. The only problem is that, inasmuch as the contemporary university is a reactionary institution, it must refuse the anti-oedipal implications of such knowledge.

Eyes are meant to stay in their sockets and see the truth; they were not made for caressing, for play, certainly not meant to be shot out of our asses like rockets. If an eye gets out of hand, it must be nailed back into place. And so I opened the cover of the book and found the magistrate's seal there. Which magistrate? The one who placed the book in someone else's mailbox, a signature declaring ownership of a book being lent to someone else. Only in this case I had intercepted it with my gaze, which at that moment was as invisible as the machinations that had placed the book there in the first place.

The next morning I received an e-mail from someone else, also a magistrate, which read as follows:

Dear Ramón,

I received your materials [at this point I am already thinking, the question of "my materials" has grown infinitely more complicated] yesterday, and plan to look them over shortly.

It has come to my attention that you are thinking about teaching *Story of the Eye* next semester. I don't think this is a good idea for several reasons. Can we meet say, this Friday, around 1:30 to make sure we are on the same page?

Sincerely,

Someone else

It had come to his attention. The classic “discretion” to prevent me from identifying the forces at work as anything other than the music of the spheres, a discretion that, by sheer chance, had been foiled by my own indiscretion. But, just because I knew which magistrate had set into motion these recent machinations, didn’t mean that I really knew very much about the forces at work which, as “autistic organizational artifacts,” were somewhat immune to simple articulation. Someone else had deliberately put me on a different page than he and the magistrate were reading, which is not to say that the institution itself had not placed each of us “off the page” altogether.

I had to emphasize to someone else that there was at least one page that the three of us shared, and that what was at stake was larger than an individual page, book, or person. After much deliberation, I gave my completely truthful reply:

Hello someone else,

I would love to meet you any time on Friday afternoon, just let me know, since it’s always a genuine pleasure regardless of the subject matter. But the fact of the matter is that I was not considering teaching the offending book this spring (call the [local as opposed to the corporate] bookstore if you don’t believe me), so I’m not quite sure how that rumor got started. Well, that’s not exactly true, I do know the magistrate provided you with the evidence because I noticed your box while searching for one of the dutiful children’s³ boxes (to put an assessment folder there) on Tuesday afternoon. Great I thought, he got my material. But wait, that lone book in there looks familiar. I don’t make a habit of such things, but curiosity got the best of me and I opened to the first page, where the magistrate’s name was printed. I’m not generally superstitious, but I seem prone to such bewitched moments at times.

At this point I paused to consider some of the implications and ironies of the situation. First of all, the magistrate, in questioning my choice of teaching materials, was actually replicating their content. Like Simone, he had dislodged an “eye” presumably belonging to someone else (me) and inserted it into someone’s “box.” Secondly, I, one of the illegitimate, prodigal children, had discovered this information en route to willingly take part in a department-wide “assessment” or legitimization process. Finally, I thought of my use of the word “bewitched,” which was not innocent, since it has a personal resonance for me that always leads to the same passage, one that someone else may have been aware of, but likely does not think about every time the word “bewitched” is invoked. It too is a letter of admonishment: “Your study is located at the crossroads of magic and positivism. That spot is bewitched. Only theory could break the spell.”⁴ In short, Walter Benjamin’s bold experiment in historical form, *The Arcades Project*,⁵ with its assemblage of quotations and minimal commentary, was so fragmented that it did not look like “serious” discourse at all.

Since then, history has proven both the prescience of Benjamin’s project and the institution’s resistance to such experiments in form. As Jacques Derrida has put it, “What this institution cannot bear, is for anyone to tamper with language It can bear more readily the most apparently revolutionary ideological sorts of ‘content,’ if only that content does not touch the borders of language and of all the

juridico-political contracts that it guarantees.”⁶ Benjamin’s tampering took the form of breaking the continuity of the academic book or essay. Anticipating the more “participatory” reading strategies discussed by poststructuralists and hypertext theorists, *The Arcades Project* stands or falls on the reader’s ability to draw connections between the book’s various, sentence-length to paragraph-length fragments. One could argue that any traversal of this text is, by design, radically incomplete. As such, it resists more teleological ideas about history as “progress” that can be narrated in the form of a *bildungsroman*. And here, dear reader, my troubles began:

I did teach the book a year ago, and I guess the magistrate and/or some members of the religious right followed the rule of thumb that there is a high rate of recidivism among “sex offenders.” The book came at the end of the semester devoted to an extensive contextualization/historicization of revolutionary sentiment in French literature, and the students were encouraged to read the text in that light. I don’t know why I’m telling you this (or cutting and pasting some responses to the book from “mediocre” students who seem to me to be the real targets of a successful general education course) other than to assure you that I did my best to teach the text as an artifact, like an anthropologist would, and encouraged students to interpret it this way as well.

Casting myself as a sex offender was meant to add a bit of levity to the situation, although in some ways I had already been cast as such, I assume, by someone. The fact of the matter is that someone else read the student extracts and concluded that I was indeed on the same page, particularly since the offending pages were not on my spring syllabus. In addition, he must have realized that the book had been taken out of context and used to represent the entire course I was planning to teach. Thus, since the fragment was masquerading as a whole (me, my teaching, etc.), it could not be said to resemble the sort of open, above-board fragmentation that exists in writers such as Benjamin and Bataille. In retrospect, I feel that my “offense” against the institution was not primarily that of a sex offender (although that, undoubtedly, was the manifest content), but introducing an irredeemable fragment into the institution—further evidence to follow.

I want to return to the scene of a real course, not the virtual one I had been accused of teaching in the near future, although it also took on a virtual identity. The previous fall I had submitted a course description, including assignments, for a course entitled “Revolt Literature,” the content of which is summarized above. Now, who does one submit something like this to, and for what reasons? It was a second submission, the first being a public one so that students could decide which courses they wanted to sign up for. The second submission was to something called a “writing committee,” of which I was an elected member. So, on the one hand, I was submitting my course description to myself. On the other hand, I was submitting it to no one, a bureaucratic entity lacking the qualities of an organic recipient. I do know that I received a printed list of all the course proposals to which I was to “respond” as to their “suitability.” I responded to two of perhaps twenty proposals, making comments solely on departmental requirements (such as reading load, number of assignments, etc.). I kept my responses to a minimum because I was genuinely impressed by the range and complexity of the courses these Ph.D. holders had proposed. I avoided content because I had, in fact, been elected to discourage what other professors had felt was an ad hoc policing of content

favoring those fields with which the writing committee was familiar. The pressure to police was strong, decreed by the magistrate, but the question of how to police or what to police was never clearly articulated. One might say that in this institution, as in many others no doubt, there was a general feeling for the virtues in “policing for policing’s sake.” After declaring the need for policing, the magistrate receded into the background, much like Duke Vincentio in Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure*:

Therefore indeed, my father,
 I have on Angelo imposed the office,
 Who may in th’ ambush of my name strike home,
 And yet my nature never in the fight
 To do in slander. And to behold his sway
 I will, as ‘twere a brother of your order,
 Visit both prince and people. Therefore, I prithee,
 Supply me with the habit, and instruct me
 How I may formally in person bear
 Like a true friar. More reasons for this action
 At our more leisure shall I render you.⁷

Ah yes, the reasons, they must always be deferred. But the role of Angelo was assigned to the dutiful children (see note 3). I published my comments on the syllabi to the group, but they never published their comments to me. As representative of the postdoctoral contingent, I was the enemy and, by definition, was not to be on the same page.

Now, the title of my course was a sort of a joke aimed at the committee. How could they “approve” of something revolting? But it was also an idea I felt worth pursuing; its *double entendre* proposed an open-ended question for my students—was there a relationship between revulsion and revolution? In answering this question, students would draw from texts as diverse as Julia Kristeva’s “Approaching Abjection,” Rikki Ducornet’s *The Fanmaker’s Inquisition*, and yes, Georges Bataille’s *Story of the Eye*. I had been discussing the importance of Bataille with a colleague of mine all semester, who had employed Bataille’s “Critical Dictionary” as a model for writing about culture in ways that access the poetic and intuitive dimensions of the psyche in addition to the time-worn method of analysis. I became convinced that Bataille would be indispensable to the question my course was proposing and that the hybrid methodologies of the “Critical Dictionary” would form the basis of my final assignment.

Interestingly, it was my final assignment that prompted the only communication made to me by my fellow committee members. I received an e-mail from one of the committee members to this effect: “I am not familiar with the work of Roland Barthes, but don’t you think that your final assignment’s focus on research as a form of ‘academic fetishism’ will undermine the very values we are trying to instill in students?” First, I had to try to overcome my disbelief that I was working in a Research university where the validity of courses in “cultural studies methods” was being judged by people unfamiliar with Roland Barthes. To this day, I have not been successful in this endeavor. What was more disturbing to me was that

this dutiful child had chosen to make such a large claim about my course without at first trying to familiarize herself with Roland Barthes and his relationship to “academic fetishism.” It was going to be difficult to engage in a scholarly conversation with such stalwart anti-intellectualism. What *interested* me was the implicit assertion that in teaching cultural studies research methods we were really “instilling values” in our students. Starting from that premise, how could one deny that anything related to “fetishism,” which in the popular mind had come to mean one thing and one thing only—sexual perversion—was the very antithesis of “values”? Once I recognized this logic, I did my best to summarize what I meant by fetishism (attention to detail, the part rather than the whole) and how it related to Roland Barthes and research. The reply came back that she still thought I was going to undermine the very values of the course but that she would “trust” my judgment as long as I thought I was doing the “right” thing. How generous, given that it was apparent the fetish was hers, based upon the disavowal of the fragment.

But of course, the fetish is not just hers; it is the very fetish on which the unity of the institution is based, the fetishism of wholeness. Another dutiful child attempted to justify the haphazard surveillance known as “review of syllabi” by invoking the cliché that “the right hand must know what the left hand is doing.” But in fact, it is that very assumption that not only Bataille, but postmodern theory as a “whole,” has subjected to scrutiny. It was interesting for me to note how, in this institution, buzzwords such as “cyborg,” “posthuman,” and “rhizomes” were tossed about, their theorists valorized, but without any seeming acknowledgment of the fetishistic, fragmentary implications of these concepts. One linguistic oddity struck me as more revealing than the others, the tendency to pass over the term “virtual reality” in favor of something called “augmented reality,” as if somehow we have more reality now than we once did. Rather than acknowledging how the embodiment of the cyborg places the concept of wholeness under erasure, the term “augmented reality” suggests that we can become more and more whole. Why settle for a C-cup, when technological “progress” will soon give us all double-D’s. In this sort of environment, which I fear is not atypical, there is no room for someone like Bataille who would threaten to dismantle the wholer and wholer body.

Let me aver that I have never personally experienced this wholesomeness, this infinite augmentation, within the institution. Its existence seems more virtual to me than embodied. Explanations, recommendations, have not been forthcoming. My left hand has been smacked, but I’m reasonably sure that *my* right hand was not the culprit. I used to work in a building that literally circled itself around a column of thin air. It wasn’t a real silo, but a silo effect was undeniably in that thin air, that whole air, that air where bodies and their minds were made virtual by being disciplined, restrained from their desire to be torn apart.

Notes

¹ Michael A. Diamond, Howard F. Stein, and Seth Allcorn, “Organizational Silos: Horizontal Organizational Fragmentation,” *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society* 7, no. 2 (2002): 283.

² Georges Bataille, *Story of the Eye*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (San Francisco: City Lights, 1987), 83.

³ The “dutiful children” will make other appearances in this essay. I have so named them because the magistrate, in my opinion, is a reminiscent of King Lear and Duke Vincentio of *Measure for Measure*. Both figures wish to abdicate power and assume it at the same time, and both do so by attempting to transfer their duties to “dutiful” subordinates who share qualities of both malevolence and incompetence. It is their “dutiful” nature which recommends them and nothing else.

⁴ Theodor Adorno, “Letter to Walter Benjamin,” trans. Harry Zohn, in *Aesthetics and Politics*, ed. Fredric Jameson (London: Verso, 1938/1980), 129.

⁵ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

⁶ Jacques Derrida, “Living on: Borderlines,” in *Deconstruction and Criticism* (New York: Seabury, 1979), 94–5.

⁷ David Bevington, ed., *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 411.

The Ethnocentricity of Democracy, Capitalism, and Christianity.

By Kendal Smith¹

“To be governed is to be watched over, inspected, spied on, directed, legislated at, regulated, docketed, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, assessed, weighed, censored, and ordered about by men who have neither the right, nor the knowledge, nor the virtue” (Platt 45). Capitalists always have and will most likely continue to control democracy, much more so than the legislatures or the people who elected the legislatures and whom they represent. Lobbyists, with their seemingly endless support in the form of campaign donations, barter for the addition or removal of laws and for tax breaks that ultimately result in lucrative returns for the capitalists. The United States government has always claimed God-ordained authority, and, of course, has actually acted in the name of money. ‘In God We Trust’ is written on the currency of the United States of America. God is mentioned on state flags, written on government documents, and engraved on seals that are posted on the walls of government facilities. Before testifying in a courtroom, one must swear an oath of the truth on a Bible. Legislators must also swear an oath of allegiance on the Bible when elected and before beginning approval or rejection of new laws, repealing or amending old laws, and deciding the direction the United States will take in any given situation or crisis. The connection is evident in the operation of the democratic, capitalistic, and Christian enigma that is the United States of America. It is also becoming more evident that the United States’ intentions are to assimilate the entire world into a democratic, capitalistic, and Christian society that not only poses no threat to it, but is also identical to it in every way. The beauty and individuality of the diverse cultures of the world are changing or vanishing due to the ethnocentric philosophy of the governmental, religious, and economic leaders of the United States of America and her cohorts of similar thinking nations. First, the United States has continually policed the world and forced democracy upon other countries for more than a century. Second, the westernization of the world through consumerism is destroying the individuality of indigenous cultures. Finally, religious missions have drastically altered a unique and important facet of other cultures by discrediting native religions. After examining these issues, one can clearly see the United States of America and the culture-bound thinking of her leaders and citizens are assimilating the uniquely diverse cultures of the world.

