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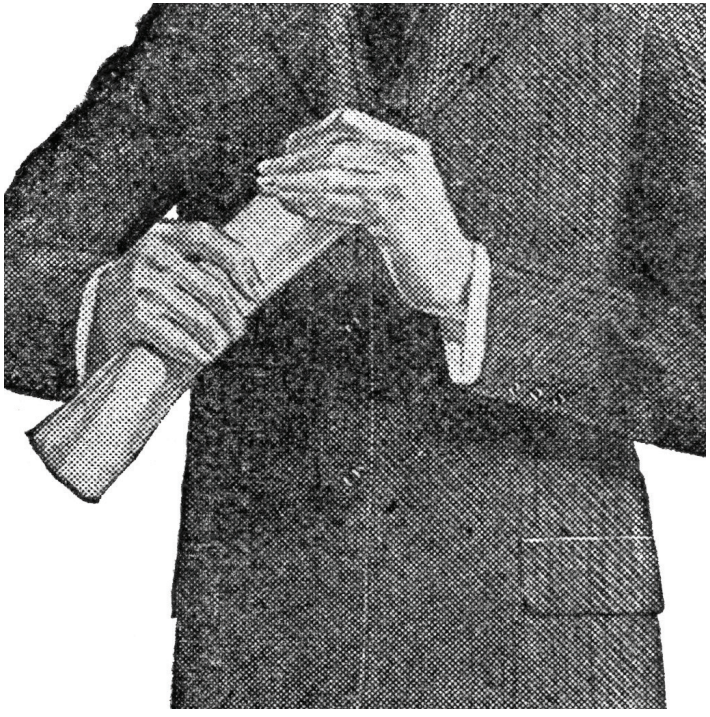
CONTENTS



Editors' Note

Michael Carelse & Emma Stens

With this issue, we respectfully acknowledge the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory UVic stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt, and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all the members of the UVic English community who have contributed to the success of this issue. Thank you to the students who volunteered their time as editors and copy editors; to UVic English alumna and graphic designer Emma Fanning for designing this issue; to the contributors whose work we are proud to publish; to all the students who submitted their essays for publication; and to the instructors whose invaluable teaching and feedback have shaped the essays in this journal.

We are also delighted to thank three UVic English instructors to whom we are especially indebted: Mary Elizabeth Leighton and Lisa Surridge, who generously designed and led an editing workshop specifically for our volunteers; and Susan Doyle, whose copy-editing courses have been the foundation of our copy editors' training.

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Finally, congratulations to the editors and contributors who are graduating this year, and our very best wishes to the next generation of *Albatross* students. We hope you will find being a part of this journal as exciting and rewarding as we have found it.

Introduction

Michael Carelse

Although the essays in this issue are methodologically diverse, they all share a preoccupation with the historical and cultural contexts that inform the literary texts they analyze. Erin Donoghue Brooke and Faith Ryan focus on Edenic contexts surrounding Shakespeare and Frankenstein respectively; Katie Yakovleva on the context of feminist scholarship on Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*; Sonja Pinto and SD Pitman on politically problematic Victorian cultural contexts; Emma Stens on the devastating context of World War I in interwar shell-shock narratives; Isabelle Carré-Hudson on the linguistic contexts that inform the dialogue of *The Great Gatsby*; and Kelsey Kilbey on the politically portable context of the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 BCE and its reverberations in modern literature and society. To better foreground this persistent attention to historical and cultural contexts, we have ordered the essays in this issue not alphabetically by author but instead in chronological order of their primary texts. Thus, we begin in Eden (Donoghue Brooke, Ryan), and we end in the international literatures of the modern world (Kilbey), along the way stopping in the simultaneously medieval and Renaissance worlds of Shakespeare's plays (Donoghue Brooke), the Regency era (Ryan), the Victorian period (Yakovleva, Pinto, Pitman), interwar England (Stens), and Jazz Age New York (Carré-Hudson).

Our first two essays look back to the Garden of Eden. Donoghue Brooke examines the Edenic contexts surrounding the gardeners and gravemakers of William Shakespeare's *Richard II* (c. 1595) and *Hamlet* (c. 1599–1602), reminding us of the significance of Adam as the first gardener of the Western world. The gardeners and gravemakers of these plays, Donoghue Brooke argues, "are simultaneously elevated and debased by their connection to their ancestor, owing to his curious position as both the original

sinner and the first progenitor of mankind" (16). In the following essay, Ryan argues that Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) figures its monster as a type of Eve in the tradition of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1674), "analyzing Victor as a type of Adam, discussing the similarities between Eve's and the monster's creation stories, and assessing Eve's and the monster's eventual identification with Satan" (25).

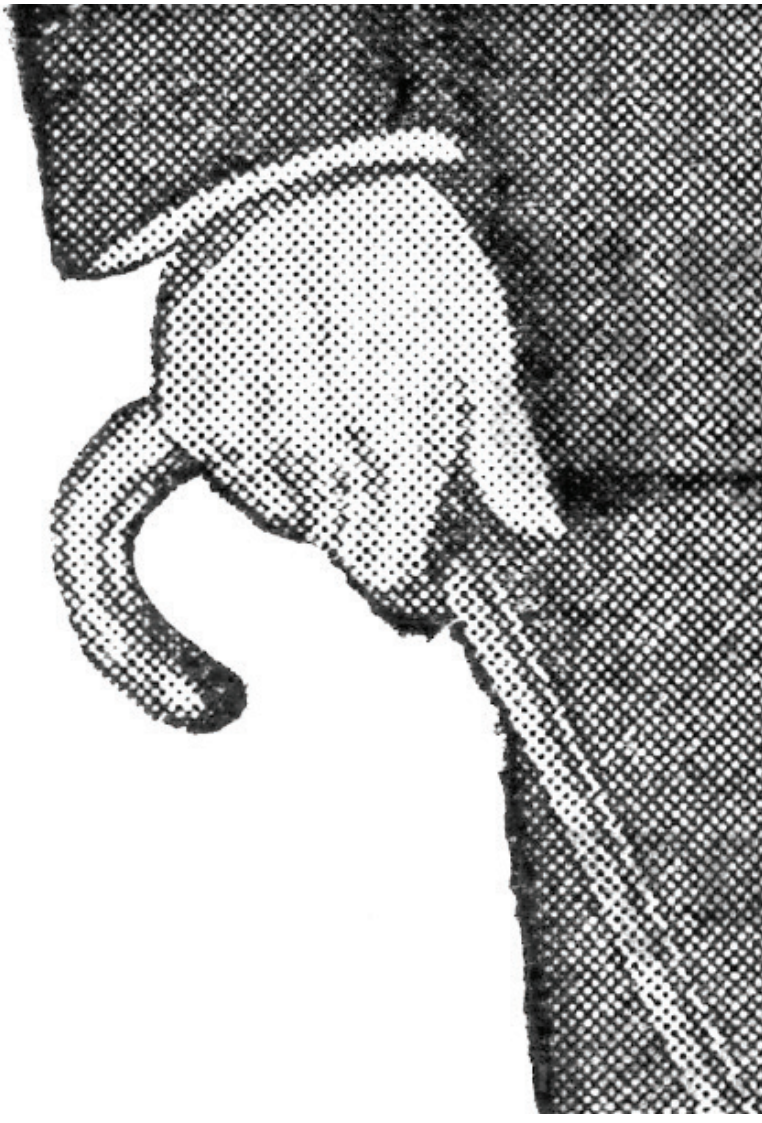
The next three essays investigate the fraught political contexts surrounding three canonical Victorian novels. Analyzing the significance of sheep in Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), Yakovleva argues that the novel is not purely one of male domination, as some feminist critics have traditionally understood it, but rather one that ambivalently attributes "not only the weak but also the surprisingly powerful characteristics of the novel's sheep" to its heroine, Bathsheba Everdene (33). In our second Hardy essay, Pinto examines the symbolic function of milk in *Far from the Madding Crowd* as well as in Hardy's later *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), arguing that "milk functions dually in both novels to symbolize a Victorian ideal of femininity while also problematically likening Bathsheba and Tess to farm animals" (43). In our third Victorian studies essay, we move beyond Hardy's pastoral novels and into the speculative fiction of H.G. Wells. In this essay, Pitman investigates Wells's seminal Martian-invasion novel *The War of the Worlds* (1897) as an allegory of British colonialism that critiques colonial violence yet upholds Victorian stereotypes of colonized peoples "as less advanced cultures" (50).

Following our Victorian studies essays are two very different works on the literature of the interwar period. Stens compares depictions of shell shock in Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier* (1918) and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), arguing that both texts "demonstrate the inherently flawed logic of a society that demands men go to war only to punish them for experiencing the natural consequences of witnessing such horror," as well as "form a critique of the heteronormative ideals that also tie themselves to the institution of war" (60). Carré-Hudson then analyzes F. Scott Fitzgerald's use of dialogue in *The Great Gatsby*

(1925) from the perspective of sociolinguistic theory, providing a linguistic vocabulary to identify the conversational techniques at play in the novel so that "we can more fully appreciate the significance of Fitzgerald's relatively sparse dialogue in shaping our perceptions of the novel's characters" (69).

Our final essay brings us full circle, analyzing the literatures of the modern world in the context of ancient myth. In this study of modern German, South African, and American representations of the Battle of Thermopylae, Kilbey considers Theodor Plievier's novel *Stalingrad* (1948), Heinrich Böll's short story "Stranger, Bear Word to the Spartans We…" (1950), Douglas Livingstone's poem "After Thermopylae" (pub. 2004), and finally Kieron Gillen, Ryan Kelly, and Jordie Bellaire's graphic novel *Three* (2014), arguing that "each of these works deploys the 'myth' of Thermopylae—that is, the longstanding representation of the Battle of Thermopylae as a heroic defence of the civilized West against the barbaric East—subversively, thereby challenging the xenophobia inherent to this myth and also pervasive in each writer's immediate sociopolitical context" (76).

As is already apparent from these summaries, the essays in this issue consistently return to questions of identity and equity, scrutinizing both the social criticism that their primary texts produce and the social contexts in which their texts are undeniably implicated. Indeed, our authors have much to say about the time periods relevant to their texts. More importantly, however, our authors' considerations of these eras' discourses surrounding class, gender, and racial identities are strikingly pertinent to the discourses of the twenty-first century, given the extent to which we have inherited our own cultural values from these past eras.



CRITICAL WORKS

Labour, Class, and the Edenic Gardener in *Richard II* and *Hamlet*

Erin Donoghue Brooke

Abstract: This essay examines the biblical contexts surrounding the gardener-figures of William Shakespeare's *Richard II* (c. 1595) and *Hamlet* (c. 1599–1602). In these plays, gardeners and gravemakers are associated with Adam, the steward of Eden appointed by God. These rustic figures are simultaneously elevated and debased by their connection to their ancestor, owing to his curious position as both the original sinner and the first progenitor of mankind. This essay shall concentrate on the various historical and historiographical contexts of Adam, Eden, Genesis, and their relationship to labour and social class, locating Shakespeare's characters in a historical continuum in which authoritative texts are ubiquitous and significant.

In his study of politics and economics in Renaissance commentaries on Genesis, Arnold Williams writes that "praise of agriculture … is conventional. Farming, many of the commentators write, is the most ancient and best of occupations. Adam, even before his fall, was a farmer, for God put him in Eden to 'dress it and keep it'" (209). This theological respect for tillers of the earth is reflected in William Shakespeare's tragedies *Richard II* (c. 1595) and *Hamlet* (c. 1599–1602). In these plays, labouring characters—gardeners and gravemakers, in particular—are associated with Adam, the steward of Eden appointed by God. These rustic figures are simultaneously elevated and debased by their connection to their ancestor, owing to his curious position as both the original sinner and the first progenitor of mankind. Shakespeare, a meticulous arranger of meaning, was aware of Adam's many significations

(sin, disgrace, fatherhood, history, and not least of all manual labour) and of their presence in the historical texts from which he draws his sources and the contemporary atmosphere in which he works. Shakespeare manipulates this fertile intersection of text, history, and theology to animate these small roles with a uniquely dignified religious lineage. This essay shall concentrate on the various historical and historiographical contexts of Adam, Eden, Genesis, and their relationship to labour and social class, thus locating Shakespeare's characters in a discrete historical continuum in which authoritative texts are ubiquitous and significant.

Though the gardeners of *Richard II* are supposedly relegated to rustic ignorance by their class position, the simplicity associated with their profession belies a greater political conscience than figures of their status are typically given credit for. The gardeners first appear in the Duke of York's garden, where they intrude on the melancholic Queen and her ladies. The women hide themselves in the shadow of a grove, and the Queen listens attentively to the men's conversation, especially when it explicitly concerns her husband. She becomes furious when one gardener suggests that "depressed [Richard] is already, and deposed / 'Tis doubt he will be" (3.4.69–70) and reveals herself to berate him:

> Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,
> How dares thy harsh rude tongue sound this unpleasing news?
> What Eve, what serpent hath suggested thee
> To make a second fall of cursèd man?
> Why dost thou say King Richard is deposed?
> Dar'st thou, thou little better thing than earth,
> Divine his downfall? Say where, when, and how
> Cam'st thou by this ill tidings? Speak, thou wretch!
> (3.4.74–81)

The Queen scathingly invokes Adam's name and hyperbolically suggests that the gardeners' knowledge of her husband's political circumstances and Adam's consumption of the fruit of knowledge are comparably grievous sins. Such a comparison is decidedly paternalistic.

She weaponizes Adam's prelapsarian innocence to imply that the servile gardeners cannot have a sociopolitical consciousness independent of a tempting Eve or serpent. However, their knowledge of political affairs, which springs from the Gardener's "harsh rude tongue," is more accurate than even the Queen's, indicating a keen awareness of the machinations of the state. In fact, these manual labourers seem to understand more about the management of the body politic than does King Richard himself—by dint of their particular profession. The Gardener instructs his Second Man to

> Go thou, and, like an executioner,
> Cut off the heads of too fast-growing sprays
> That look too lofty in our commonwealth.
> All must be even in our government. (3.4.34–37)

The Gardener here abstractly refers to the sycophantic courtiers Bushy, Bagot, and Green, each of whom manipulates his intimacy with Richard to obtain prestige; indeed, when Bolingbroke assumes control of England, he cuts off Bushy's and Green's heads. In fact, the entirety of the gardeners' botanical conversation is a thin metaphorical veil for affairs of state. "Garden" serves as allegorical shorthand for "kingdom" in *Richard II*: for example, in John of Gaunt's eulogy of England, he describes his nation as "this other Eden, demi-Paradise" (2.1.42). Such a description positions Richard as a deficient Adam (and Bolingbroke as a successful one, by extension). Like Lear, Richard shies from his vocational responsibility as the keeper of the garden of the state. Clayton G. MacKenzie writes of the speech, "Gaunt's second Eden … remains merely a latent paradise unless those who live in the present can enliven it, refurbish it, build upon it" (27). MacKenzie's interpretation of Gaunt's remarks points to the necessity of labour to maintain paradise: just as Eden cannot thrive without the stewardship of Adam, England stagnates without an industrious king to refrain from excess, distribute wealth fairly, and refuse the advice of flatterers. Work is thus intrinsically linked and ethically fundamental to England, and Richard's failure to labour in the garden—to rule judiciously—is the Aristotelian

hamartia that ends his reign. The gardeners, then, are by contrast admirable figures. Their prudent eye for order in the natural world distinguishes them from Richard, who has "not trimmed and dressed his land / as [they] this garden" (3.4.57–58). Both the gardeners and Richard are types of Adam, but only the gardeners succeed in Adam's directive from God.

