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Language, Literature, and Interdisciplinary Studies (LLIDS) is an open access e-journal with a double-blind peer review policy. It is published quarterly in Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer. *LLIDS* is conceived as a platform to engage with the existing fault lines of standard academic research through perceptive and rigorous enquiry. Committed to promote the standards of quality research, it provides discursive space for relevant and meaningful investigations in the fields of linguistics, literature, and other interdisciplinary studies for both upcoming as well as established scholars alike.

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ENGAGING FICTIONS: AESTHETIC ORIENTATIONS AND RECEPTION OF NOVEL

SPECIAL SUBMISSIONS

OCEANVALE WORKSHOP: THE IDEA OF A TEXT

EDITORIAL
Deeksha Suri

The Call for Papers (CFP) for the issue at hand focused on the novel as an intersecting space for the author and the reader that opens up aesthetical possibilities of interpretations to uncover a 'work of art.' In Paul Ricoeur's discussions any work of art, particularly in the domain of fiction, is a realm of possibilities for the reader where the possibilities implicit in the text project possible worlds that transform the living context of the reader. By focusing on the reading strategies of postmodern texts—one among many intents of the CFP—there was a bid to understand novels' appeal to aesthetic sensibilities of the readers relative to the coordinates of doubts and questions deriving from history and culture. The papers responding to the CFP in this issue present readings 'into' the novels through a system of binaries, which open the text up for multiple interpretations. In his paper, Chinmaya Lal Thakur critiques the post-apartheid politics of Truth and Reconciliation Commission highlighting the flawed mechanism of justice, as instanced in the novel *Disgrace*. The second paper of the themed section by Wenwen Guo pitches together the contrary concepts of openmindedness vis-à-vis shame, paranoia, and knowledge through Henry James's *The Wings of The Dove*. The paper contends that paranoia has multiple resonances due to its ability to transcend, which creates a liminal space for both self-reflexive turning and going beyond the set boundaries.

The Special Submissions of this issue undertake diverse fields of enquiry–Iswarya V. discusses the twentieth century playwright Tom Stoppard and his experiments with metatheatre in relation to spectatorship within the theatrical space, while Anup Kumar Bali talks about the creative process of Muktibodh to investigate the exclusivity of the domain of art in relation to the truth of the 'Event' via the theoretical framework of Alain Badiou, and Milanika Turner analyses the emic and etic perspectives on hip hop music segueing into a sociological study of cultural capital.

This issue also marks our maiden collaboration with Oceanvale Workshop, a critical writing workshop organized by Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi, to provide a rigorous platform for research and academic writing to undergraduate and postgraduate scholars. In its *Autumn 2018* edition they worked on the topic "The Idea of a Text" presenting perspectives into the aesthetic ambitions of varied texts and shaping them into well thought-out research papers under the mentor-

ship of Dr. Sukanta Chaudhuri, Professor Emeritus at Jadavpur University; Dr. Prasanta Chakravarty, Associate Professor at Department of English, University of Delhi; and Dr. N.A. Jacob, Assistant Professor at Ramjas College, University of Delhi. The mentors corrected and discussed the papers during multiple workshop sessions which spanned over a period of three months honing the research methodology, critical reading as well as writing skills of the participants.

Out of the thirty undergraduate and postgraduate papers written during the Workshop, six have been selected to be published in this issue of LLIDS. The set of papers curated in this section correspond to the notion of the text as an 'idea,' "…structured and narrated by the mind imaging or 'imagining' the subject,"[1] beyond generic compartments and distinctions. Among the curated papers—Anagha Gopal presents an analysis of fiction as a shared construction of text between readers and authors along with the question of identity construction; Anshul Timothy Mukarji is an enquires into the disruption of the totality of form through the letter in *Jane Eyre*, refracted through a critique of Adorno's Aesthetic Theory; Mehvish Siddiqui explores varied interpretations and adaptations of Somadeva's *Kathā sarit sāgara* to study the dynamics of 'sameness' and 'otherness' among them; Karan Kimothi explores the interplay of the image and the text in the genre of graphic novel through a critique of Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons's *Watchmen*; Ragini Sarmah analyses of Raya Sarkar's List as a text in cyber space with a focus on the politics of, what is understood as, 'proof' within institutionalized domains thereby dismantling the power structures inherent in university spaces; and Raunak Kumar investigates into the conceptualization of rational subject within Sartrean philosophy, and its representation within the postmodern text as non-essential entity. A special word of thanks to Dr. Sunjay Sharma, Director of the Oceanvale Programme, for extending constant support and cooperation during the process of publishing the best Oceanvale papers.

Our overall mission statement aims to engage and encourage academic scholars into critical thinking and writing for widening their future prospects in research. The CFP for our next issue invites research on Adaptation studies and within it the scope of 'cinema' as an independent medium of art. We look forward to receiving engaging papers from scholars and enthusiastic responses on the published research from our readers.

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[1]Dr. Sukanta Chaudhuri, Concept Note, The Oceanvale Workshop.
https://oceanvaleworkshop.000webhostapp.com/archives-autumn2018conceptnote/

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Post-Apartheid 'Disgrace': Language and Politics of Human Rights

Chinmaya Lal Thakur

The Apartheid in South Africa (1948–1994) presents one of the few instances in modern history when the systematically organised segregation and oppression of select groups of people—the Black and the Coloured populations of the country in the case of South Africa—enjoyed legal sanction.[1] In 1995–96, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up by the post-Apartheid democratically elected government to address this history of legally-backed racial subjugation. It was then naturally expected of the TRC that while administering the much-anticipated justice to those who suffered during the Apartheid, it would necessarily revise the legal framework which formed the bedrock of the Apartheid system. To the extent that the TRC recognised racism as an essential violation of a victim's human rights, it was also understood that it would inevitably address violations of such rights. The President of the TRC, the Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, has unambiguously recognised the Apartheid as a system that violates principles of human rights and dignity in these words: "As I listened in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to *the stories of perpetrators of human rights violations*, I realized how each of us has this capacity for the most awful evil-every one of us" (Cited in Todorov 457 Emphasis added).

In his critical account of the history of Human Rights titled *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*, Samuel Moyn highlights the universal and a-historical impulse as inherent to most conceptions of human rights. He suggests that international movements for Human Rights have always worked by eliding crucial foundational questions, certainty about which should necessarily underlie such endeavours so that they remain consciously self-critical as well as meaningful for others who might wish to become a part of them. These include ques-

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[1]Much of the Apartheid legislation was passed by the government of the National Party that came into power in 1948. The Population Registration Act 1950, for instance, required that all South Africans be divided into racial population groups and their racial affiliation be registered in a government document. Similarly, the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act 1953 stated that services, transport, and public spaces were to be divided along racial lines such as for "Europeans only" and "non-Europeans only." Further details about Apartheid legislation in South Africa can be accessed from http://scnc.ukzn.ac.za/doc/HIST/Apartheid%20Legislation%20in%20South%20Africa.html.

tions such as: What are Human Rights? Are they natural? When and where do they originate? Moyn argues that:

> Historians of human rights approach their subject, in spite of its novelty, the way church historians once approached theirs. They regard the basic cause—much as the church historian treated the Christian religion—as a saving truth, discovered rather than made in history. If a historical phenomenon can be made to seem like an anticipation of human rights, it is interpreted as leading to them in much the way church history famously treated Judaism for so long, as a proto-Christian movement simply confused about its true destiny… And the organizations that finally appear to institutionalize human rights are treated like the early church: a fledgling, but hopefully universal, community of believers struggling for good in a vale of tears. If the cause fails, it is because of evil; if it succeeds, it is not by accident but because the cause is just. (Moyn 5–6)

It should not be construed that the parallel between the a-historical attitude inherent in most histories of the movements for Human Rights and a Church history of the Christian religion that Moyn considers is misplaced. This is because, as this paper hopes to establish, legal mechanisms to redress historical wrongs such as the TRC that are established with a consideration of the principles of Human Rights often implicate questions of history and religion in complex ways in their conception as well as workings.

If one carefully scrutinises the terms of reference and mandate of the TRC and contrasts it with the nature of its own attempts at material historical reparation for those who suffered, one discovers a paradox. The terms of reference recognise the significance of the historical context of the Apartheid by acknowledging the fact that the Apartheid was systematic violence, enjoying legal backing and support, directed against a particular *community* of people. Citing the Report of the TRC, Mahmood Mamdani attests to this fact in these words: "The big finding [in the report]…was that apartheid was indeed a "crime against *humanity*"" (Mamdani 35 Emphasis added). However, the TRC's preferred method of conducting its hearings contradicted its own mandate and terms of reference as it asked an *individual* perpetrator to *confess* all of his/her crimes in public for his/her case to be considered for amnesty. Justice for the TRC thus clearly meant an unconditional affirmative admission of all crimes committed on the part of the perpetrator which would elicit forgiveness for the same from the 'victim.' Unsurprisingly, with reference to the method of the conduct of TRC's hear-

ings, its President Desmond Tutu has highlighted the importance of this gesture of forgiveness in the following words:

> …when I talk of forgiveness, I mean the belief that you can come out the other side a better person. A better person than the one being consumed by anger and hatred. Remaining in that state locks you in a state of victimhood, making you almost dependent on the perpetrator. If you can find it in yourself to forgive then you are no longer chained to the perpetrator. You can move on, and you can even help the perpetrator to become a better person too. (Tutu, "Forgiveness Project")

Forgiveness for Tutu therefore implies a certain psychological progress for the victim that marks his or her movement away from a state of anger and hatred towards the perpetrator to one of empathetic reconciliation.

Mahmood Mamdani, however, highlights the nature of the political manoeuvre that underlies the TRC's professed ethic of confession and forgiveness. He rightly points out that both confession and forgiveness in the TRC's model of mutual reconciliation between the victim and the perpetrator are designed to work at the level of the individual. Thus the historical fact of the Apartheid being a legally sanctioned system of racial segregation and oppression against a specific community is not adequately addressed by the TRC. The TRC, he suggests, thus renders this systematic and deliberate segregation a personal issue between the victim and the perpetrator as it ignores the hierarchical socio-political positions that they have occupied during the Apartheid. He states, "The core victims of the crime against humanity, of this "system of enforced racial discrimination and separatio" could not have been individuals; they had to be *entire communities* marked out on grounds of race and ethnicity…" (Mamdani 54).

Mamdani also suggests that the TRC's affirmation of the act of forgiveness further implies an erasure of the history of colonisation of South Africa as it construes the Apartheid as a system marked by a stereotypical political struggle between the Apartheid government's officers and certain pro-democracy activists. He argues this to be an outcome of the lack of any well-defined mechanism in TRC to identify the victims of Apartheid which resulted in mainstream political activists being solely identified as those who suffered the inflictions of the system. This identification was of course at the cost of the many tribal groups and communities that constitute the population of post-Apartheid South Africa as they were never recognised by the TRC as those who also suffered during the Apartheid. Mamdani rightly under-

lines the fact that such a scenario seems to unfortunately repeat the manner in which the exploitation of tribes in South Africa under colonial rule is often ignored while an attempt is made to highlight the ways in which the colonial government proved to be difficult for the semi-urban middle classes in the country to endure and survive (Mamdani 34).

Apart from the above described historical elision by the TRC, another perplexing fissure marks the linguistic discourse of the individual confession mode that it has preferred as the method for its workings. A religious and secular dichotomy marks the individual's confession in the TRC hearings. The mode of an individual confessing his/her crimes to the Commission is remarkably similar to the Catholic practice of an individual confessing his or her sins in a church to the head Pastor. It is not surprising therefore that Desmond Tutu has himself spoken of the TRC in language that has Biblical intonations: "We had to distinguish [in the TRC hearings] between the *deed* and the perpetrator, between *the sinner and the sin: to hate and condemn the sin* whilst being filled with *compassion for the sinner*" (Cited in Todorov 457 Emphasis added). On the other hand, as discussed earlier in this paper, the TRC has also been understood as a mechanism to address the gross human rights violations that marked the Apartheid in South Africa. The international Human Rights community lent its support to the TRC on purely secular grounds, providing it with legal and technical assistance.[2] It understood the Apartheid as the large-scale repetition of acts of violation of an individual's human rights. Thus, one realises that the almost religious, confessional mode with which the TRC functioned was at odds not only with its secular and legal mandate but also with the fact that its hearings were conducted in public. The latter is a problem in at least two ways—it was supposed that the TRC would address questions of violation of human rights which, by definition, go beyond the bounds set up by any one religion; internationally it was understood and supported as an institution built upon and working through secular and legal means. The TRC was thus marked by an uneasy cohabitation of the two fundamentally opposed discourses of the religious and the secular or legal. Jayne Poyner rightly remarks, "…a key flaw of the processes of the TRC: that discourses of truth and reconciliation are premised upon a Christianized, private ethics of confes-

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[2]In this regard, Mahmood Mamdani informs his readers of the two Non-Governmental Organisations, namely the Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa (IDASA) and Justice in Transition that have, under the leadership of Alex Borraine, helped in promoting the activities of the TRC. Borraine later became the Vice-Chairman of the TRC (Mamdani 55–56).

sion and are therefore inequitable in the public sphere of the TRC" (Poyner 150).

Nowhere is the uneasy coexistence of the religious and the secular in the discourse of the TRC represented more sensitively than perhaps in J.M. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace*. The protagonist David Lurie, a White male professor in post-Apartheid Cape Town, is charged with committing sexual abuse and violence against his (presumably coloured) student Melanie Isaacs. He appears before the Committee investigating the charges in a scene that almost mirrors the many hearings that have been conducted by the TRC. He accepts his guilt without even reading the statement made by Isaacs. This exasperates the members of the Committee, especially Farodia Rassool, who insists that Lurie must state in detail the nature of what he acknowledges as his guilt. She implies Lurie's acknowledgement to be insincere because of Melanie's belonging to a coloured community in these words: "I want to register an objection to these responses of Professor Lurie's, which I regard as fundamentally evasive. Professor Lurie says he accepts the charges…To me that suggests that he accepts the charges *only in name…The wider community* is entitled to know what it is *specifically* that Professor Lurie acknowledges…" (Coetzee 50 Emphasis added). Lurie understands that what Rassool really wants from him is a *confession*, a 'coming-clean' in deference to the authority of the Committee rather than a mere statement of his guilt regarding what transpired between him and Isaacs. He thus responds to her, "Frankly, what you want from me is not a response but a confession. Well, I make no confession. I put forward a plea, as is my right. Guilty as charged. That is my plea. That is as far as I am prepared to go" (Coetzee 51).

The day after the hearing the Committee Chairman, Manas Mathabane, calls Lurie and asks him to submit a "plea of mitigation" to the Committee in a "spirit of repentance" (Coetzee 58). Lurie refuses to accede to Mathabane's suggestion. He replies:

> Manas, we went through the repentance business yesterday. I told you what I thought. I won't do it. I appeared before an officially constituted tribunal, before a *branch of the law. Before that secular tribunal I pleaded guilty, a secular plea.* That plea should suffice. *Repentance is neither here nor there. Repentance belongs to another world, to another universe of discourse.* (58 Emphasis added)

This acrimonious exchange between Rassool and Lurie as well as the conversation between Lurie and Mathabane reveal that both Rassool and Mathabane do not realise the significance of the politico-linguistic

slippage that occurs when a secular and legal acceptance of guilt is construed as, in a gesture similar to the multiple evocations of the religious in the discourse of the TRC, an act of confession or repentance. Lurie's responses to them suggest that he is acutely conscious of the ultimate incompatibility that exists between legal/secular discourse, which demands a specific admission of guilt and provides a certain 'amnesty' in return, and the religious discourse that asks for confessional repentance.

Coetzee's *Disgrace*, however, does not limit itself to the presentation of the above mentioned instance that can be construed as a subtle critique of the workings of the TRC. The narrative of the novel further traces the way in which a refusal to publicly confess one's guilt in terms of repentance can ultimately get played out. Even as David Lurie refuses to publicly repent his guilt he chooses to suffer personally in a spirit of, what Elleke Boehmer calls, "secular atonement." Boehmer suggests that secular atonement, contrary to a Christian understanding of confession, works through a Levinasian ethic of abjection of the self for the other. It entails an acceptance of humiliation on the part of the self that ultimately manifests in the form of an acceptance of physical abjection. In the context of *Disgrace*, she argues that for the 'near-rape' of Isaacs, Lurie thus accedes to and undergoes personal suffering. He chooses to bear his guilt on his own body even though he does not care to or cannot re-present it in *confessional and repentant* language for either the Committee or even for himself (Boehmer 347–8). This suffering entails Lurie's recognition that he would need to live and survive through his disgraceful guilt in extremely difficult conditions of abjection—conditions of an absolute lack of material possessions and a completely depleted sense of self-confidence which get reflected, (if only) in a spirit of love and compassion, in his service for the dead dogs that he helps to carry for their incineration. As Boehmer argues, this empathy for the dead dogs ultimately transcends conventional limits of the subject's expression of his or her feelings such as the divide between the living and the dead, and between humans and other beings (Boehmer 346). She thus rightly suggests that the ethical scheme that *Disgrace* presents as an alternative to the TRC's preferred method of an almost Christian confession is of an individual addressing his guilt in 'private' in terms of personal suffering, physical abjection, and an excruciating truthfulness to himself. Such an acknowledgment of course cannot be confined to a representation of the guilt in terms of a *narrative* of what transpired between two specific individuals for the Committee set up by the University and, by extension, even for the TRC.

The conversation that transpires between Lurie and Mr. Isaacs (Melanie Isaacs's father) when the former visits the Isaacs's towards the end of the novel's narrative provides strong evidence that corroborates Boehmer's argument. As Lurie is bidding farewell to the family, Mr. Isaacs wonders if Lurie has learnt any lessons from the past episode as for him God wills people to learn lessons from their experiences. Lurie responds in the following words:

> Normally I would say that after a certain age one is too old to learn lessons. One can only be punished and punished. But perhaps that is not true, not always. I wait to see. As for God, I am not a believer, so I will have to translate what you call God and God's wishes into my own terms. *In my own terms, I am being punished for what happened between myself and your daughter. I am sunk into a state of disgrace* from which it will not be easy to lift myself. It is not a punishment I have refused. I do not murmur against it. On the contrary, *I am living it out from day to day, trying to accept disgrace as my state of being. Is it enough for God, do you think, that I live in disgrace without term?* (Coetzee 172 Emphasis added)

Boehmer herself, however, stops short of completely endorsing the ethical alternative of personal suffering and physical abjection in the face of an engagement with "extreme alterity" that *Disgrace* proposes. This is because, according to her, the novel does not present the reader with any concrete evidence to infer that Lurie actually does learn his lesson and engages with others (humans) around him with gestures of reconciliation as a consequence of his sustained engagement with the dead dogs (Boehmer 346). He, for instance, assaults Pollux, one of the three Black men who raped his daughter Lucy and lusts after Melanie Isaacs's younger sister, Desiree. Besides, as Boehmer further argues, the ethical paradigm espoused in Coetzee's novel does not seem to be politically inclusive, if examined closely, especially from the perspective of gender.

Lucy's decision to marry Petrus, another Black man and a relative of Pollux, serves as the crucial point in the narrative of *Disgrace* that requires examination. Her decision of not reporting the fact of her being raped to the police justifiably disturbs most readers of the novel. She never articulates the reasons for deciding to do so in clear terms and the reader is left wondering if her decision is solely in lieu of her being allowed to continue staying on the piece of land that she holds in the post-Apartheid South African countryside. In other words, Boehmer suggests that Lucy seems to have sacrificed her (sexual) identity and sense of personal being in the aftermath of her predicament. Her

decision to not report the matter of her rape to the police, to marry Petrus, and to bear the child born out of the rape threaten her very (sexual) existence and put it at stake in such a manner that Lurie, quite apart from experiencing, cannot even begin to comprehend. Unsurprisingly, Boehmer reads the ethical alternative to Christian confession suggested by *Disgrace* as being particularly harmful to Lucy and underlines that, in the process, "Lurie remains a subject…Lucy's self-substitution involves becoming reconciled to the position of conventional object…" (Boehmer 349). She, therefore, asks the reader of *Disgrace* to recognise the danger of not subjecting the ethical paradigm espoused by the novel to a rigorous and politically conscious scrutiny.

Boehmer's own terms of questioning, however, can be scrutinised further. In making the assertion that the ethic of "secular atonement," that *Disgrace* presents to its readers, as an alternative to the demand that a person confesses his/her guilt in public and repent for them is politically suspect, she yields to the temptations of understanding gender relations in heteronormative and patriarchal terms. Instead of looking at Lucy as a subject who deliberately chooses to marry Petrus and continues to stay in the South African countryside of Grahamstown, she sees an essential opposition between Lucy's dignity as a human being and the fact that she agreed to have the child born out of the act of rape. In other words, Boehmer does not quite appreciate the fact that Lucy does not attach ethico-political value to the fact that she is going to marry the relative of one of her rapists and she is not going to abort the child which was conceived during the assault. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak agrees with this assertion in her argument:

> It is…the casting aside of the affective value-system attached to reproductive heteronormativity as it is accepted as the currency to measure human dignity. I do not think this [Lucy's decision to marry Petrus and not abort the child] is an acceptance of rape, but a refusal to be raped, by instrumentalising reproduction. (Spivak 21)

It is slightly ironic then that on one hand, Boehmer seems unable to appreciate Lucy's instrumentalization of reproduction and, on the other, she does not recognise Lucy's decision to not report the incident to the police to be a refusal to accept an instrumental and normative conception of justice and the law. As Maria Michelle Kelly suggests, Lucy's insistence that the rape is a 'private matter' is actually a refusal to submit to the space of law in which confession and testimony are subjected to analysis. The TRC, in its procedure of analysing confession and testimony as an instrument providing amnesty, is pre-

cisely the kind of space that Lucy rejects when she rejects legal redressal for the act of rape in *Disgrace* (Kelly 228). Therefore, this paper suggests that Boehmer cuts short shrift to the very ethic of "secular atonement" that she otherwise so astutely recognises as being configured in the narrative of the novel.

Thus, in light of the above discussion, it can be said that legally sanctioned mechanisms such as the TRC that are evolved to address instances of gross violations of human rights like the Apartheid tend to become the site of an uneasy cohabitation of mutually adverse worldviews such as the religious and the secular or legal. These contradictory ideologies have a tendency to exclude particular and specific historical instances of mass communal abuse from the purview of such mechanisms and turns them against the mandate of their own constitution. The mechanisms then adopt an instrumental and normative view of justice and insist on working with a model that requires individuals to confess and repent their crimes in public in exchange for amnesty.

The ethical paradigm of personal suffering through physical abjection as presented in texts such as Coetzee's *Disgrace* can be used as a basis to critique the working of enterprises such as the TRC. The novel presents the TRC as being limited on at least three accounts—of not being able to adequately address the Apartheid as a history of violence and subjugation that targeted communities and not individuals; of being caught in a binary of the religious and the secular; and of taking an instrumental view of justice and law. It then, ultimately, demands its readers to understand conceptions and mechanisms of justice which at least make a sincere attempt to address histories of violence, to try to think beyond easy and comfortable conflations of binaries, and to re-imagine the law in a way that does not think of it as a mere instrument of delivery.

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Shame's Pallor and the Paranoia Imperative in *The Wings of the Dove*

Wenwen Guo

"Do you love me, love me, love me?" is the question Merton Densher, back from his journalistic mission to America in *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), hurls at his fiancée Kate Croy, when he comes to pay a formal visit at Lancaster Gate. The intensity of the moment unleashes itself in an anticlimactic "long embrace" that signifies for Densher an ultimate and irrefutable sign of Kate's avowal—her sincerity. What gets overlooked in this lover's spat is the ways in which a vast array of feelings have gone in and out of, behind and beside, the vocal and gestural significations. The prodigious Kate Croy, who has romanticized her first encounter with Densher in the gallery party, attests that "other conscious organs, faculties, feelers" (49) must have found their way into a predominantly visual interaction. Without making categorical claims that this episode encapsulates the central drama that will be carried to its fullest scale in the events to come this paper turns, with feelers fully forward, to the richness around this scene of shame.

Before putting the idiosyncratic question so bluntly to Kate, Densher conveys all his passion and tenderness into a simple request, "Will you take me just as I am?" to which Kate responds with a "strain" that is particularly disturbing for him.

> She turned a little pale for the tone of truth in it—which qualified to his sense delightfully the strength of her will; and the pleasure he found in this was not the less for her breaking out after an instant into a strain that stirred him more than any she had ever used with him. "Ah do let me try myself! I assure you I see my way—so don't spoil it: wait for me and give me time. Dear man," Kate said, "only believe in me, and it will be beautiful." (*Wings* 198)

What stands out most conspicuously in the scene is the quantity of imperatives that Kate manages to squeeze into a relatively short sentence. If Densher instantly felt the sharpness of a strain, it is because almost nowhere has Kate uttered a variety of commands so closely strewn together. The only temptation she still remembers to dangle in front of her dear young man is a vague promise in the form of an aesthetic abstraction, "beauty," for which Densher is asked to perform a range of actions—let her try, do not spoil her vision, wait for her, and give her

time. The stringency of her demand results in a most "violent" response in Densher. He resorts to his superior physical force and assaults her emotionally with an almost abusive question. Kate's answer—"only believe in me"—takes the place of her unuttered vow, "Yes I do." Mirroring Densher's repetitive format, her commands indeed shout out, "believe in me, believe in me, believe in me!" Her assurance evades Densher's question and hides behind elaborate abstraction.

Kate also impresses the reader with a particular hue in the scene. Kate Croy is not *pale*. Paleness is the attribute par excellence for Milly Theale, who strikes Susan Shepherd Stringham, her friend and companion,[1] upon their first meeting, as a singularly "striking apparition"—slim, constantly pale, delicately haggard, anomalously, but agreeably angular (*Wings* 77). Milly, the American heiress to an immense fortune, *she* is the pale one. The epithet follows her after she moves to Venice at Palazzo Leporelli for her health, where her paleness intensifies in contrast with the overflowing luxury of her surroundings. Kate, on the other hand, is always the handsome girl, the girl who blithely self-identifies as "a brute about illness" and whom Densher finds as "strong as the sea" (218). Precisely because her health is such a well-established fact in the novel, the rare bouts of her paleness might come across as an insignificant irregularity. But her paleness is not accidental; it takes a peculiar pattern, and often appears on confrontational occasions that bear an emotional intensity.

Kate Croy has been *pale* before; in fact, she *is* pale the first time she arrives on the scene. While she is waiting for her father to come down at his shabby lodging, *before* the acknowledgement of her stature and grace, the face with which she greets the readers is a "positively pale" one (*Wings* 21). Kate has been pale *before* anything else,[2] but her paleness is often eclipsed by the rosy brilliance of her beauty, and buried under the blessings of her health and spirit. This paper traces the appearances of the affect of shame in the novel, and compares and contrasts it with the paranoid mindset, which is a particular

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[1]Though Susan Stringham had repeated referred to herself as a confidant to Milly Theale, the latter had seldom voluntarily confided in her, which Susan was either oblivious of or chose to overlook by will in the course of the novel. Sharon Cameron goes further to claim that "Milly has nothing to confide. Milly doesn't tell Susan Stringham anything, and Milly doesn't need to." More discussions of Susan's style and habit of thinking and their significance to the novel in general and impact upon other characters in particular, see *Thinking in Henry James*, pp. 131–6.

[2]Mitchell (1987) reads her pallor in the light of the Jamesian "play of the portentous"—a stylistic principle that puts demands on symmetry and reciprocity in literary imagination (188).

conditioning of the mind that becomes hyper-sensitive to and over-cautious of shame. Access to shame, it argues, is productive in ways that the adoption of paranoia is largely antithetical towards. The paper will first track the spells of Kate Croy's pallor, and, referencing Darwin and Tomkins's works on shame, interpret Kate's paleness in light of shame. It argues that in *The Wings of the Dove*, attachment to the pursuit of pleasure is singularly generative, not only of a variety of bonds between characters, but of *other* differences as well. It then goes on to present a (mimetic) reading of the paranoid relationship to knowledge in the book, paying particular attention to moments of *different* manifestations. Henry James with his literary explorations of shame precedes and exceeds Tomkins's schemata of the affect, which underplays its potentially positive effects. Rather than casting paranoia in an overwhelmingly negative light as Tomkins and perhaps even Sedgwick might have done, the paper reads James as gesturing towards its productivity in *Wings*. Not dissimilar to shame, paranoia could also reverse and traverse boundaries.

In the course of Charles Darwin's contemplation on the various human emotions and their nuanced physical expressions in *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872), he gives an etiological account of paleness, and identifies, to the best of his knowledge, five occasions in which such a complexion would occur: rage, terror, grief, envy, and shame. Paleness, Darwin informs us, is occasioned normally with the "contraction of the small arteries of the skin" (307). But individual differences should always be taken into account since for each of those internal conditions, usually more than one outward expression is available. While it's easy to understand the pallor brought out by fear, the pale face in shame is almost counterintuitive, and Darwin references Dr. Burgess in establishing this particular point, attributing the paleness to either a natural capillary adjustment or a rarity in physiological constitution. He even allows a personal anecdote the role of scientific evidence in which the lady who made a social faux pas at a party was surprised to find herself "extremely pale" against her own judgment that she must have "blushed crimson" (330). This peculiar instance of paleness as opposed to blushing when ashamed becomes overlooked as soon as it has been registered, admitted as only one curious incident in the book.

Whereas an alarming sense of duty toward scientific rigor might have held Darwin back, the "feelers of our sensibility," a la Kate Croy, beckon us to linger at this shameful pallor.[3] Henry James, con-

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[3] Paleness might also ensue a spell of vomiting, voluntary or involuntary. Jacques Derrida, in his paper "Economimesis" identifies a tautological relation between disgust and vomit, arguing that the disgusting is what is excluded and irrepresentable in

temporary to Charles Darwin, might have not translated Darwin's insight on the shameful pallor in literature, but his depiction of the pale Kate suggests the extent to which his personal understanding of shame agrees with Darwin's. With Kate, James can be seen as proposing other manifestations of the shame sensation that are not fully verified by the social scientific researches of his time. He has put to concrete literary creation what science could only vaguely suggest. While the shameful pallor exists only in the anecdotal realm in Darwin, it has become fully realized in the figure of Kate Croy in James. Besides her inaugural pale irritation and the pallor following Densher's shaming of her lack of devotion, three other occasions witness this peculiar facial manifestation. When the group rejoins in Venice for a party at the spectacular Palazzo in the honor of the great physician Sir Luke Strett, Densher has an epiphanic moment with Kate regarding the nature of his mission. He learns, to his disbelief, that there is "all along" a hidden layer of injunction in Kate's suggestion for him to "Go to see Milly" (203), which he is able to understand now as, "Since she's to die I'm to marry...so that when her death has taken place I shall in the natural course have money" (311). The thump of this revelation, forceful as it must have been upon his conscience, produces none but a "soft murmur" which hardly interrupts the flow of their conversation. A paling spell, nevertheless, takes over Kate, when

> [s]he turned her head to where their friend was again in range, and it made him turn his, so that they watched a minute in concert. Milly, from the other side, happened at the moment to notice them, and she sent across toward them in response all the candour of her smile, the lustre of her pearls, the value of her life, the essence of her wealth. It brought them together again with faces made fairly grave by the reality she put into their plan. (*Wings* 313)

Her paleness ensues, then and there, accompanied by a deadly silence that is only broken up by the music at the party. If the pallor at her father's living room is caused partly by her grief and terror at her father's decrepit circumstance, according to Darwin, her facial reaction now could hardly be anything else than shame. She is put to shame by the horrid contrast between the admirable trust of Milly and the ruthless pragmatism of their scheme to procure her fortune. As much as they cherish her generous simplicity, they can't help but look beyond

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the logocentric system except through vomit. In vomit, Derrida locates the foreclosed failure of any mourning work. In regard to such claims, the paleness of Kate might signify an unwillingness or incapacity to process and successfully mourn the shame towards her father.

her innocent presence at the monetary core, and for their purpose, the promise of her upcoming demise. It is at this critical juncture, when incongruity proves almost unbearable, and shame too acute to dismiss, that Kate Croy grows pale again. Another occasion, when she is "paler than she had been," occurs when her father, Lionel Croy, comes back to his elder daughter, Marian, for protection from his "terror" (395). Having deflected Densher's first attempt at knowing what Lionel has done, Kate resorts to another emotional plea, making a direct reference to his profession of love the time when she was shamed to pallor, "If you love me—now—don't ask me about father." The effect is instantaneous, for not only does their conversation change course immediately, the silent ban on the topic of Lionel is kept till the end.

The five instances of Kate's mystifying pallor are divided in between the references to her father and to her plot against Milly's fortune. It is precisely the ones associated with Lionel that take on an intensity that the rest lack—Kate is only "a little" pale when Densher corners her in the boudoir and again when Milly's credulity puts their cunning to shame at the Palazzo, but she is "positively" pale waiting for her father to show up, and becomes "paler than ever" when pushed to answer about her father. Interestingly, Lionel makes a sole appearance at the beginning of the novel, and is only alluded to when absolutely necessary. It is the critical consensus now that the "silence that surrounds him" (58) is gesturing toward a crime whose nature is as much moral as sexual.[4] The bits of information we manage to piece together from the text would get us no further than "he's odious and vile" and "he's done everything," but Kate's as well as other close family members' reaction towards Lionel bespeaks of unequivocal shame. The "faint flat emanation of things" that shrouds her father's living room, it becomes increasingly clear, bears an overwhelming sense of shame. And the pale Kate, persuading herself to battle "the shame of fear, of individual, of personal collapse [among] all the other shames," is then as much irritated by Lionel's delay as by her own in-

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[4]Eve Sedgwick (1995) identifies a "code" behind the homosexuality of Lionel Croy, *illum crimen horribile quod non nominandum est*, translated roughly into "the horrible crime which is not to be named." This "naming something 'unspeakable' as a way of denoting," Sedgwick claims, is among James's endeavor to explore "the limits of...rhetorical possibilities" (75). For a fuller discussion, see "Is the Rectum Straight? Identification and Identity in *The Wings of the Dove*." A variation of this principle is also alluded to in Cameron's analyses of the intricate interrelationship between thinking and speaking in *The Golden Bowl*, when she proposes to discover a "prohibition against meaning" in the communicative strategies among characters, that meaning is to be "proposed" rather than "experienced" (104). See *Thinking in Henry James*, pp. 83–121. Kumkum Sangari, on the other hand, allows "crime" to be embedded in a context that "constitute[s] a generative matrix for plural meaning or reading" (299) that in a Jamesian text centers upon the principle of uncertainty.

supportable sense of shame toward her father. She braves herself to drown her shame with an overflow of sensory stimulations. With each intake of "the street...the room...the table-cloth and the centre-piece and the lamp" (21), there is a renewed resolution to overtake shame, a bravado not unlike self-immolation in taking in sensory assaults repetitively. The emotional and physical adjacency between Kate's pallor and the presence of her irrepresentable father offers a key insight to her paleness through the lens of the shame response. The shamed nuance enriches the complexity of the emotional tenor in James's characters, and provides an example for deriving local and contingent manifestations of affects from their universalizing theoretizations. Kate's pallor arises as her sense of shame intensifies, when she is confronted with her deception of the unsuspectingly romantic Milly, and more intensely so, when she comes in close contact with her father.

American psychologist Silvan Tomkins has put forth a unique formula of the shame response. Shame, he argues, is "innately activated," when there is an "incomplete reduction of interest or joy" (*Affect Imagery Consciousness* 353). Tomkins's understanding of shame is particularly useful in explaining Kate's shame. Her pallor during the lovers' spat in the beginning of this paper in response to Densher's query highlights the *difference* between Densher's demand and the reality of her situation. Just as her color is to change, when Milly's unbounded trust in her two marvelous English friends provides too shocking a contrast to the truth of their relationship, Kate falls short of Densher's expectation of how she *should* take him. The "tone of truth" is not so shocking in itself as when compared to the circumstances under which it is uttered. When and only when Kate *never* plans to "take Densher as he was" could she become ashamed into pallor by such a supplication. And if shame is indeed a result to the aroused joy and interest as Tomkins avows, what, we are tempted to ask, triggers the decrease of excitement or enjoyment[5] for Kate on the present occasion? And more challengingly perhaps, if such "incompleteness" bespeaks both a *reduction* and a *continuation* of the "investment of excitement or enjoyment" (361), what protects the remainder of her in-

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[5]Silvan Tomkins differentiates between the interest-excitement and the enjoyment-joy affects, the only two positive among the nine primary human affects; the former he claims follows one simple rule—"a range of optimal rates of increase of stimulation density" (187). The smile of joy, on the other hand, doesn't necessarily indicate a joyful mood; it is "innately activated...by any relatively steep reduction of the density of stimulation and neural firing" (204), which makes it possible to appear with the reduction of pain, fear, distress, aggression, anger, pleasure, and excitement. The key to the activation of smile, Tomkins points out, is the "steepness of the gradient of stimulation reduction," not the nature of stimulation itself. See *Affect Imagery Consciousness*, pp. 185–218.

terest from being sipped dry? It is the pursuit for joy that underlies Kate and Densher's mutual attachment and nourishes the relationship through the most trying times. Not only has this positivity been written into one of the most significant relationships in the novel, it affects other major characterizations as well. James's portrayal of shame retains a peculiar *positive* component that offers interesting complements to Tomkins's theoretical probing of the affect.

Attempts have been made to account for "the nature of the tie"[6] between Kate and Densher, and to wonder at the ardor, vouched for by the author, of a "worried and baffled, yet clinging and confident" peculiarity, through the "mere force of the terms of their superior passion combined with their superior diplomacy" ('Preface' 14). If passion stands behind her attachment to Densher, and if it provides incentives for turning to her notorious father for shelter, then her disavowal of such a connection is particularly mind-boggling. Kate proceeds with deadpan matter-of-fact-ness, with a "I don't," to assure Densher the absence of any such romantic considerations behind her action. Densher covers up his disappointment with a gentlemanly irony, "Heaven be praised" (59). He wishfully mistakes Kate's "being turned back" by her chastening father and disapproving sister in light of her relation to *him* while *her* prior concern is simply to "escape Aunt Maud" (59). Kate is not afraid of making herself clear to the degree of being almost ruthless in confessing her willingness to "give [him] up" as well. Her possible desertion is aborted only through an adamant refusal to cooperate by Lionel Croy, who "declin[es] [Kate] on any terms" (59). What then underwrites the proclamation with an "extraordinary beauty" with which Kate promises to engage herself forever to Densher, to pledge "every spark of [her] faith," and to dedicate "every drop of [her] life" (73), is perhaps her unreserved emotional investment in Densher, which starts to deplete with the latter's unapologetic stance "as he is."

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[6]The critical stances vary as to the exact nature of the bond between the two lovers; the budding and consolidation of their romance are as ineffable as mystical. Elissa Greenwald in her "Transcendental Romance" (1986) maps the mystery onto a Hawthornian mode of romance, interpreting their connection in the light of a "temporary relief from social bonds" and an "access to the uplifted state of romance" that is otherwise denied the two (180). Kumkum Sangari adopts a much more sobering view in blasting apart the density of their tie and replacing it with a money-oriented realistic Kate and a "plastic" Densher adept at "speak[ing] the language of hard cash transactions" with Kate (294). Positioned in between and prior to them both, Rowe romanticizes their love as born from the "timeless space" of the "temple" and the "garden wall" while acknowledging its eventual return to the "material and physical" (137). For Van Slyck (2005), the nature of their bond takes on a powerful Lacanian overtone, making his desired object Kate ultimately "inaccessible," the symbol of his "lack," "incompletion," and "emptiness" (308). He contrasts this pre-*jouissance* desire with love, an admirable transformation gained only with the final sacrifice of Milly.

Densher, the way he genuinely is, is not what she has stamped faith and life for. What she originally saw in him, with a consensus of her organs, faculties and feelers, was an "*arrange*-ability," a mixture of his density and intelligence that would *fit* perfectly into her scheme, the singular feat of achievement that could magically deflect her from running away from Aunt Maud, and turn her mystically around to wanting to "keep her" instead (61). The secret that sustains their attachment is gestured at in Kate's comments on their mutual habit of mind as being "…hideously intelligent. But there's *fun* in it too. We must get our *fun* where we can. I think...our relation's quite beautiful. It's not a bit vulgar. I cling to some saving romance in things" (60 emphases mine). The secret constituent of their bond, the salvaging ingredient in Kate's lingering attachment is indeed the pursuit of fun, which overrides any other aesthetic, moral, spiritual, or materialistic concerns. Pleasure, before anything and anyone else, preserves their attraction to one another.[7] As Densher proves himself less and less "enjoyable," Kate's interest dwindles. Such a reduction engenders spells of paling shame, the effects of which Densher (chooses to) misread(s). It finds adequate expression in the playful account of their first meeting—both perched on a ladder, gazing at one another, exchanging via a multitude of feelers. It comes up again here as Kate spells out the fundamental law of their attraction; the sensation of pleasure is crucial to her understanding of romantic love. Their mutual enjoyment and enjoyability set their romance on course from the very beginning. The concern for pleasure is significant for *The Wings of the Dove* not only because it undergirds one of the most important relationships in the novel, but it casts shadows over Kate Croy's ideo-affective[8] organization as well.