1) Policing the World

Immediately after colonizing, the North American continent colonists began expelling or annihilating indigenous people and the culture they had developed and subsisted in for thousands of years. The colonists then revolted and after winning their independence founded the United States of America, and created what they called a democracy. Two hundred and thirty years later, the United States government is so certain of success in the founding of a form of government with seemingly indefinite longevity that the attempt is repeatedly made to rescue other countries or territories from their own ignorance, to enlighten them, and to force them into attempting to establish a pseudo-democratic form of government for themselves.

At one time, the United States was indeed fighting the good fight. During World War I and then World War II, the enemy was clear. The Nazis, Fascists, and Imperialist dictators had every intention of taking over the entire world. After experiencing undeniable victories in the two World Wars, the United States and her shiny, newly proven democracy, reveled in the fact that they had saved the world from, what the U.S. thought to be, certain demise. "The United States, delighting in her resources, feeling that she no longer had within her sufficient scope for her energies, wishing to help those who were in misery or bondage the world over, yielded in her turn to that taste for intervention in which the instinct for domination cloaked itself" (Platt 381).

Korea and Vietnam were two more chances to show the world what a shiny new superpower with God on its side could do and what a supremely successful form of government democracy actually was. The enemy had changed its name for these wars; it was now called Communism. However, the United States' reasons for going to war had changed as well. Instead of fighting against the imminent and immediate conquest of the entire world by the axis powers, they were now playing a virtual game of chess with communism as the face of the new enemy. The world was the chessboard, democracy and communism the players, and Korea was the first desired square on the board. Democracy was white and communism black, good and evil. The problem was that the American people were not as interested in what was happening on the other side of the world as they were when a tangible threat existed during the World Wars. The communist takeover of Korea, and a lost chance for another democratic stronghold, was simply not a just enough cause to merit sending soldiers to fight and die. The next square on the chessboard was Vietnam; the notoriously unpopular conflict that should have taught the United States of America a lesson for the ages. The American people knew they did not want the Vietnam War long before it became a war, even though it was never actually called a war, and it was sugar coated and called a conflict instead. Vietnam was nothing more than a bloody, expensive reproduction of the Korean War. This time it was the same game, same opponents, and different, although equally insignificant, squares on the chessboard. After a black eye and hasty retreat the United States was content to lick her wounds for a while though she never would admit defeat and obviously did not learn a lasting lesson from the embarrassment.

The United States' latest quest for the assimilation of a country is President George W. Bush's war in Iraq. The Bush administration adamantly professed that Iraq was invaded due to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's continued refusal to allow United Nations inspectors into sites where Iraq was allegedly manufacturing and stockpiling biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction. To date no weapons of mass destructions have been found, and the Bush administration has made a transition from the apparently non-existent weapons of mass destruction to Iraqi support of the terrorists who flew planes into the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. However, since there were no Iraqis involved in the attacks on the World Trade Center, reasoning for the invasion and occupation shifted yet again to aiding the spread of democracy and removal of a tyrannical dictator from power and installing a democratic form of government. The Iraqi people were living in fear and poverty, and the United States had a God given right to save the Iraqis from the situation they found themselves in and the totalitarian leader currently in power. However, reports show that since the United States' invasion of Iraq in 2003, conditions continue to deteriorate. Lack of water, electricity, and chronic malnutrition has actually increased with United States intervention (Mrove).

The problem, which is becoming more evident all the time, is that the invasion and occupation of Iraq is and always has been about oil. Democracy is secondary and only because it is the standard American justification used to pursue its own form of world domination. Iraq had a large portion of the planets' oil reserves and the United States wanted it. The Bush administration then, after exhausting the reserve of standard excuses, decided that the reason for the invasion and occupation of Iraq all along was to spread this self proclaimed, superior form of government called democracy. Not only has the United States continually policed the world and forced democracy upon the people and governments of other countries for decades, but religion is another aspect of cultural individuality falling victim to the ethnocentricity of western idealism.

2) Westernization through Consumerism

The westernization of the world through consumerism is destroying the individuality of indigenous cultures. All aspects of non-western cultures around the world are subject to the corruption and oppression of the United States capitalistic machine. "It is probably true that business corrupts everything it touches. It corrupts politics, sports, literature, art, labor unions and so on. But business also corrupts and undermines monolithic totalitarianism. Capitalism is at its liberating best in a non-capitalist environment" (Platt 34). Capitalistic imperialism is saturating countries around the world and is quite possibly at its most voracious in the countries of Asia. "In the past two years, U.S. venture capitalists (VCs) have been streaming into China like Manchu invaders breaching the Great Wall" (Maney).

Western clothing is so glamorized that the people of many countries have discontinued wearing the indigenous clothing of their country, and many of the youth may go their entire life without ever seeing the native dress of their culture actually worn. All one must do is view television or open a magazine and the

lack of native dress is readily apparent. Women of the Pacific Islands have traded their bark cloth wraps and grass and palm leave skirts, and men their sarongs, for western style swimsuits and trunks and shirts depicting western ideas and slogans. Women in Japan have set aside their beautiful kimonos and sandals for business suits and flats. In Korea, Tibet, and India the chupas and kaftons have been traded for designer jeans, half-shirts, and sneakers. Around the world turbans, tankas, and milfas have all been traded for ball caps and bandannas. In some instances, perhaps western clothes are more practical, but seldom more interesting and beautiful. In many more instances, the spiked heel, halter-top, and mini-skirt type outfits of popular western dress, for example, are much less practical than the indigenous clothing. When switching to more desirable western dress, many people sacrifice much more than practicality, they sacrifice the money needed to sustain life to look more American. In Vietnam, where the average per-capita income is four-hundred and fifty dollars per year, residents line up to pay anywhere from seventy dollars to one-hundred twenty nine dollars for a pair of jeans (Kirk). Occasionally some types of indigenous clothing can still be seen on the pages of *National Geographic Magazine*, or while viewing the *Discovery Channel* or *History Channel*, but not in magazines depicting cultures and the dress of cultures as they are on a day-to-day basis.

Many non-European people throughout the world will go to great lengths to look more American. Some will go as far as seeking plastic surgery to accomplish this goal. Altering one's normal, native-born features simply because what is seen in magazines, movies, and on television is an unsettling trend. The hooded eyes of the Orientals, for example, are an exotic, unique, beautiful feature to be treasured instead of altered to mirror popular culture. Another very common example of altering one's appearance to fit popular cultures, which can be seen in Hispanic and Asian cultures alike, is the attempt at bleaching the beautiful jet-black hair they were blessed with. The result is usually a burnt orange that seldom comes close to the perfect blond pictured on models and actors or actresses in the magazines, movies, and television programs of which they dream of being a part.

Around the world, people are following the United States' example in diet as well. Every day there are more instances of McDonalds, Burger Kings, Pizza Huts, and other fast food chains opening up satellite stores in every corner of the world. A continual deviation from traditionally plain, but less processed, diets is occurring among the native people of countries who have lived on certain staple foods for centuries and who have now been introduced to rich, high fat, high calorie junk foods. The digestive system and metabolism rate of the indigenous people of a given area have evolved in direct correlation with the food sources most readily available. A population may be adapted to consuming rice and fish, rice and beans, corn and beans, or whatever combination of staple foods their locality allows, and provided there is enough of the staple food, the people will thrive and enjoy a relatively healthy lifestyle. After the western diet has been consumed for a while, the native foods are no longer fulfilling, lacking the heavy fats that leave one feeling full, lethargic, and ultimately satisfied. The diet trends and overall health of countries around the world are now following the United States' tendency towards obesity, heart disease, and a plethora of other health problems linked to poor diet and a sedentary lifestyle. Not only has consumerism drastically changed indigenous cultures through the ethnocentricity of western ideology, but religious missions have also radically altered a unique and important facet of other cultures by discrediting native religions.

3) Missionaries

The final problem of United States dominated ethnocentricity is that religious missions have drastically altered a unique and important facet of other cultures by discrediting indigenous religions. Religion is one of the more distinct characteristics of a culture historically defining the dress, diet, and disposition of the members of a civilization. Religion has been the cause of disagreements, alliances, and wars throughout history because each member of particular religion feels passionately about his/her chosen faith. Many feel passionately enough about spreading their religious convictions and continually attempt to recruit others into their religion in the form of missionary work. Many more feel passionately enough about their faith that an encroachment upon their beliefs warrants one to either kill or be killed in the name of their religion. Missionaries can unintentionally become that encroachment upon an indigenous religion with their tireless and relentless recruitment practices. Christian missionaries believe the teachings of Christianity to be the only way to salvation and everlasting peace. Missionaries also believe that the indigenous religions from which they are trying to recruit members are completely false. Therein lie the problems missionaries can cause when offering unsolicited advice on spiritual matters.

Missionaries are not acting with malice when discrediting the native religion in an area; they are working because they believe they are fulfilling the will of God. However, missionaries do not seem to understand that many times the people they are evangelizing to passionately believe in their existing faith as well or they would not be participating in it. The natives of this persuasion, much like the missionaries, believe their form of religion to be the only correct and proper form of worship. Offence is taken when one from far away visits a society and tells the members of the society being visited that their method of worshiping God is not only incorrect, but if it is continued, they will be punished by the unimaginable punishment of eternal damnation. This practice is not only an example of culture-bound thinking that undermines the structure of a culture through its religion, but it is spreading a belief as truth, that when viewed from a neutral point of view, has no more credibility than the religion of the culture being encroached upon.

Christian missionaries' most profitable argument in evangelism is, and always has been, a simple scare tactic. Missionaries simply ask the heathens who recoil from the idea of renouncing their inherent religion, "What if you are wrong?" They explain that if the heathens convert to Christianity and the decision turns out to be a mistake the heathens are no worse off than they are now. However, if they do not accept Christianity as their faith and they turn out to be wrong, they will burn in hell. Many of the less structured religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, or Shinto might have members who are more likely to be swayed by these tactics, but when used to confront a strong, well- entrenched, and very skeptical religion such as Islam, these tactics are useless. Muslims continue to not only resist the American military and Christian missionary agenda, but also to view their differences with Americans and their advances as a sign of the coming Jihad or Holy War. Muslims protested recently in Afghanistan: "Shouting 'Death to America,' more than 1,000 demonstrators rioted and threw stones at a U.S. military convoy" (Sadeq). "Death to America" has become the war cry of Islam.

The story is as old as time itself. Battles have been fought, won, and lost over which religious faith will dominate a territory or country. Whichever religion wins out will bring with it a rich and textured culture. The culture will have its own dress, festivals, and overall personality. These unique differences will be what distinguish the culture from the rest of the world. The members of a culture are not evil, bad, or heathen because they choose not to accept an offer of a purportedly better religion.

The United States has continually policed the world and forced democracy upon other countries for more than a century, the westernization of the world through consumerism is destroying the individuality of global cultures, and religious missions have drastically altered a unique and important facet of other cultures by discrediting indigenous religions. Though democracy, capitalism, and Christianity may seem, to an American, like the only way for the people of a country to prosper, the truth is that our pristine example has simply not withstood the test of time. Many civilizations founded with systems very different than that of the United States of America have lasted many times longer. The Romans and the Mayans both lasted many times longer than the United States has endured thus far. At the peak of any civilization, which could claim a substantial piece of history, the sentiments of the people were probably much like those of American society. Unfortunately all things must end, and democracy, capitalism, and even Christianity fall into that category. When all is said and done, one can only hope to be a part of a civilization that carves a considerable and honorable piece of history for itself. As one can clearly see, the beauty and individuality of the diverse cultures of the world are changing or vanishing due to the ethnocentric philosophy of the governmental, economic, and religious leaders of the United States of America and her cohort of similar thinking nations.

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Notes

¹ Kendal Smith is presently incarcerated in the US prison system at Calico Rock, Arkansas. He will shortly be entering his sophomore year of higher studies.

“Come on and Rise Up:” Springsteen’s Experiential Art after 9/11.

By David Carithers

When Walt Whitman reacted to the assassination of President Lincoln by writing “Oh Captain, My Captain” and “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d,” he left us with more than just two great poems. His personal response to the tumultuous war and its aftermath provided a blueprint for transforming personal experience into art. Bruce Springsteen, a direct spiritual descendant of Whitman according to some genealogies,¹ achieved something similar in his album *The Rising* (2002). Although a few of the songs on the album elude neat categorization, *The Rising* was generally recognized and praised as one of the few lengthy, concentrated artistic responses to the attacks of September 11. One reviewer dubbed Springsteen the nation’s “poet laureate of 9/11” (Scott). *The Rising* can be viewed as a process that moves through feelings of hopelessness, grief, divisiveness, and hatred, before settling into renewed strength, faith, love, and hope for reconciliation. The process itself may help listeners to integrate the radically new experience (at least for Americans) of 9/11 into the fabric of the rest of their lives. Thus *The Rising* can be viewed as a work of romantic pragmatism.

The term “romantic pragmatism” is a version of Cornel West’s “prophetic pragmatism” and Roskelly’s and Ronald’s “romantic pragmatic rhetoric.” Combining the philosophies of Ralph Waldo Emerson, C.S. Peirce, William James, and John Dewey, romantic pragmatism posits the following tenets: “the significance of context, the need for the experimental, the realization of private and public connection, the role of communal effort, and the belief in truth as possible outcome” (Roskelly and Ronald 54). With a focus on the democratic nature of *process*, romantic pragmatism accepts both contingency and fallibility as important elements in a restless, hopeful method that seeks to unsettle past conclusions. Beliefs are contingent on the limited experiences and the fallibility of the humans who hold them—both individually and in groups—and thus are often in need of adjustment when new experiences prove them wrong. C.S. Peirce, late nineteenth century mathematician and philosopher who came up with the name “pragmatism,” argued that at the heart of pragmatism is a “scientific spirit” that requires a person “to be at all times ready to dump a whole cartload of beliefs, the moment experience is against them” (*Collected Papers* vol. I: 55). To admit as much is to accept the pragmatic anti-foundationalist stance that knowledge and truth are

essentially social constructs, and as such are always open to revision. However, a “romantic” pragmatism stops short of insisting, with Stanley Fish, that “interpretation is the only game in town,” or with Nietzsche that “facts are precisely what there is not, only interpretations.”ⁱⁱ Romantic pragmatism leaves room for the possibility of nondiscursive, experiential meaning (such as somatic experience) that lies outside the traditional realm of interpretation.

