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Haunted Armistice: The Great War, Modern British Literature, and the Mourning of Historical Trauma

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* * *

Unless otherwise stated, all bolded words indicate the special emphases of the author being cited.

Notes are provided at the end of each section or chapter.

Sources exclusively discussed in bibliographic or content notes are provided with full publication information in the Notes rather than the Works Cited.

ABSTRACT

The Armistice serves as the Great War's haunted point of closure in Britain. By combining literary and historical analysis with psychoanalysis and trauma theory, my inter-disciplinary approach to the Great War enables a multifaceted exploration of the dynamics of unresolved mourning after catastrophic events through both general and historically specific modes of investigation.

Chapter One addresses the unresolved crises of cultural and medical mediation occasioned by shell shock. I then suggest that contemporary scholarship which reformulates trauma and mourning after Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920) effectively recalls the specters of the century's first massive trauma. Chapter Two foregrounds the scholar's participation in the cultural transmission and reception of catastrophic events through practical and theoretical formulations of trauma and mourning. In Chapter Three, diverse conceptualizations of mourning and survivorship are juxtaposed in illustration of the challenges which trauma poses to any unitary formulation of its aftermath. And adapting scholarship on the Second World War, Chapter Four considers the ways that secondary narratives of the Great War continue to engage the dynamics of historical trauma through an abiding preoccupation with the frontsoldier.

In Part Two, by reclassifying the poems of Owen and

Sassoon as poetic testimonies, Chapter Five privileges their urgent transmission and reception of harrowing experience and unresolved mourning. Chapter Six then contrasts the oppositional engagement of Woolf's Jacob's Room (1922) with official modes of memory-work configured after the Armistice by national commemorative sites such as the Cenotaph and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. In Chapter Seven, the postwar suicide of a veteran in Woolf's Mrs Dalloway (1925) merely dramatizes that the specters of the War haunted the peace, a peace belied by numerous unresolved losses which contributed to the Second World War. Finally, Chapter Eight discusses Jones's In Parenthesis (1937) and its reconstruction of the haunted topography of the Somme, a landscape central to the War and its aftermath in Britain. In conclusion, I highlight the belated literature of historical trauma at the millennium as it continues to engage the cultural work of mourning initiated by the Great War generation.

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Preface

A Haunted Armistice

> It is rumoured that Austria has really surrendered. The new soldiers cheer when they hear these rumours, but the old ones bite their pipes, and go on cleaning their rifles, unbelieving.
>
> Wilfred Owen, Collected Letters (October, 1918)

> The rooks wheeled round, & were [sic] for a moment, the symbolic look of creatures performing some ceremony, partly of thanksgiving, partly of valediction over the grave. A very cloudy still day, the smoke toppling over heavily towards the east; & that too wearing for a moment a look of something floating, waving, drooping.
>
> Virginia Woolf, Diary (November 11, 1918)

> . . . the song was wordless; the singing will never be done.
>
> Siegfried Sassoon, "Everyone Sang" (1919)[1]

> . . . the war itself was a parenthesis--how glad we thought we were to step outside its brackets at the end of `18 . . . .
>
> David Jones, "Preface," In Parenthesis (1937)

You dead bury your dead.

. . . . . .

Let England close. Let the green sea-anemone close.

Ted Hughes, "Out: III Remembrance Day," Wodwo (1967)

The official ceasefire of the Great War was declared on November 11, 1918 at 11 o'clock. This solemn anniversary continues to be marked around the world. After four long years of industrial warfare in which close to one million soldiers from the British Empire lost their lives amidst the staggering losses of other Central and Allied nations (Keegan FWW 423), British culture continues to engage the impact of this historical trauma without achieving any decisive freedom from its profound and incalculable legacies. In this connection, for example, Owen, one of Britain's most celebrated combatant-poets, died just a week prior to the Armistice at the crossing of the River Sambre, but his body, which was "lifted off the ground by bullets, describing a slow arc in the air as it fell," has certainly "seemed to take for ever to fall," as Pat Barker's belated narration of his death in The Ghost Road (1995) effectively dramatizes (273). Although Owen, the old soldier, never lived long enough to believe in the reality of a German surrender, Woolf, a female civilian far from the Western Front, suggestively captured the combined challenges of mourning and separating from the dead posed by this incredible occasion.

By linking the transient movements of birds, smoke, and clouds in her diary, Woolf resorts to pathetic fallacy to sketch the day's elusive and uncertain significance. Suspended between the contrasting gestures of thanksgiving and valediction, Woolf's images are organized around "the grave," a rather chilling shorthand for the overwhelming and unaccountable deaths of the Great War. What ceremony could address such massive historical trauma? Interestingly enough, Woolf's divided emphases on rejoicing and farewell are also shared by Sassoon, one of Owen's fellow officers and detainees at Craiglockhart, a decorated veteran, and a tireless chronicler of the War's impact upon his own life.

Although by Sassoon's own admission in "A Footnote on the War," his "notebook seldom laughed" (66), he commemorates the Armistice with a rare poem which imagines the unending collective mood of celebration experienced by survivors facing their long-anticipated emancipation from horror, duress, and the dread of death. But even as he writes that "the singing will never be done," in a general poetic rebuke dated only one month earlier, a rebuke which seems to be directed at himself as well as his readers, he exclaims: "**Have you forgotten yet? . . ./ Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you'll never forget**" ("Aftermath" 10-11). While the celebration and thanksgiving of both civilians and veterans is an important aspect of any consideration of Armistice Day, 1918, ultimately Sassoon's emphasis on the obligation of survivors

and successive generations to undertake a relentless "commemorative vigilance" in the name of the fallen became the ostensible basis for Remembrance Day rituals, rituals which soon succeeded Woolf's private impromptu sketch of a tentative and unofficial ceremony performed by the wheeling of rooks (Nora 289).

But neither the Armistice nor the institutionalized recognition of its subsequent anniversaries imposed closure on the War. Even now, the yearly renewal of ritual in November completes a circular, if increasingly belated, trajectory of memory in relation to the event. Hence, many decades after the declaration of the ceasefire, Hughes implores, "Let England close. Let the green sea-anemone close." Simultaneously repudiating and underscoring the "commemorative vigilance" advocated by Sassoon, and even echoing some of Woolf's concerns, Hughes bids farewell to the Great War through its primary symbol, "the poppy," proclaiming that the blood-red flower serves as "the mouth/of the grave" (III 2-3). In this poem, Hughes seeks to exorcise the ghosts of the Great War which haunt both himself and his nation, ghosts which he struggles to name, to conjure and to dispel. Although Jones imagines the War as a critical temporal and experiential parenthesis, then, as I argue in the chapters to follow, the cultural reconstruction which succeeded the Great War in Britain only makes sense as an evolving and unbounded legacy, a legacy even now configured by narrative and poetic represen-

tations which recursively engage the Armistice as the Great War's haunted point of closure.

Preface

Note

1. All references to Sassoon's war poems are taken from The War Poems, edited by Hart-Davis. All references to Owen's war poems are taken from The War Poems, edited by Stallworthy. With the exception of epigraphs, which offer titles and dates only, all other references to these bodies of work will offer titles and line numbers and will invariably refer to these specific editions.

General Introduction

As after the huge wars
Senseless huge wars
Huge senseless weeping.

Ted Hughes, "The Last of the 1st/5th Lancashire Fusiliers: A Souvenir of the Gallipoli Landings," New Selected Poems (1995)

Sigmund Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917) remains central to the numerous elaborations of mourning formulated by psychoanalysts and cultural theorists after him. In his famous essay, Freud delineates a slow process of detachment from an object of conscious and unconscious psychic investment, typically a beloved person. This process of detachment is "carried out bit by bit, at great expense of time and cathectic energy" because the work of mourning involves "each single one of the memories and hopes which bound the libido to the object" ("MM" 253). Although Freud explicitly disclaims any "general validity" for his conclusions (251), in Kathleen Woodward's persuasive viewpoint, "Mourning and Melancholia" continues to function as both a "founding" and "constraining" text in contemporary scholarship, in spite of its normative model of affective closure which also isolates mourning from interpersonal or group processes (94). However, while he highlights the process of mourning which accompanies the death

of a loved one, Freud also extends his analysis to "the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on" ("MM" 252). Thus, his discussion of the process of mourning invites considerations of actual and ideal losses within wider socio-historical contexts such as the Great War, contexts which inevitably challenge a model of mourning premised upon a "dizzying phantasmagoria of memory" engaged by a solitary individual purely in relation to an intrapsychic object (Woodward 95). In fact, Jacqueline Rose argues that the prescriptive nature of "Mourning and Melancholia" is symptomatic of the destruction and mass bereavement engineered by the Great War: "Freud's famous paper can be read as an attempt to drive mourning away" ("VWDM" 1).

The experience of historical trauma undoubtedly involves loss. Yet a traumatic experience such as shell shock, for instance, involves the overlapping sites of multiple losses, actual and ideal, survived and perpetrated. My study is informed by a view of traumatic experience which Robert Jay Lifton succinctly and powerfully summarizes as "the death encounter," after his work with latter-day historical catastrophes (BC 169). This specification of traumatic experience avoids the contestatory or reductive pitfalls potentially engaged by assigning the locus of trauma to a single point of origin. However, this description clearly enables trauma to be situated in relation to limit-events, or

sites of mass death, such as the Great War, which precipitate profound crises involving a range of defining losses and complex mourning processes. Lifton, who addresses a wide range of twentieth-century historical crises from the Great War to more recent events, is a significant influence on my thinking about trauma. His description of trauma as a death encounter necessarily qualifies Freud's depiction of the affective closure afforded by the mourning process, closure achieved "when the work of mourning is completed" and "the ego becomes free and uninhibited again" ("MM" 253). Rather, as the psychoanalyst later suggests, the aftermath of trauma more clearly engages "pathological" processes of melancholia which destabilize or shatter the coherence of the ego: the ego has "fallen apart into two pieces, one of which rages against the second" (Freud "GPE" 139). Accordingly, trauma may more accurately be said to engage the perilous, ambivalent, and recurrent trajectory of bereavement of melancholia rather than mourning, given that melancholia is aptly characterized as "an open wound" (Freud "MM" 262).

The experience of melancholia, so described, engages the ego as an object of loss. Yet, as Freud subsequently maintains, the ego itself is already a complex product of loss, "petrified in nostalgic postures" (Mogenson 260). In The Ego and the Id (1923), for example, Freud revises his earlier, more functional account of melancholia by seeking to account for its role within the "**structure** of the psyche itself"

(Mogenson 252). More specifically, Freud later claims that the dynamics of melancholia determine the ego; in fact, he asserts that "the ego is a precipitate of abandoned object-cathexes" and that "it contains the history of those object-choices" (EI 368).[1] Following Freud, Peggy Phelan correctly observes that the experience of loss must be considered one of the "central repetitions of subjectivity" (5). Beyond the scope of "Mourning and Melancholia," then, Freud minimizes the distinction between "pathological" and "normal" processes: "the limits between the two are not strictly defined, and the mechanisms are to a certain extent the same" (MM 160).

Yet the schematic assertion of alternatives in the earlier essay continues to remain a fundamental point of departure for contemporary commentators seeking to reorient conceptualizations of the mourning process. In this connection, Woodward argues of "Mourning and Melancholia" that "Freud leaves us no theoretical room for another place, one between a crippling melancholia and the end of mourning" (95). If mourning is to be explored as a meaningful category in relation to trauma, then, it requires reformulation precisely in relation to Woodward's call for a theorization attentive to interstices, partialities, and qualifications. Such theorizations have been undertaken by many scholars attentive to twentieth-century historical trauma. For example, although he advocates hope for renewal through the experience of "survivor illumination," Lifton also highlights the inextricable and

enduring relationship between trauma and loss: "in severe traumatic experience, grief and loss tend to be too overwhelming in their suddenness and relationship to unacceptable death and death equivalents for them to be resolved" (BC 296, 170). In a powerful illustration of his claim, Lifton suggestively juxtaposes the crippling collective legacies of melancholia and the complex nature of belated mourning tasks when he acknowledges the terrifying imagery of extinction which has continued to haunt humanity since the Second World War in relation to both nuclear and ecological threats (BC 5).

In a more explicit reconfiguration of the prescriptive legacies of Freud's distinction between mourning and melancholia, as well as the related assumptions which this opposition entails, Jahan Ramazani convincingly privileges "`melancholic' mourning," which is "unresolved, violent, and ambivalent," as the dominant mode of mourning expressed by poets in the twentieth century, an age contextualized by successive historical traumas, and simultaneously marked by the increasing "privatization of grief" (4, 15). In its application to literary contexts attentive to trauma, the validity of Ramazani's formulation, a formulation I invoke throughout the chapters to follow, is indisputably borne out. Corroborating some of Ramazani's observations, for instance, Melissa Zeiger also notes "the pervasiveness of cultural melancholia" within the context of an age marked by the proliferation of "elegiac occasions" both "numerous and dire"

(1). An appreciation of twentieth-century contexts of historical trauma thus demands that mourning be mourned, in so far as mourning is understood to involve mastery, closure, full ego identity, or consoling models of social inheritance.

Moreover, mourning must be reformulated in ways which challenge the "privatization of grief" specified by Ramazani if it is to be meaningful to the recursive trajectory of grieving tasks activated throughout the lives of many survivors of severe trauma. In a decisive rejection of any normative discourse modelled on the polarized social locations of mourning or melancholia, for instance, Leslie Frazier advocates the practice of "countermourning" in the Chilean transition to neoliberal civilian rule. She advocates a defiant embrace of melancholia, "a work working at its own unproductivity" (Derrida "BFM" 174), in a concerted refusal to "relinquish the past" or accommodate any prescribed traditional "vocabulary of mourning," a vocabulary which advocates a joint end to public bereavement and the political demands which occasion it (105, 108). In a similar vein, although in connection with the possibilities of mourning during the AIDS crisis, Douglas Crimp also rejects "the internal opposition of activism and mourning" within traditional models (6). Thus, collective contexts of trauma tend to invalidate schematic conceptions of the mourning process, inviting extended considerations of its modes of possibility, its limitations, and its ongoing function: a

vital, if difficult and nuanced project for contemporary scholars.

This vital project demands a critical awareness of the manner in which private and collective occasions of mourning interact. More specifically, for example, the World Wars designate sites of distinct, unresolved cultural and social losses which continue to engage the contemporary imagination with their haunted landscapes, namely, the concentration camps of the Nazi Genocide and the blasted topography of the Western Front. In relation to contemporary Germany, for example, the intriguing research of James E. Young affirms the relevance of Ramazani's category of "`melancholic' mourning" to collective as well as individual contexts. Young discusses the recent advent of "counter-monuments" in Germany which "contemptuously reject the traditional forms of and reasons for public memorial art," namely consolation or redemption ("GMQ" 858). These "counter-monuments," then, seek to foreground rather than recuperate the ongoing individual role of "memory-work" in relation to catastrophic events, eschewing the model of closure afforded by traditional delineations of the mourning process.

And in a related examination of memorial practices after the Great War, Marilène Henry reinterprets the thousands of **monuments aux morts** erected in France between 1916-1926 as a way in which the local populations could publicly "perpetuate their accusations," rather than signify their gratitude,

patriotism, or private remembrances of the fallen (9). Interestingly enough, in relation to the arguments of both J. Young and Henry, Freud explicitly describes the belated nature of emotionally-charged observances at public monuments as an analogue for the "hysterical symptoms" of neuroses; in his view, such symptoms are present when individuals "cannot escape from the past and neglect present reality in its favour" (QDP 11, 12). Yet, increasingly, as the researches of Young and Henry indicate, specific historical traumas can be neither definitively memorialized nor conclusively mourned by survivors or by belated generations. For instance, the elegiac literature of the Great War now serves as a crucial precedent for contemporary efforts to reconfigure communal models of death and remembrance. Beyond radical differences of setting and historical location, the "catastrophe" of World War One is "actively recalled in both AIDS and breast cancer writing" (Zeiger 14). Such adaptations attest to the viability of Robert Whalen's retrospective construction of the Great War generation as "the first generation of survivors" in the twentieth century (192).

* * *

In the investigation which follows, an investigation which modulates between both general and specific modes of analysis, I offer a multifaceted exploration of issues central to an understanding of the mourning of historical trauma, most specifically the Great War. But Part One, in particular, which

makes recourse to wide-ranging and, at times, general discussion is not meant to be understood as a homogenization of all forms of trauma or historical circumstance. Rather, scholarship attentive to the conjoined possibilities of trauma and mourning largely inspired by work on the Second World War is consulted, given the speculative and ongoing nature of contemporary theoretical debates. Furthermore, as will be evident throughout this exploration, many recent formulations of trauma and mourning demonstrate a recursive preoccupation with Freud's formulations of these categories in "Mourning and Melancholia," Beyond the Pleasure Principle, and other works, which only functions to underscore my concern with psychoanalytic texts and contexts contemporaneous with the Great War and its immediate aftermath.

In outline, my approach to the Great War and its legacies privileges the question of mourning, specifically the manner in which aspects of historical trauma may be productively identified as potential or partial "objects of mourning," a complex and even controversial process fundamental to the ensuing chapters. As Peter Homans points out, the process of mourning must be understood as "a complex response to object loss, in which the `objects' that are `lost' are social and cultural objects and not only familial and intrapsychic objects" (3). In this regard, Freud proposes in "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1921) that a group "**is a number of individuals who have put one and the same**

object in the place of their ego ideal . . ." (147). Thus, cultural and social objects, phenomena "charged with unconscious significance," are critical to discussions of mourning attentive to intersubjective processes extending from the individual trauma survivor to the transgenerational effects of mass death upon the nation (Easthope ENC 16). At particular points in my analysis, then, particularly in Part Two, a dual emphasis on trauma and mourning necessitates some discussion of the category of the nation, a complex theoretical and interdisciplinary problem in its own right which is invoked where relevant to linkages of loss, collectivity and cultural reconstruction, a term which foregrounds the manner in which the centrality of humanistic disciplines is contested by massive historical trauma.

Following Freud and Ramazani, as well as Eric Santner in Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory and Film in Postwar Germany (1990), I maintain that cultural and social objects linked with historical trauma may become "stranded objects," collective objects of investment and identification configured by processes of melancholic mourning. Specific instances of historical trauma may culminate in complex constellations of these stranded or "haunting objects" which continue to shadow aspects of social and cultural life (LaCapra RH 193). In this connection, haunted objects of identification linked with the British experience of the Great War are addressed, haunted objects which include shell shock (Chapter One), the

frontsoldier (Chapter Four), the Great War poetry of Owen and Sassoon (Chapter Five) and the Somme (Chapter Eight), for instance. By undertaking to embed these objects in specific contexts and social processes, I hope to generate a greater understanding of the ongoing ambivalence which holds these objects in suspension, a suspension animated by the dynamics of historical trauma and opposed by the countervailing dynamics of individual and collective mourning processes. Moreover, in Part One, I suggest that even as trauma demands respectful consideration as an abiding object of melancholic mourning for many survivors of severe trauma (Chapter Three), aspects of contemporary trauma scholarship highlight the manner in which the category of mourning may become displaced or overgeneralized in light of recent preoccupations with catastrophe (Chapter Two).

In the first of the four chapters which comprise Part One, in a contribution which combines both cultural and intellectual history, I discuss the construction of shell shock and its establishment as a haunted object within medical, psychoanalytic and literary texts after its designation in Britain in 1915. Shell shock, which is one of the most common tropes for traumatic experience, dramatically foregrounds the problematic conjunction of mourning and trauma involved in an examination of the Great War and its legacies. The unprecedented number and uncertain nature of shell-shocked soldiers contributed to a complex crisis of cultural media-

tion. As Kali Tal incisively argues, the "cultural codification" of historical trauma is engaged, in part, by a strategy of "cultural coping" which she designates as "medicalization": "medicalization focuses our gaze upon the victims of trauma, positing that they suffer from an `illness' that can be `cured' within existing or slightly modified structures of institutionalized medicine or psychiatry" (6). Highlighting the general failures of this process, Chapter One culminates in a critical discussion of Freud's global speculations in Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920) on the "traumatic neuroses," a scheme of classification which sought to incorporate the disorder of shell shock. In this chapter, I also highlight the manner in which his speculative text frames the unresolved encounter between trauma and mourning which continues to haunt contemporary discourse.

In Chapter Two, I address dilemmas deriving from the study of trauma which beset theorized models of exchange between the present and the past, including models proposed by Harold Bloom, Judith Herman, contemporary Foucauldians Ian Hacking and Allan Young, Jacques Derrida, Cathy Caruth, neo-Freudian psychoanalysts Nicholas Abraham, Maria Torok, and Nicholas Rand, as well as intellectual historian Dominick LaCapra. The diverse range of models proposed by these scholars enables a cumulative consideration of the persistence of the past in contemporary "trauma theory" (an admitted oxymoron), a body of scholarship which frequently continues to

bear witness to the impact of Freudian formulations of trauma, formulations often undertaken during the formative years of the Great War. This part of my speculative analysis stresses the necessity for explicit attention to the theories, assumptions and investments which shape the scholar's cultural reception and transmission of catastrophic events in the present.

In a significant shift of focus, Chapter Three foregrounds the trauma survivor and the profound complexities which inhere in any consideration of survivorship, a term which implicitly names and values the centrality of the death encounter in the aftermath of extreme experience. Endurance and possession, permeation and recession, numbing and terror: recursive and oscillating affective and memorial preoccupations characterize the mourning processes of trauma survivors. I examine efforts to mourn catastrophic experience inherent in the facilitated narrativization of events and in the reception of those events by ethically-situated listeners, or witnesses to trauma testimony, who must struggle to enact a mode of "recognition without violence" (Román 130). This chapter concludes with explicit attention to the ethical questions which are generated by the centrality of the witness to the mourning processes of survivors; scholarly debates involving Emmanuel Levinas and others are briefly considered here. Diverse conceptualizations of mourning, including models offered by Freud, Pierre Janet, Lifton and Dori Laub are

situated in supplementary relationship to one another as a way of generating an awareness of the challenges which trauma presents to any unitary formulation of its aftermath.

Finally, in Chapter Four of Part One, I address secondary modes of narrating the Great War in literary criticism and historiography, dating principally from Paul Fussell's famous study, The Great War and Modern Memory (1975). Can melancholic mourning, a formulation which Ramazani applies to elegiac poetry, be considered relevant to scholarly accounts of the Great War or its literature? In support of this perspective, secondary accounts continue to privilege or dispute the authority of the traumatized combatant, highlighting the persistent preoccupations of secondary narrative with the Western Front and its primary witnesses. Wittingly or unwittingly, secondary narratives engage the tensions which remain active in representations of historical trauma. This chapter explores the unique potentialities of trauma scholarship in application to secondary narratives of the Great War, an event which has not yet been explicitly considered in the context of the committed and extensive body of historical interpretation which has emerged in response to the Second World War, notwithstanding the obvious differences between these events.

Among the work of Great War scholars discussed in Chapter Four, though, I would especially like to acknowledge the important work of Jay Winter, Sites of Memory, Sites of

Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History (1995), a cultural history of the Great War which focuses on "the theme of mourning and its private and public expression" (5), as well as the richly contextualized study of British literature and culture by Trudi Tate, Modernism, History, and the First World War (1998), which suggestively rather than systematically "explores the ways in which writing attempted to bear witness to the trauma of the war and its consequences" (1). In addition to these and other works on the Great War, Chapter Four engages the research of distinguished scholars of the Shoah, a name which designates "a great and terrible wind" in Hebrew. Scholars such as Lawrence Langer, Saul Friedländer, J. Young, Santner, and LaCapra are invoked in this section, which emphasizes the importance of interpreting twentieth-century historical trauma in relation to the transgenerational collective contexts which configure mourning and cultural memory. Accordingly, I highlight the manner in which the nexus of trauma and its transvaluation links both World Wars, an argument advanced in distinct ways by other scholars, including Modris Eksteins (1989) and George Mosse (1990). It is my hope that the complexity, significance, and, at times, the necessary hesitations involved in any speculative discussion of mourning historical trauma will be impressed upon the reader by the interrelated investigations of Part One, prior to turning to the specific discussions of modern British literature in Part Two.

While Part One constitutes an interdisciplinary and largely theoretical treatment of the potential connections between mourning, psychoanalysis, shell shock, contemporary trauma theory and historiography, Part Two addresses major figures in modern British literature introduced in the Preface, namely, Owen, Sassoon, Woolf and Jones, all of whom are historical contem-poraries who confronted the defining trauma of the Great War in distinct but related ways. With the exception of Woolf, they all served in combat on the notorious wastelands of the Western Front. Although these writers have been subjected to repeated scholarly consideration, I am able to offer original contributions to research in these areas due to the careful articulation of my central concern with the complex nature of mourning in the aftermath of events which engage both personal and collective legacies of loss. The authors and texts which I have chosen were selected in light of their exemplary exploration of the problematic co-implication of trauma and mourning, a juxtaposition which animates my entire study and engages a complex conjunction of psychoanalytic terms, individual human experiences and abiding cultural preoccupations. Sustained attention to the conver-gences of literature and trauma in Part Two entails that the investments and collaborative energies of the reader attain a primary significance within my ethically-directed framework of analysis; the anticipated hermeneutic engagements of the reader are fundamental to all genres of writing active in the

reception, transmission, or mediation of testimony in view of the belated witnessing functions which derive from any consideration of historical trauma (Felman 108).

Analysis of the literature of the Great War commences with a reinterpretation of the poetry of Owen and Sassoon, a body of writing which has merited extensive critical commentary. However, in the absence of any sustained attention to the persistent preoccupations with death, disintegration, alienation and the civilian witness evident in their work, trauma and mourning frequently remain implicit, untheorized and undeveloped contexts for critical discussion. On the other hand, a nuanced reading of their work as poetic testimony, a genre which I carefully define and develop in my discussion, resituates the task of interpretation in relation to a set of concerns governed by the urgent transmission and reception of harrowing experience. By privileging these concerns, the problems of mourning which these poems insistently foreground emerge in a dramatic new light. In my view, the unresolved mourning processes in these testimonies animate the ongoing preoccupation with these writers in contemporary British literature. Following Chapter Five, which discusses Owen and Sassoon, figures who remain paradigmatic to constructions and reconstructions of the British cultural memory of the War, as illustrated by Barker's contemporary Regeneration Trilogy (1991-95), I turn to an investigation of Woolf's Jacob's Room (1922).

In an rereading of Woolf's famous modernist text, which was published in the same year as James Joyce's Ulysses and T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," I adapt J. Young's investigation of the counter-monument in order to reanimate Woolf's remarkable confrontation with a diverse and even bewildering array of historical intertexts. Treating her novel as a counter-monument enables a demonstration of its disruptive memorial engagement with a dead soldier, Jacob Flanders, in opposition to official modes of memory-work configured by national commemorative sites such as Sir Edwin Lutyens's Cenotaph and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior (1920), sites which invited identifications which linked masculine sacrifice, private memory, historical nation, and public monument. These complex markers of collective loss played a pivotal role within Britain's topography of cultural reconstruction after the Armistice and they continue to serve as icons of remembrance. Accordingly, my analysis of Jacob's Room commences with a relevant contextualization of these official commemorative sites and their respective roles in configuring collective mourning, roles questioned and undermined by Woolf's attentions to the unstable and irrevocable burdens of memory in the wake of historical trauma. But even as Britain's memorial landscape sought to negotiate the sacrifices of combatants and the bereavements of civilians, the quarries of national and international postwar consolation and reconciliation proved more elusive. As my treatment of Mrs Dalloway

(1925) makes clear in Chapter Seven, failures of postwar communalization between veterans and civilians in London merely dramatize that the specters of the War haunted the peace, a peace proclaimed at the Armistice, but belied by deferred shell shock, the status of a defeated Germany, and the Armenian genocide, among other unresolved objects of loss which contributed to the Second World War.

Part Two concludes with a discussion of the Somme and Jones's In Parenthesis (1937) because of the catastrophic significance of that battle within British culture and society. In many respects, the Somme, a site of hitherto unprecedented mass death, commemorated in countless British memoirs, fictions and histories, presents this study with its most intractable subject matter. Jones's book was one of the last works of Great War literary testimony to emerge prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, marking a convenient, if highly artificial, parenthesis for my study. Clearly, however, the Second World War did not conclude the mourning processes which derived from the First. Rather, as distinguished military historian John Keegan notes, "the Second World War, when it came in 1939, was unquestionably the outcome of the First, and in large measure its continuation" (FWW 9). The proliferation of contemporary literature which bears belated if profound witness to the Great War, both contending with and configuring its legacies, stands as a manifest testament to the challenges which the Great War still presents to collec-

tive cultural mourning processes, and also functions as a dramatic justification for ongoing scholarship in the area, scholarship attentive to the complex cultural and social pathways of human grief in the wake of shattering losses.

Although this study's analyses of trauma, mourning and literature are primarily undertaken on works generally classified under the rubric of modernism, I have also drawn upon a rich body of contemporary British fiction and poetry dealing with the Great War in Parts One and Two wherever I felt pertinent excerpts or citations were warranted. As the afterword makes clear, only constraints of time and space preclude further investigation of the cultural mediation of historical trauma from within the secondary spaces of "post-memory" manifest in more recent reconstructions of the Great War. As Marianne Hirsch summarizes her own compelling work on "postmemory," this form of engagement with trauma describes "the relationship of children of survivors of cultural or collective trauma to the experiences of their parents, experiences . . . so powerful, so monumental, as to constitute memories in their own right" (8).[2] Hughes, for example, a poet preoccupied throughout his career with the exploration of violence, was the son of a Great War veteran who was "one of only seventeen survivors of an entire battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers that went through its numbers three times at Gallipoli" (Scigaj 46).[3] The excerpt from Hughes which serves as the epigraph for this introduction describes belated

weeping in the aftermath of the World Wars as "senseless." Yet it is the purpose of this study to demonstrate the complex persistence of transgenerational dynamics of melancholic mourning after historical trauma through both abstract and applied modes of investigation. Moreover, given the fact that "postmemory is not an identity position," but must also be considered "a space of remembrance, more broadly available through cultural and public, and not merely individual and personal, acts of remembrance, identification, and projection," the conscious and unconscious participation of my project in a postmemorial relationship to the Great War must be acknowledged from the outset (Hirsch 8-9).

The Great War occurred at the beginning of a century which is now officially concluded. Its historical distance relative to more recent forms of historical trauma facilitates an articulation of its relationships to memory and mourning, while its status as a historical trauma ensures that its traces continue to demand acknowledgement and interpretation, potentially illuminating other twentieth-century cultural crises in the aftermath of devastating events. As I demonstrate in Chapter Four, the prevailing focus on the Second World War in trauma scholarship can only benefit from sustained attention to the War which preceded it. Combining literary and historical analysis with a critical perspective informed by psychoanalysis and trauma theory, an explicit approach to catastrophe enables new readings of the period's

literature and culture. Furthermore, this study frames the problem of mourning in a recursive fashion, embracing the ongoing transmission and reception of the event as a critical aspect of the Great War and its legacies; thus, discussions of more recent historiography and criticism are not excluded from the analysis. By demonstrating the transhistorical impact of the War and its legacies, a more complex and comprehensive appreciation of the question of mourning in the aftermath of historical trauma is provided than any investigation of the literature alone could provide. In turn, however, I believe that the literature of the Great War, when situated within such an explicit theoretical and historical framework, yields hitherto unappreciated, interrelated and contradictory dimensions.

The interpretation of trauma theory which unfolds within this study, though, must not be understood as unbiased or comprehensive, in spite of the range of figures and debates I invoke. Rather, given the ethical controversies and complex transferences generated by work in this field, even my synthesis of approaches to mourning in Chapter Three must be understood as an individual intervention in an ongoing area of debate. Following a minority of other scholars working in the field, including LaCapra, Hirsch, and Laub, I foreground both trauma and mourning as processes active in testimony, cultural reception and reconstruction. Through attention to the highly developed and challenging bodies of theoretical literature in

both areas, the dynamic and symptomatic relations between the conjoined phenomena of trauma and mourning become apparent. In so far as scholarship fails to consider trauma, as it is conceived as a specific historical object of investigation, as it is experienced and re-experienced by survivors, or as it is situated in belated relationship to scholarly and theoretical concerns, in terms of the problematic of mourning, trauma theory must remain a discourse unable to address itself to a range of concerns. Included among these concerns are the specificity of traumatic contexts, the agency or accountability of social processes, which inevitably include the mediations of the scholar, or the meaningfulness of the limits which both trauma and mourning present to the possibilities or practices of theorization. With this final acknowledgment of the limitations which ultimately confront my endeavour, then, I invite the reader to turn to the explorations of trauma, mourning and literature which contribute to what is undoubtedly one of the most exciting and important areas of contemporary scholarship in the humanities.

General Introduction

Notes

1. For contemporary discussions which elaborate on Freud's view of melancholia and ego formation, see "Freud and the Melancholia of Gender" in Judith Butler's Gender Trouble (New York: Rout-ledge, 1990) and Victoria Smith, whose essay, "A Story beside(s) Itself: The Language of Loss in Djuna Barnes's Nightwood" (PMLA 114.2 1999), 194-206, contains an excellent bibliography on the topic.

2. Also see other works by Hirsch, including Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997) and "Family Pictures: Maus, Mourning, and Postmemory," in Discourse 15.2 (1993), 3-30.

3. Although battalions vary enormously in size, at the most, a battalion potentially contained one thousand men.

PART ONE

I. Collective Legacies: Shell Shock as a "Haunted Object" After 1915

> Always they must see these things and hear them,
> Batter of guns and shatter of flying muscles,
> Carnage incomparable, and human squander
> Rucked too thick for these men's extrication.
>
> Wilfred Owen, "Mental Cases" (1918)

Introduction

Inextricably associated with fact and phantasy, horror and awe, death and endurance, the frontsoldier of the Great War continues to preside over contemporary imaginative engagement with the events of 1914-18. His "exceptional presence" (Hartman "TK" 537) and "blindfold look" (Owen CL 521), often recorded by Wartime photography, clearly signal his disturbing authority as an eyewitness in relation to extreme historical events. Simultaneously, though, this authority may be radically undermined by his blinding proximity to catastrophe.[1] In particular, the shell-shocked frontsoldier seems to represent "a symptom of history" (Caruth "TE" 5). Recent fictional representations continue to explore the challenge to cultural assimilation represented by the traumatized veteran. In spite of the passage of time, our own belated relationship to the events of the Great War continues

to be mediated by the haunting image of the shell-shocked soldier who remains immune to our gaze (Dyer 40). The shell-shocked soldier is a spectacular figure, "a central and recurring image of trauma in our century," who is distinct from, if decisively associated with, other twentieth-century figures, including the victims of genocidal state policies and the veterans of other protracted military conflicts. Such perceived kinships attest to the proliferation of massive trauma in this century, a proliferation which often functions to overwhelm the "irreducible specificity of traumatic stories" (Caruth UE 11; "P" ix). Significantly, however, in spite of its diverse contexts, contemporary trauma research continues to contend with the legacy of shell shock, both directly and indirectly, through the pivotal formulations of traumatic experience which resulted from the coincidental and formative encounter between Freudian psychoanalysis and the Great War.