To associate both a king and some of his lowliest subjects with Adam is a populist gesture, especially in reference to Richard's reign, a period in which the public posed a palpable threat to hierarchy. Hamlet remarks on this threat when conversing with Horatio and the gravemakers and identifies the growing intellectual sophistication of the peasantry: "By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it. The age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier he galls his kibe" (5.1.134–37). In both plays, the aristocracy is threatened by an increasing terror of the socioeconomic other—and in *Richard II*, Bolingbroke takes advantage of this terror when he legitimizes the concerns of the dissident public by overthrowing Richard. He is a people's monarch, most vehemently beloved by citizens of the gardeners' social class. If Richard rules by the divine right of kings, his deposition then represents divine order—the ordained will of God—overturned with the endorsement of the English masses. This kind of sociopolitical unrest characterized the early reign of the historical Richard II as well as its final days. Having ascended the throne in 1377 at age ten, Richard was fourteen years old during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, an event extensively recorded in the principal source of Shakespeare's histories, Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1587), and which forms the basis of the Cade Rebellion in *2 Henry VI* (c. 1591). Proponents of the revolt used biblical rhetoric to appeal to "the common uplandish people" (Holinshed 430). The Lollard priest John Ball mobilized Adam and Eve in particular: in a public sermon, he famously asked, "When Adam delved, and Eve span, / Who was then the gentleman?" (qtd. in McIntire 104). Thomas Walsingham, in his *St Albans*

Chronicle (1328–88), reports that Ball "endeavoured … to introduce and prove the notion that all men were by nature created equal from the beginning, and that servitude had been brought in wrongly by the unjust oppression of human beings, contrary to the will of God" (547). Ball's invocation of Adam was wildly successful among the English peasantry because it sanctified manual labour and honoured those socially obligated to perform it for survival. Ball's sermon also portrayed the earliest moments of human history as an idyllic age of equality, a notion to which Shakespeare repeatedly refers throughout his corpus (in *As You Like It* [c. 1599] it is called "the Golden World" [1.1.114], for example). The leaders of the Peasants' Revolt held that this democratic epoch could be restored by force, and thus proved profoundly destabilizing to the aristocracy that controlled the boy-king's realm. The fictionalized Bolingbroke's popularity among England's citizenry is similarly threatening to Richard because Bolingbroke promises a similar restoration or refurbishment of the state, a return to Edenic equality antagonistic to the existence of a monarchy or an aristocracy. England is poised between two reigns, much as Adam is situated between two human epochs. His actions uproot order and consequently dictate the fall of mankind from bliss to suffering. He is thus a figure of temporality, transition, and change, and by associating the gardeners with Adam, Shakespeare makes his servile characters harbingers of possibility and fruitful subversion.

Though *Hamlet* similarly associates its gravemakers with social change by suggesting a linkage with Adam, their position as comedic figures somewhat defangs their potential for class disruption. In her study of Shakespeare's English history plays, Phyllis Rackin observes that "segregated by generic restrictions, the plebeian characters … can rebel against their oppression, but they can never finally transcend the conventions of comic representation that keep them in their social place and mark their separation from the serious historical world of their betters" (221). This much is true of the gravemakers in *Hamlet*, who claim a link to the distant historical world of Adam in the opening

of the play's final act as they prepare the recently drowned Ophelia's grave:

> SECOND CLOWN. Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.
> FIRST CLOWN. Why, there thou sayst, and the more pity that great folk should have count'nance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and gravemakers; they hold up Adam's profession.
> SECOND CLOWN. Was he a gentleman?
> FIRST CLOWN. A was the first that ever bore arms.
> SECOND CLOWN. Why, he had none.
> FIRST CLOWN. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged. Could he dig without arms? (5.1.23–37)

Though the clowns' conversation falls short of the outright rebellion perpetrated by working-class characters in plays such as *2 Henry VI*, their discussion of inequality is certainly seditious. However, any subversive potential in their speech—along with the professional pride they take in the lineage of their work—is promptly quashed when the First Clown stumbles at the double meaning of "arms" and mistakes a heraldic coat of arms for body parts. The audience enjoys a hearty chuckle at the clowns' expense, thereby returning them to the narrow confines of comedy from which they momentarily stood apart.

In this exchange, the Second Clown gestures toward a feature of institutional inequality: limited access to ecclesiastical rites and the luxury of suicide. Though the Danish aristocracy is as Christian as the peasantry, their socioeconomic status permits them to commit decidedly un-Christian acts, such as suicide, with impunity. Though Hamlet himself is aware that "the Everlasting [has] fixed / His canon 'gainst self-slaughter" (1.2.131–32) and therefore refrains from it, he consistently commits or dwells on other sins. Nevertheless, Horatio anticipates a heavenly final destination for Hamlet's soul. The clowns' discourse,

however, undermines the sense of security with which Horatio beckons Hamlet's "flights of angels" (5.2.360). Their speech exposes inconsistencies in Christian doctrine permissively perpetrated by the Catholic institution and encapsulates the central issue of the Protestant Reformation.

Hamlet takes place in a timeless Danish court, and although this deliberate temporal displacement lends the play universality, it is nevertheless tinged with the very contemporary presence of church reform (the prince attends university in Wittenberg, the birthplace of Protestantism, for example). John Calvin, deceased in 1564, the year of Shakespeare's birth, esteems Adam's profession in his commentary on Genesis: "For the tilth of the earth was commaunded by God: and the labour of keeping and feeding beastes, was no lesse honest then profitable: to be short, the whole life rustike is hurtlesse, simple, and most of all framed to the true order of nature" (127). Calvin's views, both on Catholic hypocrisy and on the virtue of manual labour, align with the gravemakers' simplistic but straightforward assessment of their working existence. Though they do not express specifically reformist views, their speech is critical of the aristocracy as upheld by the Catholic Church and contributes to the Protestant undertones that present themselves throughout the play. Like the gardeners of *Richard II*, their connection to Adam poses a threat to institutional power.

According to Williams, "general concern with society and social arrangements [is] evident in much of the theology of the Renaissance" (221). In *Richard II* and *Hamlet*, theology locates lower-class labouring characters within matrices of power that they often threaten. Both plays represent the lower class as a destabilizing force with historical precedents—the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 in the case of *Richard II* and the rise of European religious reform in that of *Hamlet*. However, within the plays themselves, the gardeners and the gravemakers view their professions with gravity and speak seriously about their responsibilities; they are fully aware of a lineage descending from Adam to them and the implications of such an inheritance. For

Shakespeare's characters, Adam is not a static historical figure but a point of intersection of theology, labour, and power that shapes the way they are perceived by others and the way they perceive themselves.

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Monstrous Femininity: The Female Abject in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*

Faith Ryan

Abstract: This paper analyzes depictions of femininity in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1674), arguing ultimately that Frankenstein's monster is representative of Milton's fallen Eve. I will analyze Victor as a type of Adam, discuss the similarities between Eve's and the monster's creation stories, and finally assess Eve's and the monster's eventual identification with Satan. This analysis presents *Frankenstein* as a reworking of Milton's myth, and in doing so sheds new light on the relationship between Adam and Eve as an archetype of the relationship between the patriarchal male and the resisting female.

In his comparative analysis of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1674), John Lamb suggests that "[Frankenstein's] monster's identity has been shaped by a cultural myth in which the fallen can be only Adam or Lucifer" (51). However, this essay will consider the implications of the monster as representative of a form of the female—specifically, the abjected female who materializes from the demonization of Eve in *Paradise Lost*. Marie Conn asserts that "no story has had a more profound negative impact on women throughout Western history than the biblical story of Eve," who, in both the biblical account and in Milton's work, becomes an archetype of the abject female who is both "seductive" and "evil" (Conn 3). This abjection of Eve connects Frankenstein's monster to the Edenic myth. In this paper, I will reveal how Frankenstein's monster can be read as representative of Milton's Eve, and thus the ab-

jected female, by analyzing Victor as a type of Adam, discussing the similarities between Eve's and the monster's creation stories, and assessing Eve's and the monster's eventual identification with Satan. In *Frankenstein*, Shelley reworks Milton's myth to display the relationship between Frankenstein and his monster as a reflection of the relationship between Adam and Eve, and ultimately the relationship of the patriarchal male with the unsubmissive female. Through this typological representation, Shelley highlights the inequality of Adam and Eve's relationship and presents the biblical Edenic myth as the root of the English literary tradition of "othering" the female sex.

In *Frankenstein*, Victor is presented as a type of Miltonic Adam who desires knowledge and companionship and, through these desires, exposes the world to monstrosity. Victor's solitude and desire for companionship link him to Milton's Adam, who recognizes his loneliness and desires a "fit help" (8.450). Like Adam in *Paradise Lost*, Victor links his desire for knowledge with his desire for companionship. In "solitude" (75) he embarks on his quest for knowledge, which ultimately leads to his creation of the monster. Similarly, Adam presents God with questions of the Earth and how he may "Adore [God], Author of the Universe" (8.359), before inquiring "but with me / I see not who partakes. In solitude / What happiness?" (8.364–66). Both Adam's and Victor's desire for knowledge lead them to acts of creation. Additionally, in the beginning of *Frankenstein*, Victor warns Robert Walton that the latter's search "for knowledge and wisdom" (62) appears similar to his own, as Robert also desires the "company of a man" (54). Victor relates that he "hope[s] that the gratification of [Robert's] wishes may not be a serpent to sting [him], as [his own] has been" (62). Here, Victor associates his quest for knowledge with the misfortune that came of his creative act. The monster is figured as the "serpent" that stung Victor, just as Eve is accused of being a serpent by Adam in Book X of *Paradise Lost*. Thus, Victor expresses his hope that Robert's desire for knowledge and companionship will not lead to the creation of an abject, as his and Adam's did. These similarities draw to-

gether the female abject of Eve from Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the monster of Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Moreover, Victor's relationships with Elizabeth and the monster possess similarities to Adam's relationships with prelapsarian and postlapsarian Eve. In this way, both *Paradise Lost* and *Frankenstein* "split" their female characters into archetypes of the ideal and the abject. Splitting occurs as a result of an inability to bring together the dichotomy of both positive and negative qualities of the self or another. Splitting has occurred in literature for centuries in attempts to understand femininity, wherein the female is often split into archetypes of the virgin and the whore. In the Edenic myth, this splitting occurs in unfallen and fallen Eve, and in Shelley's *Frankenstein* it occurs in the characters of Elizabeth and the abjected monster. Victor views Elizabeth as "light and airy"; "she appeared the most fragile creature in the world," and he "never saw so much grace" in one being (66). Similarly, Adam is fixated on Eve's "beauty which whether waking or asleep / Shot forth peculiar graces" (5.14–15). Through the word "grace" and the attribution of an angelic quality, both unfallen Eve and Elizabeth are made to embody ideal femininity through the mediated gaze of a male character. Moreover, Mary Wollstonecraft, Shelley's mother and author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), regarded Milton's unfallen Eve as "'one of the masculine stereotypes of female nature' in which … the female … is grossly distorted [and] subjugated" (Wollstonecraft qtd. in Wittreich 502). Joseph Wittreich recounts that Wollstonecraft "discovers in Milton's Eve a 'commentary not on women but on men from whose imagination she sprang—from Milton's Adam, and before him, from Milton himself'" (Wollstonecraft qtd. in Wittreich 502). Therefore, from Wollstonecraft's perspective, Milton's prelapsarian Eve is the ideal female product of masculine imagination, as she is born through Adam's dream in Book VIII of *Paradise Lost*. She is imagined in Adam's dream as one who "infused / Sweetness into [his] heart, unfelt before" (8.473–75). Similarly, in *Frankenstein* Elizabeth is described by Victor as "good tempered, yet gay and playful as a summer insect"

(66). Not only do both ideal women possess childlike purity, but they also show a willingness to submit to male authority. Elizabeth is described as willing to "submit with … grace" (66), just as Eve is figured to "[yield] with coy submission, modest pride, and sweet reluctance" (4.310–11). Finally, Victor narrates that "the world was to [him] a secret, which [he] desired to discover; [but] to [Elizabeth] it was a vacancy which she sought to populate with imaginations of her own" (66). Here Victor suggests that Elizabeth is not endowed with his curiosity for knowledge, relating Elizabeth to Eve, who likewise does not participate intellectually in Adam's conversation with the angel Raphael. Adam, like Victor, "thirsts" (8.8) for knowledge of the universe, while Eve, observing "by his continence [Adam] seemed / entering on studious thoughts abstruse," contents herself in "retir[ing] in sight" (8.38–40). Thus both women are presented as the ideal female through their beauty, innocence, lack of intellectual curiosity, and willingness to submit to a male as their guide and "head" (1 Cor. 11:3).

In opposition to the ideal relationship of Victor and Elizabeth, which mirrors Adam's relationship with prelapsarian Eve, Victor's relationship with the monster presents similarities to Adam's reaction to the postlapsarian Eve. Lamb suggests that like *Paradise Lost*, "*Frankenstein* is a 'birth myth'" (52). As such, the creation of Frankenstein's monster reimagines Milton's birth of female monstrosity in the character of Eve. Both creatures are born out of the minds of men: the monster is born out of Victor's creativity and intellect, just as Eve is created through Adam's dream. Moreover, the monster is assembled from body parts, which Victor fashions into a man, while Eve is born out of Adam's "rib," which God then "formed and fashioned with His hands" (8.471). Thus, both the monster and Eve are created from pre-existing body parts in the myths of their birth. Additionally, both Eve and the monster are described as "creature[s]" at the time of their creation. Describing Eve's creation, Milton writes that "under [God's] forming hands a creature grew" (8.470), and in Shelley's *Frankenstein* Victor recalls the "eye of the creature open" (83). The word "creature" refers to

"anything created" ("creature"), and can retain this originally neutral denotation; however, it can be argued that in these myths, given the outcome of both creations, the word "creature" is used to connote a "reprehensible or detestable other" ("creature"). This connotation of creature connects to Julia Kristeva's definition of the abject as something that is "ejected beyond the scope of the … tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close…. It beseeches, worries, and fascinates" (1). Both the fallen Eve and Frankenstein's monster are "close" to Adam and Victor, having been made by them, and both have been "ejected" from the favour of their creators and hated as "detestable other[s]" ("creature").

Frankenstein also represents the monster as a reimagining of the abjection of Eve through reference to Eve's first memories. The monster recounts that he "gradually saw plainly the clear stream that supplied [him] with drink, and the trees that shaded [him] with their foliage" (122). This passage evokes Eve's first memory in *Paradise Lost*, where she gazes into the "clear smooth lake" (4.459–60). Both the monster and Eve are startled by their reflections in the water. Eve indicates that she "started back" (Milton 4.462) just as the monster narrates that he "started back" (130). However, the monster is "terrified, when [he] viewed [himself] in the transparent pool" (130), while Eve is "pleased" (4.463) by the beauty of her reflection. At this moment in *Paradise Lost*, Eve is still the ideal female; however, Shelley's monster reflects the abject figure that Eve becomes after her temptation by Satan.