Springsteen’s The Rising shows the possibilities of such experiential meaning. Its optimism lies in the hope that these stories of real people (firefighters, widows of 9/11, suicide bombers, working men contemplating suicide) may be received as true “instrumentally,” in the words of William James, “true just in so far as they help us to get into satisfactory relation with other parts of our experience” (Pragmatism 58). The act of rendering the experiences of real people is a political act, and Springsteen has been mining such experience since the 1970s and continues today with his latest album Devils and Dust (2005). Before focusing on the way Springsteen transforms experience into art in The Rising, I will offer a brief introduction to his work and his importance to the singer/activist tradition in which I and others are placing him.

Background: American Icon

Born in 1949 in Freehold, New Jersey, Bruce Springsteen was a musician long before he was an activist, but his working-class origins had a lasting effect on both his music and his awakening to politics. His father showed him firsthand what unemployment and menial work could do to a person. Eric Alterman describes Douglas Springsteen as “an embittered man who struggled to find a place for himself in the local economy” (11). He worked intermittently in the local rug mill, as a jail guard, and as a cab and bus driver, and never encouraged his son’s musical efforts. “Bruce’s home life was dark and oppressive, filled with menacing authority,” writes Alterman (11). The father and son relationship involved little but discipline and rebellion. As one might imagine, the elder Springsteen had no friends. “Not one person, claimed Bruce, came to visit his father in twenty years” (Alterman 11). Such isolation would become an area of inquiry for the maturing Springsteen, especially on his album Nebraska (1982). “That’s one of the most dangerous things, I think—isolation,” he commented retrospectively in 1984. “Nebraska was about that American isolation: what happens to people when they’re alienated from their friends and their community and their government and their job. Because those are the things that keep you sane, that give meaning to life in some fashion” (Marsh 339-340).

Springsteen’s first two albums, Greetings from Asbury Park (1973) and Born to Run (1975), were autobiographical celebrations exulting in the possibilities of individual escape—usually via the “suicide machines” of fast cars and motorcycles—from the despair and meanness of the kind that Springsteen himself must have experienced at home. But beginning with Darkness on the Edge of Town (1978), Springsteen’s themes began to move toward an awareness of the social injustices that created the situations out of which such meanness and despair arise. This slow transition to thinking along more political lines was accompanied by a loss of the earlier optimism. Most of the songs on Nebraska (1982) are full

of despair, as when Springsteen has convicted murderer Charley Starkweather explain himself thus in the song “Nebraska:” “Well, sir, I guess there’s just a meanness in this world.”

Dave Marsh shows how Nebraska’s despair mirrors Springsteen’s own psychological struggles at the time that involved, among other things, his transition to superstardom. At any rate, the album’s tone reflects a transition in Springsteen’s career. “You could say that Nebraska’s story begins with ‘The River,’” writes Marsh, “when Springsteen finally imagines a character asking, ‘Is a dream a lie if it don’t come true / Or is it something worse?’ In Springsteen’s universe this is a very dangerous question because it dredges up an irreconcilable contradiction” (170). Nebraska’s clear departure from the optimistic temperament of the earlier albums indicates Springsteen’s evolving attitude that did not shy away from contradictions. “Maybe he could still stomp and shout, ‘It ain’t no sin to be glad you’re alive,’ each night during ‘Badlands,’ but now he also saw justice on the other side of the story” (Marsh 373).

It was Born in the U. S. A. (1984) that catapulted Springsteen into true superstar status, and it was also at this time that Springsteen found his prophetic voice and began to put his political ideas into action. Springsteen began to articulate his concern with the growing economic injustices resulting from Reaganomics. He had always been concerned in some ways with the human struggle against spirit-crushing forces, but during the Born in the U. S. A. tour, he found new ways of articulating this focus by working with specific organizations that helped people. At this time, one might say that Springsteen began to develop the characteristics of what Cornel West calls “prophetic pragmatism,” which he describes as

a form of tragic thought in that it confronts candidly individual and collective experiences of evil in individuals and institutions—with little expectation of ridding the world of *all* evil. Yet it is a kind of romanticism in that it holds many experiences of evil to be neither inevitable nor necessary but rather the results of human agency, i.e., choices and actions” (228).

“Human struggle sits at the center of prophetic pragmatism,” continues West, “a struggle guided by a democratic and libertarian vision, sustained by moral courage and existential integrity” (229). West calls his version of pragmatism “prophetic” because “the mark of the prophet is to speak the truth in love with courage” and “prophetic pragmatism proceeds from this impulse” (233). In the 1980s, Springsteen began to realize the difference he could make if he worked more purposefully with the movements of human solidarity such as labor unions and food banks.

Marsh maintains that Springsteen’s political goal during this time was “to link his wealth and fame with the sort of people who were living in the circumstances in which he’d originated” (488). Springsteen told Rolling Stone’s Kurt Loder in an interview, “I want to try and just work more directly with people, try to find some way that my band can tie into the communities that we come into. I guess that’s political action, a way to just bypass that whole electoral thing— human politics” (Marsh 489). During the second leg of the Born in the U. S. A. tour, Springsteen began to meet with local unions and food banks in the cities where he played. He told manager Jon Landau, “If I’m going around this country, I want to know what’s going on where I’m playing, and I want to leave something positive behind” (Marsh 493). At each stop,

Springsteen would talk with leaders of the local organizations and present a check for \$10,000 (\$25,000 if it was a big arena show). The money was important for those who received it, but Springsteen's intention was that the publicized interactions "would symbolize commitment and solidarity and perhaps serve as an inspiration to his fans" (Marsh 494). This endeavor to reach-out and make a lasting human connection through his art, links Springsteen to singer/activists like Woody Guthrie and to the original American poet of human solidarity, Walt Whitman.

Scholars have noted the line of influence that runs from Walt Whitman to the group of American songwriters known as working class heroes: Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen. Guthrie was a Whitman aficionado and shared his predecessor's concern with, and delight in, common people—although he eventually came to question Whitman's ability to speak for the common man. "Does Whitman, Sandburg, and Pushkin," asked Guthrie, "actually talk in the lingo ... of the kinds and breeds of working people I've met and dealt with?" (Pastures of Plenty 179-180). Of course Whitman was writing in a different century, and while Guthrie succeeded in capturing the lingo of his own contemporaries in his songs, his prose retained a noticeable Whitmanesque flavor, so much so that in the late 1970s, students at the University of Michigan responded to Will Geer's reading of a passage from Guthrie's narrative "My Best Songs" by asking him "to locate the verse in Leaves of Grass" (Garman 111). Whitman had a noticeable influence on Guthrie, then, and Springsteen, like Dylan before him and Steve Earle after, was highly influenced by Woody Guthrie.

One thing that Walt Whitman, Woody Guthrie, and Bruce Springsteen share is the poet's observant eye. Robert Coles links Springsteen to Whitman via William Carlos Williams, and not simply because all three were residents of New Jersey (where Springsteen still makes his home). Coles writes that Springsteen and Williams are poets who continue "one aspect of what Leaves of Grass offers—the always interested observer of a nation still restlessly in formation rather than solidly settled, fixed in its social and political ways" (16). This restless, open-ended quality is a tenet of pragmatism in general and the vision of the United States as an *idea* still in the making, strongly links Springsteen to romantic pragmatism.

In his book A Race of Singers: Whitman's Working-Class Hero from Guthrie to Springsteen, Bryan Garman argues for an explicit connection between the Good Gray Poet and the Boss, a link mediated by the proto-American singer/songwriter, Woody Guthrie. Garman explains that after several inward-looking albums in the early 1990s (Human Touch and Lucky Town) that celebrated his personal recovery from depression, Springsteen performed at the Severance Hall Tribute to Woody Guthrie in 1996 and "unequivocally announced that he had returned to take up the cultural work of his predecessors" (236). He opened his set with "Tom Joad," Guthrie's lengthy ballad about the protagonist of Grapes of Wrath. And on Springsteen's album The Ghost of Tom Joad (1996), and during the tour that promoted it, Garman writes that:

Springsteen, as Whitman had done before him, constructed economic and racial oppression as a moral problem and tried to forge a culture that is not based on self-interest but that [which] will teach men and women to balance individual freedom with the public good, to value

people over profits, to create an egalitarian society based on love and compassion rather than hate and greed. (236)

Springsteen dates his awakening to the political and cultural history of the United States to around the time of the Darkness on the Edge of Town tour of 1978-1979. After severing ties with his first manager in 1976, Springsteen found not only a new manager but a new influence in Jon Landau, former critic for Rolling Stone, who encouraged him to read John Steinbeck, Flannery O'Connor, and John Ford. Ford's film version of The Grapes of Wrath particularly affected Springsteen, as did Henry Steele Commager and Allan Nevins's Pocket History of the United States. The latter was a narrative that, as Garman explains, "while professing an unwavering faith in the American experiment, enabled Springsteen to examine the social and economic forces that had shaped his life" (197). Springsteen wrote that it was around this time that "I figured out what I wanted to write about, the people who mattered to me, and who I wanted to be" (Garman 199-200). Garman summarizes the new focus in Springsteen's art from that point forward:

Since the release of Darkness on the Edge of Town (1978), Springsteen has consistently recorded material that not only examines the tension between individuality and community but also embraces his working-class roots and articulates a concern for social and economic justice. Inspired by the works of Woody Guthrie, as well as readings in American cultural and political history, he has gradually placed himself in the lineage of Whitman's working-class hero (Garman 197).

Like Whitman and Guthrie, whose observant eyes recorded the restless nation in formation, Springsteen finds truth in the common experience of ordinary people while holding out hope for a better life for them. The hope that was absent on Nebraska returned with Tunnel of Love (1987) Human Touch (1992), and The Ghost of Tom Joad (1996), and was resurrected powerfully with The Rising (2002). The rhetorical aim of Springsteen's art seems to be to lift people up and give them hope, or, as his forebear Woody Guthrie put it:

I am out to sing songs that will prove to you that this is your world and that if it has hit you pretty hard and knocked you for a dozen loops, no matter how hard it's run you down and rolled over you, no matter what color you are, what size you are, how you are built, I am out to sing the songs that make you take pride in yourself and in your work. (Bound for Glory ix)

It is Springsteen's hope in the people and his emphasis on experience as art that make his work—and indeed his life—an example of romantic pragmatism in action. And true to the nature of pragmatism, Springsteen's art makes a real difference in the lives of everyday people. In Robert Coles's book Bruce Springsteen's America: The People Listening, A Poet Singing, ordinary people—among them a student, a teacher, a truck-driver, and a police officer—write about the difference Springsteen has made in their lives. By lifting people up and encouraging them to be interested observers and participants in the world, Springsteen promotes democracy. Cornel West explains that this connection between critical engagement and democracy is the main thrust of romantic pragmatism. "Prophetic pragmatism," he writes, "with its roots in the American heritage and its hopes for the wretched of the earth, constitutes the best chance

of promoting an Emersonian culture of creative democracy by means of critical intelligence and social action” (212). Like Guthrie and Whitman before him, Springsteen has worked for democracy by giving the people reasons to believe and to act. He continued this work on The Rising by lifting people up through renderings of poignant experiences in the face of September 11, 2001. The thrust of this album is both personal and rhetorical because its stories connect the individual’s experience with the collective experience of the community. Dewey explained this relationship in Art as Experience: “Experience in the degree in which it *is* experience is heightened vitality. Instead of signifying being shut up within one’s own private feelings and sensations, it signifies active and alert commerce with the world; at its height it signifies complete interpenetration of self and the world of objects and events” (19).

Springsteen and 9/11

In The Rising, a fifteen song release, Springsteen takes his own and others’ experiences in reaction to 9/11 and turns them into art. Springsteen’s focus on the aesthetic quality of experience links him to John Dewey, who argued in Art as Experience that experience *is* art. “Because experience is the fulfillment of an organism in its struggles and achievements in a world of things,” Dewey writes, “it is art in germ. Even in its rudimentary forms, it contains the promise of that delightful perception which is esthetic experience” (19). Since the release of his first album in 1973, Springsteen has consistently transformed the experiences of everyday people into art. Dewey claimed that there were really only two philosophies, and “one of them accepts life and experience in all its uncertainty, mystery, doubt, and half-knowledge and turns that experience upon itself to deepen and intensify its own qualities—to imagination and art” (34). This is the philosophy of Bruce Springsteen and romantic pragmatism.

Released in 2002, The Rising is one long prayer that asks a higher power for strength, faith, hope, and love in response to 9/11. Many of the songs depict realistic situations in which people who have lost loved ones in 9/11 try to come to terms with their loss. Like a jazz riff repeated and revised throughout a musical composition, then, these key words (strength, faith, hope, love) are offered as solace for those experiencing the sudden loss of loved ones.

The key words are used to express a number of specific responses to the event, including but not limited to: praise for those who sacrificed their lives for others; vengeful anger directed toward the perpetrators; sadness both for the dead and missing and for the heart of the city itself (and America by extension); and finally, a suggestion that differences between people may be overcome. All of these responses are framed within what appears to be Springsteen’s personal experience as well as the imagined experiences of other people in their immediate response to 9/11, particularly those who have lost loved ones. Whether or not Springsteen actually lost anyone particularly close to him during the attacks or knew anyone personally who suffered such a loss is irrelevant to my argument, for we know experiences *like* these did in fact happen.