Shell shock provoked fundamental debates on the nature of adult trauma within and without psychoanalysis well after the cessation of the military conflict. Certainly, its diagnosis and treatment had a decisive role in the dissemination of psychoanalytic ideas throughout Britain and elsewhere. Important ideas formulated by Freud and his contemporaries during and after the War in response to the "traumatic neuroses" continue to inform contemporary trauma research, whether these ideas are contested, elaborated, or refined by

recent scholarship. Beyond the Pleasure Principle, which explores the theory of the death drive, the role of the repetition compulsion, and the concept of the protective shield, often in explicit relationship to the traumatic disorders of trench combat, is one of Freud's most significant works subject to re-examination in recent trauma scholarship. Prior to the advent of contemporary developments in this field of research, Jean Laplanche, a noted expert on Freudian and post-Freudian psychoanalysis, specified Beyond the Pleasure Principle as "the most fascinating and baffling text of the entire Freudian **corpus**," an assessment which has only been underscored by the resurgence of interest which this text has merited in the context of the recent concern with trauma (106).[2]

Additionally, attention to the study of trauma within the more general rubric of the Freudian psychoanalytic topography has led to the scrutiny, revision, or resuscitation of alternate formulations of trauma, memory, and repression within and without psychoanalysis. As Ruth Leys accurately observes, "the problem of psychic trauma and psychic violence has come back to haunt the theory and practice of psychoanalysis" ("DM" 47). In this regard, for instance, Freud's early studies on hysteria (1890-97), which have long been the subject of controversy, also prove significant in recent post-Freudian formulations of trauma.[3] But in another variation on Leys's suggestive trope of haunting, Lifton suggests that Freudian

psychoanalysis is possessed more precisely by the unassimilated shadow of the Great War: "the impact of the traumas of World War I on Freud and his movement has hardly been recorded" (BC 164). Clearly, contemporary trauma scholarship must contend with a range of unresolved encounters between the present and the past as it subjects specific psychoanalytic formulations of trauma to renewed attention. Recent research effectively revisits Freud's encounter with the war neuroses, as well as other traumatic phenomena, then, as a repetition which is implicitly bound in problematic relation to the psychoanalytic category of mourning.

Contemporary trauma discourse addresses numerous "haunted objects" in its field, objects implicated in complex processes of social and cultural loss, which may continue to be situated within contested and unresolved histories, and which can be decisively confined to neither the past nor the present. Two of the "haunted objects" I have already specified, hysteria and shell shock, were significantly linked in the aftermath of the Great War. The influential analyses of Elaine Showalter continue to link these phenomena. By way of contrast, I argue that close scrutiny of hysteria and shell shock actually discourages any conflation of these distinct terms and contexts. Shell shock, the major focus of my investigation, generated a range of conscious and unconscious investments which registered its repeated occasion as an ambivalent and unmastered event. As Chris Feudtner argues, "the history of

shell shock compels us to think in terms of dynamic permeation, where different elements of the disease-system interact in reiterative loops, continuously recreating the disorder as both an individual and a group phenomenon" (406). Thus, medical, psychiatric, and psychoanalytic discourses on shell shock engaged numerous contests regarding its aetiology, the assignment of causation or point of origin: "behind the treatment of the psychic victim of war lay the question of the tolerability of the war itself" (Leed 180).[4] While contemporary scholarship stresses the fact that complexities and undecidables must remain constitutive of any definition of traumatic experience, discourses dealing with aetiology, or the specification of a point of origin in relation to trauma, remain significant in so far as they either displace or seek to situate traumatic experience in relation to socially-mediated sites of loss. Ultimately, as Joanna Bourke comments, "men whose bodies were tortured by their minds gained little--if anything--from the furious debates surrounding shell shock" (108). Such furious debates, however, attest to the collective import of shell shock. In addition to its devastating effects on individual lives, then, shell shock also marked imaginary and ideal socio-cultural sites of loss during and after the War.

As Grafton Smith and his medical colleague, T.H. Pear, declare in Shell Shock and Its Lessons (1917), the complex range of British attitudes to the disorder constituted shell

shock as a "public wound" (xiv). While Lifton describes the impasse of mourning experienced by traumatized individuals as "the state of being haunted by images that can neither be enacted nor cast aside" (BC 172), undoubtedly, collective processes of mourning are far more difficult to assess. My discussion begins with a selective survey of the reception of shell shock extending from its medical designation (1915), when the effects of the weapons of the Front were foregrounded by early diagnostic interventions, until Freud's work in 1920, the same year in which W.H.R. Rivers also published Instinct and the Unconscious. By 1922, the year of Rivers's death, Freud's work had been translated into English. Yet, beyond its status as a clinical object of investigation by doctors and psychoanalysts, I address shell shock as a cultural object necessarily implicated in contests involving combatants, civilians, and the army, among other social groups. In addition to clinical and popular literature published during the period, then, I also highlight the postwar testimonies of Robert Graves and Sassoon in my analysis, both of whom were pivotal agents in one of the most famous British cultural encounters of the century, involving Sassoon's letter of protest against the War and his subsequent treatment by Rivers at a shell shock facility. Both Graves and Sassoon were enormously influenced by their War experiences as well as by the views and teachings of Rivers.[5] But with the exception of such elite testimonies, as Peter Leese observes, there are

virtually no records available which detail the postwar fate of British veterans officially treated for shell shock (1059).

However, in light of Lifton's suggestive linkage of trauma and mourning, it can be argued that shell shock invited specification as a collective socio-cultural object, even as such an effort was actively resisted and constrained within the wartime military context, ensuring its haunted legacy. In his general reflections on "Psychology and the War," for example, commenting on the "fatigue and exhaustion" of the nation, Rivers fears the "disorganization and regression" of postwar life as a result of a widespread denial of "painful elements in the national situation" (IU 256, 257). In fact, charting civilian responses to the psychological injuries of veterans in the 1920s, Eric Dean highlights "an ambivalent attitude" which registers "both understanding and fear" (66). Similarly, in a different context, Ted Bogacz maintains that The Report of the War Office Committee of Enquiry into "Shell-shock," which was released to Parliament and the Press (1922), must be considered "an ironic cultural document" which attempted to "defiantly reassert pre-war military values" even as it "unwittingly" employed Freudian vocabulary and assumptions regarding the nature of psychological injury (249, 248, 250).[6] While there are important limitations to my ability to assess the changing reception of shell shock in relation to an array of complex historical factors, limitations which underscore the speculative nature of my inquiry, the views of

Rivers, Dean, and Bogacz serve to support my construction of shell shock as a "haunted object" after its widespread cultural circulation since 1915.

Within the more specific context of psychoanalysis, moreover, a fundamental change in Freud's conceptualization of death can be observed between 1915-20, a change undoubtedly related to the Great War. In "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" (1915), written six months after the beginning of the hostilities, Freud expresses one of his fundamental early convictions: "in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his own immortality" (289). Yet, referring to the symbolic crises occasioned by the thousands of deaths which took place every day of the War, he appropriately declares, "we are unable to maintain our former attitude towards death, and have not yet found a new one" (SE 14: 292). The crises of death, bereavement, and shell shock only exacerbated the need for efforts to be made "toward enclosing the experience of violence and death in some sort of symbolic system" (Whalen 37). Freud's subsequent formulation of the death instinct, the urge of living beings to return to inanimate matter, which is manifested through self-destructive and aggressive behaviours, must be situated within the evolution of his thought as a whole (Laplanche and Pontalis 97). But his remarks in Beyond the Pleasure Principle provide an interesting point of comparison with his earlier conceptualization of death where he observes that "our `unconscious'--the deepest strata of our

minds . . . . knows nothing that is negative, and no negation . . . . there is nothing instinctual in us which responds to a belief in death" (SE 14: 296). It seems likely, then, that the Great War contributed to a radical revision of emphases within Freud's consideration of human finitude. In any event, in the wake of the traumatic neuroses, the death instinct was clearly located within the Freudian psychoanalytic topography. As Tate points out, "we need to pay closer attention to the historical context in which Freud was writing" (7).

Beyond the Pleasure Principle, though, deprivileges the historical specificity of forms of catastrophic shock in order to privilege speculative and global psychoanalytic inquiry into the general experience of trauma. Given the nature of his inquiry, Freud's investigation does not address potential modalities of treatment: he does not seek to inscribe the neuroses within a discourse of individual cure. Nor does Freud effectively situate the traumatic neuroses within the specific realm of social processes. In this manner, his text displaces any particular consideration of shell shock as a phenomenon which continued to configure socio-cultural legacies; it should be recalled that Freud erroneously believed that "with the end of the war the war neurotics, too, [had] disappeared" (SE 17: 215). The Great War is only nominally addressed in explicit terms, in spite of Lifton's persuasive claim that the war neuroses "played a very special part for Freud in his conceptual development in general and in his idea about death

in particular" (BC 164).

In my view, this crisis-ridden text ensured that "the dark and dismal subject of the traumatic neurosis" would serve as a "haunted object" within subsequent psychoanalysis (BPP 283). Notably, his "far-fetched speculation" (Freud BPP 295) attempts to situate a global theory of trauma within a discourse of life's collective evolutionary origins, thereby enacting, as we shall see, "the very intractability of trauma to articulation" (Kavka 152). Furthermore, his work brilliantly, if inadvertently, highlights the intractability of trauma to the mourning processes which he so eloquently describes in his earlier, more schematic, essay (1917). In spite of his efforts to generate global hypotheses on the nature of trauma in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, then, my reading situates Freud's text within wider social and clinical contexts of uncertainty regarding shell shock, an ongoing and complex locus of postwar cultural losses, which could not be positioned as a stable object of speculation and retrieval, symbolic "disappearance and return" (BPP 285).

In part, Freud interpreted responses to trauma as an outcome of ancient evolutionary legacies, such as the death instinct, foregrounding without resolving the complex and formidable problem of mourning "beyond the pleasure principle." In particular, through the famous anecdote of the child's efforts to adapt to separation from his mother through the game with the reel, which Freud relates in passing, the

issues of mourning and trauma are juxtaposed and highlighted without being resolved or formally linked in his discourse. Consequently, this anecdote, which suggestively points toward a telling lacuna in trauma scholarship, has become a pivotal focus of theoretical investigation in the work of Jacques Lacan, Derrida, Kaja Silverman, Santner, Richard Terdiman, and Caruth, among others. Notably, Caruth's influential emphasis on Freud's formulation of trauma as a phenomenon of "belatedness," which is characterized by the "insistent appearance" of traumatic experience "outside the boundaries of any single place or time," tends to ignore the problems posed by the persistence of the past in Freud's adaptations of biological and evolutionary theory ("TE" 9; UE 66-67). Such adaptations have important implications for any discussion of the problem of trauma and mourning which derives from psychoanalysis. In my view, these tensions and contradictions in Freud's theory of trauma demand our attention. The "doubt and vacillation" which informs Beyond the Pleasure Principle, particularly in relation to the issue of binding and mourning traumatic losses, continues to animate contemporary debates in trauma scholarship, testifying to the paradigmatic nature of the encounter between psychoanalysis and the first widespread example of massive trauma in this century (Leys "DM" 51).

A Crisis of Communicability

The idea that the experience of battle is horrific and

incommunicable is an enduring military truism powerfully consolidated by the Great War. This truism emphasizes the fact that "substantial numbers of soldiers were temporarily or permanently scarred by their experiences," rather than the fact that "still more emerged from this encounter relatively mentally unscathed" (Stone 258).[7] Foregrounding its horror in the face of his own careful consideration of qualifications, Samuel Hynes credibly maintains that "no other war and no other front that I know of drove its troops to desire wounds, or to wound themselves, or even to kill themselves, on the scale that was true on the Western Front in the First War" (ST 72). In Rose Macaulay's fiction, Non-Combatants and Others (1916), for instance, the main character's brother is described as "exposing himself, taking absurd risks, in order to get laid out" (99). Eventually, he dies of a self-inflicted wound in the shoulder from his own revolver. This self-inflicted wound is described by a fellow soldier as the only effective antidote against the involuntary incursions of traumatic memory which continue to plague those veterans of the Western Front who must "[keep] on remembering all the things one tries to forget" (103, 102).

Hynes points out that this description of a soldier's death by a self-inflicted wound is an important precedent in twentieth-century writing, one of the very first examples of what has subsequently become "a common incident" in the genre of war literature (AWI 127). Such incidents, depicted with

increasing frequency after 1916, without condemnation, have become a staple of the elite canon of Great War combat poetry. In this connection, Sassoon's "Suicide in the Trenches" baldly describes a soldier's self-inflicted death and then redirects the shame typically reserved for charges of military cowardice at civilian targets: "Sneak home and pray you'll never know/ The hell where youth and laughter go" (11-12). Owen's "S.I.W." also incorporates a narrative of suicide on the Western Front in the service of an ironic depiction of the civilian will to ignorance: "With him they buried the muzzle his teeth had kissed,/And truthfully wrote the mother, `Tim died smiling'" (36-37). And in Goodbye to All That (1929), Graves situates his own experience of the War within a macabre parenthesis, recalling that the first and last corpses he witnessed while in the army died from self-inflicted wounds, rather than enemy fire (200). While varieties of stress, fatigue, and prolonged exposure to horror have certainly had a documented and lengthy history in modes of combat prior to the twentieth century, cultural representations of the horrors of the Western Front have undoubtedly played a decisive role in the transformation of attitudes to the soldier's role within military conflict.

The incommunicable nature of the trenchsoldier's experience of battle, however, was most dramatically evident through the efflorescence of the bewildering symptomology identified as shell shock: "paralyses and muscular contractures of the arms, legs, hands and feet, loss of sight, speech

and hearing, choreas, palsies and tics, mental fugues, catatonia and obsessive behaviour, amnesia, severe sleeplessness, and terrifying nightmares" (Stone 251). The literal and metaphorical "dislocated speech" of the shell-shocked frontsoldier clearly signalled a displaced or unassimilated relationship to the events of the Great War, a crisis of communicability which also engendered crises of cultural interpretation implicated in multiple and overlapping sites of loss involving masculinity, class, and nation (Sassoon SP 557). Thus, shell shock could not merely be isolated as a discrete and recuperable site of individual loss, since it "resulted from the conjoined force of physiologic and social processes, so entwined to defy separation" (Feudtner 383).

It may be speculated that the shell-shocked frontsoldier manifested a "frightening freedom of referential activity" distinct from that of the dead or wounded body Elaine Scarry discusses in relation to the contests of war (119). In a notable omission from her fertile and painstaking book, The Body in Pain (1985), Scarry does not offer any consideration of combat trauma. With great acuity, though, she observes that injured bodies "make perpetually visible an activity that is past, and thus have a memorializing function"; she also points out that these "injuries-as-signs point both backward and forward in time" in relation to "the war's locus of victory" (121). In response to Scarry's speculations on the status of physical injuries in war, though, I surmise that shell shock's

more diffuse "injuries-as-signs" bore a highly contested and uncertain relationship to all of the traditional "arenas of alteration" in warfare which she delineates, arenas which involve persons, material culture and ideology, or "aspects of national consciousness, political belief, and self-definition" (114). In my view, then, shell shock must be distinguished from other varieties of injury because during the crises of meaning which it occasioned, the very nature and basis of injury became subject to controversy and contestation.

Shell shock seemed to exemplify a complete crisis of embodiment, identity and memory. Thus, the shell-shocked soldier could only with difficulty be metaphorically or metonymically linked with the "**derealized and disembodied**" cultural constructs of the nation at War, constructs which actively repudiated "**the reality of the other country's issues, beliefs, ideas, self-conception**" (Scarry 128). It may be conjectured, then, that the memorializing function Scarry associates with the wounded combatant was radically disoriented but ultimately intensified in relation to the shell-shocked soldier, whose body and mind literally and compulsively memorialized the contests of the War. In this respect, in spite of the fact that the War was initially fought by a volunteer army, the memorializing function of traumatic injury more closely approximates the structure of torture due to the totality of its effects: it "takes over all that is inside and outside, [and] makes the two obscenely

indistinguishable" (Scarry 55). In support of this linkage of shell shock and torture, Owen encapsulates the situation of an afflicted combatant in "The Chances" in the following manner: "he's wounded, killed, and pris'ner, all the lot . . . Jim's mad" (15-16). Could shell-shocked soldiers, then, whose bodies were neither clearly injured nor rendered intelligible through previous modes of public perception, serve the structures of war, which, according to Scarry, must function to anchor disembodied cultural constructs? The welter of medical and cultural representations which informs the shell shock debate reveals both the dilemmas and consequences which attached to this question.

Leed argues that this ambiguity surrounding shell shock served the interest of military authorities, preventing the "legitimacy" of the War from being called into question (168). Yet existing crises of cultural "self-description" noted by Scarry were undoubtedly transformed during the course of the War by shell shock. This transformation of attitudes can be clearly traced within popular and elite cultural productions of the period. While H.G. Wells charts the loss of ideals associated with the War in Mr Britling Sees It Through (1916), declaring it to be merely one of the "mobbing, many-aimed cataclysms that have shattered empires," a "war without point, a war that has lost its soul" (359), explicit linkages between the War and madness as in Owen's "Mental Cases" are increasingly prevalent between 1916 and the year of the Armistice,

including works published by male and female civilians, such as Macaulay's Non-Combatants and Others, Rebecca West's The Return of the Soldier (1918), Arnold Bennett's The Pretty Lady (1918), and Rudyard Kipling's short stories published after the death of his son in the Battle of Loos.[8] Additionally, William Orpen and C.R.W. Nevinson were among the first official British War artists to visually represent shell shock (Hynes AWI 187).[9] At one time, for example, Nevinson's work was influenced by his service in an observation ward for psychological casualties of war dominated by "hallucination and persecution" (Nevinson 79).

Within the popular press, to cite another crucial arena of cultural contestation, Horatio Bottomley advocated for court-martial reform in response to the case of officer Edwin Dyett, who was shot for cowardice in 1918.[10] Edwin Dyett's case was later cast in fictional form by A.P. Herbert as the popular story of Harry Penrose in The Secret Battle (1919). Writing ten years after the Armistice, Winston Churchill describes the book as "a soldier's tale cut in stone to melt all hearts" (viii). Although he served as Secretary of State for War (1918-1921), Churchill nonetheless declares that Harry Penrose was "a gallant soldier borne down by the stresses incredible to those who have not endured them" and that he was tragically "caught in the steel teeth of the military machine," revealing the remarkable transformation of attitudes effected by the shell shock crisis (vi). According to my

interpretation, then, shell shock augmented and created conflict within existing crises of cultural self-description engaged by the process of warfare with an external enemy, as Scarry so uniquely and exhaustively addresses that process.

Aetiological Debates

The name "shell shock" manifests the same conflation of cause and effect evident in the contemporary designation, "trauma," inviting the commentator to offer more precise distinctions (Adler 927). In spite of its popular adoption in place of numerous other common synonyms or clinical titles, "shell shock" is a phrase which testifies to past confusions surrounding its status, diagnosis and treatment. Nonetheless, I have chosen to retain this designation: it reveals the immediate challenge presented to frontline soldiers and medical staff in conceptualizing the terrifying effects of industrialized weaponry, particularly the "high velocity explosive shells employed in frightening and seemingly endless bombardments" (Bourke 109). Initially, the name indicated the attempt to trace the dispersed and baffling symptomology of shock to a precise, physical cause, the exploding shell. In this connection, the shell could provide a stable basis for aetiological explanations which isolated the soldier, his participation in the War, and his injury, from social processes. As Scarry declares, though, in an observation relevant to the idiomatic attribution of shock to the

exploding shell, "the mental habit of recognizing pain in the weapon . . . . is both an ancient and enduring one" (16). Certainly, the weaponry of the Great War seemed to have "the last laugh," according to Owen, who depicted the Western Front devoid of human agency in his poem of the same title: "the Bullets chirped--In vain, vain, vain!/ Machine-guns chuckled--Tut-tut! Tut-tut!/And the Big Gun guffawed" (3-6). The term "shell shock," then, arguably "effects a powerful linguistic condensation between the inarticulable traumatic moments at the front and their broader social effects" (Kavka 155).

The actual term "shell shock" is frequently attributed to Charles Myers. But in a later memoir he wholeheartedly deplores the widespread use of the term he helped to establish. Myers published "A Contribution to the Study of Shell Shock" in the Lancet (February 1915), and, in spite of his declaration that "the close relation of these cases to those of `hysteria' appears fairly certain," the name of the disorder suggests that it has a basis in pathoanatomical theories of trauma (320). Pathoanatomical theories of trauma common to pre-existing debates on "railway spine" sought physical or neurological bases for claims of delayed shock in the wake of railway accidents (E. Brown HCP 505). Freud describes this way of thinking as "the old, naive theory of shock," which conceives of trauma as a result of "the direct damage to the molecular structure or even to the histological structure of the elements of the nervous system"; such a

viewpoint appears to privilege "the effects of mechanical violence" alone, independent of other factors (BPP 303). As Daniel Pick affirms, in view of previous debates on railway accidents, "the terms of the shellshock debate and the aetiological dilemma were in many respects in place before 1914" (250).

While continuities with previous discussions of functional nervous disorders central to modernity, such as hysteria and railway spine, are important to any understanding of the debates surrounding shell shock, my own arguments contradict views wholly informed by assumptions of shell shock's continuities with previous disorders. For example, Leed maintains that "other than the quantity, variety, and protractedness of neurotic symptoms, medical authorities found little that was new or surprising in war neuroses" (163). In many respects, his argument seems to be contradicted by its very qualifications. Certainly, in Britain, medical authorities were generally "unprepared" for the crisis (E. Brown STM 341). Astonished at the number and variety of cases set before them, for instance, British medical authorities Smith and Pear register their own involvement in a sense of international crisis when they remark that "never in the history of mankind have the stresses and strains of body and mind been so great or so numerous as in the present war" (2). The widespread proliferation of theories and the persistence of eclectic and even idiosyncratic approaches to shell shock do not attest to

its incorporation into any unified, stable or pre-existing medical category (cf. Feudtner 405).

Even early explanations of trauma which apparently privileged a simple external aetiology for shock also required a means to understand "the effects produced on the organ of the mind" by what Freud later described as "the breach in the shield against stimuli" (BPP 303). As Feudtner observes, "physical explanations of shell shock, entwined with notions of hereditary predisposition, were disseminated widely at the beginning of the war" (385). Such theories also persisted well after the War (Myers SS ix). Increasingly, though, as the medical literature published throughout the War reveals, shell shock could not be isolated through any framework which pin-pointed predisposition through heredity or class, and which sought to separate officers from men of the ranks. In his own postwar memoir, for instance, Graves estimates that "there were proportionately twice as many neurasthenic officers as among men, though a man's average expectancy of trench service before getting killed or wounded was twice as long as an officer's" (144). However, Sassoon grimly notes that class privilege often enabled psychological injury to be more readily accommodated by the military infrastructure: whereas "balmy" officers out of the line might be sent home after a confidential report, "if a man became a dud in the ranks, he just remained where he was until he was killed or wounded" (MIO 26).

The fact that officers seemed to be especially prone to shell shock decisively challenged previous theories of hereditary degeneration fundamental to the categories of Victorian psychiatry. Moreover, theories of hereditary degeneration could not be applied to a massive volunteer army without controversy: "the ideological tables had been turned" (Stone 253). Ultimately, "by June 1918, there were six special neurological hospitals for officers and thirteen for other ranks" (Bogacz 235). Aetiological debates involving class, predisposition and heredity were clearly implicated in social contests demarcated by the stratified range of subject-positions within the specific historical context of early twentieth-century Britain. In its most virulent form, a class-based rhetoric of degeneration which eschewed the connections between shock and industrial warfare sought to reinscribe the losses occasioned by the Great War within a preexisting and prescribed set of losses which configured dominant norms of class in terms of abjection and prior impoverishment. Thus, shell shock's status as a socio-cultural object of mourning was confirmed even as it was actively repudiated.

Even the specification of the shell as the origin of the trauma must be understood in relation to the actual and ideal losses involved in trench warfare, a mode of combat which plays a decisive part in definitions of technological modernity. Given the unprecedented scale and effects of weaponry during the Great War, the exploding shell was often perceived

to take effect through internal secretions, carbon monoxide poisoning and concussion. For example, it was reasoned that "the bursting of a large shell in a closed space such as a trench led to `commotional shock' as the sudden rise of atmospheric pressure produced minute haemorrhages in the brain," leading to organic illness (Bourke 115). Such a pathoanatomical theory sought to connect the body to the weapon in a decisive fashion, highlighting the dilemmas posed by the mutually unstable categories of explosion and shock. But efforts which traced the effects of the shell's volatile action to the body could not stabilize the disorder, nor restrict consideration of the nature of shock, because many soldiers who had never been to the front presented nervous symptoms. In the opinion of F.W. Mott, the leading proponent of arguments linking shell shock to changes in the central nervous system, trench warfare produced "a new epoch in military medical science" (331). To summarize, the crises and complex losses of the War could not be located within the body, the traditional domain of medical expertise which renders injury potentially susceptible to autopsy, diagnosis or cure.

In spite of the diagnostic difficulty of precisely relating the effects of shock to the cause of the exploding shell, the linkage between industrial weaponry and traumatic shock was feared by the army as an actual or potential mode of narrative self-legitimation for frontline soldiers. Repor-

tedly, British soldiers popularly employed the designation of shock in self-diagnoses during the disastrous Battle of the Somme. In this connection, it is clear that any effort to understand shell shock must "take into account the willingness of the combatants to alter traditional moral definitions of acceptable military conduct by accepting this new medical category" (E. Brown STM 340, 323-24). Later in the War, seeking to sever the associational logic imbued in a designation which seemed to attribute the uncertain effects of traumatic shock to the conditions of industrial warfare, the name was changed to the acronym NYD-N, "Not Yet Diagnosed--Nervous," as a way of effectively foregrounding the soldier's implicatedness in factors of causation and restoring disciplinary and diagnostic authority to the military in relation to the disorder. In spite of the new classification, though, "shell shock" persisted as a popular term, and, as a result, afflicted soldiers were sometimes treated with "the regard and sympathy that should legitimately be reserved for the physically disabled" (Leed 166). However, the stigma associated with what was more often interpreted by many doctors as psychological breakdown is clearly reflected in Sassoon's desire to differentiate himself from the "failures" surrounding him in the military facility for shell shock (SP 523). Accordingly, he describes Craiglockhart in terms of "an unescapable atmosphere of humiliation" (SP 636). As Bourke maintains, in keeping with Sassoon's articulations of exter-

nally and internally-directed shame, "the more sympathetic response to neurasthenic ex-servicemen and the acknowledgement that they were `genuinely ill' (rather than cowards and malingerers) did not last" (118-19). Conflicts concerning the status of psychological injuries on the part of the army, civilians, and the soldiers themselves reveal the significance of shell shock as a contested site of socially-mediated losses.

A Crisis of Accountability

According to Feudtner, the conflict between physical explanations and psychological observations of the disorder eventually culminated in the establishment of the unconscious as "a new `social location'" which existed "somewhere outside the socially-accountable self" (395). As a result, shell shock challenged previous assumptions of conduct and seemed to demand the formulation of "a new ethics" of military conduct (Bogacz 249). Hence, shell shock is clearly implicated in the perceived loss of stable co-ordinates for selfhood, or traditional categories of reason and conscience, within military contexts. Doctors affirmed that "the strongest man when exposed to sufficiently intense and frequent stimuli may become subject to mental derangement" (Smith and Pear 89). Similarly, Mott dramatically declares that the trenches could "exhaust and eventually even shatter the strongest nervous system" (331). However, as Herbert's <u>The Secret Battle</u> illus-

trates, military models of masculinity were often effectively reconciled with the category of shell shock through a framework which stressed the disorder as an "ongoing individual psychological battle" which "privatized the lunacy of war," potentially leading to death or further traumatic injury after rotation back to the front (Feudtner 404). For instance, in another example, Sassoon recalls an incident in which he threatened a fellow officer who had "lost all control" with his pistol in order to force him to return to the line; in a terse afterthought, he reveals that this officer was killed ten days later in a "**bona fide** manner," a fact which is only recalled in order to augment the narrative of his own heroic actions (MIQ 54, 55). In this manner, the War itself and the social values which sustained it were minimized or even excerpted from aetiological consideration and shell shock itself became a regulative trope for masculine norms.

The social co-ordinates by which the military established the parameters of both heroic and ignoble norms of masculinity were, however, clearly undermined by the disciplinary crisis of shell shock. Treatments which emphasized the psychological disorder as a disease of the will, such as the electrical faradization advocated by Lewis Yealland in Hysterical Disorders of Warfare (1918), only served to underscore the coercive nature of masculine norms. Absence of personal accountability was a contentious issue for the military authorities. Ironically, reflecting on his own experiences

within a military hospital for shell-shocked soldiers, Sassoon himself summarizes the suspicious approach of the army official when he writes that "if `war neuroses' were indiscriminately encouraged, half the expeditionary force might go sick with a touch of neurasthenia" (SP 523). Suspicions of manipulation and malingering which regularly attend instances of psychological trauma due to their controversial or complex genesis, though, were complicated by the fact that cowardice and desertion were still considered capital offenses during the Great War (E. Brown HCP 505). In the final analysis, then, given the size of the problem, a disciplinary approach could not effectively confine the meaning of shell shock to the dictates of the military code: "there were limits on the number of men who could be executed without demoralizing the nation" (E. Brown STM 341).

Any understanding of the manner in which an official acceptance of the shell shock diagnosis functioned in the service of the military must contend with the manner in which both the conservative institutions of the government and the military sought to limit the range of meanings which attached to combat trauma. Sir John Collie, a famous prewar expert on malingering hostile to the claims of psychoanalysis, was appointed the director of Ministry of Pensions medical services (1918), an institutional branch responsible for administering to veterans formerly treated for shell shock. While the Ministry functioned as "a visible response to public

concern," its "objectives were to uphold and support a restrictive military view of shell shock and thereby limit financial liability" (Leese 1055). On the other hand, in contrast to the claims of the Ministry, for example, Graves declares after the War that "neurasthenia" developed in any soldier who had spent more than three or four weeks in the line; by his own admission, it had taken him ten years for intrusive thoughts and recollections of the War, which "persisted like an alternate life," to abate, as well as for his blood to "recover" from the effects of shock and stress (143-44, 240). While restricted definitions of shell shock were challenged in a diverse array of popular and elite cultural productions during and after the War, frequently leading to the revision of the social category of masculinity and its correlatives, cowardice and courage, not surprisingly, the actual responses of the government and the army to the plight of veterans were cautious and limited.[11] The constitutive military dichotomy between courage and cowardice in the army was only officially dismantled after the War (1930), when cowardice was no longer punishable by death (Bogacz 250). In the same year, the Mental Treatment Act was passed, enabling voluntary admission to mental institutions.

Doctors were placed in the position of mediating the claims of both the soldier and the army in the crisis of accountability occasioned by shell shock. For the most part, "the evaluation of psychological disability remained haphazard

and subjective" (Leese 1058). According to E. Brown, though, "the resolution of intellectual differences among doctors was strongly influenced by the social consequences of their ideas" (HCP 501). Along with issues involving compensation, justice, and blame, debates over aetiology and treatment were thus clearly linked to the practical outcomes of military service. Rivers, whom J. Herman describes as a champion of humane and progressive treatment (21), continues to play a central role in the British cultural construction of the Great War, particularly in light of Sassoon's devoted account of his former doctor as a man "with peace in the pools of his spectacled eyes and a wisely omnipotent grin" ("Letter to Robert Graves" 21-22). Rivers interpreted shell shock as a conflict articulated by the body between the instinct for self- preservation in the context of danger and the socially-mediated values and imperatives expressed by an adherence to duty. Quite significant in his approach is an emphasis on the cumulative effects of constant proximity to danger and death. As Stone summarizes his position, Rivers "centred his aetiological account on the emotional world of the battlefield" (255).

In this manner, Rivers vehemently refutes any aetiology of shell shock which disregards the actualities of the Western Front. Moreover, he redefines Freudian "repression" as a voluntaristic practice amplifying the damage caused to the shell-shocked who obeyed social imperatives to deny or

minimize the affect and details of mental disturbances, thereby acknowledging the role of socially-mediated practices which contested the losses occasioned by psychological injury. Generally, Rivers does not focus on any single overwhelming past traumatic event, but rather on "present conflict between the soldier's desire to banish his recent experiences from his mind and their insistent return" (Whitehead 679). However, Rivers also acknowledges that single events on the Western Front could bear an aetiological relationship to subsequent effects, as in the situation of "a young officer who was flung down by the explosion of a shell so that his face struck the distended abdomen of a German several days dead, the impact of his fall rupturing the swollen corpse" ("RWE" IU 192). In this incident, the abject status of external events is powerfully emphasized. Ultimately, in contrast to Freud, who stressed the commonalities of the war neuroses with the "refractory" neuroses of peace wherever possible (SE 17: 209), Rivers viewed the Great War as "a vast crucible in which all our preconceived views concerning human nature have been tested," thereby explicitly acknowledging the collective import of the shell shock crisis (IU 252).

Situated within the disciplinary network of the army, though, Rivers responded to the "demand for the revirilization of the demoralized soldier" in which return to combat effectively constituted cure (Leys "TC" 632). Such an approach militated against any criticism of the War, or any general

awareness of the manner in which "shell shock theories were an expression and a fulfilment of complex social needs" (Feudtner 399). In West's fiction, The Return of the Soldier, on the other hand, shell shock is represented as one of the only means for a man to resist his socially-imposed role by shattering "the familiar frame of things" (16). West powerfully exploits an ironic vision of "cure" as the shell-shocked soldier resumes his memory as well as his military gait and "a dreadful, decent smile" prior to his inevitable return to military service, the chief task of the military physician (187). In retrospect, commenting on the pivotal roles of doctors within the military bureaucracy, Freud shrewdly remarks that "the insoluble conflict between the claims of humanity, which normally carry decisive weight for a physician, and the demands of a national war was bound to confuse his activity" (SE 17: 214).

While doctors committed to military edicts may have sought to circumscribe the meaning of the shell shock crisis, and by extension, the War, within medical and disciplinary practices, frontline soldiers often struggled to specify their condition as a socially-inflicted site of loss. This is most dramatically evident in Sassoon's letter of protest (1917), directed not against "the conduct of the war but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed" (MIO 207). A diagnosis of shell shock, ironically, enabled Sassoon's act of pacifism to be classified

as a war neurosis, a private conflict, rather than an offense worthy of court-martial (Showalter "RS" 67). Civilians, though, those whom Sassoon accused of "callous complacency" and insufficient imagination, were also confronted with the breakdown of clear norms of masculinity and military conduct (MIO 207).

Following Freud, who highlights the "mental distress" experienced by noncombatants (SE 14: 275), Tate documents the way in which many civilian writers experienced the Great War in relation to a profound crisis of social location: "is it inside or outside; in the world or in your mind; inscribed upon your own body or upon the bodies you have seen?" (95). In West's fiction, for instance, the civilian narrator is only free of nightmares after her childhood friend returns home in a state of partial amnesia: "no more did I see his body rotting into union with that brown texture of corruption which is No Man's Land, no more did I see him slipping softly down the parapet into the trench, no more did I hear voices talking in a void . . . " (146-47). More generally, Mr. Britling is "haunted by long processions of refugees," images of the dead, and "anticipations of the frightful economic and social dissolution" in the future (Wells 417). By 1916, the British medical journal The Lancet confirmed the existence of varying degrees of "war neuroses" in civilians.[12] Medical and psychoanalytic discourses could not effectively contain the collective crises of meaning occasioned by the War. As Brigid

Doherty argues in relation to the German context, medical literature and treatment methods for wartime neurasthenics were later deployed to disturbing effect in postwar cultural productions, such as Dada montage (128).[13]

Shell shock and Hysteria

Shell shock seemed to emerge in a cryptic language which dramatized dilemmas of referentiality, and bodily symptoms became subject to interpretation and decoding. The outward manifesta-tions of shell shock were classified by many medical practi-tioners and psychoanalysts in relation to hysteria, among other nervous conditions, a classification which attests to the impulse to categorize the phenomena of traumatic shock within a prior repertoire of diagnosis and "cure."[14] Freud's own early research on hysteria has subsequently played a critical role in constituting hysteria as a "haunted object" in feminist theory and contemporary trauma scholarship, significantly complicating any discussion of its relationship to shell shock.[15] In spite of work undertaken on male hysteria by Jean-Martin Charcot and Freud himself, hysteria has been widely conceptualized as "the daughter's disease," a phrase coined by Juliet Mitchell (308). Given the frequent conjunc-tion of shell shock and hysteria in medical and psychoanalytic literature during the War, then, the conjunction has often been subsequently interpreted as an indication of the de-stabilization of discourses of masculinity.