In addition, there are similarities between the monster's creation and Eve's experience as she eats the forbidden fruit. Firstly, both narratives use a pathetic fallacy to describe the reaction of Nature to the event. In the monster's birth, it is a "dreary night in November" (83), which reflects the sad results that the birth of the monster will effect. Similarly, Milton uses a pathetic fallacy to describe Nature's reaction to the fall: "Earth felt the wound and Nature from her seat / Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe" (9.784–85). In both works, Nature foreshadows the result of the creatures' monstrous births. Furthermore, just as Eve's

fall is depicted in terms of a sexual act, the monster's awakening is described in similarly eroticized terms. Eve's act of eating the fruit causes nature to "sigh" (9.785) as she is "engorged without restraint" (9.791). Wolfgang Rudat suggests Eve's experience with the fruit is described in terms of a female orgasm (113). Correspondingly, Victor narrates that the monster "breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs" (83). This description of the monster breathing heavily, and the "convulsive" motion of his body corresponds to the interpretation of Eve's fall as a sexual experience mimicking a climactic moment. Consequently, both the fall in Milton's work and the "fall" in Shelley's *Frankenstein* are figured as moments of sexual knowledge, presenting the abjected female as a sexual being.

Frankenstein's monster is further analogous with Eve and thus the abjected female through his eventual association with Satan. In Wollstonecraft's criticism of *Paradise Lost*, she suggests that "women who saw themselves victimized by a male-dominated society and [found] their own situation mirrored in Satan's ... fastened their attention on his soliloquy in book IV" (Wollstonecraft qtd. in Wittreich 503). Through Wollstonecraft's suggestion, Eve is associated with Satan as one who resists tyrannical rule. In his soliloquy, Satan asks, "is there no place / Left for repentance, none for pardon left?" (4.79–80). Viewed through a Wollstonecraftian lens, this speech is a plea from Eve for forgiveness and grace from God, and ultimately a rejection of patriarchal submission and a call for female freedom. Victor's monster is also aligned with Satan as he is presented as carrying "a hell within [him]" (149), evoking Satan's suggestion in *Paradise Lost* that "Which way [he flies] is hell, [he himself is] Hell" (4.75). The monster laments that he "ought to be [Victor's] Adam; but [he is] rather the fallen angel, whom [Victor] drivest from joy for no misdeed" (119). The monster's identification with Satan mimics the feminist claim that under patriarchal oppression "women seemed all too like Satan, who 'bore about within him a hell in his own bosom'" (Wollstonecraft qtd. in Wittreich 503). In both the monster's and Eve's reality of abjection it is Satan who best

represents their desire for liberty.

Furthermore, Adam's hatred and rejection of the post-lapsarian Eve corresponds to Victor's hatred of the monster. After the fall, Adam looks on Eve with "shame, perturbation and despair / Anger … hate and guile" (10.113–14). Similarly, Victor recalls that "the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled [his] heart" at the sight of his creation (84). This passage illustrates the similarities between both Adam's and Victor's dreams of the ideal, and the hatred they harbour toward their creations. Moreover, Adam associates Eve with the serpent, and expresses his desire for her to be physically grotesque in the following lines:

> Out of my sight, thou serpent! That name best
> Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false
> And hateful! Nothing wants but that thy shape
> Like his and color serpentine may show
> Thy inward fraud to warn all creatures from thee
> (10.867–71)

This passage is analogous to Victor's expression of disgust at his creation, for which he "had selected his features as beautiful" (83). Victor is unable to imagine what he saw as beautiful about the creature whom he now finds so abhorrent. Driven by the same disgust as Victor, Adam desires Eve to be physically transformed into the serpent so that her outward appearance matches the hatred he feels for her. Finally, Victor laments that his "dreams that had been [his] food and pleasant rest for so long a space, were now become a hell to [him]; and the change was so rapid, the overthrow complete!" (84). In this passage, Victor expresses that his dreams have been drawn out of him to become manifest as a collective grotesque "other" to himself—an "other" fulfilled in the monster. In a similar way, Adam presents Eve as his abjected self by lamenting that she was made by "all but a rib / Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears / More to the part sinister from me drawn / Well if thrown out" (10.884–87). Adam regards Eve as the "sinister" part of himself, which he has "thrown out" (10.887) in the same way that the monster is the dream that Victor heaves from himself.

Ultimately, if this reading is to be accepted, the unde-

niable masculinity of the monster has to be addressed. One might wonder if it is possible for Shelley to have presented a concept of the abjected female through the portrayal of a masculine being. However, this masculinization appears to be the only fitting way to portray such a concept, as the abjected female is one who, in effect, acts as a man. Through tasting the fruit and claiming agency over herself, Eve takes on the characteristics of a man. Thus, Shelley's monster is at once the abjected female and the masculinized female, who dares to take the masculine role of being her own guiding "head" (1 Cor. 11:3). Therefore, it is significant that the monster, as a corresponding figure to the postlapsarian Eve and the abjected female, finally meets Elizabeth, the ideal female, and strangles her to death. Elizabeth, as one archetypal side of the split female, is eliminated by the abjected side. In this way, ungratified in its desire for "communion with an equal" (158), the monster becomes aligned with Satan, as Eve is "leagued" (10.872) with the serpent in *Paradise Lost*. Victor refuses to create "another like" (176) his creation and in this act refuses a relationship of equality, similar to the Edenic hierarchy that raises Adam above Eve. Eve's act of eating the apple can thus be read as a fulfillment of her desire to be "rendered more equal" (9.823) to Adam, though she and the monster both ultimately fail in that project. Therefore, both figures of the abjected female are created by man's unwillingness to allow for equality. Through a reimagining of Milton's "monstrous myth" (Lamb 51), Shelley presents a critique of the great patriarchal text and asserts her own monster as a redemption of Eve who will "ascend [his] funeral pile triumphantly, and exult in the agony of the torturing flames" (221). Aligned with the classic images of resistance to tyranny in Eve and Satan, the monster becomes a symbol of female agency that revolts against the forces of patriarchal oppression.

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Sheep and Shepherd: The Ambivalent Gender Politics of Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*

Katie Yakovleva

Abstract: Some feminist critics have interpreted Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) through a lens of male domination, wherein the novel's heroine, Bathsheba Everdene, is figured as a helpless ewe-lamb, controlled by her male suitors. While I agree that Bathsheba is portrayed this way, I would like to argue that Bathsheba exhibits not only the weak but also the surprisingly powerful characteristics of the novel's sheep. In Bathsheba's relationship with Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba relies on Gabriel for her well-being. However, like the novel's sheep, Bathsheba influences Gabriel both economically and emotionally. This paper demonstrates that unlike Bathsheba's male-dominant relationships with Farmer Boldwood and Sergeant Troy, Bathsheba's relationship with Gabriel (both a literal shepherd on her farm and ultimately her moral shepherd) bestows power on both genders through Bathsheba and Gabriel's mutual reliance on one another.

In 1872, the London *Times* reprinted a Canadian newspaper's account of a thousand sheep falling to their deaths after jumping off a bridge in Upper Canada. When a drover tried to pass the sheep over a bridge, the flock's bell-weather "noticed an open window, and, recognizing his destiny, made a strike for glory and the grave." After he jumped, he "at once appreciated his critical condition, and with a leg stretched toward each cardinal point of the compass, he uttered a plaintive 'Ma-a!' and descended to his fate." The rest of the sheep followed, "imitating the gesture and remark of the leader" until the last sheep "waved adieu to the wick-

ed world" ("Sheep Strike" 9). The author does not mention any attempt by the drover to save the flock, but the sheep's deaths indicate that the man was powerless to intervene. This article anticipates the representation of sheep in Thomas Hardy's 1874 novel, *Far from the Madding Crowd*. One of Hardy's opening scenes features two hundred ewes running to their deaths off a cliff, helplessly herded by an overeager sheepdog. The ewes' shepherd and the protagonist of the novel, Gabriel Oak, fails to prevent their unfortunate fate. Both the article and the novel portray sheep as simultaneously helpless and strangely powerful. In the *Times* article, the sheep lack the foresight to understand the deadly consequences of their actions, but their anthropomorphism grants them authoritative agency that thwarts the intentions of the drover. Similarly, sheep proliferate Hardy's novel as foolish, helpless creatures that rely on Gabriel for their survival. However, they also profoundly influence Gabriel's economic and romantic pursuits. The tragic loss of his two hundred ewes devastates Gabriel's hopes of independent sheep-farming but draws him close to Bathsheba Everdene, the woman he marries at the end of the novel after earning her trust by working as a hired shepherd on her farm.

Deborah Denenholz Morse, Martin A. Donahay, and Grace Moore have shown that animals in Victorian literature illuminate character relationships, reflect gender implications, and offer moral guidance. In *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Sergeant Troy's comparison of Bathsheba to a "ewe-lamb" implies that she is an inferior creature to be possessed by men (Hardy 173). Indeed, Linda Shires notes that feminist critics have typically interpreted *Far from the Madding Crowd* as a novel of male domination, pointing to Penny Boumelha's *Thomas Hardy and Women* (1982; pp. 32–34) and Rosemarie Morgan's *Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (1988; pp. 30–57) as the most conspicuous examples of this tendency to read the novel as "predominantly a male discourse intent on taming the heroine" (Shires 163). Shires herself argues, however, that "gender and power are *not* permanently aligned in the novel" (164; my emphasis), a view that more closely aligns with

that of this study. Whereas Shires argues her case through semiotics, psychoanalysis, and narratology, this paper will demonstrate the ambivalence of gender politics in *Far from the Madding Crowd* by examining Hardy's representations of sheep and their allusive association with Bathsheba. The sheep's simultaneously helpless and powerful qualities offer insight into Bathsheba's relationships with her three suitors: Gabriel Oak, Sergeant Troy, and Farmer Boldwood. Bathsheba demonstrates an increasingly sheep-like weakness when she interacts with Troy and Boldwood and relies on Gabriel to run her farm. However, she demonstrates the powerful qualities of the sheep by influencing the same key aspects of Gabriel's life as the sheep do: the shepherd's financial and romantic ambitions. Bathsheba's relationships with Troy and Boldwood, defined by male power and manipulation, result in disastrous consequences. Only Bathsheba's friendship with Gabriel, characterized by mutual reliance and respect, results in genuine love and serves as a moral standard for male-female relationships. Thus, the ambivalence of gender politics in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, illuminated by Hardy's representations of sheep, condemns male domination and encourages gender equality.

Far from the Madding Crowd portrays sheep as pitiful creatures whose poor reasoning ability hinders them from making wise decisions and positions them at the mercy of those who help or hurt them. The fates of sheep are correlated with the skill of their caretakers. Gabriel, an experienced shepherd "from his youth," does not permit "a hireling or a novice" to tend his flock's newborn lambs, because he knows that the lambs are more likely to survive if he cares for them himself (Hardy 16). Unfortunately, Gabriel's less experienced sheepdog kills all two hundred of Gabriel's pregnant ewes by driving them off a cliff. The ewes do not have the reasoning capacity to save themselves; they merely travel in whatever direction they are driven. The novel's sheep-washing scene further evidences the sheep's lack of agency. Here, Hardy describes the creatures' actions with passive constructions. The sheep do not "enter" the water; they are "pushed into the pool" and "thrust under" (126).

Even when the sheep do perform actively, they make poor decisions because they fail to understand the consequences of their actions. Dozens of Bathsheba's sheep gorge themselves on clover, not realizing that the result—their subsequent bloating—will endanger their lives. Again, the sheep cannot save themselves: Gabriel heals them by piercing a precise spot in their side with "dexterity" comparable to a "hospital surgeon" (141). Bathsheba, responding to the clover crisis, expresses sympathy for the sheep's tendency to experience troubling circumstances: "Sheep are such unfortunate animals—There's always something happening to them!" (137). Without Gabriel, who delivers the sheep from their sufferings and cares for their basic needs, the animals would not survive.

However, though they rely on their shepherd immensely, the sheep also demonstrate enormous influence over two key aspects of Gabriel's life: his economic position and his romantic pursuits. When Gabriel's flock perishes at the beginning of the novel, Gabriel must sell all his possessions to clear his debt from the uninsured sheep. His hopes of independent sheep-farming crushed, "possibly for ever" (41), Gabriel resigns himself to the lowly occupation of a hired shepherd. The sheep's fates also affect Gabriel positively: his search for employment brings him through Weatherbury, the district to which Bathsheba moves after she rejects Gabriel's first marriage proposal. In Weatherbury, Bathsheba hires Gabriel as a shepherd. Had Gabriel's flock not perished, Gabriel would never have seen Bathsheba again, let alone had the opportunity to work with her so closely. Gabriel's superior shepherding skills earn him Bathsheba's trust: after she fires Gabriel for criticizing her treatment of Boldwood, Gabriel's successful treatment of her clover-engorged sheep convinces her to rehire him. Thus, sheep facilitate the development of Gabriel and Bathsheba's working relationship, which eventually leads to friendship and culminates in marriage. Just as the sheep are herded in directions they do not choose, they direct Gabriel's life in ways he cannot control. The creatures rely on Gabriel to survive, but Gabriel depends on the sheep for financial and romantic

success.

Bathsheba displays the reliant and pitiful qualities of the sheep in her interactions with her suitors. Initially content to remain single, Bathsheba rejects her first marriage proposal, from Gabriel, and asserts herself as fully capable in the male world of farming. When Bathsheba begins interacting with Boldwood and Troy, however, she displays the helpless, foolish qualities of the novel's sheep. Bathsheba exercises poor judgment when she gives Boldwood false hope of her romantic affections by sending him a valentine and when she pursues Troy despite numerous warnings regarding his poor character. Bathsheba's marriage to Troy is reminiscent of Gabriel's sheep being herded off a cliff or her own sheep gorging themselves on clover: she marries Troy mindlessly, hopelessly driven by "jealousy and distraction" (249), and she fails to understand the negative consequences of her actions. After Bathsheba marries Troy, she (like her sheep) suffers one misfortune after another: the dilapidation of her farm; Troy's cooling affections and supposed death; Boldwood's increasingly disturbing obsession with her; and, finally, Troy's reappearance and Boldwood's murder of Troy. Bathsheba's servant Liddy comments on the effects of these tragic events on Bathsheba's welfare: "Poor thing: her sufferings have been dreadful: she deserves anybody's pity" (375). Liddy's remark parallels Bathsheba's earlier statement regarding the misfortunes of sheep. As Bathsheba becomes increasingly sheep-like, she desperately needs Gabriel to manage her farm. Distraught at Gabriel's plans to move abroad, Bathsheba expresses her desire for him to stay and help her instead. At the beginning of the novel, free from romantic relationships, Bathsheba is "too independent" (36); at the end, a victim of Troy and Boldwood and utterly reliant on Gabriel, Bathsheba is, like the sheep, "more helpless than ever" (379).