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[7]Their shared sense of perchedness in their first meeting is a confirmation of their mutual investment in pleasure. The metaphoric encounter on the top of a ladder in a formal party suggests a shared taste for pleasure and play between the two. Performance, with its allusions to entertainment and pleasure, also dictates their chance encounter on the train that results in the "real beginning" (51) of their attachment, when Densher moves all over the scene around Kate, and when the two engage one another in a series of verbal and nonverbal communications. (*The Wings of the Dove*, pp. 49–51).

[8]Tomkins uses the term "ideo-affective" to encompass the whole range of human experiences in his *Affect Imagery Consciousness*. He doesn't offer a clear definition on what he means by "ideology," "ideological," or "ideo-affective," but he tends to associate ideology with the socialization process, in a much less repressive manner than Althusser's classical understanding, with a descriptive emphasis on the internalized ideas (*AIC* 75, 245, 406). A few modifiers he uses together with *ideology* are "normative," "religious," "utopian," "anti-shame," "disgust," and "Freudian" (430, 451, 477, 502). Tomkins understands "ideo-affective organization" as responsible for "determin[ing] the future role" of certain affective experience (450). Basically, it has two components—the "examination of information for relevance to particular af-

The dimension of joy in the shame sensation is too often overlooked. For Tomkins, it is a prerequisite; it is indeed through a later alteration of an initial level of interest and joy that shame could be activated. Significant for Tomkins and for many psychologists, shame exists in a spectrum[9] of affects alongside humility, embarrassment, humiliation, etc. This dynamic applies to the family[10] of shame affects

fect," and the "strategies for coping with contingencies to avoid or attenuate impact" of that affect (458). Different expressions of ideo-affective organization could lead to weak or strong theory for the individual, guiding them to respond in restricted ways to different affects. Tomkins uses shame as an example to explain his concept of an affect theory. The shame theory deals with the generality in the activation of shame; it alerts the individual to the possibility and imminence of shame, and provides standardized strategies to minimize shame (411). A weak theory is applicable for a very selective range of circumstances; it is effective in predicting and controlling certain emotions, which makes these related affective experiences either *infrequent* or frequent but *restricted*, thus *weak* in their forces over the individual's life, their personalities and actions (451–461). In comparison, a strong theory is *ineffective*; it gains strength by "failures of its strategies to afford protection" (460). For more discussions on affective binds and difference types of affective socialization, including the Tomkins-Horn Picture Arrangement Test (PAT), see *Affect Imagery Consciousness*, pp. 409–597.

[9]Tomkins uses a joint name of affects with a dash differentiating the low and high intensity. For the affect of shame, he designates it as shame-humiliation, with shame being a lower degree of emotional experience and humiliation as a severe case. He states confidently that "[s]hyness, shame and guilt are not distinguished from each other at the level of affect...They are one and the same affect" (351). The difference between the affects grouped under "shame-humiliation" lies in the "conscious awareness of [different] experiences"; but these "other components which accompany shame in the central assembly" should not make them distinct at the level of affect. See *Affect Imagery Consciousness*, chapters 10 & 16.

[10]In the following discussion, the term "shame" is often used to refer to a wide range of affects closely related to shame, including but not restricted to shame, humiliation, and guilt. It is recognized that the emotional experiences for individuals vary across these different states, but at the level of affect, they differ only in the strength of sensation. Depending on their research interests, scholars have approached this issue differently. Tomkins, Wurmser, and Nathanson do not theorize between the cognates of shame, while other researchers, from a wide range of disciplines, maintain a more or less strict distinction between the shameful emotions, especially between shame and guilt. For Tomkins, shyness, shame, guilt, and discouragement are identical affects, albeit with different "objects" of interest, which might "produce such qualitatively distinct experience" (*AIC* 159). They are not experienced as "identical" because of the "differential coassembly of perceived causes and consequences" (630). Shyness, for instance, is about the "strangeness of the other," whereas guilt is about "moral transgression," shame about "inferiority," and discouragement about "temporary defeat" (630). Wurmser characterizes this set of closely related affects as the shame family of emotions. Nathanson adds a few more terms to the list of shame family, which "impl[ies] the acute lowering of self esteem," including bashfulness, modesty, the "experiences of being put down, slighted, and thought of as contemptible," disgrace, dishonor, degradation, and debasement ("Timetable" 3). Other scholars and practitioners, within and beyond the profession of psychotherapy, find such a lack of distinction unproductive, or even dangerous. Ruth Benedict has drawn one of the most well-known distinctions between shame and guilt in her comparative affects stud-

equally well. As one of the fundamental aspects of a human-object relationship, pleasure is closely associated with shame in David Hume's understanding of the affective double-sidedness of things "everything related to us, which produces pleasure or pain, produces likewise pride or humility" (Hume 209). Even though his categorical statement might have reduced the extreme complexity of human emotions to only a dichotomized duo, it highlights the role joy plays in the individual relations to objects and human beings. It also reveals an almost primeval proximity between shame and pleasure. The power of joy is not unrelated to the centrality of affects in human life, to the extent that it sanctions our every attachment to the immediate and broader environments. Nietzsche, in his denunciation of slave morality, claims Ellen Feder, has regarded the central goal of the "life-negating" morality as particularly "destructive of pleasure," perverting the noble human traits of "confidence and openness" into sick "obliquities," rife with both "fear and shame" (Feder 641). Pleasure, argues Jemima Repo, is what by Foucault's evaluation falls outside the overarching discursive totality of power, only to be "sexualised as desire when exposed to biopower" within the discourse of sexuality (Repo 81). To the extent that the hermaphroditic body of the legendary Herculine Barbin might have defied such a transcription, Repo understands Foucault as identifying a "*capacity* for love and pleasure" in Barbin's corporeal anomaly, exceeding the "orders" and disciplines of power (81–2). The *excessive* power that pleasure wields is important in reading *The Wings of the Dove* as well, particularly in light of the shame response. As my later discussions yield, this hedonic concern is empowering for several key characters in their respective individual trajectory. It allows Milly Theale and Merton Densher to depart from norms, and to experience moments of affective and epistemological excess. And though pleasure has lost its prominence in recent queer studies with its "turn to suffering," critics such as Heather Love and Elizabeth Freeman recontextualize this focus on "loss...failure, shame, negativity, grief" with "…a premature turn away from a seemingly obsolete politics of pleasure" (Love 160). The centrality of pleasure and its power of transcendence persevere in James's work, and take on fresh characteristics that gesture towards a *different* organization and reading of the individual and social surfaces in *The Wings of the Dove*.

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ies between Western and non-Western cultures in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Psychoanalysts who propose a turn from guilt to shame also find it useful to distinguish between shame and guilt. Helen Block Lewis and Andrew Morrison have maintained such a distinction in most of their works. Ruth Leys is a representative figure for those researchers who react negatively to the "turn to shame." For Leys, the difference between shame and guilt is indicative of the mimesis-related paradigms, and serves a significant role in scholarships on trauma and beyond.

From time to time, an overt concern over personal happiness breaks out from under James's intricate textuality, and sheds light on the exquisitely vague intentions of the characters. This affective undertone, eclipsed by more pressing issue of intrigue and betrayal begs critical attention. Together with instances of temporal disturbances, moments of joyful intensity signal productive tension between the affective and the epistemological organizations. These instances of affective and temporal disruptions signal underlying ideo-affective arrangements whose resistance to interpretation makes them decidedly "queer." On her seminal visit to Matcham, sipping iced coffee on the sward, Milly yields to one of the few spells of happiness in the book, much to her own amazement: "She was *somehow* at this hour a very *happy* woman, and a part of her *happiness* might precisely have been that her affections and her views were moving as never before in *concert*" (136 emphases mine). Milly seems to have been swept away by an all-enveloping gush of exhilaration, the underlying source of which is as of yet unknown to her. But she is somehow not oblivious to the immediate cause of her happy development, which she ascribes to a certain accord between affect and epistemology. The unanimity she confesses to have discovered is further explained in an effusive proclamation of love:

> Unquestionably she *loved* Susie; but she also *loved* Kate and *loved* Lord Mark, loved their funny old host and hostess, *loved* every one within range, down to the very servant who came to receive Milly's empty ice-plate—down, for that matter, to Milly herself, who was, while she talked, really conscious of the enveloping flap of a protective mantle, a shelter with the weight of an Eastern carpet. (136 emphases mine)

Milly is undoubtedly happy and content, not only through her devotion to others, but for the treatment she receives. And her romantic habit of mind has sublimated Aunt Maud's meddlesome intrigue as a genuine and altruistic concern for her wellbeing, wilfully ignoring any side effects of this claustrophobic "enveloping mantle."[11] Milly's loving spirit, as the later arguments show, is central to her preference for affective vulnerability over a paranoid way of living. Paradoxically, it is her willingness to create positive affective investment in other people

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[11]In a rather different line of argument, Scappettone touches upon similarly "enveloping" effects in her discussion of the impact Venice, "a city of water" with its gondola-centered transportation, has on its tourists. She argues that submission to this physical limitation "infantilizes and discomposes the tourist," who is almost "being returned to the womb" (104). See *Killing the Moonlight*, pp. 103–5. In contrast, Milly is purportedly not in the least bothered by such protective suffocation, rather, she welcomes Aunt Maud's envelopment with a sense of privilege.

that makes her vulnerable. But her decision to remain prone to unpleasant surprises, such as pain and shame, speaks for the volumes of benefits that an affective openness yields.

For Milly, the "uplift" that Susan predicts also figures as a "weighing down." But the burden of knowledge hardly affects her access to an almost prelapsarian blissful conception of life. The dawn of reality two days later at Sir Luke Strett's does not at all have any effect on the ecstatic Milly; she welcomes the confirmation of her doom as a consolation of her heretofore rickety identity. Her impending downfall, rather than being singularly discouraging and life-negating for her, is taken as "something firm to stand on," the likes of which she identifies as unprecedented and highly productive for her.[12] The mysterious sense of security Milly extracts from having been "held up," of being "put into the scales" obliterates all other considerations of danger and doom (148). And when Sir Luke commandeers her happiness as a prerequisite for her health, stipulating that it's no longer a question of choice or will that she should be happy, her gaiety verges on levity, "Oh I'll accept any whatever!...I'm accepting a new one every day. Now *this*!" (151). It is no longer possible or necessary to distinguish between her resilience and buoyancy, and her almost inhumanly high spirits are clearly overflown and drowned all ill omens. Milly is determined to cast her doom precisely in the light of *joy*, conflating cause and effect, posing disruptions to the finely policed lines between the affective and the epistemological, and the temporal and spatial dimensions.

The fluidity and openness of her logic, brought out in her conversation with Kate when the latter demands the latest news from her doctor's visit, defies Kate's faith in the causal rigor of knowledge. Pressing further the "kind of pleasure" that Milly is to undertake, Kate is assured simply "[t]he highest;" hardly satisfied, she ventures again, "Which *is* the highest?" only to be reassured that "it's just our chance to find out. You must help me" (161). Kate is incredulous and finds herself hardly ever convinced by the open-endedness of Milly's frail

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[12]Fowler (1984) is critical of Milly's romanticizing acceptance of her disease, interpreting her strategy as seeking "refuge from active participation in the world" in her own bleak fate, molding a idiosyncratic *modus vivendi*. She reads her character as being shrouded under a blanket of "passivity [which] she displays from her first appearance in the novel," and all her decisions and viewpoints henceforth, Fowler contends, could be understood in light of her willful "nonparticipation" (97). Scappettone (2014) on the other hand fits Milly's fluid identity into a larger Jamesian modernist realism in the "extreme abstraction," with "its resistance...to the representation of distinct 'subjects' and 'settings'" (123)—a "referential flux" with "shifting contexts and morphing connotation" (122).

logic. Kate's notion of "fun," as previously noted, calls for an "intelligence" in what Densher perceives to be a "caution" (60) that takes things in in a certain manner, the stringency of which is in direct conflict with Milly's roundaboutness. The latter's openness might bespeak for Kate a high degree of vulnerability to chance, and a susceptibility to shameful shocks to which she would never expose herself. One of the only times in the novel she deigns to take such risks occurs when Densher, after weeks' sojourn to the US, comes back to England. Today and today only Kate reasons, could she sacrifice everything else—her precaution, her alarms, her security, her sense of propriety—for the complete appreciation and "profit[]...for her joy" (189). On any other day, her fun would never forego its "intelligent" and "cautious" underpinnings. Compared to Milly Theale, Kate Croy's foreclosed mindset to surprise renders her subservient to a logic of maximizing certain positive affects, promoting access to joy while warding off the surprising element in the affect interest-excitement. James in his characterization of Kate gestures towards a close connection between the affect of joy and shame that precedes and exceeds Tomkins's schemata of the affect shame-humiliation.

Among the characters in *The Wings of the Dove*, Susan Stringham and Milly Theale figure at the opposite poles, in spite of their devout attachment to one another, in their attitudes towards knowledge. Susan delights in the possession of knowledge, whereas Milly shies away from the prospects of gaining certainty. Their contrasting views regarding the value of epistemological pursuit, at times grounded by a disparity in material and physical conditions, gesture towards a deeper discrepancy between two casts of mind. This reading of their radically different approaches to knowledge supports a larger claim for an ideo-affective openness. In *The Wings of the Dove,* characters who retain a manifest aversion to uncertainty put up by default a defense of impatience and anxiety, which might be alleviated temporarily, but often aggravated in the long run, with an almost blind trust in knowledge and truth.

Susan's pursuit of knowledge follows a more "active" track, although her capacity falls short at other critical aspects when compared to Milly's more "passive" and receptive mindset. Milly's open-mindedness, susceptible to unpleasant surprises at times, does seem to relieve the mind of perennial burdens of impatience, anxiety, and suspicion, and primes it for more comprehensive experiences of pleasure than that of Kate's and Susan's. Clinging tight onto the certainty that a faith in knowledge and telos grants, the latter two characters evince a habit of mind that will be identified as "paranoid," the personal cost of which, is demonstrated by the readings of Milly Theale and Merton

Densher, far outweighs the benefits it brings. For the individual, paranoia clouds over the positive affects and places limits on the amount of joy and interest they might generate. The paranoid bent of mind works against shocks and derives pleasure from the mimetic cycles of anticipation-confirmation. Kate Croy's sense of joy, it seems, shares some of its internal mechanisms with that of Susan Stringham's, who professes to have derived pleasure from obtaining knowledge through technical know-how. Immediately preceding her pursuit of Milly to the tip of the promontory, Susan strikes herself as being "secretively attentive" of her companion, reaping off "scientific observation" thereof, "hovering like a spy, applying tests, laying traps, concealing signs" (84). She performs as rigorously as she possibly could for a "culminating" scientific understanding of the "matter" of Milly. Her rationale behind such an almost pathological interest is, or so she confesses, the occupational necessity as Milly's paid companion. Translating a pathological mindset into a discourse of scientific discovery confirms Brian Massumi's understanding of scientific concern as "the institutionalized maintenance of sangfroid in the face of surprise" (*Parables* 233). Remaining "knowledgeable" is for Susan being invulnerable to news about Milly. Managing her composure diligently, Susan extracts a predominant amount of her joy from confirmed knowledge; even the "pleasure of watching... [Milly's] beauty" comes not so much from *discovering* Milly's graceful appearance as *knowing* Milly would always be beautiful (84). And for the reward of such a *reflexive* and *mimetic* joy, Susan is obviously relentless. Her project of "know[ing] everything" is thus a direct result of mimetic self-affirmation in which only *facts* that will confirm a *suspicion* will be considered, thereby leading to an *expected* confirmation of initial beliefs (366). The pleasure that paranoia produces is in this sense none other than the pleasure of being proved *right*. Investing in no entity other than the self, and since the self *will* always be *right*, paranoia could be a very effective mechanism against sensations of shame. Kate Croy, the unlikely *pale*-faced girl, remains almost always impervious to the shameful pallor. Rarely would she allow herself to be so *imprudent* as to incur risks of uncertainty by showing interest in *other* people. The always "pale" Milly, on the hand, with her open embrace of things, might as well have been under the constant attack of such a shame-induced pallor.

Milly's indifference to knowledge, it seems, assumes a particular temporal relation. She welcomes knowledge when it comes of its own accord. She *shall* know, or so she claims, in due time; and it is the mediated form of knowing—through Susan in this instance—to which she objects. Milly demands to be informed, however unpleasantly, directly, and in the course of her own treatment, not to be rushed in any untimely fashion. The bravery embedded in her defiant stance might

also be spelled out, echoing Scappettone's formulation on sentimental tourism, as a resistance to "the mortifying effect of information" through an "imbrication of knowledge and somatic experience" (105). Asking for direct and mannerly contacts with knowledge, Milly emphatically asks for no corporeal or temporal (pre-)mediation; she only takes pains to stress that, for all her seemingly deprecation of Susan as the *channel*, her gratitude towards the latter is unbounded and unequivocal. She assures Susan that *other* things, *other* possibilities might then appear, when one agrees that "The best is not to know—that includes them all. I don't—I don't know. Nothing about anything—except that you're *with* me" (244–5). Her caution against knowledge takes a turn to the worse, and vows to take on an overwhelming scale here. The pause between the two "I don't" signals a near nervous breakdown when one approaches the limits of signification. The repetition, sanctioned by a wandering and searching consciousness, is followed by the word "know"—a fallback when more complex and descriptive phrases become not readily available. To *know* is at once the most natural collocation to come after "don't," and the most comprehensive—it encompasses a wide range of possibilities and enables Milly to glide through her temporary failure of signification to arrive at meaning again. This episode is suggestive of the power of knowledge—a totalizing term that could block out all other more specific experiences in life. For Milly, contra Susan, it is the specifics, the various embodied experiences that fulfill a life-engendering role. Shame and other unpleasant sensations are but necessary prices to pay in order to experience to the fullest extent the pleasant experiences in life.

Milly's preference for practice-based knowledge, in the course of the story, results in a spectrum of responses between shameless elation and shame-laden despondency. Milly vows to stay "shamelessly" ignorant particularly regarding Merton Densher and her illness. Her selective non-knowledge, for the most part, guards Milly against any untimely *reduction* of interest in Densher and his life, and keeps her buoyant and happy until things *actually* happen. Embracing the unknown with open arms, Milly objects to unverified knowledge and insists on embodied knowledge. Before her consultation with Sir Luke, she has, in response to Susan's concern over her health, returned cheerfully, "it might be well to find out" (91). Her receptivity towards lived experience and her disregard for knowledge in advance play out in the response she gives to Kate on the nature of her illness, "I *shall* know, and whatever it is it will be enough" (145). To questions regarding the relationship between Densher and Kate, Milly remains "proudly" dense. When Susan complains about the pang of "mov[ing] in a labyrinth" on such matters, Milly's "gaiety" is almost shameless:

"Of course we do. That's just the fun of it! [...] Don't tell me that—in this for instance—there are not abysses. I want abysses" (121). The unknown, instead of evoking terror, suggests for Milly an irresistible appeal of pleasure. Her affective openness also incurs, in due time, an "abysmal quantity" of gloom. Distressed by Kate's "*other* identity, the identity she would have for Mr. Densher," Milly's *enjoyment* of Densher and Kate suffers an acute reduction (146). The unease with which the access to lived experience degenerates appears the first time she visited Lancaster Gate which culminates in her "turn[ing] her face to the wall" (334). At times resulting in minor discomfort of shame, the reduction of her enjoyment in life also takes the form of life-threatening agony. What was early on "too sharp" a strain on her "sensibility" in response to the "very air of the place, the pitch of the occasion" (100) ends with a determined refusal of life.

Milly's refusal of certain knowledge and her rejection of certain manners of knowing, it becomes clear, have laid the groundwork for her final collapse.[13] It isn't simply an outright denunciation of knowledge, for which she has been at times rather receptive; her insistence that knowing *shall* come in a natural order-*less* fashion, without unnecessary intervention, sets her decidedly apart from several of the more calculating characters. Susan Stringham is always passionate in setting up "tests" and traps; Kate Croy is forever avid in pursuing and perfecting her "arrangements"; and Lord Mark, after Milly's indifference to his proposal, lingers at her *sala* only to *know* the name of her guest after seeing "one of the gondoliers...obsequiously held out to her...a visiting-card" (280). Lord Mark, as do Susan and Kate, chases after knowledge with a cunning determination that vows to "leave nothing unlearned" (107). They detest uncertainty almost as passionately as they prepare against shame. Sir Luke Strett too, is enabled by his unparalleled medical expertise to look "in advance...all one's possibilities" so much so that he might be deprived of exploring *other* possibilities (256). The elimination of ambiguity, then, comes at a price, for Sir Luke as well, as a loss in possibility and joy. Lord Mark, in a like manner, is burdened with "too much knowledge" (101) to ever entertain the idea of a *different* future. His conviction—the "working view" that "nothing to make a deadly difference for him...*could* happen" (275)—comes at the time of Milly's refusal to his proposal to salvage his self-esteem. But total relinquishment of all as-

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[13]Fowler (1984) argues that Milly "fatally lacks important knowledge and abilities" (89) despite her attempts to obtain them by her European sojourn. Milly's habitual nonparticipation from life and her comfortable refuge in her illness, according to Fowler, are underlined with a preference for "objectification," for "detachment," and a "denial" of the remedial power of love, which together results in her untimely death even *before* Lord Mark's delivery of the blow (103).

pirations is nonetheless lamentable, and not simply for the fact pointed out by Milly that he has "no imagination"—Lord Mark rarely experiences any *joy* (108). The deep-set aversion to uncertainty manifests itself in the characters as a general impatience and a default anxiety, a trust in knowledge, and an ardent and persistent pursuit for the hidden truth.

Interested in the unknown, Merton Densher remains unaffected by "shocking" news that would have put the likes of Susan and Kate to shame. In contrast to Kate's almost blind faith in the vindication of knowledge, Densher, like Milly, favors the mysterious and the unknown. Densher, who at times professes that he is "…to understand and understand without detriment to the feeblest...of his passions" (64). Even the intimidating Maud Manningham who confesses to Susan Stringham that "one must understand" (339), seems at critical junctures to have stopped pursuing knowledge altogether. In response to Kate's skepticism towards his inclination to forgo Milly's bequeathal, Densher avers, almost insolently, that "[m]y sense is sufficient without being definite" (406). In the plainest words to characterize his beloved, Densher understands Kate as "a whole library of the unknown, the uncut" (222). His complicity in Kate's plan is suggestive of an abiding taste for mystery and secrecy. Interestingly, it is the depletion of mystery that results in a reduction of his sense of enjoyment and hence his shame. The certainty that comes with knowledge ushers in a lucid outlook on life that is not in the least palatable to Densher. After Kate's monumental visit to his room at Venice, even when his memories are fresh and the taste of victory still sharp, he succumbs to a "slightly awful" spell: "[T]his was by the loss of the warmth of the element of mystery. The lucid reigned instead of it, and it was into the lucid that he sat and stared. He shook himself out of it a dozen times a day, tried to break by his own act his constant still communion" (316). The "loss of the warmth of the element of mystery" conditions a "lucidity" that allows him to access the guilt and shame in being a conniving scoundrel. Chastened by the "awful" spell of his conscience, Densher emerges from his access to shame less centered on his own desire for Kate. The shameful bouts of "sitting and staring" with his guilty lucidity provide a heightened experience of the "tyranny and prison of the self," which Ewan Fernie takes as an existential condition of being human; shame, in his opinion, is both "a painful rehearsal for" a more dreadful confinement and the gateway to the "world beyond egoism" (8). Led by his feelings of shame and guilt, Densher is forced to confront the "tyranny" of his desires and limited perspective, and eventually comes out of the confines of this room and Kate's commands.

Kate's appeal of mystery further diminishes when she, apropos his request not to open Milly's posthumous letter, destroys it by throwing it in the fireplace. Her action, so definitive and forceful, destroys Densher's conception for her as the "unknown" and "uncut." On the other hand, the dimension of the unknown increases for Milly, as Densher shall *never* know her last confession. It is his mourning over the perpetually "unknown" that most probably sparks his romantic feelings for Milly, who figures *as* the unopened letter that forever tempts his interest. Densher's propensity for the unknown and the unknowable culminates in his falling in love with a dead person, when death revokes all means of knowing and sanctions an ultimate ignorance. It comes as one of the most poignant moments in the course of the story when, pining after the violent dispossession of "possibilities," Densher likens the smarting pang he feels to

> …the sight of a priceless pearl cast before his eyes...into the fathomless sea, or rather even it was like the sacrifice of something sentient and throbbing, something that, for the spiritual ear, might have been audible as a faint far wail. This was the sound he cherished when alone in the stillness of his rooms. He sought and guarded the stillness so that it might prevail there till the inevitable sounds of life, once more, comparatively coarse and harsh, should smother and deaden it. (402)

If he ever relishes the solitary "stillness" in the wake of Kate's visit, and fights to keep it fresh, he struggles desperately to guard the "stillness" now against the overflow of knowledge. The advent of knowledge is shameful for Densher because it most violently depletes his enjoyment of the unknown. With all her "pure talent for life" (284), Kate, as she becomes increasingly *legible* to Densher, has ruthlessly murdered his aesthetic ideal of an *illegible* book.[14]

Susan Stringham's reading of Milly Theale is quintessentially paranoid. In light of Eve Sedgwick's composite sketch of paranoia, Susan's scientific undertaking, the espionage she is secretly so proud of and derives immense pleasure from sets the tone for her inevitable

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[14]In contrast to Kate's talent for life, Habegger (1971) argues that, Densher's is a "talent for thought" that puts him "outside English society" and its "workings"—his density in grasping Kate's plan, he points out, results from an innate unfamiliarity with the "brutal and self-seeking society" (460). Suggesting an innate psychological deficiency—American girls' sub-humanization or full subjectivation due to an "inability or fear" (103)—that is partially, if not wholly responsible for her early demise, Fowler (1984) compares Kate's "talent for life" with Milly's competitive edge of her impending doom, extrapolating that the former might have "drive[n] Milly self-destructively to seek refuge in a fatal illness" (96).

and tautological discovery. It is inevitable because such a result has been preconditioned by her initial conception of the experiment itself, by her methodology, by the very mode of conduction and her interpretation; and paranoia has been written all across the space like an overarching guiding spirit. Paranoia, regarded by Leo Bersani as "an inescapable interpretive doubling of presence" (188), is hailed as "hortative" among a set of must-have skills for an ideally sensitized reader, "vigilant" with the kind of "trickery and cunning" necessary for *Ulysses* (156). Sedgwick, building upon his insight, arrives at paranoia's mimetic nature. A paranoid reading, she allows, is quizzically imitative, for it "require[s] being imitated to be understood," and one could "understand only by imitation" (131). Thus Kate's vision that "poor Milly had a treasure to hide" (264)—a treasure in the least sense pecuniary in this instance—with her "general armoury," is but a reflection of and condition for her own guarded existence. Similar to Susan's suspicious intuition, Kate's "habit of anticipation"—her precocious aversions to things—saves her from unnecessary contact with bad surprises. But as the discussion below will show, such a strategy to adopt a paranoid stance to close off paranoid invasions is counterproductive, and conducive to an optimization for total control of paranoia. Their concern for joy and pleasure, on the other hand, makes them *uniquely* paranoiac in a way that both Tomkins and Sedgwick have not fully accounted for. Kate Croy in The *Wings of the Dove* is a key figure for a refreshed understanding of paranoia. Her case furnishes me with the critical evidence to demonstrate the discrepancy between theory and (literary) reality alerting both theorists and literary critics to the limits of their vision and the constraints of their methodology.

Paranoia, Sedgwick claims, observes a "unidirectionally future-oriented vigilance" through which "badness [is] always already known (130). And it is through such prescient vigilance that knowledge, especially foreknowledge of bad news, is secured. Paranoia thus grants its proponents an immense range of "vision." By virtue of its adequate explanatory power, it makes Lord Mark prescient, knowing *before*-hand, even *before* Milly's refusal, that nothing that would make any difference could ever happen to him. Susan too, clings to her precious precaution or a ready "prepar[ation] for the worst" as firmly as her fur boa (79, 121). And it is only right that Maud Manningham is simultaneously "afraid of nothing" by Kate's estimation, and of "everything" by Susan's account (38, 248)—it is by her defense against everything that she could become impervious to any incoming attacks. To experience everything as "of a natural" (290) is to find one prepared for every possibility, particularly the bad ones.

The access to paranoid knowledge, however reassuring at times, also closes off *other* possibilities that could be pleasurable as well. Sir Luke laments his loss of pleasure when his medical expertise allows so few surprises about the fate of his patients. Under the spell of paranoia, the future, Matthew Helmers envisions, is reduced to "a discrete system of buried knowledge that, once uncovered, can be exhausted" (109), which is confirmed by Lord Mark's assertion that he has by that time left *nothing* unlearned. Knowledge becomes complete when it takes on a paranoid dimension, empowering it to furrow backward and forward across the linear progression of events. Shocks, which could easily lead to shamed responses, are abundant in those who are unsubscribed to a paranoid worldview. Milly, with her face turned to the wall, never fully recovers from her shame of being deceived. Densher too, though from time to time seized with an "unrest" that might have progressed, if not regressed, into paranoia, couldn't foresee the course of things, and is prone to be left "shaking forever" (371). Amazed at Densher's always "seeing his way so little" (309), Kate prepares herself in every regard, even meeting Densher's "vulgar" request for sex with shameless composure (297). Nor does she "wince and mince" upon Densher's blunt candor regarding the sordidness of their plan (311). Densher, on the other hand, like Milly, takes a romantically finite view of life, staying vulnerable to the ebb and flow of his interests. Their loss of "knowledge," it seems, finds compensation in the *good* surprises that make up the core of the "event" itself. Only through a temporary withholding of paranoid vigilance, according to Brian Massumi, could one access the real "event" penetrating its stultifying structure with "self-consistent set of invariant generative rules" that guarantees that "nothing ever happens" ("Autonomy" 87). While holding off negative affects such as shame and fear, a paranoid stance also wards off the reality of life itself.

Densher is always seeing things afresh and anew, struck time and again by their immensity and abruptness, as well as his invariable lack of preparation. He shares thus a susceptibility to the world, with Milly, which opens him up for bad news sometimes, but for wonders too, the extraordinary "handsomeness" of his fiancée being one example (356, 375). And just when the strain of temporal and epistemic unidirectionality from a paranoid worldview threatens to break them, the queer moments burst out again. Milly's letter, arrives *after* her death and *timed* precisely for Christmas, the season of gifts, comes to signify for Densher later on as the "only proof and symbol of the sacred" in his life, and contributes to the feat of his finally falling in love with the "poor rich American girl." All those surprises prove that after all the stringent vigilance against surprise, emotional disturbances do and need to occur. Kate and Susan's occasional admission of pleasure

and joy was perhaps, inadvertently, the most persuasive evidence, given all their proclivity to "paranoia." And if we were to take their personal confessions of an inclination for "fun" and "pleasure" seriously, according to Tomkins's explications of the internal mechanisms of interest-excitement and enjoyment-joy, abrupt fluctuations of feelings are part and parcel of any genuine experience of joy. Thus psychologically speaking, Kate and Susan's reluctance or refusal to be shocked is paradoxical to their professed access to pleasure. Such odd moments, as those "waste products and blind spots" in Adorno's criticism of the dialectic, could equally "transcend" and "outwit" the immaculate linearity of knowledge and life, with their very own "impotence, irrelevan[ce], eccentric[ity]" and "incomparability" (151). It's only through such moments of temporal, emotional, and epistemological incongruence—which for Milly and Densher often take the form of excess and waste—that the validity and the value of such paranoid reading of life is called into question.

For Sedgwick, paranoid reading renders the individual attached to the more negative and destructive aspects of things while disregarding the positive and the reparative.[15] A paranoid way of reading,[16] by the very nature of its fervent prediction of bad news, hunts for and forestalls the emergence of negative affects. Among the four "general images" of the ideo-affective organization of human beings, Silvan Tomkins maintains, the maximization of positive affects, desirable as it is, should be kept in moderation since an overt and passionate pursuit of such affects could be "self-defeating," and result in "failure and

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[15]Adorno's critique of dialectic could be likened to Sedgwick's objection to an uncritical embrace of paranoia. His denunciation of dialectical positivism that derives its power in the "absolute rule of negation" (150) echoes Sedgwick's arguments that paranoia denies accidents and rejoices in the triumphalism of knowledge and certainty.

[16]In their brilliant introductory essay, "Surface Reading," Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus conduct a brief survey of what they call "symptomatic reading," which is to some extent synonymous to Sedgwick's "paranoid reading." They refer to Umberto Eco who dates the practice back to the Second Century with the Gnostic tradition. Later revivals with the Marxist readings of ideology and commodity, the Freudian interpretations of dreams and the unconscious, and the Althusserian symptomatic reading, they argue, tend to presume and foreground the shaping forces of the "phantom questions" in the texts. They hope to resituate the surface as "an affective and ethical stance" that counters the "depth model of truth" (10), and call for more immediate "immersion" that would "free us from the apathy and instrumentality of capitalism" (14). Their central claim can be concurred as an affective call for "a true openness to all the potentials," without reducing the richness of a text by accentuating one particular understanding and discounting all others. While it might be ultimately beneficial to remain utterly disinterested in literary criticism, the paper, for the purpose of contributing to such a disinterest, leans more heavily on some standpoints and is distanced from others. The "fertile paths of inquiry" demand while discount such interests.

misery" (*AIC* 181). Any affect theory, according to Tomkins, yields, after "a simplified and powerful summary of a larger set of affect experiences" (411), a generalized scheme of filtering incoming information and generating customized behavior in response to a particular affect. The strength of any negative theory derives, Tomkins alerts us, not from its efficacy but from its failure, the repetition of which expands the breadth of its operative domain, and consolidates its power in the ideo-affective organization of an individual. Thus when a theory is increasingly ineffective in preventing intrusive negative affects from occurring in an increasing number of situations, its growing strength might assume a monopolistic scale, so that one affect becomes dominant in an individual's affective life.

With the assistance of over-interpretation and over-organization, the paranoid, maintains Tomkins, processes every bit of incoming information by its connection to one single "affect and its avoidance," and launches the "entire cognitive apparatus in a constant state of alert" in forecasting and inhibiting such an affect (519). Under the paranoid posture, the general image of positive affect has to be sacrificed when the individual becomes obsessed with over-avoidance of and over-escape from the negative affects, to the degree that, in the case of a monopolistic humiliation theory, the "strategy of maximizing positive affect has to be surrendered... [and the] only sense in which he may strive for positive affect at all is for the shield which it promises against humiliation" (532). It is proposed in this reading of *The Wings of the Dove*, with insights from Sedgwick and Tomkins, that a strong affect-shame bind takes over Kate Croy's ideo-affective life to the extent that all her other affective experiences are clouded over by a hypersensitivity to shame. Overly cautious of shame experiences, Kate is enslaved by a "shameful" mindset that closes off other joyful possibilities for her while prompting her to find alternative pleasure in the proximity to shame. Not only does this paper hopes to contribute to the already robust scholarship that interprets James's œuvre as prominently psychological, it aims to draw attention to his deployment of affects, in particular the affect shame, the engagement with which well precedes comprehensive theorizations of shame in the late 1950s.[17]

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[17]Helen Merrell Lynd's *On Shame and the Search for Identity* (1958) marks the virtual beginning of contemporary interests in the theoretical explorations of shame. Speaking to previous works done by Ruth Benedict, Gerhart Piers, and Franz Alexander, Lynd's monograph is concerned with aspects of personality development that are directly influenced by experiences of shame and its impact on the sense of identity. Léon Wurmser contributes to the scholarship on shame, with his *The Mask of Shame* (1981), a "systematic inquiry into shame with its manifold aspects and related attitudes and feelings" (16). He pours into its phenomenological constituents, and

One explicit instance of affect-bind shaming unfolds in the course of Kate's recollection of her father's "original" downfall. Cautious as she always has been, Kate testifies, in a decidedly paranoid fashion to her mother's paranoia, which gives credence to Sedgwick's interpretation of the mimetic nature of paranoia: "She must have had some fear, some conviction that I had an idea, some idea of her own that it was the best thing to do. She came out as abruptly as Marian had done: "If you hear anything against your father—anything I mean except that he's odious and vile—remember it's perfectly false" (57). Here Kate recalls a time when she was put to shame by her mother's veiled demand and subtle rebuke that she was not only not to believe any slur upon her father's character, but she should be positively ashamed if she were even to dignify such allegations by contemplating on their validity. And if Kate has at other times struck the reader as peculiarly calm and tranquil, it might be because in the disturbing and turbulent process of her upbringing, she has been well trained in fashioning her affective articulations, the process for which involves exhibiting appropriate behavior after explicit or implicit references to shame.

Tomkins gives a sketch in which a total affect-shame bind has worked an individual into believing "that affect per se is shameful, that shame itself is caught up in the same taboo and that even affectlessness may be shameful" (411). What Kate's recollection also suggests, is an ideo-affective bond that wraps knowledge and shame irrevocably together—a *total* bind. To know is to know shame and to be shamed— by the shadows of her father. To know, moreover, is to know how best to stay alert to any shaming possibilities in order not to experience them. And to be ashamed was to have failed to anticipate knowledge, or knowledge of shame specifically. But even the shield, arguably one of her only positive affective gains, is a nominal and self-delusional one. However potent, or weak in Kate's case, a theory of shame is, as an affective interpretation it assures "experience of shame...of a large number of situations" (411). It takes paranoia to understand paranoia, and it takes shame theory to experience shame, or vice versa, and a monopolistic shame theory the fullest experience of shame.

What Kate Croy's total and monopolistic shame indicates, given her declaration of a dedicated pursuit of pleasure, is a veiled affinity that Tomkins has overlooked between paranoid shame and the general image of maximizing positive affects. Tomkins understands a paranoiac to be on constant guard against any possible intrusion of the

recognizes its protective capacities not only against exposure, but against other affects as well. He echoes Otto Fenichel in understanding shamelessness as a psychological reaction against previous experiences of intense shame.

shame sensation, pointing to suppression and inhibition of affects, mostly negative in this instance, as the predominant motivation. The case of Kate Croy, while meeting this description, also bears a dissonance: an excess that makes her somehow a misfit with Tomkins's downcast monopolistically shamed figure. This excess is her overzealous investment in and access to *joy*. We have seen how her dedication to the pursuit of joy has written itself from the onset of her relationship with Merton Densher. Her change of mind towards the materiality of life's offerings gives another credible glimpse into the significance of pleasure in Kate's frame of mind. Plotting after Milly's fortune promises Kate a constant access to fun secured through her intelligence, and a copious reward that would set her mind at ease forever by severing the collusion between shame and destitute. Wealth, as demonstrated by the success of Milly in London, confirms Kate's belief in its powers of affective optimization. But rather than letting the second general strategy of minimizing negative affects taking control over her affective life, Kate's pursuit of the first strategy of maximizing positive affect assumes dominance, reversing Tomkins's figuration by rendering the former a "by-product" and "derivative" (*AIC* 181).

Inasmuch as shame comes into being with a reduction of interest or joy, the particular case of Kate Croy offers a major modification. Her over-sensitivity to shame, which is not so dissimilar to an over-attachment to affective stability, begs a differentiation between interest and joy in accounting for shame. Kate Croy's aversion to surprise and faith in the comfort and defense of knowledge are akin to her pursuit of enjoyment-joy, which is activated, according to Tomkins,[18] by a decrease of neural firings. If revulsions for surprise undergird her subscription to a paranoid reading of life, then it is the reduction of joy, instead of interest-excitement, which depends on a sharp increase of neural firings, that triggers Kate's shame, and it is her concern for pleasure that motivates and maintains its bouts of attack. For Kate, shame or paranoid theory is taken up as a response to and strategy for the guaranteed access to joy and pleasure. A consideration for and from positive affects, the Jamesian portrait seems to propose, takes precedence over the more potent negative image in Tomkins's schema.