Following the work of Leed, for example, Showalter's feminist comparison between domestic spaces and the confined spaces of warfare emphasizes a correlation between hysteria and emasculation: "men were silenced and immobilized and forced, like women, to express their conflicts through the body" (FM 171). Rather than highlighting the specific contexts engaged by the diagnostic categories of hysteria and shell shock, she concludes that "shell-shock was the male counterpart of hysteria, a discourse of masculinity addressed to patriarchal thought" (FM 194). In keeping with her argument, Showalter maintains that "the efficacy of the term `shell shock' lay in its power to provide a masculine-sounding substitute for the effeminate associations of hysteria and to disguise the troubling parallels between male war neurosis and the female nervous disorders epidemic before the war" (HBF 321). In this regard, Showalter indicates that the manifest convergence of hysteria and shell shock was generally opposed to prevailing discourses of sexual difference which informed medical and psychoanalytic constructions of trauma along gendered lines.

In my view, though, the persuasiveness of Showalter's polemic is qualified due to her insufficient attention to distinctions between hysteria and shell shock. Furthermore, her approach, which emphasizes "hysterical symptoms as a response to powerlessness," requires greater nuance than that afforded through the decontextualized and exclusive

privileging of gendered variables (Showalter HBF 304). Certainly, commenting on the construction of hysteria, Mitchell is correct to point out that "the question of sexual difference--femininity and mascu-linity--was built into the very structure of the illness" (386). But Showalter merely redeploys the established conjunction of sexual difference and hysteria rather than subjecting these interrelated issues to contextualized analysis. In another approach to hysteria which interrogates established emphases, for example, Tate questions the contaminated associational chain which links women, hysteria and castration in Freudian theory by foregrounding the complex entanglement of postwar historical contexts in the consolidation of discourses of sexual difference. Drawing upon Freud's formulation of sexual difference (1925), she asks, "is the very notion of woman as castrated a fetishistic response to the traumatic site of damaged men--a response which simultaneously acknowledges the fact of war injury and displaces the image on to woman?" (100). In contrast to Showalter, then, Tate's question speculates on the manner in which the historically-mediated losses of the Great War may be effaced or displaced within prior economies of loss troped in relation to the feminine, economies in which "female subjectivity represents the site at which the male subject deposits his lack" (Silverman 46).

While Tate's question focuses on the potential associations between castration and war-related physical injury, in

my view shell shock remains a more contested and abstract site of losses within postwar social, medical, and psychoanalytic discourses, a site of losses which could neither be troped in relation to the feminine along the lines of Tate's speculation, nor nominally differentiated and recuperated through the reassertion of a "masculine-sounding" proper name, as Showalter maintains (HBF 321). Rather, any discussion of the effects of a collective trauma such as the Great War must remain attentive to the specificity of socio-historical circumstances which culminate in massive death. Like sexual difference, which also operates through a visual economy, "hysteria is constructed out of the perceived ability to categorize and classify categories of difference visually" (Gilman 434). Shell shock, though, is implicated in categories of difference beyond those which had been consolidated in relation to hysteria (cf. Freud BPP 281). In spite of shell shock's manifest similarity to hysterical symptomology, then, my argument for its construction as "hysteria's other" is not merely implicated in the differential abjection of women's experience, but in the disturbing challenges which the unforeseen and protracted collapse of massive numbers of men within the context of industrialized warfare posed to pre-existing categories of difference and classification.[16] Conflating shell shock and hysteria only contributes to the problem of articulating the unresolved histories of these distinct and vexed phenomena. Caruth formulates this problem

of comparison in an adroit fashion when she asks, "how, indeed, can one compare what is **not** fully mastered or grasped in experience, or what is missed, in two separate situations?" (UE 124 n14).

Showalter's sustained recourse to the category of hysteria in her discussions of shell shock, and more recently, in relation to other claims of traumatic experience, does not address the unresolved nature of hysteria's history.[17] In fact, Freud's contributions to the history of hysteria continue to elicit many provocative viewpoints which actively contend with hysteria's status as a "haunted object" in past and present scholarship, a facet of research overlooked in formulations which do not attend to the contested nature of distinct forms of trauma. For in-stance, Christine Froula situates Freud's recantation of the seduction theory within what she terms "the hysterical cultural script: the cultural text that dictates to males and females alike the necessity of silencing woman's speech when it threatens the father's power" (623). Inspired by the work of Luce Irigaray and others, Froula specifies the feminine as the haunting and constitutive absence of Western patriarchal discourses, including psychoanalytic discourse on hysteria. And, introducing the variable of race, Sander Gilman makes the compelling observation that Freud himself, as an Eastern male Jew, was placed at the "center of risk" in discourses of hysteria which frequently made foundational claims associating Jews and disease: "the clinical gaze of the

Jewish physician now becomes the object of the gaze of study" (436, 411). In Gilman's view, then, Freud's formulations of hysteria are haunted by a history of racial trauma which the psychoanalyst was compelled to negotiate through his deprivileging of visual categories of difference previously considered fundamental to the diagnosis of the hysteric.[18] According to these thoughtful scholars, hysteria must be recontextualized in relation to Freud's own historical period. Moreover, hysteria remains haunted by its ongoing relevance to discourses involving sexual and racial difference: discourses of the feminine, the body, and Jewish identity, situating it in highly problematic relationship to other varieties of traumatic experience.

Beyond the Pleasure Principle

Although Beyond the Pleasure Principle sets out to offer a global theory of the traumatic neuroses, this text inevitably leaves many unanswered questions in its wake. One of the most influential considerations of trauma ever undertaken, Freud's text is shaped, in part, by pivotal reconsiderations of psychoanalysis occasioned by the war neuroses. After assimilating shell shock into the category of the traumatic neuroses, though, Freud's intervention effectively foregrounds the more general problem of mourning and trauma for subsequent practice and scholarship. His text, critically informed by the shell shock crisis, continues to be engaged,

adapted, and rendered increasingly relevant in ongoing post-traumatic exchanges with the past at the end of the twentieth century. In many respects, then, psychoanalytic scholarship which struggles to reformulate issues introduced in Beyond the Pleasure Principle in order to counteract the specters of recent historical trauma effectively recalls the specters of the Great War.

In order to be tenable, a global theory of the traumatic neuroses called for a review of prior psychoanalytic tenets, a body of precedent which had been subject to acute controversy in Britain during the shell shock debates. The war neuroses, for example, could not be explained with reference to the pleasure principle, which Freud also refers to as "the principle of constancy," first formulated in the Studies on Hysteria (1895): "the work of the mental apparatus is directed towards keeping the quantity of excitation low" (BPP 277). Instead, as Freud discerns, in the wake of trauma, the pleasure principle is "put out of action" (BPP 301). Moreover, the literal reenactments of fear and danger evident in the nightmares of veterans and accident victims challenged the wish-fulfilling theory of dreams Freud offered in his epochal work, The Interpretation of Dreams (1900) (cf. Whitehead 681). Instead, "dreams occurring in traumatic neuroses have the characteristic of repeatedly bringing the patient back into the situation of his accident, a situation from which he wakes up in another fright" (BPP 282). As Freud is forced to

speculate in his effort to consolidate a global category of trauma, "if there is a `beyond the pleasure principle,' it is only consistent to grant that there was also a time before the purpose of dreams was the fulfilment of wishes" (BPP 305). Furthermore, cases of trauma did not manifest conscious anxiety and obsession in accord with previous theories of the neuroses. Rather, "fright" was observed to be a fixation in the dreams of traumatized individuals rather than in their waking life, indicating "a lack of any preparedness for anxiety," a lack of preparedness deemed central to the traumatic encounter (BPP 303). Thus, trauma is associated not with the activation of "a repressed desire or thwarted pleasure principle, but to a force which is **beyond** the pleasure principle" (Silverman 57). Clearly, then, trauma posed many challenges to the major formulations of psychoanalysis, most notably the pleasure principle and dream interpretation.

In the face of such challenges, it is important to note that Freud turns to an intensive pursuit of evolutionary origins, rather than to any investigation of the specific contexts of railway accidents or shell shock on the Western Front. In this connection, Laplanche is certainly correct to maintain that the affirmation of origins clearly functions as "one of the fundamental, founding orientations of Freud's thought" (123). Thus, in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, a work which speculates on memory, temporality, death, and the malig-

nant forces of repetition in human affairs, "the biological field does in fact play the part of the underlying bedrock" (Freud SE 23: 252). For instance, Freud invokes embryology, germ-cells, protozoa, protista, and animalcules. Laplanche speculates that these inchoate, partially bounded, or primitive organisms bear a metonymic relationship to the human ego, highlighting Freud's efforts to conjure the origin of consciousness in order to formulate his theory of the traumatic neuroses (123).

In support of Laplanche's hypotheses, Freud foregrounds the continuities of human life with the ancient past through his discussion of the protective shield: "**protection against** stimuli is an almost more important function for the living organism than **reception of** stimuli," given "the enormous energies at work in the external world" (BPP 298, 299). Accordingly, trauma is defined as "a breach in an otherwise efficacious barrier against stimuli" (BPP 301). The traumatic neuroses are ultimately treated as the occasion for an examination of the development of the species rather than the individual. Even as he charts the constitutive disjunction between the present and the past occasioned by the individual experience of trauma, Freud adheres to a phylogenetic view of the psyche. Such a view, which emphasizes the "historically determined" nature of instincts, involves a belief that each individual somehow recapitulates in an abbreviated form the entire development of the human race (BPP 309). As Lucille

Ritvo documents, Freud and Sándor Ferenczi were engaged in a project to reconcile the psychoanalytic concept of the unconscious and evolutionary theories of adaptation during the years of the Great War, a project which was never formally completed, but which clearly informs other work undertaken during this period (55-58).

The traumatic neuroses, and indirectly, shell shock, then, are situated in relation to a mode of transhistorical memory based on unchanging ancient memory-traces in the unconscious. This unchanging mode of collective memory contrasts with Freud's claims for the mobile representations of memory which are subject to interpretation under the rubric of psychoanalysis. Freud's concept of deferred action (**Nachträglichkeit**), particularly relevant in relation to unassimilated traumatic experience, for instance, attests to a model of memory in which "consciousness constitutes its own past, constantly subjecting its meaning to revision in conformity with its `project'" (Laplanche and Pontalis 112). In response to Freud's distinct models of memory, models of memory significant to any discussion of traumatic memory, Terdiman persuasively concludes that Freud "conceives memory through two divergent, perhaps irreconcilable models for understanding the past's presence and its effectivity" (290). Freudian psychoanalysis thus serves as a culmination of modernity's "memory crisis": in Freud's "attempt to unravel the complications of the mnemonic, he magnified its field, its

centrality--and its ambivalence--more insistently and more powerfully than any other theorist in the modern period" (Terdiman 242).

In particular, Freud's appeal to a mode of trans-historical memory, an appeal he also makes in his final work, Moses and Monotheism (1939), attests to his vision of the collective import of our response to trauma: "if we assume the survival of these memory-traces in the archaic heritage, we have bridged the gulf between individual and mass psychology" (128). However, his appeal to biology to "arrest the slippages of psychoanalytic interpretation" ultimately situates his analysis of trauma "beyond psychoanalysis itself" (Terdiman 332). Thus, while Freud suggests that the individual experience of trauma constitutes a crisis of belatedness, in which neither anxiety nor interpretive agency can be mobilized in time, his own global construction of trauma is ultimately implicated in a profound crisis of socio-cultural temporal location, neither exclusively confined to individual nor collective development, the present nor the past. In accord with my own viewpoint, then, Santner comments that "there can be little doubt that Freud's understanding of the workings of the human mind and culture cannot dispense with the dynamics of haunting" ("F" 34).

In particular, Freud's elaboration of the death instinct, which derives from the prehistoric past but continues to operate decisively in human affairs, can be understood as a

mode of unchanging collective memory. Yet, the hypothesis of the death instinct continues to be regarded as "one of the most controversial of psycho-analytic concepts" (Laplanche and Pontalis 97). Declaring that "all instincts tend towards the restoration of an earlier state of things," Freud conjectures that "the attributes of life were at some time evoked in inanimate matter by the action of a force of whose nature we can form no conception" (BPP 310, 311). Based on the conflict between organic life and inanimate matter, he speculates that the "origin and aim of life" is death, that "instinctual life as a whole serves to bring about death" (BPP 311). His theory privileges the regressive character of human instincts based upon the compulsion to repeat he associates with "the instinct to return to the inanimate state" (BPP 311, 333). However, concerning the truth of his own hypotheses, Freud offers a disclaimer: "I am not convinced myself and . . . I do not seek to persuade other people to believe in them" (BPP 332).[19]

Significantly, the compulsion to repeat associated with trauma is bound up with the death drive, which is also described in terms of "excitations from within" which do not meet with any protective shield against stimuli (BPP 306). When consciousness is flooded as a result of internal and/or external stimuli, then, the difficulty arises of "mastering the amounts of stimulus which have broken in and of binding them": the problems of psychic binding are central to the problems of mourning (BPP 301). In this connection, mourning

may be understood as a compulsion to repeat which is governed by the economy of the pleasure principle, a scenario exemplified by Freud's description of his grandson's action of "staging the disappearance and return of the objects within his reach" in his mother's absence (BPP 285). Alternately, it may refer to actions considered to lie beyond the pleasure principle, actions subject to the compulsively experienced reenactments resembling melancholia, as in the war neuroses (BPP 285). Clearly, nightmares, for instance, bear a significant relationship to the effort to achieve the psychical binding of trauma. But if trauma represents "the outcome of the radical unbinding of the death drive" (Leys "DM" 50), then how can the compulsion to repeat, the "very attempt **to claim one's own survival**" (Caruth UE 64), be recuperated and bound under the restored operation of the pleasure principle? In short, how can trauma be mourned?

The critical problem of binding, though, is assessed as a "large unknown factor" in any investigation of trauma (BPP 302). Freud offers successive and even contradictory positions on this problem. In the first instance, he says it is clear that the binding of excitations proceeds "not, indeed, in **opposition** to the pleasure principle, but independently of it and to some extent in disregard of it" (BPP 307). Later he maintains that the operation of psychic binding "occurs on **behalf** of the pleasure principle; the binding is a preparatory act which introduces and assures the dominance of the pleasure

principle" (BPP 336). Further into the essay, in an even more baffling formulation, he asserts that "the pleasure principle seems actually to serve the death instincts"; "the death instincts seem to do their work unobtrusively" (BPP 337). All of these vacillations and modifications contextualize the significant nature of the dilemma, a dilemma central to considerations of trauma and mourning, namely, the interaction between the pleasure principle and the death instinct, "that factor which determines the actual **principle** of all instinct" (Laplanche and Pontalis 102).

The unresolved questions of Freud's text are brought into sharp focus by commentary on his anecdotal representation of mourning, namely, his grandson's efforts to contend with loss through the agencies of a substitutory object. Freud describes his grandson's game of fort/da with the wooden reel in the absence of his mother as a "great cultural achievement" (BPP 285). While he disclaims the representative status of this incident, he tends to privilege it as an example of the effort to achieve mastery, highlighting the significant transition from passivity to activity enacted through the manipulation of the reel: "at the outset he was in a **passive** situation--he was over-powered by the experience; but, by repeating it, un-pleasurable though it was, as a game, he took on an **active** part" (BPP 285). Describing the child's labours with the reel as a "homeopathic procedure" through which he is able to "administer in controlled doses the absence he is mourning,"

Santner compares the child play-adapting to separation and the repetitive reenactments of the trauma survivor, highlighting the recursive and compulsive patterns inextricably related to their respective mourning tasks, in spite of their distinct contexts and economies (SQ 20, 25).[20]

In line with Lifton's own emphasis on World War One's "traumas to the movement" (BC 164), however, Beyond the Pleasure Principle itself could be said to manifest the compulsion to repeat, reciting and reviewing the history of psychoanalysis in relation to major concepts and issues, in its effort to effect a mastery of the traumatic neuroses. But the psychic labours facilitated through the reel or through writing can "give no evidence of the operation of tendencies **beyond** the pleasure principle," tendencies "more primitive, more elementary, more instinctual than the pleasure principle which it overrides" (BPP 287, 294). In the end, Freud's text offers no final conclusions on the related problems of the death instinct, the pleasure principle, and trauma and mourning. Rather, commentators have taken up the issues Freud failed to resolve as an aspect of his ongoing legacy, demonstrating that "one truly enters into Freud's own text only when one finds oneself unsettled, compelled, by its deep and animating enigmas" (Santner "F" 41).

Mourning Beyond the Pleasure Principle?

Recent theoretical readings stress the reel's signifi-

cance exclusively in relation to "disappearance" rather than "return," loss rather than recuperation (BPP 284). For instance, in Irigaray's gloss, Freud is "pleased that his grandson, in all innocence, gives him what he needs to go on writing his own text, his own life, both their lives" (SG 30). She thus interprets the incident in relation to Freud's own quest to ritualize and symbolically master a process of loss or threat even as he seeks to efface his role as a "motivated witness," a viewpoint which sharply contrasts with Freud's construction of the event as one of many "heroic male narratives of renunciation" (Derrida PC 298; Zeiger 4). And, declaring that the incident is "already too legendary, over-burdened, obliterated," in spite of its "ellipses everywhere," Derrida nonetheless contributes to the proliferation of commentary on the anecdote when he describes the fort/da game as "the scene of an interminably repeated supplementation" which cannot be linked to any form of mastery or conclusive consolation (PC 298, 313).

Also in contrast to Freud's principal emphasis, Lacan argues that "the function of the exercise with this object refers to an alienation, and not to some supposed mastery, which is difficult to imagine being increased in an endless repetition . . ." (FFC 239). According to Lacan, then, this incident demonstrates the process by which the child "deploys language for the first time in a differential system, and so stages the trauma of his own disappearance" (Silverman 62).

Leys corroborates some of Lacan's post-Freudian emphases when she points out that the fort/da game implies "an organized ego capable of libidinally cathecting or incorporating a desired object" which is contrary to the infant's "fascination with the object" in situations of trauma ("DM" 56). And Caruth highlights Freud's "curious wavering" about the status of the game by questioning its ultimate significance in relation to departure or return (UE 65). In her interpretation, which treats the reel as a trope for traumatic experience, the incident suggests that the theory of trauma "engages a notion of history exceeding individual bounds," ensuring disappearance and deferral rather than return (Caruth UE 66). In one way or another, then, all these theorists undermine Freud's emphasis on the incident in relation to mastery. The game, originally interpreted within the economy of the pleasure principle, is reinterpreted according to an economy of loss or disappearance; it is troped in relation to trauma, to processes beyond the pleasure principle.

Contemporary discussions of Beyond the Pleasure Principle continue to generate a profusion of views on the "story of the spool," an "anecdote that could have been taken as banal, impoverished, truncated, told in passing, and without the slightest import" (Derrida PC 304). But the short incident of a small child and his attempts to stage presence and absence, related in a fragmented and speculative manner, remains central to theoretical considerations of ritual, loss,

alienation, mourning and trauma. While the incident is not explicitly related to the problem of repetition beyond the pleasure principle, its suggestive and enigmatic character constitutes it as a site of enormous transferential and explanatory investments. The recent interpretations of loss by Irigaray, Derrida, Lacan, Leys, and Caruth, among others, militate against any orthodox model of affective closure, emphasizing the manner in which rituals of mourning may bear a supplementary relationship to melancholia. The implications of this theoretical and pragmatic perspective on mourning are explored in greater detail in the next two chapters.

At this juncture, however, Silverman's brilliant study of shell shock and masculinity in Male Subjectivity at the Margins (1992) requires consideration, given her attention to the lacunae in Beyond the Pleasure Principle. Significantly, she begins by highlighting the contradiction between "an instinct for mastery" which seeks to transform a passive relationship to an active one, and the compulsive, and thereby, passively experienced, role of repetition in the very same quest for mastery (57). She points out that the death instinct is linked to the repetition of experiences "which render the subject hyperbolically passive"; mastery, on the other hand, often associated with masculinity, is linked to active modes of repetition mediated through the linguistic rather than the affective register (59). Yet, these modes of repetition, compulsive passivity and active mastery, exist "in

a strangely intimate manner," particularly in relation to what Silverman defines as "the dominant fiction" of masculinity "because of its ideological alignment with mastery" (59, 61). Her rereading of Freud problematizes without resolving the vexed connections between masculinity, shell shock, and repetition: since war trauma "can only be bound through repetition, yet is itself nothing more than the imperative to repeat unpleasure, disintegration constantly haunts the subject's attempts to effect a psychic synthesis" (61).

In Silverman's interpretation, then, the war neuroses signal a critical disruption of the "dominant fiction" of masculinity which can no longer effectively efface male lack. Her theses are certainly borne out by the narrative aftermath of the Great War. In elite postwar literary texts, legacies of trauma and loss inform the construction of male character, from "T.S. Eliot's mysteriously sterile Fisher King and Ernest Hemingway's sadly emasculated Jake Barnes to Ford Madox Ford's symbolically sacrificed O Nine Morgan and Lawrence's paralyzed Clifford Chatterly," attesting to the manner in which the crises of masculinity occasioned by the War were explicitly voiced in relation to sexual lack (Gilbert and Gubar 260). As Silverman continues, only a process of postwar "cultural binding" works to reassert a "gradual reaffirmation and reconstitution of the dominant fiction" (64). Such a process of "cultural binding" can be noted in connection with the reassertion of the male heroic ideal in Britain between 1918-

26 (Bourke 211). In the face of the ideological ruptures occasioned by widespread male dismemberment, massive death, and the war neuroses, it is clear that the process of "cultural binding" specified by Silverman required collective efforts. These collective efforts arguably restored the sustained fictions of masculinity and mastery through the denial of mourning and the repudiation of shell shock as a socio-cultural object of loss, a denial of trauma which is explored further in the discussions of Owen and Sassoon and Woolf's Mrs Dalloway in Part Two. More generally, though, as Silverman foregrounds the problem of mourning in relation to the crises of war, melancholia constitutes an abiding precondition for the eventual cultural recuperation of the dominant fiction.

Conclusion

While Freud does not explicitly address the traumatic neuroses as socio-cultural objects of mourning, Beyond the Pleasure Principle contends, in diverse ways, with death and its correlatives, "`the negative': aggression, destruction, sado-masochism, hatred" (Laplanche 107). According to Freud, the War itself is explained through the persistence of the primitive within civilization: "the man of prehistoric times survives unchanged in our unconscious" (SE 14: 296). In fact, in a development of his views from Totem and Taboo (1913-14), Freud argues that the primitive persists precisely in relation

to our inability to resolve ambivalence of feeling: our unconscious is "murderously inclined towards strangers, just as divided (that is, ambivalent) towards those we love, as was primeval man" (SE 14: 299). The ambivalence of feeling Freud associates with the Great War also serves as the basis for his discussion of the disordered mourning of melancholia. In effect, even though Freud advocates the practices of "working-through" fundamental to mourning in "Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through," emphasizing the potential for revision and abreaction in the face of repression, Freud often stresses an incomplete process of mourning in his psychoanalytic model of individual and collective development. He traces the "conflict of feeling at the death of loved yet alien and hated persons" to the origin of speculative thought, implicating humanity in timeless, melancholic propensities which are inextricably linked with the recurrence of trauma and conflict (SE 14: 293; Rose WW 19).

Yet Freud also clearly identifies the Great War with a profound sense of collective "disillusionment," appropriately describing it as "more bloody and more destructive than any war of other days" (SE 14: 275). He rightly fears that it "threatens to leave a legacy of embitterment that will make any renewal of . . . bonds impossible for a long time to come" (SE 14: 278-79). Freud thus implicitly identifies the Great War as an event which demands the mourning of many losses, actual and ideal, in spite of his alternative construction of

historical trauma as an expression of the constitutional ambivalence of humanity which is always already unable to mourn. As Whalen indicates, "understanding death, finding a language with which to express the reality of death, had become the haunting task of Europeans" (22). But Freud's text is itself haunted by trauma and death; more specifically, Beyond the Pleasure Principle remains haunted by the specter of melancholic "return," in so far as it is unable to address or reformulate the nature of mourning in relation to the death drive.

Shell shock, a manifest testament to the survival of numerous psychic and actual encounters with death, played a decisive and disturbing role in the postwar effort to undertake the "haunting task" of subjecting the traumatic legacies of the Great War to codification. While the physically wounded soldier may "[carry] a complex of meanings back into civilian society" (Tate 96), the unprecedented number and uncertain nature of shell-shocked soldiers contributed to a complex crisis of cultural mediation in the aftermath of the Great War. In accord with Tal's discussion of "medicalization" as a method of "cultural coping" in the aftermath of historical trauma (6), shell shock was classified by medical and psychoanalytic literature in connection with a wide range of traumatic disorders including railway spine and hysteria. Shell shock cases were frequently situated within a genealogy of trauma which preceded the War. Within the

immediate and unprecedented contexts of trench warfare, however, shell shock both stimulated and challenged medical, psychiatric and psychoanalytic quests for origins and "cure," highlighting shell shock's status as a "haunted object" within the scientific, medical and psychoanalytic fields which subjected it to analysis. In Sherston's Progress, for instance, Sassoon vividly describes the manner in which the mind of an afflicted officer could be compared to an "aquarium," suitable for the application of "scientific terminology" during daylight hours; however, at night, the hospital is transformed into an "underworld," in which each victim of shell shock is possessed by "dream disasters and delusions," immune from the exhortations or ministrations of medicine (557, 556). In the same fashion, the events which configured the collective socio-cultural losses exemplified by shell shock consistently exceeded the medical, psychoanalytic, popular and elite discourses which sought to account for them.

While "medicalization" generally functioned as an effective short-term disciplinary strategy for rehabilitating shell-shocked men for return to the front, the complex individual and cultural losses of shell shock could not be stabilized and recuperated within pre-existing discursive registers. My inter-pretation of medicalization as a strategy of cultural coping in the aftermath of the War highlights the general failures of this process. Rather, I discuss the ways in which medical and psychoanalytic discourses themselves

contributed to the specification of shell shock as a "haunted object." These discourses could not finally contain shell shock within an exclusive forensic or interpretive domain which effectively repudiated the wider socio-cultural relevance of its status as an object con-textualized by processes of unresolved mourning. Shell shock demanded "a degree of collective confrontation of death and loss," a sustained confrontation often explicitly engaged by a diverse array of fictional and poetic texts which continue to haunt our imagination of the Great War (Lifton BC 296).

Chapter One

Notes

1. A dramatic narrative representation of the frontsoldier as both witness and captive to events can be found in Macaulay's Non-Combatants and Others (1916): "Outside his own window, John . . . . was saying things from time to time . . . . Things quite different from the things he had said at dinner. Only his eyes, as Alix had met them between the daffodils, had spoken at all like this; and even that had not been like this. His eyes were now wide and wet, and full of a horror beyond speech. They turned towards Alix and looked through her, beyond her, unseeing. John was fast asleep" (18).

2. See, for example, Lifton, Silverman, Caruth, Hartman, Santner, LaCapra, Leys, A. Young, Crimp.

3. Recent scholars and psychoanalysts characterize the dynamic of discovery and disavowal in Freud's early career as unresolved. In this manner, Laub and Auerhahn extend the crisis of knowledge inherent in trauma to a crisis in the analyst (288). And in the opinion of Rand and Torok, Freud's vacillation with respect to the "fundamental question" of trauma and phantasy "has affected every aspect of his theory; unknowingly, we still labour under its influence" (OF 3).

And discussing one of Freud's early works on hysteria, in The Knotted Subject: Hysteria and its Discontents (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998), Elisabeth Bronfen declares that "each critic of Freud's interpretation, seeking to fill the original text's gaps, repeats the inability to find closure that haunts Freud's own rendition" (xiv).

The work of Bronfen, Laub and Auerhahn, as well as the commentary of Rand and Torok, among others, contends with hysteria as a "haunted object" within psychoanalysis, suggesting that contemporary approaches to trauma informed by psychoanalysis must continue to contend with the specific history of hysteria even as scholars turn their attention to urgent and diverse traumatic phenomena associated with specific socio-historical events such as the World Wars.

4. Turn-of-the-century debates on hysteria continue to function as a pivotal point of departure for many discussions of trauma in its wake. Herman identifies the legacy of Freud's recantation in the following manner: "in spite of a vast body of literature empirically documenting the phenomena of psychological trauma, debate still centers on the basic question of whether these phenomena are credible and real" (8). On the other hand, Leys disparages trauma scholarship which foregrounds questions of aetiology, charging that such discussion merely enumerates "the reductive terms in which the theory of the trauma" is "understood as an external historical

event that befalls the already-constituted female subject" (FTP 168). Yet, even those feminist scholars who severely qualify the importance of debates regarding aetiology, including Leys, note the significance of asserting that "the insistence on the reality of violence is a necessary and important task" when discussing trauma (Caruth "TE" 8).

5. For Graves's account of Sassoon's protest letter and its consequences, including his own involvement in the "rigging" of the medical board, see Goodbye to all That (212-17): "being in nearly as bad a state of nerves as Siegfried myself, I burst into tears three times during my statement" (216). His book, Poetic Unreason (1925), is an exploration of theories of poetry which is highly influenced by his own War experiences as well as the work of Rivers. For Sassoon's version of events, in which Graves is fictionalized as David Cromlech, see the last chapter of Memoirs of an Infantry Officer.

6. For more on the Report, also see Thomas (1987). Other events which attest to the significance of shell shock as a socio-cultural phenomenon include the Fifth International Psycho-Analytical Congress, held in Budapest in 1918, which conducted a symposium on the war neuroses, as well as the First International Dada Fair held in Berlin in 1920, which exploited modes of representation which explicitly associated images of soldiers, combat and trauma (Doherty 1997).

7. For a narrative of the Great War which opposes the prevailing construction of the horrific and futile nature of combat experience, see Ernest Raymond's bestselling novel, Tell England (1922). The book was also later made into a popular movie.

8. In one of his letters, Owen observes of The Pretty Lady that it is a book "which the century needs, as much as the Victorians needed Oliver Twist" (CL 546).

9. See Orpen's An Onlooker in France, 1917-19 (London: Williams and Norgate, 1921).

10. For details of Dyett's case, as well as Herbert's novel, see Babington.

11. See May Sinclair's novel, The Romantic (New York: Macmillan, 1920), for a hostile representation of military "cowardice" within an ambulance unit.

12. See "War Shock in the Civilian," for example, in the Lancet (March 4 1916): 522.

13. On Dada montage, trauma and the simulation of shock effects, compare the contrasting views of Doherty and Peter

Bürger. Doherty argues that "dada montage, assemblage, and sound poetry engage on the level of form as well as content aspects of traumatic shock and its treatment as they emerged in German culture during and immediately after World War I . . . . the making and the viewing of montage should themselves be seen as **traumatophilic**. Dada montage aimed to be mimetic of traumatic shock in such a way that the materialization of shock experiences would be effected in the bodies of both the maker and the beholder of the dada object" (128).

On the other hand, see Bürger's discussion of Dada photomontage in Theory of the Avant-Garde, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1989): "the problem with shock as the intended reaction of the recipient is that it is generally nonspecific . . . . A further difficulty inheres in the aesthetics of shock, and that is the impossibility to make permanent this kind of effect. Nothing loses its effectiveness more quickly than shock; by its very nature, it is a unique experience . . . . Such a nearly institutionalized shock probably has a minimal effect on the way the recipients run their lives. The shock is `consumed'" (80-81).

14. However, at this time, diagnoses are informed by a range of assumptions which connect hysteria to generalizations regarding class, genetic predisposition, and malingering. For instance, Rivers observes the relevance of hysteria to shell-shocked soldiers within a framework which stratifies masculinities within hierarchies of class and position at the front. Given the distinct duties of officers and men of the ranks, Rivers identifies anxiety and hysteria as the respective modes of shock typified in each group. He discusses hysteria as a "crude solution of the conflict between instinct and duty" because "the private soldier has far fewer scruples about giving expression to his fears" ("WNMT" 209). According to this understanding of hysteria, the afflicted soldier of the ranks, in contrast to the officer, places his individual interest above the collective interest (A. Young HI 65). In 1920, Freud recalls the widespread comparison of war trauma with hysteria which had been observed since Myers introduced the disorder in 1915, if only to distinguish the two disorders (BPP 281).

15. In relation to contemporary feminism, for example, Diane Herndl offers the following arresting conceptualization of hysteria: hysteria "has come to figure as a sort of rudimentary feminism and feminism as a kind of articulate hysteria" (qtd. in Showalter HBF 333). Within the broad field of trauma scholarship, the complex imbrication of feminist discourse within the contested histories of hysteria is evident in the reception of Laura Brown's work, which is interested in challenging existing definitions of traumatic aetiology. See "Not Outside the Range: One Feminist Perspective on Psychic Trauma," in Trauma: Explorations in

Memory, ed. Caruth (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995), 100-112.

In Brown's view, trauma has been defined exclusively in relation to male norms, and is premised on "the lives of men of the dominant class; white, young, able-bodied, educated, middle-class, Christian men"; for this reason, "war and genocide, which are the work of men and male-dominated culture, are agreed-upon traumas" (101). As she testifies, her attempts to resituate definitions of trauma within a feminist framework have been interpreted as "articulate hysteria" by her colleagues (109). In my view, Brown's important work foregrounds the notable absence of a gendered component in contemporary trauma scholarship: the specificities of sexual difference in relation to trauma continue to be contextualized within the contested histories of hysteria, contested histories which engage unresolved issues involving trauma, aetiology and phantasy.

16. The available statistics are as follows: "in the crisis year of 1916, neurasthenia accounted for 40 per cent of casualties in combat zones . . . . By the end of the war, 80,000 cases of war neuroses had passed through the army hospitals . . . . In 1921, there were still 65,000 men receiving pensions for neurasthenic disablement" (Bourke 109). As for those discharged from the service due to diagnoses of shell shock, Dean places the figure at 200,000 men (62).

17. See Showalter's book, Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Culture (New York: Columbia UP, 1997), which compares and conflates claims regarding Gulf War Syndrome, alien abductions, recovered memory, etc.

18. Commenting on Freud's Moses and Monotheism, Santner makes an observation supporting Gilman's insights when he states that the psychoanalyst "was under enormous pressure to construct an image of Judaism that could pass muster as a cultural formation compatible with contemporary norms of masculinity and heterosexuality" ("F" 5).

19. Ferguson (1999) unequivocally accepts Freud's discussion of the death instinct as an explanation for the soldier's motivation to fight in the Great War in his chapter, "The Death Instinct: Why Men Fought." Contrast Jonathan Cohen's summary of post-Freudian views of the death instinct in "Structural Consequences of Psychic Trauma: A New Look at `Beyond the Pleasure Principle,'" (International Journal of Psycho-Analysis 61 1980), 421-32: "the high regard customarily accorded Freud as a shrewd clinical observer wavers markedly when it comes to this area, and his formulations are widely regarded as fanciful or overly philosophic" (421).