Despite Bathsheba's weakness, in her relationship with Gabriel she holds more power than her "sheep" status might seem to indicate. Bathsheba is by no means inferior to the shepherd. When Gabriel brings her a lamb to raise as a gift, he invites her to become a shepherd, his equal. For

the majority of the novel, Bathsheba's socioeconomic status is actually higher than Gabriel's: she is an independent farmer, and Gabriel is merely her employee. Furthermore, like Gabriel's literal sheep, Bathsheba profoundly influences Gabriel's financial and romantic aspirations, both as his employer and as an active participant in their courtship. Before Gabriel proposes to her for the first time, he resolves that if Bathsheba does not accept him, he will be "good for nothing" (30). Gabriel's response to Bathsheba's rejection indicates that his desire for her remains his most significant ambition: "I shall do one thing in this life—one thing certain—that is, love you, and long for you, and keep wanting you till I die" (35). Later, as Gabriel's employer, Bathsheba can hire or fire Gabriel as she pleases, so he relies on her for his financial well-being. Bathsheba also takes the initiative for their eventual marriage. Gabriel dares not propose to her a second time, believing that Bathsheba views the idea of their marriage as "too absurd" (382). Correcting him, Bathsheba says it is merely "too soon" after Troy's death and encourages Gabriel to propose to her a second time (382). Gabriel does initially appear more powerful than Bathsheba because he is her figurative shepherd, a caretaker of a helpless sheep; however, Gabriel is also Bathsheba's literal shepherd—an employee of an independent farmer. Their relationship, therefore, is characterized by a balance of power that allows Gabriel and Bathsheba to rely on one another for their respective needs.

Mutual reliance does not characterize Bathsheba's relationships with Sergeant Troy and Farmer Boldwood, who render Bathsheba powerless and emotionally manipulate her for their own purposes. Troy's charm makes Bathsheba incapable of refusing any of his demands, from his initial scandalous invitation to an unsupervised meeting to his proposal at their (even more scandalous) rendezvous in Bath. When Bathsheba hesitates to accept Troy's marriage proposal, Troy reacts selfishly and does not demonstrate any empathy toward her; he exploits Bathsheba's jealousy and fear by threatening to leave her for a woman "more beautiful" than she (249). Bathsheba does have some influ-

ence over Boldwood, as she does not return his affections. However, Bathsheba's rejection of Boldwood causes her to feel that she is "inherently the weaker vessel," a sentiment that ultimately bestows the greater power on Boldwood (201). Eventually, Boldwood's manipulation and obsessive persistence weakens any power that Bathsheba initially holds in their relationship. After Troy supposedly drowns, Bathsheba does not wish to remarry, because she intuitively perceives that her husband is still alive. However, Boldwood manipulates Bathsheba into accepting his engagement by demanding her answer right before he hosts a large party celebrating her acceptance. Bathsheba, pitying Boldwood severely and fearing his humiliation should she refuse him, agrees to marry Boldwood in seven years if Troy does not reappear. Boldwood, like Troy, cares little about Bathsheba's wishes or well-being; both men abuse their power over the woman for the sole purpose of attaining her as a wife.

Juxtaposed with Bathsheba's relationships with Boldwood and Troy, Gabriel and Bathsheba's allegorical relationship of a shepherd and a sheep serves as the novel's best model for male-female power dynamics. Animals in Victorian literature occasionally exemplify a moral standard (Morse and Donahay 1), but Hardy's sheep and their shepherd serve an even higher spiritual lesson. In the Bible, Christ is referred to as the "good shepherd" of his sheep, the church (John 10.11). This biblical allusion elevates Gabriel, the only shepherd in the novel, above Troy and Boldwood and positions his relationship with the ewe-lamb Bathsheba as the model that Victorian society should emulate. Gabriel's care for Bathsheba is characterized not by the emotionally manipulative power of Boldwood and Troy but by the "pastoral power" of a shepherd over his sheep. "Pastoral power," a term coined by Michel Foucault, is the power of compassionate "care" rather than "biopolitical domination" (Kreilkamp 475). Gabriel tends his flock with kindness, valuing his ewes' lives over his own. When his sheep perish, Gabriel's "first" thought is not of his ruined financial position but of "pity" for the premature deaths of the ewes and their unborn lambs (Hardy 41). Similarly, after

Bathsheba rejects Gabriel's first marriage proposal, Gabriel continues to care for her selflessly by tending her farm and preventing her employees from gossiping about her. Unlike Troy and Boldwood, Gabriel prioritizes Bathsheba's welfare over his desire to marry her. He would rather see Bathsheba wedded to another man than suffer a tarnished reputation: when Gabriel believes that Troy has compromised Bathsheba sexually, he offers Troy money to marry her, not realizing that the two have already exchanged vows. Boldwood's and Troy's manipulative power over Bathsheba does not lead to lasting love but to disastrous consequences: Boldwood's murder of Troy, Boldwood's incarceration, and Bathsheba's psychological trauma, which takes such a physical and emotional toll on her that her old acquaintances "wouldn't know her" (375). Only Gabriel's pastoral power leads to a marriage born of true friendship. Thus, Hardy's moral standard for gender relationships is that of sacrificial love rather than male domination.

Arguably, the shepherd-sheep relationship between Bathsheba and Gabriel is patronizing and, by extension, demeaning to women. Bathsheba cannot possibly attain the position of Gabriel, a symbolic Christ. However, the biblical allusion does not comprise the whole of Hardy's moral argument but rather lends it powerful moral significance. Hardy's model for successful male-female relationships extends beyond a shepherd's selfless care for a pitiful sheep. Hardy's sheep influence Gabriel immensely by pivoting him between wealth and poverty, between love and loneliness. Bathsheba also possesses the power to develop or to decimate Gabriel's economic position and life goals. Furthermore, Gabriel does not view Bathsheba as an inferior sheep. His gift of the lamb and his respect for the woman's position as his employer prove that he sees Bathsheba as his equal. Bathsheba may occasionally be helpless, but her dependence on Gabriel is balanced with his reliance on her. Unlike Bathsheba's relationships with Troy and Boldwood, Bathsheba's friendship with Gabriel is characterized by mutual respect rather than an imbalance of power. This is the standard for male-female relationships in *Far from the Madding*

Crowd. By positioning Gabriel and Bathsheba's relationship as the novel's only successful one and by bestowing it with religious significance, Hardy's novel encourages its readers to embrace the moral standard of gender equality.

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Milk and Victorian Femininity in Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

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Abstract: This paper examines milk as a symbol of Victorian femininity in Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), specifically as it relates to the female protagonists of these novels, Bathsheba Everdene and Tess Durbeyfield. Through historical research into the significance of milk in the Victorian period, combined with a formal analysis of representations of milk in Hardy's novels, I will argue that milk functions dually in both novels to symbolize a Victorian ideal of femininity while also problematically likening Bathsheba and Tess to farm animals.

Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) mentions milk a staggering one hundred and forty-two times, while his *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) mentions it only seventeen times (see the Gutenberg online editions; all subsequent citations refer to the print editions). As a result of milk's more overt presence in *Tess*, critics such as Jessica Martell and Alicia Carroll have devoted considerable attention to the role of milk in that novel, whereas little attention has been paid to the significance of milk in *Madding Crowd*. However, the function of milk in *Madding Crowd* equally merits contemplation, as milk still exists implicitly in the everyday lives of the characters of that novel. In the Victorian period, people's daily lives, particularly for those who lived on farms, revolved greatly around milk, due to its status as both a source of nourishment and a source of income. This reliance on milk is true for both Tess Durbeyfield working at Talbothays Dairy in *Tess* and Bathsheba Everdene on her

farm in *Madding Crowd*. Milking played a large role in the daily life of both milkmaids, such as Tess, and farmers, such as Bathsheba; it also nourished infants, both human and animal. In this essay, I will explore the role of milk in Victorian culture, specifically in the lives of women, as it relates to Bathsheba and Tess. Through historical research into the significance of milk in the Victorian period, combined with a formal analysis of representations of milk in Hardy's novels, I will argue that milk functions dually in both novels to symbolize a Victorian ideal of femininity while also problematically likening Bathsheba and Tess to farm animals. This duality simultaneously reveals what Victorians saw as desirable qualities in women while also demonstrating the alarming ways in which Victorians likened women to animals.

Milk served a multifaceted purpose during the Victorian period, especially in relation to women. According scholars such as Alicia Carroll, William Cohen, Chantel Langlinais, Jules Law, Jessica Martell, and Jacob Steere-Williams, milk was seen by the Victorians as representing sustenance, youth, and motherhood. Furthermore, Law points out the controversial significance of breast milk in Victorian culture everywhere from debates about feeding it to babies to milk representing female agency in contemporary novels such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897; see Law ch. 3). Carroll notes the disparity between how people use human milk and cow's milk as more and more people feed their children milk that does not come from humans (172). Carroll's argument for milk's cultural significance demonstrates that milk's prevalence in Hardy's novels should come as no surprise, seeing as it affects every person's life whether or not they work on a dairy. Cohen goes as far to say that fluids such as milk are one of "the most important issues in Victorian literature and culture" as they are both an "inherent property of human bodies" and an "occasion for social regulation" (529). Indeed, Steere-Williams recognizes that milk also had a dark side in Victorian culture: the possibility of "widespread outbreak" created the "milk problem" that prompted increased regulation in the dairy industry (265).

Similarly, milk holds symbolic significance with both positive and negative connotations in *Madding Crowd* and *Tess*.

In both of these novels, milk illuminates characteristics of the ideal Victorian woman. Youth, beauty, and motherly qualities can all be traced back to milk as it appears in the novels. Langlinais argues that the ideal Victorian woman is represented in literature as angelic, an association that epitomizes beauty as being moral and virtuous (74). Angels are perhaps one of the most extreme ideals to aspire to as they exist in eternal youth, beauty, and absolute morality. Yet, Bathsheba and Tess are both depicted in this light in various illustrations, even though the novels were illustrated by different artists. In Helen Allingham's illustration "Bathsheba Carrying a Milk Pail," for example, the scene is dark save for Bathsheba's features, which are left in white, the surrounding shadow creating a halo effect around her head (fig. 1). This illustration, in which Bathsheba performs the mundane task of fetching milk, subtly illuminates her as angelic and beautiful, akin to the ideal that Langlinais suggests. Bathsheba also appears with her face and hands bright in contrast to her dark surroundings in Allingham's "Hands Were Loosening His Neckerchief" (fig. 2). This illustration depicts Bathsheba after she douses a sleeping Gabriel Oak with milk "as there was no water" following the fire in his hut (*Madding Crowd* 24). Bathsheba is portrayed as youthful, nurturing, and physically angelic—swooping in like a guardian angel to save Gabriel. Remarkably, this connection to angels includes the usage of milk in both illustrations and textual passages. The same is true for Tess in Joseph Syddall's illustration "He Jumped Up from His Seat, and Went Quickly Towards the Desire of His Eyes" (fig. 3): Tess kneels before a cow—milking it—her face illuminated in contrast to the surrounding shadow of the cow's side. Angel Clare lurches toward her as if compelled by her despite the dullness of her task. This image paints Tess as desirable for her beauty and her youth, a state that is implied by her angelic glow. The presence of milk in all three of these illustrations creates a subtle link between milk and the virtuous representations of Bathsheba and Tess in the novels.

Figure 1: "Bathsheba Carrying a Milk Pail," by Helen Allingham. *Cornhill Magazine,* February 1874. Image uploaded to the *Victorian Web* by Philip V. Allingham. www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/allingham/1b.html.

Figure 2: "Hands were Loosening his Handkerchief," by Helen Allingham. *Cornhill Magazine*, February 1874. Image uploaded to the *Victorian Web* by Philip V. Allingham. www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/allingham/1.html.

Figure 3: "He Jumped Up from His Seat, and Went Quickly Towards the Desire of His Eyes," by Joseph Syddall. London *Graphic*, September 1891. Image uploaded to the *Victorian Web* by Philip V. Allingham. www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/syddall/4.html.

As these illustrations suggest, gendered labour involving milk further helps to depict Tess's and Bathsheba's respective desirability. Carroll associates this desirability with

increasingly gendered farming practices: women's physical traits (such as their smaller hands) were thought to be "well suited to dairy work" (Carroll 168). Through this lens, working women are deemed attractive for their ability to work on farms. Indeed, Angel idealizes Tess through references to milk when he describes the perfect wife: according to Angel, the ideal wife should "milk cows, churn good butter, [and] make immense cheeses" (*Tess* 174). Therefore, Tess's ability to perform well as a milkmaid makes her valuable to Angel and desirable as a wife. This scene parallels Syddall's illustration of Tess milking a cow: Angel is again drawn to Tess due to her association with milk. Similarly, when Gabriel beholds Bathsheba for the first time as she tugs a pail of milk toward him, he is immediately struck by the "desirability of her existence" (*Madding Crowd* 22). This scene prompts the beginning of Gabriel's love for Bathsheba, despite the mundanity of Bathsheba's task. The act of carrying a pail of milk is not intrinsically desirable, but it is milk's cultural significance that draws Gabriel's attention to Bathsheba's attractiveness and youth. Equally as striking a scene is the moment wherein Bathsheba saves Gabriel from the fire in his hut by dousing him with a pail of milk (*Madding Crowd* 26). Here, milk functions as a means for Bathsheba to demonstrate her more caring qualities. Indeed, as a shepherd, Gabriel is familiar with the nourishing and vitalizing power of milk, at one point himself nursing his own "helpless" lambs (*Madding Crowd* 110), who have been separated from their mother and for whom milk is their only form of sustenance.

However, although milk illuminates Bathsheba's and Tess's virtues, it also problematically likens them to farm animals. When Gabriel initially meets Bathsheba, he describes her presence through her milking schedule. As soon as "the cow had ceased to give milk for that year … Bathsheba Everdene came up the hill no more" (*Madding Crowd* 29). Hardy's description of Bathsheba collapses the distinction between her and the cow, as if her milking practices equate her to the actual animal. Similarly, when Gabriel peeks into the barn late at night he observes "two women and two cows" (*Madding Crowd* 19), the parallel syntax suggesting

that Gabriel views Bathsheba and her aunt in the same way as he views the animals in the barn. This pattern of comparison continues as Gabriel grasps Bathsheba's wrist and feels her pulse beat the same way the "femoral artery of his lambs [do] when overdriven" (*Madding Crowd* 54). Gabriel's direct comparison of Bathsheba to a lamb is astonishing in itself with its implications of domesticity, inferiority, and innocence. Yet, the effect of milk is magnified when it is compared to Gabriel feeding his baby lambs: as Gabriel sees a resemblance between Bathsheba and these helpless animals, he implies that Bathsheba is again only one of the animals. Gabriel then describes Bathsheba as a "slight and fragile creature," similar to the "helpless" lambs he feeds (*Madding Crowd* 55, 110). Such parallelism at the level of diction and syntax in these scenes clearly paints Bathsheba as a helpless, weak animal who is unable to take care of herself. Unlike milk's original function in equating Bathsheba to a figure capable of care (e.g., when she saves Gabriel from the fire), milk seems here to have a reverse function of infantilizing Bathsheba as well.