Yet in a very real sense, Springsteen had a very specific audience in mind when he wrote The Rising: his own fans who were struggling to come to terms with the events of 9/11. Springsteen was called on to do something in direct response to the attacks. The now almost-famous story is that a few days after September 11, Springsteen was exiting a parking lot in the Jersey Shore town of Sea Bright when a fan rode by. The man slowed down, rolled down his window, and shouted, “We need you!” before driving on. For Springsteen, naming the struggles and passions of the common person is the force behind his art, and he felt particularly compelled after 9/11 to create a specific response to the situation. “It’s an honor to find that place in the audience’s life” (Pareles). Like Walt Whitman creating “Oh Captain, My Captain” after the death of President Lincoln, Springsteen was called on by the people to pronounce his judgment on the event. “I’ve been at my best when I’m connected to what’s going on in the world outside,” Springsteen stated in a rare interview at his home. “I have a sense of what my service to my audience is going to be. It’s the true nature of the work in the sense that you’re filling a place” (Pareles). If West is right that “human struggle sits at the center of prophetic pragmatism”(229), then perhaps Springsteen’s lasting legacy in his response to 9/11 will be his unique depiction of such universal human struggle in the face of adversity. One thing that may set The Rising apart is the way that it eventually transcends nationalistic concerns to suggest instead an all-encompassing humanism.

With The Rising’s truthful handling of the complex and often contradictory responses to 9/11, Springsteen adds an important chapter to the United States’ collective memory of a defining historical moment. But it is The Rising’s focus on human experience as a test for belief and the album’s attempt to mediate between some of the differences inherent in the contradictory responses that make it a work of romantic pragmatism.

One dominant pattern in the discourse surrounding 9/11 is the idea that the event was a violent imposition of the “real” onto the dream-world, within which, the United States had lived until that point. “Welcome to the Desert of the Real!” proclaims the title of Slavoj Žižek’s book of essays on 9/11, a phrase from the scene in the popular motion picture Matrix in which the hero awakens into true reality to see a desolate landscape of post-war ruins. The ruins of ground zero similarly greeted the newly awakened United States, introducing the nation to the reality many countries experience on a daily basis. The motif of the “real” also appears throughout The Rising. From “Into the Fire” to “My City of Ruins,” Springsteen thrusts his listeners into the reality of the event, as if he wants us to see the blood of the victims and feel the dust of the ruins. This is a way for listeners to experience the event first-hand so to speak. Springsteen puts us on the street and in the towers, and—more poignantly—he places us in the minds of people who lost relatives, lovers, and friends in the attacks.

In the essay “In the Ruins of the Future: Reflections on Terror and Loss in the Shadow of September,” Don DeLillo writes that 9/11

has no purchase on the mercies of analogy or simile. We have to take the shock and horror as

it is. But living language is not diminished. The writer wants to understand what this day has done to us. [. . .]. The writer begins in the towers, trying to imagine the moment, desperately. Before politics, before history and religion, there is the primal terror. People falling from the towers hand in hand. This is part of the counter-narrative, hands and spirits joining, human beauty in the crush of meshed steel. (39)

In the Rising, graphic reminders of the concrete reality of 9/11—blood, dust, sky, and fire are recurring images—provide a way into the various human experiences which find their expression in feelings of mourning, anger, and pleas for mediation. While The Rising concerns itself with all of these responses, the dominant mood created throughout the album is a profound sadness in response to both the loss of life and the wound to the city’s (and the nation’s) heart. In this sense the work serves as a sort of eulogy for those who died during September 11. The album as a whole is much like a prayer, with its repeated litany of the need for strength, hope, faith, and love. But along with this mournful mood, and perhaps a natural part of the experience of grief in the face of violence, is an angry call for revenge: an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. This complicates what could otherwise be seen as a simple eulogy or testament to the American heroes of that day (the rescuers who sacrificed their lives in an attempt to save others). Finally, and most importantly, The Rising offers hope for mediation between some of these tensions that threaten to tear people apart.

Springsteen makes it clear that faith (along with hope, strength, and love) is needed as a means to bring about mediation between extremes after 9/11, both a traditional faith in a higher power and a humanist faith in the possibilities of human connection. The Rising highlights the agency of spirituality as an instrument that might lead one toward truth. His pragmatism is of the spiritual sort, then, in the tradition of Cornel West’s prophetic pragmatism.

The following discussion of Bruce Springsteen’s romantic pragmatic contribution to post 9/11 discourse will focus on these dominant patterns on the album: The reality of the event, our natural responses of sadness and anger, and a glimpse at mediation between extremes at this crucial juncture in the nation’s history. All of these responses are presented in terms of realistic human experience, as well as in terms of a process. It is this focus on the process that makes Springsteen’s response romantic/pragmatic.

“The Sky Was Falling and Streaked with Blood”: Reality and The Rising

While The Rising opens with an upbeat song in which the speaker vows to find his way “through this lonesome day,” the second song, “Into the Fire,” reminds listeners that 9/11 was a violent event marked by destruction of real bodies and real buildings:

The sky was falling and streaked with blood,
I heard you calling me then you disappeared into the dust.

Up the stairs, into the fire.
Up the stairs, into the fire.

The words dust and blood are repeated frequently throughout the album, with “dust” occurring in six songs a total of seven times, and “blood” appearing six times in three songs. The only words that occur with more frequency are the prayer-like repetitions of strength, faith, hope, and love. So while Springsteen emphasizes the reality of the event, graphic details like blood and dust are heuristic images that allow listeners to move to other issues, such as the suffering of real people. The Rising offers little analysis of the political climate that characterizes the scene after 9/11. Springsteen instead focuses on actions of people as agents in response to the scene and, most importantly, the agency that enables them to respond.ⁱⁱⁱ

The speaker of “Into the Fire” addresses a loved one lost at ground zero. In this song, the experience of the destruction of flesh and steel quickly translates into a higher lesson for the community; the focus moves from an individual’s grief to what we can learn from the actions of those brave enough to run toward the burning towers to help others:

May your strength give us strength.
May your faith give us faith.
May your hope give us hope.
May your love give us love.

This chorus expresses the real message of the song, that those individual acts of bravery represent actions based on the best beliefs of the community: strength, faith, hope, and love. Their sacrifice should remind us of the validity of these beliefs, Springsteen seems to say, and they should reinforce our actions that put these beliefs to the test. This list of key terms is repeated again in almost the same order and in a similar context in the fifth song, “Countin’ on a Miracle,” as well as in the final song “My City of Ruins,” making it clear (to this listener at least) that these traits are key to Springsteen’s artistic response to 9/11.

“Into the Fire” moves back and forth between a speaker longing for a missing loved one in the verses and in the refrain “up the stairs, into the fire,” to a more universal message in the chorus about what the community of listeners can learn from the actions of such heroes. The chorus is, after all, not “may your strength give *me* strength,” but “may your strength give *us* strength.” Yet the song remains grounded in the personal narrative of someone experiencing loss after 9/11, specifically the loss of someone who chose to risk their life to help others. We may assume the person is a firefighter or some other type of rescue worker, although stories abound about civilians also going “into the fire.” The final verse describes the lovers’ last moments together:

It was dark, too dark to see.
You held me in the light you gave.
You lay your hand on me,
Then walked into the darkness of your smoky grave.

The song then repeats the chorus four times, prayer-like, and repeats the fourth line of the chorus a fifth time, with the effect of the following phrase echoing in the listener's ear: "May your love bring us love." Springsteen seems to rely heavily on love as an antidote to the hate behind the attacks. "This is part of the counter-narrative," writes DeLillo: "hands and spirits joining, human beauty in the crush of meshed steel" (39). Like C.S. Peirce's "evolutionary love," this love is a liberating force that offers listeners an alternative response to 9/11 radically different from the typical "eye for an eye" mentality that is more common. Although, as we shall see later, Springsteen also expresses the desire for revenge. *The Rising*, then, does not present a simple, unified response to 9/11.

"My Soul is Lost, My City's in Ruins": Mourning for America and Beyond

Like "Into the Fire," "You're Missing" speaks from the point of view of someone who has lost a loved one to 9/11. But instead of referring to the material reality of ground zero to evoke feelings of loss and sadness, "You're Missing" evokes such feelings by listing all the physical things left behind and intact when one is taken so suddenly:

Coffee cup's on the counter, jacket's on the chair.
 Paper's on the doorstep, but you're not there.
 Everything is everything
 Everything is everything.
 But you're missing.

And of course clothes and objects are not the only things that are left behind. There are people, too, and, in this case, children. Focusing in on the experience of a wife who must now face the reality of telling her children that their father is gone, the following lines are among the most heartbreaking on the CD: "Children are asking if it's all right. / Will you be in our arms tonight?"

Unlike "Into the Fire," which offered more than a glimmer of hope after 9/11, "You're Missing" ends with the speaker offering nothing but the observation that God seems not to have noticed, and that the devil, perhaps in the form of new acts of terror such as sending anthrax in the mail, seems to be in control. Images of the devil and dust appear to hold special significance for Springsteen in his latest works; note the title of his 2005 release: *Devils and Dust*. At the closing of "Into the Fire," the speaker is left with nothing but the ubiquitous dust on his shoes and futile tears for the dead:

God's drifting in heaven, devil's in the mailbox.
 I got dust on my shoes, nothing but teardrops.

While the song ends after these lines, with only the melancholy rhythms of the F and D-minor chords as a musical dénouement, Springsteen clearly does not intend for his listener to linger in this state. The next

song, an upbeat, electric guitar-driven anthem called “The Rising,” brings listeners back up to an optimistic plane as it invites us to believe in the hope of human solidarity with the lines “come on up for the rising / Come on up, lay your hands in mine.”

In “My City of Ruins”—a gospel song reminiscent of “People Get Ready” that Springsteen wrote before 9/11 to commemorate the closing of Asbury Park but that works well to voice the losses of 9/11—Springsteen links one individual’s experience of loss to the communal sense of loss experienced by Americans (and sympathetic people worldwide) as they faced the wounded landscape of New York city. The opening lines, “There’s a blood red circle / On the cold dark ground,” suggest that the recent traumatic event is like a stain on the earth. The physical ruins of the city mirror the emotional ruins of its citizens, and these feelings are intensified by Springsteen’s focus on a particular person’s loss. Here the personal is explicitly linked to the communal as the lyrics eulogize both a lost lover and a damaged city:

Now there’s tears on the pillow
 Darlin’ where we slept.
 And you took my heart when you left.
 Without your sweet kiss
 My soul is lost, my friend.
 Tell me how do I begin again?
 My city’s in ruins.
 My city’s in ruins.

Unlike “You’re Missing,” “My City of Ruins” offers hope that a higher power will provide the strength, faith, and love needed to rebuild the city and to mend the wounded hearts of its citizens. “With these hands,” Springsteen intones, “I pray for the strength.” Thus Springsteen enacts his religious form of romantic pragmatism by naming the agency that may enable those dealing with losses after 9/11 to find the strength to move on. Unlike some other musical responses to 9/11 that urged immediate war—Toby Keith’s “Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue (Angry American)” is the best example—Springsteen’s response urges listeners to consider non-violent ways of responding to violence. A philosophy that asserts that one can rid the world of *all* evil is based on (moral) certitude, and as Oliver Wendell Holmes found out through his experience in the American Civil War, “certitude leads to violence” (Menand 16).^{iv} Springsteen’s approach here is pragmatic in the sense that it refuses to remain fixated on past beliefs. That would be a philosophy based on certitude. Even Springsteen’s apparent calls for revenge reveal, on closer inspection, a more complicated stance than what is implied on the surface.

“I Want an Eye for an Eye”: Anger and Revenge in The Rising

The lyrics of “Lonesome Day,” the first song on the album, suggest that revenge is also an appropriate response to 9/11, as if the United States is a sleeping giant that will soon awaken:

Hell's brewin,' dark sun's on the rise.
This storm'll blow through by and by.
House is on fire, viper's in the grass.
A little revenge and this too shall pass.

These lyrics echo a common reaction to 9/11 among both ordinary citizens and some high-ranking officials: the need for revenge. This is, then, another example of Springsteen's apparent aim in The Rising to record real experiences of people in response to 9/11. We all heard the angry cries for revenge that followed the event, a reaction captured in popular song by Toby Keith's "Angry American" in which the speaker warns: "You'll be sorry that you messed with the U S of A / Cause we'll put a boot in your ass, it's the American way."

While the speaker in Springsteen's "Lonesome Day" suggests that revenge is in order, the idea is problematized by what appears to be the speaker's glib prediction that the U.S. will lash out quickly and then forget the implications of 9/11. "A little revenge and this too shall pass," he says. The next verse includes a prescient warning that further complicates a simple reading of "Lonesome Day" as an angry call for revenge:

Better ask questions before you shoot.
Deceit and betrayal's bitter fruit.
It's hard to swallow, come time to pay.
That taste on your tongue don't easily slip away.

"Further On (Up the Road)" also suggests revenge, as the speaker seems poised to take some kind of violent action:

Where the road is dark and the seed is sowed,
Where the gun is cocked and the bullet's cold,
Where the miles are marked in blood and gold,
I'll meet you further on up the road.

The revenge factor figures most prominently in "Empty Sky," the sixth track on The Rising. "Empty Sky" begins with the now familiar scenario of a person faced with the sudden death of a loved one after 9/11. But this song takes a different turn when it explicitly expresses the desire for revenge in the first stanza:

I woke up this morning
I could barely breathe.
Just an empty impression
In the bed where you used to be.
I want a kiss from your lips.
I want an eye for an eye.

I woke up this morning to an empty sky.

The chorus then reiterates the image of the empty sky. While this opening verse refers to an ancient law shared by both Judeo-Christian and Muslim societies to express the natural urge for revenge, the second verse goes farther back in time to the pre-Greek era, evoking a similar kind of revenge in the form of the Furies who would rise up from the blood of the slain to avenge the perpetrator in an endless cycle. Naturally the human mind moves away from the limbic region in response to such an act of terror as 9/11 and reverts back to a more primal approach to justice than a fair trial by jury. Again, Springsteen expresses the experience felt by many in their immediate response to 9/11:

Blood on the streets,
Yeah blood flowing down.
I hear the blood of my blood
Cryin' from the ground.