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[18]Silvan Tomkins puts forth a model of the innate activators of the primary affects, in which every possible major general neural contingency will innately activate different specific affects—"increased gradients of rising neural firing will activate interest, fear, or surprise, as the slope of increasing density of neural firing becomes steeper. Enjoyment is activated by a decreasing gradient of neural firing. Distress is activated by a sustained level of neural firing which exceeds an optimal level by an as yet undetermined magnitude, and anger is also activated by a non-optimal level of neural firing but one which is substantially higher than that which activates distress" (*AIC* 621).

Moreover, such a reading of James's characterization of Kate Croy seems to have accentuated an easily overlooked affective affinity between interest and surprise that Tomkins briefly touched upon, but hardly ever contemplates. In the latter's theoretical formulation of the innate activation of affects, interest and surprise differ only in the rates of neural firing increment. Thus a paranoid figure who recoils from the possibility of surprise would by default curb any foreseeable surges of interest or excitement. And Kate's self-chastening or reluctant self-indulgence for rushing to the train station to welcome Densher from America is a case in point for the general adoption of such an inhibition. Shame, with all its connection to paranoia,[19] might be unrelated, if not totally antithetical, contra Tomkins, to the affect interest-excitement. Considering Kate Croy's particularity in being not only totally shamed but quintessentially paranoid, it is at least safe to argue that one of the distinctions between shame and paranoia is the increasing distance to the affect interest-excitement. If, a la Tomkins, shame is an affective auxiliary to both interest-excitement and enjoyment-joy, then paranoia might be a sole collaborator to enjoyment-joy. It's only ironic how an overly passionate pursuit for happiness could blunt the heart and mind's affective sensibility to such an irrevocable degree.

The homosocial rapport Densher experiences in his social and personal relations with the group of men—Eugenio, Pasquale, and Sir Luke Strett—finds its support in his more generous affective stance than, for example, Lord Mark or Lionel Croy. Milly's attachment to Kate, which verges on proto-homosexual interests, would never have come into being with a foreclosed affective sensibility. Taken in this light, shame figures as a "uniting force" not because it encourages "conform[ity] to societal conventions and standards," as Fernie asserts,

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[19]Tomkins hardly ever gives a clear and explicit definition of the term paranoia or paranoid in *Affect Imagery Consciousness*, but a majority of his discussions on paranoia are closely related to his postulations on the affect shame-humiliation. He contrasts paranoids with depressives in terms of their different shaming mechanisms. Unlike the depressives, paranoids have never "been loved (by their parents) but have been terrorized as well as humiliated" (240). Unable to find "…a way back from the despair of shame to communion with the loving parent who ultimately feels as distressed as does his child at the breach in their relationship," the paranoids could be likened to members of "a truly persecuted minority group," with their "shame...imposed with a reign of terror." Tomkins positions a "paranoid posture" in relation to the monopolistic humiliation theory, when the individual has yet to reach the terminal phases of being totally defeated. The paranoid posture arises when there is still an "…unrelenting warfare in which the individual generates and tests every conceivable strategy to avoid and escape total defeat at the hand of the humiliating bad object" (531). Paranoid schizophrenia is a special case of the paranoid posture in which "the individual is both terrorized and humiliated at the same time," and in which the only level on which the individual can respond is in his beliefs and fantasies, delusions of persecution and grandeur.

but precisely because it highlights differences and binds people together *by* their disparate reactions. Only with the willingness to withstand shame in the pursuit of one's interest can one establish genuine connections with others and emerge out of the sophistic, self-serving stronghold of paranoia. This connecting, socializing effect of shame is thus hinged upon the risky venture of investing interest and joy in another. Milly, despite all her physical frailty, exhibits such an openness to harm even as she recognizes the dangers of her "unbounded" interests: "Strange were the turns of life and the moods of weakness; strange the flickers of fancy and the cheats of hope; yet lawful, all the same—weren't they?—those experiments tied with the truth that consisted, at the worst, but in practising on one's self" (265). If the paranoid positions were adopted to generate, as Stef Aupers identifies in contemporary conspiracy culture, "the construction of ultimate meaning that is resistant to the meaning-eroding forces of modernity" (Aupers 30), then reparative practices choose to stay and live with such existential insecurity, rather than seeking any metaphysical transcendence.

What the Jamesian allegory of Milly's fatal diathesis demonstrates, alongside other possibilities is the dire consequences for closing off affective receptibility. Tomkins understands such an affective openness as intrinsic to an individual's "essential freedom" (*AIC* 68). To be paranoid and perennially guarded against the tendency to "feel strongly or weakly, for a moment, or for all his life" (ibid), is then tandem to forsaking the basic capacity to be humanly free. What Fernie vouches for as the "transcendence" and "freedom" from the self that shame engenders, begins with a willingness to be tethered and interdependent. In the case of Milly Theale, while she is still *open* for "abysses," whether the term stands for the fullness of life that her fortune guarantees or the bleakness of death[20] her unrevealed "condition" incurs, Milly still *lives*; but as soon as she voluntarily closes off that opening by "turning her face to the wall" she rapidly declines and dies. Affective openness underlines Sir Luke's injunction for her to *live*. For Milly, to live is to be able to be affected. The "firm footing" of her illness that Milly finds so welcome and liberating keeps well in place the fact of her "affectedness." And an adamant rejection of that footing, or a single-minded devotion to it, will have endangered the viability of that life-engendering affective openness.

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[20]Andrew Cutting reads Sir Luke's diagnosis as a "confirmation" and "enhancement" of Milly Theale's recognition of her "unique capability of dying" (90). Such a capacity, Cutting argues, distinguishes Milly from the rest of the characters in *The Wings of the Dove*, and bespeaks a generally applicable stratagem to secure individuality in the homogenizing power-knowledge system. See *Death in Henry James*, pp. 88–90.

What transpires in the scene at the beginning of this paper, when Kate, with her endearing pale face, entreating and enjoining Densher to "believe in [her], and it will be beautiful," is a curious pedagogical event in which Kate, risking her total susceptibility to shame, vouches for the beautiful certainty of knowledge. And what Densher takes to be her own sincerity, with which he could forego the demand upon her vow, is the faith paranoia placed in the perfection and superiority of knowledge. In light of Sedgwick's assurance that "it is not people but mutable positions, or...practices, that can be divided between the paranoid and the reparative" (150), it behooves us to duly recognize the range of positive affects and good surprises Kate and the paranoid others might engender. The extent of trust and the depth of love that fuels it are both admirable and awe-inspiring in their own right regardless of their (mis)appropriations. James foreshadows Sedgwick's misgivings about paranoia, and precedes her caution against its total negation, since paranoid people are also "able to, and need to, develop and disseminate the richest reparative practices" (150). His depiction entertains the interpretive possibilities of the reparative work they might have left behind, before, beside, above, and around, and complicates even further the verdict on paranoia.

The Wings of the Dove, under this paranoid reading perhaps, might as well be considered as a sketch of paranoia by James—his very own mimetic performance. Paranoid reading, a la Sedgwick, is a quintessential performance of mimesis, an act of self-reproduction that, regrettably, yields nothing but monotonous self-sameness. Despite all the affiliations between paranoia and shame, the performance of the former, according to Sedgwick, is to be distinguished from the latter, which "involves a gestalt"—the capacity to reverse and traverse the individuating boundaries with a "precarious hyperreflexivity" ("Cybernetic" 520). And while one laments the tedious omniscience of the paranoid positionality of the characters, one takes delight, and comfort, in the productivity of James's mimetic paranoia, which lays at one's mercy the critical destinies of a group of more or less personable characters, with whom one empathize to a more or less cathartic extent.

Side by side with the moral disgust and indignation, there also exist joy, marvel, pity, concern, surprise, shame, anguish, fear, etc., the whole gamut of human emotions. Face to face with the *tableaux vivants* of paranoia, readers of James stand to benefit from the intricate nuances in his portrayal of a wide range of affective constraints and closures. And just as writers of paranoia and critics of such writers are necessarily paranoid, as readers, in our very own acts of reading—eyes

down, head down, upper body down—we are on the way to perform, if not to be indeed paranoid, ourselves.

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Spectators Onstage: Metatheatrical Experiments in Early Tom Stoppard

Iswarya V.

Audience participation in theatre has now become almost too commonplace to be remarkable, with even the commercial theatre presenting murder mysteries in which the audience members are encouraged to participate as detectives in their own right or wedding ceremonies where they are the guests (Schmitt 143).[1] It is easy to overlook, therefore, that audience participation, at least by conscious design, is a relatively recent phenomenon in the long history of Western drama, and its unmistakable emergence can be traced back to mid-twentieth century.

Dramaturgs, theatre practitioners, and performance artists as diverse as the Dadaists, Bertolt Brecht, Antonin Artaud, Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Allan Kaprow, Julian Beck and Judith Malina, Marina Abramović, and Richard Schechner are often credited with shaking theatre loose from its traditional moorings of a fixed performance space, plot structure and acting style. While the bold experimentation by all these avant-garde theatremakers has been valuable in transforming the theatrical experience into being more immersive and participatory, some contemporary performers have carried spectator engagement to its extreme by crafting "intimate theatre" experiences even for an audience of one (Grant); or even at times assaulting their audience (Jennings; Twite).

In contrast to the extensive critical attention paid to some of these later experiments while studying audience engagement, the significant contribution of the Pirandellian metatheatre and later the Theatre of the Absurd in incorporating the spectator-figure into the dramatic structure remains under-analysed.[2] In fact, one of the well-

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[1]Schmitt lists commercial Chicago productions such *Bingo in the First Degree, Murder at the Manor, Who Shot the Sheriff? At the Reunion,* and *The Case of Stanford Claus* among the mysteries and *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding* (performed in New York, 1988) as an example of a participatory wedding event.

[2]Going by Keir Elam's useful distinction of 'theatre' and 'drama' as "the complex of phenomena associated with the performer-audience transaction" and "that mode of fiction designed for stage representation and constructed according to particular ('dramatic') conventions" respectively (2), one may say that contemporary scholarship on spectatorship focusses much more on the role of the audience in a *theatrical* setting than in the *dramatic* composition itself. The burgeoning interest in the broad field of Performance Studies has also ensured that any attempt at systematically un-

known and exhaustive studies of the role of audience in theatre, Susan Bennett's *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception,* devotes very little attention to the Theatre of the Absurd and its metaphysical engagement with spectatorship, moving quickly instead from the early avant-garde to the later performance arts movements.[3] Similarly, Helen Freshwater's concise yet comprehensive introduction to the subject, *Theatre and Audience,* makes no mention of the work of the Absurdists. In an attempt to redress this oversight, the present paper examines two of the early plays of Tom Stoppard, who combines the metatheatrical structure of Pirandello with the thematic preoccupations of the Theatre of the Absurd. It is argued here that *The Real Inspector Hound* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead,* like several other Absurd plays of the period, engage with the idea of spectatorship in theatre by creating a distinct character-type that may be called the onstage spectator[4] whom the audience is meant to identify with. Some of the attributes of this character-type are an undisclosed personal history, lack of awareness of or control over the action developing around them and initial aloofness from the action before they get subsumed in the plot.

Many twentieth-century theories had already explored the idea of the blurring line of distinction between the actor and spectator. For instance, the Russian formalist Jan Mukařovský, in his 1941 essay "On the Current State of the Theory of the Theatre," examined the idea of how an actor could simultaneously be a spectator:

> [T]he roles of the actor and the spectator are much less distinguished than it might seem at first glance. Even the actor to a certain extent is a spectator for his [*sic*] partner at the moment when the partner is playing; in particular, extras who do not intervene actively in the play are distinctly perceived as spectators. The inclusion of the actors among the audience becomes quite apparent, for example, when a comedian makes a co-actor laugh by his performance. Even if we are aware that such

derstanding spectatorship is now shaped largely by the latest theoretical developments in theatre semiotics, reception theory, or phenomenology (Shepherd and Wallis 238–39) rather than dramatic structure alone.

[3]Bennett makes no mention of Ionesco in the book and the only discussion of Genet is confined to the stage setting in *The Balcony*; she does write about the critics in Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound* (44) and the stage arrangement (134), but no systematic study of the Absurdists other than Beckett is attempted.

[4]Some other characters that fit a similar definition of the onstage spectator are the Mother and the Son in Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, Vladimir and Estragon in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Maurice in Fernando Arrabal's *Two Executioners* and Peter in Edward Albee's *Zoo Story*.

laughter can be intentional (in order to establish active contact between stage and auditorium), we cannot but realize that at such a moment the boundary between the stage and the auditorium runs across the stage itself: the laughing actors are on the audiences' side. (qtd. in Bennett 12)

At the other end of the spectrum, there are moments when the audience in a show becomes an extension of the characters on the stage. This is particularly true when the action contains a set of passive onlookers, playing the equivalent of the audience onstage and their feelings are mirrored in the audience. J. L. Styan examines such a typical moment in *Julius Caesar* when there is an outraged mob of Roman citizens on stage and the audience only seems to "swell their number." As Antony plays his rhetorical tricks to incite them, his address is directed as much at the actual theatre audience as at the unruly Roman crowd. In fact, in productions such as Tyrone Guthrie's, the stage design places the audience as a physical extension of the mob, while Antony faces them together upstage. However, the illusion of participation is short-lived, since the audience do not identify emotionally with the mob for long: they distance themselves from their apparent representatives onstage once they perceive how easily Antony plays on the sentiments of the irrational crowd (Styan 118). The possibilities outlined suggest how a dynamic actor-spectator exchange may take place at a conceptual level without any of the excesses of the later innovators who resort to more intrusive and physical forms of audience participation.

Luigi Pirandello excelled in precisely this kind of audience engagement by creating an endless hall of mirrors in the form of a play-within-a-play-within-a-play. For instance, the central element of his play *Each in His Own Way* is, in Pirandello's own words, the conflict "between the Spectators and the Author and the Actors" which "sends …the performance—up in smoke" (209–10). In this play, he experimented with the complex relationship of the spectator to the spectacle by deliberately conflating the roles of the spectators and actors, as 'spectators' appear within the play to either comment on the action or get involved in it directly.

Building on the Pirandellian precedent, many of the prominent figures associated with the Theatre of the Absurd, such as Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco, and Jean Genet carried out these metatheatrical experiments much further. It is noteworthy that these playwrights very often rejected facile or frivolous attempts at establishing a connection with the audience, in favour of achieving a complex—what

may be called a metaphysical—engagement with the idea of spectatorship. A classic instance of this is seen in Martin Esslin's account of the rejected endings of Ionesco's first play *The Bald Prima Donna* (1950). Among suggestions that he turned down were ideas such as orchestrating chaos among the audience and later "machine-gunning" them or having the maid announce the entry of the author, who would later walk in and pronounce threats against the audience. Instead, he chose the much more disturbing conclusion of having the play begin all over again from the first (Esslin 112), preferring a deeper even if more indirect emotional connection with the audience to overt sensationalism.

The early works of Tom Stoppard have often been discussed in the context of the Absurd and throughout his career, Stoppard has consistently engaged with metatheatrical devices in plays such as *Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth, Travesties,* and *The Real Thing*. Specifically in *The Real Inspector Hound,* which opens with two theatre critics at the première of a whodunit, the focus is on the play-watchers themselves. Birdboot is an experienced critic smitten by an attractive young debutante and Moon is a second-string critic standing in for his superior Higgs, all the while hoping to displace or even kill him. (He also acknowledges that his own stand-in Puckeridge may harbour a similar animosity against him.) Initially, Moon is spotted reading the printed programme, unmistakably bored, while Birdboot opens a chocolate box with an "absurdly loud" crackle (9). While both assume a self-consciously spectatorial position, they play at guessing the murderer or discuss each other's professional achievements. Their actions suggest that they are too sophisticated to be gripped by the atmosphere of 'mystery' onstage or to simple-mindedly identify themselves with the characters and share their anxiety about what might happen next. In fact, they are quick to judge the play before they can even evaluate it, each dictated by his own predilections: Birdboot lavishes praise on the actresses who strike him as sexually attractive, and Moon reveals his penchant for making grandiloquent statements and pretentious allusions to all the literary figures he knows.

At the beginning, the demarcation between the 'play' and 'reality' is sharply drawn. The private lives and preoccupations of the critics alone are given importance as 'reality,' while the inner play is drawn with the bold strokes of a caricature, incessantly calling attention to its own staginess. Through elaborate design, the audience is invited to identify themselves with the critics, who belong to the more realistic realm. The very opening stage direction presents an "impossible" situation: "the audience appear to be confronted by their own reflection in a huge mirror...a bank of plush seats and pale smudges of

faces" (9) and the two critics are seen as a part of the crowd. In fact, Stoppard revealed in an interview that he wanted a real mirror placed upstage to create an illusion of audience surrounding the stage. Further, he noted how in productions of the play it is more effective to place the critics among the real audience or between them and the stage, rather than placing them in the rear onstage ("Ambushes" 70). Stoppard's stage direction further requires that the voices of the critics come through their microphones not as "*sound picked up, amplified and flung out at the audience*" but as "*sound picked up, carried and gently dispersed around the auditorium*" (10). Once the identification of the real audience with the two critics is painstakingly established, they both begin to watch the charade of the murder mystery together.

The play they watch has a ludicrous plot involving a mysterious corpse and an alleged madman-on-the-loose on the secluded premises of Muldoon Manor. The element of exaggeration is made plain in the barely disguised expository statements Mrs. Drudge utters into the phone:

> Hello, the drawing-room of Lady Muldoon's country residence one morning in early spring? [...] I hope nothing is amiss for we, that is Lady Muldoon and her house-guests, are here cut off from the world, including Magnus, the wheelchair-ridden half-brother of her ladyship's husband Lord Albert Muldoon who ten years ago went out for a walk on the cliffs and was never seen again—and all alone, for they had no children. (15)

Lady Cynthia Muldoon who is in mourning is now wooed both by a young man Simon Gascoyne, a new arrival in the neighbourhood, and Lord Magnus Muldoon. All the while, the company at the Manor is engaged in playing cards and nobody in the household notices a corpse lying face down in the middle of the room in full view of the audience. An onstage radio which is turned on at regular intervals seems to have a programme consisting only of 'interruptions' by police—a clear travesty of plot-propellant devices found in popular thrillers.

While Moon and Birdboot remain coolly detached from the spectacle they witness, the conventions of the commercial thriller are constantly satirised: the clichéd stock-in-trade of the genre—the corpse lying in full view unbeknownst to any of the characters, the pointless threats by the characters to kill one another uttered in the maid's hearing, the gratuitous eeriness of a baying hound—are all laid bare for mockery. Inspector Hound, who arrives on the scene looking for the madman, stumbles on the corpse and concludes that the corpse must be

a victim of the madman. As he attempts to investigate the murder, all the characters go on their ways in search of Simon who is now missing. Simon, who is suspected to be the madman, then walks into the room alone and is shot from offstage as he tries to identify the corpse. At this point, the 'play' breaks for interval with the unanswered question of who shot Simon.

In contrast with all these incredible plot contrivances in the inner play, the casual conversation between the critics remains mundane, unpretentious, and mostly credible. Even the stage directions indicate that their behaviour is entirely unselfconscious, which contributes to the largely realistic illusion they are expected to produce. For instance, as Birdboot munches his chocolate, he is heard "chewing into mike" (12). The naturalness of their conversation is highlighted in contrast with the deliberate, inflated style of critical pronouncements they make by putting on a 'public' voice.

Stoppard thus builds up a steady dichotomy between exaggerated theatricality and an illusion of reality at two levels of action, creating a secure distinction between the 'play' and 'life.' However, just as the critics, and vicariously the audience, are about to feel complacently superior to the preposterous action in the play, they find themselves suddenly trapped in it. During the interval, the onstage phone keeps ringing and an annoyed Moon picks it up to realise that the call is for Birdboot from his wife Myrtle. As Birdboot talks over the phone, the 'play' resumes and he is forced to act the part of Simon. As a result, he repeats all of Simon's earlier actions and is killed by the end of the act, but only after he identifies the corpse as that of Moon's superior Higgs. Startled by this bizarre turn of events, Moon ventures onto the stage to look at the corpses and the play resumes once again. Moon is now compelled to play the role of Inspector Hound to solve the case, while the actors who originally played Simon and Hound occupy the critics' seats. The strict demarcation between 'play' and 'reality' has already begun to give way.

In due course, Moon is challenged by the other actors for impersonating Inspector Hound and he begins to feel the plot thickening around himself. Lord Magnus Muldoon now reveals himself to be the "real" Inspector Hound and declares Moon to be the criminal. When Moon recognises Magnus as his own subordinate Puckeridge and attempts to flee, he ends up being shot too. A dying Moon watches his rival in grudging admiration of his ingenuity, while Magnus reveals himself to be also the missing Lord Albert Muldoon who had lost his memory for many years and joined the police under the name of

Hound. Though initially insulated from the play, the two critics finally become victims of a criminal mastermind within the thriller in a *coup de théâtre* that overturns the whole setup.

It is interesting to note how the roles of Moon and Birdboot are explicitly written for the audience to identify with, as is clearly reflected in the opening description of the play. They perfectly fit the character-type labelled earlier as the onstage spectator: Moon and Birdboot are as unaware of the course of the action to ensue as the members of the audience, and react to the barefacedly contrived thriller as any experienced playgoer would—by betraying a mildly amused condescension. Only as much is revealed about their personal history—Moon's disgruntlement at living in the shadow of Higgs and Birdboot's weakness for enchanting actresses—as is required to explain their later implication in the action. Ultimately, when Moon and Birdboot are killed as a part of the play, the audience is expected to receive a similar jolt out of their smugness for having condescendingly distanced themselves from the action. Art, even at its inartistic worst, may still invade life in the most insidious ways. In such a case, the carefully built-up distinction between the actors and audience may simply collapse, leaving the spectators inextricably mixed up in the spectacle. Gabriele Scott Robinson notes how the "spectator as hero"[5] is the "most typical Stoppard character" (42). Thus, Stoppard brings the audience into the limelight by a vicarious representation which eschews any undue physical liberties with the audience.

The principle behind "the spectator as hero" is carried much farther in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, which among other things, is an extended speculation upon the nature of spectatorship. While many of the momentous events of the play are directly imported from *Hamlet*, the predicament of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as the baffled spectators of the incomprehensible drama around them is what lends significance to Stoppard's play. A brief outline of the plot would serve to explain the unenviable condition of the two attendant lords who can neither understand the purpose of their existence nor control the goings-on around themselves.

Tossing coins that mysteriously turn up heads consecutively ninety-two times, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern speculate upon their lives which seem to be under the sway of supernatural forces. Summoned by King Claudius to extract the secret of Hamlet's madness, they meet some players on their way to the court and discuss the rea-

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[5]Robinson also observes that, incidentally, "spectator as hero" is the title of a chapter in *Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon,* the only novel Stoppard ever wrote (42).

sons for the decadence of theatre with them. They rehearse interrogation sessions among themselves in order to fathom the secret of Hamlet's melancholy. Outwitted by the Prince time and again, they seem incapable of fulfilling the King's mission.

Uncomprehendingly, they watch the players rehearsing mimed scenes of the action of *Hamlet* that is to follow, and as they watch, Guildenstern forsees that they both may be fated to die pointlessly. After several failed attempts to discover the reason for Hamlet's melancholia, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are commissioned to travel to England with Hamlet. Suddenly, in the final act, they discover themselves hidden in barrels along with Hamlet and the players on-board the ship. Soon, Hamlet disappears and the two attendant lords discover that they are meant to die on reaching England. They argue with the players about the nature and enactment of death, at the end of which the scene switches to the final *tableau vivant*—or rather, *tableau macabre*—from *Hamlet*, where the two are declared to be dead.

Although the larger structure of the play is not an explicit meta-theatrical setup as in *The Real Inspector Hound,* Rosencrantz and Guildenstern share much in common with Moon and Birdboot in terms of their function. However, it is important to note that their spectatorial role operates at two distinct levels within the play. In the literal sense, the two gentlemen are invited to be the audience—or, indeed voyeurs—to the players' "performances," a euphemism for their participatory pornographic shows. They constantly interact with the players during their rehearsals as well as even after they are exiled. More than the patronage of the court, the players seem to depend on these two attendant lords to keep them meaningfully occupied. They offer their shabby repertoire of pirated Italian tragedies and melodrama of the "blood, love and rhetoric school" before the two (24) in the hope of finding favour at the court.

On one occasion, the troupe performs a dramatic spectacle in the hope that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are watching and the actors feel betrayed when they realise that their audience is gone (47). They dwell at length on the essence of their profession and the indispensability of the spectators: "...the single assumption which makes our existence viable—that somebody is *watching*... (46). However, both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern remain unmoved by their protestations and continue to regard them superciliously. Coldly distant, the two refuse to get involved in the pathetic spectacle they witness rehearsed. Even when Rosencrantz betrays concern, Guildenstern warns him against unsolicited involvement: "Keep back—we're spectators"

(59). After such patronising aloofness, the two are in for a shock towards the end of the rehearsal when they see their own fates foreshadowed by the 'play,' where two Spies dressed in coats identical to their own are shipped away to England with a letter ordering their deaths. Frustrated at their inability to even control the limited action of the players acting before them, Guildenstern tries for once to mount a coup—by stabbing a player (93). However, his triumph is short-lived and he watches disconcertedly as the player rises and explains that the knife is a fake. The ability of the players to enact a mime that prefigures their destiny subverts the assumed superiority of the two and underlines their role as helpless spectators even within the larger scheme of the play.

Stranded in a situation not of their own making and governed by forces beyond their control, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are ready for any surprise. Having little knowledge of what could happen to them next, they become spectators within the play, functioning as an on-stage surrogate of the audience. Their status as spectators in this wider context is made explicit in their own observations, as can be seen in their anxious exchanges and poor attempts at consolation:

> ROS (*at footlights*). How very intriguing! [...] I feel like a spectator—an appalling prospect. The only thing that makes it bearable is the irrational belief that somebody interesting will come on in a minute....
> GUIL. See anyone?
> ROS. No. You?
> GUIL. No. (*At footlights.*) What a fine persecution—to be kept intrigued, without ever quite being enlightened.... (31)

In moments of confused desperation, it is the security of inaction they depend upon for comfort, as when Guildenstern declares resignedly, "Somebody might come in. It's what we're counting on, after all. Ultimately" (43). Alternatively, when bombarded by a series of disconnected events that seem to defy interpretation, a frustrated Rosencrantz exclaims, "Incidents! All we get is incidents! Dear God, is it too much to expect a little sustained action?!" (89).

In this larger spectatorial framework of the play, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are baffled onlookers while the self-assured 'actors'—in the sense of being the prime agents of action—are the royalty around them. In relation to them, the two lords exhibit a pattern of behaviour which corresponds with the different stages of a spectator's comprehension of a play and illuminates the manner of an audience's

response to a theatrical spectacle. These stages may be roughly named as *capitulation*, *distancing* and *individuation*, in addition to which the two also bring about a subtle *alienation* by parody.

Presented with an emotionally charged or intellectually stimulating piece of dramatic art (with the help of skilful actors and corresponding ambience), the audience, at least momentarily, surrenders to the charm of the spectacle and loses its individual identity. This *capitulation* becomes the insurmountable problem for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, since they know they cannot help being overwhelmed. Rosencrantz confesses to this weakness: "We're overawed, that's our trouble. When it comes to the point we succumb to their personality…" (55). In fact, a simple indication that they cannot resist the spell of the royalty is that, whenever they encounter the royal personages, they switch to a different kind of language in keeping with the manner of the court. Freely conversing in a modern, colloquial idiom between themselves or with the Players, they put on an Elizabethan diction only in the presence of the King, Queen, or Hamlet.

Once the spectacle ends, its charm begins to slowly wear off and the audience may resume their everyday selves, no longer overcome by the sway of a dramatic character. This *distancing* is an essential step towards triggering reflection upon the nature of the scene they have witnessed and an intelligent assessment of its significance—as opposed to its pure affect. In Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, this process is indicated by their quick return to modern idiom as soon as the actors depart from the scene. They start analysing the meaning of the action as soon as they are alone. For instance, at the end of the sequence where Hamlet is brought in before Claudius to be deported to England, the two try to understand their own part in the scene:

> ROS (*moves to go*). All right, then?
> GUIL (*does not move: thoughtfully*). And yet it doesn't seem enough; to have breathed such significance. Can that be all? And why us?—anybody would have done. And we have contributed nothing.
> ROS. It was a trying episode while it lasted, but they've done with us now.
> GUIL. Done what?
> ROS. I don't pretend to have understood. Frankly, I'm not very interested … (70)

The third phase is a logical continuation of the earlier one, where each member of the audience forms his or her own impression of the scene,

by means of individual reconstruction and interpretation. The scene no longer 'belongs' to the actors but has been assimilated by every spectator in terms of his or her own unique experience of it. This process of *individuation* is achieved by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern when they restate whatever they have heard the actors speak in their presence in their own words. Articulated by these two, the statements become coloured—or more often, simplified—by their consciousness and are no longer the same as the lofty declamations of the royal personages either in form or essence. A striking case is when the King's elaborate rhetoric welcoming the two is reduced to a simple set of instructions.

> CLAUDIUS.   I entreat you both
>   That, being of so young days brought up with him
>   And sith so neighboured to his youth and haviour
>   That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
>   Some little time, so by your companies
>   To draw him onto pleasures, and to gather
>   So much as from occasion you may glean,
>   Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,
>   That opened lies within our remedy. (26–27)

These are the King's actual words whereas the two paraphrase the invitation in their casual way:

> GUIL. Draw him on to pleasures—glean what afflicts him….
> ROS. We cheer him up—find out what's the matter—
> GUIL. Exactly, it's a matter of asking the right questions and
>   giving away as little as we can. (30)

It is hard to recognise the grave formality of Claudius's address in such a garbled and watered-down summary, although it is this apparently simple-minded version that makes the sinister intention behind the espionage glaringly obvious.

Once the significance of the play has been broken down to its simplest units and coloured by their individual understanding, the attendant lords turn irreverent enough to parody the foregoing action, achieving for the audience a subtle *alienation*, somewhat similar in its outcome to the Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt*. The heightened language of the royalty and the authenticity of their feelings are presented through a distorting mirror of parody, thereby, alienating the audience from naïve identification with them. Since the instruments of such devastating parody here are also the vicarious representatives of the audience, it becomes easier for the audience to laugh at Claudius or even Hamlet.

A telling example of such parody is presented in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's recapitulation of their first interrogation session with Hamlet. Their bungling conversation with Hamlet ends with a strange puzzle:

> HAMLET. But my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.
> GUIL. In what, my dear lord?
> HAMLET. I am but mad north north-west; when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw. (40)

As they analyse how they had been outwitted by the Prince's obscure responses, Rosencrantz's restatement strips the speech of its air of grave mystification: "Denmark's a prison and he'd rather live in a nut-shell; some shadow-play about the nature of ambition, [...] and finally one direct question which might have led somewhere, and led in fact to his illuminating claim to tell a hawk from a handsaw" (42). Towards the end of the play, all of Hamlet's actions have been reduced to a pre-posterous list of peculiar maladies:

> GUIL. It really boils down to symptoms. Pregnant replies, mystic allusions, mistaken identities, arguing his father is his mother, that sort of thing; intimations of suicide, forgo-ing of exercise, loss of mirth, hints of claustrophobia not to say delusions of imprisonment; invocations of camels, chameleons, capons, whales, weasels, hawks, handsaws—riddles, quibbles and evasions; amnesia, paranoia, myopia; day-dreaming, hallucinations; stabbing his elders, abusing his parents, insulting his lover, and appearing hatless in public... (88)

If the Brechtian actor is advised to alienate or estrange the audience from feeling any empathy towards the role he or she is playing, the two parodist-lords here succeed in estranging the audience from the royalty whom they travesty.

Having examined the role of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as spectators within the play, it is easy to understand how the audience are invited to identify with them. Guildenstern acknowledges early on the inevitability of their involvement in the action when he observes, "We've been caught up" (30). Their lack of knowledge of or control over the happenings is made explicit in such exchanges as when Rosencrantz wonders where it is all going to end and Guildenstern re-sponds, "That's the question" (33). Further, they make a claim on the audience's empathy when Guildenstern complains, "We only know

what we're told, and that's little enough" (49). Finally, the absence of any personal history for the two except their summons to Elsinore (11-14) contributes to making them onstage representatives of the audience.

In fact, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern illustrate a further trait of theatre audience that Richard Schechner describes: "Unlike the performers, the spectators attend theatre unrehearsed; they bring to the theatre a decorum that has been learned elsewhere but which is nevertheless scrupulously applied here. Usually the audience is an impromptu group, meeting at the place of the performance and never meeting as a defined group again" (44). Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have obviously blundered into a setting where they do not know how to act; they try applying the laws of another world that seem to be void in the new, incomprehensible universe of *Hamlet*—as demonstrated by Guildenstern's frustrated attempts at testing the laws of probability by tossing coins; finally, both seem aware that they have been thrown together only by accident, as when Guildenstern exclaims: "What could we possibly have in common except our situation?" (35–36).

At a point when the pain of philosophical speculation on the meaning and purpose of their existence becomes intolerable for Guildenstern, the player advises him to act like a cool spectator, a piece of advice that might as well be directed at the audience turning testy about the surface absurdity of the action: "You're nobody special.... Relax. Respond. That's what people do. You can't go through life questioning your situation at every turn." Later on, he unceremoniously cuts off Guildenstern when he pleads helplessness:

> GUIL. But we don't know what's going on, or what to do with ourselves. We don't know how to *act*.
> PLAYER. Act natural. You know why you're here at least. (49)

The suggestion may not be altogether helpful to Guildenstern, but spoken appropriately by the player, it reassures a perplexed audience that they are ultimately there to witness the drama of two attendant lords from *Hamlet* and to depart on their own ways even if they had been momentarily swept into the action for the duration of the play.

Taken together, Tom Stoppard's early works *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* and *The Real Inspector Hound* are an indication of the continued metatheatrical engagement that can be seen throughout his career. In the context of the innovations such as intimate theatre or other postmodern performances such as those by the

Blue Man Group, it is interesting to see how much Tom Stoppard has anticipated the changing perceptions of the audience's role in theatre and included a spectator-figure vicariously representing the audience within his plays. In a world where life itself is increasingly turning into an incomprehensible spectacle, he has succeeded in getting his audience to reflect upon their roles both within and outside the theatre.

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The '*Three Moments of Art*' and Truth-Event: Reflections on Muktibodhian Creative-Process

Anup Kumar Bali

Introduction

Poetry has its own politics within the ambit of its own specificity. But to conceive any phenomena only in an identitarian form[1] is precisely an indication towards the fundamental problem of envisioning phenomena and processes in dichotomized distinct forms that function according to the logic of binary oppositions. This problematic is pertinent to envision the relationship between poetry and politics not as dichotomized distinct processes rather as mutually constitutive ones. On the one hand, dominant ideological manoeuvrings reduce poetry as an instrument for 'political' struggles in 'political' movements whereas we have also been the spectator of art for art's sake kind of conception which clenches poetry within the identitarian fortifications of aestheticism on the other extreme. While shattering these kinds of delusional dichotomies, this paper intends to illumine art of poetry as an embodiment of truth-procedure and this truth-procedurality of art, according to contemporary french philosopher Alain Badiou, is irreducible to other truths. According to Badiou, art as a singular regime of thought is irreducible to philosophy (Badiou 9). On the other hand,

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[1] Here identitarian stands for identification of phenomenon without reflecting upon the processuality that leads to phenomenal appearance. German philosopher, Theodor W. Adorno, reflects upon this as identity thinking which privileges positivity, origin, fixity, and most importantly immanence. With his immanent critique of identitarian thinking—which is the consequent result of idealist dialectic of Hegel—he offers Negative dialectics. In light of this discussion, poetry and politics are not two distinct phenomena as binary oppositions functional only at certain junctures rather the entwinement of poetry and politics as processual unfolding envisages at diverse junctures. This watertight presumption of limiting politics to so-called political events and poetics to so-called aesthetic or artistic ghettos is a symptom of identity thinking or identitarian envisioning of conception. Adorno in his magnum opus *Negative Dialectics* (2004) reflects upon the non-conceptuality under the aspect of concept. For him, dialectics is the consistent sense of non-identity (Adorno 5). He writes, "Contradiction is nonidentity under the aspect of identity; the dialectical primary of the principle of contradiction makes the thought of unity the measure of heterogeneity. As the heterogeneous collides with its limit it exceeds itself" (ibid). Hence, in the form of non-concept, non-identity is the fundamental premise of societal contradiction(s). For Adorno, identity is a primal and real form of ideology (ibid 148) whereas non-identity as negativity unveils the ideological (ibid 31). Because of his emphasis upon negative and consequently on non-identity, his dialectics is negative dialectics. In this way, the non-identity as untruth of identity with its emphasis upon negative dialectics shatters the ideological constitution of reality.

Badiou believes that philosophy has no truth of its own and it depends on politics, art, love, and science for truth. In Badiou's own words, philosophy is conditioned by the truth-procedure in above-mentioned four domains (Badiou 101–107). Here it is important to mention that according to Badiou's conception of art, the truth is immanent and singular within art. Therefore, Badiou rejects the intervention of exchange and relationality by envisaging singularity of truth-procedure in art. This paper intends to reflect upon the revolutionary poetry in politics which offers the possibilities of negation of relationality in the context of creative process of poetic-praxis. As discussed above, the understanding of intimate entwinement of poetry and politics beyond above-mentioned delusional polarities neither would be poetry of politics nor poetry for politics.[2] This paper puts emphasis upon the politics inherent in poetry which manifest itself as *poetry in politics* (Ghosh 136). Politics in *poetry in politics* is not something which is outside of poetry, rather it is poetry in its own actualization while its poetic endeavour unfolds its own politics. Undoubtedly, the aesthetic question is predominant in poetry but the politics inherent in poetry is intrinsic and not free from aesthetic questioning. Consequently, the questions of aesthetics is also the question of politics and hence called the politico-aesthetic of Muktibodh. The politics in *poetry in politics* is to negate the possible generalization of networks of exchange-principle in ongoing creative-process of poetry by the concrete useful labour of an artist. This concrete useful labour of artist is his aesthetic labour that constitutes the use-value of art. German philosopher, Walter Benjamin, recognizes the usefulness of artistic labour that has the potentiality to negate the commodity character of society. In his essay, "Author as Producer," he recognised the revolutionary use-value (87) of art which wrenches with modish commerce of capitalist society. In this light, the revolutionary poetry in politics is a politics against the dictates of capital as the dictatorship of exchange and relationality. Contemporary Italian Marxist, Franco "Bifo" Berardi, rightly recognised the revolutionary potential in poetic language. In his essay, "Poetry and Finance," he stated a pertinent point about poetic language, "Poetry is the language of nonexchangeability, the return of infinite hermeneutics, and the return of sensuous body of language" (139–140). Hence, the revolutionary politics in poetry is the politics to invoke the nonexchangeability of poetic language. This negation of relationality is possible only through the negation of exchange-principle inherent in capitalist societal structure and hence through the subtraction from this very structure. Contemporary Marxist Philosopher, Slavoz Žižek, indicates towards exchange-principle in his conception of ideology and

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[2]As it leads to instrumentalization of poetry considering it makes poetry an instrument of identitarian politics.

ideological fantasy while engaging with the idea of real abstraction given by Frankfurt school economist, Alfred Sohn-Rethel, in his book, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. This negation of exchange-principle with the singularity of truth immanent in art, emancipates poetry from its aestheticist identitarian fortifications and foregrounds what Badiou would call "autonomy of the aesthetic process."