20. Contrary to Freud's own description of the fort/da

incident within the economy of the pleasure principle, Santner maintains that it is the "most famous presentation of elegiac procedures beyond the pleasure principle" (SQ 20).

PART ONE

II. Crises of Transmission: Trauma, Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Theory

> How does one encounter the past as an anteriority that continually introduces an otherness or alterity within the present? How does one then narrate the present as a form of contemporaneity that is always belated?
>
> Homi K. Bhabha, The Nation and Narration (1990)

> The future can only be for ghosts.
>
> Jacques Derrida, Specters of Marx (1994)

Introduction

The problem of psychic trauma raised in Beyond the Pleasure Principle continues to pose important challenges to standard protocols of interpretation. While the experience of trauma constitutes a radical crisis of knowledge, the dynamics of trauma research also seemingly engage profound crises of knowledge transmission. The interfiliations between the present and the past which serve as a hallmark of traumatic experience also pose pivotal conceptual and emotional challenges to scholars, given the belated and deferred effects of catastrophic events. As Anne Whitehead suggestively remarks, "the detective story, or the mastery of the past through a process of interpretation, has become a ghost story,

in which the specters of the past persistently haunt the present" (678). Occasioned by appalling events and disabling effects, trauma scholarship must remain attentive to deferral and displacement beyond the confines of the linguistic register, within the primary and secondary contexts of traumatic experience and their mediations, which insistently foreground the "possible **consequences** of interpretation" (J. Young WRH 4).

The problematic persistence of the past in contemporary trauma research necessitates an investigation of crises of knowledge transmission through attention to models of exchange between the past and the present. More specifically, I offer a critical examination of the following typologies: revisionism, amnesia, "memoro-politics" deriving from Foucauldian genealogical method (Hacking TP 72), "interminable mourning" (Derrida "BFM" 172), "endless survival" (Caruth UE 80), the phantom, and transference. Although these typologies of cognitive and/or affective transmission are distinct, each typology represents an effort to conceptualize the abiding and elusive effects of traumatic experience, and they often take Freud's work for their vital intertext. Although mourning bears the most compelling and direct, if qualified, relevance to the survivors of trauma and their contemporaries, a topic explored in detail in the next chapter, an examination of these typologies reveals that discourses of mourning are also constituted through assumptions about the nature of the past,

its ongoing role, and its partial or potential relevance to the scholar, as he or she participates in the cultural transmission and reception of catastrophic events in the present.

While I privilege LaCapra's reconfigured psychoanalytic models of transference and working-through, models explicitly theorized in relation to mourning processes, his general approach may in fact be understood to embrace selected aspects of the typologies proposed by Bloom, Herman, and Abraham and Torok. Moreover, LaCapra's model foregrounds the fact that no scholarly project can be divorced from shaping preoccupations and unconscious investments, including projects which employ Foucauldian or deconstructive tenets. More generally, while it is certainly true that "there has never been a scholar who really, and as scholar, deals with ghosts," this chapter demonstrates that researchers increasingly struggle to acknowledge the specters which attend trauma and its aftermath, contrary to the rational protocol Derrida specifies (SM 11). Yet emphases on trauma and the dynamics of haunting may effectively displace meaningful contexts for discussions of mourning. Accordingly, in a comparative analysis of various models of transmission, I attempt to address the assumptions and aims which frequently work to suspend the question of mourning in trauma scholarship, even as I highlight the considerable difficulties which beset the conjunction of trauma and mourning in theory and practice.

Seven Typologies of Trauma Transmission

Bloom's theory of revisionism, a "meditation on the melancholy of the creative mind's desperate insistence upon priority" (13), a theory which itself manifests a struggle to reappropriate Freud, provides a suggestive point of departure in our consideration of models of transmission relevant to contemporary trauma research. Freud himself revisited the problems associated with trauma in successive works until his death, ranging from the early work on hysteria to his explorations of trauma and Jewish religion in Moses and Monotheism. According to Lifton, though, whose theories focus on "death-related struggles around meaning and feeling," Freud invoked a "conceptual shield" which enabled him "to ward off the potentially transforming influence of death on **theory**, on our understanding of human experience" (BC 167). In other words, Lifton highlights the lacunae or gaps in Freud's formulations which require reinterpretation in light of his own paradigms of understanding. Nonetheless, Lifton treats Beyond the Pleasure Principle as one of Freud's most significant works, arguing that it serves as an important point of origin for his own "death-oriented psychology" (BC 167). Lifton thus contends with his major precursor, Freud, "even to the death" (Bloom 5); calling himself "a child of Freud," Lifton describes The Broken Connection as a "continuous dialogue with Freud" as well as a means of "separating from him," highlighting an oedipal trajectory of succession (T 131-32).

In light of his harrowing work with survivors of Hiroshima and Vietnam, then, Lifton situates Freud's formulations of shell shock in belated relationship to his own compelling insights on the centrality of death in traumatic experience, suggesting that Freud's inability to contend with this issue stemmed from the significance of his efforts to consolidate the theoretical discourse of psychoanalysis. A revisionist theory of transmission highlights the clash of paradigms and personalities between Lifton and Freud in terms of contests for authority and priority. But, in the final analysis, a revisionist model reduces the work of mourning to "a sort of psychic wrestling match between males" (Rabaté xiii). Although the somewhat reductive theory of revisionism Bloom outlines is "probing and one-sided," after the fashion of some of Freud's own major emphases, I invoke Bloom's model at the outset in order to signal Freud's totemic status within the interdisciplinary domains which constitute contemporary trauma theory (Lifton I 130). In this connection, a revisionist understanding of Freudian topography perhaps bears a general relevance to all recent psychoanalytically-oriented inquiry into trauma, in that "a father figure's castrative authority" remains central to the negotiation of interpretive crises and the work(s) on mourning which these occasion (Sacks 17).

Another model which contends with the persistence of the past within contemporary trauma research is described by Herman, a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard

University, as "amnesia": "denial, repression, and dissociation operate on a social as well as an individual level" (2). In this view, trauma research is a discontinuous field not because of historical contests for priority, but because such research can only occur through the support of a political movement able to "counteract the ordinary social processes of silencing and denial" (9). Thus, Herman champions a metanarrative of emancipation in relation to our own traumatic histories, "periodically forgotten and periodically rediscovered through the past century" (28). Freud is not granted a place in her discontinuous genealogy of war trauma; in her view, "he dissociated himself at once from the study of psychological trauma and from women" after his abandon-ment of the seduction theory (19). She concludes that psychoanalysis remains haunted by the realities of violence it failed to address. More specifically, after Freud's recantation, Herman deplores the manner in which psychoanalysis merely "became a study of the internal vicissitudes of fantasy and desire, dissociated from the reality of experience" (14).[1] Freud's work is thus treated as a paradigmatic instance of forgetting in her model of trauma research, given the "absence of a political and social context that would support the investigation of hysteria" (18).

In specific relation to war trauma, according to Herman's interpretation, immediately after the Great War civilian societies were "eager to forget" the traumatic experiences of

veterans in a process of denial akin to the aftermath of the Second World War (23, 26). As a result, significant advances in social and medical approaches to the traumas of the World Wars could only take place after Vietnam. More specifically, Herman argues that research on shell shock which began with the Great War only reached its apotheosis in the aftermath of the Vietnam War with the formulation of PTSD, or post-traumatic stress disorder in the DSM-III, The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association (1980). She interprets PTSD as a means of bringing the discrete instances of trauma as well as the discontinuous histories of trauma research together. In this perspective, the legacies of both World Wars were never adequately acknowledged and remained largely unconscious and unmourned until the social interface between Vietnam veterans' organizations and the advocacy of specific institutions enabled the emergence of a viable anti-war discourse and the recognition of the diagnostic category of PTSD.

While Lifton and Herman offer distinct views of perceived advances in trauma research dating from the time of the Great War, another group of scholars inspired by Michel Foucault situates contemporary trauma discourses within the strategy of critique identified as genealogy. A genealogical strategy of critique repudiates any stable point of origin or continuous or traceable history: "the true historical sense confirms our existence among countless lost events, without a landmark or a

point of reference" (Foucault "NGH" 155). In a trope bearing an ironic kinship with trauma research, Foucault conceptualizes genealogy in relation to the accident ("NGH" 146). Hacking's recent research, in an example of a Foucauldian approach, is designed to expose the power/knowledge nexus of medical discourses, including PTSD. Not surprisingly, then, Hacking pays a backhanded compliment to Herman's research when he comments on its "superb exploitation of the politics of memory" (TP 69). In opposition to Herman's reading of the decisive impact of Vietnam, for example, Hacking describes the impact of the Vietnam War as the "revenge" of "memoro-politics," given that "the VA hospitals cultivated Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder": "the past works only when there are procedures for making it work" (TP 78). Within Hacking's conception of memoro-politics, it is not sex which is "driven out of hiding and constrained to lead a discursive existence," but traumatic memory (Foucault HS 33). Clearly and significantly, Herman and Foucauldians perceive PTSD in divergent ways.

Commenting on the "generally accepted picture of PTSD, and the traumatic memory that underlies it," A. Young, who is also influenced by Foucauldian practices, argues that the diagnostic category possesses no intrinsic truth, but rather that "it is glued together by the practices, technologies, and narratives with which it is diagnosed, studied, treated, and represented . . ." (HI 5). In Young's view, representation of

the category of PTSD constitutes medical intervention rather than any recognition of a pre-existing reality: "the secret disclosed by genealogy is that there is no essence or original unity to be discovered" (Davidson 224). Following Hacking, Young considers memoro-politics to be centrally concerned with representations of the self and corresponding self-representations. In his view, PTSD functions to "connect heaps of heterogeneous, stigmatizing, and self-defacing memories into a unitary and satisfying account and self-representation" (Young TP 98-99).

Inspired by Foucault's construction of counter-memory in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," A. Young objects to the manner in which the diagnostic category of PTSD postulates the clear and unequivocal origin of trauma in the aetiological event which occasions traumatic experience on the assumption that the past invades the present (TP 97). Instead, he suggests that "the mental memory's moral logic," grounded in victimization, "is notoriously revisable and permits time to move in two directions"; thus, "individuals `choose' PTSD for this purpose, to reorganize their life-worlds, because it is a widely known and ready-made construct . . . " (Young TP 98). Accordingly, from a Foucauldian perspective, then, the category which Herman champions for its acknowledgement of a wide array of victims of trauma has merely created "a new language of self-deception" (Young HI 4). Ultimately, Young challenges the apparent primacy of the past within models of

traumatic memory, suggesting that greater attention needs to be paid to the manner in which the assumptions of the present effectively construct the past.

The critique of PTSD's claims for a unified aetiology offered by Hacking and A. Young has been a standard source of controversy, and continues to be a lively point of debate. For instance, Jonathan Shay, a psychiatrist who treats Vietnam veterans, confirms the ambiguities and lacunae of the diagnostic category of PTSD even as he affirms its clinical value: "naming is one of the early stages of the communalization of trauma by rendering it communicable, however imperfectly" (173). The Foucauldian critique, however, rejects the "depth model" of the subject offered by psychoanalysis or psychiatry, and as such, it claims to be uninterested in all but the "functionalist view of the soul" and its interface with "surface knowledge" as constituted by the "sciences of memory" (Hacking TP 73). According to Hacking, memory sciences, discourses constituted by Freudian psychoanalysis and medical mediations of war trauma, among other facets of the nexus of power/knowledge, had "as their aim the takeover of the soul, the last refuge of a person from all prior science" (TP 85). In my view, though, this contradictory invocation of the soul as a category unmediated by discourse prior to the advent of psychoanalysis seems dubious at best. In this instance, Hacking seems to be creating the very object which he seeks to emancipate.

Foucault himself describes the work of genealogy in terms of its commitment to the "dissipation" of identity, the exposure of "a body totally imprinted by history," as well as its advocation of "the sacrifice of the subject of knowledge" ("NGH" 162, 148, 163). As Patricia O'Brien affirms, "this is a method, not a theory," because such a strategic and determinist mode of situating the subject in a perpetual state of dispersal fails to account for the very possibilities of theoretical critique (38). In this regard, memoro-politics bears a parasitic relationship to the depth knowledges it critiques; its "strategic pattern" of analysis is nowhere explicitly related to "conscious ends and projects" (Taylor 87). Moreover, the "reciprocal conditioning between global and micro contexts" which Herman pinpoints as the basis for the organization of Vietnam veterans, for instance, is interpreted only in terms of the widespread amplification of technologies of self-surveillance and self-representation within the regime of truth constituted by memoro-politics (Taylor 85).

In spite of A. Young's protestations that "the suffering is real; PTSD is real," suffering and its ethical correlatives are systematically excluded from his analysis (HI 10). Within this body of "strategies without projects" (Taylor 86), then, we encounter a significant and justifiable suspicion of technologies of power which effectively regulate new political anatomies of memory within the context of a complete "silence on how to heal or at least ameliorate intense physical and

psychological pain" (Glass 132). Moreover, Young disclaims any investment in the power/knowledge nexus of interpretation central to the tenets of Foucauldian genealogy when he espouses a stance of neutrality: "the ethnographer's job is to stick to reality, its sources and genealogies; that should be enough" (HI 10). His own self-representation as a neutral ethnographer situates him within the thoroughly discredited discourse of evolutionary anthropology. As Foucault himself affirms, "power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere," including the investigations of those who critique memoro-politics (HS 93). Hacking also asserts that his own work "is inevitably distanced from real events" (TP 71). This self-conscious articulation of the divorce between critique and reality functions as an acknowledged evasion of the ethically-situated contexts of their research. Their challenges to the truth-claims of diagnostic categories associated with the experience of trauma inevitably raise associated issues involving the credibility of those impacted by trauma, demonstrating that Foucauldian analysis cannot effectively function as an ambivalent bystander in spite of assertions of neutrality. A research agenda which fails to generate greater self-reflexivity or accountability merely subjects survivors of trauma to the instrumental technologies and practices which it claims to critique. In my opinion, a more productive tension between psychiatry, psychoanalysis and Foucauldian strategies

of critique requires such a self-reflexive basis.

A. Young and Hacking seek to demystify the current critical and popular preoccupation with trauma. By repudiating any depth model of individual or social processes, they also repudiate the dynamics of haunting which I highlight throughout my considerations of contemporary trauma research. By its own account, Foucauldian practice "initiates the necessary critique for the disillusioning of phantasms" (Foucault "TP" 171). Yet, this insistent "refutation of specters" merely signals the haunted status of the enterprise in question (Rabaté 216). When Hacking argues that "we rewrite the past, not because we find out more about it, but because we present actions under new descriptions" (RS 243), his own purported meta-analysis of a descriptive vocabulary, an analysis which conflates trauma with altered definitions of normativity, fails to take account of "what remains unaccountable in such emergence" (Santner "F" 35). Descriptive vocabularies and incitements to discourse do not wholly account for our abiding cultural preoccupations with trauma. Rather, trauma enacts "a shift in the ground of the normative space in which historical events can be located" (Santner "F" 36). Foucauldian claims involving the demystification of specters within contemporary trauma research, then, entail that the ghosts of trauma must now also be considered the inadvertent products of discourse analysis.

Furthermore, even as critiques of descriptive vocabu-

laries may be ultimately unable to render trauma intelligible, mourning and related tropes must be considered one of the conditions of intelligibility governing Foucauldian critiques of memoro-politics. Their approach to trauma may actually be situated within a "rhetoric of mourning" identified by Santner, a vocabulary which arguably emerged in the wake of the Second World War. As Santner observes of Foucauldian practices, "the appeal, in these discourses, to notions of shattering, rupture, mutilation, fragmentation, to images of fissures, wounds, rifts, gaps, and abysses, is familiar enough" (SQ 7). Foucault's description of "effective history" serves to isolate some of these emphases: "history becomes `effective' to the degree that it introduces discontinuity into our very being--as it divides our emotions, dramatizes our instincts, multiplies our body and sets it against itself . . . . knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting" ("NGH" 154). Discourses inspired by post-structuralism, then, appeal precisely to trauma and related tropes in order to propose "a kind of perpetual leavetaking from fantasies of plenitude, purity, centrality, totality, unity, and mastery" (Santner SQ 7). Even in the context of prior and potentially irreparable shattering, the post-structuralist critique of PTSD seeks to destabilize its unified aetiology and potentially or partially enabling strategies of self-representation which may or may not work to effect a partial consolidation of the subject. Such discourse

actually functions to valorize and amplify the effects of sustained ruptures associated with trauma through its "metaphorics of loss and impoverishment" (Santner SQ 7). In this manner, the critiques of memoro-politics offered by Foucauldian scholars do indeed reveal that the co-implication of trauma and mourning lies within their provenance.

Santner's insights into the rhetorical affiliations between mourning and poststructuralism can also be extended to the work of Derrida, who relocates mourning "at the very origin of language" (SQ 10). More generally, Marsha Lynne Abrams corroborates Santner's arguments when she points out that "much contemporary philosophy images a loss of supreme magnitude" (67). In particular, Abrams comments on the extent to which deconstruction "resembles an incomplete grieving process": "as with melancholia, a focus on **différance** entails a reiterative foregrounding rather than a productive sublimation of lack, a fixation in the initial phase of the loss experience" (69, 76). Derrida himself cites Beyond the Pleasure Principle prior to his formulation of **différance** in terms strikingly similar to recent commentary on trauma when he describes it as "radical alterity, removed from every possible mode of presence," characterized by "delayed effects" (qtd. in Spivak xliv). Within the model of textuality proposed by deconstruction, linguistic mediations of trauma themselves mediate the quest to locate trauma beyond its textual representations, which must thereby inescapably exceed unified

principles of explanation. In this connection, Martin Jay associates Derrida's "valorization of infinite, unconstrained linguistic play" with a melancholic imaginary ("A" 93).

Jay's claim seems to be borne out in a variety of ways. For example, in Writing and Difference, Derrida asserts that "the absence and haunting of the divine sign . . . . regulates all modern criticism and aesthetics" (10). And in Specters of Marx, the deconstructive project is reconfigured as "haunt-ology": ghosts have become the condition of any ontology, and ontology is defined as "a movement of exorcism," a "conjura-tion" (161). Although hauntology "is invoked to cover a bewildering range of local or regional relations," in line with previous deconstructive strategies, Derrida highlights the inevitable fissures inherent in conceptions of "the living present conceived of as self-contained, and adequate to or coincident with itself" (Fletcher 33, 34). In plainer terms, Derrida maintains that "all work is also the work of mourning. All work in general works **at mourning**"; within this viewpoint, "mourning is interminable. Inconsolable. Irreconcilable" ("BFM" 172; cf. SM 97). Thus, mourning cannot be limited, for its diffused and interminable aspect legitimates the decon-structive enterprise and generates its recurring aporias.

Although Derrida's claim that "mourning as a complete working-through of lost material is itself a utopian myth" is also an assumption shared by many scholars of trauma, including myself, the manner in which such a widely diffused

conception of mourning is troped and retroped within much of his work effectively suspends the question of its relevance to specific instances of historical trauma (Jay "A" 97). In this connection, though, commenting on the significance of historical trauma to post-Marxist history, Derrida identifies "the totalitarian world" as "perhaps the deepest wound for mankind . . . . still more traumatizing than the `psychological' lesion (**Kränkung**) produced by the blow of psychoanalysis" (SM 98). The latter statement signals Derrida's explicit and implicit participation in the post-Holocaust "rhetoric of mourning" specified by Santner (SQ 7).

However, precisely because of the preoccupations of deconstruction with the dynamics of haunting, a reconfigured application of some of its concepts may prove productive in trauma scholarship, an area which engages the inherent dilemmas of phenomena which simultaneously partake of the past, present and future. Accordingly, supplementarity, famously anatomized in Of Grammatology, and later adopted in the service of a variety of other projects, including Bhabha's analysis of the "archaic ambivalence that informs modernity" (294), may be addressed as a productive model to undertake the study of trauma. Trauma scholarship often inspires ambivalent trajectories of analysis, given the manner in which catastrophic events seem animated by a "logic of spectrality" (Derrida SM 178 n3). Such a "logic of spectrality" is evident in the supplement which "harbors within itself two significa-

tions whose cohabitation is as strange as it is necessary" (Derrida OG 144). Even as the supplement "cumulates and accumulates presence," it also "intervenes or insinuates itself **in-the-place-of** . . . . by the **anterior** default of a presence" (Derrida OG 144, 145). A reconfigured model of supplementarity in application to the question of mourning trauma enables me to highlight the recursive interanimation of modes of mourning, substitution and accumulation in Chapter Three. In the final analysis, though, modes of trauma interpretation by scholars who privilege the dynamics of mourning often indirectly seek to engage the elision between the critique of presence offered by deconstruction and its implicit valorization of the perpetual displacements of mourning as an aspect of the ongoing dynamics of historical trauma within the twentieth century.

Not surprisingly, given that she works within a theoretical framework inspired by deconstruction, Caruth does not explicitly address mourning in her model of trauma transmission. Instead, she emphasizes the impossibility of locating the origins or departures of traumatic encounters as a means of foregrounding their deferred dynamics. Caruth situates psychoanalysis itself within the belated mode of understanding generated by trauma, describing it as "the endless survival of what has not been fully understood" (UE 72). According to Caruth, whose central insights are generated through her reformulations of Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Moses and

Monotheism, psychoanalysis remains haunted by its own inability to assimilate its encounters with trauma. More specifically, psychoanalytic theories of trauma cannot "see and situate precisely where the trauma lies"; rather, the work of psychoanalysis consists in "handing over the seeing it does not and cannot contain to another (and another future)" (Caruth UE 111). In this manner, then, psychoanalysis remains perpetually haunted by the future of that which cannot be symbolized or assimilated within its own frameworks of understanding: "its truth is bound up with its crisis of truth" (Caruth "TE" 8). This viewpoint offers a means of conceptualizing the persistence of the past in contemporary trauma scholarship as an inevitable result of the psychoanalytic encounter with trauma: the belated effects of trauma continue to generate insights, problematics, and ongoing crises of assimilation in the present and the future.

The concept of the phantom, developed by post-Freudian psychoanalysts Abraham and Torok, which engages the question of the transgenerational transmission of trauma, specifies one particular modality of the "survival" of trauma discussed by Caruth. In contrast to deconstructive methodologies, though, these neo-Freudians seek to discover why "meaning has been made unavailable" through "hidden principles of coherence" (Rashkin 51). Their work, dedicated to reviving the spirit of Freud's early researches (1890-97), introduces the concept of the "phantom" as a way of analyzing the unspoken transmission

of trauma.[2] More specifically, the concept of the phantom extends the effects of trauma beyond the boundaries of the ego: "what haunts are not the dead, but the gaps left in us by the secrets of others" (Abraham SK 171). In this way, post-Freudian formulations of trauma and group processes have occasioned an extension of Freud's metapsychology. They also indicate that the concept of the phantom may be applied to the consideration of transgenerational dynamics within the history of the psychoanalytic movement. As Rand and Torok point out, "the history of psycho-analysis is comparable to a vast mental organization that includes, among other features, areas of silence, secrets, and crypts" (QF 99). Thus, their work seeks to apply the methods of psychoanalysis to the movement itself.

As Rand declares, "the phantom represents the inter-personal and transgenerational consequences of silence," so that this concept "may provide a new perspective for inquiring into the psychological roots of cultural patterns and political ideology" ("SP" 168-69). Accordingly, Abraham and Torok's work militates against "the falsification, ignorance, or disregard of the past" which may engage "the phantomatic return of shameful secrets on the level of individuals, families, the community, and possibly even entire nations" (Rand "SP" 169). The theory of transgenerational haunting highlights the disordered mourning processes often engaged in the aftermath of traumatic knowledge. In fact, the phantom is generated through a refusal of mourning: "**the phantom which**

returns to haunt bears witness to the existence of the dead buried within the other" (Abraham 175). Given that the "words giving sustenance to the phantom return to haunt from the unconscious," Abraham conceives that it is the task of psychoanalysis "to relieve the unconscious by placing the effects of the phantom in the social realm" (176). While their work stresses the ways in which traumatic knowledge may be perpetuated through an unwitting line of descendants, then, unlike Caruth, they do not generalize the inevitable perpetuation of traumatic encounters based on the unassimilable nature of such experience. Thus, the neo-Freudian approaches of Abraham, Torok and Rand have more in common with a theory of "amnesia" than with any vision of the "endless survival" of trauma.

In contrast to Caruth, Rand, Abraham and Torok do not necessarily maintain that generational trauma is "in some sense presupposed in the theory of individual trauma" (UE 136 n22). While Caruth does not devote explicit attention to a discussion of the relationships between traumatic experience and mourning, her insights, akin to those of Derrida, involve the manner in which trauma perpetually defies the processes of mourning. For example, in her reading of Moses and Monotheism, she observes that "the history of chosenness, as the history of survival, thus takes the form of an unending confrontation with the returning violence of the past"; similarly, in relation to psychoanalysis, Caruth stresses "the endless

survival of what has not been fully understood" (UE 69, 72). Given her general emphasis on the impossibility of displacing the haunting effects of encounters with trauma, she suggests furthermore that "perhaps it is not possible for the witnessing of the trauma to occur within the individual at all" (Caruth UE 136 n21). And in the context of a reading of Lacan, she characterizes witnessing in light of "the ethical imperative of an awakening that has yet to occur" (UE 112). Arguably, given her complete lack of consideration to the mourning of trauma, her approach may be understood as "compulsively fixated" on "impasses" in a symptomatic fashion (LaCapra RH 193).

LaCapra outlines a mode of theoretical practice which would "engage a process of mourning that would attempt, however self-questioningly and haltingly, to specify its haunting objects and (even if only symbolically) to give them a `proper' burial" (RH 193). While he is quick to observe that even scholarly writers are implicated in repetitive processes which they cannot entirely transcend when they address traumatic events, LaCapra argues that the challenge in such cases is not to trope and retrope "the paradoxical witnessing of the breakdown of witnessing," but instead "to elaborate a mutually informative, critically questioning relation between memory and reconstruction that keeps one sensitive to the problematics of trauma" (HMA 183). Within the context of such an approach, shaped according to the imperatives of responding

to the Shoah, Caruth's "textual itinerary of insistently recurring words or figures" fails to address "the role of institutions or practices that both mitigate trauma without denying its force and allow for more desirable socio-cultural and political configurations" (Caruth UE 5; LaCapra HMA 47).

An attention to the mitigation of trauma is articulated in opposition to approaches which stress the "near fixation on the sublime or the almost obsessive preoccupation with loss, aporia, dispossession, and deferred meaning" which engage trauma as an analogue for the postmodern (LaCapra RH xi). These typological tropes repudiate any relevant conceptualization of mourning in their model of exchange with the past. As Robert Leventhal summarizes LaCapra's position, "one of the great challenges of postmodern and poststructuralist readings of the trauma inflicted by the Shoah would be to reflect on the ways in which they themselves participate in a melancholic reaction to the event" (2). LaCapra's amplification of Freud's concept of "working-through" constitutes an effort to forge options other than "totalizing, redemptive meaning," or "symptomatically staying within trauma by acting out a repetition compulsion with its fracturing or fragmenting of all possibilities of bonding or renewal" (RH 195). Moreover, he highlights aspects of this concept which require further thought. In his own engagement with trauma, then, he foregrounds the significance of self-reflexivity, repudiating the possibility of a "unified theory" or decontextualized recourse

to binarized norms (HMA 205, 181).

In an interesting development, LaCapra makes use of psychoanalysis in a somewhat unconventional and eclectic manner. He does not follow any particular school but rather "selectively appropriates aspects of the work of Freud and of those responding to him" in the service of "reconfiguring historical understanding" (HMA 6). In addition to its familiar associations with clinical practice, he perceives psychoanalysis "as an inherently historicized mode of thought intimately bound up with social, political, and ethical concerns" (RH xii). In order to consolidate a viable model of mourning, LaCapra draws on many concepts from Freud's oeuvre: acting out, denial, disavowal, mourning, melancholia, transference, as well as working-through. All of these modes of affectively-mediated exchange with the past may be operative in the context of engagement with massive historical trauma.

Crucial to LaCapra's elaboration of working-through is his articulation of transference: "working-through requires the recognition that we are involved in transferential relations to the past in ways that vary according to the subject positions we find ourselves in, rework, and invent" (RH 64). He defines transference "at the intersection of the personal, political, and textual," focusing on "the way in which problems and processes active in the texts or artifacts we study are repeated in displaced and often disguised or distorted form in our very accounts of them" (RH 111). In an

adaptation of the concept of working-through, he also calls for greater specificity in discussions of trauma, noting the significance of distinguishing among perpetrators, survivors, bystanders, or those born after events. Furthermore, he situates trauma scholarship in relation to both public and specialized modes of intellectual activity: "one is indissociably a scholar, an ethical agent, and a citizen or political being" (HMA 210). Thus, while he emphasizes the inescapable transferential dynamics which traumatic events such as the Shoah engage even for historians or literary critics, he also advocates a transformed and transformative understanding of the role of scholarship. The scholar and intellectual may participate self-reflexively in the mitigation or reformulation of the repetitive dynamics which continue to shape historical processes. Such a self-reflexive process calls for a renewal of the concept of objectivity, through a redefinition which is shaped by "the attempt to counteract modes of projection, self-indulgence, and a narrow partisanship in an exchange with the past" (RH 47).

Notably, LaCapra's most extensive formulation of mourning draws specifically upon Beyond the Pleasure Principle in its references to both the repetition compulsion and the death drive: mourning is "a homeopathic socialization or ritualization of the repetition-compulsion that attempts to turn it against the `death drive' and counteract compulsiveness by repetitioning in ways that allow for critical distance . . . "

(HMA 45). LaCapra draws on Beyond the Pleasure Principle in order to reformulate the concept of mourning Freud presents in "Mourning and Melancholia," a discussion which makes no explicit reference to trauma. Clearly, LaCapra participates in the trend to reconfigure psychoanalytic views of mourning but he is especially concerned to emphasize that mourning need not be confused with "the phantasm of total mastery" or considered "objectionably recuperative or naive" (HMA 46). In this connection, he reserves a place for "scars that will not disappear and even wounds that will not heal" (RH 126). Thus, LaCapra returns to Freud's models and insights in order to honour the survivors of severe trauma as well as to challenge the melancholic assumptions informing contemporary trauma scholarship.

Conclusion

All of the typologies I examine, including revisionism, amnesia, memoro-politics, "interminable mourning," "endless survival," the phantom, and transference, are models which seek to address the persistent effects of the traumatic past within contemporary culture and scholarship. How do these theories construct the nature of exchange between the past and the present, operative within the highly unstable field of cultural representations, literary testimonies, official documents, and oral histories which constitute the traces of historical trauma? On an obvious level, the persistence of the

past may be perceived through the very tangible and pervasive legacy of Freudian psychoanalysis. All of the models of exchange interpret, adapt or appropriate Freud in some way. Revisionism provides a means of comprehending Freud's ongoing significance as a precursor figure within contemporary trauma scholarship through recourse to many of the concepts introduced by psychoanalysis: melancholy, ambivalence, and anxiety, a series of unresolved and intermediary affective states which can neither escape nor recapitulate prior investments. However, while Bloom's theory posits a model of melancholic transmission between creative individuals which is perpetuated by belatedness, recent theoretical developments situate the orthodox discourse of psychoanalysis itself in belated relationship to the phenomenon of trauma.

Abraham, Torok, and Rand, for instance, advocate a self-reflexive approach to psychoanalytic doctrine. Moreover, they maintain that the history of psychoanalysis has occasioned the delayed return of haunting ruptures, gaps, and secrets, highlighting the importance of collective models of transgenerational transmission which consider the persistent and unexpected effects of trauma from the vantage point of wider contexts, including institutions, families and even nations. In an alternate but related emphasis, Herman foregrounds the manner in which groups and individuals must actively and consciously confront the effects of psychological trauma in order to construct a viable climate for the recovery of a wide

variety of survivors, a climate which was not facilitated in Freud's own time, explaining the persistence of our preoccupations with his research on trauma. In opposition to views which stress the effects of the past on the present, however, when Caruth thematizes trauma as an unknowable legacy which inescapably exceeds the interpretive domain of psychoanalysis, she destabilizes any predictable conception of temporal exchange, suggesting instead that traumatic effects demand a revised understanding of the interactions between the past and an unforeseeable future. In this manner, she makes use of psychoanalytic concepts even as she foregrounds their limitations; her approach instances a Derridean emphasis on the perpetual displacements of mourning in the wake of trauma.

And finally, rather than any emphasis on the past or the future, Foucauldians argue that contemporary trauma scholarship occasions its own ghosts through its investments in shaping "the architecture of traumatic time" according to the assumptions and ideologies of the present (A. Young HI 7). However, Foucauldian analyses of the manner in which normative discourses are instituted cannot contend with the manner in which trauma consistently exceeds explicit or conscious registers, as manifest in their own recourse to a vocabulary preoccupied with loss and rupture. In the final analysis, even genealogical methods cannot disown complex transferential investments in the histories they investigate. LaCapra's application of Freud's theory of transference to the field

amply illustrates the manner in which the past and the present cannot be sharply demarcated, and even constructions of their interrelationships constitute an interactive and highly unstable field of cognitive and affective mediations. Most significantly, as he also demonstrates, mourning itself may become the object of melancholic investments in contemporary theoretical discourses. Ultimately, all of the models of exchange attest to the challenges which trauma presents to modes of historical and theoretical inquiry. My engagement with seven typologies of trauma transmission highlights the interdependence between psychoanalysis and contemporary trauma scholarship, even as trauma occasions an important awareness of the manner in which the concepts and tools of psychoanalysis may be productively applied to theoretical discourses, including psychoanalysis itself.

Chapter Two

Notes

1. Laplanche opposes Herman's verdict when he maintains that "so clear a separation between what is purely somatic and what is purely psychical in the trauma has never been sustained within the Freudian tradition" (131). In his view, Freud's notion of psychical trauma remains inextricably intertwined with "medicosurgical" discourses, signalling "the displacement of the various elements of physical trauma into a different domain" (131, 130).

2. See Christopher Lane's review essay, "The Testament of the Other: Abraham and Torok's Failed Expiation of Ghosts" in Diacritics (27.4 (1997): 3-29) for a critical perspective on the work of Rand, Abraham and Torok. In his view, their "pursuit of resolution and harmony **detracts** from their psychic investigation" (27).

PART ONE

III. Mourning and Survivorship: Trauma, Narrative and the Witness

> We have no choice but to make judgements about trauma and our relationship to it.
>
> Robert Jay Lifton, The Broken Connection (1979)

> The absence of an empathic listener, or more radically, the absence of an **addressable other** . . . annihilates the story.
>
> Dori Laub, "Bearing Witness," Testimony (1992)

> First-person narrators can't die, so long as we keep telling the story of our own lives we're safe. Ha bloody fucking Ha.
>
> Pat Barker, The Ghost Road (1995)

Introduction: Death and Continuity

Contemporary trauma theory, described as a "virtual community of explorers" by Geoffrey Hartman (1995), is by no means a unified body of inquiry, in spite of its persistent recourse to specific psychoanalytic texts such as Beyond the Pleasure Principle (537). Due to the overwhelming obstacles to theorization and synthesis presented by specific configurations of trauma, scholarly practices in this area combining

history, literary theory, psychiatry, anthropology and other disciplines have contributed to an invigoration of inter-disciplinarity in the humanities. However, as contemporary trauma research continues to develop, controversies over specific terms and concepts have proliferated. In particular, the respective roles of narrative and witnessing in the aftermath of catastrophic events identify ongoing debates and sites of controversy, both as individual terms and as issues conjoined in a dynamic and recursive process. For example, how may trauma engage narrative in the work of mourning? What is a witness? Why is the witness often considered a precondition for the narrative of traumatic experience?