At this point the speaker in the song becomes a kind of super-hero who prepares to mete out this justice that he has been describing: “On the plains of Jordon / I cut my bow from the wood / Of this tree of evil / Of this tree of good.” Again, as in the previous allusion to the “eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth” method of justice, traditionally practiced by Judeo-Christian and Muslim societies, perhaps Springsteen is reminding listeners of the shared humanity of all people of the world, even though it is easier to demonize strangers as the enemy and designate them as the evil “them” in the “us” vs. “them” dichotomy. This, then, is a moment of pragmatic mediation between extremes in The Rising.

As the chorus repeats and fades—“Empty sky, empty sky, / I woke up this morning to an empty sky”—the song meditates on the emptiness after 9/11, emptiness as absence of grounds for meaning in the face of something so completely new and unexpected as multiple attacks by jet plane on New York and Washington. “Unexpected” yet fantasized about in popular films for years, as Baudrillard notes in The Spirit of Terrorism. At any rate, there is a need to make meaning out of this newness, to create some order out of the chaos. This is where the writer comes in, and this is what Springsteen achieves in The Rising. He is trying to give some semblance of meaning and memory to that event by focusing on the experiences of real people. On this note, Don DeLillo wrote about 9/11: “In its desertion of every basis for comparison, the event asserts its singularity. There is something empty in the sky. The writer tries to give memory, tenderness, and meaning to all that howling space” (39). Like Whitman recording his experience of the Civil War, Springsteen creates some meaning out of howling, empty space of 9/11 by depicting the humanity of those most directly affected by the event.

“There’s a Lot of Walls Need Tearing Down”: Pragmatic Mediation in The Rising

New walls, literal and metaphorical, sprang up immediately after 9/11, the most familiar one being the

wall between “Us” and “Them.” A line was drawn in the sand and you were either on the side of the United States or on the side of the terrorists. In response to this Manichean outlook, a pattern of discourse has emerged that calls for increased dialogue between the opposing groups on each side of these walls. Music can be a mediating factor for those who are quick to turn their hatred on a real or imagined other, for music appeals to the limbic region of the brain: the mammalian part thought to be responsible for emotions. Emotions such as caring and empathy for others are what make us human and Springsteen suggests that we can work through our misunderstandings of others to arrive at a point of mutual respect, perhaps even love. This move is subtle in the song “Paradise.” Once we realize that the first part of the song depicts the actions of a suicide bomber, we at least recognize the person’s humanity: “Where the river runs to black / I take the schoolbooks from your pack. / Plastics, wire and your kiss, / The breath of eternity on your lips. / In the crowded marketplace / I drift from face to face / I hold my breath and close my eyes. / And I wait for paradise.”

The song “Let’s Be Friends (Skin to Skin)” more explicitly indicates that dialogue between people can move them beyond differences:

I know we’re different, you and me,
Got a different way of walking.
The time has come to let the past be history.
Yeah if we could just start talking.”

In this song Springsteen suggests that the only way to bring about positive change is to work together, taking on specific problems one at a time: “There’s a lot of walls need tearing down / Together we could take them one by one.”

The song with the most potential for suggesting the possibilities of mediation between oppositions such as “us” and “them” after 9/11 is “Worlds Apart,” which, like Steve Earle’s “John Walker’s Blues,” incorporates Arabic language significantly. Whereas Earle takes a verse from the Koran and places it in the chorus of “John Walker’s Blues,” Springsteen’s use of the Other’s language is more subtle. “Worlds Apart” begins with a prayer-like chant that sounds like it could be coming out of a mosque, and the voice is soon accompanied by an African-like drumbeat. The liner notes indicate that Pakistani singer Asif Ali Khan and Group collaborated with Springsteen on this song. After this rather exotic prelude, “Worlds Apart” then changes into a traditional guitar-driven rock tune, although the Arabesque intonations and African rhythms remain throughout.

Springsteen has shown how spirituality may work as an agency to enable listeners to respond meaningfully to 9/11. Love is the other dominant agency offered on The Rising as a means to move beyond apparently irreconcilable differences between people based on their cultures. In “Worlds Apart,” the lyrics repeat a familiar scenario in Springsteen’s work of a lover addressing another. Though the speaker seeks “faith in your kiss and comfort in your heart,” he admits that “when I look into your eyes, we stand worlds apart.” While most of the songs on the album place the scene of action in the city (presumably New York),

“Worlds Apart” describes the scene as “this dry and troubled country” where, “‘Neath Allah’s blessed rain, we remain worlds apart.” My first impression was that the song referred to Afghanistan, but the exact location is probably inconsequential. It is enough to say that Springsteen is asking his listeners to consider the Other as a flesh and blood human with the same hopes and desires as his audience, with the implication that any apparent differences can be overcome once the pathways to understanding are opened.

In the third verse of “Worlds Apart,” Springsteen suggests that experience is always the test of truth, not the other way around, and this is a core tenet of romantic pragmatism. In a manner that is consistent with his earlier work, Springsteen indicates that the experience of romantic love may unite people no matter what their differences.

Sometimes the truth just ain’t enough,
Or it’s too much in times like this.
Let’s throw the truth away, we’ll find it in this kiss.

Here the speaker is prepared to throw away the “truth” if it does not fit with his experience in a move that invokes C.S. Peirce’s statement that a person should dump a whole cartload of beliefs the moment experience proves them wrong (Collected Papers vol. I:55). And yet, how difficult it is to dump that cartload! How much easier to deny our experience or that of others!

In his published response to 9/11, Don DeLillo names death as the one thing that unites all humans: “The dead are their own nation and race, one identity, young or old, devout or unbelieving—a union of souls” (40). Commenting on the pilgrims in Mecca, he points out that they recall, in prayer, “their fellowship with the dead” (40). Although Springsteen certainly honors the deceased in The Rising and thus admits our fellowship with the dead, he clearly encourages the living to work for a better world.

In your skin upon my skin, in the beating of our hearts,
May the living let us in, before the dead tear us apart.

For Springsteen, then, life—not death—unites us all as inhabitants of this planet, a romantic and optimistic notion to be sure. The song ends fittingly with the speaker trusting love to take him and his partner to a higher plane where their differences do not matter: “Let’s let love give what it gives. / Let’s let love give what it gives.” Accepting this hypothesis which passion seems to have whispered to him, Springsteen knows what he means by “true.” Truth is found in the human touch.

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Notes

ⁱ Springsteen was highly influenced by American folk-singer Woody Guthrie, who consciously affected a Whitmanesque style. All three lyricists have a talent for transforming common language and mundane situations into meaningful art. On the direct line of descent from Whitman and Guthrie to Springsteen, see Garman. On Springsteen as observant poet in the style of Whitman and William Carlos Williams (three New Jersey natives), see Coles. Larry David Smith offers a scholarly analysis of Springsteen's work in Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, and American Song. Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2002. Another noteworthy book is Daniel Cavicchi's Tramps Like Us: Music & Meaning among Springsteen Fans. New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. The best biography is Dave Marsh's Bruce Springsteen: Two Hearts; The Definitive Biography, 1973-2003 (2004), which combines his previous two biographies of Springsteen and adds updated material, including a commentary on The Rising.

ⁱⁱ Friedrich Nietzsche. The Will to Power. New York: Vintage Press, 1968. Stanley Fish. Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1980.

ⁱⁱⁱ The terms Act, Agent, Agency, Scene, and Purpose are borrowed from Kenneth Burke's A Grammar of Motives. These terms make up a heuristic "pentad" that offers a way of exploring rhetorical moves.

^{iv} Louis Menand gives considerable space to Oliver Wendell Holmes in The Metaphysical Club as someone who was able to take some of the ideas of the pragmatists and put them into practice. "The lesson Holmes took from the war can be put in a sentence," Menand writes. "It is that certitude leads to violence" (61). People will fight for things they are certain about, such as slavery or abolition, because they are certain that their relative conceptions of "the way life should be" are the right ones. "What prevents

the friction between competing conceptions of the way life should be from overheating and leading to violence is democracy” (64).

Beyond Ethnicity: An Interview with Theresa Maggio.

By Elisabetta Marino

Theresa Maggio is probably one of the most interesting American writers of modern times. Besides pursuing a career as a journalist, she is the author of two travelogues in which her personal experience of places and people plays a vital role: *Mattanza: Life and Death in the Sea of Sicily* (2000) and *The Stone Boudoir: Travels through the Hidden Villages of Sicily* (2002). The first volume is focused on the ancient ritual of blue-fin tuna fishing carried out in the Sicilian island of Favignana, where, every year, around May or June, the tuna fish gather in order to spawn. The second volume is a quest for the remotest and still unspoiled villages of mountainous Sicily, starting from the place where her family came from: Santa Margherita Belice. In these two books Theresa Maggio explores her Sicilian roots but she somehow overcomes the boundaries of ethnicity since she seems to plunge deep into the very core of humankind, by unearthing ancient traditions whose secrets are orally transmitted from generations to generations.

I had the pleasure of reviewing and writing on Theresa Maggio's volumes as a part of my research project on Italian American literature. The wide acknowledgement of the originality of Theresa's perspective, together with my personal appreciation of her writings, prompted me to ask her whether she would be willing to be interviewed. She kindly accepted, showing the same enthusiasm, interest and vitality that the reader can gather from her books. We leisurely started exchanging thoughts through the internet, the globe-straddling network of communication, and we carried out the following conversation between continents, from Italy to the USA, for several months, up until July 2005.

E.M. Theresa, how did you decide to devote your life to writing? Did the discovery of "writing" come along with the discovery of your "Italian side"?

T.M. You are making me think about my life ... The seeds of a writer were in me but they took a long time to flower. The Benedictine nuns who taught at St. Joseph's elementary school turned every subject into a writing class. Spelling, grammar and good sentence structure counted in written assignments from religion to art. Clarity of expression is what they were after, I now realize. Good thing I loved words.

I won the spelling bees, diagrammed the “Our Father” on the chalkboard during recess, and I played Scrabble instead of with dolls. I was an introspective nerd and had no social life. As a depressed teenager, I wrote heartfelt, execrable poems late at night on the kitchen table listening to the Moody Blues Knights in White Satin on the radio. (I wish I could find them now!) When I was 13 and 14 I wrote long letters to an older friend, and she encouraged me to write for a living. But I wanted to grow up and raise horses. I never thought of writing as a career because when I walked into our small town library and looked up the stacks – yards and yards of words between covers – I thought that everything that could be said must have already been said by someone.

There were no books in the house where I grew up. Poetry was superfluous. I never could invent a plot. I never considered writing as a career option. My mother died when I was ten. When my father came home from work (he pumped gas and fixed cars at his own gas station) he turned on the CBS nightly news, sat in his recliner and fixed his attention on Walter Cronkite, then America’s most famous anchor man. I sat between my father and the television to make him look at me, to try to get his attention, but he always asked me to move aside. Twenty years later I was accepted into Columbia Journalism School. Before classes began, the university chartered a Manhattan tour boat and gave a party aboard for us new students. The guest of honor turned out to be Walter Cronkite. (See why I like non-fiction?) I specialized in science writing because I had always liked reading about the cosmos and astrophysics in popular magazines, and I thought it was useful writing. I got a job as a science writer for the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, where I had previously worked as a technician, making laser optics. Then I went on a long vacation in Sicily with my father, met Piero, the fisherman of Mondello, and the rest is history. Yes, you are right, my mature writing was born alongside my re-discovery of Sicily. My impetus to write was to share what I was seeing, what I was living, in this beautiful, strange, sub-tropical, pathos-filled island. Both my books sprang from that era, in 1986, when I was 33 and in love, first with a Sicilian, then with Sicily.

E.M. That’s an amazing story! You somehow broke my expectations: I was convinced you would talk to me about you being “an Italian American” but instead you do not seem to perceive the same dilemma expressed by so many other Italian American writers. How do you view yourself in that context? How do you compare yourself with very important writers such as Maria Mazziotti Gillan, Rachel Guido DeVries, and Diane Di Prima?

T.M. I am embarrassed to tell you I do not know the work of the writers you mentioned. I did find one in a recent anthology of Italian-American writing, and admired DeVries’s short poem about her father’s losing his grocery store in a fire. I never thought of myself as an Italian American writer while I was writing. That happened after the books were published and the Italian American community became the largest part of my readership, judging from the comments I receive on my web page, and the invitations I have received to speak at Italian American events. So I am sorry but I can’t tell you how I fit into the Italian American writers scheme. I am certainly not considered famous or important. I am one of many others like me. But I am glad YOU singled me out.

E.M. Who are the writers that influenced you the most, then?

T.M. Let's see who's on my favourite shelf. Lots of Hemingway. I read almost everything of his the winter I was writing *Mattanza*. They said in journalism school that what you read the night before seeps into your writing the next morning. I think it did. I also liked his advice to write just "one true sentence." That's how it got written, one true sentence at a time. I like Hemingway for his directness and for using just the right fifty-cent word. John Hersey (*Hiroshima, Bell for Adano*), for his reporting and clear declarative sentences; Norman Lewis, especially *Naples '44*, for his sentences hard as diamonds; Matilde Serao for writing so passionately about a place; Robert Frost for seeing the macrocosm in the microcosm, and for the music of his verse, and because of our common involvement with Vermont; Danilo Dolci for turning over rocks and examining the underside; Rosario La Duca for being madly in love with one's city and knowing every little thing about it.

It looks like I don't read anybody who wrote much past the 1950's, and I have been faulted for this. But you don't have enough time in your life to read ALL the books, so why not stick to the classics of every genre? But as I said, if someone I trust sticks a book under my nose and says, "You must read this," I will. That is how I managed to read Ann Proulx's *The Shipping News*, and I am grateful to have read it.

E.M. **I'm sure some readers will recognize some echoes of these works in your two volumes, *Mattanza* and *The Stone Boudoir*. How much did your readings influence you and how much did the places themselves and the contact with people inspire you? Can you tell us more about your writing technique?**

T.M. Everything in *Mattanza* and *Stone Boudoir* really happened -- no invented quotes, scenes, people, or situations. When I gave up on writing poetry, in my teens, I thought to myself I could at least make evocative declarative sentences. So that's what I tried to do.