Hardy's narration of Tess similarly portrays her connection to milk in a disempowering way. For example, Hardy narrates a scene at the dairy where the cows "[troop] towards the steading": "their great bags of milk [swing] under them" and "Tess [follows] slowly in their rear" as if she herself is a cow (*Tess* 123). Again, parallelism plays a role in implying that Tess is one of the animals. Just as he does with Bathsheba and the lambs, Hardy describes Tess as mirroring the physical actions of an animal in order to suggest similarity. Furthermore, Angel observes Tess at breakfast as if she were one of the farm animals. When she realizes she is being watched, Tess "[traces] … the tablecloth with her forefinger with the constraint of a domestic animal that perceives itself to be watched" (*Tess* 137). Here, Tess is not only watched as if she were one of the farm animals, but she is also described explicitly as a farm animal. Despite the fact that she is merely eating breakfast with the other workers and ostensibly has no connection to milk, what springs to Angel's mind as he watches Tess is what a "fresh and vir-

ginal daughter of Nature" she is (*Tess* 137). Even when Tess eats breakfast, Angel connects her to nature as if he cannot help but associate her with the farm. Moreover, as Tess milks, Hardy describes "her temple pressing the milcher's flank" (*Tess* 162). This image suggests a physical connection to the cow she is milking, recalling the mentions of Tess behaving as a farm animal would. Syddall's "He Jumped Up from His Seat, and Went Quickly Towards the Desire of His Eyes" echoes this sentiment as Tess is portrayed with her head on the cow's flank, hunched over as the cow itself is. In both of these examples, milk is the connector, just as it is in *Madding Crowd*. Despite milk's connection to Tess and Bathsheba displaying desirable characteristics, its second symbolic function connects Bathsheba and Tess to the animals that they work with as if they themselves are animals.

Milk had a prevalent cultural significance to the Victorians, both as a means of sustenance and as a symbol for various aspects of women's identity. Analyzing the function of milk in *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* creates a lens through which Tess and Bathsheba are celebrated for their femininity and yet gazed upon as inhuman for that very femininity. Thus, through analysis of Hardy's two novels, I demonstrate milk's function as illuminating Victorian perceptions of women. While milk portrays women as ideal in their beauty, youth, and motherly qualities, it also fosters a narrative atmosphere in which milk is used to portray Bathsheba's and Tess's likeness to animals.

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Questioning H.G. Wells's Colonial Critique in *The War of the Worlds*

SD Pitman

Abstract: In his novel *The War of the Worlds* (1897), H.G. Wells uses a Martian invasion of Earth as a vehicle to discuss the validity of late-nineteenth-century British colonialism, drawing parallels between England's fictional plight and the real hardships of indigenous populations throughout the empire. However, though the novel questions the morality of the colonialist mission, at certain points Wells's novel reflects and even enforces Victorian colonialist attitudes.

In his novel *The War of the Worlds* (1897), H.G. Wells uses a Martian invasion of Earth as a vehicle to discuss the validity of late-nineteenth-century British colonialism, drawing parallels between England's fictional plight and the real hardships of indigenous populations throughout the empire. By casting England in the role of the conquered rather than the conqueror, Wells attempts to elicit sympathy for victims of colonization and asks his readers to consider what it would be like to live and die as an oppressed people. What is more, at both the beginning and the end of the novel, the narrator directly comments on the similarities between the Martians' and the British people's expansionist "spirit" (Wells 43). However, though *The War of the Worlds* questions the morality of the colonialist mission, at certain points Wells's novel reflects and even enforces Victorian colonialist attitudes. When Wells does refer to populations vanquished by British imperial powers, he portrays them as less advanced cultures, their subjugation inevitable; and although the vanquishing Martians are not depicted with any emotional complexity, the vanquished human characters likewise have little individuality. The narrator compares characters more than once to animals of lower intelligence, large groups of people described as floundering masses concerned only

with survival. The formal narrative style and the fact that none of the primary characters are named additionally contributes to this detached tone, promoting an "us versus them" mentality. *The War of the Worlds*, then, acts as a provoking examination of British colonialism, while remaining a product of its time unable to escape entirely the prejudiced attitudes that it critiques.

The War of the Worlds was first serialized in 1897, near the end of what historians have deemed Britain's imperial century, and one may read the novel as a reflection on both the power and the fragility of the empire at this time. Countries and territories under British rule encompassed approximately a quarter of the world, and that Wells chose to set his allegorical tale at the centre of the most expansive kingdom in history suggests that even the mightiest may fall. Indeed, Wells's concerns were not unfounded; during the latter half of the nineteenth century, conflicts in the colonies raged. Rebellions in Egypt and Sudan against British rule, the Indian Mutiny, and the Irish Home Rule movement are all examples of the turmoil that threatened jolly old England's colonial mission (Bulfin 487). Britain's dominance on the world stage concurrently faced challenges from other imperial powers, such as Germany, which had achieved a sudden and unexpected victory over France in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. In "'To Arms!': Invasion Narratives and Late-Victorian Literature," Ailise Bulfin argues that the explosion of an "alarmist body of fiction" between 1870 and the start of WWI stemmed from anxiety that Britain "might imminently find itself facing an invasion attempt by any one of its resentful European 'great power' rivals or even by rebellious colonial subjects" (482–83). In this light, *The War of the Worlds* can be considered just one of the many invasion narratives that surfaced during this period, some other notable examples including George Tomkyns Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) and M.P. Shiel's *The Yellow Danger* (1898). *The War of the Worlds*, however, differs from these other texts in that the invading force is not another imperial army but an extraterrestrial one.

Dispute over the validity of the colonial mission sur-

faced not only in literature such as *The War of the Worlds* but also in England's political debates. Victorian liberals voiced various reasons for opposition: some objected to the colonies for economic reasons, and some objected on moral grounds to the treatment of the conquered peoples (Howe 31). Pressure on the government to reform colonization practices additionally came from left-leaning intellectual groups such as the Labour Party Advisory Committee of Imperial Questions, whose reformist campaign for self-governance in the colonies was reportedly supported by Wells (Howe 48). Clearly, then, we can read the colonial critique in *The War of the Worlds* as intentional. The question therefore becomes not *if* Wells attempts to criticize colonialism in the novel but instead *how* he does so.

The novel questions the British imperial mission primarily by evoking the reader's sympathy for colonized people in the real world. In the first chapter of the novel, the narrator retrospectively implores that before his readers judge the Martians for their genocide, "we must remember what ruthless and utter destruction our own species has wrought … upon its own inferior races" (43). This outright admission of guilt would have reminded Victorian readers that what was fiction to them was a reality to others around the globe. Later, as he describes his journey through war-torn Southern England, the narrator claims that he felt "an emotion beyond the common range of men, yet one that the poor brutes we dominate know only too well" (160), and in the next chapter he muses that "Surely, if we have learned nothing else, this war has taught us pity—pity for those witless souls that suffer our dominion" (164). Through his hardship, the narrator gains understanding of and empathy for others who have undergone such suppression as he has, and the embedding of these realizations within the text forces the reader to pause and directly consider the current colonial injustices.

Wells also evokes readers' empathy by filling his text with realistic details. The narrator chronicles his journey with the accuracy of a geographer, noting various small towns and villages he passes, as well as specific landmarks

in London, such as Oxford Street, Euston Station, Regent's Park, Blackfriars, and Tower Bridge. He also vividly depicts the latest Victorian technologies and inventions. Wire-guns and Maxim-guns in the artillery, the bustling train stations throughout Surrey and London, the bicycle ridden by the narrator's brother and the little steamboat he escapes on—all these devices signify the contemporary world of the readers. If one disregards the Martians, *The War of the Worlds* reads as a complete and incredibly accurate depiction of Southern England at the *fin de siècle*. Readers may gasp as they see the destruction of England depicted so vividly, and Wells then reminds them that any emotions prompted by this fictional account are, in fact, real agonies for millions of people overseas. In this way, he represents the reality of colonialism on a psychological level, demanding readers' "pity" (Wells 164) by making them feel the same grief for their decimated homeland that "lesser races" might for their lands overseas.

But although Wells encourages pity for indigenous peoples under colonial rule, he does not encourage respect; rather, throughout *The War of the Worlds*, Wells enforces the idea that these colonized non-whites are less human than their British oppressors. Indeed, the reason they deserve pity is not because they are thinking, feeling beings, but precisely because they are "lesser" and therefore at the mercy of the supposedly superior Europeans. Tom Lawson asserts that this was a common viewpoint among the Victorians, specifically "that in Indigenous society they were seeing a version of themselves in the past, a glimpse of the 'drift and cave men' of Europe" (451). In other words, on an evolutionary scale, the English people believed they were more developed than those with brown or black skin. Lawson goes on to reference Wells, writing that Wells's acknowledgment of the Tasmanian Genocide in the preface to *The War of the Worlds* highlights "the iniquities or indeed the lie of British imperial progress" (454). However, Lawson also points out that while Wells criticizes this act of colonial violence, Wells also supports the theory that the Tasmanians were further back on the evolutionary timeline. When

the narrator of *The War of the Worlds* compares the Martian invasion to the Tasmanian Genocide, he states, "before we judge of them too harshly we must remember what ruthless and utter destruction our own species has wrought…. The Tasmanians, in spite of their human likeness, were entirely swept out of existence in a war of extermination waged by European immigrants" (Wells 43). Here, the author's social evolutionist viewpoint manifests itself in a seemingly insignificant dependent clause: "in spite of their human likeness." That is to say, though they looked like humans, the Tasmanians were not humans. Such disregard for other civilizations, culminating in the conclusion that its people were not even human, demonstrates an unignorable bias on the part of Wells, which readers must acknowledge before they attempt to judge the success of his novel as colonial criticism.

Wells was by no means unique in his failure to recognize colonized peoples as full humans, and *The War of the Worlds* can therefore be said to represent a widespread prejudice among the Victorians. Liberals who protested the imperial mission did so on ethical grounds, but seldom advocated political independence because they did not believe non-white populations capable of governing themselves (Howe 35). Put plainly, though some objected to colonization and the brutalities endured by the "lesser races," many of these naysayers still supported the civilizing mission and wished to impose European customs on other cultures. This attitude is succinctly expressed in the work of another writer thought to be an important influence on Wells: the evolutionist T.H. Huxley. In his 1893 essay "Evolution and Ethics," Huxley outlines what he considers the perils and benefits of colonization and discusses how European immigrants must act in order to be successful in their new home. Huxley compares colonization to gardening, saying that colonists must "clear away the native vegetation" and "introduce English grain and fruit trees; English dogs, sheep, cattle, horses; and English men" (234). Essentially, Huxley advocates for a complete eradication of local tradition, something that today would be considered cultural genocide. He goes on to

caution the English settler against yielding to the lifestyle of the local people. He warns his readers that if the colonists fail in their duty to cultivate order, "the native savage will destroy the immigrant civilized man" (235). Huxley's contrast between "native savage" and "immigrant civilized man" suggests a world of extremes: chaos and brutality, or order and culture. He implies that these "native savages" lack any culture of their own and does not for a moment entertain the possibility that their practices and ideas, though different from his, may be just as rich and complex as those of Europeans. In "The Empire of the Future: Imperialism and Modernism in H.G. Wells," Paul Cantor and Peter Hufnagel assert that "going native was one of the great fears of imperial Britain" (42), and this fear is exactly what drives both Huxley's and Wells's writing. Both depict the Englishman in a fragile fortress of order, under the constant threat of an outside force that seeks to tear them down and render the civilized individual a savage beast.

Thus, instead of humanizing non-white populations by likening their plight to that of the English in The *War of the Worlds*, Wells shows humankind reduced to animalistic chaos, suggesting that those who suffer colonization are weak and unintelligent. He even likens the English to insects in order to emphasize their helplessness against the Martian foe. When the extraterrestrials first unleash their heat-ray on a group of civilians, the narrator records how "the little group of black specks … had been swept out of existence" (59). "Black specks" conjures up an image of flies, insignificant and more a nuisance than a threat. Later, he compares the frantic retaliations of the army to a "disturbed hive of bees" (110), and both he and the artilleryman liken the Martians' superiority over humans as a man's over an ant's (167, 185). Perhaps the protagonist's most poignant comparison—one that captures his sense of helplessness against the alien antagonist—is a lament he utters after emerging from the wreckage of a ruined house:

> For that moment I touched an emotion beyond the common range of men, yet one that the poor brutes we dominate know only too well. I felt as a rabbit

> might feel returning to his burrow and suddenly confronted by the work of a dozen busy navvies digging the foundations of a house. I felt the first inkling of a thing … that oppressed me for many days, a sense of dethronement, a persuasion that I was no longer a master, but an animal among the animals, under the Martian heel. (160)

Again, in this passage, the author compares the subjugated man to an animal, as if being overwhelmed by technologically advanced weapons automatically signifies lesser intelligence. Wells calls once more for pity, imploring readers to feel sympathy for those who have suffered the same fate, not comparing humans to insects this time, but to a rabbit whose soft fur and adorable features will assuredly tweak the heartstrings of many readers. Furthermore, his use of anaphora ("I felt … I felt") builds momentum that contributes to an emotional arc in his speech. But as before, Wells's carefully crafted sympathy betrays a lack of respect for indigenous populations under imperial rule. The "poor brutes" he describes may refer both to unintelligent animals and to colonized populations—though it would appear that Wells regards those two groups as one. Notably, his choice of words ("poor brutes") is echoed in a subsequent text notorious both for its critique of colonialism and for its dehumanizing portrayal of Africans: "Exterminate all the brutes!" (83), writes a deranged Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Conrad's novel is another example of how anti-colonialist attitudes can still perpetuate colonial stereotypes. Conrad's narrator attempts to illicit pity by depicting the hardships undergone by native peoples living in an imperialist colony, but ultimately he portrays those people as uncultured and undignified. In both novels, the word "brutes" connotes something without sensitivity, something unrefined and animalistic; when Wells's narrator attributes this word to the colonized British subjects, he betrays a bias against non-white people that pervades his story.

The narrative style of *The War of the Worlds* further emphasizes this bias. The protagonist is a man of science and relates these events in retrospect. Such traits render him a

formal storyteller, distanced from the events by his objectivity and his time of reflection. His prose is measured and scholarly, seldom prone to exaggeration or emotional lyricism. Because of this seemingly objective style, *The War of the Worlds* reads sometimes like a historical textbook rather than science-fiction sensationalism, and while the realistic details in the story may help to draw readers' empathy, the coldness and distance of the narrator does just the opposite. The reader has little idea of what this man has left behind. Did he have a career in Woking, or any friends and family? He seems to experience minimal grief over the fact that he has needed to flee his home. And what of his wife? There is virtually no depiction of their relationship with one another until the second-to-last chapter of the book, when they reunite in a relieved, sparsely worded embrace. The narrator does not even record her name. But then, none of the primary characters are named. The wife, the artilleryman, the curate, the brother, and even the narrator himself go unidentified. This anonymity generalizes the characters and leaves them underdeveloped and without palpable desires, passions, or distinct personalities. In this way, the human characters resemble the Martians who have come to earth en masse, indistinguishable from one another inside their metallic tripods. Wells amalgamates thousands of individuals into one simplistic mass, thus suggesting that there are only two kinds of people concerned in the conquest of land: friend and foe, us and them. Just as Martians and humans have no hope of reconciliation, Wells suggests the British and their colonized subjects likewise must remain at odds, segregated by differences as insurmountable as if the British had been an alien, albeit a superior, species themselves.

Therefore, although H.G. Wells makes several provocative observations about the flaws of colonialism, such as the inhumane disregard for the lives of those under enforced British rule, and though he attempts to elicit sympathy for colonized peoples by likening their plight to that of the English during his fictional interplanetary war, Wells cannot escape the system he critiques, and in this way his novel mirrors Victorian biases against non-white people.

Throughout the narrative, Wells compares indigenous colonized populations to animals of lower intelligence, rendered helpless by superior military power and unevolved and uncivilized compared to their oppressors. That Wells attempts to make *The War of the Worlds* a social critique and yet is unable to effectively criticize his own society from his standpoint within it should resonate with modern readers. Ultimately, *The War of the Worlds* is a product of its time, a stepping stone to a new way of thinking about colonialism, yet not devoid of the harmful attitudes that first encouraged the British to impose their own culture on others, often with devastating results.