These questions must be contextualized in relation to the complex mourning tasks which may be performed throughout the trauma survivor's lifecycle (Herman 211). Regardless of the challenges involved, as Santner correctly maintains, "central to any elaboration of survivorship" is "the work of mourning" (PLR 145). In this connection, it should be recalled that Lifton describes the survivor as "one who has come into contact with death in some bodily or psychic fashion and has remained alive" (BC 169).[1] Crises of memory in the aftermath of trauma frequently involve recurring "guilt-associated struggles around fidelity to the dead and the experience of deadness" (Lifton BC 177). Consideration of the conjoined processes of trauma and mourning thus demands a "necessary dialectical focus on death and continuity," which involves

"formidable intellectual difficulties and imaginative requirements" (Lifton BC 4). Not surprisingly, the sustained encounter between death and continuity which any discussion of trauma requires demands a particular sensitivity to nuance, qualification, and context. Continuity must be understood to connote a wide range of images, provisional practices and projects which enable survivors to render their death encounter meaningful even as loss is both confronted and partially transcended. Accordingly, this chapter addresses the individual process of mourning trauma by treating narrative and witnessing as ongoing and supplementary processes. An exploration of the controversies and particularities engaged by these processes will enable an extended consideration of the limits and possibilities of mourning in the aftermath of traumatic experience.

At the outset, however, it should be noted that a dual focus on death and modes of continuity in no way functions as a prescriptive imposition of norms upon the experience or representation of harrowing events: "resolution of the trauma is never final; recovery is never complete" (Herman 211). Trauma demands that mourning be considered in terms of conjoined opposites, such as Ramazani's melancholic mourning, or Lifton's distinct but related concerns with death and the reassertion of modes of symbolic and psychological continuity. Other formulations which address modalities relevant to the mourning of trauma include Freud's discussion of the processes

of acting out and working-through in "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through" (1914), and Janet's description of the transformations of traumatic memory and narrative memory in his study, Psychological Healing (1919-25).[2] Recent explorations of mourning by noted humanities scholars Santner and LaCapra privilege Freud's terminology, even as they have modified and expanded his terminology. On the other hand, recent therapeutic and clinical literature by Herman, Bessel van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart reclaims Janet's distinctions, although his formulations have also been subjected to criticism, expansion and modification. I highlight Lifton's general framework, which clearly situates trauma in proximity to death-related issues, even as I tend to value Janet's basic distinctions, given the clinical prominence he gives to narrative in the aftermath of trauma, a suggestive point of departure for applications in literary and cultural studies. In addition, Laub's model of witnessing will be extensively considered. More than any of the preceding models, his work on massive trauma foregrounds the socially-implicated nature of all mourning practices.

While the emphases and contexts highlighted by all of these models of mourning clearly differ, the juxtaposition of a number of models enhances any investigation of the complex aftermath of traumatic experience, enabling nuanced interpretations of the supplementary roles of narrative and witnessing in the facilitation of griefwork. Ultimately, this

chapter must be understood as a speculative inquiry which struggles to address both death and continuity in the context of past and present theoretical and therapeutic debates on trauma. This discussion is undertaken as a contribution to ongoing research in the field; for this reason, I pause to consider significant questions and prominent concerns in light of recent interventions in the literature. To my knowledge, no critical synthesis of the recent literature on mourning and survivorship has been undertaken until the present study. Due to the complexity and possible unfamiliarity of the major concepts in trauma scholarship, then, an overview of salient issues precedes more detailed discussion.

The conjunction of trauma and narrative marks an important and unresolved confrontation in discussions of trauma. For instance, Showalter highlights the difficulties of this conjunction in relation to hysteria: "it is a question of the wandering story, and of whether that story belongs to the hysteric, the doctor, the historian, or the critic" (HBF 335). To whom does the story of trauma belong? Trauma engages both anxieties and conflicts over its relationship to narrative, precisely because, in the final analysis, the actual experience of trauma can never ultimately be narrated or even communicated "without distortion" (Hartman "TK" 537). In fact, trauma and narrative are conceptualized as processes which define one another through their contradictory character. The timelessness of traumatic memory, with its qualities of in-

tense visuality, forceful repetition of images, and "perpetual troping" of detail and event, is defined precisely through its non-narrative character (Hartman "TK" 537). As Roberta Culbertson claims, the "undeniable presences" in the aftermath of traumatic experience have "an aura of unbelievability" because "they appear in nonnarrative forms that seem to meet no standard test for truth or comprehensibility" (169).

Thus, while narrative is able to impose coherence on traumatic experience, it inevitably fails to convey the incoherence and isolation at the heart of traumatic events precisely because narrative form is configured by, and in relation to, social responses. And when trauma is eventually transformed into narrative by survivors, such narrative offers a mediated representation of catastrophic experience which may engage a wide range of potential reactions: it may be appropriated or disavowed, or, arguably, it may effect a transformative social role. Ultimately, the losses specific to the survival of extreme events may be figured through narrative, but narrative must also be considered a secondary site of loss in the wake of trauma. Shay captures the paradox at the center of any discussion of trauma and narrative when he asks pointedly, "if narrative is a lie, then how can it heal?" (191). Narrative, then, must be positioned in relation to both aspects of trauma considered fundamental to the analysis of aftermath experiences: death and continuity.

Moreover, the provisional conjunction of trauma and

mourning requires a discussion of the category of the witness. The narrative collapse inherent in traumatic experience also marks the collapse of human relationship; traumatic memory circulates outside narrative frameworks which organize ethical understanding, and the survivor cannot generate any relational context for experience. As Laub and Daniel Podell declare, in light of their combined experiences of extensive therapeutic practice, "the feelings of absence, of rupture, and of the loss of representation that essentially constitute the traumatic experience all emerge from the real failure of the empathic dyad at the time of traumatisation and the resulting failure to preserve an empathic tie even with oneself" (992). Clearly, then, mourning in the aftermath of trauma requires an intervening category which obviates stable distinctions between the ego and the object stipulated by Freud in "Mourning and Melancholia." This intervening category is the witness. Within the enabling conditions of narrative, the survivor's testimonial act may reconfigure an empathic dyad both internally and externally. The establishment of a "witnessing other within the self" is essential to the process of mourning, which yields to melancholia in the event that the ego is radically riven by unconscious aspects of the trauma (Laub and Podell 1003).

Following Laub and others, I argue for the centrality of enabling narrative contexts in the survivor's attempts to assimilate overwhelming experience. Moreover, I treat the

category of the witness, which always requires situational placement, as a role crucial to the configuration and reception of mourning tasks. While this chapter largely foregrounds clinical or psychoanalytic dimensions of trauma reception, modes of witnessing introduced here will inform subsequent discussions of this crucial category in Chapter Four, where I address the scholar as a secondary witness (cf. LaCapra RH 198). And throughout Part Two, extended analyses assess the centrality of witnessing figures in British literature, whether these figures are invoked, phantasized, celebrated, or repudiated.

More generally, the witnessing role is situated at the potential intersection of the conjoined processes of trauma and mourning, which perhaps explains recent controversies and reconsiderations of this category in the wake of Felman and Laub's collection, Testimony (1992).[3] Rather than conflating the survivor and the witness, however, or implicating the witness in "the appropriation of survivor experience" as "a crucial component of the process of depoliticizing the survivor" (Tal 59), my analysis maintains that the witness and related processes of self-witnessing serve as one critical aspect of cultural reconstruction whereby modes of appropriation and depoliticization may be potentially reconfigured in the aftermath of trauma. Needless to say, though, the interaction between individual and group processes in the wake of historical trauma remains a challenging and important area of

inquiry (cf. LaCapra HMA 184-85). By co-implicating the discourses of trauma and mourning, the witness, a crucial category generated by trauma theory, can be subject to greater critical scrutiny. Such scrutiny promotes the consideration of ethical questions. For instance, how can the witness take up what Jeffrey Nealon describes as "a non-appropriative ethical subject position" with respect to the survivor (131)? How do such positions facilitate wider socio-political processes of "communalization" (Shay 189)? The problem of "trying to live ethically in an age of trauma," however, to invoke the apt phrase of Roger Gottlieb, is an issue by no means concluded by my analysis (239). Rather, an examination of the recursive and interrelated dynamics of trauma, narrative and the witness provides one means to situate the ethical challenges posed by survivorship in terms of the urgent question of mourning, a question pivotal to the practice and formulation of any posttraumatic ethics.

Freud and Janet

The complex connections between trauma and narrative were formulated by Freud, as well as Janet, who was a prominent French psychologist critical of the founder of psychoanalysis, prior to the outbreak of the Great War. Each approach to mental functioning led to distinct views of memory and narrative in relation to traumatic events. In the most general terms, Freud highlights repression which "reflects a

vertically layered model of mind: what is repressed is pushed downward, into the unconscious" (van der Kolk and van der Hart 168). His emphasis on "resistances" produced through processes of repression informs his psychoanalytic technique as articulated in "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through": "the patient brings out of the armoury of the past the weapons with which he defends himself against the progress of the treatment--weapons which we must wrest from him one by one" (SE 12: 151). Freud notes that "gaps in memory" arise as a result of "resistances due to repression": "the patient does not **remember** anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, but **acts** it out" (SE 12: 148, 150). Such unconscious repetition is identified as a mode of remembrance: "the greater the resistance, the more extensively will acting out (repetition) replace remembering" (SE 12: 151). Working-through, on the other hand, is specified as a means whereby the patient becomes "more conversant" with her resistance, effectively cooperating with the course of the treatment (SE 12: 155). Inevitably, then, within Freud's original articulation of the processes of acting out and working-through, the privileged topoi which comprise psychoanalysis may subsume and thereby transform the individual's apparently incoherent account of experience into an ordered narrative. As Kavka perceptively observes, "since the method never dissolves trauma, but rather resolves its effects by making it conscious, one might say that psychoanalysis provides not a cure proper so much as

narrative consolation" (160).

Yet orthodox psychoanalysis cannot account for what has not been formulated within pre-existing schemes of classification. As Showalter wryly suggests in this connection, "if Freud is an unreliable narrator, a very different plot emerges" (HBF 319). In other words, Freud's description of the contestatory encounter between the patient and the analyst does not allow for modes of exchange which enable the survivor to configure the narrative outcome of experience. By way of contrast, Janet opposes Freud's viewpoint regarding the Oedipal basis of traumatic memory, arguing for an inductive method of approach to each individual case (Perry and Laurence 37). The significance of privileging the particular trajectory of the individual life story over the "universalist tendencies" of orthodox psychoanalysis has also been a working assumption of more recent psychoanalytic practices attentive to traumatic experience (Abraham and Torok SK 1). As adopted by a scholar such as LaCapra, for instance, contemporary recourse to Freud's privileged terms, such as "working-through" and "acting out," has in fact effectively departed from the orthodox registers of Freud's early emphases in order to retain their scope while embracing the contradictions and particularities inherent in traumatic experience.

Among Freud's contemporaries, Janet departs from psychoanalytic tenets when he stresses the cognitive aspects of mental processes rather than their affective dimensions

(Nemiah 52). In keeping with his view of the importance of cognitive processes, Janet's important concept of dissociation describes the results of "a failure to synthesize information and incorporate it" (Perry and Laurence 30). As van der Kolk and van der Hart summarize the concept, "dissociation reflects a horizontally layered model of mind: when a subject does not remember a trauma, its `memory' is contained in an alternate stream of consciousness . . ." (168). According to Janet, then, the ability to construct a narrative of trauma is an index of psychological healing.[4] In this way, he defines ordinary, or "narrative memory" as "an action; essentially, it **is the action of telling a story**" (PH 661). On the other hand, the timeless "fixed idea" of the trauma survivor resembles a hallucination, with its profusion of imagery in excess of any frame of reference or context, its visuality, and its repetition; Janet speaks of this as "traumatic memory," making clear that this is actually NOT a form of memory, because traumatic memory cannot tell a story (PH 663). Traumatic memory thus remains bound to the event (cf. van Alphen 26). For Janet, the healing of trauma occurs when survivors can contextualize their formerly timeless experience within their history by emplotting it as an action with a beginning, a middle and an end in the form of "narrative memory." Such assimilation may conclude a process which involves the recital of the event to others, reflexive processes of self-witnessing, and the placing of this recital in the context of the total life

history (Janet PH 666). Contemporary trauma physicians, including Herman and van der Kolk, have made renewed psychotherapeutic use of Janet's initial distinctions, thereby situating him at the center of ongoing debate in the field.

Recent Controversies

According to the viewpoint of Leys, though, whose research combines a variety of theoretical investments, ranging from Foucauldian approaches to trauma, feminist theory, and Lacanian psychoanalysis, Herman and van der Kolk, among others, have rather misleadingly "hailed Janet as a pioneer in developing a fully formulated mnemo-technology for the treatment of the trauma victim" ("TC" 647). Leys criticizes the recent wave of attention to Janet, linking it to the "recovery movement" and its claims that the healing of trauma can be facilitated through the narration of traumatic events ("TC" 652). Furthermore, she accurately points out that Janet's own model for the transformation of traumatic memory often involves the distortion or even the forgetting of such experience ("TC" 650). Given that he foregrounds the therapeutic role of forgetting in the aftermath of trauma, advocates who champion memory-work cannot effectively support their claims through recourse to Janet. As Leys concludes, "if narration cures, it does so not because it infallibly gives the patient access to a primordially personal truth but because it makes possible a form of self-understanding even in

the absence of empirical verification" ("TC" 661). In her view, then, Janet's psychotherapeutic approach conceives of memory as narration, rather than truth telling, per se ("TC" 661).

But, interestingly enough, her criticisms of the heterogeneous yoking of memory, truth, and narration in therapeutic methods deriving from Janet are not contested by advocates of posttraumatic practices focused on the narration and renarration of trauma. For instance, Shay clearly distinguishes between narrative, trauma, and the modes of "truth" and memory which they may be understood to generate, when he observes that "narrative temporality can never be completely true to the timeless experience of prolonged, severe trauma" (190). Nevertheless, Leys martials her arguments against the therapeutic goods Herman and van der Kolk associate with Janet in order to expose what she interprets as "the scandalous nature of the traumatic cure" ("TC" 662). In response to her own query, "what is the goal of treatment?", then, Leys argues that suggestion constitutes the "most intimate interiority" of psychoanalysis and already constitutes the basis of its practices (FTP 203). Ultimately, the model of trauma proposed by Leys is premised upon the foreclosed possibilities of self-representation and mourning, possibilities which, in my opinion, have a demonstrated, ongoing, and vital significance to the protracted aftermath experiences of a diverse array of survivors.[5]

In contrast to Leys, other advocates of posttraumatic narrative practices stress the relevance of successive retellings to the following experiential oppositions: passivity/activity, timelessness/temporality, and isolation/sociality. The renewal of a sense of agency and context are considered some of the explicit goods to be obtained through the valorization of the trauma narrative within a therapeutic setting. In "The Intrusive Past," for instance, van der Kolk and van der Hart advocate the role of imaginative reconstruction as a viable strategy to contend with "the intrusive power of the original, unmitigated horror" of the trauma; in their perspective, based on extensive clinical encounters, "once flexibility is introduced, the traumatic memory starts losing its power over current experience" (178). In this manner, horrifying and compulsively repeated memories may be potentially mitigated through narrative, complicating the passive experience of repetition characteristic of the trauma through the conscious and active mediation of language. Furthermore, the timeless and decontextualized character of traumatic memories may be slowly transformed by consciously and interactively emplotting recurring experiences within a narrative. Through this process, overwhelming events are situated within a bounded and coherent framework which presumes a chronology of events and a priority of emphases. By way of contrast, a mind mobilized for persistent danger, which has lost its authority over memory, cannot comprehend terror

or grief within an arc described by beginning, middle, and end: "the trauma world knows only is" (Shay 190). The passive and timeless reenactments of the trauma which haunt the survivor's consciousness thus attest to the failure of human relationship in the face of devastating events: "traumatic memory has no social component; it is not addressed to anybody, the patient does not respond to anybody; it is a solitary activity" (van der Kolk and van der Hart 163). According to several therapeutic practitioners, then, the codification of narrative enables the trauma to be registered within active, temporal and social contexts, contexts only provisionally reclaimed after painstaking psychic reorganization in the aftermath of traumatic experience.

The specific terms which derive from the recent reappraisal of Janet's work, namely, "narrative memory" and "traumatic memory," will be retained as useful conceptual distinctions, in spite of the latter term's manifestly contradictory character. However, rather than retaining the innate models of mind and memory which inform Janet's terminology, I resituate his distinctions within a framework attentive to the social and cultural mediations by which individual experience becomes both comprehensible and meaningful (cf. van Alphen 37). For example, when Laurence Kirmayer declares that "the form of narrative may also influence what can and cannot be recalled," he is pointing out that social codes and conventions invariably shape what can be

both narrated and remembered (181). Survivors must adapt their experiences to the codes and confines of "**meta-memory**--implicit models of memory which influence what can be recalled and cited as veridical" (Kirmayer 175). It must be emphasized, then, that the transition from one form of memory to another remains problematic: the transitions effected between traumatic memory and narrative memory should properly be considered potential processes of "reconstruction" (Herman 176).

Such reconstructions are animated by the dynamics of translation, which necessarily fail to establish any exact congruence between experience and representation, leaving a remainder, or an excess, which may continue to threaten the coherence of any narrative of trauma. Thus, the survivor's reconstruction frequently bears witness to traumatic memory, a mode of memory which manifestly defies sequential assimilation. Within their modified contexts of contemporary usage, then, Janet's terms may be loosely correlated to Freud's terms, working-through and acting out, respectively, where working-through designates the outcome of a conscious struggle with the past, and traumatic memory corresponds to acting out in so far as the past is repeated through the dominance of unconscious processes. Yet, as LaCapra points out, "in cases of extreme trauma there may never be a full transcendence of acting-out" (HMA 54). Struggles with death and continuity remain resonant in the reconstruction(s) entailed by the

transformations of traumatic memory into narrative memory. The "work of narrative" clearly plays a fundamental role in the survivor's work of mourning, whether mourning is discussed in relation to distinctions privileged by Janet, Freud or Lifton.

But as Caruth is also correct to point out, the transformation of traumatic memory into narrative memory records a very problematic loss: "the loss, precisely, of the event's essential incomprehensibility, the force of its **affront to understanding**" ("RP" 154). For example, Claude Lanzmann, pathbreaking director of Shoah, maintains that only the repudiation of integrative understanding on the part of the listener can render the testimony of Holocaust survivors truly audible. He and many others assert that the history of the Shoah can only be perceived through its "unassimilable forms," forms characteristic of traumatic memory rather than narrative memory (Caruth "RP" 156). In a related emphasis, Culbertson, who discusses childhood trauma, describes the process of transforming the traumatic protoknowledge of bodily sensation into narrative knowledge as a process which is necessarily fictional, because "memory is always in the end subjected to those conventions which define the believable" (179). By her account, "narrative requires a narrator, but the destruction of the self at the root of much violence makes this narrative nearly impossible by definition" (Culbertson 191). Traumatic experience can thus be interpreted as a tacit critique of the normalizing nature of narrative: "the value assigned to

narrative form itself in our culture makes of anything that is thought to be unnarrativizable something of little worth" (White "C" 134). Moreover, one of the obvious implications of reconstruction must also be admitted: "unlike hallucinations and automatic memories," traumatic memory which has been translated into narrative memory can be forgotten (Roth 208). While modes of narrative continuity may effectively transform a survivor's encounter with death, narrative may never ultimately subsume such an encounter through recourse to codes or conventions: "it would be a mistake to become complacent about the efficacy of narrative as cure" (Zajko 25).

Trauma Testimony

Narrative frameworks typically emplot the experience of life histories as "continuous unities," in spite of the profound and abiding ruptures frequently occasioned by unassimilable events (van Alphen 35). Clearly, trauma narratives challenge traditional conceptions of authorship premised on rationality, objectivity, or other modes of mastery. The encounter with death and the struggle for continuity is dramatically recorded in the process of the survivor's testimony, a genre which should not be confused with autobiography, although these two genres are often conflated (Sommer 108). Unlike autobiography, the testimony is an exploration of "difference rather than identity" precisely because it records an uncertain "passage through the otherness

of death" (Laub "BW" 73). In fact, testimony enacts the survivor's struggle to contend with both conscious and unconscious aspects of the past in the dynamic oscillation of traumatic memory and narrative memory, acting out and working-through. As Felman declares: "testimony seems to be composed of bits and pieces of a memory that has been overwhelmed by occurrences that have not settled into understanding or remembrance" (16).

The convergence between the present and the past which is realized through the survivor's unpredictable trajectory of recall in the testimony must be considered a "discursive practice," a "speech act," wherein language is "in process and in trial, does not possess itself as a conclusion" (Felman 17). The trauma and its aftermath are reconfigured through the testimony, which may "bear witness to a past that was never fully experienced as it occurred" (Caruth "RP" 151). Moreover, testimony is an intervention which contends, however precariously, with "the radical break between trauma and culture" occasioned by acts of massive aggression (Laub and Auerhahn 288). Testimony, then, is a dialogical process which clearly challenges traditional conceptions of aesthetic reception or readership, highlighting the "urgency of creating new ways of listening" (Caruth "P" viii). In this regard, Herman encapsulates the manner in which this genre of speech act simultaneously addresses the multiple domains of civil and intimate life: "testimony has both a private dimension, which is

confessional and spiritual, and a public aspect, which is political and judicial" (181).

Given that Felman and Laub generally describe historical trauma as a "crisis of witnessing" (xvii), the restoration of crucial social contexts ruptured by catastrophic events is one of the central tasks of mourning, a struggle which involves the alternations of traumatic memory and narrative memory, acting out and working-through. Laub recognizes three distinct levels of witnessing: "the level of being a witness to oneself within the experience; the level of being a witness to the testimonies of others; and the level of being a witness to the process of witnessing itself" ("EWW" 75). Clearly, as Herman indicates, "to hold traumatic reality in consciousness requires a social context that affirms and protects the victim and that joins victim and witness in a common alliance" (9). The struggle to bear witness to oneself, then, the chief mourning task in the aftermath of traumatization, is bound up with associated struggles to engage the related modes of witnessing which Laub outlines.

It is interesting to note at this junction, however, that Lifton does not address the aftermath of trauma explicitly in terms of the internalization and/or the intervention of empathic agencies. Rather, in a complementary emphasis, he describes the survivor's struggle in terms of the problem of "formulation," a process which involves the reclamation of modes of "symbolic immortality," given that the trauma insti-

tutes a fundamental disconnection between "the phenomenon of death and the flow of life" (Lifton BC 295, 4). In his view, the imagery of disconnection signals the persistence of a "broken connection" between death and continuity, a disconnection which poses protracted problems in the aftermath of massive threat. Countervailing modes of conceptualizing symbolic immortality and understanding its significance are proposed as ways of repairing the "broken connection": these include family continuity, theological transcendence, creative accomplishment, natural continuity, and the achievement of mystical or experiential well-being (BC 18). As Lifton observes, "the survivor seeks vitality both in immediate relationships and ultimate meaning, the one impossible without the other" (BC 176-77). His work primarily addresses the outcome of mourning processes which involve the reorganization of the death encounter in a way which stresses the potentialities of renewal. In general, his emphasis on modes of symbolic continuity stresses the significance of countering the radical disconnection of the trauma, a disconnection which Laub foregrounds in a distinct fashion through his careful considerations of the interconnected modes of bearing witness.

According to Laub and Podell, the survivor must testify in the presence of an external witness precisely because the experience of trauma ruptures pre-existing modes of psychic and social organization, instituting an "empty circle" (1000). The testimony of the survivor must therefore commence with the

failures of witnessing which took place at the time of traumatization. Such failures are registered by a sense of absence, a paralyzing impasse of meaning. In this connection, the mutually responsive dynamic between survivor and witness plays a critical role in the viable reconstruction of self-representation in relation to the trauma. Accordingly, Laub describes the external witness as an "enabler" or "guardian" of the survivor's testimony ("BW" 58). Paradoxically, while an external witness may function to enable the testimony, "it is only when the traumatic event becomes narrativized that it is experienced as a trauma," highlighting the recursive nature of the survivor's ongoing confrontation with the past (Zajko 25). Yet, as Laub also points out, given the "trapping roles" of victim and perpetrator which may continue to polarize the perceptions and responses of the survivor, "if one talks about the trauma without being truly heard . . . . the telling might itself be lived as a return of the trauma" ("BW" 67).

The narration of trauma in any context may activate dissociative coping strategies which may extensively impact the survivor's ability to process affect, knowledge, behaviour, and sensation in the wake of catastrophic experience. As Lifton maintains more generally, numbing constitutes "the desymbolizing center of the traumatic syndrome" (BC 177). Aspects of dissociated experience do not return predictably or consistently; traumatic memory frequently takes the form of flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, or nightmares. And while

dissociation may manifest itself rather predictably as "a rupture in narrative," dissociation may also be "maintained by narrative because the shape of narrative around the dissociation protects (reveals and conceals) the gap" (Kirmayer 181). Any discussion of mourning in relation to trauma therefore calls for the careful and graduated consideration of "increasing integration and ownership of memory, as memory emerges from negation to eventual enmeshment in an associative network and impinges ever more interpretively and creatively upon relationships" (Laub and Auerhahn 290).

The testimony, then, may function as a "ceaseless struggle" in the life of the survivor as new events or crises activate the compulsion to confront aspects of the trauma which have not been fully assimilated (Laub "EWW" 75). Ultimately, recall "remains substantially incomplete, changeable and alive, not limited by a factual, objective correctness" (Adler 940). Moreover, prior unassimilated crises may complicate processes of recall and mourning. As Leys discerns, "the sign of a prior, impossible mourning for and incorporation of the lost mother" plays a significant role in theories of trauma ("TC" 634). Attention to mourning in contexts of trauma thus seems to require a complex awareness of the interaction between instances of historical trauma and the vicissitudes of previous adaptations to maturational crises which Santner and LaCapra designate as instances of "primitive mourning tasks," and "structural trauma," respectively, critical

psychodevelopmental passages which mark stages of subject formation (SQ 7; HMA 47). Stated in other words, in line with Lifton's own emphases, "the death encounter reopens questions about prior experiences of separation, breakdown, and stasis, as well as countervailing struggles toward vitality" (BC 170). In the most general terms, the testimony is "inherently a process of facing loss," loss which is often only experienced once the individual reclaims the capacity for some degree of internal witnessing of the trauma after renegotiating and maintaining a sense of personal safety (Laub "EWW" 91).

The survivor's ongoing confrontation with the past may also be engaged by creative and cultural activities. In fact, Felman and Laub extend a discussion of witnessing to the realm of cultural artifacts. They make an important argument for "literature and art as a precocious mode of witnessing--of accessing reality--when all other modes of knowledge are precluded" (xx). In this connection, Laub and Podell offer a convincing and detailed analysis of art produced by survivors of traumatic events, foregrounding the processes and contexts of aesthetic reconstruction. They contrast what Aharon Appelfeld designates as "compulsory memory" with their own conception of an "art of trauma" (qtd. 996; 992). Compulsory memory proceeds through the chronological narration of facts in linear sequences; such a mode of narration is used in official histories and documents, ignoring the multiple micro-narratives of disoriented affect and cognition which mark the

survivors of any traumatic event. In this manner, compulsory memory may manifest "an inability to mourn" the events it describes: "to be literally bound to a traumatic experience is to permit oneself no psychic vitality in relationship to the experience itself, and to limit vitality in other areas of life as well" (Lifton BC 178).

Laub and Podell suggest that compulsory memory may function as a "screen memory," "consciously or unconsciously working to cover up and to resist confrontation with the more inner aspects of the horror" so documented (996). In this regard, for example, in the context of the collusion of the survivor with the narrative mode of compulsory memory, memoirs and fictions which privilege realistic registers of representation may paradoxically indicate the unconscious and unmasterable status of traumatic memory. Accounts which proceed through metonymic contiguity privilege the sequential status of narrative above the experiential and symbolic ruptures occasioned by the trauma, and such narratives may thereby reenact the collapse of witnessing occasioned by the trauma, rather than providing evidence for any productive transformation of traumatic memory into narrative memory. An art of trauma, then, in opposition to compulsory memory, may potentially act "as an antidote to the erasure and annihilation of the `other,' which is both the core and the self-perpetuating legacy of trauma" (996). Yet, such an art may necessarily require conscious indirection "to create a

protected space wherein the remembrance of the traumatic experience can begin" (995). Thus, Laub and Podell highlight the qualified redemptive significance of aesthetic reconstruction in relation to the survivor's ability to summon intersubjective contexts which facilitate mourning.

Cultural Dynamics of Reception and Communalization

Intersubjective contexts which facilitate the mourning of trauma may involve both individuals and groups. Although he later declares that "from the very first individual psychology . . . . is at the same time social psychology as well" ("GPE" 95), Freud does not articulate mourning in relation to group processes. For instance, Freud emphasizes that the "main instrument" for "curbing the patient's compulsion to repeat and for turning it into a motive for remembering lies in the handling of the transference" (SE 12: 154). Thus, the trauma victim and the analyst potentially "co-constitute the space in which loss may come to be symbolically and affectively mastered" (Santner SQ 25). However, Freud's outline of therapeutic transference encompassing the trauma survivor and analyst is only a partial and inadequate social rubric by which to engage the complex processes of mourning in relation to the collective contexts of a historical trauma. As Kai Erikson notes, trauma has "a social dimension": "it draws one away from the center of group space while at the same time drawing one back" (185-86). Gesturing to the overwhelming

importance of intersubjective contexts for mourning practices, then, LaCapra remarks, "one may ask whether the social space of the empathic witness is sufficiently occupied by a one-to-one relationship or whether it requires--for any publicly effective (and perhaps for any individually durable) process of mourning--the role of more widely instituted practices" (RH 215). According to Shay, "narrative heals personality changes only if the survivor finds or creates a trustworthy community of listeners for it" (188). In this connection, Herman properly identifies the potential for "pathological grief" in the wake of traumatic events, given that "no custom or common ritual recognizes the mourning that follows traumatic life events" in spite of the fact that the survivor must contend with numerous shattered contexts of identification which constitute posttraumatic subjectivity, including cultural affiliations, ties to nation, family, and so on (70).

Both survivors and secondary witnesses are constrained by prevailing social constructions of mourning, constructions which emphasize the "privatization of grief" (Ramazani 15). Given the survivor's challenge to "the rightness of the social order," Shay makes the compelling claim that "the reasons to deflect, deny and forget trauma narrative stem from the social construction of normal human life" (194). As Herman attests, "to speak publicly about one's knowledge of atrocities is to invite the stigma that attaches to victims" (2). It must be admitted that extreme limit-experiences may challenge the

boundaries, separateness, and functionality of those engaged in the process of receiving the survivor's testimony (Felman and Laub xvii). Clearly, though, in any consideration of the psychological hazards of participating in the "testimonial chain" which enables the survivor to transmit massive historical trauma, the "primary trauma" and "secondary stress" of the survivor and the witness, respectively, must not be conflated (Laub "BW" 71; Tal 56).

Once traumatic memory has been reconstructed as narrative, it may enter into the realm of social and cultural mediations. The secondary transmission and reception of trauma narratives are areas fraught with potential dangers, according to Tal: "traumatic events are written and rewritten until they become codified and narrative form gradually replaces content as the focus of attention" (6). In her view, the process of cultural codification, a process governed by dynamics of appropriation and assimilation, subverts the political and ethical confrontations inherent in survivor accounts in the service of national and hegemonic interests. As J. Young affirms, "once written, events assume the mantle of coherence that narrative necessarily imposes on them, and the trauma of their unassimilability is relieved" ("ILT" 404). Yet, the trauma narrative itself frequently issues implicit and explicit challenges to the social context to renarrativize itself with respect to the survivor in that the destruction engendered by trauma is itself "a social act" (Culbertson

179). According to Tal, then, "if survivors retain control over the interpretation of their trauma, they can sometimes force a shift in the social and political structure" (7).

Through her emphasis on the contrasting variables of appropriation and control, Tal's committed and often combative contribution to trauma discourse highlights the political stakes involved in the reception of survivor testimony. Yet Tal fails to offer any explicit or sustained intervention on the role of the witness in both receiving and transmitting trauma. She does not reconfigure the category of the witness in a way which signals the potential significance of this role in the mitigation and mourning of trauma, in spite of her own passionate critique of witnessing as it is constructed by Laub (53-59). Her own view of the inevitable cultural movement toward the appropriation of survivor texts which she perceives as being "predictable and consistent across traumas" is contradicted by her declaration in the final chapter that the reader potentially "becomes part of [the] reconstruction when she participates in the testimonial process" (59, 203). In the end, her insistent cautions regarding appropriation signal the importance of a more self-conscious effort to contend with the ethical complexities and psychoanalytic dynamics which charges of appropriation frequently work to conceal.

Those responding to testimony confront an implicit imperative to resist identification with the survivor while privileging affective response through contiguous, or adja-

cent, relationship. As Doris Sommer declares, "the testimonial `I' does not invite us to identify with it . . . . there is no pretense here of universal or essential experience" (108). However, such a mode of response has few cultural models: as Carolyn Steedman argues with respect to the Holocaust, prevailing paradigms of reading often promote the collapse of textual and historical alterity in order that we may seemingly engage our own stories (107). In this regard, she suggests that the conflation of biography and history may be implicated in "an evolving, adventuring appropriation that can confront and conquer ever-newer forms of otherness" (Nealon 130). Such a reading strategy fails to affirm the separateness of the survivor experience; rather, it seeks to transmute the "unassimilable forms" of trauma testimony into "forms of mediation available for making events of the past items of a subjectivity" (Steedman 104). But, as Zeiger is surely correct to comment, the "global imperative" of bearing witness to an event such as the Holocaust seems like "a responsibility that can neither be relinquished nor effectively discharged" (162).

In this connection, Hirsch's articulation of postmemory makes clear that the category of the witness must be divested of its generality, and considered in more specific relationship to both proximate and displaced acts of memory. As she distinguishes postmemory from survivor-memory, so the memorial engagements of children of survivors may be distinguished from other locations of remembrance, such as those involved in the

study of historical trauma specified by Steedman (8). In a declaration of non-appropriative practices which may be extended to the scholar, for instance, charging that "responsibility de-nucleates the I," Edith Wyschogrod advocates the difficult and dynamic role of "the heterological historian" who is "driven by the eros for the dead and the urgency of ethics" (247, xiii). And in a qualified corroboration of her emphases, Roth declares that "the dialectic between connection and otherness" demanded of the witness must also characterize the special "piety" of the historian of massive trauma (224). To conclude consideration of this issue, then, a range of commentators addressing the potential interactions between the survivor of trauma and the witness do not view "the ethical relationship which subtends discourse" as "a species of consciousness whose ray emanates from the I"; rather, even contexts which summon complex familial, cultural or imaginative alignments also function to "[put] the I in question" (Levinas 195).