I am telling true stories, with me in the picture. I included myself because I am sure my presence affected what happened, in some way. You can't really be a fly on the wall, observing but unobserved. I was part of the scene. I worked with the facts. I call it *narrative journalism*. I did include my various emotional reactions: rapture, horror, feeling like an outsider, feeling like an insider, you name it -- because I wanted to give the experience of being there. My eyes were the readers' eyes.

To answer your second question: the people and places my subject matter influenced me more than other writers did. My goal was to mirror reality. That's what helped me pick my words. The influence of other authors is in the courage they give you to write your own way. And of course when I read something written wonderfully, it makes me strive for artistic mastery of my own tale.

E.M. **I can see your deep involvement in your writings ... In your books you also express a serious concern about the damages that we are causing to our environment and about the loss of one's tradition and cultural heritage. Could you tell us more about it?**

T.M. All I can think of is my friend Cristina on Favignana, whose house faces the sea and the tuna trap.

She said that once, when she had serious surgery, and was being put under, and she wasn't sure she would wake up again, the image that passed before her eyes was of the tuna boats being towed in a line to the trap so the men could count the tuna in it.

While I was reporting for *Mattanza*, the fishermen and the islanders in general were in the denial phase of grief, if you ask me. I haven't been back there during the spring for several years, but I have heard reports from eyewitnesses that one year they took one tuna, and another year, none.

The old timers were retiring, the new men just wanted a job for three months, or to be part of something their grandfathers did. Hunters lose interest when the prey is gone. I felt like the island was losing its life blood.

One year after the book came out I did go back in the spring. The tuna catch had dwindled over the years. I found Rais Gioacchino Cataldo in a boathouse. He'd invented what he said was an improvement to the trap. It was an eighth room, which he named GG, because he'd designed it with former Rais Gioacchino Ernandes. I wondered why he'd gone to all the trouble of building a new net chamber, when the tuna were so diminished. I didn't insist on a logical answer; I understood he was heartbroken, grasping at straws now, and that he just wanted to leave his mark on Favignana's tonnara.

There were no more blue-fin in their trap because of industrial fishing. If mankind can do a thing, mankind will do it, regardless of the consequences. A steam engine, an atomic bomb, a trip to the moon, purse seine nets. Another reason is because there are too many of us, and we are all consumers.

I recently read an article in the *New Yorker* magazine (May 9, 2005) about global warming due to man's actions, and its disastrous effects. Reporter Elizabeth Kolbert talked to Marty Hoffert, a professor of physics at New York University, who was as pessimistic, and realistic, about global warming as I am about over-fishing and its effects on culture.

He said, "...you know, somebody will visit (earth) in a few hundred million years and find there were some intelligent beings who lived here for a while, but they just couldn't handle the transition from being hunter-gatherers to high technology."

E.M. From what you have said so far I gather that orality, the experience orally passed from one person to the other, plays an important role in your writing. Could you expand on that? Do you think it could also be somehow connected with your Italian origin, with the importance we attach to story-telling in the family?

T.M. I have to say, there wasn't much storytelling in my family. Everything was a secret, usually a discussion of some bitter vendetta or remembered slight. Whatever stories were passed at the dinner table Sundays at my grandmother's house were passed in Sicilian, the older generation's secret language, and kept from us kids. But in the end, maybe you are right. I went to Sicily in the first place in spite of my

grandmother's caustic admonishment that "there is nothing there", to find out what WAS there, and what were all the secrets about.

Why am I so interested in oral tradition? Human behavior is the most interesting thing on earth. For some reason, I am fascinated by human rituals and dying traditions. I'm a journalist, trained to seek out my sources and write down what they say, simple as that. I get people to tell their stories, when I am lucky, or when I do my job right, or both. Then I write them down. It helps me and my readers to see the world from my subject's point of view. To recreate a foreign world, a distant culture.

Mattanza was full of oral tradition—the *cialome* (songs the fishermen sing), the prayer of the rais, the shout of the *tonnaroti* the day before the first *Mattanza* (*Sempre sia laudato il nome di Gesu!*), the soaring seabirds that signal the arrival of migrating blue-fin tuna, the short ritual and prayer a fisherman learns to stop a sea tornado, washing one's face with water sprinkled with flowers on May First. The women had their own traditions: my landlady's mumbled invocation to relieve her son-in-law of the curse of the Evil Eye, Rosa of the Cemetery's semi-pagan prayers to Saint Anthony to get one's boyfriend back.

Stone Boudoir was full of oral tradition, too. For example, the methods nuns used to name the infant orphans placed in their care, or the traditional family protocol for naming legitimate children, or what the screaming devotees of Saint Agatha are actually saying during her mind-boggling feast in Catania.

It was a pleasure to learn from a distant cousin that the women of Santa Margherita Belice who cleaned the Leopard's palace took "an hour-and-a-half just to open all the windows, and an hour-and-a-half to close them." That's the kind of telling, human detail journalists, or any writers, really, appreciate and give to their readers. The lovely thing about Sicily is that it is FULL of such oral tradition and is such a treasure chest of material for me. I am full of gratitude to Professor Michele LoMonaco for teaching me Italian for the price of a sack of mackerel. Without a knowledge of Italian, Sicily would have been an opaque mystery to me.

E.M. From the US to Italy to the US and back again, time after time ... The last question I would like to ask you concerns your idea of belonging and "home." Where do you really feel at home, Theresa?

T.M. Home is right here in the West River Valley of Vermont. I have often felt lucky about knowing exactly where my home is. I don't own a house, but I do have a home. I have an intimate relationship with the hills and folds of this little valley, and the good people in it.

I was not born here but often wished I was. I first came here when I was nine, on a weekend trip with a friend of my father's who was a New York lawyer who owned a horse and stabled it up here. He flew up here weekends with his wife to ride and enjoy the country. When we arrived at the airport in Massachusetts we took his old car to Brookline, Vermont. I remember getting out of the car, walking over to the white paddock fence, seeing horses grazing in a pasture, heads down, tails swishing, and beyond them, soft rounded green hills, and beyond them a dark summer storm coming our way and saying to myself, "I am

going to live here.” I knew it, literally, the moment I set foot in Vermont. There is no other place I call home.

At the time, I still had to live in New Jersey with my parents. But when I was 13 the family friends bought the inn and stable they had used for years, and asked me to work at the inn during summers. I worked there every summer from eighth grade through college except for the summer I worked in Paris, made friends with real Vermonters, set down roots. When I was 17 I became an “emancipated minor” (legal term meaning I was legally on my own and responsible for my own debts, though underage) and took the Freeman’s Oath, which is a promise every voter in Vermont makes, a promise to always vote for what would be best for Vermont. Later on, in my thirties, I became the West River Valley reporter for the *Brattleboro Reformer*, a feisty little daily newspaper. I wrote lots of features about ordinary people that I saw as extraordinary. Especially the older people. I loved their stories and their ways of expressing themselves. It was a privilege to meet them and write about them, and take their pictures. My articles were pasted on refrigerators up and down the valley. It was a job I loved, but I left it to write *Mattanza*, then *Stone Boudoir*.

When I quit my *Reformer* job at the end of 1991, I didn’t have enough money to rent an apartment or house, so the older people in the valley took me in. For a few years I lived in a turret room in an old Victorian house in Townshend that belonged to a 90- year-old widower. After he died, his daughters asked me stay on until they sold the house. Then I was invited to live here, in this simple room in an old farmhouse on Newfane Hill. The kind lady who owns the house and lives downstairs teaches art to children. She let me choose my own rent, and said if I couldn’t pay it I could stay on anyway. I have been here 15 years, and wrote both my books at this Vermont maple table which I got for \$19 at auction. I love every stream, pond, river, tree and hill that surrounds us.

E.M. At home in Vermont and at ease in the world. Thank you very much, Theresa!

Dead Souls...

By Adam King

Andre sat reading *Dead Souls* at the rickety old round table upon a rickety old chair upon bare, rotten wooden floors. It was beside the bed in his room--the only furniture in the place. He began reading Gogol on Wednesday before three stars had emerged, and finished it on Saturday morning as the sun was rising--almost without sleeping--only grabbing little naps. And yet he felt regenerated.

He had been late with his rent. He had no food in the place, and the rags upon his back were tattered and filled with holes as were his shoes. As he walked he felt the wetness of the ground, yet in his soul he felt at peace and warm--a sensation which had eluded him for a long while due to the drudgery of his existence. But good reading invigorated and inspired him, and gave him new life. He strolled like a wealthy man along the avenue until he came to a pretty little used bookshop which he loved, traded back *Dead Souls* and took Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*. He was surprised and pleased to find a copy in the German.

"I have been coming here ten years now," he said to the bookseller. "I come and buy a book, and I treat it like something precious and make certain there are no oils on my fingertips before I turn the pages. I never make a mark. I treat it like the shroud itself. Then, after having read it, I return it to you as good as the day I bought it and for ten years you sell me a book and you purchase the book back from me and you always charge me the full amount possible and you never waiver in that. I look at you. You wear fine clothing. You live above this shop in a well-furnished place. You once confided in me. You said that your lovely wife had money when you married and so you were able to buy this entire building and that you pay no rent. God bless you. I see that you are happy and prosperous in business. It is bustling, and I respect the quality of the folios here. You have a keen eye for good literature. And for that I am grateful to you. I appreciate your abilities and so I make it my habit to walk many blocks to purchase my books here.

"Well, now perhaps you have no sentimentality regarding our history--nevertheless, for ten years we have been doing business. I must tell you that I'm pretty well down on my luck. In fact, nothing is going my way. So now, for the sake of our history and due to the fact that this is the last of my funds, could I perhaps persuade you to cut your profits just a little this time, my friend, in order that I might have a little left over to eat something tonight as I read? For old time's sake--after all, what good will my soul be to you if I'm dead? So you see, it's simply good business to cut your profits a little this time for my sake--please."

The man only smiled and shook his head and began to unwrap the book. "Why don't you go and buy some food? The book will be waiting. I will hold it for you here."

"You're still going to make money on this purchase, and then when I bring it back, and then again when I

purchase the next one as I have always done. I am only asking for a little mercy.” “I’m not in the business of mercy, sir,” said the man. “I buy and sell books.”

He held the money tight in his hand and his face became desperate and ashamed. “Listen, if you don’t help me this time, I swear to you--I’ll never return.”

But without flinching and without any change in his contented expression, the bookseller replied, “Please, sir, go and buy yourself some food and you’ll feel better. And then, when you can afford the book, return here and it will be waiting for you just as I said.”

I require it more than food. He thought. It’s sustaining my soul. It’s responsible now for my existence. For the spirit guides the man and what good is a well-fed body and a dead spirit? He put the money down on the table. He had nothing left; he took the book and went out from the store without saying a word. But he was wondering how it was that men like that had the right to create their own sort of currencies. And then he realized that it was poor men like himself who gave them that privilege. The seller would purchase the books back again, but he would not pay with money--that burgher would only take a little off the price of another book! So that was the way he ruled the peasants, and everyone who bought and sold from him. What a smug and satisfied look he held on his face. He’s never starved--and he has the confidence of the protestant ethic to bolster his conscience and to condemn men like myself. Desperate, begging little man that I’ve become! Nevertheless, it is a fine, elegant bookstore, he thought, and he knows very well that I’ll return. It’s not required of a bookseller to show mercy to a pauper like myself. The profit is sacred, he thought. Men will share anything except money. He loathed the ways of humanity in regards to money. Every man is a little banker--how smugly and how tightly they hold every penny! Then even when they have something to share instead they parcel it out with interest. How contemptuous of humanity we are! How undignified we perceive our fellow man--unworthy of a coat even if we have two.

Every high and mighty idea can be spoken of and shared with ease, great theories and philosophical concepts and religion can all be shared with open minds and willing hearts. Every man is welcome to the table of knowledge--but then, you can put starving children in the streets, crying, naked, and homeless and not a passer-by will lift a finger or turn his head. Nothing seems to shake money’s sacred structure--we compact men, women, and children into crumbling tenements. Diseased, festering wormholes! And still, the economists are not shaken. The intellectuals’ philosophies are not damaged. He still bows at the applause as he finishes his eloquent lecture. He still reaps the rewards and praises and honors of his peers, but when a hungry man asks him for something he shrugs his shoulders and brushes him aside. He is too preoccupied with lofty matters.

He once saw a desperate woman screaming in the street, intruding upon a public meeting of deep thinkers and important men of honor all continually honoring themselves, complimenting each other upon their publications and declarations--a circle of the elite. She disturbed them. She was begging for anything to feed her starving children, and yet no one had even turned to look at her. Not one of those honored and esteemed gentlemen lifted a finger--only some one came and took her away from annoying them.

The poor are not included in politics or in policies. Their destitution is rarely pitied and often mocked. They have no barristers and they lack a physician--so go to the jail and see if you can find a rich man and then go into a hospital and see if you can find a poor man. If you can, it's because he was dying in the street, a public nuisance--but it is certain that his bed will be swiftly taken away in favor of a paying customer. He was thinking, also, of his friend Jacob--an old man he worked with on the docks who was dying, growing thinner and paler from the disease called poverty.

It is never named as a cause; it is never denounced or cursed by rhetoricians--and yet it grinds humankind's bones into dust. No plague or fever even approaches the number of its victims, but they are often poverty's accomplices. From the conception of the world until this very hour--this very second--its children and mothers wail in wretched agony--their death cries. This moment, guilt-torn fathers watch their infant sons pant for last breaths while other fathers who are not willing to submit to providence are being tried and hanged for stealing loaves of bread.

He thought of Jacob because Jacob always managed to keep a lot of tobacco on him, and while reading on an empty stomach was not ideal, it was bearable. However, reading without a cigarette was impossible. To aid him in traveling past the boundaries into the forbidden zones, he did not just sit and read the pages--but a single line could transport him into an entire universe and this took plenty of tightly rolled cigarettes and no one rolled them more perfectly than Jacob. The book felt good in his hand now as he hurried along. The cover was well-crafted--covered in quality cloth and supported by a solid, clean leather binding. He stopped and examined it more closely. It had a rich, unfamiliar feel to it--and after further examination he became excited, and then he began to laugh heartily with the feeling of great satisfaction for now he was certain that he had paid much too little for the book.