Hindi poet and literary thinker, Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh,[3] in his creative process of poetry demonstrates the relation of form and content in its singularity and not in relationality. For him, the emergence of the form of artifact is actually a processual continuity. In this sense, the psychic elements (content) which one acquires from social-reality and the emerged form from this content develops from the innovative experience of the artist. This form flows freely in diverse directions and marks the boundaries of the artifact. This free-flow of form is the autonomy of art which capitalist hegemony wants to subordinate through its control. The explicit proof of singular processuality of Muktibodh's art-production is his conceptual discovery, *Three Moments of Art*. This paper intends to illumine the poetic-praxis of Hindi poet Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh's critical reflection on creative-process of poetry in context to his *Three Moments of Art.* as well as the envisage the possible relationship between

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[3]Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh (1917–1964) was a prominent poet of *Nayi Kavita* (New Poetry) and Hindi modernism. Though belonged to central India (Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra) and his mother tongue was Marathi and not Hindi, he has been considered as one of the most influential poet and literary thinker of Hindi. Muktibodh was one of the central figures in Hindi literature who endeavored to rethink Marxism and progressivism in his own way. While critiquing dogmatic Marxism and traditional progressivism for their ignorance of the question of individual, he was keen on resolving the complex relationship of individual and society in capitalist social structure while profoundly encountering the question of self-alienation. In this direction, he was heavily influenced by psychoanalysis as is reflected in his critical essays and letters. It is of significance that his exercise of psychoanalysis was influenced by Marxism. This productive relationship between Marxism and psychoanalysis can be seen in few of his poems, such as *Andhere Mein* (In The Dark) (Muktibodh Rachnawali 2, pp. 320–355. Its English translation can be found in the journal *Hindi: Language, Discourse, Writing*, vol. 2 no. 1), *Brahmarakshasa*, *Dimagi Guhaandhkar kaa Orang-Outang* (The Orang-Outang), and *Shunya* (The Void Within). (Muktibodh Rachnawali 2 and their English translation can be found in *Signatures: one hundred Indian Poets*, pp. 68–77). Muktibodh was one among the many Indian writers who innovatively thought about creative process. For this reason, his *Ek Sahityik Kee Diary* is an important document in Hindi and Indian literary history. This paper is a theoretical reflection on the creative process of poetry as *Three Moments of Art*. Since it is a bit complicated to reflect upon Muktibodh's creative process through his poetry and demands a separate endeavour altogether, this paper will mainly focus on the theoretical aspect of Muktibodhian creative-process. The artistic inquiry of his poetry is beyond the scope of this paper.

Muktibodhian creative-process and contemporary anti-capitalist global philosophy.

The question of subjectivity: Interaction between interior and exterior

Self-struggle is a word whose conceptual analysis can only be possible in context to world-view and praxis of the person/artist through which we endeavour to comprehend this struggle. What does it mean in context of Muktibodh's self-struggle? While referring to long poems of Niraala and Muktibodh, renowned Hindi critic, Namwar Singh, underlines the significance of the dual struggle between the self and the world:

> English poet W. B. Yeats writes somewhere that when we do struggle outside of our self then fiction literature is created, and when we do struggle within our own self then lyric poetry is created. Lyric poetry which is created during our own self struggle is definitely not romantic (*Chhayawadi*) but rather the song of today's poetry. But there is third possibility also, when we try to struggle with various externalities during our own self struggle, and there are special kinds of long poems created, it is the supreme contribution of modern poetry, Nirala's "*Raam Ki Shaktipuja*" and "*Saroj-Smiriti*" etc. poems are born due to this kind of self-struggle. Muktibodh's long poems come under this tradition only.[4] (As quoted in Nawal 1) [My translation]

While struggling with his own self, Muktibodh was also constantly struggling with the socio-political hegemony. Not only is his poetry but his whole oeuvre a proof of this struggle. Therefore, it is requisite here to understand this self-struggle with its complexities via comprehensive contexts.

The different aspects of an individual's perspective of life are a result of actions, reactions, and self-consciousness of personal desires, aspirations, and social-reality. The different dimensions of these aspects inclusively direct his/her temperament (or psychology). This temperament is also manifest in specific desires which are the outcome of social atmosphere, socio-economic location, as well as familial and community relations of the individual. The question arises here is

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[4]अंग्रेजी कवि डब्ल्यू. बी. एट्स ने कहीं लिखा है कि जब हम अपने से बाहर संघर्ष करते हैं, तो कथा साहित्य की सृष्टि होती है, और अपने आपसे लड़ते हैं तो गीत–काव्य की. अपने आप से लड़ने पर जो गीत–काव्य पैदा होता है, वह निस्संदेह छायावादी गीत नहीं बल्कि आज की कविता का गीत है. लेकिन एक तीसरी भी स्थिति है, जब हम अपने आपसे लड़ते हुए बाहरी स्थिति से भी लड़ने की कोशिश करते हैं, और एक विशेष प्रकार की लम्बी कविताएँ पैदा होती हैं, जो आधुनिक कविता की सबसे बड़ी उपलब्धि है. निराला की 'राम की शक्तिपूजा' और 'सरोज–स्मृति' आदि लम्बी कविताएँ इसी प्रकार के आत्मसंघर्ष से पैदा हुई हैं. मुक्तिबोध की लम्बी कविता उसी परम्परा में आती हैं.

whether both the processes exist in a form of binary-opposition while differentiating to each other or is it significant to comprehend these processes with some other perspective. This question is relevant because the analytic approach of interaction among interiority and exteriority is fundamentally premised upon it. Psychologist Dr. Anup Dhar and economist Dr. Anjan Chakrabarti put forward the possibility of psycho-social studies while confronting this question. For this possibility, they formulate a correspondence between Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser and Psychologist Jacques Lacan.[5]

Althusser's conception of *interpellating apparatuses* underlines the process of subject formation in a capitalist society with ideological and repressive state apparatuses. Dr. Dhar and Dr. Chakrabarti named this conception as *philosophy of inside*. Similarly, they named the Lacanian conception of Real as *philosophy of outside*. Lacan formulates the Real as the thing which is beyond the process of symbolization or which is the remainder of the process of symbolization. In this way, Real as remainder of symbolization, is always beyond the demarcation of symbolic. Therefore, not only the expression rather the imagination of the Real is also impossible. In this way, Dr Dhar and Dr. Chakrabarti endeavour to reconcile the process of delimitation of subject by capitalist ideology and hegemony; the Althusserian *philosophy of inside*, to Lacanian *philosophy of outside* for comprehending their dynamicity of hegemony within symbolic order or social reality. An individual only sees his/her real conditions in some imaginative illumination because of this ideological hegemony. This is Althusserian elucidation of ideology which is a 'representation' of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence (Althusser 32). They further quote Mexican psychologist, Pavon-

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[5]In one of their research papers Dr. Dhar and Dr. Chakrabarti put forward many questions before the reader while attacking hypostatized dichotomy and pseudo distinction between interiority and exteriority. In this direction they strive to envisage the continuous and processual interaction between psychic and social. While referring this point, they write, "If the condition of the psychic is traceable to the "factory of [unconscious] thoughts" (Freud 317), and if unconscious thoughts are an inalienable thread of the overdetermined social, affecting the social and, in turn, being affected by it, how can this dialogue be avoided? How is the "psychic," which is usually understood as a kind of interiority, always already "social?" How is the social, which is usually understood as a kind of exteriority, paradoxically "psychic?" What is the connection then between the psychic and the social? How are they interlinked? Where is the overdetermination and contradiction between interiority and exteriority? – and can the Althusser–Lacan correspondence stand in as the ground for the above-mentioned question?" (221).

Cuellar, in context of English word *extimacy*.[6] Pavon-Cuellar shattered the pseudo distinction of interiority and exteriority while using this term in context of Lacan.

At this juncture, it is important to reflect upon whether Muktibodh introduces any schema that foregrounds the micro and macro behavior[7] and activities of human vis-à-vis art and literature. His essay, *Vastu aur Rup: Do*, shows a significant denotation related to the idea of non-distinction between interior and exterior. He writes:

> Ergo, even if it's convenient to differentiate sociological and psychological exposition, it is important to know its limitation. The lack of knowledge regarding this limitation, if it makes the exposition of art, on one hand, mechanically sociological, whereas on the other hand, it is assumed as a part of chaste psychology or spirituality.[8] (108) [My translation]

It is evident from Muktibodh's above quote that he envisions the humanist philosophy of literature in the context of interaction among social and psychological aspects of an individual. Now it is interesting to reflect upon whether there is any attempt in Muktibodhian thought-process for questioning the distinction between interior and exterior or is there any attempt in Muktibodh which shows the continuous interaction and hence dialectics between these two? Here Professor Apoorvanand's statement seems relevant whether Muktibodh was seeking Marxism or was he preparing his own Marxism. Interestingly, he said so in the context of *Ek Sahityik Kee Dairy* (11). Because of his profound interest in psychoanalysis, Muktibodh has been stamped as an

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[6]It's an English translation of French neologism coined by Lacan. Pavon-Cuellar employ this term to question the hypostatized dichotomy of interiority and exteriority. He writes, "The term "extimacy" is an English translation of the French neologism (*extimité*) coined by the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1959–1960). It is deployed in this paper for the purpose of problematizing, questioning, challenging, and even rejecting and going beyond the traditional psychological distinction between exteriority and psychic interiority or intimacy. Instead of this fundamental distinction and the resultant fixed conceptual dualities that cross and constitute psychology, extimacy indicates the non-distinction and essential identity between the dual terms of the outside and the deepest inside, the exterior and the most interior of the psyche, the outer world and the inner world of the subject, culture and the core of personality, the social and the mental, surface and depth, behaviour and thoughts or feelings (Pavon-Cuellar as cited in Dhar and Chakrabarti 224).

[7]Here Micro and macro refers to individual's psychic and social behavior, respectively.

[8]अतएव, मनुष्य की समाजशास्त्रीय व्याख्या और मनोवैज्ञानिक व्याख्या को एक–दूसरे से अलग करना सुविधाजनक भले ही हो, इन दोनों की सीमाएं जान लेना ज़रूरी है. इस सीमा–बोध के अभाव ने ही कला की व्याख्या को यदि एक ओर यांत्रिक समाजशास्त्रीय बना दिया है, तो दूसरी ओर उसे विशुद्ध मनोवैज्ञानिक का या अध्यात्मवाद का अंग मान लिया गया है.

existentialist in Hindi literature but Muktibodh's interest in psycho-analysis is primarily because of the question of self. It is significant to reflect on Muktibodhian literature and critical thinking in relation to whether he was self-obsessed, as argued by renowned Hindi critique professor Ram Vilas Sharma (142) or he was obsessed with the question of self and hence with self-alienation. It is through his emphasis on the question of self that Muktibodh illuminates interactions among interiority and exteriority time and again in his writings while exceeding the pseudo distinctions of interiority and exteriority. This is exemplified by Muktibodh's writing:

> Our life which starts with our birth gets fulfilled & developed by the internalization of external life. If this internalization does not happen, we would become as blind worm, or the water creature hydra. Our emotional wealth, knowledge wealth, experience prosperity all these are inseparable parts of this system of internal content. This system we acquired from internalization of external life and world. We internalize the external till our death continuously. But with discussion, debate, writing, speech, literature and poetry, we externalize our self continuously. *Internalization of external and externalization of internal is a perpetual cycle*. This internalization is not just related to contemplation rather it's also related to action. In essence, art is a form of externalization of internal.[9] (105 Emphasis Mine) [My translation]

Therefore, in the process of exceeding from distinction between social and psychic, one thing is explicit: with any change in social-reality, these two domains (social and psychic) get impacted. Hence, they are regulated by social-reality and they also regulate it within their ambit. Here it is important to ponder upon the related inconsistency in social-reality because one format of reality makes social and psychic non-distinct and the other format of '*reality*' make them appear as dichotomize distinct.[10] Does the regulation exist only up to the dialecti-

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[9]हमारे जन्म–काल से ही शुरू होने वाला हमारा जो जीवन है, वह बाह्य जीवन–जगत के आभ्यंतरीकरण द्वारा ही सम्पन्न और विकसित होता है. यदि वह आभ्यंतरीकरण न हो, तो हम अंध–कृमि, हाइड्रा – बन जाएँ. हमारी भाव सम्पदा, ज्ञान सम्पदा, अनुभव समृद्धि तो उस अंतर्तत्त्व–व्यवस्था ही का अभिन्न अंग है, कि जो अंतर्तत्त्व–व्यवस्था हमने बाह्य जीवन–जगत के आभ्यंतरीकरण से प्राप्त की है. हम मरते दम तक बाह्य जीवन–जगत का आभ्यंतरीकरण करते जाते हैं. किन्तु बातचीत, बहस, लेखन, भाषण, साहित्य और काव्य द्वारा हम निरंतर स्वयं का बाह्यीकरण करते जाते हैं. बाह्य का आभ्यंतरीकरण और आभ्यंतरीकृत का बाह्यीकरण एक निरंतर चक्र है. यह आभ्यंतरीकरण मात्र मनन–जन्य नहीं, वरन् कर्म–जन्य भी है. जो हो, कला आभ्यंतर के बाह्यीकरण का एक रूप है.

[10]This delusionality of dichotomization directly links to Dr. Dhar, Dr. Charkarabarti, and Dr. Dasgupta's idea of capitalism or capitalist hegemony as irreal. In their recent book, Dr. Dhar, Dr. Chakrabarti, and Dr. Dasgupta bluntly critique, even reject the incessant dichotomizations by referring to Marx's Capital. They write, "Marx's

cal nexus of social-psychic or some other interventions also control this regulation? The other pertinent question which persists here is—how is this intervention related to the other format of *reality* which makes social-psychic appear as dichotomize distinct?

Real abstraction and ideological reality: The Chasm of Social and Psychic

The dichotomize distinction of social-psychic points towards the fact that there are some processes which interrupt an individual in reaching his/her social-reality or rather would be significant to reflect that he/she is alienated from his/her social-reality. Earlier we had seen in context to Althusser that ideology is a 'representation' of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence. In this sense, the alienation of individual from his/her social-reality is explicit. In this section, the objective is to underline this very situation. When ruling or dominating class publicizes and propagates an aspect of reality (or some special sort of reality or myth) with the help of organized mass mediums of communication for their class related interest, then this representation of reality (with on-going glorification of that reality) appears as *reality* which is different from the actual reality of society. In a way, *reality* alienates from its real. According to this *reality,* a particular social consciousness aligns with the society which seems actual social consciousness of society. This leads to a distorted ideology, constructed on the basis of this false consciousness. Marx and Engels' well-founded concept of false consciousness in their book, *German Ideology*, described the characteristic features of ideology cherished by this false consciousness, according to them, in light of ideology—"the human and his conditions seems always upside down." Similarly, they also reveal the hegemonic ideas of ruling or dominat-

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Methodology in *Capital: Critique of Political Economy* is premised on dual play of on the one hand defetishing the fetish (the location of the critique), and on the other hand, working through the dialectic of real and unreal, commodity as material and sensuous, concrete labour and abstract labour, labour power and labour…capital as material and capital as more than material, etc. Marx thus, moves beyond the watertight compartmentalization of object-subject, thing-idea, concrete-abstract, or the strict bifurcation of idealism-materialism. To miss the methodology of Marx is to reduce the delusional nature of reality, and the real nature of delusional into simple matter/idea, true/false consciousness frameworks" (2015, pp. 49). By emphasizing on this methodology of Marx they also reject the dichotomize distinction of real and unreal while putting the idea of irreal. They write, "Taking off from the methodology of Marx, we theorize capitalism as capitalist hegemony, which is both real and unreal, irreal to be precise, and which has a dream-like quality." (ibid, pp. 49) Similarly, my attempt by elucidating Muktibodhian critical-thinking is to critique, shatter, and even reject dichotomize distinct forms of phenomena, processes, or events which functions according to the logic of binary oppositions.

ing class: "the ideas of the ruling class are in very epoch the ruling ideas; the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at same time its ruling intellectual force." Hence, Marx and Engels envisage ideology as an intervention which controls social-reality. On the other hand, contemporary Marxist philosopher, Slavoz Žižek, instead of differentiating ideology from reality, questions the *reality* itself. He writes:

> …ideology is not simply a 'false consciousness', an illusory representation of reality, it is rather this reality itself which is already to be conceived as 'ideological' – *'ideological' is a social reality whose very existence implies the non-knowledge of its participants as to its essence* – that is, the social effectivity, the very reproduction of which implies that the individuals 'do not know what they are doing'. '*Ideological is not the 'false consciousness' of a (social) being but this being itself in so far as it is supported by 'false consciousness.'* (15–16)

Žižek reveals the structural violence of real abstraction which is inherent in exchange process of capitalist social structure which represses and hides the use-value of commodity. The form of exchange-value came into existence by repressing the content of use-value which remains secret in the internal kernel of commodity fetishism. Consequently, there is always an antagonism between use-value and exchange-value in commodity. Marx writes in volume one of Das *Capital*, "As use value, commodities are above all, of different qualities but as exchange value they are merely different quantities, and consequently do not contain an atom of use value" (45). Therefore, in the process of emergence of exchange-value while repressing use-value, exchange becomes an inevitable need and hence, exchange-principle generalizes itself and becomes universal in every socio-economic domain. Hence, in a capitalist society individual is working within networks of exchange-values of diverse commodities that control and delimit the fundamental unit of social-reality. In a capitalist society, individual is a subject of capital who completely internalizes the logic of real abstraction. Hence, this logic of real abstraction becomes the *reality* of individual on its own. Žižek shows the characteristic feature of this real abstraction, as the non-knowledge of the reality of real abstraction, is a part of its very essence and is possible only on a condition that the individuals partaking in it are not aware of its proper logic, "...if we come to 'know too much,' to pierce the true functioning of social reality, this reality would dissolve itself" (15).

Creative-process: Artist's self-struggle against hegemony and ideological reality

Muktibodh envisions reality in its micro, specific, and spatial forms. Its dynamicity reconciles the micro preciosity of reality to the macro expansiveness of reality.[11] This micro preciosity on one hand links with an individual's psychology and, on the other hand, gets regulated and controlled by dynamicity of social-reality. Therefore, Muktibodh's reality-process not only renders the socio-political contextualization of individual's life but also marks the impact of socio-political turmoil on the psyche of individual. It captures the action-reaction of diverse activities of reality. It represents the complex schemas of diverse aspects of action-reaction and strokes and counter-strokes of dragging and intricacies of reality. For Muktibodh, this reality-process which he calls *internalization of external* is important since the artist's art-praxis is fundamentally premised upon this. Moreover, he suggests that if this internalization is carried immaturely and irrationally then it might have decisive consequences on the literature produced. Precisely at this juncture, he emphasizes upon the continuous self-criticism of poet vis-à-vis *internalization of external* (Muktibodh 216). Hence, for Muktibodh the *internalization of external* is a conscious process, where continuous self-criticism illuminates reality-process in its singularity. It doesn't mean that for Muktibodh reality is one-dimensional or monochromatic, rather Muktibodh contextualizes reality in its specificity. The singularity of specific reality here implies the reality in itself. This is use-value or usefulness of reality which negates the exchange-principle and consequently stops the Muktibodhian reality to become the instrument of/for capital. Hence, it is important to reflect how Muktibodh demonstrates the relation of form and content in its singularity and usefulness. Muktibodh writes, while answering this question:

> Assuredly the question of development of form is enclosed to the question of development of content; it is incidental to the whole life. Even though we visualize the question of form and content distinctly in accordance to convenience of our intellect, it is inalienable to each other. The relationality of these relations is inherent in entire life like tree roots. Actually the prolem of form emerges only when the problem of content arises.[12] (118) [My translation]

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[11]Here micro preciosity refers to subtle detailing of psychic reality and macro expansiveness refers to global and national socio-political turmoil.

[12]निश्चय ही रूप के विकास का प्रश्न तत्त्व के विकास के प्रश्न के साथ जुड़ा हुआ है. वह सारे जीवन से जुड़ा है. हम अपनी बौद्धिक सुविधा की दृष्टि से भले ही रूप और तत्त्व के प्रश्नों को अलग–अलग करके देखें,

The above quote explicitly demonstrates Muktibodh as a militant poet and thinker against the exchange-principle of capital. Here, by going forward from the singularity of reality, content, and form, Muktibodh demonstrates whole life in an entire singularity which indicates toward Badiou's *universal singularity* (14–15). This is a generalizability of mutual partaking of specific singularities, which negates the exchange-principle of capitalist relationality. Contemporary Marxist activist and thinker, Pothik Ghosh, calls it relationality of non-relational while referring to Badiou's another conception. (78)

Hence, the self-struggle of Muktibodh is a struggle for mutual partaking of specific singularities in content and form, while going beyond the conscious process of *internalization of external*. Here the question of how Muktibodhian creative-process synthesizes dialectical relation between micro reality of psychic action-reaction and macro reality of socio-political turmoil arises. How does the artifact come into being by this synthesis which maintains singularity of its reality in its production-process? Whether incarnation of the form of an artifact from the content of reality in this processuality is an incarnation of some dichotomy which activates the networks of exchange relations while interrupting the usefulness of reality? In other words, are the roots of this artifact located in specific singularity of reality or is the form of artifact controlled and captivated by and, hence, subsumed within hegemonic ideological reality? What does it mean when Muktibodh ponders upon the complexities of creative-process when he says that "…many people including poets forget this fact, because they don't want to carry on or else they want to run away from middle"[13] (215) [My translation]. Is it an escape from self-struggle of singularity for emerged form from singular reality; the struggle within self in singularity while struggling against the logic of capital (exchange-principle) and capitalist hegemony? For Muktibodh it is important that the quest of form of artifact should be free from any external intervention. But, this external intervention can enter into ongoing creative-process of an artist from the history of some earlier artifact of artist himself. The entry of this external intervention into the singular processual unfolding actually is the lapse of singularity itself and consequently the establishment of exchange-principle and relationality. In this way, the intervention of pre-determined form from already existed artifact, if it intervenes in ongoing creative-process, then the established artifact—which is distinct from artist and already a commodity

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वे एक दूसरे से अविच्छिन्न हैं. इन संबंधों के सम्बन्ध–सूत्र, वृक्ष–मूलों की भांति सारे जीवन में समाये हुए हैं. सच तो यह है कि रूप की समस्या ही तब उठती है जब तत्त्व की समस्या उठती है.

[13]बहुतेरे लोग जिनमे कवि भी शामिल हैं, इस तथ्य को भूल जाते हैं, क्योंकि वे उस पर चलना नहीं चाहते, अथवा बीच में से ही भाग जाना चाहते हैं.

in exchange networks of capital—extends itself through exchange networks in ongoing creative process through this intervention. Hence, the self-struggle of Muktibodh is a continuous quest of singularities. It is the politics of Muktibodhian poetic-praxis which negates the exchange-principle continuously for the specific singularity of reality to attain generalizability of politics—either in *internalization of external* or for the quest of form for dynamic reality. As a consequence of the lapse of singularity, Muktibodh recognizes the mechanization of poetry production and calls it 'conditioned literary reflexes' which can be linked to Walter Benjamin's idea of mechanical (re)production of art, especially in its impact on literature after the emergence of printing (Benjamin 218–219). In the same line of thought, Muktibodh was aware of the fact that the generalization of publishing industry intervenes into the singularity of creative-process of poetry which results in what he calls reified aesthetic patterns[14] (Muktibodh 239, 105–106). Muktibodh adequately demarcates the reification of internal criticality of poet. He underlines that the poet's subjectivity during the process of projecting the affective-constellations of his sensible life gradually develops the criticality and internal affective-editing during his creative-process. In this way, he (poet) adequately takes control over psychic form(s) of expression—imagery, rhythm, and suggestive connotation—and adjoins it with the specific affects and affective-constellations of his life. This adjoining of psychic form of expression with the specific sensible-affects gradually becomes the prominent reason of reification which Muktibodh calls 'conditioned literary reflexes.'[15] This is the lapse of singularity of poetry when it comes under the dictates of exchange.

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[14]मुक्तिबोध इसके लिए जड़ीभूत सौंदर्याभिरुचि नामक अवधारणा का प्रयोग करते हैं।

[15]Muktibodh profoundly reflects upon this problem. He strives to comprehend the process behind this conditioning as reification of aesthetics. He writes while subtly inquiring this problem that, "many poets don't arrive at the cognition of these problematic and the related turning point of life. Instead of further exploration for development they keep on revolving around themselves. Subsequently, their earlier establishment of conditions mechanically and continuously expresses the old echoes. The old tentacles made by them – means old affect and their expression doesn't let them go further. Conditioned literary reflexes mechanically produce poems. Impulse becomes mechanical and an expressionistic form becomes insentient. Poet stuck within his own cage. And then there is a time when poet ultimately died but his body remains for centenarian" (214) [My translation]. Following is the original quote in Hindi by Muktibodh: किन्तु, बहुतेरे कवि इन कठिनाइयों के बोध तक, जीवन के उस घुमाव तक, आ ही नहीं पाते. वे आगे के विकास के बजाय अपने ही आस–पास घूमते रहते हैं. फलतः उनके पूर्व की स्थिति स्थापना, यांत्रिक रूप से, पुरानी गूंजे प्रकट कराती रहती हैं. उनके खुद के तैयार किये गए पुराने शिकंजे – यानी पुराने भाव और उनकी अभिव्यक्ति – उन्हें आगे नहीं बढ़ने देती. कण्डीशण्ड साहित्यिक रिफ्लेक्सेज़ यंत्रवत् कविताएँ तैयार करवाते हैं. मनोवेग यांत्रिक हो जाते हैं, अभिव्यंजक रूप जड़ीभूत हो जाते हैं. कवि अपने बनाये कटघरे में फंस जाता है. और एक समय आता है जब कवि कतई मर जाता है, किन्तु उसका शरीर शतायु रहता है.

It would be significant to look into Berardi's reflection on poetic language here. For him, "…poetry opens the door of perception to singularity. Poetry is language's excess, poetry is what in language cannot be reduced to information, and is not exchangeable, but gives to a new common ground of understanding, of shared meaning: the creation of new world" (147). As soon as poetry comes under the dictates of exchange, it becomes commodity. Benjamin contends that the most perfect reproduction of artifact lacks its temporal and spatial sense. Hence, there is a decadence of art's specific spatiality and consequently of its existence (220). In this way, Benjamin shows that the mechanical reproduction of art leads to the decay of its aura (ibid 222–223). This could be understood as the increasing democratization of art and culture whereas on the other hand this decay also underlines the subsumption of art and culture under the dictates of capital. The widespread distribution of artworks is the ideology of mechanical reproduction of art. Here distribution represses the internal technique of art while subordinating it under the dictates of market forces. In this way, the use-value of art, or in other words the aesthetic labour which organizes the internal laws of art, subsumes under the exchange-principle of capital. Adorno formulates the concept of *culture industry* for explicating the intervention of capital in art and culture as mechanical reproduction of artworks and its widespread distribution. He writes while underlining the peculiarity of *culture industry*, "what might be call use value in the reception of cultural assets is being replaced by exchange value" (128). He underlines that the universal victory of mechanical production and reproduction of art ensures that nothing will change and nothing unsuitable will emerge (106–107). In this precise sense the conception of *culture industry* signifies the intense penetration of capital in the socio-culture scenario. Interestingly, Muktibodh recognizes this intense penetration of capital in his own way in Hindi cultural landscape. He writes:

> This is the age of capitalism. It is hostile to poetry. Capitalism primarily attacks poetry in the cultural landscape once it establishes itself. While wrecking the poetry from its overall emotionality, passion and zeal, capital detaches the poetry from the significant vibrations which is fostered with the great virtues of mutually conflicting diverse full life and world. This age makes poetry sterile or in other words, it diminishes poetry to decaying obscurity (239).[16] [My translation]

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[16]यह युग पूंजीवाद का युग है, कि जो पूंजीवाद कविता का दुश्मन है। पूंजीवाद एक बार सुप्रतिष्ठित हो जाने पर सांस्कृतिक क्षेत्र में सबसे पहले कविता पर हमला करता है। कविता को समस्त भावावेशों से छिन्नकर, इस

It is significant to relate poetry as decaying obscurity to Benjamin's decay of aura, which is a consequence of mechanical production and reproduction of art. Here the decaying obscurity of poetry denotes the commodification of poetry that results in the increasing generalization of *culture industry*. In his poem *Meetha Ber* (sweet jujube), Muktibodh underlines the intense penetration of capital in Hindi cultural landscape. Here the sweet wild jujube tree is a symbol of aesthetic labour of creativity which critiques the exchange-principle inherent in mechanical (re)production of art. Muktibodh portrays the mechanical (re)production of *culture industry* in these imageries:

> Thousands lines of flashlights
> Write your poems
> In colorful alphabets
> Reside In remotely situated clouds!!
> Thousands of flashlights
> That you have import from remotely situated countries
> That you have made to
> Enlighten your zeal
> Those are your treasure. (C: 22)[17] [My Translation]

For Muktibodh, this symbol of wild jujube shrub represents the creativity inherent in human-labour. Interestingly, for Berardi, the poetic sensibility is the ability to understand what cannot be verbalized (143–144), whereas Badiou recognizes the unnameable singularity of poetic sensible which shatters the dichotomy of sensibility and thought in his profound essay "Philosophy and Poetry from the Vantage Point of the Unnameable" (47–48). It is precisely the non-identity of creativity due to which Muktibodh calls it unnameable.

> I would also die unnamed
> Yet also
> I would flow
> As red blood flows in veins
> In the body of every generation

विशाल परस्पर–द्वंद्वमय महान गुणों से युक्त वैविध्य–पूर्ण जीवन–जगत के सार्थक स्पंदों से बहुत दूर हटाकर, यह युग उसे (कविता को) निष्प्राण अथवा क्षीण–छाया–समान बना देता है।
[17]हज़ारों फ्लैशलाइट रेखाएँ
सुदूर मेघों पर
तुम्हारी कविताएं लिखती हैं
रंगीन अक्षरों में !!
हज़ारों फ्लैशलाइटें
जो तुमने मंगायी हैं दूर स्थित देशों से
जो तुमने बनायी हैं अपने आवेश
प्रकाशन के लिए
वे निधि तुम्हारी हैं !!

One by one
Unnamed radiant red blood.[18] (ibid 22–23) [My Translation]

According to his Marxist world-view, Muktibodh considers the fundamental premise of human knowledge to be the creativity of human-doing. He knows that the artifacts amassed with the aesthetic labour of art express the fundamental power of human expression. Hence, this creativity of human-doing flows as social flow of doing. This social flow of doing as power-to has been precluded by exchange-relations of capital. This preclusion of social flow of doing and power-to have been replaced or substituted by the power-relations constituted by capital. Irish philosopher, John Holloway, would call this power-over (28). Nevertheless, this social-flow of creativity of human-doing in the form of negativity remains active as the possibility of destruction of these power-relations. This negative is the use-vale of human creativity. Muktibodh adequately recognizes the use-value of creativity. It is extremely difficult to conciliate it but its taste is sweet.

The overall savour and pile of knowledge
As amassed in jujube's (fruit)
Has been becoming more strengthful
Becoming a vigor.
I do not need
Flashlights, clouds and sky
Foy my self-glorification!!
I do not display
I just spread and flow in blood!!
Because I am a wild jujube shrub
Thorny and wild
But sweet!![19] (ibid 23) [My Translation]

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[18]मैं भी मर जाऊंगा नामहीन
फिर भी मैं
पुश्त–दर–पुश्त
पीढ़ी–दर–पीढ़ी की देह में
शिराओं में
लाल–लाल खून बन बहता ही रहूँगा –
प्रकाशमान लाल रक्त नामहीन ।
[19]बेरों में इकट्ठा
सारी ज्ञान–रस–राशि
लाखों की रगों में बह रही है
वीर्य बन रही है
ओजस बन गयी है !!
मुझे निजत्व–प्रकाशन–हित
फ्लैशलाइटों व मेघों व व्योम की
ज़रूरत ही नहीं है !!
स्वयं का प्रकाशन नहीं करता

For Muktibodh wild and thorny is a symbol of self-struggle. The struggle is fundamental in artist's life against the mechanical (re)production of poetry and, hence, against the reification of aesthetics. It is extremely difficult and painful at the same time. The poet is trapped within the network of relationality while escaping from the challenge of self-struggle and consequently becomes the subject of exchange-principle. But the negation of relationality and exchange is also depicted in Muktibodh's writing:

> The process of conditioned literary reflexes is natural but at the same time, it's also obvious that there must be some change in poet's inner-subjectivity. Subsequently, the newly formed constellations of affects would be confronted with old reflexes. If poet courageously accelerates the self-struggle and by self-introspection makes this self-struggle significant then there is a hope that he should discover new ground.[20] (214) [My translation]

The discovery of new grounds by an artist implies discovery and the making of reality by the artist himself/herself. In this direction, Muktibodh rejects the intervention of capitalist hegemony which alienates an individual from his/her own labour and consequently from reality. Muktibodh negates this alienation through the specific singularities and its mutual partaking of his life-process, creative-process, and critical-process. But this negation is not easy. For this, creator has to question his self, time and again, while continually confronting himself. In this process poet also feels 'inferior.' But he/she does not discover new ground without confronting this level. This discovery is inherent to self-discovery. The continual confrontation of self while continuously questioning self is actually the processuality of self-discovery. This processuality in its dynamicity re-questions the phenomenality of the newly discovered self, and consequently ensures continuation of self-discovery. This continuation of self-discovery ensures the self-transformation of the individual. In this sense, Muktibodh does not only discover and transform the form of his artifact from the psychic elements (content) of internalized reality but rather there is a continuation of self-transformation of Muktibodh which

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मैं तो सिर्फ फैलता हूँ बहता हूँ खून में !!
क्योंकि मैं एक बेर का झाड़ हूँ
जंगली और कंटीला
किन्तु मीठा !!

[20]कण्डीशण्ड साहित्यिक रिफ्लेक्सेज़ बनने का नियम प्राकृतिक है. किन्तु इसके साथ यह भी स्वाभाविक है कि कवि मनुष्य के अंतर्व्यक्तित्व में परिवर्तन होता जाए. इस परिवर्तन के फलस्वरूप उत्पन्न होने वाली नयी भाव–श्रेणियां, पुराने रिफ्लेक्सों से टकराएंगी ही. यदि साहसपूर्वक कवि इस आत्मसंघर्ष को तीव्र करता गया, और आत्म–निरीक्षण द्वारा उसे और सार्थक बनाता गया, तो यह आशा की जानी चाहिए कि वह नयी भूमि की खोज करके रहेगा.

keeps going on in the process of transformation of living-reality into creative-reality. Muktibodh's diary and his entire critical thinking is a proof of these self-transformations whereas his creative literature, poems, and stories are infinite constellations of artistic-truths acquired from such self-transformation(s). Badiou also indicates towards the conception of truth-procedurality in reference to art. Badiou believes that there is no truth without Event and in the context of art, truth is not a work of art rather *truth is an artistic procedure which is initiated by an Event* (11–12 Emphasis Mine). It is pertinent to look into Badiou's conception of Event to investigate the relation between singularity and Event. In his magnum opus, *Being And Event*, Badiou specifically explains that singular term is something which is presented in *situation* but not represented in the *state of the situation*.[21] For Badiou, singular term or singularity "is an essential attribute of historical being, and especially of Evental site" (ibid 522) from where Event emerges. Event is an actuality of singularity and a lapse of relationailty. Interestingly, Muktibodh also rejects hypostatized dichotomies which function according to the logic of binary oppositions. In his book *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*, Žižek explains Badiou's *Truth-Event* in these words:

> In this precise sense, Event emerges *ex nihilo*: …… it attaches itself precisely to the Void of every situation, to its inherent inconsistency and/or its excess. The Event is the Truth of the situation that makes visible/legible what the 'official' situation had to 'repress' but it is also always localized – that is to say, the Truth is always the Truth *of* a specific situation……..An event thus involves its own series of determinations: the Event

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[21]For Badiou, situation is a term which shows any presented multiplicity and in order to demonstrate presented multiplicity situation homogenizes it which Badiou would call empire of count-as-one (24). On the other hand, state of the situation refers as organization of situation which constitutes the counting of homogeneous structure and hence the re-counting of the count-as-one. In this sense, state of the situation is a meta-structure of the structure of situation. Hence, on one hand, terms of presented multiplicity belong to situation and on the other hand, state of the situation in its meta-structure includes them. Situation presents the terms of presented multiplicity whereas state of the situation represents them (102). In this way, state of the situation incorporates the essence of political nation-state which strives to homogenize the presented multiplicity in its meta-structure. For Badiou, singularity is a term which shows the inherent inconsistency between situation and state of the situation. In this sense, singular term is inconsistent multiple vis-à-vis state of the situation. Badiou writes while referring to singular term, "...a singular term is definitely a one-multiple of the situation, but it is 'indecomposable' inasmuch as what it is composed of, or at least part of the latter, is not presented anywhere in the situation in a *separate manner*…. This term exists – it is presented – but its existence is not directly verified by the state" (ibid 99).

itself; its naming……..; its ultimate goal…..; its opera-
tor……..; and last but not least, its *subject*, the agent who, on
behalf of the Truth-Event, intervenes in the historical multiple
of the situation and discerns/ identifies in it signs-effects of the
Event. *What defines the subject is his fidelity to the Event: the
subject comes after the Event and persists in discerning its
traces within his situation*. (130, Emphasis Mine)

It is explicit from the above quote that intervention is a pertinent point
during the process of Event. It is precisely the intervention which rec-
ognizes the Event (Badiou 202) and generalizes the Eventality of the
Event. Since Event is an epistemological break within prevailing limits
of situation of knowledge or in other words it reveals the fissures in
prevailing epistemological framework—Event can become the ground
for new knowledge, but it depends upon intervention and the generali-
zation of Eventality of the Event; hence, it is undecidable from the
standpoint of situation. Only the subject of Event can recognize the
multiplicity of situation as Event as far as he participates/intervenes in
the Event. In this way, Badiouian subject is not an ideological subject
since it emerges out of Event, and precisely through his fidelity to
Event, the subject tries to reconstruct situation after the post-Evental
subversion of hypostatized dichotomy. Once he breaks with his fidelity
to an Event, subject losses his subjecthood (Feltham and Clemens 8).
The task of this subject is to intervene in Event while inquiring the
traces of Event. Badiou states, "The undecidability of the events be-
longing is a vanishing point that leaves a trace in the ontological Idea
in which the intervention-being is inscribed: a trace which is precisely
the unassignable or quasi-non-one character of the function of choice"
(227). In his diary, Muktibodh is trying to trace the truth of the Event
of his artistic endeavours reflected in his different artistic works. In
Muktibodh's literature and especially in his giant and complex poems,
one can see the enfolded marks of *Truth-Event*. The uninterrupted
processuality of poetic-praxis in Muktibodh indicates his exertion for
discerning the traces of Event. This processuality of investigating these
traces is actually an artistic-procedure which is Truth as suggested by
Badiou in his book *Handbook of Inaesthetics*. These lines from Muk-
tobodh's poem explicitly reflect his indefatigable militant inquiry for
Truth-Event:

> Restless eagle!!!
> Like him, I am an excursion-seeker
> always thirsty
> I will look out for a shining Lake
> or a mirage of water
> in whose white shimmer there is a strange

empty denial!![22] (442–443) [Translation quoted from Ghosh, 137]

Therefore, on one hand Muktibodhian critical-thinking as uninterrupted processuality renders him as a militant of Truth,[23] Truth of the Event, for infinite discovery of philosophy of praxis. On the other hand, Michel Foucault's conception of *ascesis* ineluctably connects truth and self-transformation (Truth-as-self-transformation). Foucault used a term *ascesis* for a long labour for acquiring truth. He explicitly said that there can be no achievement of truth without self-transformation (15–16).[24] Muktibodh's entire life seems like a long labour of *ascesis* for acquiring artistic-truths. Here, he is continuously struggling with the long labour of *ascesis* against the well-equipped ideological reality of capitalist hegemony. Needless to say, Muktibodh envisions this long labour of *ascesis* against the literary conditioned reflexes and consequently against the reification of aesthetics. Hence, Foucault's idea gives a new reading into Muktibodh's life and self-struggle. Nonetheless, Foucault also reflects upon disciplinary power in his earlier works. He demarcates the subject formation in light of these power-relations. He also notes that power or power-relations also produce resistance. It is interesting to note that Foucault underlines the possibility of Truth in his later phase. Hence, the pertinent question that persists here is—was Foucault thinking about the possible place which is not completely constituted by power-relations or was he offering the critique of power in the complex conceptions of resistance

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[22]बेचैन चील !!
उस–जैसा मैं पर्यटनशील
प्यासा–प्यासा,
देखता रहूँगा एक धमकती हुई झील
या पानी का कोरा झांसा
जिसकी सफ़ेद चिलचिलाहटों में है अजीब
इनकार एक सूना!!

[23]For Badiou, "subject of a Truth" is a finite moment within the infinite process of Truth. In this precise sense, for him artistic procedure as infinite rendition of Truth is Truth-procedure whereas individual artworks and artists are subject of a particular Truth. In this way, for him subject does not have any kind of mastery vis-à-vis Event(s). In this process, he avoids the ideological interpellation of subject. "At the very most," he writes, "we can say, in an absolutely general fashion, that subject is the militant of truth" (55).