Posttraumatic Ethics

Clearly, the problems of posttraumatic ethics are foregrounded dramatically by any consideration of the potential relationship between the witness and the survivor. As Lifton deduces in relation to the phenomenon of survivor-guilt, "we have no choice but to make judgements about trauma and our relationship to it"; there is "a moral dimension inherent in

all conflict and suffering" (BC 172). However, this moral or ethical dimension cannot be calculable or categorical, nor can it be formulated or codified in advance: "the appeal to a theoretical ground for determining the right and wrong of differing claims already reflects a weakening of what is exacted by the other who is anterior to theories of justice" (Wyschogrod xii). As Nealon summarizes the work of Levinas, a man who experienced the upheavals of the First World War, the Russian Revolution, and the Second World War, "there are no pre-existing ethical grammars by which I might respond adequately to the other, and yet I must respond nevertheless" (132). And in the words of Levinas himself, "we name this calling into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the Other ethics" (43). Within this conception, the ethical "describes, **a posteriori**, a certain event of being in a non-subsumptive relationship with the other" (Critchley 56). Such a non-subsumptive relationship with the other can take place only in the concrete situation of speech or discourse: "the same and the Other can not enter into a cognition that would encompass them . . . . This conjuncture is irreducible to totality . . . " (Levinas 80). According to Levinas, then, in the summary of one critic, ethical obligations exist independently of "consequences of historically, conceptually, or developmentally prior structures of social life, rational thought or experience" (Gottlieb 223).

Yet, as Irigaray asks, "who is the other, if the other of

sexual difference is not recognized or known?" ("QEL" 181). Levinas conceives of alterity in a way which rejects the significance of sexual difference, a mode of difference central to Irigaray's oeuvre, when he asserts that "the alterity of the Other does not depend on any quality that would distinguish him from me, for a distinction of this nature would precisely imply between us that community of genus which already nullifies alterity" (194). However, Irigaray is surely correct to signal the significance of sexual difference in connection with the "situated, partial, finite, empirical" contexts which actualize modes of ethical relationship (Gottlieb 231). Moreover, Levinas's formulations of the Other in relation to the infinite reject the significance of transference, a central insight of psychoanalytic thought which has crucial relevance in all considerations of traumatic events. Transference must be understood as a dynamic between self and other which engages "the phantasmal relics of our complicated psychic histories," in addition to numerous prior social and conceptual investments which configure experience and understanding (Fuss IP 2). Issues implicated in the psychoanalytic understanding of transference only highlight the inherent difficulties engaged by the questions of posttraumatic ethics.

More specifically, Hildegard Adler defines the process of transference in the context of the traumatised analysand's engagement with the analyst as "the zenith of the confron-

tation of the irreconcilable objects" (940). The "irreconcilable objects" which configure historical trauma include the roles of victim and perpetrator, "the dialectic in which severely traumatised persons are caught" (Adler 938). In this connection, Gottlieb discusses Levinas's ethical system in light of a transposed dialectic of victim and perpetrator, given Levinas's "quite radical account of the subject as substitution, hostage, persecution, obsession and trauma" (Critchley 56). In a manner related to, but distinct from, Irigaray, then, Gottlieb seeks to contextualize Levinas's conviction that "beyond knowledge and history, we are ethical hostages for the other whom we do not know" (232). Gottlieb argues that an ethical system which elevates the Other into a "metaphysical precondition" of human life may be understood in association with the experiences of Levinas and his family under the Nazis (233). In his view, "it is as though persecution by another were at the bottom of solidarity with another" in Levinas's philosophy, revealing a transposed dialectic of victim and perpetrator (Levinas qtd. in Nealon 136).

While I have no desire to reduce the significant challenges and difficulties represented by Levinas's extensive and celebrated philosophical works, I cite Gottlieb's comments in order to suggestively highlight the formidable problems which beset considerations of posttraumatic ethics. Such considerations must simultaneously embrace a range of issues including

transference, difference, context, possibilities and limits. Beyond my consideration of Levinas, who has arguably become "the most central theorist for the postpoststructuralist dispensation of turn-of-the-century literary-ethical inquiry" (Buell 9), I am in agreement with LaCapra when he indicates that "there is a great deal to unlearn and to rethink in order for ethics and the ethicopolitical to take a prominent place in critical discourse" (HMA 203). Needless to say, questions implicated in the elaboration and assumption of a potentially non-appropriative mode of exchange continue to remain central to the future direction and practice of trauma scholarship, particularly in relation to the vexed and critical encounter between the survivor and the witness.[6] Along with Gottlieb, I believe that "ethical frameworks open to tasks set by the distinctive experiences of our century must comprehend the traumas of mass industrialized genocide, ecocide, and collective personal violence toward women and minorities" (222). And as my brief consideration of Levinas may be taken to indicate, twentieth-century formulations of "post-rational ethics" cannot be extricated from the extreme events which have themselves called the rational and the ethical jointly into question (Hand v).

Conclusion

To summarize, then, in this chapter, I emphasize broad categories, such as "the survivor" and "the witness," in order

to stress general features of traumatic experience throughout my analysis. Yet I also summarize, nuance or criticize specific issues within trauma scholarship which pertain to the possibilities and limitations of mourning. Accordingly, I address the problems of mourning and trauma in terms of the persistent complexities and perils of survivorship: "the copresence of ongoing death and ongoing life--without resolution or higher synthesis--is, for survivors, embodied reality" (Greenspan 148). Any precise conjunction of mourning and trauma, though, remains variable and contingent upon historically specific situations, which, in turn, give rise to specific ethical contests and configurations, because distinct forms of trauma involve "differing expectations for recollection and different contexts for retelling" (Kirmayer 188).[7] By focusing on the challenges which traumatic experience continues to pose to psychoanalytic and other therapeutic literatures attentive to individual, and, to some extent, collective, mourning processes, I selectively synthesize a vast area of scholarship which ranges from the beginning to the end of the twentieth century. Privileging contemporary interventions, I develop the significance of narrative and witnessing as a means of generating a sense of the recursive, overdetermined, incomplete, and socially-implicated nature of mourning in the aftermath of trauma.

Just as narrative and witnessing are treated as supplementary processes in the survivor's struggle to work through

trauma, diverse conceptualizations of mourning, including formulations offered by Freud, Janet, Lifton and Laub, are situated in supplementary relationship to one another as a way of generating an awareness of the challenges which trauma presents to any unitary formulation of its aftermath. The persistent application of distinctions introduced by Janet and Freud at the beginning of the century, in spite of a variety of more recent approaches to disaster, in contexts ranging from the Holocaust to Vietnam, signals a devastating succession of historical catastrophes beyond any corresponding capacity to develop a meaningful, viable vocabulary and praxis of mourning in relation to them. Like other efforts of cultural reconstruction, my own discussion struggles to articulate a connection between mourning and survivorship which ultimately "moves within the damaged space of speech" (Hartman "SIW" 48). In conclusion, then, a complex appreciation of survivorship, in relation to death and continuity, traumatic memory and narrative memory, acting out and working-through, as well as emptiness and repossession (Laub and Podell 993), is fundamental to any engagement with more mediated processes of cultural reconstruction, including works of literary, historical, and philosophical scholarship which explicitly or implicitly seek to supplement specific struggles with mourning in the wake of this century's many devastating events.

Chapter Three

Notes

1. As Tal points out, however, the category of the "survivor" demands contextualization and specificity: "where there is no safe refuge, the designation of `survivor' is always temporary and conditional" (9).is independent of a libidinal relation to the object" ("DM" 59).

Leys's model of trauma, which is based on a radically revised theory of the psyche (FTP 168), certainly offers a bold departure from the traditional psychoanalytic discussion; it seems especially significant in relation to childhood trauma and specific instances of prolonged and overwhelming trauma because it potentially addresses the enigmas and complexities of severe psychic disorganization which are associated with the survival of catastrophic events. For this reason, her research offers a challenging point of departure for many current avenues of trauma scholarship. However, in my view, her oddly ambitious and unitary formulation fails to contend with the wide array of symptomology, aftermath experiences, and historical circumstances relevant to considerations of trauma.

2. Another model of mourning relevant to instances of trauma has been provided by Abraham and Torok. See "Mourning or Melancholia: Introjection **versus** Incorporation" in The Shell and the Kernel, which I discuss briefly in Chapter Seven. Many recent commentators have adopted their model of mourning, including Derrida (1994) and Leys (1992).

3. For a suggestive and influential discussion of the role of the witness prior to Testimony, see Langer (1991); for a critique of the concept of the witness put forward by both Felman and Laub, see Tal (53 ff.); for more recent discussions which define and extend the term, see LaCapra (1998), Hartman (1998), and Hirsch (1999).

4. Bal explicitly relates repression and dissociation to narratology: "in narratological terms, repression results in ellipsis--the omission of important elements in the narrative--whereas dissociation doubles the strand of narrative series of events by splitting off a sideline . . . . this sideline is called paralepsis in narrative theory . . . . repression interrupts the flow of narratives that shape memory; dissociation splits off material that cannot then be reincorporated into the main narrative" (ix).

5. In contrast to the models of mourning associated with Freud and Janet, respectively, Leys's own self-described "mimetic model" of trauma challenges the possibilities of any degree of catharsis, recollection, partial mourning or mode of treatment

based on narrative self-representation. In her view, trauma engages not "a pregiven ego," but a subject "prior to any identity and any perceptual object" ("DM" 61). Her definition has very important implications for recall: describing traumatic memory as "**incarnated memory**," she argues that "it can only be experienced in the mode of a repetition or acting out in the present, not in the mode of conscious recollection" ("DM" 60). In this manner, she repudiates both Freud's model of working-through and Janet's privileging of the significant struggle to shape a narrative memory of the trauma. Rather, with her theory of mimetic identification, she dismisses the distinct roles of the ego, the object or the event in relation to the experience of trauma: "the traumatic situation is a situation of unconscious imitation of, or emotional identification with, the traumatic event or person that occurs in a state akin to hypnosis, and it is independent of a libidinal relation to the object" ("DM" 59).

Leys's model of trauma, which is based on a radically revised theory of the psyche (FTP 168), certainly offers a bold departure from the traditional psychoanalytic discussion; it seems especially significant in relation to childhood trauma and specific instances of prolonged and overwhelming trauma because it potentially addresses the enigmas and complexities of severe psychic disorganization which are associated with the survival of catastrophic events. For this reason, her research offers a challenging point of departure for many current avenues of trauma scholarship. However, in my view, her oddly ambitious and unitary formulation fails to contend with the wide array of symptomology, aftermath experiences, and historical circumstances relevant to considerations of trauma.

6. In this connection, for instance, commenting on "the ways the next generation simultaneously feeds on the past and disposes of it in their work," J. Young observes that "while academic critics have been quick to speculate on the motives of filmmakers, novelists, and popular historians, we have remained curiously blind to our own instrumentalization of memory, to the ways an entire academic industry has grown up around the events of the Holocaust" ("TRH" 43).

7. The importance of specificity in discussions of distinct modes of historical trauma is most forcefully articulated by LaCapra; by way of contrast, Herman explicitly links a diverse array of traumatic situations, extending from Vietnam to childhood abuse. In particular, her comparative discussion of childhood abuse survivors with Holocaust survivors has been controversial (120). Without rejecting the basis for the comparison, however, Kirmayer qualifies Herman's general level of discussion by offering "theoretical and empirical grounds for distinguishing the two at the level of the social and cultural shaping of memory" (191). Kirmayer's discussion can

also be usefully contrasted with Sturken's far less considered remarks in "Narratives of Recovery: Repressed Memory as Cultural Memory," Acts of Memory, eds. Bal, Crewe and Spitzer (Hanover, NH: UP of New England, 1999), 231-48: "this move to acquire the status of the **historical** survivor can be seen as an attempt at legitimacy . . . . the idea that a childhood of neglect is equivalent to surviving genocide is both ludicrous and offensive" (242).

More generally, and by no means unanimously, Tal maintains that "a careful study of the works of literature produced by trauma survivors points to a certain uniformity of experience and unanimity of intention that transcends the particular instances described" (120). As Bal attests, trauma theory is responsible for "an expanding `geography' of cultural memory"; for instance, she notes the "transfer of Holocaust-related issues, insights, critical vocabularies, and therapeutic paradigms to other, related, historical contexts" (xi). In a distinct but related example of this "expanding `geography' of cultural memory," Zeiger's work on elegy draws comparisons between AIDS writing and women's breast cancer poetry, without reducing either body of work; in particular, see her discussion of Marilyn Hacker, who makes "fastidiously negative rather than sensationalizing positive connections between the situation of the breast cancer patient and the victims of historical atrocity" (163).

PART ONE

IV. Mourning and Cultural Memory: Secondary Narratives of the Great War

> I wanted my readers to weep as they sensed the despair of people like themselves, torn and obliterated for a cause beyond their understanding.
>
> Paul Fussell, commenting on The Great War and Modern Memory in Doing Battle (1996)

> How is the historian to re-member affect?
>
> Edith Wyschogrod, An Ethics of Remembering (1998)

Introduction: Deep Memory and Common Memory

The Great War is a historical trauma. This event continues to engage belated efforts to narrate its events, assess its general significance and construct its ongoing legacy, as is evidenced by the persistence and proliferation of critical and popular commentary on it.[1] But the inability of stories, narratives and other cultural mediations to assimilate the event only magnifies the status of the Great War as a conscious cultural preoccupation. Self-conscious contemporary critical scholarship continues to address the experiences of combatants and their contemporaries. Yet such experiences may be characterized by "deep memory," a mode of traumatic knowledge which may be neither fully assimilated nor

fully mourned, and thereby continues to resist narrative incorporation (Delbo qtd. in Langer 5).[2] Contemporary scholarship can confront the existence of such "deep memory" only with a "common," or narrative, memory of events. Common memory, though, "tends to restore or establish coherence, closure and possibly a redemptive stance" to a traumatic event, "notwithstanding the resistance of deep memory at the individual level" (Friedländer 41). With respect to massive historical traumas, then, common memory remains "haunted by that which it necessarily leaves unstated, its coherence a necessary but ultimately misleading evasion" (J. Young "RH" 37).[3] Quite simply, as Adrian Gregory declares at the conclusion of his study of the Armistice Day ritual first instituted in 1919, "we can respect the suffering but we can no longer hope to understand it" (227).

Thus, the secondary narratives of historical trauma which seek to acknowledge the significance of deep memory are confronted with a unique challenge: they must connect the "protocols of formal history" with "misremembering" (Steedman 109). As J. Young declares, a historiography which connects formal history with misremembering "would simultaneously gesture to the existence of deep, inarticulate memory and its own incapacity to deliver it" ("HVP" 668). Ideally, then, secondary narratives of catastrophic events might bear witness, albeit in an indirect and mediated format, to the confrontation of narrative with the counternarrative forces of historical

trauma. Although historiographers and literary critics are situated in the complex role of "bystanders after the event," this very status outside the traumatic event makes secondary narratives bear a unique and significant, although vexed, relationship to issues of mourning and memory (Hartman "SIW" 45). While self-consciously addressing the counternarrative forces of historical trauma even as they reconfigure events through common memory, historiographical and literary discourses also contribute to discourses of mourning as a function of the belated memory-work they perform, foregrounding questions concerning the viability of cultural reconstruction in the wake of catastrophic events.[4]

Notably, in connection with the question of cultural reconstruction in the wake of the Shoah, Santner highlights one of the ways in which the protocols of formal history may consciously and unconsciously contribute to the disavowal of deep memory. He supplements a psychoanalytic understanding of mourning with Freud's concept of the fetish in order to articulate his theory of "narrative fetishism": "the way an inability or refusal to mourn emplots traumatic events; it is a strategy of undoing, in fantasy, the need for mourning by simulating a condition of intactness, typically by situating the site and origin of loss elsewhere" (PLR 144). Highlighting the general relevance of Santner's formulation, as Julia Kristeva also indicates, "the work of art as fetish emerges when the activating sorrow has been repudiated" (BS 9). Thus, Sant-

ner foregrounds the uses of secondary narrative, particularly historiographical narrative, to deflect the process of mourning traumatic events by instituting formal, ideological or affective closure; "narrative fetishism" reinstates the pleasure principle prior to the working-through of trauma (PLR 146). In his view, then, common memory which thoroughly effaces its connection to deep memory cannot assert any legitimate claim to historical representation.[5]

In a complementary fashion, J. Young also argues for a historiography which is attentive to the existence of both deep and common memory. He suggests that Freud's formulation of the "uncanny" provides a more appropriate model for the historiography of the Shoah than either mourning or melancholia, which may resolve themselves into premature closure or shattering reenactment, respectively. Drawing on Freud to different effect than Santner, he argues for the role of what he calls "the uncanny historian" in a historiographical mode which is both "anti-redemptory" and "integrated" and "whose narrative skein is disrupted by the sound of the historian's own self-conscious voice" (J. Young "HVP" 667-68). In related ways, both Santner and J. Young point out the necessary self-reflexivity which must characterize the commentator's belated narrative encounter with a historical trauma, an event which may continue to be the occasion for disturbing and recurrent forms of deep memory which defy sequential representation.

As illustrated by the preliminary citations from Santner

and J. Young, it is difficult to attend to the "magnetic field" of the Great War without appreciating its status in phantom relationship to the Second World War (Lewis qtd. in Hartman "SIW" 38). Certainly, the Great War is often implicitly situated in a comparative framework relative to the Western conception of its own cultural demise in the events of the Shoah, an occasion of systematic genocide which poses massive, apparently intractable and ongoing challenges to processes of mourning and critique. According to Hartman, "in this democidal century, each further genocide does not weaken the memory of the Shoah but revives it as an event that founded the exemplarity of testimonial acts" ("SIW" 39). Similarly, Felman and Laub address the Second World War as a defining historical trauma (xiv). My own research on the Great War takes place within the "magnetic field" of the Second World War, which has largely provided the impetus for the accelerated development of historiographical debates regarding the representation of twentieth-century historical catastrophes. Without wishing to conflate the World Wars, nor the very distinct modes of survivorship constellated in the wake of these conflicts, this chapter generally supports retrospective interpretations of the Great War offered by Eksteins, Mosse and Leed, among others, which argue that the unmourned losses of that conflict were critical to the shaping of the subsequent War. My discussion of secondary narratives, including historiography and literary criticism, explores the

unique potentialities of trauma scholarship in application to the Great War, an event which has not yet been considered in the context of the committed and extensive body of literature on trauma which has emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War, notwithstanding the obvious differences between these twentieth-century watersheds.[6]

The British cultural memory of the Great War has generally been constructed in relation to either historical rupture or historical necessity, approaches which consciously or unconsciously engage distinct assumptions regarding the status of mourning in relation to the event. These approaches to rupture or continuity are exemplified in the studies of Fussell (1975) and Winter (1995), respectively. Following a schematic examination of these contrasting approaches, I address the manner in which strategies of recall and emphasis within secondary narratives are almost invariably shaped by assumptions regarding the traumatic memory occasioned by the event. Although the vocabulary of trauma theory has not yet had any decisive impact on Great War scholarship, the field has been consistently informed by the construction of the event in catastrophic terms, which only highlights the value and general significance of an explicit framework which privileges recent theoretical approaches to historical trauma. By foregrounding the agencies of the scholar, whether historian or literary critic, cultural mediations of the Great War may be productively situated in relation to the dynamics of his-

torical trauma, dynamics which often implicate successive generations.

Cultural representations of the Great War have changed emphases in the last several decades, even as the issue of deep memory and the problems associated with it have persistently animated the field. Mediations of the frontsoldier's experience of the Great War therefore occupy a central place in the analysis, and the shifting significance of this figure in secondary narratives of historical trauma is interpreted as a crucial index of the transformations effected in scholarship on the period. While the literary testimonies of elite officers such as Owen and Sassoon may no longer be glossed as representative visions of the Western Front, present-day scholars of the Great War must now contend with the imminent disappearance of living memory. This disappearance underscores the belated reception and mediation of traumatic events by those who bear no direct relationship to modes of deep memory, an impasse which only highlights the significance of contemporary debates on memory-work consolidated in the shadow of the Second World War. Throughout, I emphasize the manner in which common memory configures events and thereby contests or affirms particular modes of cultural remembrance. Cultural memory, a mode of memorial work which both informs and supersedes individual memory practices (Bal vii), and which effectively destabilizes any single interpretation of the past, mediates the acknowledged existence of deep memory through

modes of narrative memory, functioning to illuminate the tensions which remain active in any representation of historical trauma. Reading the literature in terms of its conscious and unconscious preoccupations enables me to illuminate the field's belated encounters with the Great War's specific and "tragic grid of participant-positions," a grid which polarizes combatants and civilians (LaCapra HMA 41). Finally, I conclude my analysis by exploring Hartman's discussion of the "intellectual witness," a reconstructive ethico-political position which I also advocate as a significant role for scholarship in the aftermath of catastrophic events ("SIW" 37).

The Great War: Rupture or Continuity?

Scholarship on the Great War has accelerated since the publication of Fussell's The Great War and Modern Memory, which asserts that the primary mode of modern understanding in the aftermath of the First World War is "essentially ironic" (35). In Fussell's view, "a paradigm of ironic action" has persisted, marking the perception and narration of all subsequent twentieth-century conflicts (GW 33). He characterizes irony in terms of the "dynamics of hope abridged," which "originates largely in the application of mind and memory to the events of the Great War" (GW 35). Irony became a dominant mode during and after the Great War, in his view, because representation required that "unprecedented meaning

. . . had to find precedent motifs and images" (GW 139). In this manner, Fussell highlights irony as a trope which suspended the resolution of tensions between deep memory and common memory. As a result, in Daniel Pick's felicitous phrase, the Great War has become "a new unconscious of modernity" (197). Through his emphasis on the search for a linguistic vehicle capable of registering the disjunction between the precedented and the unprecedented, Fussell offers an implicit interpretation of traumatic knowledge in the form of "`situational irony,'" a form of irony which necessarily remains "non-normative and ethically indeterminate by virtue of the self-reflexiveness and synthetic balancing that it enjoins" (LaBossière 572). In fact, though, his privileging of irony signals his melancholic preoccupation with the traumatic nature of the event (cf. Winter SM 115). As Elizabeth Ward affirms, "Fussell's private myth is simply of the war as so historically unprecedented a phenomenon as to defy modern understanding altogether and resist any attempt to assimilate it to a preconceived pattern of interpretation" (104).

Other critics acknowledge their debt to Fussell even as they comment on the limitations of his book. As Eksteins properly objects, an emphasis on irony fails to comprehend why the battle continued for four years (176). More generally, Martin Stephen remarks that the "weaknesses" of Fussell's position are due to his "tunnel vision with regard to irony" as well as to "his interest in the Great War only as something

which began things and forced change" (PP 234).[7] Fussell himself has subsequently acknowledged that his book on the Great War was highly overdetermined, "an act of implicit autobiography" which bore complex transferential investments stemming from his own experiences in the army during the Second World War, as well as from his attitudes to the Vietnam War (DB 266). In retrospect, he summarizes his aims in the following way: "I wanted my readers to weep as they sensed the despair of people like themselves, torn and obliterated for a cause beyond their understanding" (DB 267). In short, by his own account, Fussell's narrative assumes that the Great War cannot be understood or represented through the protocols of formal interpretation. In his effort to stimulate mourning in relation to the event, he reifies its melancholic status.

More recently, Winter challenges Fussell's thesis when he maintains that "if the War created `modern memory' . . . . it was a traditional, even archaic, kind of memory that came out of the conflict" (SM 73). Instead of Fussell's highly inflected relationship to mourning, Winter's explicit emphasis on postwar preoccupations with "older languages of loss and consolation" highlights a "universality of bereavement in the Europe of the Great War and its aftermath" (SM 5, 76). In this connection, as Winter accurately notes, almost every family in Britain and elsewhere was implicated in the grief attending the loss of a brother, husband, or father. Winter pays explicit attention to the rituals and privacies of mourning in

the wake of the Great War's devastation of families and communities, although he does not explicitly theorize the historian's belated role in contributing to the mourning of traumatic past events after the fashion of self-conscious contemporary debates on the Shoah. Accordingly, he does not address the status of the Great War as a contemporary site of memory or mourning in any comprehensive fashion, a complex endeavour which lies beyond his aims.

Winter's discussion of mourning after the Great War, "one of the signal catastrophes of our century," is, however, briefly and suggestively situated within the aftermath of the Second World War (SM 116). In this regard, Winter's work indicates a critical shift in focus away from Fussell's. While Fussell foregrounds the cultural "domination of the Second War by the first" (GW 318), Winter's more recent work, written twenty years later, registers the belated nature of contemporary cultural representations which continue to circle the catastrophic sites of the Second World War in a recursive fashion.[6] As Winter acknowledges, the Second World War's specific sites of atrocity are collectively interpreted within postwar intellectual developments to represent a "caesura in European cultural life" (SM 228). More specifically, he comments that the Second World War "made it impossible for many survivors to return to the languages of mourning which grew out of the 1914-18 war when they tried to express their sense of loss after 1945" (Winter SM 9). In this manner,

Winter suggests that deep memory only retains significance for historiographical treatments of the Second World War. While this viewpoint is compelling, it erroneously assumes that languages of mourning remained both viable and stable throughout the first half of the century. But as Gregory persuasively maintains, many discourses of mourning consolidated in the aftermath of the Great War stressed that event as "an object lesson in peace"; these discourses were shattered by the outbreak of the Second World War because it "destroyed the meaning of the First for a generation" (122, 172). To revise Winter's position then, traditional languages of mourning linked with the Great War were underwritten by the presence of recurring modes of melancholic and traumatic deep memory.

Fussell's focus on the frontsoldier gives way to a treatment of comparative and communal contexts of bereavement in Winter's cultural history while Winter's focus on the continuities of memorial culture is contradicted by Fussell's exclusive emphasis on the Great War as a fixed site of rupture. Each study privileges the persistence of a particular mode of representation, whether ironic or traditional. In this connection, as Pick observes, "the First World War cannot be seen as either the final signified or the new signifier which emerges out of nothing--and yet so often it is" (196). In my view, then, neither approach alone is sufficiently attentive to the manner in which ongoing shifts in representational practices effectively transform the Great War as an object of

engagement, given that "any discussion of the memory of the First World War must take into account the chronological framework of that memory" (Gregory 118). My own approach to historical trauma, which is also informed by attention to the problem of mourning, however, bypasses any modernist/ traditionalist divide in its attention to both the uniqueness and continuity of the event, enabling an examination of the ways in which the Great War simultaneously resists and invites narrative representations, as it continues to be subject to the ongoing and unstable transformations of primary and secondary memory-work at the end of the century.

The Frontsoldier: Myths and Countermyths

Even at the end of the century, the combatant remains the focus of many secondary narratives which demonstrate a persistent preoccupation with the category of myth. Why has myth served as a predominant focus of so many critical studies of Great War literature? Stephen records his own fascination with this topic when he remarks, "the question remains why the First World War exerts such a myth-creating power" (PP 236). Any provisional answer to this question must inevitably foreground the fact that aspects of historical trauma "cannot be intensified through imaginative recreation or trans-figuration" (LaCapra HMA 181). In particular, the studies of Bernard Bergonzi (1965), Fussell, Leed (1979), and Hynes (1997) focus their distinct analyses of the combatant's War

through explorations of myth, variously defined.[9] Along with a telling emphasis on the testimonial contributions of soldiers to the elite literary culture of the Western Front, these studies privilege the trench experiences and postwar fates of frontsoldiers, "victims and witnesses of a unique crisis of British civilization" (Bergonzi HT "Preface"). For instance, in this regard, Leed's compelling observation is typical: "perhaps no war before or since challenged more thoroughly the value and status of the combatant" (24). His work constantly alludes to the significance of traumatic memory: in his view, the topographies of combat "combined to shatter those stable structures that can customarily be used to sequentialize experience" (124). Given the fact that these myth-centered treatments of the War frequently focus on the harrowing experiences of combatants, it is not surprising that they tend to stress the event in relation to its discontinuities.

The thematic focus on myth reflects a struggle to identify and discern the "disjunctive rather than integrative" knowledge of combatants prior to the development of any inter-disciplinary discourse of trauma consistent with contemporary developments (Leed 74). In particular, Leed's emphasis on the liminality of the veteran implies that "the symbols generated by liminality are readable only to those familiar with the `alphabet' of trauma; what they represent is not common knowledge" (Tal 118). This view of veterans as a kind of secret nation was made famous by Charles Carrington (1968),

who describes himself as part of "an initiate generation, possessing a secret that can never be communicated" (157). Similarly, Sassoon famously declares that "the man who really endured the war at its worst was everlastingly differentiated from everyone except his fellow soldiers" (MIQ 195). The studies of Leed, Bergonzi and Fussell all emphasize the writings and experiences of frontsoldiers in their attempts to contend with the deep memory of combatants, as those experiences are largely represented by primary witnesses. Their research manifests a fidelity to the most highly mediated literary testimonies of combat, which may in no way be deemed to possess any representative status.

Accordingly, social historians and others invested in an approach to the continuities of the combatant experience discount the assumptions inherent in accounts which argue that "the war induced widespread feelings of betrayal and alienation," asserting that the "disillusionment thesis rests too heavily on a small number of writers and artists" (Bourke 19). Gerard DeGroot, for instance, insists on continuity, claiming that veterans experienced a widespread desire to return to normalcy after demobilisation; "looking back from the vantage point of the approaching millennium, what is striking is how much of pre-war society survived" (270, 291). In keeping with Winter's own emphasis on traditional frameworks of meaning, revisionist interventions are surely appropriate and amply supported by evidence. However, in my view, claims that the

British soldier's "urge to forget" the Front was "the dominant urge" do not effectively dismiss ongoing cultural preoccupations with the Great War and deep memory (Bourke 22). While critiques of myth-centered studies foreground, even if they fail to contextualize, the consistent and even repetitive preoccupations of previous scholarship with the traces of the frontsoldier's traumatic experience, such critiques fail to contend with the abiding significance of literary testimony in shaping the cultural memory of the War. Even a mammoth revisionist history such as Niall Ferguson's The Pity of War (1999) testifies to the stubborn persistence of the determining import of trauma in our understanding of the Great War; even his title is issued as a challenge to the authority of Owen's vision of war and its "unmitigated horror" (448).

In particular, though, feminist literary criticism challenges the scholarly fixation on the combatant and his elusive deep memory of trauma. Instead, feminist criticism seeks to expand the range of representations which configure the field. Certainly, the studies of Bergonzi, Fussell, Leed and Hynes (ST) only make minor reference to women's writing in the period. As Lynne Hanley (1991) points out, for instance, Fussell "obscures his own part in the production of myths about war, presenting himself as an observer of rather than an agent in the process" (24). Originally conceived of as a response to the work of Fussell, Claire Tylee's The Great War and Women's Consciousness (1990) condenses its interrogative aim in the

following terms: "what cushioned the imaginative drive of women's writing so that their myths were stifled?" (17). While she acknowledges the fact that neither women's nor men's "written memory" of the War was "homogeneous," her attempt to unearth the myths of women remains contextualized by the culturally-dominant male myths which have traditionally taken precedence over women's experiences of the War in literary and cultural scholarship (15). However, in light of numerous feminist studies of the War written in the last decade, women's War writing can no longer be considered a neglected area of study.[10]

More recent feminist approaches to the writing of the period, such as Women's Fiction and the Great War (1997), deemphasize an exclusive focus on gender dynamics. Instead, the collection examines the traumatic impact of the event on a diverse array of subject-positions constellated by the historical crisis. Signalling their decisive rejection of an approach inaugurated by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, for example, Tate and Suzanne Raitt persuasively maintain that "to transform the actual violence of the Great War into a trope for sex warfare is to deny the specificity of its trauma, both for women and for men" (15). Thus, attention to modes of difference in Great War literature continues to be a pressing issue which calls for greater study and theorization, although recent interventions indicate that the focus on gender can be supplemented and enriched through recourse to the dynamics of

historical trauma, an approach quite in keeping with the concerns of the present study.

While gendered critique successfully highlights the dominant homosocial construction of the Great War, a construction which privileges elite combat testimonies, Hynes systematically reveals the manner in which secondary narratives adhere to this general pattern of recall and emphasis, a pattern which continues to structure accounts of the event according to the exigencies of the frontsoldier's plight. In A War Imagined (1990), Hynes defines the fictionally-mediated history of the Great War and its legacy, "the Myth of the War," as "the story of the war that has evolved, and has come to be accepted as true" (ix). Furthermore, he argues that the Myth can be "reduced to two terse propositions: the old betray the young; the past is remote and useless"; moreover, the most significant emotional mood of the Myth is one of "protest" (AWI x, 439). Hynes is chiefly interested in the process by which the formally distinct categories of history and literature are collapsed into the useable fiction of a stabilized national narrative, one which has been inherited by successive generations. Almost all subsequent critical work on the Great War has acknowledged its ongoing debt to Hynes's elaboration of this Myth; clearly, scholarship on the Great War falls repeatedly within specific narrative patterns and cultural emphases, and evidently extricates itself from such patterns with some difficulty. In the final analysis, as Hynes is quick

to point out, myth tells what is "imaginable and manageable" about the Great War; the Myth remains persuasive because "it offers a clear and correct moral view of a terrible, destructive episode in history" (AWI xiii; ST 105). Most importantly, Hynes's systematic articulation of the Myth contextualizes conscious and unconscious assumptions which many scholars had previously failed to identify in relation to their own secondary narratives. Arguably, unconscious adherence to the Myth has effectively contributed to the relative neglect of the event's relationship to mourning until fairly recently.

And yet, it cannot be doubted that "any pattern, no matter how pervasive it seems, is always a simplification of reality" (Booth 7). In this connection, in addition to her discussion of "medicalization" as a strategy of "cultural coping" in the wake of traumatic events, Tal offers an incisive analysis of the process of "mythologization" Hynes describes. According to Tal, "mythologization works by reducing a traumatic event to a set of standardized narratives . . . . turning it from a frightening and uncontrollable event into a contained and predictable narrative" (6). Hynes's predictable Myth, then, dramatically attests to the partial assimilation of traumatic events through modes of common memory; the ritualized and even formulaic condensations of events in myth-centered accounts must be acknowledged. In many ways, Hynes's articulation of the Myth accords nicely with Tal's specific description of its social function, alerting us

to the confluence of public and private configurations of memory in the wake of traumatic events.

However, in the final analysis, the Myth, which continues to gesture to the fragmentary traces of deep memory through mediated modes of cultural memory, seems to enhance rather than diminish critical preoccupations with the unmasterable and unmournable status of the event. To some extent, it may be argued that the abbreviated and simplified narratives within myth-centered accounts effectively operate as a collective "screen memory" (Laub and Podell 996). In a revision of Tal's emphasis on myth as an effective strategy of containment, then, I would point out that in its foregrounding of its own partial and decontextualized status, the Myth registers both a presence and an absence. Its truncated litany of the War's impact simultaneously gestures to the necessity and impossibility of the narrative codification of trauma within collective contexts. In fact, the Myth of the War reveals "the complex ways that knowing and not knowing are entangled in the language of trauma and in the stories associated with it" (Caruth UE 4). Animating tensions between modes of deep and common memory are constitutive of the Myth; secondary narratives have long been preoccupied with the War's collective legacies and their abiding resistances to narrative.

Recurring Counternarratives

In spite of the recognizable historical patterns of the

Myth, and the numerous accounts of the period, scholarship written in the last few decades of the twentieth century continues to stress the unprecedented status of the Great War, along with the assumption that its events cannot be adequately mourned. Scholars frequently treat the War as an event which has not achieved historiographical or imaginative closure, in part explaining its "perennial fascination" for contemporary historians, recent literary critics, and postmodern writers, all of whom were born long after the events of 1914-18 (Winter SM 1). In spite of the passage of time and the recurrence of military conflicts, Hynes declares that "the First World War remains our favourite war--the one we most want to know about, the one that most moves us" (ST 106). And yet, as Tate also indicates, "our inability to see the history and politics at work in much modernist writing is itself a perplexing question for our own time," particularly given the filiations of such writing with the War (8). While its monuments may have "become part of the unheeded architecture of the everyday" (Dyer 19), Eksteins, for instance, argues that the War lastingly transformed human consciousness (xiv). The cultural legacies of the Great War continue to be traced in terms of its active agency in the present, at the end of the century, even more than eighty years after the cessation of the conflict. The War is treated as a vital precedent for the events which succeeded it; the War is thus envisaged in terms of its persistent and belated effects.