Yes indeed--the great burgher had let one slip by! Yes, I'm certain, he gasped. This is a first edition. He knew the publisher's markings. It required an expert eye, and unless one looks closely at publishing notes, they could be easily misread. His greed blinded him this time! His lovely wife, his soft bed, his big, plush apartment, his rent-free building--they had all conspired against him.

Perhaps he was in a quandary about it and was about to take a closer look, but then he smelled the roast in the oven--but whatever it was, he missed it. This was worth much more than Andre had paid. He could read it and then take it to an appraiser--perhaps it could be auctioned. He felt glorious! Still a pauper, he would still go hungry tonight--nevertheless, he felt glorious. Even as his stomach growled. A first-edition Nietzsche! This is remarkable--it is, in fact, the most remarkable thing which has ever happened to me. "Beyond Good and Evil" he read the title out loud, then wiped his hands with his shirt and put the book in his pants between the belt and his stomach. Promise and hope are more sustaining than food, he thought. Better than money in your pocket.

Target Greatland...

By Jennifer Thompson

When death's hair brushes my cheek
simple facts present themselves:

1. I am 32.

2. Men's gazes always will flow over me
like a clear, cold stream
over one of many pebbles, smoothing me.

3. This mind, consciousness
will never fall still.
It sings out, inanely
like a rubber fish at Target
twitching in a ghastly fashion
framed and mounted in a cardboard box
one of dozens piled
now on sale
only \$12.99.
My being is
an ill-chosen gift
that provokes a frozen grin.

4. Somehow I imagined
that my life would be --
no, that human life is --
a series of violent contractions
sending blood squirting
from core to extremity and back
or, better
the thrill of taking sweet, careless Avi
deep inside me
grasping at a certain friction and pressure
there
meeting his fervid blue eyes

our very different organs matched
in need and feeling.

But no. When death rests the floss of her pale hair
on the pillow next to mine
and runs a careless finger
down my thigh
I know:

5. Existence consists
of standing in line at Target Greatland.
The cashier's movements are painfully slow
I feel vaguely tempted by racks and pyramids
of last impulse buys
the plaque-fighting gum
which my dingy teeth need
espresso-flavored candy canes all
khaki green

"Target Greatland," continue stanza

scented cardboard trees – surely
my seedy Firebird could use one?
I am in agonies over the
bruised sunset shades of
the bag-boy's acne.
The stiff collar of his company
polo shirt grazes
a cluster of pustules.
My pimples throb
in answering sympathy.
His eyes bleed with
the uncomprehending suffering
of a Dalmatian locked
in a behaviorist's laboratory.
This
This
This is existence.

6. Now, having felt the gentle probe
of death's curious fingers

I'm not looking for satisfaction, joy
balance, inner peace
season's greetings. No.
Like Charcot's hysterics I lie
docile and wracked by turns.

7. Perhaps for Avi
I am a just tortured prop
a moving figure
for banal and pointless suffering.

8. I must drive and live so hard so fast so wildly
with such a sure touch
that I outstrip
this twitching, dripping self.

092804

By Bill Stobb

Beyond three orange trucks
in a bright thaw south of Rochester
wild grasses overtake a state highway.
When I stop and step out

sand rides wind to my eye.
It's hostage release day
so I think the world has changed direction.
Freed Italian women

step back into their legs—
unterrified, remembered.
A thresher unstarts itself in the field.

These seed pods, grown through
the low shoulder, shrink
from purple to green and disappear.

A Linguistic-Stylistic Investigation of the Language of the Nigerian Political Elite.

By Moses Omoniyi Ayeomoni

Intention

The study reviews and analyses the language of the Nigerian political elite while discussing the business of politics, with a view to finding out functional reasons for the features that characterize or permeate this language variety.

Definition

The political elite, we have in mind in this paper, are Nigerians that are educated and saddled with the task or business of political leadership and those occupying various political positions like Presidency, Head of State, Governorship, Ministry, Ambassadorship, Advisory, and other political offices. It also embraces those that are involved in practical political practitioning and politicking either civil or military. Nigeria, since independence, has been under the tutelage of two different kinds of political regimes: the civil political administration and the military political regime. Each regime has always produced its own political leaders and elite. However, this study will not segregate or sectionalise the political elite. The study specifically concentrates or focuses on the elite that have made significant contributions or landmarks to the building and development of Nigerian political history, across various regimes and governments, which we have had so far in this country; military or civilian.

Scope of the study

In view of the large number of people covered by our classification, vis-à-vis the size of the country, and

considering the shortness and limitation of the space for this study, it thus becomes imperative to restrict the selection of the political elite to notable ones across different regimes and various geo-political zones or regions of the country. Such notables include Chief Obafemi Awolowo (South West), Chief Nnamdi Azikiwe (South East), S.G. Ikoku (South East), Chief Nwawor Orizu (South East), Mr Tunji Braithwaite (South West), Uncle Bola Ige (South West), Chief Ebenezer Babatope (South West), Tafawa Balewa (North East), Alhaji Shehu Shagari (North East), General Aguiyi Ironsi (South East), General Olusegun Obasanjo (South West), General Badamosi Babangida (North Central) and Major Kaduna Nzeogwu (South East).

Analytical approach

To get to the linguistic features of this variety of language, there are various linguistic options or approaches that could be explored. The options include the Text linguistic approach, Discourse Analysis, General and Linguistic Stylistic approaches and so on. In this study however, the procedure of General stylistic analysis is adopted for the following reasons: in the first place, stylistics itself is described as a linguistic study of different styles (Chapman (1973), Ayeomoni (2002), Babajide (2002), Romano (2000), William (2002)), it is a product of social situation, implying that there is a common relationship between language use and sociopolitical situations. Stylistics in this wise, is taken as an integral part of sociolinguistics, in the sense that it studies humans in relation to their society. Furthermore, stylistics could also be described as an academic field, which studies certain aspects of language variation. It is in this respect that Crystal and Davy (1969) stress that stylistics aims at “analyzing language habits with a view to identifying, from the General mass of linguistic, features common to English as used on every conceivable occasion...” (Crystal & Davy: 10) So, the general stylistic method of analysis applied here, offers three major benefits to us in this study. Firstly, as analysts we will be aware of the structural pattern of language, permeating a text so as to be able to identify the prominent or foregrounding stylistic features of the text. It also enables analysts to be consciously aware of the kind of social variations, which the inherent linguistic features are identified with. Finally, of course, the approach also enables analysts to know the technique of putting these features down systematically in order to reveal the internal patterning of various texts. It is this phenomenon that has equally induced Crystal and Davy (1969) to argue that the central requirement of stylistics is to provide a single clear technique of description with which to cope with any piece of language. They opine that:

The central requirement of any linguistically oriented approach to the classification of stylistic effect is that it should provide a single, clear technique of description which will allow the student to cope with any piece of language he wants to study.(Crystal &Davy: 13 – 14).

Consequently, the stylistic approach is usually synchronically applied to the codes available in the English language currently, vis-à-vis this study. This technique of description is what Chapman (1973) and Crystal and Davy (1969) refer to as codes and linguistic levels of analysis respectively. According to Crystal and Davy (15), the levels of analysis could be: Phonetics/ Graphetics, Phonology/Graphology, Grammar/Lexis and Semantics.

Language and Politics

It is widely conceived that language and politics are interconnected; language is for instance, considered the vehicular expression of politics. It is the means by which politics or political discourse and ideas are widely disseminated, Ali (1975) corroborates this when he opines that language “is the most important point of entry into habits of thought of a people. It embodies within itself cumulative association derived from the total experience of its people” (Ali: 48). In the same spirit, Harris avers, “in politics words have a powerful effect” (1975:58). Similarly, Harris (Ibid) views that Orwell sees political language as being designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, while Harris in (53) claims that Disraeli is of the view that “with words we govern men.” He (Harris) adds, “language is the means by which political ideas are transmitted to the community,” while in (55), he views that Locke claims that the strength of language in politicking is enormous. And at another setting, Ranney (1975:130) submits that four hostile newspapers were the equivalent of 100,000 enemy troops on the field of battle underlining the extent to which political language is itself a weapon (Ranney: 130). He claims further that every political authority will lead to justify itself by an appeal to language in its symbolic or realistic sense. It is apparent from the various opinions stated above that language is the key factor in political behaviour concerning mobilizing people to support and acceptance; it is this relatedness of language and politics that justifies the need for this research so as to identify and highlight features inherent in the language of the political elite.

Methodology

The public speeches of the underlisted politicians, in the course of their addressing political issues, are extracted as data for this study. The speeches so collected are studied and analysed along the following linguistic parameters:

(a)

Nature of the lexical choices and functions.

(b)

Forms or types of sentence prominent in the speeches and functions.

(c)

Rhetorical devices prominent in the speeches and functions.

(d)

Contextual semantic implications of the features. Then as each of the speeches is analysed, they are studied critically with a view to identifying the nature of the features of the linguistic parameters above. The identified features are then related to their contexts with the intention of drawing the concomitance or relatedness between the features and the intended messages.

Analysis

The linguistic features that are manifested in these speeches are summarized as follows:

Sentence/Clause Typology.

1. Simple Declarative Sentences and Clauses: This feature is widely or largely manifested in these data.

Data I: Obasanjo's Broadcast of September 21, 1978 to signal the game of politics.

You are all aware that the Constituent Assembly has completed its task of fashioning out a new constitution for our country; you are also aware that I have formally expressed the gratitude of the nation and that of the Supreme Military Council to the entire members of the Assembly for the successful completion of their historic assignment...(Ojiako: 195).

In the speech above, all the sentences are in declarative form with all the obligatory sentence elements of (SPC) – Subject, Predicator and Complement. For instance, we have;

S **P** **C**

You / are all aware / that the Constituent Assembly had completed...

Besides, the declarative nature of the sentences, they are mainly of simple typological form. This feature is in tune with the simple and determining attitude of the politicians in getting what they want. So, they often make their messages clear, simple and unambiguous. In the same vein, if this speech is contrasted with the speech of Shehu Shagari, 1979 President – Elect, at a Lagos Press Conference, after the result of his election was announced, a similar feature is also obtained from this speech; the speech runs thus:

(Data II)

As you all know that Federal Electoral Commission yesterday announced to this nation the final results of the Presidential election held on the 11th of August, 1979. Nigerians gave their unmistakable verdict and I was declared the First President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

(Ojiako: 218)

As usual, the clauses in the speech are declarative as shown below:

S		A		P		A		C
(i) // the Federal Electoral Commission / yesterday / announced to the nation / the final result... //								

S(A)P()C		
S	P	C
(ii) // Nigerian / gave / their unmistakable verdict // SPC		

S	P	C
(iii) / I / was declared / the first Executive President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria ... / SPC		

The clauses analyzed above, are simple declarative ones. This feature facilitates direct and emphatic pronouncement of the speaker's intentions and messages. Besides, the clauses are syntactically balanced and complete with all the obligatory sentence elements, as they often present their messages in complete, unambiguous and straight forward forms.

Metaphoric Feature

The speech of Ikoku, who was the secretary – general of the People's Redemption Party (PRP) in the Second Republic reveals will be used to illustrate this feature and style. This feature manifested in this speech is shown thus:

(Data III)

We in the PRP have no doubt that the entire country will draw a conclusion from this precipitate action that Alhaji Shagari is the favoured baby. (Ojiako: 209).

This speech as it is, is highly figurative, specifically, it is metaphoric. For instance, the phrase Precipitate action in the speech, is a metaphor, so also, is the nominal phrase favoured baby. We have this feature here because more often than not, irrespective of the subject of the discussion, political elite often resort to using figurative language in some political contexts. So, the language of this political class is usually figurative and metaphoric when they want to force their ideas through and make them convincing and impressive. For instance, in this speech, the metaphoric nominal phrase – “precipitate action.” – means from the context of its usage, the declaration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as the President. Then the nominal phrase – “favoured baby” – contextually implies partiality with the political implication that the election that has brought Alhaji Shehu Shagari in, as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was not free

and fair. Illustrating this feature further is the Chief Obafemi Awolowo's speech in *Voice of Courage*: He says:

Data (IV)

... our experience during the past 6 years has shown ... that though we are (ostensibly) free as a nation, yet as a people we remain, tightly shackled in the chains of ignorance, disease, want and native tyranny... (Awolowo: 110)

In the above speech, there is the use of metaphor in the phrase "shackled in the chains of ignorance, disease (and) want and native tyranny." This metaphor according to Awonuga (1988) could be linked with Chief Awolowo's attitude to colonialism, capitalism and socialism. In this connection, the metaphorical chains in the above quotation refer to colonialism and neocolonialism, which should be destroyed by all means. Similarly, Chief Ebenezer Babatope, a stalwart of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) in 13 years of Military Rule in Nigeria Ojiako (1986) says:- metaphorically that:

(Data V)

We wish to assert that this ordinary meaning is not only abnormal but also outrageous and irrational. (Ojiako: 210)

In the above statement, the noun phrase, "ordinary meaning" is metaphorical as it is used to stand for a view or position that is generally considered unacceptable to the speaker's party and his people. Then Uncle Bola Ige, in his maiden speech in (1979) as the Governor of the defunct Oyo State, says in *The essential Ige Tribute to Uncle Bola at 70* (2000) that:

(Data VI)

I promise, once again, that during my own time life will be made more meaningful. I will turn stone to bread; the poor will reap the fruits of their labour. I know that, you my fathers and mothers will pray for me and our state and your prayers shall be heard. (Ige: 3)

In the above speech, Uncle Bola Ige is highly metaphoric as most of the nominal items in the speech, and are metaphoric and symbolic. He uses for instance, the words: ('stone', 'bread', 'fruit of labour', 'fathers', and 'mothers' to represent hardship, prosperity, benefits and mentors respectively.) In the "Sunday Times," of October 29, 1972, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe on "analysis of the political theory," a lecture delivered at Lagos University, he says:

It is difficult for human beings to profit from experience. They learn nothing and forget nothing. Four years before the Military hand over to Civilian rule, I am bound to speculate whether the prospective civilian rulers of Nigeria have learned lessons from the events of the last six

years and have made up their minds to forget and forgive.