[24]"Spirituality postulates that the truth is never given to the subject by right. …truth is not given to the subject by the simple act of knowledge (*connaissance*), …for the subject to have right of access to the truth he must be changed, transformed, shifted, and become, to some extent and up to a certain point other than himself. The truth is only given to the subject at a price that brings the subject's being into play…there can be no truth without a conversion or a transformation of the subject…. This is a work of the self on the self, an elaboration of the self by the self, a progressive transformation of the self by the self for which one takes responsibility in a long labor of ascesis (askesis)" (Foucault 15–16).

and autonomy? According to Oliver Feltham and Justin Clemens, Foucault has no answers regarding these questions. Contrary to this, in his later phase Foucault affirms the agency of few privilege subjects, who resist power with their aesthetic endeavors.[25] In the same direction, Badiou on the other hand offers the convincing thesis of Truth-procedurality. In the context of the question of agency, he does not start from the question of how subjects initiate an action in autonomous manner rather he shows how subject emerges through an autonomous constellations of changing situation. For Badiou, this change or subversion of situation is Event.

For Muktibodh, the emergence of form of artifact or the incarnation of artifact is actually a processual continuity. Needless to say, Muktibodh renders this processual continuity as constellation of specific singularities. The explicit proof of processual singularity of Muktibodh's art-production is his conceptual discovery–*Three Moments of Art*. It is significant to enter into Muktibodh's art's laboratory for recognizing the singularity in art-production. In the long essay of his diary named, "Teesra Kshan," Muktibodh describes this conception comprehensively. By discerning the uninterrupted singularities of creative-process, Muktibodh writes:

> The first moment of art is the ardent and intense experience moment of life. The second moment is the detachment of this experience from its roots of throes and pain and embodies a form of fantasy which seems like concrete figuration before our eyes. The third and last moment is the moment of initiation of symbolization and the process of dynamicity of its completion. The uninterrupted flow during the process of symbolization is a flow of entire individuality and life. The fantasy proceeds further while transforming itself during its development. In this way, fantasy embodies new form while abandoning its original form. The fantasy which is under the endeavour of symbolization goes much far from its original form, that it is difficult to say that this new fantasy is an image of original form of fantasy. The creation during the process of symboliza-

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[25]While referring to this inconsistency – regarding source of truth and resistance as autonomous from constituted power – of Foucault, Feltham, and Clemens writes, "In his later work, he deals with this problem by assigning agency to those subjects who resist power by means of an aesthetic project of self-authoring. Again, the source of such privileged agency – why do some subjects shape themselves against the grain and not others? – is not explained" (5–6).

tion of fantasy – with which artifact respectively develops – is a third and last moment of art. (85)[26] [My translation]

In above mentioned quote Muktibodh explicitly shows the intimate entwinement of form and content within the dynamics of creative-process. The first moment of art gives form and shape to content. He underlines that the psychic content concurs with other contents of inner psyche and transforms as concrete figuration of fantasy before psychic-screen. This concrete figuration of fantasy represents the second moment of art. Here Muktibodh ponders upon two processes which basically relate to same dynamics but has their own specific functions. On one hand, this concrete figuration is a consequence of impersonification of personified empiric and on the other hand, this impersonification is itself a result of internal distantiation and detachment from the empiric of first moment. Whereas in the third moment, the process of initiation of symbolization of impersonified fantasy, the dialectical process between the psychic-form and words-affects results in the development of new material form of artifact which is autonomous from psychic-form. But according to Muktibodh, the primitive imprint of psychic-form resides in the artifact since in the third and final moment of impersonified art, fantasy melts down and starts flowing in this primitive stream. Muktibodh writes while positing the singularity of these three moments of art in these words:

> During impersonalization of fantasy from its personified state, it embraces something new with which it becomes autonomous from its real experience. Fantasy is a daughter of experience and the daughter has her own autonomous developing individuality. *It procreates from experience, therefore free from experience…*the artifact produced after symbolization or after the completion of portraying of imagery is the daughter of fantasy of second moment of artifact nor its image or imitation. *There-*

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[26]कला का पहला क्षण है जीवन का उत्कट तीव्र अनुभव क्षण। दूसरा क्षण है इस अनुभव का अपने कसकते–दुखते हुए मूलों से पृथक हो जाना, और एक ऐसी फैंटेसी का रूप धारण कर लेना, मानो वह फैंटेसी अपनी आँखों के सामने खड़ी हो। तीसरा और अंतिम क्षण है इस फैंटेसी के शब्द–बद्ध होने की प्रक्रिया का आरंभ और उसकी परिपूर्णावस्था तक की गतिमानता। शब्द–बद्ध होने की प्रक्रिया के भीतर जो प्रवाह बहता रहता है वह समस्त व्यक्तित्व और जीवन का प्रवाह है। प्रवाह में फैंटेसी अनवरत रूप से विकसित परिवर्तित होती हुई आगे बढ़ती जाती है। इस प्रकार वह फैंटेसी अपने मूल रूप को बहुत कुछ त्यागती हुई नवीन रूप धारण कर लेती है। जिस फैंटेसी को शब्द–बद्ध करने का प्रयत्न किया जा रहा है वह फैंटेसी अपने मूल रूप से इतनी अधिक दूर चली जाती है कि यह कहना कठिन है कि फैंटेसी का यह नया रूप अपने मूल रूप की प्रतिकृति है। फैंटेसी को शब्द–बद्ध करने की प्रक्रिया के दौरान जो–जो सृजन होता है – जिसके कारण कृति क्रमशः विकसित होती जाती है – वही कला का तीसरा और अंतिम क्षण है।

fore, her individuality is free, bizarre and separate from original fantasy.[27] (ibid, emphasis mine)

Hence, Muktibodhian self-struggle of continual processuality of uninterrupted singularities is actually a struggle to emancipate self from the dazzle of capitalist hegemony. Therefore, Muktibodh attacks fundamental logical premise of capitalist hegemony. This attack is not only related to political activeness rather it also demands self-activeness. Here Muktibodh makes the self-activeness inevitable for political activeness. This self-activeness qua militant inquiry underlines the continual processuality of self-discovery which, by continuous questioning of phenomenon self, makes self-introspection possible. Hence, this self-activeness becomes the concrete basis of/for self-transformation which is the inevitable condition and dialectical need in processual terms for individual's dedicated political-activeness which he embodies for the struggle for social-transformation. Therefore, Muktibodh explicitly demonstrates the schemas of self-transformation and social-transformation. While questioning the phenomenon self, the continual processuality of self-transformation points towards the idea which Dr. Dhar and Dr. Chakrabarti used from Lacanian Marxist 'I'. Parker's conception of *'revolutions in subjectivity'* and for making this self-transformation inevitable and dialectical need for social-transformation, Parker used another idea of *'subjects in revolutions'* (as cited by Dhar and Chakrabarti 229). The only difference is that Dr. Dhar and Dr. Chakrabarti envision or visualize *'revolutions in subjectivity'* inside the psychiatric clinic in context of psychoanalysis (ibid 227), whereas Muktibodh extends this clinic extensively and establishes it in his art-laboratory. Badiou on other hand abandons the subject[28] for its ideological attribute, as he explicitly said, subject-effect are statist and hence ideological (65). For him, over-determination is in truth the political place, as it belongs to subjective realm (choice, partisanship, militancy) without having any subject-effect (such effects are ideological) (ibid). This subtraction of subject-effect from subjective in political place of over-determination gives Badiou a possibility to explain the term for revolutionary militancy qua *subjectivity without a subject or object.* Badiou explains thus:

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[27] वैयक्तिक से निर्वैयक्तिक होने के दौरान ही उस फैंटेसी ने कुछ ऐसा नवीन ग्रहण का लिया कि जिससे वह स्वयं भी वास्तविक अनुभव से स्वतंत्र बन बैठी। फैंटेसी अनुभव की कन्या है और उस कन्या का अपना स्वतंत्र विकासमान व्यक्तित्व है। वह अनुभव से प्रसूत है इसलिए वह उससे स्वतंत्र है।..... ....शब्द—बद्ध होने पर अथवा चित्रित होने पर जो कृति या रचना तैयार होती है, वह कृति या रचना कला के दूसरे क्षण की पुत्री है, प्रतिकृति नहीं। इसीलिए मूल फैंटेसी से उसका व्यक्तित्व स्वतंत्र, विचित्र और पृथक है। कला का यह तीसरा या अंतिम क्षण है। इन तीन क्षणों के बिना कला असंभव है। इन तीनों क्षणों की विकास—गति के अपने—अपने अलग नियम हैं।

[28] Here Badiou uses the subject not in the context of event.

How should 'subjectivity' without a subject or object be understood here? It is a process of homogeneous thought in the material form of militancy, one not determined through (scientific) objectivity, nor captive to the (ideological) subject-effect. At the place of overdetermination…, this process balances over into the possible, and does so in accordance with a partisanship, a prescription, that nothing guarantees, neither in the objective order of the economy nor in the statist order of the subject, but which nonetheless is capable of tracing a real trajectory in the situation. (65–66)

The *revolutions in subjectivity* are possible within the order of *subjectivity without a subject*, as it's giving a possibility of thinking against its own thought. As we have discussed in second section, in his exposition of structural violence of real abstraction, Žižek renders this abstraction as exchange-abstraction. He demarcates that it is precisely the material reality of real abstraction which alienates individual from his concrete useful labour which subsumes in the order of exchange relations of abstract labour. This is how the individual is alienated from the real of his/her reality and it is precisely the material reality of real abstraction which constitutes the chasm between interior and exterior or, in other words, between psychic and social of subject. Žižek explicates that this real abstraction is not thought rather it is *form of thought*. He writes:

Here we have one of the possible definitions of the unconscious: *the form of thought whose ontological status is not that of thought*, that is to say, the form of thought external to the thought itself – in short, some Other Scene external to the thought whereby the form of the thought is already articulated in advance. The symbolic order is precisely such a formal order which supplements and/or disrupts the dual relationship of 'external' factual reality and 'internal' subjective experience. (10)

If *form of thought* is already present which is before and external to thought itself, then it's ineluctable that this thought is determined by *form of thought*. Hence, thinking against its own thought is actually struggle against *form of thought* and consequently against real abstraction qua rule of capital which alienates psychic from its social milieu. The process of thinking, in thinking against its own thought, is actually its action. Hence, this action embodies its own thought which is *action as its own thought*. Badiou's homogeneous thought in *subjectivity without a subject* is precisely this, which is struggle against fundamental logical premise of rule of capital. Hence, *subjectivity without a subject* is actualization of *revolutions in subjectivity*. This *subjectivity*

without a subject and its actualization as *revolutions in subjectivity* gives tremendous peculiarity to Muktibodh's literature and thought. This is the greatness of his literature which never allows it to become old. Therefore, new time and new era discovers, makes, and presents a new Muktibodh in new circumstances and conditions. Hence, Muktibodh's *Ek Sahityik Kee Diary* is a creative document of this self-struggle *(subjectivity without a subject)* and self-introspection *(revolutions in subjectivity)*.

Conclusion

In this way, Muktibodh, while shattering the dichotomy and binary of interiority and exteriority ensures the comprehension of social and psychic in their continual interaction renders his understanding about hegemony as specific and detailed and subtle and it expresses through the network of power-relations which are explicit through his creative literature and critical thinking. Hence, Muktibodhian praxis negates the exchange-principle inherent in ideological reality of hegemony. Consequently, *poetry in politics* is precisely the critic of instrumentalist appropriation of poetry in dominating 'political' fronts which is continuation and extension of Muktibodhian critic of traditional progressive literature.[29] Within these grounds of poetry as a political struggle, poetry manifests itself in fantasy supported with reality. As we have seen, fantasy is an inevitable part of Muktibodhian singular creative-process as *Three Moments of Art*. This singularity ensures the Truth-Event and consequently the Truth for Muktibodhian artistic-procedure. Hence, these *Three Moments of Art* render Muktibodh's *fidelity* to the Event which make Muktibodh militant of Truth—Truth of the Event.

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[29]Muktibodh writes while critiquing traditional progressive literature, "…progressive criticism and literature hugely emphasis only on socio-political struggle of individual. There is very little emphasis or no emphasis on others facets comparatively. Consequently, the representational image of human which presents in front of reader was unilateral; there were no manifestation of overall progressive perspective of human sovereignty in that." (Muktibodh 357). Following is the original quote in Hindi by Muktibodh: प्रगतिवादी समीक्षा और साहित्य ने मनुष्य के मात्र सामाजिक–राजनीतिक संघर्ष पर ही खूब जोर दिया. इसके शेष पक्षों पर, तुलनात्मक दृष्टि से, बहुत कम बल रहा, या नहीं ही रहा. परिणामतः पाठक के सामने मनुष्य का जो चित्र प्रस्तुत हुआ, वह एक–पक्षीय ही था, उसमें मानव–सत्ता की सर्वांगीण प्रगतिशील दृष्टि का प्रगटीकरण नहीं था.

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Hip Hop as Cultural Capital: Remixing Bourdieu's Theory to Affirm Cultural Wealth

Milanika Turner

Hierarchical societies reproduce themselves through cultural resources that generate social value. The values attached to these social and cultural resources are determined from the top social strata and then disseminated throughout society via mediums like education. Pitched as a supplement to mainstream pedagogy, hip-hop based education (HHBE) uses rap songs and lyrics as curricular resources to teach a variety of disciplines. HHBE has been inserted into teaching practice since the 1990s to enhance English language arts analyses (Hall 343; Morrell and Duncan-Andrade 89) in addition to providing context and relevancy for humanities and social science curricula (Stovall 587). However, the pedagogical potential of HHBE has thus far used hip hop lyrics as an accessory to reinforce the transmission of dominant social values through education instead of utilizing the inherent value of hip hop as its own form of social and cultural capital. Applying Yosso's conceptualization of community cultural wealth to rap music provides evidence of the social value of hip hop for education and broader society even after decades of negative characterizations of the genre.

Despite its popularity in the United States of America, hip hop culture is misunderstood by many. The popular discourse on rap music is unjustly negative. Throughout history black popular music has been blamed for the propagation of a number of social ills including the deterioration of families, urban decline, and juvenile delinquency. In the contemporary scenario, it is hip hop or rap music that bears the brunt of the same allegations. It quite possibly has been criticized and censored more than any other genre of music. The controversy surrounding this chart-topping musical art form can be traced to popular discourse on the subject which has shared an inverse relationship with record sales for over three decades; the more popular hip hop becomes, the more mainstream America's image of it plummets. The discourse on hip hop music characterizes it in many negative ways, calling it violent, sexist, menacing, misogynistic, ignorant, vulgar, unintelligible, debauched, or venomous to name a few; it is even said to reinforce stereotypes and promote racist images of African Americans. This same discourse has been used to judge and censor rap, outlaw the sale of some artists' records, and even arrest rappers who violate main-

stream standards of decency.[1] However, hip hop does indeed have a rich history and comprises some of the most talented musicians, word-smiths, dancers, and other artists. Its ascent is credited with transforming the fashion industry as well as reviving African American cinema.

Hip hop has as many definitions as it does varieties, but a few are better at describing the uniqueness and expansiveness of its culture than Keyes's who defines it as "…a youth arts mass movement…[which] encompasses what its adherents describe as an attitude rendered in the form of stylized dress, language, and gestures associated with urban street culture" (1). Westbrook further builts upon it by claiming that hip hop is "the artistic response to oppression" and is the culture that includes rap music; hip hop "…as a musical art form…is stories of inner-city life, often with a message, spoken over beats of music" (113). Therefore, the term 'hip hop' is used to denote a culture and is also a genre of music. The term 'rap' is a large musical component of hip hop and "…can be defined as a musical form that makes use of rhyme, rhythmic speech, and street vernacular, which is recited or loosely chanted over a musical soundtrack" (Keyes 1) or even as "a verbal sport" (Westbrook 113). Both terms, 'rap' and 'hip hop,' are used interchangeably throughout this text with distinctions made while referring particularly to the culture or the music.

The criticism directed at hip hop necessitates a review of long-standing debates within anthropology regarding authority and identity when researching culture. The issues of perspective and reflexivity have been debated in social science for many years. Some believe that only an emic or insider's account of a culture is valid while others argue that a researcher must take an etic approach and remain outside a culture to objectively study it. In the case of music, the field of ethno-musicology recognizes a tendency in etically-oriented researchers to treat ethnic music in a condescending way, encourage the retention of old material, or even cause artists to become artificially elite through association with the researcher (Nettl 151). One cannot fully understand the power of music as a cultural vehicle while standing outside

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[1]See Hudson for a review of court cases attempting to censor rap lyrics or charge rap artists with obscenity. Potts further gives insightful reflections on attempts to censor rap music artists such as N.W.A, the Geto Boys, and 2 Live Crew throughout the 1990s that details the following incidents and several similar occurrences: (1) N.W.A concerts were canceled or disrupted across the nation due to beliefs that their music was disrespectful toward law enforcement officers and incited violence against police; (2) The Geto Boys' record label refused to distribute their 1990 album citing concerns that it endorsed violence; (3) After a U.S. District Court declared that the lyrics of 2 Live Crew's album *As Nasty As They Wanna Be* to be obscene, members of the group were detained and charged with obscenity after performing at an adults-only club.

the culture in which it originated. It may lead to an uninformed view by the etic researcher.

In the study of hip hop, one taking an etic approach is anyone who is not *inside* hip hop culture. Re-visiting the aforementioned definition of hip hop culture as expressions of an attitude associated with the urban streets illustrates that it is not a label limited to artists and those who work in the music industry. Instead, it is also inclusive of those who create, listen to, support, and value hip hop music and culture. Furthermore, this culture encompasses particular ethnic, social, and age groups who share, experience, and exhibit its features—mostly African American or Latino/a, urban, and youth (usually aged thirty or younger). For an insider taking an emic approach, the value of hip hop is intuitive. This viewpoint is possible as emically-oriented researchers have been able to create objective and unbiased studies of their own cultures while viewing phenomena from the perspective of their subjects.

The criteria for taking an emic approach has been defined in order to highlight the fact that most scholars who write about hip hop, whether for or against it, are not actually a part of the hip hop culture. This does not mean etically-oriented researchers cannot appreciate other cultures, because they can and do. It does, however, mean that their contributions are different as they link cultural practices to external factors in the absence of native understanding of phenomena. Furthermore, those who believe the "golden age" of rap to be from the mid-1980s until the early 1990s,[2] keep old cultural material in the forefront of study. They then endorse the popular discourse which purports that contemporary hip hop promotes antisocial values (Dyson; Miranda and Claes 113). Others focus their studies and attention on a small segment of artists they believe to be the artistic elite, discounting the brilliance of the majority who comprise the genre. For example, they write only about what they call "conscious rap," "conscientious rap," "political hip hop" or "message rap"—songs with lyrics that focus on social issues or politics and contain what the mainstream considers to be positive or uplifting messages. Likewise, rap that is not message rap is characterized as diluted, sterile, and inauthentic (Dyson 64). Etically-oriented researchers do not realize that the general mes-

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[2]The "golden age" of rap music is said to have commenced with the release of Run DMC's album *King of Rock* in 1985 when all elements of hip hop culture became mainstream and the genre was revered for its progressiveness; this period ended in the early 1990s after the rise of the subgenre known as gangsta rap which included lyrics that were misogynistic and glorified drugs, violence, and crime (Lavin). See Alridge and Stewart for a chronology of hip hop history as well as reviews of texts about hip hop.

sages in commercial rap can be just as positive and uplifting to the community as conscious rap. Furthermore, some who love rap music (both emically-oriented researchers and etically-oriented researchers) have demonstrated its value and beauty by evaluating it as poetry or comparing it to other art forms when, in reality, hip hop has a value of its own.

Hip hop culture provides the basis for cultural capital within the community. Cultural capital is the concept created by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu to explain resources capable of generating social profit that are transmitted through culture.[3] Cultural capital can be defined as "[…]a set of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are typically passed from one generation to the next" (Rodriquez 22). It functions as symbolic capital and is natural to those who possess it. The original formulation of Bourdieu's theory privileged the white middle-class because their culture dominates, leaving all other cultures in a deficit for not possessing the same knowledge base. It follows that people of color and the working class would be deficient because they lack the social and cultural capital to be upwardly mobile in society. Additionally, the culture they do possess is incompatible with that of mainstream society—especially in educational settings (Lin and Man 201). However, Bourdieu's work has been re-interpreted by Yosso using Critical Race Theory (CRT), and herein extended to apply to hip hop culture.

CRT, relevant to the study of both law and sociology, emerged from the Critical Legal Studies movement.[4] While Critical Legal Studies examined how the legal system functioned to legitimize oppressive social structures, it did not incorporate race into the analysis; CRT was developed as a framework that centralized racism and white supremacy when describing social structures and practices (Sablan 180;

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[3]Bourdieu conceptualized cultural capital as existing in three forms with the most applicable one being "the embodied state" which is the integral part of a person that includes culture. It is accumulated over time (even unconsciously) and must be invested personally by the investor to yield profit (18). While Bourdieu recognized that there is an unequal distribution of capital in class-divided societies, he considered the lag in accumulating this symbolic capital to be a "handicap" that must be made up before one could achieve success (19). As all people in such a society do not have equal means to acquire and utilize embodied cultural capital, this theoretical approach characterizes them as operating from a deficit which seems to attribute their lack of capital to personal shortcomings or inadequate cultural values.

[4]Critical Legal Studies (CLS) is a movement in legal theory and scholarship that challenges accepted norms and assumptions that American law is fundamentally just and has resulted from years of historical progress. Instead, proponents of CLS believe that law is intertwined with social issues and is inherently biased ("Critical Legal Theory").

Yosso 71). CRT expanded from legal studies into the discipline of education, and is now further extended and applied to popular music which can be considered a type of informal education which permeates the lives of listeners.

There are five central tenets of CRT that Yosso put forth: first, "[…]race and racism are central, endemic, permanent and a fundamental part of defining and explaining how US society functions"; second, it challenges White privilege and refutes the claims institutions make toward objectivity; third, the field "[…]is committed to social justice and offers a liberatory or transformative response to racial, gender and class oppression"; fourth, it "[…]recognizes that the experiential knowledge of People of Color is legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing and teaching about racial subordination"; and fifth, it takes a transdisciplinary perspective and draws on scholarship from a number of other fields (Yosso 73–74). These five principles outline how CRT can function as both a theory and a methodology to guide the transformation of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital into one that is no longer limited by the omission of voices of color.

Therefore, hip hop operating as cultural capital commands respect for the knowledge and products generated by the culture instead of dismissing them as reasons for African Americans' apparent marginality Clay states:

> The use of hip-hop culture, that is, fashion, gestures, language, and performance as cultural capital, establishes the boundaries of who is and who isn't popular, who gets the most support and encouragement, and who is and isn't Black in settings… (1356)

Extending Bourdieu's theory applies to hip hop culture "by privileging and legitimizing the knowledge bases of historically marginalized people" including youth (Rodriquez 22).

This is important because cultural capital is the basis for both social inclusion and exclusion as "[…]cultural capital is used to position people in a particular status hierarchy among their peers" and sets boundaries and criteria to determine legitimacy and authenticity in a particular setting (Clay 1349). Knowing the language, codes, and messages of hip hop culture is a proof of emic status. It is what carries currency in these circles. Utilizing cultural capital can demonstrate solidarity or status. For example, "[…]knowing about the roots or connections between and among various hip hop artists communicates to others that you are part of the culture and these knowledge bases can serve as a vehicle to facilitate solidarity among different groups of

people" (Rodriquez 27). Furthermore, scholars have identified six forms of cultural wealth that communities of color use to survive and resist oppression: aspirational, linguistic, familial, resistant, social, and navigational. They are neither mutually exclusive nor static, as demonstrated in the findings of this pilot study.

Whether scholars, journalists, or other writers support or criticize hip hop, they can always find lyrical evidence to support their claims. In an effort to avoid such subjectivity and control personal bias, this study uses a probability sample design—stratified random sampling, using Billboard, as primary source for music information and popular trends. Music charts have been used to gather data on music trends by compiling the most popular rap songs for six years (2006–2011), i.e., a total of 215 songs. The songs on each year-end chart are ranked by sales, radio airplay, and audience impressions. Therefore, they represent the most prominent and widespread songs for each year—both important features when considering overall cultural impact.

Stratified random sampling of just over five percent of the population ($N = 215$) generated the subset for this pilot study ($n = 12$). The year-end charts were of varying lengths (seemingly in correspondence with the cross-over growth of hip hop into other genres, sometimes termed 'hip pop') and the years served as strata for the sampling procedure. The charts for years 2006 through 2008 each had 25 songs, the 2009 chart had 40 songs, and both 2010 and 2011 charts had 50 songs each. Stratified random sampling ensured that songs from each year were adequately represented in the sample. Furthermore, a proportionate stratified sample was obtained with a uniform sampling fraction (12/215). An online random number generator (*www.random.org*), based on the randomness of atmospheric noise, selected songs from each stratum. This process resulted in the following sample from year-end Billboard music charts of the top rap songs each year from 2006 to 2011:

1. "Ridin" – Chamillionaire featuring Krayzie Bone (2006)
2. "We Fly High" – Jim Jones (2007)
3. "Stronger" – Kanye West (2007)
4. "Whatever You Like" – T.I. (2008)
5. "Put it on ya" – Plies feauring. Chris J (2009)
6. "Stanky Legg" – GS Boyz (2009)
7. "Beamer, Benz, or Bentley" – Lloyd Banks (2010)
8. "Toot It and Boot It" – YG (2010)
9. "Not Afraid" – Eminem (2010)
10. "Roll Up" – Wiz Khalifa (2011)

11. "Rocketeer" – Far East Movement (2011)
12. "Aston Martin Music" – Rick Ross (2011)

Lyrics of all songs in the sample were analyzed for various forms of cultural capital (aspirational, linguistic, familial, resistant, social, and navigational) as well as other motifs. The lyrics of each song were evaluated for words and phrases which function in ways that match the description and definition of the various forms of cultural capital: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, resistant, and navigational. The characterizations of each type of capital have been identified in literature by various scholars, but compiled in Yosso's discussion of community cultural wealth, which was used for the analysis of data in this study.

First, aspirational capital is:

> …the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers…those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals. (Yosso 77–78)

More than half of the sample, seven of the twelve songs, have lyrics that correspond with aspirational capital. Moreover, this form of capital can be further broken down into three main functions—resilience, escapism, and boasting. For example, Kanye West's 2007 hit song "Stronger" has a chorus which chants, "N-now th-that that don't kill me, can only make me stronger." West reminds listeners that he, and by extension they, have the ability to recover from tough challenges. On the other hand, the Far East Movement's "Rocketeer" immerses listeners in imaginary situations and activities; it sings, "here we go, come with me, there's a world out there that we should see, take my hand, close your eyes, with you right here I'm a rocketeer." Similarly, artists who boast about their material possessions and expensive lifestyles serve to ignite the desire in their listeners for the same markers of wealth and status. In "Whatever You Like," T.I. asserts that a girl with him can have all the expensive things she wishes to have. Meanwhile, Lloyd Banks raps that no matter what he drives, "beamer, Benz or Bentley, my jeans are never empty…" ("Beamer, Benz or Bentley").

Linguistic capital was also found to be evident throughout the entire sample. However, this is not simply because each song utilized rhythm and rhyme. According to Yosso, "...linguistic capital includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication ex-

periences in more than one language and/or style" (78). It also includes the ability to recount oral history or stories, use skills such as rhythm or rhyme, and the usage of literary devices. Furthermore, the language of the lyrics serves as an ethnic marker to indicate who's in the group and to promote group solidarity. This is the principal way emically-oriented researchers of hip hop culture demonstrate their identity. Along with the performance of clever literary devices throughout the sample, there was also the use of vernacular as well as profanity. The last two could even be considered a form of resistance capital as the use of African American Vernacular English is widely debated in many fields for its inappropriateness. They are not only used in rap, but are seemingly glorified.

Hip hop is known for its use of vernacular, jargon, and slang, as well as its tendency to offend. Bradley writes,

> To understand hip hop as a cultural movement we must explore the roots and the reasons for its explicit nature. Rap often specifically intends to offend polite sensibilities. After all, it is an art form born on the street corner, speaking a language of the corner as well. It has evolved…from the 'shunned expressions of disposable people.' (86–87)

Likewise, it can be stated of rap that:

> …the collection of expressions at its core…were based on inner-city life—a life and lifestyle that contained, in many cases, gangs and violence, narcotics and alcohol, crime and poverty, and hustling and the desire to attain riches. The language of the streets was slang. It was full of graphic imagery and explicit words, phrases, and metaphors that were often unknown to folks from outside the inner-city perimeter. This was the situation from which the expressions of Hip Hop grew, and these were the realities of which Hip Hop spoke. (Price 74)

Thus, rap music is far more intellectual than the aforementioned popular discourse would have one believe. It features intense rhythms, structured patterns of rhymes and complicated wordplay which all give texture to its poetry. All manner of figures of speech are present including similes, metaphors, paronomasia, eponyms, metonymy, and homophones, among others. Hip hop is more than merely a vehicle of cultural expression. Hip hop music transmits hip hop culture and vice versa. It is loved by the community because it serves the community.

When the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) decided to regulate musical content, the proposed solutions to avoid penalties were to clean up lyrics, create edited singles for radio and television, or release dual versions of albums—all of which would destroy artistic and musical integrity (Fox 511).

The use of profanity invokes similar concerns. The FCC denotes profanity as "[…]language so grossly offensive to members of the public who actually hear it as to amount to a nuisance" (Weiss 578). This disregards the truth that "…harsh words are sometimes required to describe harsh realities;" moreover, rap has an "[…]identity as an outlaw expression, a form that doesn't mind using the words that people actually say, words that describe the sometimes unseemly reality of our modern life" (Bradley 86–88).

Five songs of the sample showed evidence of familial capital, which is "…cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition…kin also model lessons of caring, coping and providing…which inform our emotional, moral, educational and occupational consciousness" (Yosso). Familial capital broadens the concept of kin, and demonstrates a healthy connection to the community. Also, these messages minimize feelings of isolation and share the message that one is not alone in dealing with problems. A few excerpts from the sample exemplify this feeling of community well. In Rick Ross' "Aston Martin Music" Drake sings, "Would've came back for you, I just needed time, to do what I had to do." In his 2011 single "Roll Up," Wiz Khalifa raps, "Whenever you need me, whenever you want me, you know you can call me, I'll be there shortly…." Both songs broaden the connotation of kin to romantic partners.

Social Capital is a bit similar to familial capital in that it offers support to the community. Five songs in the sample demonstrate social capital. By Yosso's denotation, social capital "[…]can be understood as networks of people and community resources…[that] can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's institutions" (79). Similar to familial capital, it offers the solace that one is not alone when facing challengers or maneuvering through life. For example, in "Roll Up" Khalifa reassures, "No matter where I am, no matter where you are, I'll be there when it's over baby, 'cause I was there from the start." Similarly, Eminem raps, "I'm not afraid to take a stand. Everybody come take my hand. We'll walk this road together, through the storm, whatever weather, cold or warm, just letting you know that you're not alone" in his 2010 hit "Not Afraid." Social capital is also closely related to navigational capital.

While navigational capital is similar to social capital, it does not appear in the sample as often with only two songs showing evidence of this type. Simply stated, it is "…skills of maneuvering through social institutions…institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind" (Yosso 80). It could also be strategies of avoiding and dealing with institutions; in music, this often takes the form of cautionary tales. In addition, navigational capital acknowledges individual agency within institutional constraints. For example, after Chamillionaire released "Ridin," he appeared on several news programs to discuss racial profiling by police, the subject of his hit song. He raps, "so they get behind me, tryna check my tags, look in my rearview and they smilin', thinkin they'll catch me in the wrong, they keep tryin', steady denyin' that it's racial profilin'." A large portion of rap music deals with the subject of interacting with police, which is not surprising given the common experience and perception among minorities that the U.S. legal system is unjust.

Because these six types of capital are not mutually exclusive, it is easy to see how navigational capital and resistant capital are linked. Resistant capital includes "…knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality… [and] is grounded in the legacy of resistance to subordination exhibited by Communities of Color" (Yosso 80). Four of the songs in the sample indicate resistant capital. A lot of resistance capital deals with law and police relations. Again, Chamillionaire's "Ridin" establishes this well when he rhymes, "with no regard for the law, we dodge 'em like, 'fuck 'em all,' but I won't get caught up and brought up on charges for none of y'all." Also, resistant capital "...includes cultural knowledge of the structures of racism and motivation to transform such oppressive structures" (Yosso 81).

There was also evidence of another hidden form of capital in the sample. For now, it will just be referred to as counter-cultural capital, which includes explicit lyrics and is overtly sexual. It challenges what can be said over airways, thereby posing a challenge to censorship and mainstream values. From this study's sample, it includes "Toot it and Boot It" by YG and "Put it on ya" by Plies, both songs that explicitly describe and depict sexual activities.

As CRT sprang from Critical Legal Studies, at its core is the belief that legislature cannot be separated from politics because it serves the interests of those with wealth and power; those with power create and define laws as well as the related language and discourse. The legislation most closely associated with music is the First Amendment to the United States Constitution which grants the free-

dom of speech. Despite this guarantee, "[…]the political interests of those in power outweighed [musical] artists' First Amendment rights to freedom of speech" (Price 77). Under the guise of protecting children from inappropriate broadcasts, those with power in the U.S. have been able to manipulate the text of the Constitution to serve their interests. They have decided what is appropriate to say, hear, write, see, or exhibit, and enforce their standards through laws, regulations, monetary penalties, and even imprisonment.

It is a violation of federal law to air obscene programming at any time. The FCC guideline on obscenity says:

> An average person, applying contemporary community standards, must find that the material, as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; the material must depict or describe, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable law; and the material, taken as a whole, must lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. (Weiss 577)

It is also a violation of federal law to air indecent programming or profane language between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. (Federal Communications Commission). According to the FCC, content considered indecent does not rise to the level of obscenity but is:

> ...language or material that, in context, depicts or describes, in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium, sexual or excretory organs or activities. (Weiss 578)

Both of these definitions are problematic because they are ambiguous and biased. The FCC does not describe nor qualify these "contemporary community standards," but they are obviously equated with white, mainstream, middle-class American values and thus it is evident that hip hop culture does not fit.

A few conclusions that may be inferred from this pilot study are: it is possible and necessary to reframe the discourse on hip hop and rap music by demonstrating how the music indeed operates as cultural capital, commanding respect for, and establishing the legitimacy of the knowledge and products generated within hip hop culture. Seventy-five percent of the sample evinced at least three types of capital. Linguistic capital was the primary type, and it was evident in every song of the sample. Also, another category seemed to be apparent in the sample—counter-cultural capital. Not to be confused with resistant capital, counter-cultural capital communicates the forbidden, pushes limits, and challenges mainstream values.

It is possible to further analyze rap music's contribution to the life of the community by examining its various functions within the community aside from its role and use in HHBE. The primary function of rap music is to educate and instruct by disseminating information. Furthermore, this information can: encourage behavior that promotes survival while discouraging behaviors that do not; teach listeners to be aware, alert, and cautious of common pitfalls; empower audiences with knowledge; inspire; and/or establish codes, create and transmit messages, and maintain secrecy and exclusion. Throughout history, all of these functions of rap music have been associated with functions of black music of African Americans and their tradition of orality. Rap is often compared to poetry to show its worth, but this isn't necessary. Rap has value as a musical form on its own. It does not need to be analyzed simply as poetry to garner respect. Though progression to hip hop from African American poetry and various musical forms has been identified by many scholars, few recognize hip hop's function to resist oppression as a phenomenon that began during slavery.

The use of CRT to examine cultural capital shifts power and acknowledges "counterstory" as a method of challenging the primary narratives of white privilege by telling the stories of people and groups of color that are routinely diminished (Sablan 181). As James Baldwin once said, "It is only in his music, which Americans are able to admire because a protective sentimentality limits their understanding of it, that the Negro has been able to tell his story" ("It is only"). There were coded messages in spirituals and work songs before and after manumission, and significance in the many allusions to the Israelites deliverance from Egypt (Krehbiel 21; Work 40). Blacks sang ballads of social and religious justice which emphasized that the rich and powerful would surely be punished for greed, arrogance, and selfishness. Forward in history, black blues, rock, and funk artists featured messages and anecdotes in their music concerning sexuality, violence, politics, and other topics that garnered criticism similar to the popular discourse on rap. Hence, hip hop is on a trajectory no different than the genres that emerged before it and it should be recognized (and perhaps celebrated) for the knowledge generated for and from within the culture.

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Reading Authors/Authors Reading: Navigating Textual Worlds through Rainbow Rowell's *Carry On*

Anagha Gopal

In the realm of fantasy fiction, each word-in-print can be seen as representing a fragment of an author's imagined fantastical 'world.' The same words-in-print, as they occur in the work, contribute to forming a fantastical 'world' for the reader to imagine and navigate. This sense of navigation, often brought about by paratextual material, suggests the possibilities of inhabiting a world that is daunting, yet inviting; which seems exclusive (requiring 'instructions' towards various imaginings) but also inclusive (if one traces these 'instructions') through the processes of reading. The processes of reading engender the writing of possibilities for each reader to negotiate different paths to navigate the 'world' offered by the author. The two-way action of the words-in-print—of representing and forming—not only indicates transmission, but also a difference between the author's 'world' and the readers' worlds formed through imaginative navigations.

The multiplicity generated by the processes of reading and responding inhabits virtual spaces on internet based media, especially communities of fans or 'fandom' spaces, like LiveJournal, Tumblr, and Archive of Our Own. These fan communities with their specific codes, structures, and idioms, either created or manipulated by readers, mark a reversal—authors of Young Adult (YA) and fantasy fiction now navigate versions of their fictional 'world' as interpreted by readers. Echoes of authorial presence in fandom spaces have manifested themselves in various ways: Cassandra Clare is in the process of publishing a series of alternative occurrences to the events in the *The Mortal Instruments* series; J.K. Rowling assimilated the fan-work *The Cursed Child* by declaring its events to be 'canon'; John Green actively engages with his readers on Tumblr, often referring to their interpretations. While fan-work may not offer competition to these authors commercially, these interceptions show authors to be continuously asserting their presence in fan-populated virtual communities, even as readers develop and assert their responses in various media forms.

What is important is not to mark a specific division between spaces of authorial imperative and interpretive fan/reader-based spaces or a *moment* of transfer between the two, but to trace a strained navigation of shared interests: both readers and authors seem to be working

with their texts, and the texts of themselves, long after the text-as-book is published. Rainbow Rowell's *Carry On* is instrumental towards studying this emerging author-reader relationship because of the precarious specificity of its position. In Rowell's *Fangirl*, the protagonist Cath writes fan-fiction for the fictional "Simon Snow" series, written by fictional author Gemma T. Leslie, loosely based on J. K. Rowling. *Carry On* is a narrative located by Rowell in the fictional "Simon Snow" universe. It is not a published version of Cath's fan-fiction, but significantly different from it. In being a reworking of a fictional universe, *Carry On* locates itself in fandom spaces; simultaneously, it is legally and economically privileged in the marketplace. *Carry On* offers a prototype for the possibilities of readers' interventions in systems of authorial privilege and control, but is simultaneously an assertion of capitalized production in fandom spaces. It therefore offers a point of convergence for re-examining theories of textuality in fan scholarship and media studies.

This paper explores the issues outlined above—the shared navigation of media spaces, the emerging author-reader relationship in the YA-fantasy genre, and the possibilities of applying and extending theories of textuality in fan scholarship, specifically the theory of media paratexts as outlined by Jonathan Gray, Matt Hills' theorization of affect in fan-scholarship, and Barthes' "From Work to Text." In order to do this, it will examine the changing understanding of the processes of 'reading' in keeping with expanding media interfaces; the concepts of ownership and legality in terms of fan-work; the place of affect in interpreting YA-fantasy fiction; the problems posed by pedagogy and self-positioning in academic scholarship on YA-fantasy fiction; and how these apply particularly to *Carry On*. Further, it will explore the possibilities of using the methodology and structures of fandoms on Tumblr to interpret Rowell's *Carry On*. In doing so, the paper intends to trace the ways in which issues of ownership, access, and representation brought up by fan communities may further the possibilities of accommodation of 'fandoms' within a marketplace which tends to co-opt fan-work and frame readership largely in terms of consumerist narratives.

Readers negotiate their relationship with a work through adaptations, fan-art, fan-videos, networks of communication on websites which house fan-work, and shopping for products which refer to the work and mark them as fans. As the processes of production and reciprocation of a work multiply and traverse both marketplace production and fan-responses, the understanding of what constitutes 'reading' expands. In terms of web-based fandom spaces, a 'work' could refer to

both an electronic or physical copy of the published book and fan-works which attain a virtual 'physicality.' Platforms like Tumblr which house fan communities highlight the textuality of fan-'works'—including processes of production; the activities through which they are accessed, understood, and spread; the profiles of those who create or share them; and the varying content amongst which they are consumed by users. The interactive frame-'works' of Tumblr continuously encode these layers, and highlight the importance of studying the textuality of Tumblr itself, i.e., the processes through which devices like hashtags, embedded text posts, the 're-blog' and 'ask' functions, continuously produce the interface.