Scholarship on the War has long stressed its defiance of narrative closure. As Stephen remarks, the "full story" of the Great War "will never be told" (PP 235). In fact, the War has frequently been discussed as "a gap in history" commonly imaged through tropes of "radical emptiness--as a chasm, or an abyss, or an edge--or in images of fragmentation and ruin, all expressing a fracture in time and space that separated the present from the past" (Hynes AWI xi). Such images of "radical emptiness" testify to the fact that the War was perceived to institute "a set of abrupt disjunctions" which defied traditional patterns of narrative coherence or cultural progress (Hynes AWI x). The tropes of "radical emptiness" associated with the War highlight its status as a historical trauma which resists being "transformed into a story, placed in time, with a beginning, a middle and an end (which is characteristic for narrative memory)" (van der Kolk and van der Hart 177). In fact, the belated effects of trauma as well as its resistances to narrative organization are dramatically evident in the outpouring of books about the War only after the elapse of a decade, a temporal delay which can be considered a "latency period," after Freud (Pfeiler qtd. in Leed 191).[11] Thus, the most prolific period of prose writing about the War took place more than ten years after the Armistice, indicating the significant effort of the War generation to codify traumatic events which seemed to defy codification.

The conduct of the War has also been discussed in terms of its pronounced defiance of narrative modes of explanation. For instance, Booth argues that "attrition, which makes war a premise rather than a climax, frustrates narrative convention as emphatically as it frustrates physical movement" (108-9). Stalemate challenges the basis of narratives relating to heroic models of the nation and masculinity. And as Dyer observes, in many battles, the War seemed "capable of obliterating all trace of itself" (121). According to many general estimates, the bodies of half a million men were never located after the Armistice. In a war of attrition, dominated by artillery, infantry were without a sense of the War beyond the immediate tasks at hand: in Sassoon's words, "Armageddon was too immense for my solitary understanding" (MIO 74). And while the precise origins of the War lay in the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, this apparent point of origin for the War is belied by the complex system of European alliances which afterwards mobilized armies across Europe and elsewhere for the conflict.[12] Similarly, the conclusion of the War resists any overarching narrative: the "scattered and indecisive endings" in accounts of combat signal the interpretive agency brought to bear on a protracted world conflict which offered no clear sense of victory on the Western Front in the wake of the massive casualties and losses sustained on both sides (Hynes ST 94).

While cultural commentators continue to trace the effects

of the Great War, engaging its lack of closure, in Britain the War also clearly resists a narrative which privileges its beginning in an explosive series of occurrences within the Edwardian period. Interestingly enough, in spite of its vocal clashes, instabilities and extreme social divisions, in the wake of the War, the Edwardian period is understood in the following terms: "it embalmed for ever a past characterized by stability and certainty" (Dyer 5). Giving dramatic expression to this perspective on the period, George Orwell satirically describes the Edwardian worldview which informed his boyhood reading, a world in which "the King is on his throne and the pound is worth a pound. Over in Europe the comic foreigners are jabbering and gesticulating, but . . . . Everything is safe, solid and unquestionable. Everything will be the same for ever and ever" (189-90). What explains the persistence of the Edwardian as a cultural artifact, then, given the apparent triviality and conservatism of its associated imagery of "elegance and complacency" (Thale 34)? It seems clear that the persistence of the period in mythical rather than historical terms plays a critical role in the attempt to narrate the Great War. For instance, Paul Farr dates the construction of Edwardianism to the end of the 1920s (378), while another scholar remarks more precisely that, "in August, 1914 it began to be summoned into existence" (Thale 28). Quite clearly an object of yearning and nostalgia in a postwar memoir such as Sassoon's Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man (1928), the Edwardian

period is situated within an explicit narrative of the Great War. And yet, scholars including Farr, Thale and Hynes admit to difficulty in understanding the period's ongoing appeal or assessing its elusive but undoubted centrality in narratives of both Victorianism and Modernism.

The postwar construction of Edwardianism may be interpreted as a strategy of social emplotment which seeks to contain or displace the burden of the untellable story of the Great War. Following Freud, given that an unwarranted feeling of security precedes trauma, the Edwardian period is retrospectively viewed in light of the massive inability to defensively mobilize anxiety prior to the cataclysmic events which followed. The construction of Edwardianism attests to its putative narrativity in relation to the catastrophe which followed; as White observes, narration and narrativity function as "the instruments with which the conflicting claims of the imaginary and the real are mediated, arbitrated, or resolved in a discourse" (CF 3). The Edwardian period has been invested with a prelapsarian narrative function with respect to the Great War so that the "Edwardian Summer" has been "dismissed by almost every historian who has written on the period 1900-1914 to no noticeable effect" (Stephen PP 1). In the aftermath of trauma, then, it seems that nostalgic memory "plays a significant role in the reconstruction and continuity of individual and collective identity" in Britain (Spitzer 92).

In narratives which draw upon the reified postwar construction of Edwardianism, the cataclysmic nature of the Great War is expressed through its rhetorical affiliation with the Biblical Fall in discussions of the historical and literary genesis of the modern age in Britain. The recourse to the trope of the Biblical Fall thus functions as a structure of emplotment for unprecedented events. Edwardian England is popularly imaged as a "peaceable Eden" (Bergonzi HT 20) or a "garden party" (Hynes ETM 5) violently disrupted by the "Huns," the "Tommies," and the rats of the trenches. The Great War itself is conceptualized in terms of "a radical discontinuity" (Hynes AWI ix) in relation to the Edwardian period; it is described as "unexampled" (Fussell GW 153), "a potent myth, symbolizing the crisis of a civilization" (Bergonzi HT 220). Fussell maintains that "ex post facto, literary narrative has supplied it with coherence and irony, educing the pattern: innocence savaged and destroyed" (GW 335). In historical narrative and literary criticism, the Great War is charged with the death of "simplicity, certainty, faith" (Stephen "Preface" 299). And as Philip Larkin's famous poem, "MCMXIV," concludes, "Never such innocence again." The postwar construction of Edwardianism, then, is crucial to an emplotment of the Great War in terms of a violent rupture which demands a binary frame of reference, a world divided into a world before the War, and a world after the War (cf. Fussell GW 75).

The Great War was clearly unprecedented in many respects, as its stark opposition to the Edwardian myth only serves to dramatize. In particular, however, as Mosse observes, "nothing had prepared the generation of 1914 for the confrontation with mass death which awaited them" (50). Although statistics vary, approximately nine million men from all sides are estimated to have lost their lives in the Great War (M. Gilbert xv). Understandably, then, Hynes speculates that "perhaps there is no adequate vocabulary for suffering on that scale" (AWI 76). The sheer numbers of recruits involved are staggering: almost six million men enlisted in Britain alone between 1914-18 (Stephen PP 74). The massive recruitment of volunteers early in the War clearly explains its unique conjunction of poetry and combat: this was "the first middle class war in history" (Eksteins 177). The British army was almost wholly untrained, and was largely comprised of civilians whose most famous poetic testimonies infallibly reveal their civilian status through their refusal to admit to participation in killing, in spite of the undoubted fact that "the main purpose and outcome of war is injuring" (Hynes ST 66; Scarry 63).

In the course of the twentieth century, beginning with the Great War, the dichotomy between civilians and veterans was broken down by the actualities of the War. In addition to the losses of enlisted men, it is estimated that five million civilians died due to "occupation, bombardment, hunger and disease" during the conflict (M. Gilbert xv). Implicitly

recalling the Great War as their precedent, contemporary images of war move "beyond imaginable conflicts of armies to mass annihilation of the helpless and the innocent, and the end of war stories" (Hynes ST 277). The Great War was decisive in this development: images of the victimization of helpless women and children in Belgium initiated wartime proceedings.[13] As Tate suggests, "whole nations found themselves bearing witness to events they did not understand and, by and large, could not see" (1). The systematic targeting of civilians during the Great War only accelerated in military conflicts which succeeded it. For example, the dropping of the atomic bombs in Japan during the Second World War was authorized by a man who had served in the trenches of the First, Harry Truman. The Great War was also instrumental in the first genocide of the twentieth century, the expulsion and persecution of Christian Armenians, which Adolf Hitler, another Great War veteran, was later to cite as a crucial precedent for the implementation of the Nazi genocide (Mosse 160).[14] The unprecedented and grotesque "death immersion" of World War One provided "a paradigm of technological warfare that in some sense created all subsequent battles in its own bleak image" (Lifton BC 14; Gilbert and Gubar 259).

Most important to any contemporary effort to imagine the Western Front, the Great War was also unprecedented in its use of technological weapons.[15] Poison gas was introduced, along with tanks, flamethrowers, artillery shells, and a host of

other devices and explosives, launched by sea, air and land. Such weapons may be meticulously detailed in their own right but the registration of their effects on a human body represents one of the most significant challenges to primary and secondary narratives of the War. No wonder that inventions such as the tank "generated the fantasy that wars might be fought entirely by machines" (Tate 144). While artillery was responsible for the most losses, the machine gun alone produced staggering deaths and casualties (cf. Fussell GW 153). As Tate suggests, "perhaps the most enduring image of the Great War is of the male body in fragments--an image in which war technology and notions of the human body intersect in horrible new ways" (78). The new weaponry also utterly transformed the military tactics of warfare: a defensive posture rather than offensive heroics became the model for the passive endurance required of the trenchsoldier under deafening enemy bombardments (Leed 8). Under such bombardments, death became random, multiple and anonymous, and, according to Hynes, men coped with "conditions of terrible absolute **difference**": he calls the Great War "the worst war in the world," declaring that, "compared to the Western Front, other wars are only wars" (ST 56, 53, 72, 75).

Through the sheer force of his description, Hynes clearly seeks to instill a sense of our own absent memory of events. He gestures to the haunting incoherence and suffering of deep memory at the heart of his subject, even as he seeks to

articulate "a whole coherent story" of twentieth-century combat (ST xiii). Yet, in our belated relationship to the combatants, no number of superlative descriptions of the horror of the War, as realized through the act of killing or witnessing killing, or even of surviving an offensive after being in the frontlines, will bring the contemporary scholar into any comparable fight or flight confrontation with death or physical injury. Secondary narratives of combat must struggle to articulate their vision of the Western Front after the extensive reading of memoirs and testimonies of veterans, survivors whose own traumatic encounters were subjected to the mediations and translations of narrative. Any effort to move into greater proximity to the deep memory of veterans through an engagement with the blasted topography of the Western Front entails a corresponding acknowledgement of what J. Young discusses in another context as our "necessarily hypermediated experience of the memory of events" ("HVP" 669). Secondary descriptions of the experiential and military discontinuities of the Western Front foreground the fact that the particularities of the War are mediated through the successive acts of reception and transmission which inform all belated commentary on historical trauma.

Sacrificial Dynamics

Not surprisingly, though, in the face of the War's myriad resistances to narrative codification, it has frequently been

contextualized by successive generations through reference to the complex cultural continuities of tragedy, a genre which foregrounds the experience of loss and the performance of mourning ritual. While Stephen calls the War a "a tragedy," in an interesting formulation which privileges the extensive social history of the genre, he also observes that "tragedy is the deepest myth of all, going back to prehistory, the need for a sacrificial victim and the purging of society" (PP xv, 236). As Stephen implies, while the performance of tragedy ostensibly enacts the experience of loss, any emplotment of the Great War as a tragedy requires a consideration of its relationship to sacrificial victimization. Previous scholars have addressed this issue in a variety of ways, signalling its insistent thematic relevance, but these interpretations have not been explicitly linked to the dynamics of historical trauma.

Commenting on the significance of images of crucifixion to cultural productions in the period, for instance, Tate observes that "crucifixion is the wrong kind of death in this war; an inappropriate use of its technology" (45). Yet, the War's images of sacrifice and martyrdom require explanation, given their significant role in many combatants' representations of the Western Front. In connection with the same topic, Eksteins treats "The Rite of Spring" (1913) as an allegory for the sacrificial dimensions of the War; he suggests a tragic connection between "the unknown soldier" and

"Stravinsky's victim" (xv). According to Eksteins, the Dionysian celebration of death in the name of life typified the general cultural transformation effected by the War, wherein the "sacrificial sequence" of "The Rite" was recapitulated, and "the urge to create and the urge to destroy changed places" (202, 328). And in a distinct but related emphasis on victimization, Dyer cannot regard photographs of enlisting men without conceiving of them as the tragic phantoms of imminent events, pitifully unconscious of history, trapped on the other side of the lapsarian divide created by the Great War: "young men queuing up to enlist in 1914 have the look of ghosts. They are queuing up to be slaughtered: they are already dead" (6).

Although Stephen and others dispute the Myth's representation of the enlisting men as "thoughtless sheep going passively to slaughter" (PP 94), such an image corresponds to what Hynes identifies as the distinctly modern and pervasive conception of soldiers as pitiable young victims of mechanized slaughter, "Wilfred Owenism," after the poetry of war protest by the famous soldier of that name (AWI 449). "Wilfred Owenism," however, is full of contradictions, given that the soldier of that name was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry in action (Stephen "Preface" 7). Notably, Hanley sharply objects to the exclusive connection between soldiers and victimization when she observes that the world of war is not merely inhabited by soldiers (31). The theme of sacrificial victimization, however, must be given further con-

sideration in view of its fundamental relevance to the dynamics of historical trauma. Explicit attempts to accord the role of deep memory an abiding significance cannot ignore this complex and apparently contradictory construction of the frontsoldier.

In keeping with an emphasis on sacrifice, then, it has long been noted that particular battles during the Great War continue to be treated as metonymic shorthand for senseless slaughter. Such famous battles, perceived as harrowing and unbearable markers of death, particularly within the popular imagination, include Verdun, Passchendaele, and the Somme. In particular, the Somme is highlighted as a ghastly and futile site of senseless slaughter in the British cultural imagination: "so much of the meaning of our century is concentrated here," claims Dyer (128). Many other commentators locate the origin of the anti-war spirit which came to dominate the postwar Myth of the War in the Battle of the Somme. Hynes himself traces the spirit of dissent to the Somme, in part, as he explains, because many canonized war artists participated in the battle, including Sassoon, Graves, Jones, and others (AWI 167). He condenses the post-Somme presentation of the War in this way: "the War itself had come to seem the only source of energy in its world: guns roared, bullets flew, armies moved; but individual men could only suffer" (AWI 208). Yet, according to Tylee, "although the Somme myth ascribes guilt for the deaths of thousands of young men to old men, the final

burden of guilt is placed by literature on the shoulders of women" (257). In this connection, reviewing Sassoon's The Old Huntsman and Other Poems (1917), a volume which addresses his experiences at Mametz Wood in the Somme sector of France, Woolf struggles to articulate her level of complicity in the War: "such loathing, such hatred accumulates behind them that we say to ourselves, `Yes, this is going on; and we are sitting here watching it,' with a new shock of surprise, with an uneasy desire to leave our place in the audience . . . " (120).

Working-Through the Home/Front Polarity

The famous division between the Front and the Home which is so vividly captured by Woolf's disconcerted review, and which remains fundamental to any understanding of the British experience of the Great War, bears a fundamental relevance to the dynamics of sacrifice inherent in historical trauma. The complex transferential relationships generated between soldiers and civilians testify to an inextricable "**crisis of witnessing**" barring communalization of events (Felman and Laub xvii). More specifically, LaCapra elaborates on the complex and inextricable nature of relationships configured by historical trauma, identifying a "tragic grid of participant-positions" at the heart of catastrophic events: "it is the grid that locks together perpetrator, collaborator, victim, bystander, and resister, and that also threatens to encompass

the secondary witness and historian" (HMA 40-41). Clearly, the Home/Front dichotomy of the Great War represents a specific socio-cultural configuration of this grid. The Myth of the War places the Home, whether it is represented by the government, politicians, or women, in a position of culpability for the fate of the trenchsoldier in the Great War. The "tragic grid" enshrined by the Myth, then, casts the combatant in the position of the victim, while the roles of perpetrator, collaborator and bystander seem to be conflated in their application to British civilians, rather than in connection with the official German enemy.

How has historiography and literary criticism confronted this construction of wartime victimization which attributes guilt to the Home, largely exculpating the Front? How have scholars attempted to work-through events and "acquire greater insight into the tangled web" of historical trauma (LaCapra HMA 40)? Accounts of the civilian/combatant divide have increasingly privileged the role of propaganda. Notably, in his memoir from the late 1920s, Graves recalls that during the War, "the civilians talked a foreign language; and it was newspaper language" (188). Fussell's position does not deviate markedly from the view expressed by Graves (GW 87). And, highlighting a "collapsed economy of sacrifice," Leed focuses on the economic relationship between the Home and the Front as an explanation for the increasing element of alienation (206).[16] The interpretations of Leed and Fussell substantiate

the Myth by validating the phenomena of intersubjective breakdown between the Front and the Home, a breakdown which prohibited processes of reintegration or communalization relevant to frontsoldiers.

More recently, Tate and Raitt implicate both combatants and civilians in a mutual bond of ignorance when they emphasize that "censorship, propaganda, and the sheer scale and complexity of the event made it impossible to grasp what was happening at any particular moment" (1). Tate's individual study, Modernism, History and the First World War, is clearly animated by its challenge to the Home/Front polarity. For instance, she argues that designations of War trauma must not be confined to frontsoldiers, but extended to civilians and other varieties of witnesses: "the collective trauma of war spreads far beyond its immediate time and place" (20). While her study is rife with original contributions to the field, contextualized by meticulous and fascinating historical and literary detail, its recourse to trauma theory remains an implicit framework throughout, and requires more explicit development at times. Her general approach to trauma tends to efface highly significant distinctions or specificities, such as the difference between forms of deep and common memory, for instance, when she equates modernism and War writing, or asserts that reading about war can cause war trauma (3, 19). Most valuable in her study, though, is the attention paid to the ways in which phantasy and propaganda mediate both writing

and witnessing during wartime.

The Home/Front dichotomy foregrounds the challenge to the historian and literary critic who must shape a common memory of events in belated relationship to the traumatic knowledge of participants. In the final analysis, "while those who have not experienced catastrophic trauma ultimately cannot imagine its reality, those who have cannot imaginatively know it either," given the protracted inability of survivors to assimilate or master trauma's unconscious and repetitive dynamics (Laub and Auerhahn 288, 289). In contrast to the positions of Fussell and Leed, then, more recent perspectives on the vexed issue of civilian-combatant relations seek to reconfigure the persistent dichotomy which structures so much Great War Myth and literature. In particular, Tate cultivates a critically-informed attitude to the Myth which emphasizes some degree of collective traumatization. Yet, even as scholars subject the Home/Front polarity to critical scrutiny, their analyses must necessarily grapple with the War's unconscious and overdetermined dynamics. In this respect, LaCapra notes that "the historian should attempt to work out a complex position that does not simply identify with one or another participant-position," a mode of investigation which seems to be increasingly prevalent in recent studies (HMA 41).

The manner in which "the tragic grid of participant-positions" continues to be operative in cultural commentary is one means of registering the ongoing impact of historical

trauma, which may continue to elicit a complex range of psychic investments and defensive postures. Thus, the literary critic who writes about the Great War several generations after the Armistice may unconsciously repeat dynamics of the events being analyzed. The ongoing, unwieldy and unassimilable nature of catastrophic events makes it both difficult and necessary for the commentator to construct a critical relationship to the tragic grid of positions which configures a specific historical trauma. Clearly, when discussing such events, scholars may themselves enter into an entropic orbit wherein the repetition which lies "at the heart of catastrophe" may be engaged on an individual level, in assertions, negations, designations, and observations along with a whole range of attitudes to the categories and modes of critical and historical writing (Caruth UE 2). For example, the identification of a historical trauma as utterly unique and resistant to analysis may signal a muted reenactment of the traumatic nature of that event, even by secondary witnesses, including historians and literary scholars.

In specific relation to the Great War, though, it is clear that scholarship which attempts to grapple with the Myth of the War signals the ongoing process of working-through historical trauma. However, such a process of working-through historical trauma must remain cognizant of the significance and incoherence of deep memory, even as it facilitates the mourning of events through its self-conscious cultivation of

other modes of memory-work. The changes of emphasis from the late 1960s to the late 1990s in studies of the Great War reflect an increasing awareness of the scholar's role in reconfiguring traumatic events and shaping subsequent discussion of them. Thus, although LaCapra's critical framework is developed in relation to the Shoah, his work also has a demonstrated relevance to the Great War, in spite of the War's wholly distinct series of events and greater historical distance from the present, a distance which is clearly evident in the decreasing metaphorization of the Great War and the diverse range of secondary narrative strategies generated in relation to it.

Transvaluation and Repetition: The World Wars

Yet, no discussion of the Great War, mourning and cultural memory is complete without a consideration of the War's relevance to subsequent twentieth-century events, given the persistent and ongoing effects of historical trauma. A commitment to trauma scholarship reveals that individual and group processes interact over several generations. Such processes are undoubtedly implicated in the recurrence of massive trauma or the more hopeful outcome of possible or partial mourning processes after social and cultural reconstruction. But in a century which often invokes an unfortunate "calculus of calamity" in contests for traumatic priority, metaphors which assert the unique and unprecedented status of a his-

torical trauma only serve to make it serviceable to later comparisons (Berenbaum 96; cf. J. Young WRH). Certainly, the unprecedented status of the events of 1914-18 was translated into a nomenclature which seemingly forbade repetition, the "Great War." In fact, this designation was popular in turn-of-the-century fictional anticipations of future conflict (Pick 197). In relation to any historical trauma, "each name creates a somewhat different site for memory and mourning" (LaCapra HMA 53). Along with many other scholars of the period, I have chosen to retain the original designation, the "Great War," with its "elegiac resonance": the "Great War" is a name, in spite of its "unavoidable undertow of semantic approval" (Dyer 27), and "its ambiguous muddling of size and value," which is charged with the affective losses of primary witnesses to its events (Gilbert and Gubar 259). However, in the wake of the Second World War, a designation which foregrounds the connection of that war with prior events, the "Great War" soon embodied its own impossible repetition in the "stark numerical designation," the "First World War," which is now the most widely accepted signifier for the conflict (Dyer 27). Thus, the very nomenclature of these wars highlights their continuities and reciprocal implications.

Leed tacitly pinpoints the inexorable dynamics of the tragic grid of participant-positions when he claims that the Great War culminated in the Second World War. In his view, "those who had internalized the war, its peculiar relationship

between victims and victimizers, the liminality that it imposed upon combatants, were destined to play a significant part in this repetition" (213). Supporting Leed, Mosse also offers a critical assessment of the sacrificial dynamics of the Great War in his meta-analysis of its exploitation by the German nation-state in the service of the Second World War.[17] In a formulation distinct from Hynes, Mosse argues for a "Myth of the War Experience" which functioned as a "secular sacred" associated with the effort to "transvalue [the] violence and trauma" of the Great War (LaCapra HMA 38). According to Mosse, then, "the cult of the fallen soldier became a centerpiece of the religion of nationalism after the war" (7). In his view, this Myth was shaped by volunteers, and its "tangible symbols" included "military cemeteries, war monuments, and commemorative ceremonies for the dead" (8, 9). The Myth provided a means of transcending the mass death of the War through the revitalized symbolism of the nation (99, 105). As a result of the successful incorporation of the Myth into politics between the wars, Mosse highlights a "growing indifference toward mass death" in postwar politics (160). While his analysis needs to stress the significant interplay of many factors other than the Myth in the shaping of Nazi Germany, according to Mosse's compelling interpretation, World War Two emerges as a recursive transvaluation of effects and consequences generated by World War One. His analysis supports Lifton's contention that "the Hitler movement centered on undoing World War I and on

witnessing World War I by reversing its outcome" (T 139-40). In this manner, collective movements may bear witness to trauma through unconscious modes of transvaluation and recurrence.

Cultural Reconstruction at the Millennium

In active opposition to such unconscious and melancholic dynamics, Hartman formulates a self-conscious approach to reconstruction which involves the practice of "intellectual witness," which he describes as "an active reception that is relevant both for our time and the encroaching future, that could address with similar force a community and the public" ("SIW" 37). Such an approach seeks to value and forge a "culture of witness," counteracting cultural dynamics of denial, repetition, and indifference which may culminate in "a vicious circle of unmastered history" (Lifton BC 295). Throughout this chapter, I demonstrate that historians and literary critics, along with other intellectuals, contribute to processes of mourning in the composite cultural work of reconstruction after historical trauma, even if these processes are not self-consciously named in the analysis. However, it is difficult to discern the degree to which recent preoccupations with memory attest to the viability of any lasting postmemorial mode of witness, such as the one Hartman describes.

Pierre Nora is a French historian who has recently

explored the tensions inherent in the exercise of postmodern memory, issues which bear importantly on the subject-position of those who seek to be engaged as "intellectual witnesses" several generations after a historical trauma such as the Great War. In Nora's antithetical formulation, memory and history now exist "in fundamental opposition" because "history is perpetually suspicious of memory, and its true mission is to suppress and destroy it" (285, 286).[18] Yet, as many other historians point out, history and memory must be considered to have a "supplementary relation"; "to the degree that both are narrativized constructions the categorical distinction between them begins to dissolve" (LaCapra HMA 20; Lambek 243). In Nora's view, though, our self-conscious concern with memory only succeeds in charting its disappearance. Traces of collective memory remain within memory-sites, the only structures of postmodern life which resist the complete privatization of memory. "Lieux de mémoire," or memory sites, thus function to "mark the rituals of a society without ritual" (289). In particular, Nora views "lieux de mémoire" as contradictory sites constituted through "commemorative vigilance" which serve to preserve "privileged memory that has retreated to jealously protected enclaves" (289). Collective memory survives as traces in these memory-sites, which, however, are also highly mediated by history.

Nora's work on memory-sites may be extended to specific instances of historical trauma, in which case our discussion

of modes of memory will be significantly complicated. Even though Nora does not explicitly address trauma, he evokes "a sense of trauma that is both veiled and displaced" through his nostalgic meditation on memory and loss (LaCapra HMA 19). However, explicit attention to the problematic of trauma allows us to reconfigure the history/memory opposition in terms of more complex processes. In this connection, Nora's "lieu de mémoire" may be understood in light of the mutually animating but ultimately unbridgeable intersection of modes of deep and common memory. Fragmented and traumatic deep memory, and the interrupted and unresolved stories of survivors and combatants have become, through their very unassimilability, central to modern and postmodern memory-sites. Most compellingly, traumatic memory defies the archival imperative of history, because it cannot be subject to "meticulous reconstitution," nor is the archive able to assume "the responsibility of remembering" (290). A preoccupation with the representation of traumatic memory as well as with the mediation of historical trauma has become both paramount and suspicious for belated generations who are dominated by the images and stories of historical traumas which preceded them. As Nora observes, memory-sites resist any sort of schematic representation, and "only exist because of their capacity for metamorphosis, an endless recycling of their meaning and an unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications" (296). My survey of Great War scholarship indicates the status of that

event as a memory-site subject to such "an endless recycling" of meaning.

More specifically, in an important elaboration of Nora's work on memory-sites, LaCapra indicates that "lieux de mémoire" may be "lieux de trauma as well as commemorative sites, and the question is whether and how they may become lieux de deuil (mourning sites) for working through traumatic events" (HMA 44). While I explore the reconstruction of the Somme as a site of mourning in Chapter Eight, in British historiography, literature and oral narrative, the Great War clearly functions as a "lieu de mémoire," a memory-site created "by a play of memory and history, an interaction of two factors that results in their reciprocal overdetermination" (Nora 295). Today, Remembrance Day ceremonies throughout the Western World, for instance, signal a profound willingness to remember and to "block the work of forgetting" characteristic of the "lieu de mémoire," or site of memory (295-96). Monuments and museums, as well as Remembrance Day Services, also indicate the status of the Great War as a commemorative site: such commemoration is the outcome of a complex cultural process which seeks to stabilize "a consensus version of a past event or events" (Sherman "MMM" 82).[19] On the other hand, the poetry, prose, and oral testimony of primary witnesses, combatants and veterans continues to establish the Great War as a trauma site; the horrors of the Western Front continue to shape cultural memory. "Whose war? Whose memory?"

(Gregory 119). Quite clearly, within the range of subject-positions constellated by the event, in conjunction with other variables, including kinship, race, class and gender, the War is successively re-inscribed by distinct groups, highlighting the changing relationships between the Great War and the modes of memory it subsequently serves.

Contemporary scholarship cannot separate the events of the Great War from the ways the War has been transmitted and remembered. In turn, these contemporary accounts themselves configure the ways that the War will be constructed and remembered in the future. Dyer sums up his subject-position as a postmodern Great War writer when he observes, "the war, it begins to seem, had been fought in order that it might be remembered, that it might live up to its memory" (15). The dwindling presence of the living memory of combatants has stimulated an awareness of the self-consciousness and heightened mediation which increasingly characterize representations of the Great War.[20] The testimony of veterans who fought on the Western Front, recorded and archivized, now threatens to replace the traumatic and unrepresentable deep memory they embody with the unfettered circulation of narrative, common memory of the same events. Perhaps as a result of the loss of living memory, Dyer fears that the Great War may no longer be remembered in 2014-18 (111). Yet, as Hartman observes in relation to another historical trauma, "the passing of the survivor does not mean the passing of

witness" ("SIW" 39). In the wake of the loss of living memory, a secondary mode of engagement with historical trauma must prevail, one which will hopefully continue to struggle with the question of memory as "a form of moral practice" (Lambek 235), given the fact that postmemorial acts and investments, as they are mediated by cultural representations, even now determine the relationship of future "witnesses" to the Great War.

Chapter Four

Notes

1. General popular and critical works on the War as it pertains primarily to the British cultural imagination, and excluding works pertaining to other countries, published within the last five years, include, but are by no means limited to, Dyer (1994), Gregory (1994), Winter (1995), Bourke (1996), Booth (1996), Degroot (1996), Stephen (1996), Tate (1998), Keegan (1998), and Ferguson (1999). Additionally, broad studies of the Great War set in the context of other twentieth-century events include Hynes (1997), as well as critical anthologies such as the one edited by Winter and Sivan (1999).

2. Langer frames his discussion of Holocaust video testimonies by introducing distinctions made by the Auschwitz survivor Charlotte Delbo in La mémoire et les Jours (Paris: Berg International, 1985), the fourth volume in her series Auschwitz et après, who contrasts "mémoire profonde" and "mémoire ordinaire," translated by Langer as "deep memory," and "common memory," respectively (5). According to Langer, deep memory "suspects and depends on common memory, knowing what common memory cannot know but tries nonetheless to express" (6). In the following year, Friedländer adopts and elaborates upon the distinctions initially introduced by Delbo, and, more recently, J. Young (1997) allies himself with Friedländer when he writes that "it may be the very idea of `deep memory' and its incompatibility with narrative that constitutes one of the central challenges to Holocaust historiography" (23).

Although Delbo's terms have clearly been employed in the service of commentary on the Shoah, my more general application of these issues to the Great War derives from their now wide-spread application to historiographical controversies bearing upon survivorship, traumatic knowledge, and secondary narrative. The First and Second World Wars, however, configured highly distinct contexts of mass death; my adoption of deep and common memory as contexts relevant to historiographical discussion is effected by highlighting specific aspects of the Great War in relation to its combat survivors, survivors in no way to be confused with survivors of Nazi genocide.

3. See, for instance, the comments of M. Gilbert (1994): "if each of the nine million military dead of the First World War were to have an individual page, the record of their deeds and suffering, their wartime hopes, their pre-war lives and loves, would fill twenty thousand books the size of this one. Individual suffering is not something that is easily conveyed in a general history, yet all historians try to do it . . . .

No single book can redress that balance . . . . I have tried to give the suffering of individuals its integral part in the narrative of the wider war" (xxi-xxii).

In a related fashion, Winter (1985) remarks, "in any account of the impact of the Great War, there are limits beyond which a historian cannot go. Who can quarrel with the deep belief held by many ex-soldiers that only those who had been through battle could really understand the full meaning of war?" (305).

4. A more explicit attempt to speculate on the potential relationships between history and mourning can be found in LaCapra (1994): "insofar as historiographic discourse could itself validly have a ritual dimension without sacrificing its critical nature, it too might assist in some small way in facilitating warranted public processes of mourning. At the very least, one might point out that the idea of an appropriate language--indeed, an acceptable rhythm between language and silence--in attempting to render certain phenomena depends on ritual as well as aesthetic criteria" (215).

5. In "The Modernist Event and the Flight From History," in The Sheila Carmel Lectures, 1988-1993, ed. Hana Wirth-Nesher (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv UP, 1995), 99-123; rpt. in Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect, 1999), on the other hand, in contrast to Santner's formulation of "narrative fetishism," White maintains that "precisely insofar as the story is identifiable **as a story**, it can provide no lasting `psychic mastery' of such events" as the Holocaust (120). In his view, modernist techniques of representation may actually facilitate mourning because they "provide the possibility of defetishizing both events and the fantasy accounts of them which deny the threat they pose in the very process of pretending to represent them realistically and clear the way for that process of mourning which alone can lift the `burden of history' . . ." (SCL 120-21). In his view, then, the "anti-narrative non-stories" of literary modernism provide "the only prospect for adequate representations" of historical trauma (SCL 120); in particular, in his famous essay, "Writing in the Middle Voice," published by the Stanford Literature Review 9.2 (1992), 179-87, he maintains that works of high modernism foreground "the subject-of-writing as the latent, principle, aim, and purpose of all writing" (187).

The middle voice is described as a style of narration which provides a means of refracting realism's recourse to mimetic effects; the disruption of narrative teleology functions to facilitate mourning, given that modernist representation eschews the coherent emplotment of historical events afforded by specific plot structures (White CF 44). Moreover, such a strategy of representation self-consciously foregrounds "the detachment of the libido" from events fragmented and mediated

by art (Freud "MM" 253). While modernist contexts of representation are frequently implicated in the redemptory potential of art (J. Young "RH" 36), White's view suggests that the dangers of such "redemptive" narrative cannot be extended to historical events in modernist contexts of representation, even though White describes the Shoah as "the paradigmatic modernist event in Western European history" (SCL 116-17).

White's somewhat decontextualized valorization of modernist narrative, though, is problematized by literary critics and historians of the Great War, the twentieth century's first global catastrophic event, who discuss postwar modernism in symptomatic terms. In this connection, for instance, see Hynes (AWI 433-34), Booth (4-6), DeMeester (652, 649), Tate (3), and Eksteins (214, 293). In the most general terms, these critics discuss modernism in the wake of the Great War in terms of a melancholic relationship to trauma and discontinuity; their viewpoints tend to stress that modernist literature developed in decisive and even in fixated relationship to the ongoing and unresolved events of the Great War. Such interpretations trouble White's claims for modernist modes of writing as vehicles of cultural reconstruction in the wake of historical trauma. Although he stresses a specific mode of modernist writing in which "actions and their effects are conceived to be simultaneous . . . . and the subject and object of the action are in some way conflated" ("WMV" 185), as others have indicated, to rather ironic effect, White's proposed rhetorical mode "contains an adequate diagnosis" of survivors of severe trauma, who cannot experience their relationship to events in the position of either subject or object (van Alphen 30; J. Young "RH" 32).

It seems, then, that further attention needs to be paid to the interrelated issues of modernism, mourning, and historical trauma, as they are associated with the Great War, given White's privileging of the middle voice in relation to the historiographical challenge of representing the successive historical catastrophes in its wake, particularly the Shoah. White's valorizations of modernism and irony inadvertently point backwards to questions concerning the formative status and cultural aftermath of the Great War, this century's first massive historical trauma, even as his views focus their explicit attention on other significant and ongoing questions regarding the representation of more recent traumatic events.