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Masculinity in Collapse: Shell Shock in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier*

Emma Stens

Abstract: The author compares Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier*'(1918) for their respective juxtapositions of shell shock, splintering families, and homoeroticism and argues that these juxtapositions are used by the writers not to condemn the characters themselves but rather to condemn the society that brought on this trauma and destruction, thereby forming a critique of pre- and post-WWI British attitudes toward masculinity and gendered expectations. Shell shock renders soldiers incapable of returning home and fulfilling their heteronormative duties, while patriarchal ideals prevent even the possibility of homosexuality, leaving the British public in a state of limbo.

While neither novel takes place on the battlefields or in the trenches of World War I, both Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier* (1918) allow the effects of war to invade the text and the stability of their respective characters' lives. Five years after the end of the war, *Mrs. Dalloway*'s Septimus Smith continues to struggle with suicidal thoughts and vivid, violent flashbacks, while *The Return of the Soldier*'s Chris Baldry is sent home during the war due to suffering from severe amnesia. Shell shock, the condition that dominates both characters' lives, was a diagnosis often characterized as weak and cowardly, and therefore feminine—Septimus, Chris, and any men suffering from shell shock were considered to have failed their own senses of masculinity. It is no coincidence, then, that both characters, having been deemed unable to fulfill

the traditionally masculine role demanded of them from society, return to broken homes: homes where, in the absence of proper displays of masculinity, the heterosexual union is destined to fail. Both Woolf and West juxtapose shell shock, incomplete family portraits, and homoeroticism to demonstrate the inherently flawed logic of a society that demands men go to war only to punish them for experiencing the natural consequences of witnessing such horror, and to form a critique of the heteronormative ideals that also tie themselves to the institution of war.

Suffering from shell shock was simply not compatible with early twentieth-century notions of masculinity in Great Britain. As Jessica Meyer writes in "Separating the Men from the Boys: Masculinity and Maturity in Understandings of Shell Shock in Britain" (2009), "in the case of the psychologically disabled … it was not disability that caused effeminacy, but feminine tendencies that led to disability" (4). Shell shock was a manifestation of all that was already wrong with the soldier in question—immaturity, physical weakness, homosexuality—being brought to the surface by war. In essence, it was these men's own fault for suffering from shell shock. And as Mark Humphries writes in "War's Long Shadow: Masculinity, Medicine, and the Gendered Politics of Trauma 1914–1939" (2010), "in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries patients who exhibited these conversion disorders were classified as hysterical. Hysteria … implies that the womb is the cause of the patient's symptoms and thus the condition is inherently feminized" (506). Soldiers coming home with shell shock are, in essence, being reprimanded for acting like women. Even though both Septimus of *Mrs. Dalloway* and Chris of *The Return of the Soldier* receive some sort of treatment for their conditions, the approach their doctors use is often a Freudian one, searching for some sort of cause that goes further back—frayed relationships with their respective wives, the loss of a child—rather than focusing on the war itself as a source of trauma. But despite their doctors' claims that they sought out latent desires and motivations in order to truly restore the patient in question, the desired results of the treatments Septimus

and Chris receive are largely surface level—get along better with your wife and be able to start a family, go back to the frontlines. Both of these expectations are traditionally masculine ones that, ironically, do little to solve the deeper issues. Both Chris's and Septimus's narratives demonstrate how "doctors constructed trauma as an individual failure to meet masculine ideals" (Humphries 508) while neglecting to consider how war, a manifestation of that masculine ideal, might contribute to this trauma in the first place. In this way, both Woolf and West come across as skeptical and critical regarding the methods Freudian psychologists were using at the time.

In Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Septimus embodies the figure of the shell-shocked soldier, plagued by fears of effeminacy and homoeroticism. The most profound connections that Septimus appears to make in his lifetime are inappropriate or socially discouraged. Before heading off to war, he takes literature classes that "made him fall in love with Miss Isobel Pole" (Woolf 113) and the literature she teaches. His love for Miss Pole is not a productive one: while he may have "thought her beautiful, believed her impeccably wise; dreamed of her, wrote poems to her" (113), his love is not reciprocated and has no chance of ending in marriage and children. The poetry that he falls in love with—Keats, Shakespeare—distracts him from more masculine pursuits, to the point where Mr. Brewer, out of what he claims to be genuine concern for Septimus's health, "advised football" (114) to toughen him up. But the text quickly reveals Mr. Brewer's true intentions when Septimus goes to war and "develop[s] manliness," which was the true "change which Mr. Brewer desired" (114). In the trenches, Septimus forms a new, doomed relationship—that with his senior officer, Evans. Woolf uses euphemistic language to allude to their homoerotic bond, writing that the two "had to be together, share with each other" (115). The relationship eclipses any need for heterosexual companionship, and Evans is "undemonstrative in the company of women" (115). When Septimus hears the news of Evans's death he is stoic and appears "very reasonable" (115) in his response: he represses any

sort of emotionally charged, hysterical, "feminine" reaction for the sake of appearing more masculine. The war has suitably "toughened him up," but at the cost of his being able to properly process his emotions, demonstrated by his continued visions of Evans years after his death. These flashbacks and hallucinations, which constantly remind him of his own sexual and gender transgressions, will ultimately cost Septimus his livelihood.

Septimus's marriage to Rezia becomes both the balm with which he attempts to soothe his wounds and a further source of his distress. He proposes to Rezia shortly after the war's end—and Evans's death—"one evening when the panic was on him" (115) and anxieties over returning to England were beginning to set in. But the war has simply rendered Septimus incapable of returning to normal life in his current state, and the marriage, under the invasive presence of mental illness, is destined to fail. Meyer writes that "the inverse of the proper male soldier was defined … as the child as well as the woman, and that the failures of shell-shocked men were as much those of immaturity as of effeminacy" (4). Not only is Septimus, as a sufferer of shell shock, not enough of a man to be a husband, but he is also not even an adult. Rezia, who "had a right to his arm" (Woolf 57), must escort her husband throughout town, make sure he crosses the street safely, and try to avoid judgement from strangers when he regularly announces, "I will kill myself" (56) in public, much like a mother trying to hush up a melodramatic, crying child. Five years into their marriage they still have no children to show for it, making it easy to infer that theirs is a loveless marriage, perhaps by virtue of Septimus's perceived effeminacy on account of his shell shock. Septimus, the previously rosy-cheeked, idealistic poet, returns to Shakespeare with a new perspective: now he is compelled with how, as he perceives, "love between a man and a woman was repulsive to Shakespeare" (117) and how "Shakespeare loathed humanity" (116) in all its heteronormative forms—"the putting on of clothes, the getting of children … the business of copulation" (116–17). Septimus and Rezia's relationship is not like that of a married couple,

and they have left no "proof" (children) that would solidify their union; even the symbolic representation of their relationship, their wedding rings, is no longer sufficient. Rezia looks down at her hands and realizes "her wedding ring slipped—she had grown so thin" (63). She will later remove the ring, and Septimus will realize "with agony, with relief" that "their marriage was over" (98). Agony that the facade, all he has, is fading; relief that he could be free from the social confines that continue to be a detriment to his mental health.

His own marriage a failure and source of stress, Septimus finds himself unable to trust the doctors and therapists who claim to help him, due to their own respective marital statuses. Dr. Holmes is, according to Rezia's assessment, "such a kind man" (119) who had "four little children" (120) and a wife of his own and only wants to help Septimus to see him achieve the same lifestyle. "Didn't one owe perhaps a duty to one's wife?" (119), Dr. Holmes asks Septimus, framing Septimus's recovery as a matter of simply returning to normal, heterosexual society. Septimus sees through it. He views Dr. Holmes as "the repulsive brute, with the blood-red nostrils" (119) from whom he must escape if he is to survive at all. Sir William Bradshaw, too, a man with "a natural respect for breeding and clothing" (123) who keeps a "photograph of his wife in Court dress" (124) in his office, assures himself that Septimus, when he was well, "was the last man in the world to frighten his wife" (124); again, Woolf characterizes the doctors and professionals as men who simply want Septimus to achieve the same socially acceptable life that they have. The two men blend together in Septimus's mind—"Holmes and Bradshaw are on you" (124), he tells himself, imagining the destruction they will bring to him. The mental health profession is directly associated with reinstating social norms and expectations, and therefore a deep distrust of the profession permeates its appearances in the novel.

Septimus frequently characterizes the notions of heterosexual marriage and the expectation of children from these unions as an aspect of human nature as opposed to

something that is socially constructed, a misconception that ultimately leads to his death. When Septimus thinks of Holmes and Bradshaw, he sees them in his mind as "they scour the desert. They fly screaming into the wilderness" and declares, "human nature is remorseless" (124). In contrast to the civilized manners Holmes and Bradshaw wish to return Septimus to, Septimus views their behaviours and ideals as reckless, wild, and utterly remorseless and unsympathetic—and natural, but in a much more destructive manner than Holmes or Bradshaw would characterize their own endorsement of the "natural" order of things. Septimus evokes images of the barren "desert" in response to Holmes's and Bradshaw's encouragement for Septimus and Rezia to start a family, revealing just how hopeless he considers the usually fruitful endeavour. Septimus loves Shakespeare not because of the playwright's distaste for society but for his distaste for "humanity" (116), which Septimus views as synonymous with sex and procreation, neither of which he has any desire to engage in with his wife. And when interrogated by Bradshaw about his time during the war, Septimus thinks that "he had committed an appalling crime and had been condemned to death by human nature" (122), the specifics of which are never revealed. Considering what he tends to associate human nature with, could Septimus's crime then be his relationship with Evans? His lack of relationship with his wife? Septimus's conflation of social constructs and human nature further emphasizes how deeply embedded these ideals have become and how truly difficult they are to unlearn. Indeed, the only escape Septimus can seem to find is ultimately suicide.

As in the case of Septimus, the doctor attending to Chris in *The Return of the Soldier* searches for some deeper, latent cause behind his amnesia and shell shock rather than viewing the war as a trauma-inducing experience in itself. This is not to say that Chris does not have any repressed subconscious desires—his dislike of his wife most certainly rises to the surface with his amnesia—but the war itself is curiously never problematized by the characters in the novel. In fact, Chris's returning to the war is the end goal

of his treatment. Jenny declares, in the novel's conclusion, that the now-cured Chris looks "every inch a soldier" (West 82), ready to return to the front lines, the novel's title being a reference not only to Chris's return home at the beginning of the novel but also to his re-establishment as a proper solder in the novel's conclusion. Similar to how Septimus's doctors are only ever focused on repairing his relationship with his wife, which itself seems to be the source of much of Septimus's stress, Dr. Gilbert Anderson and Chris's family want Chris to get better so that he can return to the war that caused his distress in the first place. Whereas Woolf's distrust of the mental health profession is largely vocalized through Septimus, one of her characters, West must employ irony to express her own distrust in contrast to her characters' ringing endorsements of Dr. Anderson's psychoanalytic techniques. How productive is a treatment of shell shock if it serves only to send soldiers back to those traumatic environments in the first place?

Chris's fixation on his past relationship with Margaret does not recall the homoerotic, but it does represent a freer life than Chris's upper class would have dictated him. The Monkey Island Inn of his adolescence is remote, surrounded by "dark-green, glassy waters" and a "bright lawn set with many walnut-trees and a few great chestnuts," and is "well lighted" like a painting (31): not realistic but idealistic. His love for Margaret is "changeless" (37), timeless, not dictated or bound by others' expectations. Monkey Island provides a retreat from the institutions—class, marriage—to which Chris must inevitably return. When the fantasy is shattered by Chris's becoming jealous of Margaret's interactions with another man, she realizes that "he wasn't trusting me as he would trust a girl of his own class" (46), demonstrating just how embedded Chris's notions of class and difference are, despite his love for Margaret. And yet, when he returns to his own, more "trustworthy" class to marry, he is deeply unhappy in his marriage, which becomes evident when he simply wipes out all his memories of Kitty and of the past fifteen years in his traumatized state. Like Septimus believing that all expectations placed upon him are human nature,

Chris has arrived at an impasse. No matter which way he turns, what timeline he chooses to believe, something is lacking, and he will be unhappy.

Unlike in *Mrs. Dalloway*, wherein the homoeroticism is an element of the past that unwillingly crops up in Septimus's subconscious, *The Return of the Soldier* situates its homoeroticism firmly within the time span of the text—and unlike in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the pivotal relationship in question occurs between two women. Jenny, as the spinster cousin, is entirely dependent on Chris for her social status, financial stability, and household. As she watches the reunion between Margaret and Chris unfold, she becomes "physically so jealous of Margaret that it was making me ill" (51) as she realizes the potential consequences of having Chris leave the household. The more affection Margaret receives from Chris, the more jealous Jenny grows; likewise, as soon as Kitty loses her husband, Jenny's resentment toward her rears its ugly head. Jenny realizes that she "hated [Kitty] as the rich hate the poor as insect things that will struggle out of the crannies which are their decent home and introduce ugliness to the light of day" (13). This hatred grows, and Jenny searches for behaviour of Kitty's that she says "confirmed my deep, old suspicion that she hated me" (72). Without Chris, Jenny has become almost perversely traumatized in the absence of the proper family unit. Furious with Kitty and jealous of the affection Margaret is hoarding, Jenny feels as though she must turn to Margaret for the attention she seeks. An image of Chris growing old and becoming "not quite a man" (80) terrifies Jenny; like with Septimus, Chris's trauma has emasculated him and made him incapable of fulfilling his patriarchal duties. This fear hovering uneasily in her mind, Jenny turns to toward Margaret and the two "kissed not as women, but as lovers do; I think we each embraced that part of Chris the other had absorbed by her lover" (80). After Jenny and Margaret kiss, Margaret disappears, virtually unexplained, from the text, and Jenny turns her attention to Chris, who is "coming back" (82) to his restored state. Do Jenny—one of the characters who remembers what Chris cannot—and Margaret—the

only one who remembers Chris as he was before—carry a piece of Chris within themselves? Is this kiss an attempt on both parts to retrieve what they believe has been lost forever? Or is it, like Chris reverting to his love of Margaret, an expression of Jenny's latent desire for Margaret, for other women, which had previously been redirected onto Chris? Among the three women in his life, Chris cannot reciprocate any one of their feelings—Margaret, the one he loves, is married; Kitty, his wife, is a stranger to him; and Jenny was always destined to be the spinster cousin. Chris's amnesia shatters the normalcy of the lives of all three women, and Jenny and Margaret's kiss is a manifestation of this collapse. West leaves her syntax purposely ambiguous as to what the motivations behind the kiss would be, but regardless, Chris's mental absence serves as the missing piece that causes the family structure to collapse.

By arguing for the respective novels' links between homoeroticism and social condemnation, I do not mean to say that either novel condemns these behaviours in themselves; but with both novels taking place in worlds where social acceptance and conformation eclipses all other desires, making such a link proves effective for their respective criticisms of Freudian psychology and gendered expectations. Both West and Woolf are highly skeptical of a system that seems set on ruining a generation's chances of a happy family while simultaneously condemning any alternatives. *The Return of the Soldier*, set firmly within the war, casts a glance at the mounting crisis that doctors and society alike were unprepared to deal with. *Mrs. Dalloway*, with its characters having been granted five years of hindsight after the war's conclusion (and seven years for Woolf, who published the novel in 1925), reveals how the lingering effects of such ideologies continue to fail the men, the women, and the families affected by shell shock. In the respective novels' conclusions, Septimus is dead, and Chris is most likely being sent to his grave, leaving Rezia without any children and Kitty with no more children to bear after the death of their son: the war destroys both the man and the family in one fell swoop.