Participatory interfaces on the web lay the grounds for readers' (re)-definition of their identities. On Tumblr, the title of a user's blog, their bio, and their username may all indicate the position from which a user approaches a work, the estimable time-period of their presence, and the popular or marginal currents of the fan-community they have experienced. The way a user presents himself/herself on a user-interface hints at the ways in which he/she have mapped a fictional universe. Scrolling through their blog, viewing their archives, indicates their affinities to different approaches to a work. To use metaphors of cartography to study user-based navigation is to mark readers' 'discoveries' of, lingering(s) at, and returns to, various 'locations' at which they place themselves vis-à-vis a work of fiction.

One of the ways to theoretically accommodate users' acts of 'marking' their identities and positions online is by viewing these actions as paratextual productions. In his work on mediated consumption of films and television shows, Jonathan Gray borrows from Gerard Genette in order to speak of paratexts in terms of arrival, classifying them as texts which "prepare" and "condition" the reader for other texts (Gray 25). Published books may contain paratexts such as cover pages, a page of contexts, acknowledgements and author-pages to name a few. Similarly, paratexts like author-interviews, advertisements, and trailers may also be produced by the author or the publishing industry. In a list of paratexts, Genette also seems to have included factors like typesetting and paper as conditioning elements (Gray 25). In *Fangirl*, chapters are grouped under semester-wise divisions, with pages devoted to marking section changes. These classificatory pages paratextually re-inforce the tension between Cath's formal coursework in her writing class and the time she spends writing her fan-fiction, especially since the latter is banned in the classroom by a professor who classifies all fan-fiction as plagiarised material. *Fangirl* is also interspersed with snippets from Cath's fan-fiction, which often paral-

lels Cath's feelings in fantastical contexts, and complicates readers' initial responses. These examples show that while paratexts may inform or instruct readers, they also present possibilities of interrupting and even intercepting trains of thought. However, to locate the former with professionally produced paratexts and the latter with mediated fan-work would be far too simplistic. Both authors and fans negotiate their relationship with, and control over, texts through media paratexts.

To understand the nature and functions of media paratexts on Tumblr, it is important to note that the framework of Tumblr codes several basic movements on its interface as production. On Tumblr, posts 'liked' by a user may be viewed under the 'Likes' tab on their profile by other users. The 'Likes' tab becomes a continuously growing paratext which informs users about the affinities of their fellow users. Similarly, the codes of the 'text post' reproduce a post and its entire comment (called 'note') thread on users' 'dashboards' every time a new 'note' is added. The 're-blog' function and the classificatory potential of 'hashtags' indicate the possibilities of changing contexts and meanings through users' actions at the very inception of posts. What differentiates paratextual production on Tumblr from physical and other media paratexts is this potential for continuous reorganization. Another significant point of difference is the extent to which blogs on Tumblr allow movements between different fan communities and, by extension, different professionally published works. Jonathan Gray suggests that consumers, encountering paratexts on various media platforms, engage in acts of "speculative consumption"—consumers choose works based on their estimations of the pleasures being offered (Gray 24). The interface of Tumblr hosts avenues for such 'speculations,' as a user may 'follow' blogs that share content from multiple 'fandoms.' Different fan-communities often intersect with each other. Several books and TV shows now have 'incorrect quotes' blogs, where users make sense of characters and situations from a particular work through similar dialogues or images from another work. Users may also write 'multi-universe' fan-fiction or create videos juxtaposing scenes from several works. These inter-actions between 'fandoms' not only create paths for readers to move from one work to another, but also put authorial personas in conversation with one another. Readers' 'paratextual' movements become entry-points into commercially published works. Rowell's *Fangirl* is structured around Cath's anxiety about finishing her fan-fiction before the professional author Gemma T. Leslie publishes the final instalment of her series. Cath perceives the author to be an intrusion in her thought-process, whereas some of Cath's readers regard Cath's work as changing the way they interpret Gemma's characters. The impending publi-

cation of the author's book becomes a 'paratext' which informs Cath's responses, while Cath's work becomes a 'paratext' which informs readers' position vis-à-vis the professional author and her work. The author-reader relationship thus becomes one organized around textual power.

In addition to noting the specificities of paratextual production on Tumblr in terms of speed and interconnectivity, it is also important to note the varied ways in which authors and readers channel possibilities offered by such paratextual productions. In particular, this paper focuses on authors' borrowing of popular tropes and narrative styles from fan-work. Different kinds of fan-work then become paratexts, conditioning authors in the ways in which they renew and modify several aspects of their work. Fan-works act as paratextual material which help authors arrive at, and depart from, their own work in different ways.

'Fandom' spaces like Tumblr allow authors to tap into jokes, idioms, stereotypical behaviour, and repeated tropes familiar to fans. The power dynamic between authors and readers is often tempered with the pleasure of recognition of similar affinities in the manner of a shared secret. *Carry On* offers a point of intervention in the alternating dynamics of the author-reader relationship through its parodic nature. The parodic can be interpreted as a medium where power and pleasure coalesce, as recurrent tropes—reproduced and recognized by both readers and authors—are critiqued through humour. The specific ways in which *Carry On* is a parody mark Rowell as having travelled through fans' navigations of, and returns and affinities to, various locations in fantasy narratives. Authors' growing familiarity with fandom spaces, however, also implies the possibility of manipulation of the codes of reader-based forums.

The conceptual vocabulary within fan-scholarship reflects both, collaborative relationships between authors and readers, and the hostility of authorial assertion. Jessica Seymour notes that fandom spaces allow consumers to become "prosumers" in the process of engaging with the text as "secondary producer[s]" (Seymour 3). The term 'prosumer' seems to locate fan-work as agentic, creative, and interpretive work, and validates fan participation in textual formation. Henry Jenkins' use of the term "textual poachers" for fans captures the sense of hostility and power play—it shifts the impetus of meaning in 'prosumers' from the act of creative secondary production to fan production outside of corporate ownership (qtd. in Gray 145). A sense of territoriality manifests itself between what is considered to be the authors' writing of a fictional 'world' and readers' alternative navigation, ex-

pansion, and displacement of these authorial 'worlds' in the process of understanding them. The play of pleasure and power in the author-reader relationship necessitates the study of how both authors and readers transform their texts and personas while accounting for (or dismissing) each other's presence.

The problematics of creative production and navigation indicate that the 'reading,' consumption, and re-use of published material is not limited to readers/fans but extends through media frameworks to commercially published authors. A recurring mode of 're-use' practised by the authorial-industry copyright is the commercial co-opting of narratives developed by fans over time in various contexts. The following tweet brings up one such co-option:

> *jk rowling wakes up* what's today's tweet
> *spins large bingo cage* hagrid…is…pansexual
> and…he later joined isis
> (@bafeldman)

Feldman's tweet critiques Rowling's tendency to 'declare' the sexuality of the characters in her work post-facto. While fan-works explore the sexualities, explorations, and experiences of characters, fans have been known to consider Rowling's declarations of sexual orientation to be weak attempts at 'progressive' representation, as sexuality is dealt with in her works only in heterosexual parameters. Hanna Flint records fans' critiques of the "retroactive character changes."[1] Similarly, Michelle Smith points out that Rowling's declaration rather than narration of Dumbledore's queerness could be considered as "tokenistic."[2] A critique of 'token' representation can also be located in specific forms of fan-work. The 'gif,' a form which endlessly replays a moment encompassing only a few seconds, allows viewers to re-examine the particularities of desire, often encapsulated in slight movements and the continuing emotional response to these movements. Fan-fiction writing-challenges on Tumblr often call for specific situations and themes, and generate different textual strands of understanding relationships between characters, suggesting that issues of self-exploration need to be examined as processes in specific contexts.

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[1] See Flint, Hanna. "Fantastic Beasts Isn't Racist, but JK Rowling Should Stop Tweaking the Source Material." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 28 Sept. 2018.
[2] See Smith, Michelle. "It Doesn't Matter What J.K. Rowling Has to Say about Harry Potter Anymore." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 21 Dec. 2017.

These forms of writing can be placed within the indications of an alternative "gift exchange" economy, where fan-work may be generated in the format of requests and fulfilment within a fan-community (Seymour 2). Fan responses to *Carry On* on Tumblr seem to imbibe this format. In a text-post on Tumblr, user dragon-simon writes,

> rainbow rowell has given me the too-good-too-dumb-chosen one-who-doesnt-even-know-what hes-doing-but-he-tries-his-best queer wizard i was denied by jk rowling and im forever thankful. (dragon-simon.tumblr.com)

Another text-post, by starlight-sanders, reads, "do you ever just remember that snowbaz is canon and just,,,,life is so good" (starlight-sanders.tumblr.com). Traversing both marketplace production and fandom spaces, Rowell seems to participate in multiple economies of payment and recognition. starlight-sander's post celebrates Rowell's professional publication of the male-on-male relationship between Simon Snow and Baz ("snowbaz"). dragon-simon marks the difference between Rowell's 'canonical' representation and Rowling's attempts at the same. In *Carry On*, Rowell seems to employ formats which reflect the temporalities of both fan-works and the organizational networks on which they are shared. A popular hashtag in the *Carry On* fandom on Tumblr is 'Chapter 61,' in which Simon and Baz share their first kiss. The chapter is written in Simon's and Baz's quick alternating voices, documenting the kiss from moments before it happens to when the boys separate, through lines like: "I just want to kiss him, then go" (Baz), "I just want him to shut up and stop talking like this" (Simon), "Is this a good kiss? I don't know" (Baz), "*I'm kissing a boy*" (Simon), "Snow has done this before" (Baz) (Rowell 341-343). This style of writing records action and response simultaneously, in the manner of a fan-video. It is also similar to the form of fan-fiction writing-challenges, as it fleshes out a specific situation to draw out characters. The alternating perspectives are separated from each other with the characters' names in bold over the sections they are narrating, which isolates them in the format of 'gifs,' repeatable and opening up to analysis as small moments of self-exploration.

Rowell's 're-use' of recurring tropes and methodologies of writing from fan-works is accompanied by her acknowledgement of this usage. In the "Author's Note" placed at the end of *Carry On*, Rowell describes Simon Snow as: "A *fictional*-fictional character. Kind of an amalgam and descendant of a hundred other fictional Chosen Ones" (Rowell 521). Rowell's description seems to be locating possibilities of naming an almost confusing intertextuality. The repetition of the word "fictional" with varying emphasis, as well as the un-

sureness indicated by the phrase "kind of" and the combination of "amalgam and descendant," seems to underline the issue of placing the re-worked usage of fictional works and concepts available within frames of categorized writing. In the "Acknowledgements" section of *Fangirl*, Rowell writes: "Reading fic was a transformative experience for me…[s]o thank *you* for writing it" (Rowell 1441). While the italicized "you" could be read as an emphatic recognition of the sources from which Rowell draws material for her writings, it also indicates the difficulty of marking a precise space for these sources. It is important to note Rowell's self-conscious participation in a 'gift-economy' model, but it is also necessary to explore how such a model could be accommodated in commercial spaces.

Rowell's acknowledgement of the influence of fan cultures on her works needs to be read in the context of a larger discussion on legality and ethics in the fan-community and fan-scholarship. Currently, the 'Organization of Transformative Works' (OTW) provides frameworks to consider the question of 'legitimacy' of fan-works. The OTW curates a growing archive of fan-works, a 'wiki' which minutely records the histories of various fandoms, and publishes a recognized academic journal. It not only crowd-funds projects to defend fan-works legally, but also hosts users who post extensively on formulating ethics for the 're-use' of fan-works. The OTW responds to the problem of placing fan-work, seen in Rowell's acknowledgements in terms of an almost inarticulable confusion, by drawing attention to specific instances of intertextuality. The organization's various archives highlight a movement beyond the recognition of a blurring of boundaries, to minutely marking specific textual processes which inform this 'blurring' (transformativeworks.org).

The question of 're-use' and acknowledgment not only informs the relationship between texts, authors, and fans but also is a factor in the relationship between fan-work and fan-scholarship within literary and media studies. Matt Hills notes that there is a binary in play in scholarship on 'fandoms,' differentiating academics who are "scholar-fans"—who identify themselves as fans of the work they are engaging with—and those who are "scholar anti-fans," who identify the formers' judgments as being affectively coded and hence a "threat to academic identity" (Hills 69, 71). Hills records a critique of the "scholar-fans" of the show *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* by Levine and Schneider, who claim that 'scholar-fans' of the show "make the show out to be…something more" than 'entertainment' by "erecting their own fictions and fantasies" around it (qtd. in Hills 69–70). While this critique is dismissive of 'scholar-fans,' it is important because it high-

lights an overlapping connection between academic writing and fan-work, which in turn brings up the question of the academic possibilities of interpretive fan-work. Members of fan-communities, especially on the largely student-based Tumblr, are not dissociated from 'academic' concerns but are often humorously self-reflexive about their interpretive capabilities. A text-post by Tumblr user nephilimgirlbooks elucidates this:

> You guys reading Carry On fanfiction is so meta...
> I mean, you're literally reading a fanfiction for a book that was inspired by the fanfiction written by a character in another book, about a book that she loves that is essentially a fanfiction of Harry Potter. It's a fanfiction of a fanfiction of a fanfiction of Harry Potter.
> Yet here I am. (nephilimgirlbooks.tumblr.com)

nephilimgirlbooks's post intertwines critical analysis with emotional affinity—an exhaustive decoding ("fanfiction of a fanfiction of a fanfiction") of the meta-textuality of *Carry On* is followed by the humorous declaration, "Yet here I am," signifying an attraction that both struggles with and is enamoured by the textual layers of the work. The following post by pressed-roses-and-tea-stains does something similar:

> So I hate the Mage as much as the next Baz obsessed human, but I have a thought regarding him. In chapter 7, when the Mage comes in the tell Simon he wants him to leave Watford, Simon describes him "giving Baz's bed a wide berth – even the Mage is afraid of vampires." But we know by the end that the Mage has definitely had interactions with vampires, seeing as he sent them to Watford that time (I doubt there's an app you can use to order a fleet of vampires.) He probably isn't completely unafraid of them, but it would be a bit much for him to go around Baz's bed simply because of that. I think that the Mage feels a kind of guilt about what happened to Natasha and Baz and to interact with anything pertaining to Baz gives him these emotions that he doesn't want. In this essay I will."
> (pressed-roses-and-tea-stains.tumblr.com)

The post begins by taking a strong position ("So I hate the Mage"), and then enters into an interpretation that notes situations, quotes, and minute movements, and includes an intuitive study of character. What ties these responses together is the format of the 'In this essay I will' meme, used to frame long interpretive posts which often give nuanced character studies, but self-reflexively mark the interpretations as that of a fan's. The intensity of the rant-like interpretation is broken by the

phrase "In this essay I will" which subsumes the interpretation into the terms of 'obsessive' fan culture. This post critiques through humour what it perceives as academia's condescension towards popular emotional responses to published works.

What is striking about interpretive methods used by fans on fan-based forums is that these acts of interpretation are already coded as fan-work. They both add to and occur within multiple layers of textuality—the professionally published work and the networks which inform its production and circulation; fan-work with the codes of various genres and styles; interpretive commentaries; the networks in which these fan-works and interpretive commentaries are posted, to name only a few. These modes of interpretation, and the webs and layers they exist in and extend could be seen as an illustration of Barthes' postulation in "From Work to Text," that "… [t]he Text is not a co-existence of meanings but a passage, an overcrossing; thus it answers not to an interpretation…but to an explosion" (Barthes 159). On forums like Tumblr, any un-weaving of professionally published works or fan-works becomes a weaving of the textual currents of Tumblr in more layers of fan-work. The intertwining of interpretive frameworks and personal responses works in the manner of an "explosion," throwing out currents of postulations and affinities—which are both sustained by the codes of the forum and broken by a reference to these codes—like the use of hashtags, which both coalesce posts by acting as endings and offer possibilities of infinite multiplication by acting as systems of classification.

In many ways, *Carry On* is a parody of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*—interestingly, Rowling's final instalment seems to open itself up to continuation and retellings. Harry discovers and accepts Dumbledore's final plan for him—self-sacrifice in order to destroy his enemy. Unknown to Harry, however, the "flaw in the plan" which will ensure his victory and survival is already in play, with occurrences that stretch over the course of the series to times even before his birth (Rowling 724). Harry's decision to sacrifice himself is undercut by the interwoven currents of the text. This is reflected in the phrase "I open at the close," an almost unsolvable riddle that haunts Harry throughout the book, but which reveals to him the spirits of his parents on the verge of what he considers will be his death (Rowling 698). At a point of uncertainty, the text regurgitates itself and displays possibilities of alternative narrative paths.

Keeping in mind the textuality of fandom spaces, "I open at the close" offers multiple possibilities of meaning-making. The phrase

could occur as an 'inspirational' quote on various posts, possibly accompanied by fan-art, interpreted with reference to specific contexts, and further appearing as tattoos. It could be printed on several fan objects perpetuating the commercial gains of the franchise. It could function as an allegory for the meta-textuality of the work. Used with a hashtag, it could possibly pull up limitless variations of all these fan-responses. With posts appearing one after the other on Tumblr's search page, the phrase becomes inhabitable—a textual 'world' of its own that informs the fictional 'world' of the author, readers' navigations of this 'world,' and the affinities and conflicts between the two. The phrase offers readers a space from which to locate themselves and the author, and to minutely trace their relations.

The phrase exerts an influence on *Carry On*—possibly because Rowell's work seems to "open" at the "close" of Rowling's work; or because the phrase "Carry On" seems to possess some fragments of the meanings of the phrase "I open at the close"; or because readers might find their way to *Carry On* looking for an extension of 'magical' fictional spaces; or other multiplicities of reasons. Because of its location, *Carry On* perpetuates a confusion of 'worlds'—In *Fangirl*, Cath writes a fan-fiction of Gemma's professionally published work, and *Carry On* has the same characters and a similar fictional 'world' as Gemma's and Cath's fictions, but is a markedly different fiction from both. The readers of Rowell's work may then locate themselves in the contextual 'world' of *Fangirl*, in the fantastical 'world' of *Carry On* itself, or at the intersection of the two. A Google search for "Carry On Rainbow Rowell" lists the question "Is the Simon Snow series real?" under the tab titled "People Also Ask." The location of *Carry On* puts into question the way concepts of 'reality' are understood in reference to fan-cultures and draws attention to the way fans make textual sense of 'reality' by exploring selfhood, desire, sexuality, and interpersonal relationships through 'fictionality' and 'virtualness.'

The concept of 'magic' in *Carry On* contributes to its meta-textual nature, while also bringing up processes of meaning-making. In *Carry On*, popular phrases including idioms, song lyrics, nursery rhymes, and famous quotations, attain their literal meaning when spoken by wizards. For example, the phrase "Clean as a Whistle" works as a cleaning spell, "Get well soon" acts as a healing spell, and so on (Rowell 282, 156). An instructor at Simon's school tells him that for 'spells' to work, it is not enough to speak the words, but necessary to "summon[] their meaning" (Rowell 107). It is this process of collective or generalized meaning-making that Simon seems to fall short of—his spell-casting either has no effect, or overflows its bounds.

However, the processes of meaning-making are not only literalized but also work in an interpretive framework. For instance, the spell "Tyger, tyger, burning bright" acts as a self-immolation spell, commenting on Blake's poem as a play of power, creation, and destruction (Rowell 232). Spells are also based on the caster's feelings like "On love's light wings," which is said to work only when one is "stupidly in love" (Rowell 483). The 'world' of magic is not separated from consumerism as even slogans from advertisements like "Have a break, have a Kit Kat!" work as spells (Rowell 444). The text points to multiple possibilities of deriving meanings as well as indicates the ways in which different strains might intertwine in it—Simon's inability to cast spells 'correctly' results from an intermixing of interpretive faculties and an unsureness which is evident in his first-person narrative style, wherein he often contradicts himself with the use of parentheses. What Rowell's concept of magic seems to indicate is that linguistic possibilities of interpretation depend on socio-cultural, economic, and personal contexts.

The spell that seems to sustain the plot is one which speaks of the coming of a redeemer/saviour figure—"And one will come to end us,/And one will bring his fall,/Let the greatest power of powers reign,/May it save us all" (Rowell 34). On one level, this rhyme seems to be a 'formula' for the writing of fantasy fiction—the first two lines indicate the binary of 'evil' and 'good,' while the last two lines speak of heroism, victory, and redemption. The rhyme opens up portals of intertextuality, weaving together the structural similarity of multiple fantasy narratives. Within *Carry On*, the rhyme also demonstrates the 'lure' of power—the Mage, unable to satisfactorily arrive at a literal manifestation of the rhyme (in terms of how spells work in Rowell's 'world'), decides to birth the "greatest power of powers" on his own terms. An allegory of authorship is evident in the manner in which the Mage births but then abandons his son, Simon. In an interview published in 'The Toast' and publicized on her website, Rowell describes her relationship with fantasy fiction, saying that she "always inhaled Chosen One stories."[3] Having written excerpts containing Simon and Baz from Gemma T. Leslie's and Cath's points of view in *Carry On*, Rowell declares her wish to "play around" in the "world" of those characters (the-toast.net). These opinions can be interpreted as Rowell's play on the rhyme, an intertwining of the pleasures and desires of reading and writing, consumption and production. Her statements in

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[3]See Chung, Nicole. ""I've always inhaled Chosen one stories": Rainbow Rowell on Fantasy, Love, and *Carry On*." 6 October 2015.

the interview also place her as a fan, and further offer ways in which readers can interpret the rhyme through their writings.

This paper explores the conflicts and affinities in the emerging author-reader relationship in the YA-fantasy genre, examining how fan-cultures on reader-based forums interact with professionally published authors. As both authors and readers continuously engage in developing and virtually positioning their identities, the author-reader relationship becomes one involving the constant navigation of textual power and pleasure.

The self-reflexivity in fan-cultures about fans' position as interpreters in relation to academic production furthers the layers of textuality that can be studied through an intertwining of affective and interpretive frameworks. Rowell's *Carry On* marks a movement from capitalized authorial control to encouraging readers' precedence in interpretation, meaning-making, and the writing of responses, providing a framework for authors to acknowledge the influence of fan paratexts on their works and a framework for readers to merge creative and critical responses in the forms of the content they create.

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Adorno at Ferndean: Some Considerations on Slavery and Aesthetics in *Jane Eyre*

Anshul Timothy Mukarji

Jane Eyre is a novel that begins at its end. In the retrospective style of the bildungsroman, the narrative of Jane's life ends with the scene of its own writing as she announces "[m]y tale draws to its close" and slips into the present perfect tense of "I have now been married ten years" (445). The novel documents the growth of its subject into a novelist and the end of the novel's narrative is, properly speaking, the beginning of its own inception as the reader is finally confronted with adult author-autobiographer Jane. The genre of the novel as fictionalized autobiography, in its combination of Jane as both the writer of her tale and as character in the novel, overlays two distinct temporal schemas. In Gerard Genette's terminology, the *narration* of the text, i.e., the narrative act of Jane the narrator, is overlaid onto the novel's *histoire*, or the story which is narrated, the plot-content of the bildungsroman (25–7).[1]

Only at its end does the novel announce its stakes and lay its cards on its own writing-table: its concern is not a reflective realism, a description of a social totality which exists beyond it. Rather, it documents a form of consciousness which is both the formal organizing principle of the text as well as a character within it. Jane reveals that the novel has been filtered through and shaped by her, bringing her bildungsroman to the level of its own contemplation. In forsaking the confines of reflection the novel, like Jane on the moors, finds itself in an open wilderness of aesthetic mediation.[2] The text is thus constitutively concerned with its own aesthetic form.

Yet, in its concluding paragraphs, the novel veers away from this closed structure: Jane abdicates her own authorial voice and St. John's letter has the last word. The precise point at which the novel

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[1]Genette's is actually a tripartite narratological distinction. Alongside *narration*, or the act of narrating, and *histoire*, or the story/plot-content, Genette also distinguishes *discours* or the utterances which constitute the text itself. *Narration* and *discours* are often treated together by Genette, who uses the term 'narrative-discourse' to refer to this conjunction of the two (25–7).

[2]Such a distinction from reflection theories of realism may seem to take Adorno's polemic against Lukacs in "Reconciliation Under Duress" too much at face value. However, it is partially informed by Peter Uwe Hohendahl's distinction between reflection and representation in the context of the polemic in *The Fleeting Promise of Art* (103–128).

affirms its own writing and discloses its structure is also when Jane's (as author-autobiographer) narrative act fails to encompass the totality of the novel and is supplemented by a text from a colony. This sudden swerve off course, this letter from India which exorbitates from the circular structure of the novel, is a problem of form which belies the self-enclosed finality of 'plain Jane's progress,' to use Gilbert and Gubar's description of the story.

This paper is an attempt at thinking through this contradiction in form and what it is indicative of. As this disjunction emerges precisely when Jane is shown to write her autobiography, it forces us to go over the text of the novel once again with sedulous care. This problem at the level of *narration* must be sought out not just at the level of *histoire*, confounded as they are within the novel, but must also be parsed in the *discours*. It is to this latter critical task that this paper shall chiefly address itself by considering *Jane Eyre* as part of the traffic of texts which populated the transatlantic world of the nineteenth century.

On Form

Before dropping anchor in the Atlantic world, the paper returns to the moment at which the projected totality of the text disintegrates. The letter is caught in a double movement: it escapes Jane's authorial voice yet finds its trajectory folded back into the novel. Through the letter, *narration* and *histoire* separate out of each other: the letter cuts through the discursive density of Jane's narrative act but its very inclusion in the novel requires it to be congealed within the plot at the end of the *histoire*. This troubled inclusion, the retardation of its exorbitating motion, is central to the challenge it poses. It is, as Theodor Adorno notes in *Aesthetic Theory*, "…only as finished, molded objects that [artworks] become force fields of their antagonisms" (177).

Tracking the letter takes us into the heart of the novel's forcefield. Simultaneously, the exposition on form, mandated by the text's own preoccupation with form, requires a technical attention to narrative structure which moves us away from both plot-content and a social reality outside the text. How, then, might a movement from specialized technicalism to social critique be charted, if not attempted? The text offers a possibility immanent within it: since the problem of form occurs at the level of both narrative act and plot-content, the failure of the narrative act must necessarily lead to a consideration of the plot-content, as suggested in this paper's introduction.

Indeed, this formal antagonism returns in the content of the final chapter. The letter comes to Jane from India, reminding the reader of the possible death she foresaw for herself there. The fear of being "grilled alive in Calcutta" vivifies her rejection of St. John and the letter becomes a *memento mori* which Jane cannot fully suppress (411). But death, which breaks through the structure of the text, moving the letter centrifugally out of the orbit of the novel, also exerts a counterforce—a centripetal pull. St. John's voice is itself presented as a dying voice, indeed, the prospect of his demise is lit by a halo of religious anticipation: "his glorious sun hastens to its setting" (447). England and India are connected by death and dying, as the colonial antipodes appear to Jane as both nurse and nemesis. St. John's letter is buffeted by pressure and counterpressure: it is subject to the novel's forces rather than being a static component of an aesthetic form conceived of as an unyielding and immobile totality. It is this processual nature of artworks that Adorno draws attention to when he notes that "[a]rtworks' paradoxical nature, stasis, negates itself" (*Aesthetic Theory* 177).

But to seek within form its own explanation, immanent in it, is to confer on its enclosing circumference the very stability unbalanced by the letter. It is, of course, entirely possible to move in the well-worn grooves of ideology criticism, dismiss form as a "reactionary tendency to obscure sociopolitical content and to propagate false consciousness," and dissolve the paradox of the letter altogether (Kaufman "Adorno's Social Lyric" 354). Aesthetics becomes mythmaking, and all texts are fed into the paper-shredder of an ideology-critique constitutively incapable of doing anything but violence to the objects of its inquiry.

Instead, to do justice to artworks and to not confront them solely as veils of ideology shrouding the world, this study turns to Theodor Adorno's aesthetics. For Adorno, it is the "law of form" that ensures that "art's autonomy remains irrevocable": "[a]rtworks detach themselves from the empirical world and bring forth another world, one opposed to the empirical world *as if* this other world too were an autonomous entity" (*Aesthetic Theory* 1–2, emphasis added). The 'as if' is the fulcrum on which Adorno moves the world of Kantian aesthetics: art negates the world and in its negation bears the imprint of that which it has left behind. Art's autonomy confronts aesthetics as a *fait accompli* but it is, for all this, no less a *fait social*. J. M. Bernstein's precis is particularly incisive:

> The sublimation of content through the law of form that is art's resistance to society is itself something social. In this respect, artworks' presumption of being autonomous, spiritual items in opposition to the conditions of material production is a piece of false consciousness, indeed a form of fetishism[…] The fetish character of the artwork is its illusory claim to be a being in and for itself (to be a thing in itself). ("The dead speaking" 148)

Adorno's theory thus walks the tightrope between ideology-critiques and recent works on aesthetics in which "the autonomy of artworks is taken for granted," a tendency which Peter Hohendahl, in his work on Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory*, identifies in the works of Elaine Scarry and Peter de Bolla (Hohendahl 5). Art, for Adorno, finds its origins in magic. Something of this magic lives on in art through form, which draws around artworks a magic circle within which emerges a new world, subject to its own laws. To linger on the cusp of this circle, at the periphery of bewitchment and the horizon of disenchantment, is this paper's imperiled endeavor.

To return to the task of disambiguating the many valences of form in Jane Eyre, the paper draws its inspiration from one of Adorno's more programmatic assertions on the relationship between form and reality: "The unsolved antagonisms of reality return in artworks as immanent problems of form" (*Aesthetic Theory* 6). If texts are force-fields, then the letter's escape from the text's orbit drags the solidifying form of the novel along its own ex-centric path. Its disturbance creates within *Jane Eyre* singularities, new orbits, ricocheting fragments which gleam briefly, throwing an eclipsed light on the text, before being consumed by the fires of the work's logic, like much else.

The most immediate disruption occurs in its defiance of the sublimation of the self into the social world. Jane, at the end of the novel, attempts to recede into the shadows of her own work, as she becomes Rochester's arms and eyes. The fractious individuality which has come to be associated with her and the text's nascent feminism crumbles under the weight of wifehood and motherhood. Paradoxically, the negation of the self is the price that female selfhood must pay if it must continue its existence in society, the bankruptcy of which is intimated by this honorarium that it demands of Jane. Yet, with the advent of the letter, Jane's voice returns with urgency to counteract it and sublimate St. John instead. Bertha was consumed by hellfire while Jane presages a similarly fiery divine ecstasy for St. John: a senescence illuminated by the sun.

Simultaneous with the deferral of the image of a harmonious social whole is another process which unravels the novel's threads. Jane's acceptance of Rochester as her husband is predicated, in the proto-feminism of the text, on her inheritance bequeathed to her by an uncle. It is colonial lucre, extracted from Jamaican slavery that ushers Jane into her marital bliss at Ferndean. Raised to the class-position of a bourgeois woman Jane, as an author-autobiographer, attempts to produce a text in which her narrative act and her life itself are coextensive and coterminous. Indeed, she is the autonomous bourgeois *par excellence*: hers is the fiction of a self-producing individual. She is spun entirely out of her own narration, Jane Eyre is cut from the cloth of *Jane Eyre*. In his brief notes on Balzac, contemporaneous as he is with Brontë, Adorno diagnoses this incipient delusion: "the bourgeois illusion that the individual exists essentially for himself" ("Reading Balzac" 130). Jane's inability to absorb the letter into her narrative intimates that this is less a sustained illusion than a vanishing mirage, receding even as it is approached. The letter is an irregularity in her self-fabrication, the residue of the world which cannot be further reduced to Jane. In the element of discontinuity it inserts into the movement of the individual towards the social, the contradictions which inhere in the world and the bourgeois consciousness which perceives them are illuminated at the very moment of their projected closure.

The rise of the bourgeoisie, and the concomitant rise of this illusionary individual, is predicated on the commodity-form which itself relies on the abstraction of human labour (Marx 176). This abstraction was to become a source of grave consternation for both Adorno and Walter Benjamin (Kaufman "Lyric Commodity Critique" 208–9). For Adorno, in particular, the novels of realists such as Balzac gain importance for the "sensory evidence" they provide of the "terrifying radiance" of the commodity-world and its reification and abstraction ("Reading Balzac" 122). In talking of early nineteenth century realism, he argues that it could limn the straight line between "the unfreedom of human beings" and their subjection, under industrial capitalism, "to machinery, and its latent law, the commodity form" ("Parataxis" 127).

To move past this assertion of human unfreedom, and its purported relationship with realism, it is instructive to remember Marx's comments on the commodity-form in the first volume of *Capital.* For Marx, "the equality and equivalence of all kinds of labour," the bedrock of the commodity form and, hence, Adorno's analyses of abstraction, could only be apprehended by consciousness when "the concept of human equality has already acquired the permanence of a fixed popular opinion" (152). Only the floodlights of human consciousness,

fastened to the pinnacle of the superstructure of 'popular opinion,' can illuminate the economic base of the marketplace from where they draw their being and sustenance. This significant detour leads back, through forked pathways of critical concern, to the signposts of the novel's end which points both to social life and Jane's selfhood.

The formal contradiction of the novel is that of the bourgeois individual confronted by slavery, which gives the lie to vaunted notions of human equality. It is the wealth generated by slavery as well as the metaphors and rhetoric it furbishes Jane with that make her mistress of Ferndean. Yet, if slavery makes the writing of the novel possible, it also exposes Jane to the breakdown in the logic of commodity exchange. Jane cannot, with any conviction, believe that slaves are non-human: the metaphorics of slavery have been integral to the moral force of her self-definition. The realization that human labour cannot be counted out in ounces, equivalent weight for equivalent weight, because of the inhuman inequality of slavery reveals the irrationality of a system whose rationality is everywhere assumed.

The novel, as noted before, concerns itself not solely with social reflection but with consciousness and the wound at the heart of rationality finds its expression in the dissolution of realism in the text at precisely those moments at which Jane must confront the *disjecta membra* of slavery which pierce the text. Hers is a lacerated consciousness, whose very existence entails chafing against the fraying fabric of the world it inhabits.

Towards Content

Form, in *Jane Eyre*, points to content, the cords of *narration* and narrative-discourse are twined together. Spectres of death haunt the edges of the text threatening Jane and looming over St. John in India. The letter, in encapsulating the thematics of death in a formal contradiction, points to the precise mode through which the irrationality of colonialism may be articulated by Jane. The mode is that of the Gothic. Spectres glide through the text refusing exorcism and visiting Jane at moments when she can no longer turn a blind eye to colonialism: the fainting spell in the red room which 'oppresses' Jane as she is bathed in the preternatural glow of mahogany, a wood procured from levelled forests in the West Indies or her confrontation with Bertha who as "the foul German beast – the vampire" is living death itself (Brontë 15-19, 281; Freedgood 40–44).

If attention to content is sanctioned by the form of the text the task remains to square this imperative with Adorno's thesis that art's

autonomy is secured only when "it opposes the empirical through the element of form" (*Aesthetic Theory* 5). "Adorno's formalism," as J. M. Bernstein dubs it, emerges from his close consideration of high modernist artworks which turn inwards on themselves through the abandonment of social content ("Readymades, Monochromes" 84). In the paintings of German expressionism, for instance, the contents of the painting, pared down to light, line, and colour, are also its form, much like in Beckett's plays Adorno discerns only a post-mortem of metaphysics and the cadaverous remains of language (Bernstein "Readymades Monochromes" 87; Adorno "Trying to Understand" 241–2).

Adorno's austerities of form do not tend to fare well with artworks which do not militate against reality with the complete asceticism of modernism. Adorno himself seems to realize this, ambivalently enough, in his readings of nineteenth-century novels. As Peter Hohendahl notes in an analysis of Adorno's writings on Balzac, "it is the content rather than the form that arouses Adorno's interest" (105). Thus, in speaking of Balzac, Adorno speaks of an imitation of the rhythms of the bourgeois world, of friendships, and of names in Balzac's novels ("Reading Balzac" 123). Equally at the heart of these analyses is a misgiving surrounding the novel form as a genre which straddles the domains of an emergent mass culture and the parallelly increasing autonomy of high art. The novel can violate the proscriptions of the law of form, indiscriminately drawing content into itself and troubling the boundary between prose artwork and newspaper reportage (Cunningham 194–5).

This aporetic moment in Adorno's thought can be read in tandem with the text's own movement towards content, threading together the weft of the novel's content with the warp of other texts from the Atlantic world. To do so, this paper spotlights those sections of the text in which an explicit treatment of the Atlantic can be found. It is in these sections of the novel that this paper hopes to discern the sutures of language through which *Jane Eyre* is tethered to the world.

On Transatlantic Texts

The months preceding June 22, 1772 at Westminster bore witness to a case brought against James Somerset, a black man, by Charles Stewart who alleged that Somerset was a slave who had escaped his ownership (Wiecek 87). As this case proceeded, however, it gradually became a legal crucible in which the arguments for and against slavery were hammered out to the limits of their logic. The arguments in the courtroom turned around the possibilities of hereditary

privilege, the legality of slavery, and the historical antecedents through which slavery could be established as valid under English common law (Wiecek 89–91). The verdict of the case, which granted Somerset, and by extension all slaves, the right of *habeas corpus* to prevent from them from being seized by a master, found wide purchase in the rhetoric of a mushrooming abolitionist movement.

This rhetoric drew crucially from the text of the judgement itself as well as the highly publicized arguments put forth by Granville Sharp, who would become a prominent English antislavery leader through his association with the case, in favour of Somerset. Sharp's speech troped England or, more specifically, the land and earth of England itself as being infused with freedom. For Sharp, Somerset could not be seized by his former master because England was, necessarily, a country of free men, making the existence of slavery impossible (Wiecek 113–120). Slavery was defined as "essentially "un-British", as an alien intrusion which could be tolerated, at best, as an unfortunate part of the commercial and colonial "other-world"" (Davis 377). It was precisely this argument, put forward by Sharp, that became the rhetorical legacy of the Somerset case in the discourse of abolition.

Jane, whose self-fashioning involves the metaphorics of slavery, draws on the vocabulary of this imagined England when she rejects Rochester's authority as a 'master' and flees Thornfield Hall, permitting herself to think of him only much later when she was "gleeful, settled, content" as a village schoolmistress (Brontë 355). Inevitably, her ruminations on Rochester turn on the axis of land and location: she seems, if only for a paragraph, to luxuriate in the possibility of "waken[ing] in a southern clime, amongst the luxuries of a pleasure villa," only to wrench herself from these seductions (Brontë 355). Her movement away from 'southern climes' and her refusal to submit to Rochester's desires is displayed in the following asseveration: "Whether is it better, I ask, *to be a slave* in a fool's paradise at Marseilles—fevered with delusive bliss one hour—suffocating with the bitterest tears of remorse and shame the next—or to be a village-schoolmistress, free and honest, in a breezy mountain nook in the healthy heart of England" (Brontë 356, emphasis added). Bundled together with the idea of freedom from slavery is the image of the healthy heart of England, fanned by cool breezes. This moment is thus linked to Rochester's last words to her in its obsession with climate and enslavement: the "temperate clime of Albion" finds it mirror-image in Jamaica as an island of eternal damnation (357).

Jamaica is set ablaze with the fires of hell in Rochester's memories of a "fiery West Indian night" in which the "air was like sulphur-streams" (Brontë 281, 305) Paradoxically, this heat is accompanied by the prefiguration of rain by "black clouds" which "precede the hurricanes of those climates" (Brontë 305). "The sounds of a bottomless pit" thrill through Rochester's body as the ocean's waves sound to him like an earthquake and the moon glows red resembling a hot cannon-ball (Brontë 305). In the logical impossibility of this rhetoric are the traces of a West Indian Gothic which emerged in reaction to the Haitian revolution. The radical interrogation of the truncated fraternity of the French Revolution, restricted as it was to whites, as well as its military successes quickly became a source of deep-seated anxiety for whites in Europe as a veritable mini-industry of printed material sprung up across the Atlantic, carrying news, fictive reports, and fiction throughout the region. Important personages in the slave trade, such as MP and Jamaican planter Bryan Edwards, would draw on these fictive reports borrowing incidents from them only to inflate them with the hot air of hyperbole and embellish them with all the grotesquerie that Gothic vocabulary had to offer (Hoermann 193–194).