Azikwe's use of language here is not only philosophical but also figurative, as we have in this speech, instances of the figurative language. For instance, there is paradox in: "they learn nothing and forget nothing". This is a clear case of juxtaposition of two opposite statements. Besides, there are instances of pun and alteration in the speech as showing in Data (VIII) below:

Data (VIII)

... have made up their minds to forget and forgive.

Nnamdi Azikwe as a politician is noted for always being figurative and philosophical in his political speeches. This perhaps is to sustain the attention of his audience and to unconsciously penetrate their minds.

Liberal Rhetoric Feature

This feature is also obviously found in the speeches of the political elite in this country. A good example of this is provided by Tunji Braithwaite, a Lagos – based lawyer and one time Nigerian Advanced Party (NAP) chieftain in the Second Republic (1979). In one of his campaign speeches, he resorts to the use of liberal rhetoric device or style for the purpose of convincing his listeners. He states in 13 years of Military Rule that:

Data (IX)

We are going to produce food in abundance not only for all Nigerians, but also to export abroad and earn foreign exchange... (Ojiako: 205)

This speech is flamboyant, exaggerated and appealing to the collective sense of the people. The use of phrases like "to produce food in abundance." And to "earn foreign exchange," attest to this. This liberal and exaggerative style is adopted in order to woo and lure the people into the folds of the speakers and to cajole them into accepting them and their designed programmes. In the same exaggerative and liberal tone, the former Acting Civilian President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Nwafor Oritzu on 16th January, 1966 declared in his broadcast to the nation in 13 years of Military rule that:

Data (X)

... I have to-night been advised by the Council of Ministers that they had come to unanimous decision to voluntarily hand over administration of the country to the Armed Forces of the

Republic with immediate effect. All ministers are assured of their personal safety by the new administration... it is my fervent hope that the new administration will ensure the peace and stability of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and that all citizens will give them full co-operation. (Ojiako: 6)

Dr. Ortizu's speech above is mild exaggerative and appealing in Phrases like "have been advised, "unanimous decision," "to voluntarily handover," connote that he respects the popular opinion and interest of the people. Then, the call for "peace and stability," equally shows his liberal postures and avowed interest in the promotion of oneness and the peace of the country. This has always been the stylistic trend of the language of the political elite whenever they have an interest and image to protect and programmes to canvas for or to "sell". But after getting what they want (absolute power), they start singing another tune; they often get instantly absolved, lost and intoxicated with power to the extent that within a short time, they have forgotten the promises made at the onset of their governments. This of course, accounts for political instability in this country vis-à-vis reasons for coups and counter coups often witnessed in the country (see Ojiako 86: 82 for details).

Coercive Feature

This feature is mainly found in the military political elite's speeches whenever they want to force the governed to keep the peace. In order to ensure calmness and total submission and subjugation. On such occasions, they roll out compelling decrees and orders. During this period, the language they use becomes coercive, harsh and compelling in tone. Though this feature to some extent, is found in some civilian political elite's language, it is however, more pronounced among the military political elite, for instance, Major Kaduna Nzeogwu during the revolution of January 1, 1965, declared unequivocally in Ademoyega (1981: 88) that:

Data (XI)

This is not a time for long speech-making and so let me acquaint you with the proclamation in the Extra-ordinary orders of the day which the Supreme Council has promulgated... You are hereby warned that looting, arson, home-sexuality, rape, embezzlement, bribery or corruption, obstruction of the revolution, sabotage, subversion...(Ademoyega: 88).

And General Obasanjo (1975), reacting to Dimka's coup said:

Data (XII)

... the Supreme Military Council has taken a firm decision that all those found to be guilty will be summarily dealt with in a military way.

... I therefore appeal to all sections of Nigeria not to take the law into their hands. (Ojiako: 144)

In the two speeches above, the tone of the language is harsh, forceful, coercive and compelling. For instance, the use of the words like ‘promulgated’, ‘warned’ ‘firm decision’, and ‘summarily dealt with’, directly denote forcefully and coerciveness. Then the use of phrases and words like: ‘acquaint,’ pragmatically denotes just to inform, an order that should not be queried. Then the use of verb – ‘promulgated’ and the nominal phrase: ‘Extra-ordinary orders’ simply means laws or orders enacted and meant to be obeyed without resistance.

The language of the political elite assumes this style when there is disorder or disruption to the political system. So, to restore order, peace and stability, they change the style of their language from the usual liberal, mild and appealing one to the fiercely harsh and coercive form in order to ensure compliance with the orders and to ensure obedience to the laws and decrees of the land.

Collective Pronominal Reference

The extracts below (data XIII – XV), show a wide use of feature of collective pronominal reference: We, You, Us, Our and so on as follows: For instance, General Ibrahim Babangida in 1990, on aborted coups, during the graduation of students at Military Command College, Jaji, on 29th June, 1990, said:

*Data (XIII)

Those who hatched the coup and implemented it were apparently not part of the civil war and do not seem to know the lessons of that war. Had they been part of the experience of the civil war, they would have known that they were inevitably plunging the military into another civil war and with it the society within which they sought to correct their effort.

On June 25, 1989, at the inauguration of the Armed Forces Constituent Assembly in Abuja, President I.B. Babangida opined that:

*Data (XIV)

You all know as I do, the military remains the bastion upon which the survival of the Nigeria polity rests.... If we allow the military as an institution to be ruined or humiliated, then the consequences of Nigeria, would indeed be very grave.

The then Head of State, Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo in his broadcast christened, The Dodan declaration in 1977, declared that:

*Data (XV)

Our major pre-occupation is the stability of the country, and the mechanics of raising and improving the standards of living of everyone who lives. We cannot afford to build a nation in which a handful of people exclusively own and control the means of production and distribution to the perpetual detriment of the majority... We must all rededicate ourselves to the task of reducing the Mental and material hardship brought on fellow Nigerians...

In data (XIII), the speech opens or begins with the deictic “those” and “Those” has no anaphoric referent, it then becomes difficult to know the identities of the people being addressed. This facelessness of the addresses is further reinforced and heightened by the use of pronominal like ‘they’, in the speech, as it does not equally give a clue to the sought identities. This indicates that all the pronominal references in the text, except ‘it’ have faceless or indefinite referents; that is, people of hidden identities.

The identities of the actors here are unknown or hidden because of the illegal and shameful act of coup plotting they were involved in. In Nigeria’s socio-political context, even in the military regime, coup plotting is frowned at and considered illegal and sinful; hence it is always hatched in secrecy with the perpetrators hiding their faces and identities. This then explains why the referents of the references are faceless and unidentified. This also confirms the illegality of the government run by the military. So, here, it is a case of a “thief” chasing a “thief”, “faceless government” pursuing “faceless government hijacker.” Equally in data (XIV), the speech as usual, opens with a second person pronominal reference ‘you’ to refer to the generality of the people being addressed. And considering the context in which the speech is made, it is directed to all Nigerians, including the speaker. He thus resorts to the use of, in the second clause, the first person pronominal item – ‘I’ in order to prove his intention of non exemptionality.

He further reinforces this idea of non – exemption of any mature Nigerian, with the introduction of the third person plural pronominal reference – ‘we’ in the second sentence. This reference ‘we’ now anaphorically refers to the two pronominals – ‘you’ and ‘I’ earlier used, which are the subjects or the addressees and the speaker, that is, the generality of the people called Nigerians. Besides, the use of these pronominal references ‘you’ and ‘we’ to stand for or refer to the generality of mature Nigerians without exemption simply suggests that the issue or the art of governance (politics or leadership) concerns and touches everybody without exemption and its problems should be seen as such as a general problem requiring everybody’s attention. We also have other cohesive ties in this data that are significant, these are the ties of substitution and ellipsis. For instance, in this data, we have the subordinating clause: ‘as I do’. This clause is a proform used as a substitute for the very ‘know’. This is done to avoid unnecessary repetition of the same word. Besides, the use of this lexical substitution in this speech, is to prove further, the fact that the military is the only substitute or alternative to bad civil governance in this country it is corrective; it is thus seen as the last hope of the common Nigerians. So, the lexical substitution here reinforces the substitutional nature of the military to the civil rule especially in Nigeria, where maladministration is the order of the day.

Then in data (XV) there is also the frequent use of the first person pronominal reference in the form of

“our”, “we”, “ourselves” and “us”. The speech, like the preceding ones, opens with a pronominal reference that has no definite anaphoric referent. Then the subsequent pronominal references in the speech are anaphorically related to the first one which opens the speech – ‘our’. This style then heightens the reader’s or the listener’s tension or suspense, as he wants to know the addressee. However, when the speech is placed within the socio-political background in which it is delivered, the tension is relaxed, because a lot of information or extra – linguistic facts emerge from the contextual (pragmatic) consideration of the speech. It is however known from the context of the speech that it is the Nigerian Head of State that is addressing all Nigerians. Therefore, exophorically all the pronominal references in the speech refer to Nigerians. But the government in which these faceless pronominals are used, is still “a faceless or illegal government.”

Lexical Borrowings and Allusions

The feature of Lexical borrowings and Allusions are equally preponderant in the political language of Nigerian political elite. In this respect, it is discovered that words are often taken from various sources and fields of human endeavours like Geography, Economics, Politics, Judiciary, Sociology and so on. This is done in order to convey the exact communicative intention of the speaker, as it gives a vivid picture of the situation. So, in the cause of trying to achieve this aim, allusions to relevant fields or units of the society are resorted to. For instance, Major Nzeogwu in 1966, in his speech, alludes to the geographical features of Nigeria. He said:

Data (XVIII)

... I leave you with a message of good wishes and ask for your support at all times, so that our land, watered by the Niger and Benue between sandy waters and Gulf of Guinea washed in salt by the Might Atlantic, shall not detract Nigerian from gaining sway in any great aspect of international endeavour. (Ademoyega: 88).

In the speech above, the following words and phrases are widely used; Land, watered, Niger, Benue, sandy waters, gulf of Guinea, and Mighty Atlantic, these are geographical terms normally found in the lexical register of Geography. In the context of usage here, they perform demarcating functions as it identifies and specifies the geographical terrain affected and covered by the speech, and of which subjects are being addressed. Besides, the speech is also meant to adore and shower praises on the creator for the natural blessings and gifts bestowed on this country, as a way of exposing the greatness of the country! This is however, also meant to woo the populace and lure them into accepting him as the new ruler. General Aguiyi Ironsi reinforces this feature further in data (XIX), when he said:

Data (XIX)

The National Military Government further decrees:

a)

That there shall be appointment a Military Governor of the Regions shall continue to hold their appointments...

b)

That all holders of appointments in the civil service of the Regions shall continue to hold their appointments...

c)

That all Local Government Police Forces and Native Authority Police Forces shall be placed under the overall command of the Inspector-General. (Ojiako:11).

The three sentences (a-c) above, which are extracted from January 17, 1966's speech are framed in accordance with the legal variety of language, because it has some of the notable features of Legal variety of English.

i.

Introducing or beginning the sentences with the subordinating conjunction, 'that

ii.

The use of the non – obligatory future present tense auxiliary 'shall' in the place of "must" to indicate compulsion.

iii.

The sentences are lengthy with a close use of punctuation marks.

The intention of these military politicians here is to bring legality and sanity into their illegal act and government. So, it is a way of legalizing their illegal government so as to gain acceptance and popularity.

Conclusion

It is obvious from the analysis of the political speeches given in this paper, that the language of the political elite in Nigeria, more often than not, exhibits some unique language features. Besides, it is generally felt, as it has already been established in this paper, that language and politics are intertwined and inseparable: this quality is usually explored to an advantage by the political class to grasp power and to consolidate it. Towards acquisition and consolidation of power, they use language in various forms to achieve their political intentions and goals. Thus the language of politics in Nigeria is discovered (from the data used for this study) to manifest the following features:

There is always a preponderant use of simple declarative sentence typology that is balance and complete in components. This simple structural sentence form usually facilitates easy flow and conveyance of their intentions and messages.

In some contexts, these politicians often resort to using figurative or metaphoric language. They adopt this style, when they intend to convey their intentions or message convincingly so that the impression and intention projected could be printed and lasting in the minds of their listeners. It is also a language strategy used to arouse the feelings and collective excitement and sentiments of their followers, so as also to sustain their support, loyalty and following. In addition, they often resort to using liberal and exaggerative rhetoric, which tone is soft, mild, appealing and inviting. This is often the strategy adopted when they are campaigning or scrambling for power. This strategy is also often used when they are trying to 'sell' their programmes and entrench themselves in office.

In addition, coercion is also part of the elements of this variety of language. This strategy is normally used to compel people to submission and to secure their obedience and compliance to laws and orders of the land. This is more or less a negative way of securing the loyalty and cooperation of the governed as well as their mandate.. This language strategy is mainly used during the period of crises, disruption, anarchy or when there is a total breakdown of law and order. However, it is of note that this strategy is more popular with the military political elite than their civilian counterparts.

Finally, the language style or strategy adopted at a particular socio-political setting, depends on a number of variables such as subject matter, nature and form of setting, participants or listening audience and of course, the language prowess or communicative skill of the communicator or the speaker.

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Time's Direction...

By David Carithers

Time has been known to move backwards.

Just a second,

Just a moment, sometimes longer.

Some days when I first glance at the clock on the wall in my office,

The second hand moves one tick backward,

But as soon as I notice it, it moves forward again,

Because it knows I expect that.

The particles know when we are watching and when we are not:

This is basic quantum physics.

When we watch, they conform to our expectations.

When they are alone, they do as they please.

Sunlight, children, and lovers sometimes do the same.