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A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Conversational Techniques in *The Great Gatsby*

Isabelle Carré-Hudson

Abstract: This paper reveals the mechanisms of characterization in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925) through a sociolinguistic analysis of conversational techniques in the novel's dialogue. I analyze characters' direct speech for linguistic hypercorrection, gendered speech patterns, and indications of power or powerlessness. In doing so, I aim to reveal the significance of Fitzgerald's relatively sparse dialogue in shaping our perceptions of the novel's characters.

Although dialogue in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925) seems to feature less prominently than Nick Carraway's descriptive narration, it is through characters' conversational techniques that Fitzgerald reveals some of the most important information in the novel. Specifically, Fitzgerald uses dialogue to define his characters in relation to their socioeconomic status, gender, and power or powerlessness. Gatsby's speech in the novel is over-formal to the point of absurdity, a habit that linguists call hypercorrection. Fitzgerald's dialogue also emphasizes gender differences among his characters through overtly gendered speech patterns. Lastly, through conversational techniques such as interruptions, Fitzgerald conveys the power relations and relative aggressiveness of his characters. Thus, through a sociolinguistic analysis of conversational techniques in the novel, we can more fully appreciate the significance of Fitzgerald's relatively sparse dialogue in shaping our perceptions of the novel's characters.

As early as the 1920s, researchers have considered how the ways in which people speak reveal important informa-

tion about the speaker. An early pioneer of this research was Otto Jespersen, who published *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin* in 1922. Although it is unlikely that Fitzgerald read this work, as it was known mostly in academic circles, Fitzgerald uses dialogue in *The Great Gatsby* to subtly reveal information about his characters in ways that correspond to linguists' understandings of conversational techniques. Indeed, Fitzgerald's work has long been appreciated by non-linguists for its brilliant use of language. For example, in his non-linguistic study *Nobody's Home: Speech, Self, and Place in American Fiction from Hawthorne to DeLillo* (1993), Arnold Weinstein states that a key aspect of Fitzgerald's writing in *The Great Gatsby* is "the pivotal role of language as instrument of assertion" (131). Nevertheless, sociolinguistic works published since the mid-twentieth century, such as Jack Chambers's *Sociolinguistic Theory* (1995), Robin Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place* (1973), Gerard Van Herk's *What is Sociolinguistics?* (2012), and Deborah Tannen's *Gender and Conversational Interaction* (1993), can be excellent resources for providing a vocabulary to discuss Fitzgerald's dialogue.

To begin, we can identify in Gatsby's dialogue a tendency toward what linguists call hypercorrection. Chambers explains that "the upwardly mobile are overzealous in their attempts at adopting a sociolect that is not native to them" (64). Similarly, the nouveau-riche Gatsby overdoes what he thinks are the linguistic requirements of upper-class people, using excessively formal language and adding the phrase "old sport" when addressing other men. According to Nick, this "elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd" (46). Moreover, Gatsby's hypercorrection unravels in moments of panic, such as when Nick and Gatsby discuss the state of Nick's house and whether everything is in perfect order for Daisy's visit, when she will meet Gatsby for the first time in years. Gatsby uses a short sentence without a subject ("Looks very good" [72]) and stutters, "the shape of—of tea" (72). He also exclaims, "'Of course, of course! They're fine!' and adds hollowly, '… old sport'" (72). The affectionate name that Gatsby uses to seem well-born falls by

the wayside in his moment of panic but is then added in an attempt to revert to his hypercorrect speech. Gatsby's composure is starting to unravel here, revealing that the manner in which he normally speaks is not as natural to him as he would like other people to believe.

Fitzgerald's dialogue also emphasizes gender differences through overtly gendered speech patterns. Since Jespersen published *Language* in 1922, with a chapter entitled "The Woman," extensive study has been conducted regarding the specifics of men's and women's speech habits. One of the most well-known works on the subject is Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place*, which posits that women's language is characterized by hedges, fillers, tag questions, rising intonation even in non-question sentences, "empty" adjectives, precise colour terms, intensifiers such as *so*, increased use of standard language forms, super-polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and avoidance of interruptions. Lakoff characterizes "empty" adjectives as those that are used when expressing emotions, which are certainly a feature of women's speech that Fitzgerald represents. Early in the novel, Daisy utters the phrase "How gorgeous!" (17) to express her happiness when Nick tells her how much people from back home miss her. Myrtle's downstairs neighbour Mrs. McKee, when expressing her fondness for Myrtle's dress, says, "I think it's adorable" (33). Even Myrtle herself, when admiring her new dog, says that it's "cute" (30). The women in the novel also make use of tag questions. Describing Nick, Daisy says, "You remind me of a—of a rose, an absolute rose. Doesn't he?" (21), and when talking to Tom she says, "It's romantic, isn't it, Tom?" (22). Jordan Baker also uses a tag question when she says, "She might have the decency not to telephone him at dinner time. Don't you think?" (21). The questions at the ends of these utterances do not really serve much function, as the speaker has already declared her opinion. According to Lakoff, women also use more intensifiers, words that modify adjectives and verbs. Daisy states that "Tom's getting very profound" (20) and, when talking about her own life, says that she's "had a very bad time" (22). The last major feature of women's speech that

Fitzgerald represents is the use of fillers. For example, when Myrtle discusses whom she wants to invite to her party, she says that she wants to invite the McKees, "and, of course, I got to call up my sister, too" (31), interjecting an irrelevant phrase in the middle of her statement.

Fizgerald's dialogue also anticipates the work of linguist Deborah Tannen. As Van Herk explains, "Tannen claims that women are more likely to use language to build and maintain relationships (a rapport style), while men are more likely to use language to communicate factual information (a report style)" (89). In *The Great Gatsby*, the differences between rapport style and report style are very evident. From the above examples of women's speech, we can see that the women in Fitzgerald's novel tend to express emotive information, as opposed to facts. By contrast, the men in the novel focus a great deal on expressing facts in a report style of speaking. For example, when Tom is talking about his house, he says that he's "got a nice place here" (15), stating it as a fact. Discussing a book that he read, Tom states that "it's all scientific stuff" (20). When asked about his horseback-ride Tom tells Gatsby that there are "very good roads around here" (85). Later in the same conversation, Gatsby tells Tom that they met "two weeks ago" (85), giving Tom an exact date. Lastly, Tom replies to this with, "that's right. You were with Nick here" (85). All these utterances convey facts known to the speaker, not emotional states. The men are more concerned with saying things as they are, as opposed to the women in the book, who speak to express their feelings and strengthen their relationships—just as Tannen finds men and women do in real life.

Finally, linguistic theories of gendered speech patterns recall Fitzgerald's use of interruptions and other indications of power. In "Women, Men, and Interruptions: A Critical Review," which appears in Tannen's *Gender and Conversational Interaction* (1993), Deborah James and Sandra Clarke write that "females may use interruptions of the cooperative and rapport-building type to a greater extent than males do" (268). This means that when women talk to each other, interruptions do not necessarily mean they are being rude;

rather, they use interruptions to build solidarity among one another. Fitzgerald represents this conversational technique early on in his novel to show the friendship between Daisy and Jordan: Daisy, discussing her butler polishing silverware, says that "He had to polish it from morning till night, until finally it began to affect his nose—" (20); Jordan chimes in that "Things went from bad to worse" (21); and Daisy finishes her story with, "Yes. Things went from bad to worse, until finally he had to give up his position" (21). The interruption in this story is not negative, and Daisy does not seem offended by Jordan helping her tell the story simultaneously.

Conversely, Fitzgerald uses interruption among the men in the novel to indicate aggressiveness, competition, and power. While at Myrtle and Tom's apartment, Mr. and Mrs. McKee have a conversation that starts with Mrs. McKee saying, "I wouldn't think of changing the light…. I think it's—" (33), and her husband interrupts with a "*Sh!*" (33) that goes unquestioned, indicating Mr. McKee's power over his wife. Several times in the novel, Tom and Gatsby come head to head, not just for Daisy's affections, but to try to hold power over one another. In an interaction between the two men, Gatsby starts to say to Tom, "I suppose the automobiles—" (85) and is cut off by Tom with an abrupt "Yeah" (85). In this dialogue, Tom is asserting his dominance over Gatsby by interrupting him, a sharp contrast to the way that Daisy and Jordan used interruptions in their conversation. In a later conversation with Daisy, Tom also interrupts her when she is saying to Gatsby, "you know the advertisement of the man—" (97) with a quick "All right" (97). Tom is constantly using interruptions as a form of power and control, and in the conversational examples shown above, his utterances are always very short and abrupt. He also tends to shout in order to get his way and make sure he is followed, such as when he orders everyone to get on to town with a hostile "Come on!… What's the matter anyhow?" (98). Through Tom's speech patterns, Fitzgerald reveals Tom's aggressiveness and that Tom is constantly trying to assert dominance over others.

I will conclude by analyzing how Fitzgerald uses the direct speech of Daisy and Myrtle to contrast the two women in relation to their socioeconomic status, femininity, and power. Myrtle reveals through her incorrect verb usage that she is of a lower socioeconomic background than Daisy, saying, "I don't suppose you got that kind" (30) when asking a salesman about dogs, and "I got to call up my sister" (31). As we can see, Myrtle also has a much more imperative—and therefore more masculine—way of speaking, saying what she means directly and assertively. Finally, as we see in the paragraph above, Daisy is passive, and Tom's interruptions show the power that he has in their conversations. Myrtle, however, despite being a less cultured and a simpler person, is not overrun by Tom in conversation. Thus, in the contrasting figures of Daisy and Myrtle, Fitzgerald holds in tension the conversational techniques that define all the major characters in his novel. As I have shown, works such as Jack Chambers's *Sociolinguistic Theory*, Robin Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place*, Gerard Van Herk's *What is Sociolinguistics?*, and Deborah Tannen's *Gender and Conversational Interaction* can provide readers of *The Great Gatsby* with a sociolinguistic vocabulary to identify these conversational techniques, so that we can more fully appreciate how Fitzgerald's dialogue shapes our perceptions of his characters.

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Subversions of the Thermopylae Myth in Modern Literature

Kelsey Kilbey

Abstract: This essay examines allusions to the Battle of Thermopylae in three literary contexts: first, in several works of postwar German literature; second, in "After Thermopylae" (pub. 2004) by South African poet Douglas Livingstone; and third, in Kieron Gillen, Ryan Kelly, and Jordie Bellaire's modern graphic novel *Three* (2014). Although quite different from one another, each of these works deploys the "myth" of Thermopylae—that is, the longstanding representation of the Battle of Thermopylae as a heroic defence of the civilized West against the barbaric East—subversively, thereby challenging the xenophobia inherent to this myth and also pervasive in each writer's immediate sociopolitical context.

Since the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 BCE, the last stand of Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans against the invading Persian forces has served as an exemplification of heroism, courage, and noble self-sacrifice; of the West versus the East; of the defence of culture and civilization against barbaric, foreign tyranny. Modern literature and popular culture frequently reinforce this representation of Thermopylae: novels such as Steven Pressfield's *Gates of Fire* (1998) and films such as *The 300 Spartans* (1962) echo Herodotus's ancient praise of the "valiant" and "worthy" Spartans who died defending Greece (7.224). Often, however, the Thermopylae myth is distorted by what François Ollier terms "*le mirage spartiate*," an interpretation of Spartan society that emphasizes "discipline, orderliness, social hierarchy, and subordination of the individual endeavour to the overriding good of the state" (qtd. in Cartledge, "What Have the Spartans" 170). Historically, this version of Thermopylae has been used to foster nationalism and xenophobia in

politically conservative nations and even fascist regimes: for instance, Nazi propaganda deployed *le mirage spartiate* to structure German identity and society, while Frank Miller retroactively linked his graphic novel *300* (1998) to the American War on Terror.

In this paper, I will examine how and why writers subvert the traditional Thermopylae myth, considering works of post–World War II German literature such as Theodor Plievier's *Stalingrad* (1948) and Heinrich Böll's "Stranger, Bear Word to the Spartans We…" (1950); Douglas Livingstone's poem "After Thermopylae" (pub. 2004); and Kieron Gillen, Ryan Kelly, and Jordie Bellaire's graphic novel *Three* (2014). Although these works span diverse time periods and cultural contexts, I will argue that they share a fundamental ethical ideology, which their writers produce by inverting, undermining, or otherwise challenging the values conventionally celebrated by proponents of *le mirage spartiate*. If the Battle of Thermopylae has traditionally represented the heroic last stand of a civilized West against a barbaric East, then the deliberate subversion of this idea functions as a condemnation of racialized violence, oppressive political regimes, and the glorification of self-sacrifice in each of these works of literature.

Subversions of Thermopylae arose in postwar German literature as a result of the battle's prominence in Nazi culture and propaganda. The leaders of the Nazi regime, as Roderick H. Watt observes, "regularly projected themselves as the legitimate heirs to the traditions and values of Graeco-Roman Western civilization and culture," claiming Sparta in particular as both a practical and an ideological model for Nazi Germany (871). Helen Roche notes that this "elective affinity with the Spartans" extended most specifically to "those who had fought and died at Thermopylae," whose courageous self-sacrifice was a recurring theme in the curriculum of the National Political Institutes of Education, or "Napolas" (24). These elite boarding schools, established by the Nazis in 1933, were modelled upon the Spartan education and training system (the *agoge*) and indoctrinated German boys aged eleven to eighteen with the ideology of

the Nazi Party.

The myth of Thermopylae became especially prominent in Nazi propaganda, however, after the defeat of the German Sixth Army at the Battle of Stalingrad in 1943. This event marked a turning point in the war and, consequently, lent "a new and desperate urgency" to the notional connection between Germany and Sparta (Watt 872). On 30 January 1943, two days before the surrender of Stalingrad, Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring delivered a speech in which he described Stalingrad as Germany's Thermopylae, thereby representing the Germans' catastrophic defeat as a strategic sacrifice that would uphold "the last line of defence protecting Western Europe from the Russian barbarian hordes from the East" (Watt 872). Watt includes an excerpt of the original speech in his article: "*Wanderer, kommst du nach Sparta, so berichte, du habest uns hier liegen sehen, wie das Gesetz es befahl. Und es wird noch einmal in der Geschichte unserer Tage heißen: Kommst du nach Deutschland, so berichte, du habest uns in Stalingrad kämpfen sehen, wie das Gesetz, das Gesetz für die Sicherheit unseres Volkes es befohlen hat*" (qtd. in Watt 874). An English translation of the speech is quoted from Plievier's *Stalingrad* below. Göring also quoted an epitaph composed by the Greek poet Simonides and inscribed upon a memorial at Thermopylae: the epitaph reads, "Stranger, bear this message to the Spartans, that we lie here obedient to their laws" (qtd. in Paton 139) and became, in Nazi Germany, an evocation of heroic sacrifice and deference to the state. From the defeat at Stalingrad until the war's end, Nazi propaganda cultivated this glorification of self-sacrifice and dehumanization of the enemy through Thermopylae: one Napola student recalls in Roche's *Sparta's German Children*, "the longer the war went on, the more often the Battle of Thermopylae was presented as an act of heroic self-sacrifice" (qtd. in Roche 219). Fittingly, then, in postwar German literature, references to Thermopylae—and particularly to the Simonides epitaph that Göring cites—are often subversive, expressing disillusionment with the ideology of Nazi Germany, exposing the hollow rhetoric and exploitative nature of Nazi propaganda,

criticizing the education system of the German Napolas, and satirizing the hypocrisy of the Nazi Party leaders.