The picture of the West Indies which emerges from Edwards' account, as the spilled blood dries up and the bodies decompose and disappear from sight, is not of the otherworldly horror associated with Gothic tales set in Europe, haunted and populated as they are by ghostly presences (Paravisini-Gebert 231). Rather, what we see is an other-world in which the defiance of the blacks is transferred onto a landscape which resists British invasion tormenting the soldiers who dare step onto land. "The rains were incessant and constant," notes Edwards, and the "tropical climate" led to "the most fatal consequences," chief among which was "…that never-failing attendant on military expeditions in the West Indies, the yellow or pestilent fever" (149). Black violence against the inhumanity of slavery is distorted through the prism of white anxiety into a desire for vengeance. It is parsed through the excesses of Gothic horror which is, however, not elevated to the realm of supernatural monstrosity but is, instead, read into a landscape which expresses the will of nature as revenge against white men.

In the context of this military vocabulary, Rochester's reference to cannon-balls becomes significant, calling to mind the tropes of a West Indian climate at war with the white man. Sedimented in the paradoxes of this language, which break apart the surface of the text's realism, are diffused links of imagery and trope which disclose the historical force of abolition and slave-revolts in literature. This accumula-

tion of linguistic resonance over decades reveals to us not just the highly mediated links of the work of art to historical reality but also more immediate anxieties. The imagery of fire is central to this anxiety, as the sparks kindled in the West Indies by Bertha eventually burn Thornfield to ash, calling to mind the Jamaican slave revolt of 1831 as well as more contemporary accounts of mansion-burning in the West Indies (Meyer 254).

By inserting these discourses into the text's exposé of the irrational position of the bourgeoisie vis-à-vis colonialism, the novel dampens the force carried by the concept-metaphors which Jane uses to articulate her freedom from Rochester. Jane's self-effacement at the novel's end, her transformation into Rochester's prosthetics, is driven home by the intricate undoing of the logic by which she seeks to assert herself, which is also the logic of the text's movement due to its double character as both novel and autobiography. Adorno spoke of modern works of art as fireworks, which ascend and leave the world behind only to combust in a momentary flash of brilliance (*Aesthetic Theory* 81). The case of *Jane Eyre*, preoccupied as it is with fire, is slightly different. The novel smuggles into itself the dying embers of a moribund Atlantic economy only to immolate both Jane and Bertha with them—the spectre of the destruction of the self visits both Creole and colonizer. The text's pyrotechnics do not simply propel it away from the world. Rather, it is the world itself which supplies the gunpowder by which the novel might set itself ablaze and throw new light on reality.

Conclusion

Bertha's depiction in the novel, a mangled form, half-human, half-beast, stitched together by Gothic excess, has often been critiqued in terms of the ideological distortion of a colonized Other. To the extent that "ideology is untruth, false consciousness, deceit," this is integral to an understanding of the text. To the extent that the novel is not merely an ideological artifact, such a reading does violence to it (Adorno "On Lyric Poetry" 39). This paper has attempted to read the Gothic mode of the text more productively, seeing within it the possibility of critique immanent to the text. In the glow cast by form, the darkened recesses of the Gothic world take on fresh perspectives along with new aspects. The Gothic is not merely a demonizing distortion, it is also intimately linked with the total logic of the text, disclosing to us Jane's vexed position and the attendant modes of thought of her historical situation.

Equally, this paper has been concerned with Adorno's aesthetic theory, to which it owes the very idea of the immanent, processual movement of artworks. If Adorno's aesthetics preserve both the uniqueness of literary artworks and the imperative of social criticism, they must also be pushed up against their own aporias. The preeminence of form in Adorno, inherited from Kant, fails, even by his own reckoning, in confronting the novels of the 19th century. Moreover, Adorno's startling reticence in commenting on matters beyond Europe, oft remarked upon, fails the task Adorno himself set for philosophy: to do justice to human suffering (Said 278; *Negative Dialectics* 17). This paper has attempted to transcend these aporias through their synthesis in the logic of the commodity which is woven, and unwoven, in the text.

Over the last few decades there have been attempts to reformulate Adorno's aesthetics in the face of the challenges posed by contemporary art; this paper has sought to make his aesthetics relevant to a novel that antedates his writings.[3] Indeed, Adorno's own aesthetics cries out, from within itself, for such a revaluation, which transcends the need for fidelity to *Jane Eyre*. If, as Adorno asserts in the final sentence of the paralipomena to *Aesthetic Theory*, "[e]ven in a legendary better future, art could not disavow remembrance of accumulated horror; otherwise its form would be trivial," then art's relationship to slavery must be accounted for and Adorno's aesthetics, by fulfilling its own desire, must be made adequate to the task (324).

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[3]Instead of seeing Adorno's aesthetic theory as one that is "…so incisive and so ideologically compelling as to admit few equals" and which fails only when applied to newer contexts, I argue that a significant portion of the history of capitalism must be elided for Adorno's writings on aesthetics to become as eloquent as they are (Lazarus 134). Adorno's theory doesn't just require some stretching to fit contemporary situations; it also fails to reckon adequately with the literature of the 19th century that precedes modernism. It is only in recent works, such as Amy Allen's *The End of Progress*, that one finds the question of Critical Theory's relationship with colonialism posed more broadly and thoroughly.

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Misplacing Heads, Textual Formation, and Reformation: Somadeva's *Kathā Sarit Sāgara*, Thomas Mann's *The Transposed Heads*, and Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana*

Mehvish Siddiqui

A text[1] exists in language through its relationship with other texts. Such an existence can be seen parallel to the existence of a constantly evolving Being[2] which exists in relation to the world and to other Beings, while remaining distinct and identifiable throughout. A text evolves in a manner similar to the manner in which a Being evolves—"...at the interface of individuation and socialisation…by the action of opposite pulls which are the additive or contributory, and the consolidating or regulatory" (Chaudhuri 151). A text, like a Being, is a continuous work-in-progress which keeps on producing and re-producing itself by a simultaneously interactive and dissociative process, remaining distinctly identifiable at the same time.

This paper attempts to study "the selfsameness in manifold otherness"[3] of three texts—*Kathā Sarit Sāgara* by Somadeva, *The Transposed Heads* by Thomas Mann, and *Hayavadana* by Girish Karnad—which follow the same arc and yet say three very different things. The purpose of this paper is to trace and examine the singularity which remains identical within the changing multiplicity of intertextuality.[4] The analysis employs the theoretical framework of the German existential phenomenologist Martin Heidegger, drawing primarily from his 1927 treatise *Being and Time*.

The tale this paper concerns itself with in the *Kathā Sarit Sāgara* begins when King Vikramaditya brings the daemon Vetala back from the *simsapa* tree[5] and seats him on his shoulder. Vetala says to the king, "King, you are wise and brave, therefore I love you, so I will tell you an amusing tale, and mark well my question" (Somadeva 204).

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[1]Derived from the Latin word *texere* which means "to weave."

[2]In this paper, the word 'Being' (written in uppercase) refers to the noun, and the word 'being' (written in lowercase) refers to the verb.

[3]Martin Heidegger uses this definition for his concept of *Selbstein* or "everyday being-one's-self" (Heidegger 114).

[4]The word "intertextuality" is derived from the Latin word *intertexto*, which means to intermingle while weaving. Julia Kristeva writes, "Any text is constructed of a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (Kristeva).

[5]A rosewood tree found in India and southeast Asia, mentioned in ancient Buddhist discourses.

What unravels over the course of the next five pages is a didactic tale that is intended to ground the virtues of fixture and certainty into its readers (or hearers, as the *Kathā Sarit Sāgara* is a compendium of tales originally borrowed from the ancient Indian oral tradition).

In this tale, Dhavala falls in love with Madanasundari as soon as he sees her. He becomes agitated, goes home and remains uneasy until his mother asks him the cause of his uneasiness, which he shares with her immediately. Dhavala's father partakes in the conversation by asking his son to not worry about something "so easily attained." As both the families are equal in wealth and occupation, Madanasundari's father agrees to the marriage and the ceremony takes place the very next day. Madanasundari also falls in love with Dhavala as soon as they are married. A while after the wedding, Madanasundari's brother arrives at Dhavala's home with an invitation to participate in a festival devoted to the goddess Durga. Soon the trio, that is, Dhavala, Madanasundari, and her brother set out for the festival. On the way, they arrive at a great Durga temple. Dhavala is moved by the urge to pay his respects to the goddess so he proceeds inside the temple. He reflects on how people worship the goddess Durga by sacrificing living creatures and concludes for certain that the greatest sacrifice he could present to her would be his own self. After this reflection, Dhavala cuts his head with a sword that lay in the temple. Dhavala's brother-in-law grows impatient while waiting for him, so he enters the temple, witnesses Dhavala's decapitated head, and decides, without further ado, that he too must take the same route. Then Madanasundari enters the temple, having grown impatient while waiting outside for the two. On viewing the scene of horror, she is convinced that she too must die, so she cries out to the goddess, makes a noose around her neck, and is about to hang herself from a tree, when suddenly, the goddess appears. Impressed by the devotion of the three, the goddess grants Madanasundari that her brother and her husband will be brought back to life if she joins their heads to their bodies. Madanasundari rushes towards the corpses in order to bring them back to life, but she exchanges their heads in a hurry. As a result, Dhavala and his brother-in-law come back to life in different bodies and do not even notice the change. Only Madanasundari notices her error later.

Vetala poses his question to King Vikramaditya: Who is Madansundari's husband and who is her brother after the exchange of heads has taken place? Vikramaditya 'solves' this problem by stating with obviousness that the one with the husband's head is the husband and the one with the brother's head is the brother. The purported obviousness of Vikramaditya's solution never lets the question of incest

arise. In addition, this tale treats the question of identity as a non-problematic: its underlying ethos dictates that identity is derived from the seat of reason, which is the head, and the body is seen largely as an appendage to the head. However, it cannot possibly be that the severing of the "source of identity" from its immediate surroundings (i.e. the body), even if it is for a short while, causes no disruption in the respective continuities of those Beings which have been disjointed so.

According to Martin Heidegger, a *Dasein*[6] is a Being that exists in time and space. Humans belong to this category of Beings: they are capable of reflection and they are also aware that they exist. Such an awareness of being is informed by a spatial and a temporal component. The Being exists 'here' (which is the familiar space) and not 'elsewhere' (any unfamiliar space). The Being also exists simultaneously in the present, as it was in its past, and as it will be in its future. If any of these components were to be disturbed, the Being would transform into a different one. It seems that the lack of a conflict of identities, in the tale told by Vetala to King Vikramaditya, is an oversimplification which intends to cover up a significant philosophical problem by presupposing the problem to be non-existent. Heidegger would have us believe that such a presupposition, through curbing one's instinct to question, is almost always in service of an established tradition (which could be philosophical, socio-cultural, et al). It could be argued that the privileging of the head over the body is a ploy through which *Brahminical* social superiority[7] is culturally reproduced to the effect of justifying the socio-political status quo in the minds of the reader (or hearer). Heidegger writes that the dissolution of calcified tradition is imperative to understanding the primordial question of being.

Thomas Mann's borrowing of Vetala's tale in his novel takes a more existentialist turn: it does away with the themes of certainty and fixity, thereby trading the simplistic, definitive, and 'amusing' character of the tale for a modernist rendition. Mann's characters—Sita, her husband Shridaman, and Shridaman's friend Nanda—are far removed from the idealistic dispositions of the characters in the 'original' tale. They are given to musing, doubt, and questioning of themselves and their own choices.

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[6]The German word *Dasein*, which means "being-there," is the vernacular word for "existence" (Heidegger 8).

[7]Brahmins, the priestly caste, are believed to have originated from the head of the creator Brahma. As such, Brahmins have enjoyed the benefits of a very high position in Indian social hierarchy, often leaving members of other castes to suffer inequality and discrimination.

Shridaman and Nanda first encounter Sita while she is bathing in a river. Both are equally enchanted by the sight of her naked body and continue in their voyeurism. While Nanda assumes a playful tone, acknowledging their act to be what it is, Shridaman cannot quite bring himself to accept the nature of his gaze. To rationalise his voyeurism, Shridaman goes down the route of philosophy and lectures Nanda about how the goddess Durga resides in the womanly form, as a consequence of which it is not Sita's earthly beauty but the All-Mother's divine might which has him ensnared. Shridaman's denial of his sexual interest in Sita entails his awareness of such an interest, thus betraying his inauthenticity.[8] Another aspect of Shridaman's personality which this denial brings into view is that of his desire to always hold on to a moral high-ground, especially when he is dealing with Nanda. Descended from Brahmins and elder to Nanda in age, Shridaman assumes by default a cultural and intellectual superiority to his Vaishya-born associate, which he must exhibit from time to time. The only correct way for the two to interact would be for Shridaman to influence Nanda, and not the other way around. It is almost as if it would be 'unbecoming' of Shridaman to feel or do as Nanda does in any matter. This does not mean that the two cannot be friends; however, it does mean that they have to remain two—a unification of their types of thought is simply not feasible because it would involve 'becoming' and 'unbecoming.' On some level, this contradiction posits personal identity as a cultural fiction which requires conscious self-fashioning and a subsequent performance—Shridaman, the Brahmin's son is forced to deny a sexual instinct and paint it as a philosophical one. Thus Shridaman becomes the auteur of the text, which is his personal identity, by selectively circling out those traits in him that do not fit the 'idea' of what he should be.

Nanda is more generous in acknowledging that not all that composes him is entirely his own. He understands that he has "learned himself" from Shridaman, and believes himself in that sense to be derivative and not quite as pure as Shridaman. Nanda realises that he is an *a priori* 'Being-in-the-world'[9] where his way of existence is relative to the way of existence of his surrounding world. He is an incidental pastiche: who he is remains informed by where and when he is. If

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[8]In Heideggerian thought, "authenticity" means "ownedness" or "being one's own," implying the idea of owning up to and owning what one is and does; "inauthenticity" implies a refusal to do so (Varga and Guignon).

[9]According to Heidegger, "being-in-the-world" is an inherent characteristic of the *Dasein*. The *Dasein* dwells in the world, not just spatially, but also by belonging in the world (Wheeler).

these factors were to differ Nanda would be completely different too. This is established by his saying:

> …you are so necessary to me, my elder brother; what I have not you have, and you are my friend, so that it is almost as though I had it myself. For as your fellow, I have a part in you, and so I am a little bit Shridaman; but without you I were only Nanda, and that is not enough. (Mann 41)

"Mineness belongs to any existent *Dasein*, and belongs to it as the condition which makes authenticity and inauthenticity possible" (Heidegger 78). As "ownedness" is implicit in "authenticity," it becomes implicit in "mineness" too. This means that "mineness" can only be constituted post-reflectively, through "ownedness." Where there is a post-reflective refusal to own up to what one is, "inauthenticity" is established through a fictive or superficial "mineness" which covers up the true "mineness." The reason that Nanda can openly admit to the derivative nature of his identity is because he does not suffer from a sense of superiority. This enables him to exercise his freedom and choose who he is to be by drawing upon the varied influences available to him. Because Nanda does not follow a default code of conduct which is "received wisdom" from an "original source," he is an authentic existential individual. His "mineness" is his own as he understands how derivative it is and how much it is a consequence of his choices.

The same, however, cannot be said of Shridaman, who believes himself to be the possessor of an original 'self' derived directly from the idea of that 'self' only, and from no other source. Nanda is, of course, quite correct in his assessment of himself—he is "a little bit Shridaman" and Shridaman is a little bit of him (although Shridaman would never admit to it). Shridaman's puritanism is *Brahminical* in the sense that it refuses to engage with the possibility of a source of identity 'lower' than its assumption for what the sources of his identity should ideally be. This refusal to engage is a post-reflective choice, which does not leave Shridaman without turmoil. While Shridaman may convince Nanda otherwise, the truth remains that the nature of his gaze towards Sita has a sexual undertow, and he certainly cannot convince himself of the same lie which makes him inauthentic.

When Shridaman takes a detour into the Kali temple from the trio's journey, his motive for this deviation is not purely devotional. It expresses Shridaman's wish for a short respite from the awkwardness of the situation on the cart—Sita's obvious interest in the contours of Nanda's body, Nanda's noticing of this interest, and Shridaman's pre-

tension of not noticing any of this. At the Kali temple, however, Shridaman is overawed by the grotesque imagery and the fearsome idol of the goddess. He concludes that he must present a sacrifice to the goddess no less than his own head, following which he beheads himself with a sword. When Nanda arrives in search of Shridaman, he is shocked at the sight of his friend's head lying separate from his body. Remembering his earlier oath to Shridaman, in which Nanda swore he could not live without his friend, he beheads himself too. Sita's arrival on site, her decision to take her own life, and the appearance of the goddess completes the sequence of events marked by the "original tale" but it is at this point that Mann's version makes a serious departure. He employs a *deus ex machina* not just to bring the dead characters back to life but to also make the real motives of the characters open to the reader. In Mann's rendition of the tale, the goddess has decided to appear not because she is impressed with the devotion of the characters but because she is too well-aware of their hypocrisy and wishes to make it known that she cannot be deceived. "An 'appearance' does the announcing—that which in its showing-itself indicates something that does not show itself." (Heidegger 53) It is through the goddess' appearance in the tale that the reader comes to know of the truth of the characters' motives. Mann's characters are far removed from the idealistic archetypes of the 'original' tale (Dhavala, in Vetala's tale, is paralysed to inaction on account of his desire for Madanasundari); they are flawed human beings who are capable of feeling and being moved to action by baser emotions[10] such as desire and rage. Shridaman beheads himself because death provides him with the perfect escape from the fact that he would never be enough for Sita. Nanda follows Shridaman in death because he knows that he would be accused of murdering Shridaman in order to take over Sita. Sita decides to hang herself because she knows that society would shun her for setting two great friends against each other, ultimately being held solely responsible for the whole fiasco.

On being brought back to life in different bodies, Shridaman and Nanda notice the difference, unlike the characters in Vetala's tale who remain oblivious to the change. The difference is that of the spatial component of their, that is, Shridaman's and Nanda's being. "As a world is a characteristic of *Dasein*'s being, every *Dasein* 'proximally' has its world, thus the 'world' becomes something 'subjec-

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[10]In ancient Indian tradition, 'desire' is a base emotion from which a high-born Brahmin would distance himself. Mann's characterisation breaks the traditionally-established hierarchy of emotions, thereby humanising his characters.

tive'…'world' can be understood in an ontical[11] sense as that 'wherein' a factical *Dasein* can be said to 'live'" (Heidegger 92–93). A body is not a mere appendage, it is not happenstance. A body is the space occupied by the *Dasein* in the world—if the body were to differ, the *Dasein* too would be different. The *Dasein* cannot exist irrespective of its body because the *Dasein* does not merely have its body, it is its body. This is evident when Nanda is able to train his new, weakly body into the shape that his old body used to be. It is also evident in how Shridaman's new, muscular body turns into the shape of his old body due to a lack of the training required to maintain it. Because Nanda's mind is used to a regimen of regular physical exercise and also because Shridaman's mind is not used to any such regimen, the two friends soon find that their new bodies have turned into the likeness of their old bodies. While Sita's *deliberate error*[12] in swapping the heads while attaching them to their bodies may have satisfied her then, she is ultimately brought back to square one. For Shridaman and Nanda, the complication (which used to be the problem of desire) becomes an even greater crisis of identity and being. The question remains—who is Sita's husband? The answer is not as simple as Somadeva makes it out to be in the *Kathā Sarit Sāgara*. While Nanda's body may have Shridaman's head, it was Shridaman's body that accepted Sita's hand in marriage and also impregnated her. The correct answer is that none of the two is Sita's husband, because Shridaman has ceased to be Shridaman (on account of losing his own body i.e. the spatial component of his Being) and Nanda never really became Shridaman (despite having gained Shridaman's body) because Nanda cannot step out of his own Being temporally.

Girish Karnad drew inspiration from Mann's novella and fashioned Vetala's tale into a two-act play *Hayavadana*. The Kannada word "hayavadana" translates into "one with a horse's head." While the theme of Mann's text is the nature of Being, Karnad deals with the complete idea of being complete. The play begins with a prayer recited by the narrator Bhagavata[13] to Ganesha, the god of beginnings and a patron to the arts:

> An elephant's head on a human body, a broken tusk and a cracked belly – whichever way you look at him he seems the

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[11]'Ontical' inquiry is concerned with entities and facts about them, as opposed to 'ontological' inquiry which is concerned with the meaning of Being. The 'ontological' is more primordial than the 'ontical.' (Heidegger 31)

[12]An instance in the text in which a character is moved to act, on account of desire.

[13]The Sanskrit word 'bhagavata' is the title given to devotees of Vishnu, a Hindu deity.

embodiment of imperfection, of incompleteness… Could it be that this Image of Purity and Holiness, this Mangalamoorty, intends to signify by his very appearance that the completeness of God is something no poor mortal can comprehend? (Karnad 1)

As Bhagavata begins to narrate the tale he is interrupted by a loud scream across the stage. It turns out to be Nata, the actor. The cause of Nata's discomfort is that he has witnessed a man who has the head of a horse. Naturally, Nata is met with Bhagavata and the audience's disbelief until Hayavadana, the man with a horse's head, appears on stage. Bhagavata, sceptical at first, believes the head to be a mask and the whole affair to be some sort of a prank. However, he is shocked to discover that Nata is right. It turns out that Hayavadana was born this way; there is no previous sin or curse responsible for the way he is. The theme of the play is set around identity when Bhagavata exclaims, "…what can anyone do about a head one's born with?" (Karnad 7)

In an attempt to solve Hayavadana's problem, Bhagavata sets him and Nata on a pilgrimage to the Kali temple in Chitrakoot and continues with his narration of the tale. This Kali temple is the same temple where the characters of the tale behead themselves and are brought back to life with different heads. The arc of the tale is the same as that of Thomas Mann's. Two friends—Devadatta, the scholar and Kapila, the sportsman—fall in love with Padmini. Padmini marries Devadatta but she feels an intense, unprecedented sexual attraction towards Kapila. This becomes a cause of jealousy for Devadatta, who beheads himself in the Kali temple, following which the familiar course of events takes place. The first act of the play ends when the argument erupts between the new Devadatta (the one with Devadutta's head and Kapila's body) and the new Kapila (the one with Kapila's head and Devadutta's body) over who is the rightful husband of Padmini. Bhagavata addresses the audience as he closes:

What? What indeed is the solution to this problem, which holds the entire future of these three unfortunate beings in a balance? Must their fate remain a mystery? And if so shall we not be insulting our audience by tying a question-mark round its neck and bidding it good-bye? We have to face the problem. But it's a deep one and the answer must be sought with the greatest caution. Haste would be disastrous. So there's a break of ten minutes now. Please have some tea, ponder over this situation and come back with your own solutions. We shall then continue with our enquiry. [*The stage-hands hold a white curtain*

in front of the frozen threesome, while the Bhagavata and the others relax and sip tea.] (Karnad 39)

The idea of completeness implies two things—there is an incompleteness which is indicated through the appearance[14] of a lack and this incompleteness can be turned into completeness if there is a desire to do so. It is important to note that the lack precedes the desire, and the desire becomes a consequence of this lack.[15] The appearance of a lack indicates an incompleteness which causes desire but the disappearance of desire does not lead to completeness. Completeness can only be achieved through the disappearance of lack which would indicate the end of incompleteness.

During the intermission of Karnad's play the audience (or the reader) has the option to arrive at their own solution to the problem thereby to complete the play and leave the theatre (or stop reading further) if they are satisfied with their own conclusion. However, seldom does an audience (or a reader) surrender to the instinct of claiming "auteurial"[16] authority upon a text, favouring a more traditional reverential approach towards the author's authority. Therefore, the second act begins and the audience (or the reader) waits for Karnad's version of events to unfold upon the stage (or on paper). This waiting on the audience's part is an 'appearance' and the thing it implies is a 'desire' for the completion of the play. The desire, in turn, is another 'appearance' which implies a 'lack' of a conclusion, and the lack implies an 'incompleteness.'

The white curtain is removed as the second act begins, and Bhagavata forays directly into addressing the problem. Referring directly to the ancient tale in the *Kathā Sarit Sāgara*, Bhagavata considers whether King Vikramaditya's answer to Vetala's question would appeal to the audience, deciding that it would do so, continues to narrate the tale. In the tale, Devadatta, Kapila, and Padmini appeal to a *rishi*[17] for a solution to their stalemate, and the *rishi* reaffirms that the head is indeed the seat of identity. However, this solution does not entail the end of 'desire' in the play. While Padmini is with the new Devadutta, she continues to hanker after the new Kapila; therefore she does not feel complete. Devadutta and Kapila cannot be complete be-

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[14]The word "appearance" is used in the Heideggerian sense—"that which in its showing itself indicates that which does not show itself."

[15]In the psychoanalytic philosophy of Jacques Lacan, "lack" is always related to "desire."

[16]In film theory, an auteur is a film director who influences his/her films in such a way that he/she could be considered to be the author of the film.

[17]A Hindu sage or saint.

cause it is not feasible for them to be temporally and spatially uniform after their heads have been exchanged (as that would mean for both of them to occupy their two bodies at the same time). The realisation of the stalemate that their lack is "unfillable" leads the three to decide to die: Devadutta and Kapila fight each other unto death, following which Padmini performs *sati*[18] so that the three may become one in death.

Hayavadana returns to the stage at the end of the play. At the Kali temple in Chitrakoot, he too had found the sacrificial sword and was ready to sever his horse-head when the goddess appeared. He cried to the goddess and begged her to make him complete. At once, Hayavadana turns into a complete horse. While he had anticipated that he would become a complete man, it could be argued that in Hayavadana's case, the goddess' appearance leads to the implication that the gap between expected reality and experiential reality too is "unfillable." For those who did surrender to Karnad's authority of the play, the text might be complete. For those who did not, it is unlikely that on turning into a complete horse, Hayavadana never desired to become a complete man again. Even if Hayavadana were to turn into a complete man, he would not be spatially and temporally 'complete' unless he were to be both a horse and a man at the same time (which is not feasible) and his being so were to mark an end of 'lack.'

Another way to mark the end of 'lack' would be to destroy the Being that lacks. In Vetala's tale, the problem of 'lack' is non-existent through presupposition. Thomas Mann ends his novella after the scene of the trio's suicide—an act which marks the end of the Being which is incomplete along with its lacks and desires. Girish Karnad lets Hayavadana live even if it is the life of a horse. In doing so, Karnad leaves his audience desiring to know how Hayavadana fared after his transformation, and whether he never desired to become a man after becoming a horse. The implicit 'lack' in *Hayavadana* persists because the audience is left desiring, perhaps, right alongside the incompleteness of Hayavadana.

The question of what composes a complete Being can only be answered if one understands how being can be complete. According to Heidegger, a *Dasein* exists in the present or the "now," but it does so by way of a "connectedness"[19] to its past (that which has happened to

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[18]A Hindu practice whereby a widow immolates herself on the funeral pyre of her husband; now abolished by law.

[19]According to Heidegger, "connectedness" is what binds the *Dasein* to its different temporal instants, and those different temporal instants to each other, thereby making

the *Dasein*) and its future (that which will or might happen to the *Dasein*), as a series of experiences undergone over a sequence of "nows." Therefore, it is not just the *Dasein* in the final "now" but the multiplicity of *Dasein* over the sequence of many "nows" collected together which form the "being-a-whole" or the complete Being. "Being-a-whole" is also a "being-unto-death": the *Dasein* stretches along between birth and death, changing in every "now," yet somehow able to maintain its own singularity or "selfsameness," until it ceases to be. This is where "being-a-whole" becomes problematic for a text: the text does not move linearly in time to meet its own death.

A text's possibilities for its future "nows" are seldom exhausted: as long as a text is continued to be read, interpreted, and remembered, it continues to influence and interact with Beings and other texts. Because a text does not die, it never becomes complete. Since there is no ultimate "whole" for the text to arrive at, in every single present "now," the text is the summation of all its sequential "nows" —a tentative whole. Therefore, there is no question of *Hayavadana*'s completion in this moment. Similarly, in the case of Vetala's tale in the Somadeva's *Kathā Sarit Sāgara* and Thomas Mann's *The Transposed Heads*, there is no possibility for a completion yet. Instead of being looked at as three different tentative wholes, the paper proposes that these texts should be considered as three components of an enlarged, more consolidated, diachronic tentative whole—woven together by a "connectedness"—yet able to mark their own "selfsameness" distinctly among each other.

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the temporality of the *Dasein* possible. The link created by this "connectedness" is not linear, but simultaneous in time. This means that the *Dasein* is not linked chronologically in its past, present, and future, but in all three at the same time.

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The Textual Experience: The Interplay of the Image and the Text in *Watchmen*

Karan Kimothi

Literature, as we understand it, is a composite medium where the identity of the text is defined as the unique experience which arises from the interaction of not one singular element of the work but rather multiple such elements. To demonstrate the same, Alan Moore's graphic novel *Watchmen* has been examined in this paper as one such exemplary work that fully exploits the strength of its medium where the interaction of the textual, the stylistic, and the pictorial together contribute to the literary experience of the reader.

Two separate literary texts when positioned in the same space influence each other's meaning. As John Berger points out in particular reference to the relationship of words and images in his book, *Ways of Seeing,* "It is hard to define exactly how the words have changed the image but undoubtedly they have. The image now illustrates the sentence" (28). Depending on how the critic chooses to focus, the meaning of the image is constrained by the boundaries that are defined for it by the text. Berger further states that though seeing is an act of choice, we can never look at just one thing. Hence, it is impossible to view an image without simultaneously perceiving a line of text which exists spatially in the same vicinity and is trying to draw a connection between the two.

The reader's understanding of a text is defined by the means through which he/she accesses it. It can be argued that even if attempts are made to minimise external interference such as the presence of a caption which might prevent independent interpretation of the text by the reader, it is physically impossible to completely divorce a text from its material surroundings. Of course, the effect documented by Berger flows both ways and the caption when placed adjacent to the image is placed under pressure to say something about it, i.e., it can only be read in its interaction with the image. The meaning of one cannot exist independently of the other. As Berger goes on to suggest, "The meaning of an image is changed according to what one sees immediately beside it or what comes immediately after it. Such authority as it retains, is distributed over the whole context in which it appears" (29).

The question this paper hopes to grapple with is one of literary form; literary criticism often relies upon a binary of meanings in order to create an idea of 'text' which can be put under lens. As has been put
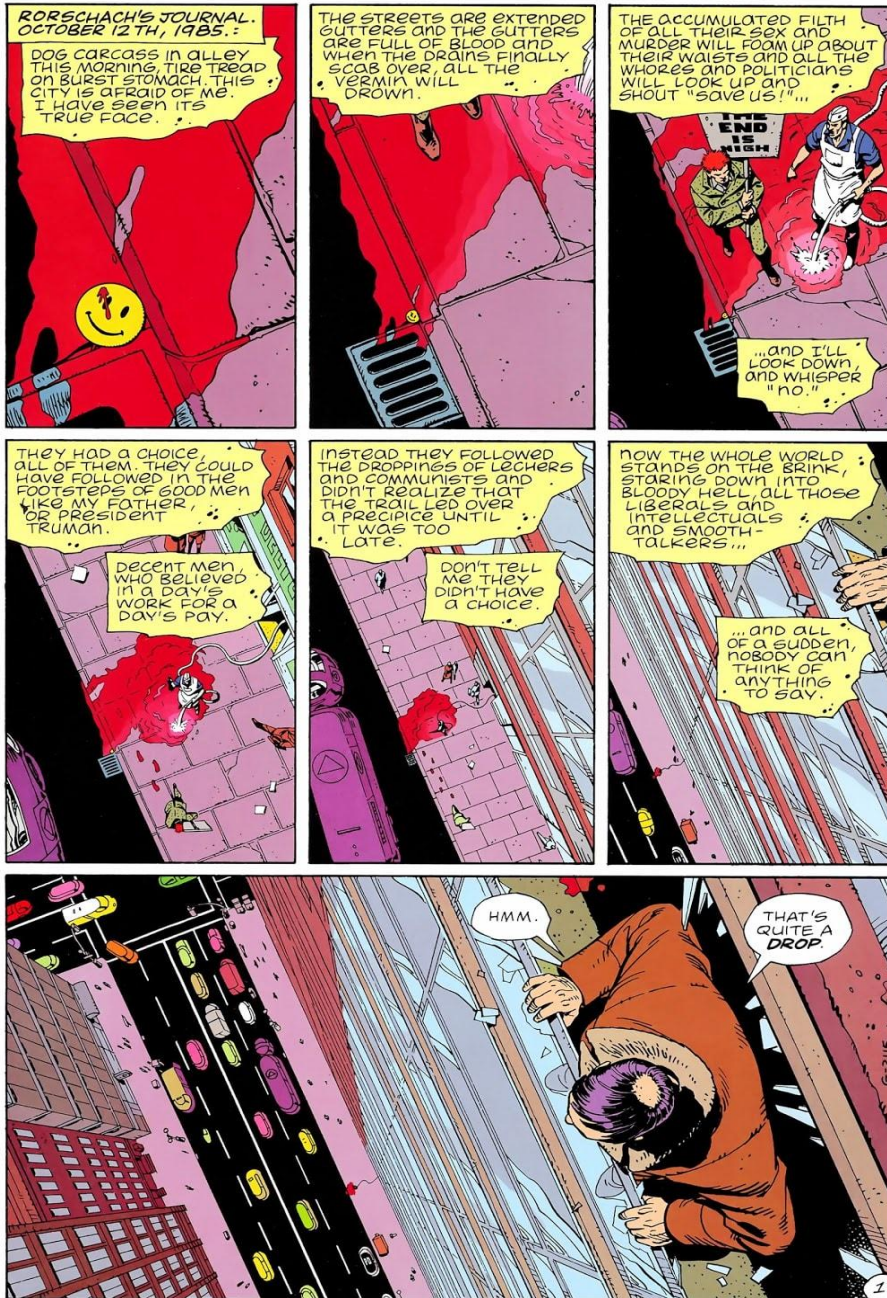
Fig. 1: Moore, Alan and Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*. No. 1, DC Comics, 1986, 1.

forward by Jerome J. McGann in *The Socialisation of Texts,* "Textual and editorial theory has concerned itself almost exclusively with the linguistic codes. The time has come, however, when we have to take greater theoretical account of the other coding network which operates at the documentary and bibliographical level of literary works" (78). McGann follows this statement by listing a number of literary works as examples that illustrate how important the manner through which the reader accesses the text is to his or her comprehension of the text. The glosses in the margins of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and the numbering of the pages in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, both find a mention as well as, and maybe more to our interest, the illustrations in the works of Charles Dickens, William Thackeray's *Vanity Fair,* and Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as examples of works meant to be composite texts by their authors. It is interesting to note, as McGann does, that though by literary consensus the decorated initials, the vignettes, and the illustrations of *Vanity Fair* are clearly involved in the structure of the book's meaning, they are left out in most editions of the text.

McGann suggests of literary works, "…they are committed to work via the dimension of the aesthesis" (83). What is understood is that no literary work can ever claim to be a purely verbal text and in fact the cover, the spine, the paper, the ink, the margins, the font, and of course the images associated with the words on the page, all work together to form the reader's experience of the text. Hence, here the text is not one singular aspect of the literary work, but an experience that emerges from the interaction of the multiple components. The semantic meaning encoded in the words of a book needs a medium through which it can be activated: a medium that is often visual but can also be aural or tactile. Since our senses often outpace our ability to interpret and understand, it can even be said that we access the material meaning of a text before the semantic meaning. Indeed, the semantic meaning is directly shaped by the bibliographic codes mentioned by McGann, a good example being the practice of italicisation that depending upon usage in a sentence lays stress on the intended word, deciding the direction of the meaning.

Taking into account the extra-verbal factors which determine one's reading of a text leads to the immediate implication that no two readings of a text can ever be the same since certain aspects of the reader's experience of the text, such as the pace at which the words are perused, cannot be formalised or regulated. In such an understanding of what constitutes a text, the meaning is surely that which is negotiated by the reader, but it is important to note that the negotiated meaning is the one derived through an experience of the multiple verbal and

Fig. 2: Moore, Alan and Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*. No. 1, DC Comics, 1986, 5.

non-verbal aspects of the text and never just the semantic one in isolation. At this point it is important to mention that the medium of graphic novel occupies the interesting position of being a composite text where the meaning must be negotiated in the space of interaction between words and images, one example being Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' *Watchmen*. As Moore said in an interview for *Entertainment Weekly,* "There are things that we did with *Watchmen* that could only work in a comic, and were indeed designed to show off things that other media can't."

The narrative of *Watchmen* is set in 1985 in New York City with the tensions of the Cold War being at an all-time high and the Doomsday Clock set mere minutes away from midnight. However, this is an alternate universe where the point of divergence was the emergence of costumed superheroes in America in the 1940s and 1960s leading to the United States winning the Vietnam War and the Watergate Scandal never taking place. The murder of the retired superhero, The Comedian, sparks off an investigation by the masked vigilante Rorschach ultimately revealing a conspiracy which threatens to change the world as it is known. *Watchmen* is set apart from the mainstream superhero genre by existing as a deconstruction of the idea of the superhero through an examination of the real-world ramifications and impact that the existence of such caped crusaders would have on society. Though the subject of the narrative is fantastic, the mode of telling the story is realist so that, even as the reader traces the paths of various men and women in tights across the panels, the grit and grime engaged in the depiction of the Big Apple mark it as so reliable that the reader is almost tricked into forgetting that the world on display is not the one that we know and inhabit. In this masterful work Gibbons manages to present us with a landscape that is both familiar and yet unnerving. Though the skeleton of the city might be one that the reader still recognises, the emergence of superheroes ensured a number of changes in the ecosystem of the city which, though never obviously referred to in the textual narrative of *Watchmen*, are still made apparent through the artwork of the graphic novel.[1] As mentioned by Leslie S. Klinger in *Watchmen: The Annotated Edition* on the very first page itself, "Note that the large delivery truck has a triangle on top (the trademark, as we see later, of a company called Pyramid Deliveries), and the truck itself is oddly shaped. This is the first indication that this

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[1] Doctor Manhattan's superpowers allow a series of technological developments to occur in the world of the text; hence, the presence of the rounded electric cars on the roads as well as the 'energy hydrants' populating the pavements. His intervention in the Vietnam War led to the absorption of Vietnam as the 51st state of the USA, a fact referred to in the text through pictures of newspapers (Chapter 1, Page 4, Panel 3).
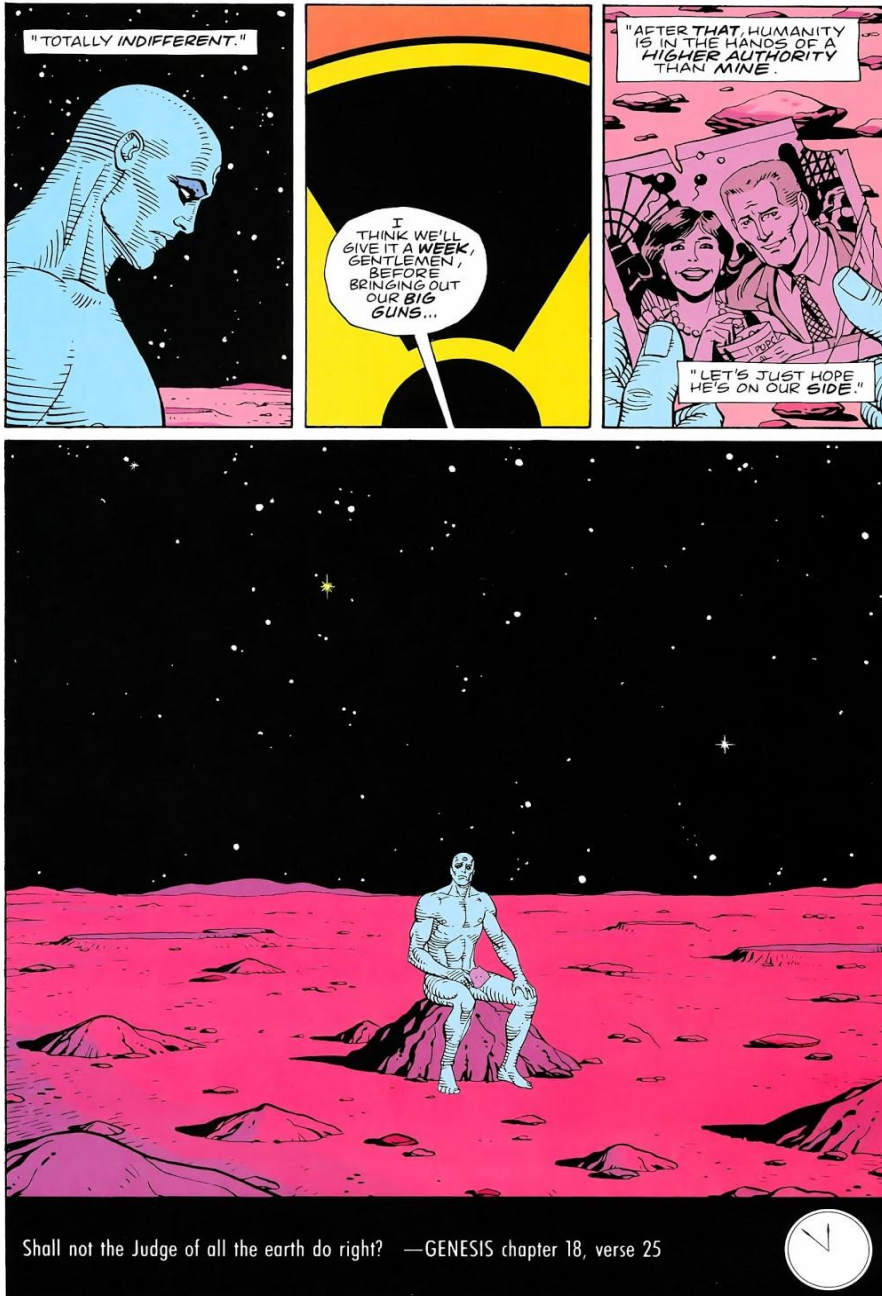
Fig. 3: Moore, Alan and Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*. No. 3, DC Comics, 1986, 28.

is a different world from the one in which the reader lives" (11).