Plievier's novel *Stalingrad* accomplishes such subversions in its use of the Thermopylae myth. In one passage, the narrator describes a "village of the wounded" in the basement of a theatre, which serves as a hospital for the German soldiers trapped in Stalingrad (294). The scene is one of weariness, frustration, and despair: soldiers are wounded and ill, rations have stopped arriving, and the doctor (through whom the passage is focalized) realizes that he can no longer save lives, only "[prolong] the process of dying" (294). Into this dismal scene, the radio broadcasts Göring's speech:

> *My soldiers, thousands of years have passed, and thousands of years ago in a tiny pass in Greece stood a tremendously brave and bold man with three hundred soldiers, Leonidas with his three hundred Spartans … and now only the inscription stands: Wanderer, if you should come to Sparta, go tell the Spartans you found us lying here as the law bade us…. Some day men will read: If you come to Germany, go tell the Germans you saw us lying in Stalingrad, as the law bade us….* (Plievier 298; italics in original)

Watt records that, historically, "this speech represented the final confirmation of what [the German soldiers at Stalingrad] had long felt, namely, that they had been abandoned, betrayed, and finally sacrificed by their leaders" (874), and Plievier's novel captures these sentiments in the soldiers' bitter reactions to the broadcast: "So we're written off already!" proclaims one man (298). Another soldier's cry of "Help!" soon becomes "the appeal of the entire cellar" as they realize that "all of Stalingrad [has] been given up for lost" (298, 299). However, their outrage and despair is prompted not only by this confirmation of their abandonment but also by the understanding that they are being "exploited in the very moment of their betrayal," their deaths propagandized by Göring instead of mourned (Watt 875). Plievier's novel also highlights a crucial difference between Stalingrad and Thermopylae: while Leonidas died with his

troops, Hitler—"that fake fat Leonidas in Berlin" (Plievier 308)—sacrifices his soldiers to preserve himself. By thus contrasting Göring's mythologized vision of Stalingrad with the reality of the soldiers' experience, Plievier undermines the glorification of self-sacrifice promoted by Nazi propaganda and exhibits the hypocrisy of the party's so-called leaders.

Similarly, Böll's short story "Stranger, Bear Word to the Spartans We…" uses Simonides's epitaph in order to subvert the conventional Thermopylae myth. The narrator, a teenage German soldier, has been wounded in combat and brought to a school now serving as a makeshift hospital. Although he recognizes many objects as the stretcher-bearers transport him through the hallway—including Anselm Feuerbach's *Medea* (1870); a photograph of the Hellenistic sculpture *Boy with a Thorn*; "a beautiful plaster reproduction of the Parthenon frieze" (Böll 31); and busts of Julius Caesar, Cicero, and Marcus Aurelius—the young soldier cannot definitively identify the school as his own because he knows that all the Napolas contain classical artwork, an observation that illustrates the Nazi fixation on Greco-Roman antiquity. What finally convinces him that he has indeed returned to his old school is a quotation written on the blackboard of the old art room (now an operating room) in his own handwriting: "Stranger, bear word to the Spartans we…" (38); he recalls how he had to write out the epitaph seven times in various calligraphy styles, and how his teacher "had bawled [him] out for not spacing properly," resulting in the "slightly truncated" quotation (38). As he makes this discovery, a doctor removes his bandages and the young soldier realizes that he has lost both his arms and his right leg, whereupon the narrative concludes with the soldier's feeble request for milk, a symbol of his childhood.

The subversiveness of Böll's story hinges upon the Simonides epitaph in several crucial ways. First, its use as a calligraphic exercise "trivialize[s]" the values commemorated at Thermopylae "and simultaneously abuse[s] them as propaganda" (Watt 878). The list of calligraphy styles that the soldier expounds, "Antique, Gothic, Cursive, Roman,

Italic, Script, and Round" (Böll 38), also demonstrates how the repetitive nature of Nazi rhetoric reduces Simonides's powerful epitaph to a meaningless cliché. Second, by situating the epitaph in an educational context, Böll criticizes the Nazi Party for using the classics "to inculcate upon their youth a mindless acceptance of military virtue" (Ziolkowski 551). The young soldier's schooling evidently instilled in him the notion of heroic self-sacrifice through the myth of Thermopylae; however, having experienced the reality of war, he expresses his disillusionment with this ideal:

> I thought of how many names there would be on the war memorial when they reconsecrated it and put an even bigger gilded Iron Cross on the top and an even bigger stone laurel wreath, and suddenly I realized that if I really was in my old school, my name would be on it too, engraved in stone, and in the school yearbook my name would be followed by "Went to the front straight from school and fell for…"
>
> But I didn't know what for. (35)

When he realizes the extent of his injuries, the soldier "trie[s] to look at the blackboard again," searching desperately for the sense of honour and purpose that he once recognized in Simonides's epitaph (39). However, the words are "obscure[d]" from his view, and the soldier fails to find any comfort or glory in his sacrifice (39). This passage therefore demonstrates how the values propagated by the Nazi education system are distorted, exploitative, and ultimately meaningless. Finally, as Watt observes, the "truncated" epitaph serves as "a grim symbol" of the young soldier's "appalling mutilation" (878), which Russell A. Berman further interprets as an image of the supposedly civilized West "discovering its own barbaric character" (28). Notably, the German text severs Simonides's inscription more abruptly than the English translation, ending mid-word ("*Wanderer, kommst du nach Spa…*") rather than mid-phrase ("Stranger, Bear Word to the Spartans We…"), and thereby underscores even more powerfully the significance of its fragmentation. In these ways, Böll deploys the myth of Thermopylae in or-

der to underscore the emptiness of propagandized rhetoric, to express disillusionment with Nazi ideology, and to condemn the education system for representing mindless self-sacrifice as heroism.

This last idea emerges as well in Wolfgang Borchert's "Lesebuchgeschichten" (1949) and Günter Grass's *Cat and Mouse* (1961), both of which depict a German educator citing Simonides's epitaph "unthinkingly and uncritically" (Ziolkowski 551). In Borchert's short story, a teacher spews a string of "prevalent clichés and formulaic catchphrases" of the Nazi regime, including the phrase "*Sparta erinnert*," or *Sparta remembers* (Watt 878). Similarly, Grass's novel features a nationalistic speech by a school headmaster that references Simonides's epitaph:

> Thosewhocomeafterus—Andinthishour—whenthetravelerreturns—butthistimethehomeland—andletusnever—pureofheart—asIsaidbefore—pureofheart—andifanyonedisagreeslet—andinthishour—keepclean—toconcludewiththewordsofSchiller—ifyourlifeyoudonotstake—thelaurelneverwillyoutake—Andnowbacktowork! (69)

As Watt observes, "the typological presentation of the headmaster's words is obviously designed to emphasize that he is simply stringing together and parroting the currently circulating propaganda clichés" (880); "whenthetravelerreturns" is only one in a series of near-meaningless phrases. Grass's and Borchert's allusions to Simonides's epitaph thus demonstrate how, under Nazi leadership, German schools become centres of indoctrination wherein both students and teachers learn to echo the hollow and predictable rhetoric of Nazi propaganda. By satirizing this process, however, Grass and Borchert each subvert the distorted ideology to which the myth of Thermopylae is here applied, and their works thus contribute to the broader "leitmotif" of subversion (Watt 877) that develops in postwar German literature.

Interestingly, this leitmotif achieves a similar effect in other cultural and literary contexts: for instance, Livingstone's poem "After Thermopylae" situates the myth of Thermopylae in twentieth-century South Africa, subverting

its traditional significance in order, perhaps, to criticize the institution of apartheid. Although Livingstone's lyrical poetry can appear somewhat "detache[d] from South African human affairs" (Heywood 156) when compared to the more explicitly political work of his contemporaries (such as Dennis Brutus, James Matthews, and Arthur Nortje), I would argue that "After Thermopylae" produces a vision of peace and reconciliation that functions as an anti-apartheid statement. Indeed, Livingstone's poem exhibits the values conventionally associated with Thermopylae: the speaker conveys the courage and heroic self-sacrifice of the three hundred Spartans by describing their "stone- / set expressions of concentration" as the Persians, "an ocean of helmeted beards," approach (lines 11–12, 18). The poem also displays the antitheses of these ideals: cowardice and self-preservation are embodied by the sergeant who flees the battle like "a crab / with bloodied nails clawing backwards" (14–15). However, Livingstone neither glorifies the speaker of the poem for fighting nor castigates the sergeant for deserting (although the speaker himself expresses a sense of survivor's guilt by identifying as "a not-dead man / under dead men," listing his primary wound as his "manhood," and referring to the "complicity of survival" [20–21, 23, 30]). Rather, Livingstone dismantles the categories of hero and coward generated by the Thermopylae myth: when the two veterans meet by chance years after the battle, they reunite over a drink, both "having forgotten" until then the incident at Thermopylae, and both "having also forsaken war" (19, 34, 42). By thus undermining the significance of the battle and, indeed, the entire ideology of the Thermopylae myth, Livingstone instead promotes an ethic of reconciliation, compassion, and pacifism.

Kathleen M. Coleman suggests that, because Livingstone deeply admired the Alexandrian poet Constantine P. Cavafy, Cavafy's "Thermopylae" (1901; 1903; appendix A) may represent "a powerful intertext for Livingstone's poem" (433), an observation that enhances Livingstone's subversive use of the Thermopylae myth. Cavafy's poem transforms the Battle of Thermopylae into a philosophical allegory that il-

lustrates a good and meaningful way of living. Parodying Simonides, his poem opens with a tribute to "all of those who in their lives / have settled on, and guard a Thermopylae," meaning a set of ethics or a guiding principle (lines 1–2). Cavafy then describes the qualities of such heroes: justice, compassion, generosity, and an adherence to truth (4–6, 9). The poem concludes with the suggestion that "more honour still is due" to those who live an ethical life even though "they foresee … / that Ephialtes will make his appearance in the end" (11, 12–13). As Paul Cartledge notes, *ephialtis* "is the modern Greek word for 'nightmare,'" and so the historical betrayer of the Spartans here becomes an allegorical force of immorality and misfortune ("Spartan Traditions" 47). Coleman argues that the title of Livingstone's poem, "while ostensibly chronological, may also convey a subtle tribute to Cavafy" (433), and indeed, "After Thermopylae" adopts several of Cavafy's themes: just as Cavafy's allegorical heroes are "without any hatred for those who lie" (10), so too does Livingstone's poem refrain from condemning the deserting sergeant. Additionally, both poems deploy the Battle of Thermopylae to promote a philosophy of pacifism and forgiveness, exchanging honourable deeds of warfare for honourable moral principles. This idea in particular reinforces Livingstone's subversion of the conventional Thermopylae myth and lends "After Thermopylae" a kind of "universality" (Coleman 442), which, I would argue, allows the poem to transcend its classical subject matter and engage with discourses surrounding apartheid in South Africa.

Finally, using the most explicitly subversive framework of the texts I have examined, Gillen, Kelly, and Bellaire's graphic novel *Three* systematically dismantles the myth of Thermopylae that underlies Spartan identity and culture. Additionally, as its title indicates, *Three* was conceived of by Gillen as a response to Frank Miller's *300*, and as such the graphic novel also challenges the use of Thermopylae "to indulge *violent, amoral fantasy*," to foster nationalism, and to glorify (and even fetishize) self-sacrifice (Basu et al. 31; italics in original). The narrative immediately inverts the idea that Sparta embodies the "Western ideals of freedom" and

civilization by exposing its violence and brutality (Basu et al. 28): in the opening scene, members of the Krypteia, the Spartan secret police, attack a group of helots as they work in the field, a red-tinted panel emphasizing the frenzied and vicious nature of the slaughter (Gillen et al. 5). *Three* also redefines the notion of noble self-sacrifice so often distorted in representations of Thermopylae. Instead of defending the Spartan state, Terpander's death challenges its oppressive structure; he sacrifices himself to preserve the lives and freedom of his helot companions, an act that he conceives as "noble" and that ironically parallels the sacrifice of Leonidas and the three hundred (94.2). This ironic parallel also extends to Miller's *300*, as Terpander's threat to "any who would dine in Hades" echoes Leonidas's infamous declaration, "tonight we dine in Hell" (Gillen et al. 107.5; Miller and Varley 65.5).

This pattern of inversion culminates in Terpander's appropriation of the Thermopylae myth for the helot class. As he guards the canyon entrance, Terpander declares to the three hundred Spartans, "You dream of Thermopylae … but we helots are just as familiar with that day. Three hundred of you died there … but each had a helot beside them" (Gillen et al. 107.1–2). His speech (re)claims the glory of Thermopylae for the helot class and thereby destabilizes the Spartans' national identity, which hinges upon the Thermopylae ideal. Indeed, having thus dismantled the Thermopylae myth, *Three* illustrates Sparta's degradation in the "unSpartan" murder of Klaros and in the closing depiction of King Agesilaos, feeble and aged, proclaiming "Here lies Sparta" (117.2, 126). This conclusion likewise subverts the vision of Sparta presented in Miller's *300*, for while Miller's Spartans die but achieve what Cartledge terms a "morale [*sic*] victory" ("What Have the Spartans" 171), the Spartan force in *Three* conquers its enemy yet suffers a moral defeat. Thus, *Three's* systematic inversion of the Thermopylae myth criticizes nationalistic deployments of the battle from classical Sparta through to modern America, and instead uses Thermopylae to promote resistance to such oppressive and violent political structures.

Although the selection of works that I have considered here spans a broad range of cultural contexts, I have attempted to demonstrate how postwar German fiction writers, a twentieth-century South African poet, and modern graphic novel artists achieve the same fundamental ethical vision in their writing by subverting the values conventionally associated with the myth of Thermopylae. The many nationalistic and xenophobic interpretations of Thermopylae informed by *le mirage spartiate* are balanced by works such as these, which condemn racialized violence, the glorification of self-sacrifice, and authoritarian regimes through their subversive treatment of the Thermopylae myth.

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Appendix A: "Thermopylae," by Constantine P. Cavafy

Honor to all of those who in their lives
have settled on, and guard, a Thermopylae.
Never stirring from their obligations;
just and equitable in all of their affairs,
but full of pity, nonetheless, and of compassion;
generous whenever they're rich, and again
when they're poor, generous in small things,
and helping out, again, as much as they are able;
always speaking nothing but the truth,
yet without any hatred for those who lie.

And more honor still is due to them
when they foresee (and many do foresee)
that Ephialtes will make his appearance in the end,
and that the Medes will eventually break through.

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THE ALBATROSS°

From left to right: Chris Horne, Erin Donoghue Brooke, Robbie Steele, Emma Stens, Sonja Pinto, Michael Carelse, Ruby Hopkins, Rhett Palas, Isabelle Carré-Hudson, Makayla Scharf, Julie Schoch, and Patrick McCann. Photo by Errin Johnson-Watson.