It is never overtly stated in the text that the landscape before the reader is more alien than he perceives but is only subtly presented via the visual form throughout the novel. Alongside this ongoing process of alienation, the reader is presented with a myriad of visual details that often end up being directly connected to the plot of the text. On the same page as this annotation, the reader glimpses for the first time a man holding a placard stating 'The end is nigh.' It is only much later that this is revealed to be the secret identity of Rorschach who hops into frame just four pages later. The text is littered with recurring symbols and visual motifs such as the smiley face, the Doomsday clock, and the Gordian Knot, all of which find meaning in relation to the themes of the text as the narrative is played out. While Gibbons meticulously constructs a visual narrative for the reader to explore, Moore's verbal narrative drives the action of the plot through speech balloons and caption boxes imposed upon Gibbon's images. The result is a complex work where words and images often have to rely on each other to drive the action of the plot. It is further demonstrated in the flashback sequences involving the characters of Doctor Manhattan and the Silk Spectre. Here, as the characters directly describe the events of the attached images through caption boxes, dramatic irony is brilliantly used to bring out the subjectivity of these characters who are oblivious to some details of information that are easily picked up by reader upon the examination of the panels.[2]

Gibbons and Moore effectively exploit their medium of choice in *Watchmen* by occasionally contrasting the interplay of word and image in the panels with instances where one of the two elements is removed. In the case where the verbal is diminished in favour for the visual, the image is imbued with a certain staticity. The static nature of the image in *Watchmen* is by no means seen as a handicap to be overcome through the use of motion lines and creative panelling as is sometimes done in order to reach a more 'cinematic' form of storytelling through the graphic novel. Rather, the lack of motion in these pict-

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[2]Much like Doctor Manhattan, the reader enjoys an omnipresent awareness of the events of the text due to his ability to pause before every image and glean every bit of information before proceeding. In Fig 4., Moore and Gibbons having given the last seven panels equal space encourage the reader to transition back and forth, to compare and contrast. In this particular page, though Janey's reaction might seem to be overtly hysterical in the moment to the characters, the reader can spot in Panel 3 that Laurie wears the same ear rings Manhattan had previously given to Janey, the ear rings that Janey still wears in this page, indicating Manhattan having replaced one person with the other. Considering this, Janey's paranoia and insecurity seem entirely justified.

Fig. 4: Moore, Alan and Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*. No. 4, DC Comics, 1986, 17.

ures is exploited in order to set the tone for narrative.

Scott Bukatman in his essay "Sculpture, Stasis, the Comics, and Hellboy" examines a number of methods that creators might use to emphasise the static nature of the image that is found in comic books, "The slowing down of the reading process, the elevation of observational detail over action, a sense of deliberateness, an enframing of the moment, and an evenness of pace…" (443). These methods give the artwork of *Watchmen* the same air of contemplation that Bukatman ascribes to *Hellboy*. The static nature of the imagery gives weight to individual panels, underlining the present and providing it with a certain concreteness.[3]

Never is the use of the static nature of the image more effective than in the portions of the narrative involving Doctor Manhattan who, being the only superhuman character in the text, stands quite outside of time.[4] Since he is immortal, bending time and space before his powers, he is indeed a static human being. In relation to him, the lack of motion in the images also plays the role of emphasising the alienation and vulnerability felt by such 'special' men and women who cannot conform to society. The readers of *Watchmen* are offered a portrait of the superhero, trapped by the panel due to the difference that marks him out, unable to move, unable to escape.[5] Here, it should be noted that this static quality is only possible when presented in sequence with scenes of motion, often scenes of verbal exchange, where the flow of the conversation sets the rhythm of movement.

While the image can be isolated from the text, the converse is not possible. Will Eisner underlines this point in his book *Comics and Sequential Art*, "Words are made up of letters. Letters are symbols that are devised out of images which originate out of familiar forms, objects, postures, and other recognisable phenomena" (14). The written pieces delving into the backstory of the world of *Watchmen* which are attached at the end of each issue would have had a different gravity and emotion associated with them if they had not been presented as excerpts from newspapers, journals, doctor's notes, and letters: they play an important role in building the context for the plot of the text in an organic fashion without putting extra stress on the narrative.

The fact that even the font of the text is important can be ob-

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[3]Cf. Fig 2.
[4]Cf. chapter four.
[5]Cf. Fig 3.

served by how the presentation of the text alters the meaning of the text by indicating tone, pitch, volume, emotion, or just the quality of voice.[6] While reading *Watchmen*, the reader is encouraged to engage with the words at various levels and pay attention to not only what is written but also how it is written, further demonstrating the point made earlier regarding the impossibility of divorcing semantic meaning from its material aspect. Hence *Watchmen*, as a text, exists not in the words authored by Alan Moore or in the images crafted by Dave Gibbons—it is a collaboration and exists in the interaction of the two.

By the inferences made from *Watchmen* regarding the relationship that exists between the different elements of a text when applied to the medium of the graphic novel as a whole, the isolation of the verbal from the visual does not seem to be an effective technique for criticism when dealing with the question of the comic book where the two are impossibly intertwined with each other. Since the text exists in the interaction of the two, separating them is indeed an act of cutting the Gordian knot, which would ultimately kill the text.

The tools and vocabulary which serve us in analysing works that neatly fit into the literary tradition are at best ineffectual when used to approach the experience of a graphic novel like *Watchmen* or at worst are misleading and prone to error. Isolating the semantic or the visual meaning creates an alternative text in the mind of the critic which is not the same as the tangled work that the critic hopes to understand. As comic books enter mainstream circulation and begin to be finally viewed under the lens of 'serious literature,' criticism seeking to concern itself with the medium requires the development of independent tools and vocabulary to analyse and approach the experience of the texts instead of using lexicon borrowed from other disciplines.

The purpose of this investigation is to complicate the idea of what is popularly understood to be a 'text.' As criticism turns its focus to media other than that which easily fits the literary canon, such as the graphic novel, there is need for examination of the many possibilities that the space opens up for thought. For the words of yesterday cannot be used to describe the experiences of tomorrow, there is a need to de-

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[6]In Fig. 1, the yellow colour and the irregular shape of the caption boxes indicate age as well as wear, indicating towards how even the thought for which the words are used for present narration in the moment: they have actually been written far in future and are talking about events which occurred in the past. In Fig. 4, the blue colour of Doctor Manhattan's caption boxes indicate his alien nature. More examples from the same page include the use of boldface in Panel 3 to indicate the character putting stress on certain words as well as bordering of speech balloons with dashes to indicate whispering.

construct the existing popular critical discourses in order to ensure that justice is done to new and emerging media that would otherwise be unable to find their place.

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Feminist Epistemology and the Web-based Text: Reflections on Raya Sarkar's List

Raginee Sarmah

The cyberspace has been harnessed by feminists as a medium to lay down theoretical formulations, launch critical debates, generate activism, and consolidate solidarity networks. The access to cyberspaces, it is believed, is an access to the 'public' sphere through which a woman transcends not just the confines of her 'private' sphere but also her immediate identity which she embodies. The subversive potential of the 'web' creates (or weaves) networks which act as sites for women to assert their selfhood (Plant 45). Such a consideration needs to be wary of the reinstatement of the binaries of public/private which are not always as neat as they are considered to be. The public space becomes the site of 'rational dialogue' and women, being the negative of men, are deemed to be devoid of any rationality which legitimises their absence from the sphere. The claim to the public space for women is then caught in a fraught relationship with politics of embodiment. It is a reclamation which aids the augmentation or reworking of the body along with the counter-discursive change in the nature of the public sphere. As Faith Wilding suggests, the linkage between the terms 'cyber' and 'feminism' alerts us to crucial new information being generated on the internet where "...each part of the term necessarily modifies the meaning of the 'other'" (Wilding).

In recent years, the quasi-oral dictum on the Internet has generated a different mode of feminist intervention where social media becomes a forum for addressing harassment. The production of meaning in the cyber realm has been characterised by a mark of instability in the grammar of its framed political articulation. The #MeToo campaign, for example, saw millions of women sharing their narratives of sexual harassment, abuse, and violence. The making of 'history' lay in the creation of the 'self' or the 'artifice' through the text, thereby visibilising what was invisibilised in institutional registers of documentation. While the discourse shaped online is grounded in materiality and lived realities, it is important to be cognisant of the broader feminist agenda and the proportionate burden which is absorbed by the cyberspace in its transgressions. These considerations have arisen from the macro-politics of the feminist imagination which lies in tandem with the micro-politics of intervention.

The modality of testimony has seen a shift with this. The realm of experience has become a criterion of credibility to generate proof.

The nature of performing victimhood registers a change. To be a victim is to adhere to a prescribed role and script to generate a sympathetic response and the web-based discourse seeks to overturn the narrative. The notion of legal validity is superseded by ethical claims. This paper analyses the discursive nature of 'experience.' As texts released and relayed in the digital forum, the authority of the author comes into question. Without names and personal narratives, Raya Sarkar's List of 'alleged sexual harassers' in the academia is one such text which frames a new turn in our understanding of feminist politics. The 'List' (with a capital *l*) then is not an ordinary inventory but a potent text which transforms the diurnal activity of list making. In the length of a year, the List has begun to acquire a form of canonicity given the excess of literature being produced on it and the conflicting readings it provokes. The List can be observed as a cultural text with contextual adaptations being curated with variance in context, modality, and location. The act of listing can be seen an act of reordering. Is it a worldview that is being reordered? Does the List as a text allow the 'concealment' if not the 'death' of its 'author'? What contexts limit this text and what contexts does it transcend? These are a few enquiries which will inform the textual interrogation of these web-based processes with a specific focus on the List.

Sarkar's list has a brief preface of two sentences. In the first sentence, she names two prominent professors as 'alleged sexual harassers.' The second sentence asks readers, "If anyone knows of academics who have sexually harassed/were sexually predatory to them PM me, let's discuss and I'll add them to the list of alleged sexual harassers" (Sarkar). The List, like all lists, is a process of classification. The form of the list enables a certain form of knowledge practice to "...make problems amenable to targeted, cross-boundary intervention in novel ways" (Goude et al. 2). Lists have agency; they have been responsible for political developments and contain a performative potential. The non-narrative form of the list makes it an interesting form of writing where the politics of listing is situated in the cutting down of language and imposing silences as signifiers to posit its site of contestation. The List which was initially released with the names of 72 men had no other detail other than the names of professors and the institutions where they are employed. At three places, the nature of abuse faced by the survivor was mentioned against the name of the 'alleged harasser.' Urs Stäheli argues that the list as a technique of ordering knowledge is distinguished by its capacity to create meaning and generate objectivity in a way that is non-narrative (234). The symbolic 'cut' of a list which transforms it into a motile entity faces a challenge in Sarkar's list. Although fashioned as an instructional text for women

who are going to step into the university space later, the list does not cite any process of verification. Her list loosely argues for a rejection of the search for logically consistent, self-evident 'true' grounds for any discourse which rests on institutional backing. While the victim is always touted to be devoid of language, here is an act of rejection of language framed by the establishment. Hence, the epistemic and regulatory techniques of her list are in constant dialogue with the semantics of legal validity or what has been captured in common parlance as 'due process.'

The List undermines and exposes power structures as it transmits, produces, and redistributes power and in so doing, makes itself a part of the network of texts which address the question of sexual violence in the university and its relation with the verticals of power. Institutional mechanisms like GSCASH (Gender Sensitisation Committee Against Sexual Harassment) or ICC (Internal Complaints Committee) have repeatedly failed women students and students from marginalised genders. The list identified powerful names hailing from privileged caste and class locations, thereby hinting that the elected bodies, the fair trials, and the policy instruments are not enough to combat sexual harassment. The stark gap between the creators of the List and the names it enlisted in terms of power differentials was not lost on the creators as well as the scrutinizers. V Geetha calls the List 'a vulnerable piece of testimony' which makes the survivors and perpetrators recede in the background. The problematic, the text raises, is the culture of the University "...for the power and authority it invests in charismatic individuals" (Geetha).

The 'University' becomes the 'materialised society of discourse' which controls and preserves discourses within a closed space (Foucault). In a way, it seeks to assume control over the production of counter-discourses in order to deflect its potential dangers. The List, since its inception, has been pitted against the struggle of the formation of anti-sexual harassment policies and bodies on campus. In this regard, the discourse around such a list faces constraints not just from the totalising narrative of the university but also the 'tailor-made' structure of an online text. While it is in contestation with the University it also exists within the echo-chamber that is a University.

The presence of the List, under these conditions, creates an anxiety which signals towards a moment of possibility. While the document was released from Raya Sarkar's Facebook account and the discourse, at large, uses her name as the signifier, like all texts the list too consists of multiple writings which are in dialogue with one another. In Barthes' language, the 'indiscernible voices' in the list fash-

ion a political voice through cohesion which finds articulation in Raya's profile (*S/Z* 1). A text always contains signs referring to the author but the author need not be a 'real individual.' Sarkar's list gives rise to several selves, several subjects, and several experiences while simultaneously identifying the text with a proper noun (Foucault 123). Discursive containment in the wired world also takes place through other condensed signifiers such as hashtags. One such example is Tarana Burke's campaign which caught momentum through the hashtag 'MeToo.' In this regard, the 'author' of the text is a structuring principle and the authorial problem of the proper noun is countered by escaping the 'paradoxical singularity' of the text. Sarkar's List organises and sustains the testimony (without narrative) of numerous women who were threatened, violated, and made uncomfortable by powerful men in academia. The author then is an ideological product who regulates the 'proliferation of meaning' through the discourse (Foucault 126).

The contributors to the List are participants in the discursive exercise of naming harassment in the university. However, the pertinent question one struggles to answer is how a subject enters the discourse. In other words, does a subject enter the discourse by exerting its agency or does the discourse construct the subject? It has been argued that subjects are constituted through experiences which create a category of 'difference' distinguishing one set of people from another. The list alerts us to several such dichotomies prevalent in the university: male/female, *Savarna[1]/Dalit[2]*, powerful/powerless, perpetrator/victim. Sarkar and the proponents of the List have repeatedly articulated the need to listen to the experiences of these women (mostly, *Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi[3]* women) in order to understand the enormity of the power play which structures the university as much as any other place in the world. However, one wonders how often the evidence of experience is recognized only to establish 'experience' as a 'fact of difference.' Joan Scott in "The Evidence of Experience" argues instead for "...a way of exploring how difference is established, how it operates, how and in what ways it constitutes subjects who see and act in the world" (777). The 'testimony' delivers its purpose by making

[1]Refers to a sociological and political constituency of people who fall under the fourfolds of the varna system. They are also called caste-Hindus.
[2]The self-descriptive label adopted by the social class called the 'Scheduled Caste' in the Indian Constitution is included in this category. The word is used self-consciously with the awareness of the history of oppression faced by the community.
[3]The term '*Bahujan*' refers to 'the majority of people.' The word is used to evoke a sense of solidarity across marginalised communities. *Dalits* and *Adivasis* are people who fall under the category of present day Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), respectively.

'visible' what was kept hidden by the structures of power. The 'visible' then is advantaged. The absence of narrativised testimony in the List is not just a difference in the modality of intervention. Apart from the style of indictment for which the List is criticised, this absence is also a scrutiny of the subject-positions of the creators of the List vis-a-vis the names on the List. The change in the modality of displaying resistance portrays the reliance on the tendency of naturalising differences. Sarkar's List problematizes the status of experience outside its discursive character. The unquestionable ground of its explanation is challenged with a linguistic turn when the meaning of 'sexual harassment,' on the basis of which the evidence conditions the narrative, is reconstructed. 'Experience,' it is understood, is also a linguistic event and is characterised through established meanings (Scott 793). It is the conflict of the different available meanings which makes the discursive exercise possible. The List has opened up conversations on the broadening of the definition of sexual harassment owing to the various axes on which these vulnerabilities are exploited.

One such critique that the List extends to the existing discourse of sexual harassment in academia is on the lines of caste. The articulation of the need for *Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi* women to 'speak differently' was registered sharply in the dialogue that ensued after the publishing of the List. One saw the emergence of two camps: established feminists versus new ones who seemed eager to discard older models of grievance redressal. In varying contexts, power produces gendered beings and determines their interaction with the axes of caste, class, region, or ability. However, the internal logic of the first list is challenged by the second list which floated in social media with an anonymous claim made on it by *Dalit-Bahujan* women exclusively. This list identified well-known *Dalit-Bahujan* activists as potent sexual predators thereby threatening the binarisms which Sarkar's List was operating on. The lack of any reaction generated by the second list hints towards the irreproducibility of the 'moment' which arrived with the release of the first list. Thus, the claim to a certain 'universality of experience' made by the List collapses in the production of the second one, thus, directing us to the ephemerality of the mode of intervention.

The List, in many journalistic writings, has been labelled as the 'published rumour mill.' The strategy used is interesting as the corpus of both subaltern and feminist studies uses gossip and rumour as sources of oral history. The oral, in the newer epistemological traditions, is considered to be subversive and documenting this history challenges the hierarchy of the written over the oral (Gopal). What does it mean to the feminist sensibility when the whisper network is relayed in virtual print for public consumption? This intervention can

be looked at as a feminist counter-practice evoked in desperation to identify the lapses in the institutional machinery. It has been argued that the practice of 'naming and shaming' has always been done in villages outside the protection of great institutions as a form of retributive justice. The question here remains how far vulnerability can be contested through the recourse to law. The discourse around sexual harassment has not only been understood in terms of its expressive value but also modes of existence, circulation, attribution, and appropriation and modification with each culture.

Raya Sarkar's Google document saw the addition of many more names. Similarly, many other lists came out in different universities, workplaces, and departments. Another movement which follows the trajectory of the List but takes a different approach is the Speak-Out movement in Kerala. Started by *Dalit-Bahujan* women, the campaign witnessed women speaking up on social media about the sexual harassment they were subjected to in workplaces, friend circles, activist spaces, and the public sphere in general. The critique which the List faced on account of the absence of narratives from the 'victims' was undone with this campaign. The transition from being a 'victim' to a 'survivor' was asserted with these narratives with a sharp *'Dalit-Bahujan'* voice. The campaign was also significant because it did not just target powerful professors who dictated the terms of the classroom but their close male comrades who engaged in 'progressive politics.' The movement also fleshed out a sharp critique of *brahmanical* values which sanctioned the violation of a *Dalit* woman's body and threw light on the particular struggle which *Dalit-Bahujan* women have led in order to acquire certain spaces.

The List has several contributors but one addressee. The authorial problem with the proper noun is specific to the List. The names on the List have been furnished by several women including savarna women. While a large number of *savarna* women can choose to stay anonymous, a queer *Dalit* woman, Raya Sarkar, has chosen to be visible with these names. The personal implication of the labour of association with the List, tied to rape threats and boycott from the academia, is colossal. That the burden of labour was taken up by a *Dalit* woman signals towards the protection of anonymity which is available only to a few. It is also worthwhile to note Sarkar's exceptionalism in her claim to identity which builds the premise on which the politics of this listing thrives and alerts us to the logic of the second list's failure.

Even when we see the List as a critique, it alerts us to the obstruction faced by certain voices in reaching institutional mechanisms. Is the List then solely the burden of the marginalised even when we

recognise the binary frameworks which power creates and escapes simultaneously? The textual and sexual politics of the List is intertwined in a way that in its configuration, it resists binaries. It, however, chalks out the nature of identitarian politics and violence which institutions reproduce even as they seek to annihilate it. The plea Sarkar makes sees beyond the gradation of sexual trauma. Following this Vqueeram Aditya Sahai writes, "If the list commits itself to no hierarchy between offences, then it cannot stop at naming only one frame of power. Yet, what does it mean to name everyone?" The value of categorisation is native to any list. The question of wrongful inclusion due to the variance in the degree of hurt caused loses relevance when looked at against the larger framework of patriarchy, caste, and capitalism. While the list retains nuance and, by extension, power through the sorting it ensured, does the continuous practice of hurt under the oppressive structures which render everyone 'listable' make the list powerless?

While feminist struggles have built and sustained policies and institutions to address skewed power relations in a caste-based patriarchal society, *Dalit*, *Bahujan*, and *Adivasi* women continue to be doubly marginalised in a manner whereby the vocabulary of *Brahmanical* law does not ensure justice. The List is also a call for rethinking feminist strategy for a reform which is social, political, legal, and economic in nature. Thus, the concern of 'experienced feminists' can be located in their anxiety of 'due processes' being toppled over, but the culture of impunity which surpasses the ambit of these bodies alerts us to the limitations of bureaucratic methods themselves.

Criticism on the List has come from several quarters. While some contended that it considered proof to be unnecessary, a few worried that it took pleasure out of the classroom. To forget that the word 'proof' is a loaded term is dangerous to feminist thought. The List directs us to the complexity of producing narrative as evidence. It is also a commentary on the accessibility of 'due process' which is reliant on the exhibition of ability. Thus, the language which these processes demand is a structural inequity that the feminist movement needs to grapple with. The List enables speech about sexual harassment without necessitating the production of evidence. It challenges the narrative of power by modifying the location of the powerful and powerless. Moreover, the List is a text with multiple readings in conversation with each other and these contestations culminate in the reader. How should the readers on whom the corpus of the text settles react to it? What burden does the List put on the readers? Our task as feminist readers is to develop a sharper critique of the structures that constitute the culture of impunity. The recognition of the interconnectedness of the struggles

of caste and patriarchy is crucial for building solidarity and resistance. The paper has aimed to view the List as a 'moment' and not a 'method.' The List never claimed to transform the power imbalances that the university produces and sustains. It was the result of not being heard and believing that no speech mattered anymore. The moment directs us to awareness where we see all of us in a public trial charged against some 'registry' of power.

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The Postmodern Text: Answer to the Problem of Meaning

Raunak Kumar

T.S. Eliot writes in his essay titled "The Metaphysical Poets" that the ideal kind of poet, which he calls the "intellectual" poet must "dislocate" the language from the meaning. What an odd choice of words! This divorce of language from meaning was practically unheard of since metaphysical poetry was violently removed from the waking memory of the English literary readership, thanks to Dr. Johnson's polemical remarks on its inauthenticity. However, it sufficiently outlines the general principle of expression that Eliot's intellectual class of modern poets followed in the years to come. With publication of *The Waste Land* and Joyce's *Ulysses*, a certain class of readers began to whet their appetite for the wave of unsavoury ambiguity of fragmented poetry, while the Anglo-American circle of New Criticism was already prepared for the birth of a new study into the untapped source of pure formalistic lyric. It would not be wrong to say at this point that literature was going under some unprecedented changes, and rightly so, for the reason that 'meaning' as the core of linguistic expression was suddenly, if I could use Eliot's words, under dislocation.

As substantiated by the efforts of modern artists, language and meaning have a peculiarly intrinsic relationship with the individual and the self, the postmodern author/reader explores this correlation with a clear cognizance of the role of metaphysics, in the dark abyss that lies between the unknowable and the 'seemingly' knowable. In other words, the modernists' endeavour to dislocate language from meaning becomes the endless deference of 'Meaning' to meanings yet unknown. If one was to invoke Deleuze here, it would be fairly appropriate to devise a fundamental purpose of postmodernist endeavour, that a subjectivity thus attained (since everything is textual and linguistically determined, but not in the naive sense) must be unique and genuine, as its potentiality arises from a self-protrusion of virtuality from existing semiotic units. Therefore, in the coming sections an attempt has been made to demonstrate the linguistic nature of consciousness (as first declared by Jacques Lacan) through the analogous field of phenomenology. Using the same finding as a premise and a guideline, it is shown how postmodernist texts (e.g. *Sexing the Cherry*) deconstruct human subjectivity through the text. The paper contrasts Modernist trends of fiction with Postmodernist ones since postmodernism derives its function of deconstruction from the Modernist's struc-

turalist point of view. Furthermore, this contrast will establish a forking of path between earlier structuralist philosophy that was still metaphysical (early 20th c.) and post-phenomenology philosophy that overlaps Poststructuralism.[1]

Upon comparison, one assumption stays with critics of Hermeneutics (or the more widely associated umbrella term, Liberal Humanists) & phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl and early Martin Heidegger, that is, the self is out there somewhere either in the community entirely or beyond physical reality. They always imagined the truthful identity to be cemented in either of these spaces and that it can be achieved either through a bipartisan dissection of text or through its annihilation. For example, Levi-Strauss' concept of '*bricolage'* as Derrida clarifies (in his speech *Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences*) must come from an internal acceptance of a perfect 'engineer,' not realising that the latter is creation of the former.[2] Another important concept that will be analysed in detail in this paper is Heidegger's concept of *Dasein.* But Sartre's work undercuts this significance of binary. Sartre re-defines interpretation based on his two fundamental claims that consciousness "...is always of something but in itself is not something" (Gutting 860). This self-awareness and alienation of the consciousness is called self-consciousness. This self-consciousness sees the embodied 'self' as the other and experiences itself as "nothing" (Sartre). Since consciousness is "immaterial" and "transparent" it cannot possibly grasp things as "being-in-itself" existent in reality but only "as" something (Gutting 861). Here, consciousness is concerned not with the objects as themselves but the meaning that they impart. Heidegger's idea of *Being* (Sein) is similar to Sartre's idea of object as being-in-itself which Sar-

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[1]In his speech *Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences*, Derrida implicates Levi-Strauss as a structuralist for imposing a metaphysical intent in his work on myths. Similarly, a possible group of thinkers could be identified with New Criticism, German Idealism, Semiotics, and Semiology. On the other hand, thinkers working to expand that philosophy deviated considerably from and denied any place to metaphysics, could be called poststructuralists, e.g., Foucault, Derrida, Sartre, and probably even Wittgenstein.

[2]"The notion of the engineer who had supposedly broken with all forms of *bricolage* is therefore a theological idea; and since Levi-Strauss tells us elsewhere that *bricolage* is mythopoetic, the odds are that the engineer is a myth produced by the *bricoleur.*" -ibid

tre displaces with the meaning of the object that consciousness conceives, independent of the object's virtue of being.[3]

This relation between virtual object and the consciousness which Sartre describes is that of utmost significance in the attempt to understand the peculiar similarities between language and consciousness. He explains the relation between the objects in themselves and consciousness as that of negation. Since the defining property of consciousness is self-consciousness, it can be aware of objects as distinct from other objects and distinct from itself. This is also the two step function of the reader's consciousness through which the otherness of the text is first recognised and then deferred endlessly to other meanings. In other words, there is extraction and then abstraction in the conceptualisation of the text for the purpose of understanding which, in effect, surpasses all barriers of signification. Therefore consciousness is at complete freedom to choose whichever meaning the text arrives at with sufficient assignation. This shift from signification to assignation highlights a paradigm shift in the way we interpret the text which the postmodern text seems to apply.

Consciousness while interpreting, immediately arrives at a certain stage where it fails to signify any meaning to the object it is perceiving. This is the notion of nihilation: an immediate perception of nothingness that lies in the mirage of signifiers. There is no direct relation between the consciousness and the object because a veil of signification hangs between them. Nihilation can then be understood as the gap between the world and the consciousness which language attempts to fill. But as language itself is symbolic, it suggests that consciousness due to its alienation from the objects fails in its duty to truly signify meaning. So Sartre's sense of negation in the interpretation of objects attempts to bring forth the semantic idea of absurdity between signifier and signified where the realm of meanings eliminates the existence of an ideal meaning.

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[3]Heidegger suggests that there are 'modes' of Being that are conditioned a priori, while Sartre utilizes this understanding to suggest that these modes of existence are based on intentionality.
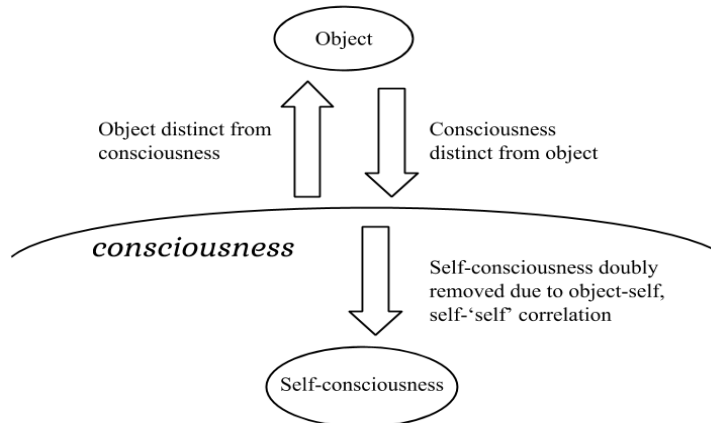
Fig. 1: Model of 'Self-consciousness' (Source: Self-created)

Sartre's ideas on consciousness are quite clearly in response to his predecessors. His idea of the 'self' as an ephemeral being is in contrast to Husserl's idea of the 'pure' self: the former being a virtual incidental shadow whereas the latter is a concrete presence. When Sartre describes that there is a wide gap between the world and the self, he seems to be proposing that the self is not absolute but is rather relational in the sense that it can only know itself as different from others. So, when a being interprets objects in correlation, it is virtually projecting itself behind the 'self.' It reveals that even the 'self' is a construction in language that is always under process of assignation. Existentialism is the final outcome of his theory on interpretation which proposes that a clear definite identity cannot be arrived at because the being and its relation with the world denies any stagnant meaning, therefore, all choices are considerable because they are equally true. This idea of complete freedom can then be applied to create a subversibly new kind of textual language that encourages discourses on several horizontal levels and more characteristically on meta levels.

This paper attempts to locate the postmodern text at the intersection of Derrida's Deconstruction and Sartre's Existentialism. The task of Modernist criticism and the entire enterprise of Hermeneutics & New Criticism was to unify the text, even going as far as considering anachronistic knowledge.[4] On the contrary, postmodern approach attempts to deconstruct the text in order to raise questions on concrete subjectivity. It uses the principles of post-structuralism to destroy mega-narrative in favour of meta-narrative. It also goes a little further

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[4]Cf. Wimsatt & Beardsley's footnote: "And the history of words after a poem is written may contribute meanings which if relevant to the original pattern should not be ruled out by a scruple about intention." ('The Intentional Fallacy')

than earlier forms of text by bringing a sociological aspect of art into its idealistic beauty. This is because a postmodern artist understands the influence that work of art has on a reader's consciousness; with the profound understanding of how consciousness perceives objects as devoid of essence, such text proposes the significance of a discourse on all discourses. It is quite understandable that if language has an effectual relationship on both conscious and unconscious level of understanding then the text must be re-shaped in an unbiased narrative in order to provide a formative means for the collective consciousness of society as a whole. In such a community of people, the marginalised and the misrepresented will find new definitions and will finally control their own narratives.
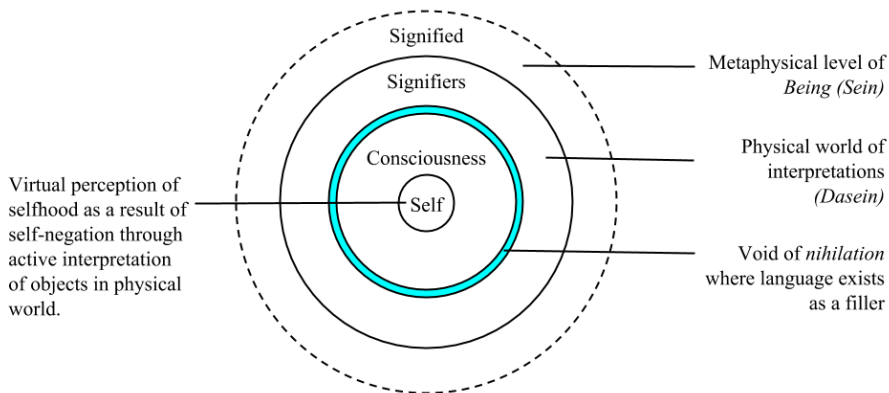

Fig. 2: Model of 'Interpretation' (Source: Self-created)
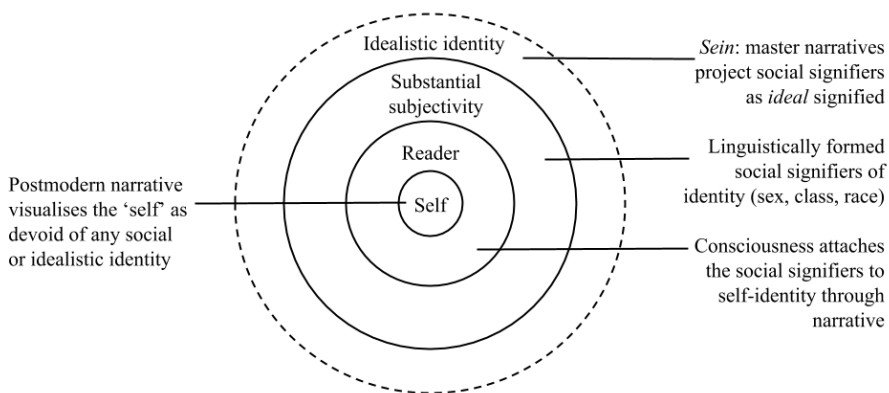

Fig. 3: Model of 'Text' (Source: Self-created)

As shown in Fig. 3, similar to the self-conscious mind, the reader's consciousness in the reading process seems to act as the centre. The prejudiced reader then attempts to bridge the gap between itself and the virtual sphere of stereotypical subjectivity through a pre-intentional reading of the text. A conventional text falls prey to such a reading in general because either the politics of language is misunderstood or the conventional narrative itself binds its characters into substantial subjectivity. A postmodern text on the other hand, defamiliarises the characters from the substantial subjectivity and also, as a counter measure. opens up the narrative; in both the cases, the author takes the command from the reader and gives it back to the characters. In this way, the individuality of the substantiated subjectivity replaces the reader as the centre of the text.

Endowed with the knowledge that language is limited to functioning only in the gap between the known and the unknowable, where even the known (consciously assumable) is actually not knowable, a text can basically surpass any meaning that seems to define it. The narrative and its characters can therefore be unbounded and go undefined. As Jeanette Winterson shows in the epigraph to her novel, *Sexing the Cherry*, the concept of 'time' seems to act as a placeholder for the centre around which language structures itself. Likewise the most human part of a text, the characters, who must be unbounded always seem to follow the linearity of time and evolve in one direction alone. For example, in a text as modern and subversive as *Mrs. Dalloway*, time is very much divided into subjective and objective. Though the characters prefer to live in their own sense of time and space, characterised by their memories, objective time like the bell of Big Ben clock or the larger marker of a passing day seems to hark them back to reality. A text like *Sexing the Cherry* utilises a similar theory of time relativism in a whole new way to give the command of narrative back to the characters. Winterson does so by giving her characters the gift of quantum entanglement, where the objective line of time fuses with the subjective time according to the wishes of the characters and, most importantly, provides the characters to view their own infinite narratives on every instant of time. This is the linguistic technique of shifting the centre back to the character. But it can also be found upon close inspection, and through the lens of Sartre's Existentialism, that the ephemeral self remains at the centre which is virtually projected outward through the symbolic function of language. We have seen how language and the text in particular exist between the consciousness and the world of objects in order to act as a positive force in the negative presence of nihilation.

Sexing the Cherry, as opposed to the ideologically nostalgic modernist texts, has no qualms 'playing' with social signifiers such as sexuality, gender, race, and even time, and succeeds wonderfully in showing that these perceived objectivities are the result of relative autonomy of reality as an untouchable tradition. The characters can jump between time perceptual realities as easily as going through a door. As Jordan says, "I resolved to set a watch on myself...trying to catch myself disappearing through a door just noticed in the wall" (2). This time-dissociative existence allows Jordan to perceive objective timeline, which is linear, as something that is external to him and he is not subjected to its tyranny. In an act of subversion, it is he who keeps watch over time and all the possible timelines in which his own self resides: "Every journey conceals another journey within its lines: the path not taken and the forgotten angle. These are journeys I wish to record. Not the ones I made, but the one I might have made, or perhaps did make in some other place or time" (2). *Sexing the Cherry* reverses the overall time-space contingency of a text by opening the linear timeline into multidimensional progression and it does so by joining the two usually distinct points of narration in the text whereby the sense of progression self-destructs. The first chapter of the text is narrated by Jordan where he mentions a vivid experience, "I began to walk with my hands outstretched in front of me...in this way, for the first time, I traced the lineaments of my own opposite me" (1–2). Interestingly, this exact event is mentioned in the penultimate chapter, where the Dog-woman notices Jordan doing the same, "He came to, and feeling his way, arms outstretched he had suddenly touched a face...he saw that the stranger was himself." The narrative has come to a full circle, culminating in a resolution for Jordan where he finally feels his belongingness with the first person who laid upon him and loved him.[5] The Dog-woman also learns to love herself by seeing through the eyes of her son and they both seem to have re-discovered their place in the infinite time and space, which is to be 'anywhere' together. Thus, the metaphysics of such a postmodern text suggests that a story need not be bound by any constraints and shows this awareness in a kind of narrative where the characters not only are free from tyranny of time but the text itself eludes any linearity by adapting a circular narrative structure and is also fragmented—divided into irreducible subjective experiences making each chapter a narrative in itself.

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[5]In the first chapter of the book, Jordan contrasts the selfless love of his mother with his own desires to flee by comparing himself to "a jealous father." It is not surprising to find this polarity of belongingness in Jordan because he has never known a father's love and all his ideas about love center around the Dog-Woman.

The previous paragraph showed how the centre of narrative time is transposed to characters by manipulating objective time. However, there exists another centre that seems to be rigid and into the social-textual interaction zone. This represents the various vague but principled ideas of identity boundaries that are affixed in the collective unconscious. These are orientations which an individual seemingly borrows from community through language such as sex, class, gender, race, caste, etc. *Sexing the Cherry* gives its characters complete agency by handing over the reins of the narrative through annihilation of objectivity; however, it does not lose the sight of the substantial subjectivity of these characters. Jeanette Winterson attempts to transgress these boundaries by defamiliarisation of the characters by completely dissociating them from their stereotypes and creating a subjectivity on its own terms. Winterson seems to understand the importance of a reader in the formation of a textual subjectivity of its characters. In this way, Jordan and Dog-Woman are as much an authorial imagination as the reader's contextual imagination allows.

Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the author to provide the text with a kind of language that determines the subjectivity of its characters. And in a postmodern text, the language takes a life of its own in order to give life to its characters. The language of *Sexing the Cherry* does this perfectly well by its use of deconstructive language in an attempt to evade any subjugation of its characters. The body of the Dog-Woman and its descriptions almost resemble a metaphysical conceit in its defamiliarisation. Due to a constant play of metaphors the perceived subjectivity is continually re-formed in the reader's mind. It uncovers the prejudices and stereotypes of the 'factual' narrative of pre-Reformation era in England, and as Jordan says, *Sexing the Cherry* shows the lives that are written "invisibly" and are marginalised due to the 'facts' of life which impose a certain subjectivity upon them, may it be literature or the reality construed in language, that polarises such beings into binaries of stereotype.

In this way, a similar unravelling of the individual self-consciousness is done both in Existentialism and a postmodern narrative pointing to the fact that language reflects the structure of human consciousness and therefore the idea of the self is neither fixed in essence nor found in community but is continually re-formed through our linguistic interaction with the collective consciousness of society.

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