6. Previous general studies of the Great War or its literature which do not explicitly theorize the event's application to the range of concerns evident in contemporary trauma scholarship, but which loosely or suggestively characterize the event and its literature in terms of historical trauma include: A.C. Ward, The Nineteen-Twenties: Literature and Ideas in the Post-War Decade (London: Methuen, 1930), John Aldridge, After the Lost Generation (London: Vision P, 1957),

Joseph Frank, The Widening Gyre (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1963), Harvey Curtis Webster, After the Trauma: Representative British Novelists Since 1920 (Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1970), Martin Green, Children of the Sun: A Narrative of "Decadence" in England After 1918 (New York: Basic Books, 1976), David Craig and Michael Egan, Extreme Situations: Literature and Crisis from the Great War to the Atom Bomb (London: Macmillan, 1979), Robert Wohl, The Generation of 1914 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1979), Anne Wright, The Literature of Crisis, 1910-22 (London: Macmillan, 1984).

7. For a range of other critical responses to Fussell, see, for example, John Terraine, The Smoke and the Fire (London: Sidgwick, 1980), who disputes Fussell's recourse to the historical facts; Hanley (1991), whose feminist analyses foreground his methodological oversights; and R.M. Bracco, Merchants of Hope: British Middlebrow Writers and the First World War, 1919-39 (Oxford: Berg, 1993), whose study demonstrates that his emphasis on irony hinges upon an exclusive emphasis on elite literary culture.

8. Compare Stephen (1988): "the facts, and logic, dictate that if any images dominate poetry they should be those of Hiroshima, Dachau, and Stalingrad. Certainly, these images appear frequently in modern writing, but it is far easier to find the images of the Great War . . . " (297).

9. The work of Bergonzi and Fussell draws upon Frygian notions of myth in complementary, if distinct, ways to assess the changing modes and mentalities of combatants; the work of Leed, though, incorporates the conception of myth formulated by Claude Lévi-Strauss. In all three cases, aspects of myth implicitly ground interpretations of historical trauma. Bergonzi's study traces the shifting literary attitude toward the experience of the front in terms of a movement "from a myth-dominated to a demythologized world"; more generally, he suggests that the War served as an explanatory site for modernist "dissociation of sensibility," an index of rupture (HT 198, 199). According to Bergonzi, then, the War was represented through the "individual" and "fragmentary" use of myth, and could not be represented within a system of meanings "rooted in a system of public and shared beliefs" (HT 199). Fussell concurs with Bergonzi when he declares that the War "resists being subsumed into the heroic myth" (GW 153). However, he revises Bergonzi's study by emphasizing what he perceives as the persistent psychological centrality of the general mythopoeic function in men who must attempt to survive both monotonous misery and unexpected, successive trauma. Fussell contradicts Bergonzi's general focus on the loss of collective mythic registers when he declares that the War instilled a movement toward myth, "the cultic" and "the sacramental" (GW 131). In response to Fussell, though, Leed

rejects an emphasis on myth as a "movement away from the oppressive actualities of trench warfare" (118). Rather, in view of French structuralist discussions, he defines myth in terms of the complex mediation of "unpalatable cultural contradictions" (118).

10. Other important feminist studies not addressed in this brief overview include, but are by no means limited to, Mary Cadogan and Patricia Craig, eds., Women and Children First: The Fiction of Two World Wars (London: Gollancz, 1978), Catherine Reilly, ed., Scars Upon My Heart: Women's Poetry and Verse of the First World War (London: Virago, 1981), Margaret R. Higonnet et al., eds., Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars (New Haven: Yale UP, 1987), Nosheen Khan, Women's Poetry of the First World War (Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1988), Helen M. Cooper et al., eds., Arms and the Woman (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1989), Dorothy Goldman, ed., Women and World War I: The Written Response (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), Sharon Ouditt, Fighting Forces, Writing Women: Identity and Ideology in the First World War (London: Routledge, 1994), Joan Byles, War, Women and Poetry, 1914-45 (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1995), Goldman et al., eds., Women Writers and the Great War (New York: Twayne, 1995), Higonnet, ed., Lines of Fire: Women Writers of World War I (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1998), Agnes Cardinal, Dorothy Goldman, and Judith Hattaway, eds., Women's Writing on the First World War (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999).

11. During this period, an astonishing number of memoirs and fictions about the War were published. These include Undertones of War by Edmund Blunden (1928), Parade's End by Ford Madox Ford (1924-28), Goodbye to All That by Graves (1929), Death of a Hero by Richard Aldington (1929), The Middle Parts of Fortune by Frederic Manning (1930), Testament of Youth by Vera Brittain (1933), as well as Sassoon's memoirs, among others.

12. The Allies included Britain and its empire, including Canada and Australia, along with France, Russia, Serbia, Italy, Greece, Romania, Japan, China, Portugal and the United States. The Central Powers included Germany, Austro-Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire. See M. Gilbert.

13. Contemporary British accounts of civilian bombing reveal a range of attitudes to the unprecedented phenomenon. In Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, Sassoon, the experienced officer back from the Western Front, feels "queer" at the sight of blood. He provides an account of a bombing which took place at a train station, highlighting distinctions between combatants and civilians which contrast with the famous denunciations in his poetry: "this sort of danger seemed to demand a quality of courage dissimilar to front-line fortitude. In a trench one

was acclimatized to the notion of being exterminated and there was a sense of organized retaliation. But here one was helpless . . . " (198). Under the chapter heading, "Malignity," in Mr. Britling Sees It Through, after one of his aunts is killed in a German raid, Mr. Britling "really saw the immediate horror of war, the dense cruel stupidity of the business, plain and close"; his experience of civilian bombing is treated as an important stage in his evolving attitude toward the War: "it was as if he had never perceived anything of the sort before, as if he had been dealing with stories, pictures, shows and representations that he knew to be shams . . . " (Wells 297). By way of contrast, in Heartbreak House (1919) the Zeppelin raids serve Bernard Shaw's satirical purposes: they are compared with the cultural productions of Beethoven and are described by one of the characters as a "glorious experience" on the final page of the play.

14. For further consideration of Hitler's policies and the Armenian genocide, see Robert Melson, Revolution and Genocide: On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992). Regarding Britain's policies in response to the crisis, see Akaby Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923 (New York: Helm, 1984). For a contemporary account, see A.P. Hacobian, Armenia and the War: An Armenian's Point of View with an Appeal to Britain and the Coming Peace Conference (London: Hogarth, 1918). The most extensive consideration of the Armenian crisis in connection with Great War literature can be found in Tate.

15. In addition to France and Belgium, land warfare was also waged in Prussia, Serbia, Greece, Italy, Africa, Turkey, Palestine and Syria. See M. Gilbert.

16. Hynes, on the other hand, refutes the Myth he so eloquently chronicles when he maintains that propaganda functioned to discourage civilian unrest, rather than to obscure the realities of the Front (AWI 145). By the same token, Eksteins problematizes the discussion of Home/Front relations by asserting that soldiers were not only censored but practiced self-censorship (181).

For other studies pertaining to the role of propaganda, see James Read, Atrocity Propaganda, 1914-19 (New York: Arno, 1941), Paul Virilio, War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception (London: Verso, 1984), Nicholas Reeves, Official British Film Propaganda During the First World War (London: Helm, 1986), Peter Buitenhuis, The Great War of Words: Literature as Propaganda, 1914-18 and After (Vancouver: British Columbia UP, 1989), Philip Taylor, Munitions of the Mind (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1990), and Pick (1993).

17. For a discussion of postwar politics in Britain, and the role of ex-servicemen in the British Union of Fascists under

the veteran Oswald Mosley, see Stephen R. Ward, "Land Fit for Heroes Lost," in The War Generation, ed. Ward (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat P, 1975), 10-37.

18. Nora defines "true memory," a wholly unconscious possession, in ways which seem blithely unproblematic, given the suggestiveness and complexity of many of his other comments on the contemporary dynamics of memory. He suggests that "true memory" takes "refuge in gestures and habits, in skills passed down by unspoken traditions, in the body's inherent self-knowledge," as well as in unstudied reflexes" (289). In a history-obsessed postmodern society, "true memory," as it is defined by Nora, has all but disappeared. History has overwhelmed the functioning of "milieux de mémoire," living environments of memory, through the creation of archival institutions and internalized imperatives for the construction of subjectivities. In contrast to the organic mode of memory Nora outlines, then, memory "transformed by its passage through history" is "voluntary and deliberate, experienced as a duty, no longer spontaneous; psychological, individual, and subjective; but never social, collective, or all encompassing" (289).

19. Gregory's study of the history of commemoration on Armistice Day stresses contestation: "Armistice Day was not a symptom of the `myth of war experience,' but an antidote to it. It stressed civilian, particularly women's, sacrifice through bereavement. It aimed to universalize the memory of the war, to make it the property of the nation as a whole. The ex-servicemen were marginalized in the process" (215).

20. Based on 1998 data, Ferguson speculates that there are a maximum of 500 veterans of the Great War still alive, a number no doubt significantly diminished since his study went to press (xxii).

PART TWO

V. "Rampant Grief": (Re)Configuring the Poetic Testimonies of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon[1]

These men are worth
Your tears. You are not worth their merriment.
Wilfred Owen, "Apologia Pro Poemate Meo" (1917)

Well might the Dead who struggled in the slime
Rise and deride this sepulchre of crime.
Siegfried Sassoon, "On Passing the New Menin Gate" (1928)

Introduction

Paradoxically, the canonical centrality of the famous Great War poets, who are a favourite subject for anthologies and Armistice Day ceremonies, may contribute to a contemporary readership curiously inattentive to their compulsive and compelling articulation of trauma.[2] But given the fact that the critical reception of Great War poetry itself plays an integral part in shaping the cultural memory of that historical trauma, a new reading of this body of work which foregrounds recent approaches in trauma scholarship seems both appropriate and important. Although Owen disclaims any concern with "Poetry," in his important, if truncated and rather tantalizing "Preface," he implicitly highlights the relevance of loss and mourning to subsequent interpretations of his work

when he classifies his poems as "elegies" (Owen WP 98).[3] Not surprisingly, the general problem of mourning in the aftermath of historical trauma has been a frequent occasion of debate in critical discussions of twentieth-century elegy after Owen. As Zeiger notes, a preoccupation with elegy has "coincided with a widespread theoretical exploration of loss, mourning, and, lately, trauma" (3). My investigation of Owen and Sassoon addresses the interrelated dynamics of loss, mourning and trauma in their poetics of "rampant grief."

In the most extensive and persuasive consideration of Owen as elegist, which also draws upon Freudian psychoanalytic contexts in order to chart the complex and conflicting positions of Owen's readership, Ramazani discerns that Owen's "melancholic elegies . . . . make it harder to interpret the elegy solely under the aegis of the pleasure principle, harder to maintain normative explanations of the genre as psychic remedy" (69). Indeed, contrary to any achievement of consolatory closure, "having roused pity, Owen often forces the reader back, warning that pity cannot bridge the chasm separating spectator and victim"; hence, in counterpoint to Owen's famous injunction regarding the connection between pity and poetry, Ramazani astutely suggests that "the poetry is also in the alienation" (80). However, in a departure from Ramazani, who interprets Owen's valorization of pity as "a reaction-formation" against "the sadomasochistic drive," I situate many of the manifest sadomasochistic dynamics of Owen's poetry

within the larger dynamics governing the transmission and reception of historical trauma (85). In my view, then, any analysis of the reader's necessarily "complicit" position "in producing the pain and death that she or he laments" upon reading Owen's work must both be qualified and resituated (Ramazani 86).

While there is certainly no doubt that Owen paid formal attention to the lyric traditions informing the English elegy, and even considered calling his collection of War poems, English Elegies, Jon Glover writes that it "seems inevitable that he can not now be seen essentially as an elegist. The fullness of the mature poems invokes so many other questions and responses" (31). Although Glover does not propose another category by which Owen and other specific War poets may be reconsidered, it is my contention that many of the War poems of Owen and Sassoon, which are clearly shaped by, and in dialogue with, lyric, epic and elegiac poetic conventions, must also be reanalyzed as literary testimony, a particular mode of "discursive **practice**" (Felman 5). This contention has recently been lent general support by another scholar, S. Gilbert, in the service of her readings of a number of Great War "anti-elegies" (183).[4] It should also be noted, though, that Owen and Sassoon are included in Carolyn Forché's anthology, Against Forgetting: Twentieth-Century Poetry of Witness (1993), a volume which collects the testimony of writers on events ranging from the Armenian Genocide to the

Tiananmen Square Massacre, signalling the accepted status of Great War poetry within the context of a variety of other literatures of trauma which confront genocide, political repression, civil rights, and a myriad of wars, whether civil, religious, or global in character. As Forché inevitably concludes in light of her ambitious and unique editorial undertaking, "because the poetry of witness marks a resistance to false attempts at unification, it will take many forms" (46).

Many of the War poems of Owen and Sassoon both transmit and compulsively submit to the aftermath of trauma, demonstrating its ongoing impact, just as testimony ostensibly "precludes any therapeutic project" in its effort to convey and contend with ongoing and partially unassimilable horror (Felman 9). Yet, in her own effort to distinguish the twentieth century as "an era of testimony," in contrast to Forché, Felman omits the Great War when she lists "the traumas of contemporary history: the Second World War, the Holocaust, the nuclear bomb, and other war atrocities" (5). However, the literature of the First World War is also an appropriate site for the application and theorization of trauma theory. To summarize my general argument, an argument carefully developed and qualified below, the poems of Owen and Sassoon, when they are resituated as testimonial acts, can also be understood as performative gestures, rather than wholly bounded forms, which seek to discharge and configure traumatic knowledge through their explicit and often overdetermined summons of a civilian

reader and witness.[5] The problematic co-implication of trauma and mourning will be my overriding concern. This concern with the "rampant grief" of uncommunalized trauma specified in my title necessitates a multifaceted analysis of testimony theorized as an unstable literary genre emerging from a unique set of historical circumstances. Following this stage of my analysis, I highlight the complex dynamics of Owen and Sassoon's poetic testimony, namely, the interaction between structural and historical variables of trauma in the shaping of the phantasmatic scenarios which inform testimony, the dynamics of combat subculture in general and the complex and contradictory subject-positions animating the testimony of Owen and Sassoon in particular, the centrality of the death encounter in their testimony, and their interpellation of the civilian witness, a hitherto misunderstood but fundamental feature of their poetic testimony, a genre which I now proceed to define.

Theorizing Great War Poetic Testimony

Ostensibly, as Simon Featherstone remarks, "war poetry seems in many ways the least open to the intrusion of any kind of literary theory," namely because this body of literature often traces a confrontation with ultimate experiential ends, the deliberate and accidental presence of death and extreme limit-events (1). Without a doubt, I believe that "the analytical appropriation of the warrior's knowledge has its

limits" (Gibson 476). James Campbell, though, deplores "the belief that combat represents a qualitatively separate order of experience," a belief which, in his view, leads to the obfuscating critical ideology of "combat gnosticism" ("CG" 203). Yet, explicit attention to the coding of trauma within literature, a problem ignored by Campbell, remains a valuable and important task. More conventional approaches, including Campbell's, have failed to move beyond a description of one of the most salient features of this body of work, its organization, within the specific socio-historical circumstances of the Great War, in relation to a "tragic grid of participant-positions," a grid which I also explore in Chapter Four in specific application to the literary criticism and historiography of the Great War (LaCapra HMA 41).

A critical awareness of the grid of participant-positions enables the literary critic to discern the manner in which victims, perpetrators, bystanders and others are configured in relation to the poet-combatant, who, however, also occupies an overdetermined location, combining the subject-positions of victim, perpetrator, and bystander in various contexts. The poetry adopts a paradoxical struggle to transmit traumatic knowledge to an audience sufficiently receptive to horror even as such horror demands a medium shaped to discourage rather than facilitate its assimilation (cf. Sassoon MIO 207). Thus, the reader is invited to undertake a provisional empathic location only after encountering, undergoing, and ultimately,

working-through the conflicting mire of claims and assumptions defensively and aggressively marshalled within these testimonies. Scholars have tended to reproduce, or, at best, only partially describe, the dynamics of the grid as they have been variously configured by the War poets, signalling that the literary critic is necessarily implicated in the working-through of historical trauma and its analysis when confronting this body of testimony.[6] The interpretive processes of the scholar cannot be disentangled from a complex range of transferential roles as she or he both submits to testimony and subjects testimony to analysis (cf. Easthope PP 11).

Interestingly enough, Owen's "Preface" highlights the resolution of cultural and personal mourning in the aftermath of the Great War as a problem which is essentially tied to postwar developments: "these elegies are to this generation in no sense consolatory. They may be to the next" (Owen WP 98). While the description of his poems as elegies has often been noted, disputed or supported, little debate has been occasioned by his claims regarding the variable impact of his work across generational lines, given that the "historical contexts for producing the work are continually shifting," as Warwick Slinn nicely observes (71). How are postwar readers implicated in the terrible fatalities and traumas of the Great War? What are the conditions under which postwar generations may find the elegies consoling? Are these conditions political, ethical, or psychological? In a merely suggestive manner, then,

the inconclusive work of mourning, one of the most persistent legacies of historical trauma, is invoked as a potentially decisive aspect of the reader's performative relationship to his Great War poetry. Such a relationship often renders the designation of "belated witness" more appropriate than the generic and uninflected term, "reader," although the process of readerly reception cannot be resolved through reference to any single locus, but must be understood according to many possible positionalities, described in a shifting language sensitive to context (Felman 108).

While a great deal of critical attention has been paid to the self-conscious recrafting of the lyric undertaken by Owen, and the exploitation of satirical effects by Sassoon, literary scholarship has failed to perceive the manner in which their poems are interanimated and transformed by their overt and implicit testimonial stances.[7] For instance, their Great War testimony often collapses the dichotomy between reader and writer central to many definitions of the lyric genre, including the definition offered by Northrop Frye. Rather than being ignored by a poet who "turns his back on his listeners" and who avoids "the mimesis of direct address" in his writing, the reader instead becomes deeply implicated in an address and an appeal which far exceeds the implicit constraints formalized through lyric literary conventions (Frye AC 250). We must consider, then, that Great War lyrics often combine two "different radicals of presentation," two different modes by

which conditions are established "between the poet and his public" (Frye AC 247, 246). In this connection, in Slinn's relevant formulation, Great War testimony may be considered a performative practice which combines the "doubled yet inseparable enactment of two sorts of reference, the self-reference of poetic formalism and the residual reference of rhetorical effect" (64). Readings of "poetic testimony" which fail to consider its viability as a performative act are unable to conceive of the centrality of the witness to this body of literature (Felman 21).[8] Discussion of these poems in light of their testimonial impetus, for example, enables me to reject an interpretation which argues that "the static lyric had suddenly been forced to accommodate a flood of experience too vast for it to assess, too various for it to order, and too powerful for it to control" (Johnston 13). On the other hand, such a remark only reveals the significance of the category of the witness to literary testimony, a role crucial to the configuration and reception of traumatic knowledges.

However, although recent interpretive efforts have attempted to map distinctive geo-political contexts of extreme events, testimony cannot be addressed as a stable genre, bound by specific conventions and invariable practices. Testimony must be understood as a mode of bearing witness which is driven to perform its imperative in a unique set of historical circumstances, in cooperation with, or in opposition to, specific cultural norms and discourses. During the specific

period of the Great War, for example, "an atmosphere of public respect for literature" existed which is, according to Fussell, "unique in modern times" (GW 157). In this connection, one scholar estimates that "one and a half million war poems were written in August 1914--50,000 a day" (Robbins qtd. in Gray 50). It is quite evident, then, that "despite attempts to give it a long literary pedigree . . . . war poetry is a product of a set of particular cultural and historical circumstances that came together in the First World War," particularly voluntary and conscripted mass recruitment (Featherstone 13-14). Significantly, the lyric became the privileged vehicle for war poetry, a genre which frequently continues to be associated with ahistorical and apolitical concerns in the wake of New Criticism (cf. Jeffreys 198). Yet, in spite of critical efforts to rehabilitate the lyric for strategies other than close reading, it is Martin Gray's own New Critical subscription to a view of the lyric as "inherently anti-narrative" which provides one avenue to adduce the relevance of the lyric to the testimonies of the trenches: the lyric was uniquely capable of mediating unassimilable traumatic images and sensations in urgent and rapid registers, a medium which potentially obviated the extended discursive frameworks which informed Wartime propaganda (54, 55).

Great War poems articulate unstable and variable subject-positions which are implicated in the particularities of gender, class, nationality and military rank. These particu-

larities and contingencies oppose any timeless, "autonomous and self-coincident subjectivity" constituted through the "logocentric model of lyric" which was "developed by modern critics with theoretical and even practical support from the Romantics themselves" (Rajan 198). As many critics point out, though, one of the dominant intertexts of Great War poetry is the Romantic and post-Romantic lyric.[9] In this connection, then, the lyric voice, which is contextualized by the tropes and conventions which constitute the Romantic legacy, poses significant challenges to my formulation of the historical conjunction of poetry and testimony. Thus, a reconsideration of the hybrid category of poetic testimony requires further analysis of the manner in which the lyric genre configures Owen and Sassoon's trauma testimony.

Commenting on "the status of the voice," Paul de Man observes that it is "the attribute of aesthetic presence" which "determines the hermeneutics of the lyric" (55). But by foregrounding the trope of apostrophe, Jonathan Culler maintains that it is precisely "the figure of voice" which "resists reduction to utterance" (40). When taken together, de Man's observation and Culler's consideration of the "confusion of rhetorical levels" operative within an understanding of the lyric as fictive "utterance" are suggestive of the difficulties involved in analyzing the co-implication of the lyric voice and the testimonial imperative (40). New Criticism addresses the dilemmas of "voice" by insisting on the

imaginary agencies of the speaker or persona rather than the actual poet: "we ought to impute the thoughts and attitudes of the poem immediately to the dramatic **speaker**, and if to the author at all, only by an act of biographical inference" (Wimsatt 5). However, a more productive critical practice does not seek to reconstitute the poem as a "self-contained fusion of being and doing," but remains attentive to the manner in which self-reference "opens gaps and generates contradiction" (Culler 46). In this connection, an approach to testimony requires acknowledgement of the unresolved aspects of historical and even biographical factors which are themselves caught within the collision of language and violence enacted by the poem in question.

While the "status of the voice" is a vexed issue in discussions of the hermeneutics of both the lyric and the testimony, unlike the lyric, the testimony is determined by the irreducible "status of the voice" because "the burden of the witness--in spite of his or her alignment with other witnesses--is a radically unique, noninterchangeable and solitary burden" (Felman 3). The witness, speaking from his or her unique location, produces "speech as material evidence for truth" (Felman 5). Testimony plays a pivotal role in the effort to consolidate the provisional coherence and efficacy which has been shattered in the wake of trauma; its struggle to negotiate the "trapping roles" of violent events attests to the inherent fragmentation which underwrites its efforts,

signalling the caution which needs to inform the trajectories of critical projects whose investments and applications in relation to the lyric voice derive from the dismantling and displacement of the category of identity (Laub "EWW" 81).

A theory of testimony, then, most emphatically reclaims the geographically and historically located agencies of the speaking subject for literary study: within the testimony, language use is tied to psychological and even physical survival. However, it must be recalled that such a reclamation is severely qualified by the internalized and intersubjective dynamics of massive trauma. For example, prolonged exposure to trench warfare may involve a catastrophic succession and simultaneity of roles and events: survivor, perpetrator, and witness to accumulated, overdetermined, and overwhelming experiences which may have no clear aetiology nor categorical purity. Thus, while the status of the voice in the poetic testimonies of Owen and Sassoon cannot be wholly reduced to a figure, a persona, or a function, specific contexts which shape their enunciative positions will be addressed through reference to the simultaneity of roles and events which massive trauma configures.

While I adopt the convention of identifying the phantasm of voice within the poetic testimony as a "speaker," in recognition of the performative imperative which acts as a compelled and compelling context for these acts of witnessing, my readings also highlight the shifting contexts and subject-

positions of historical trauma, circumstances which both heighten the need for connection and undermine the stability of identifications. As Slinn remarks, "in the act of speaking, speaker and cultural context are inseparable, mutually constituted, and mutually sustaining" (65). Finally, it must be admitted that the co-implication of testimony and lyric engenders highly unstable rhetorical modes of articulation which cannot be stabilized by my efforts to analyze each medium in turn. In my view, the unique testimonial circumstances of the Great War can only contribute to debates within trauma theory which increasingly seek to particularize, and thereby question, its own assumptions and practices in relation to the distinct and intimately related modes of writing, speaking, and performance.

The hybrid nature of poetic testimony makes it distinct from modes of testimony which develop within face-to-face encounters, including videotaped testimonies. Contrary to the exigencies of unrecorded testimony, "writing preserves discourse and makes it an archive available for individual and collective memory" (Ricoeur "Text" 45). The poetic testimonies of Owen and Sassoon engage in self-conscious intertextual play with other poets and styles, and they also form explicit alliances with, or oppositions to, other War poets: "Sassoon's war poetry had already set itself in contention with Soldier Poetry," a form of writing which he links with "an unquestioning acceptance" of the Great War, while Owen "went on to

develop a subtler, more complex response to war, incorporating dialogue with both Soldier Poetry and Sassoon" (Norgate 524, 517, 524). Moreover, poetic testimony is also distinct from other modes of testimony because it is enacted by formalized literary display, a medium which engages a phantasmatic, rather than a wholly empirical or wholly imaginary secondary witness. As a result, the complex movements of the testimonial process, which involve incalculable risks, reversals, negotiations, numbing and griefwork, among other affective, cognitive and behavioural stations, are also imbricated in dilemmas involving psychoanalysis, ethics, gender, sexuality, and ideologies of class, as well as more formal literary concerns.

The poetry of Owen and Sassoon thus demands a dynamic model of interpretation which is attentive to its **mise-en-scène**, a staging in which both the instabilities and claims of testimonial authority are enacted and embedded in psychoanalytic processes such as projection and displacement, processes which configure a possible series of phantasmatic modes of identification. According to Laplanche and Pontalis, "it is the subject's life as a whole which is seen to be shaped and ordered by what might be called, in order to stress this structuring action, `a phantasmatic'. . . . the phantasy structures seek to express themselves, to find a way out into consciousness and action, and they are constantly drawing in new material" (317). Identification, then, following Judith Butler's rigorous formulation of this issue, can be understood

as "a phantasmatic trajectory and resolution of desire; an assumption of place; a territorializing of an object which enables identity through the temporary resolution of desire . . . " (BTM 99). Phantasy is thus a fundamental dimension of the real which also "establishes the real through a repeated and persistent posturing," although phantasy is also capable of "reviewing its own productions, as it were, and contesting their claim to the real" (Butler "FF" 108). As the complicating contexts of phantasy reveal, then, Owen and Sassoon are not merely "summoning imaginary objects" in their poems, but activating a **mise-en-scène** in which they themselves play multiple roles (Burgin 85). However, like forms of face-to-face testimony, the poetic testimonies of Owen and Sassoon are governed by the dynamics of communalizing traumatic knowledge, a mode of intersubjective exchange critical to mourning processes.

In the words of Shay, communalization involves the facilitation of griefwork through a mixture of "formal social ceremony and informal telling of the story with feeling to **socially connected others** who do not let the survivor go through it alone" (39). While Shay's definition of communalization attests to the predominance of face-to-face models of the testimonial process, the acute crisis of communicability entailed by combat trauma is expressed in a variety of ways by Owen and Sassoon. While Great War poetry is situated in a highly complex cultural field, it involves the

intense convergence of traumatic experience and ethical relationship, an issue which arguably compels all aspects of the evolving discourse of trauma theory. As discussed in some detail in Chapter Three, the reception of testimony is an area fraught with the prospect of potential retraumatization precisely because the witness constitutes its enabling condition. My analysis of the distinct hybrid venture of Great War poetic testimony demonstrates that, in spite of the literal inability of the conjured witness to communalize the traumas of trench combat, it is evident that the struggles of the traumatized subject to communalize griefwork nevertheless proceed through the phantasmatic facilitation of dyadic exchange. Great War poetry demands a careful investigation of the responsibilities and role borne by the witness, a role revealed, for the most part, through acts of interpellation which actively anticipate and challenge modes of civilian misrecognition. Contestatory engagements with the anticipated reception of trauma testimony are therefore central to my discussion.

In adapting (misrecognizing) Louis Althusser's term, "interpellation," for my own use, as he develops it in "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" (1970), I would like to highlight his discussion of "the **mise-en-scène** of interpellation" in which the "ideological recognition function" co-operates with the "function of **misrecognition**" (98, 94). While Althusser argues that "the existence of

ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing," his conception of misrecognition involves the illusion of freedom which is invested in the (willing) acceptance of subjection to the interpellations of ideology (96, 102). As a result of a telling misrecognition of Lacan's theory of the mirror stage, which articulates the role of the imaginary within subject-formation, Althusser apparently weds both subject-formation and ideology to the symbolic register (Macey 149-50), noting that "mirror duplication is constitutive of ideology and ensures its functioning" (Althusser 100).[10]

Yet as briefly indicated in Chapter One, Silverman cogently argues that historical trauma may entail a potential disruption of such "mirror duplication." She revises the nature of Althusser's emphases, maintaining that the "dominant fiction" hinges on a specular economy of masculinity which is premised upon the denial of castration. Thus, in a historical crisis, both recognition and misrecognition functions may be reconfigured through the "mediation of images of an unimpaired masculinity" (Silverman 42). It follows, then, according to the viewpoint produced through Silverman's kaleidoscopic transposition of theoretical contexts, that what she terms the dominant fiction supports the production of the "`ideal' female subject" who "refuses to recognize male lack"; moreover, the phantasmatic structures which serve to consolidate the dominant fiction readily engage the psychoanalytic pro-

cesses of projection and disavowal, modes of misrecognition pertaining to the self and the other, respectively (47, 45). When Shay writes, then, that "the reasons to deflect, deny, and forget trauma narrative stem from the social construction of normal human life" (194), it is important to consider the role of the specular economy of "unimpaired masculinity" to the constellation of norms which govern such a social construction in the wake of historical trauma.

Not surprisingly, through explicit counter-invocations of social norms, many testimonies by Owen and Sassoon anticipate and reject civilian misrecognition of combat experience with directives and prohibitions. For example, "Apologia Pro Poemate Meo" interpellates the civilian reader in the following terms:

> except you share
> With them in hell the sorrowful dark of hell,
> . . . . . .
> You shall not hear their mirth:
> You shall not come to think them well content
> By any jest of mine. These men are worth
> Your tears. You are not worth their merriment.
> (29-36)

Civilian readers are vehemently excluded from the realm of the frontsoldier even as they are summoned to frame the horror and

outrage of the combatant-poet. As Adrian Caesar notes, "the paradox is that protest against the War depends on participation in it"; the poem can actually be read as a summons to enlist (145, 151). During the Great War, this crisis of communicability between Front and Home led to phantasies of "violent and if possible painful death" exacted upon "the complacent, patriotic, uncomprehending, fatuous civilians at home" (Fussell GW 86).

For instance, evidence of such a phantasy of assaulting civilians is found in Sassoon's "Fight to a Finish": "Snapping their bayonets on to charge the mob,/Grim Fusiliers broke ranks with glint of steel,/At last the boys had found a cushy job" (7-9). According to Stephen, "`Fight to a Finish' is simple fascism, arguing that moral and ethical problems are best solved with bayonet and rifle" (PP 206). Certainly, the violence in this writing is dramatic and unequivocal, when compared with the rare indications in the same body of poetry of the central activity of war, as Scarry has defined it: out-injuring the military enemy. Yet the violence in this poem does not suggest "simple fascism," but, rather, the complex interpenetration of conscious and unconscious dynamics which govern the transvaluation of traumatic experience. Briefly, Sassoon's poem exploits the contradictions inherent in the dominant fiction of masculinity: the very disavowal of trauma and lack inherent in the journalistic parade underwrites the poetic phantasy of the platoon's violent resumption of

authority and mastery through the infliction of loss. In this manner, Great War poetic testimony frequently reconfigures the specular economy of masculinity and self-coincident presence.

The "recognition function" of testimonial address in the poems of Owen and Sassoon explicitly seeks to engage its basis in misrecognition, a misrecognition predicated on the repudiation of male lack. In this manner, Owen and Sassoon often seek to interpellate a witness alert to modes of difference, fragility and lack within modes of masculinity. The specific cultural and ideological circumstances of the Great War entail that specular disruptions of the dominant fiction, engaged through images of impaired masculinity, play a pivotal role in the poetic trauma testimonies of Owen and Sassoon. In these testimonies, interpellation "loses its status as a simple performative, an act of discourse with the power to create that to which it refers, and creates more than it ever meant to, signifying in excess of any intended referent" (Butler BTM 121-22). Interpellation, as I am applying the term to these poetic testimonies, then, cannot be understood as "a unilateral act," invested with the unambiguous force of law; rather, these interpellations mark sites of rupture as well as potential "rearticulation[s]" of the dominant fiction, as this fiction of masculinity mediates the subject-positions and participant-positions of combatants, civilians, and secondary witnesses to the Great War (Butler BTM 121-22).

Historical Trauma, Phantasy, Homosexuality

In response to poetic testimonies such as "Fight to a Finish," critics have increasingly sought to wrestle with the complexities animating violent and polarized visions of War-torn society. Earlier commentary tended to support the view that the War poets had to contend with "an ignorant and often apathetic populace" without any additional analysis (Silkin OB 154). Such explanations can also be found in more recent literature, as this example illustrates: Sassoon is "driven to hoarseness, repetition and brutality by the deafness which keeps the war going" (Parfitt 48). More productive interpretations nuance an investigation of aetiological factors beyond the circumstances of the War itself, since trauma cannot be merely considered "the simple result of a psychic response to an exterior stimulus" (Silverman 56-57). In support of such a hypothesis, Kenneth Simcox hazards that "the element of pessimism in Owen's poetry did not altogether stem from war" (143). Larkin is more specific than Simcox when he anatomizes a variety of afflictions: "for Owen the war was not an impersonal calamity to be got rid of as soon as possible, but a private involvement, something that seemed part of his isolation, his frustrated ambitions in poetry, his sexual hang-ups" (239). Supporting Larkin, taking into account personal letters, diaries and biographies, Caesar convincingly maintains that the War provided both Owen and Sassoon with "a site for the expression and experience of sado-masochistic

impulses"; these attitudes merely "intensified" during the conflict (108, 97).

Scholars generally support Caesar's claims. While Brian Finney notes Sassoon's "tendency towards masochism" (177), Dominic Hibberd clearly identifies a sadomasochistic strain in Owen's early poetry. Owen, in particular, drew upon literary traditions which preceded the War, including Aestheticism and Decadence, which stressed martyrdom, apocalypse, and the free-masonry of artists, bound within secret and exclusive modes of understanding (Hibberd OP 32). Furthermore, Hibberd argues that Owen's "sado-masochistic `phantasies'" are "comparable in kind if not in degree with his shellshock nightmares in 1917," a compelling linkage which disturbs orthodox interpretations of the violent and transformative encounter effected by suffering and death upon the appalled innocence of the soldier-poets (OP 18). Thus, investigations of the War poems attentive to phantasy are able to examine the complex ways in which aspects of structural trauma, prior personal crises and intellectual affiliations interact within their testimonies. In this manner, prior social conflicts and personal losses inevitably inform the perceived range of subject-positions constellated by the historical trauma of the Great War, a range of roles both actively interpreted and unconsciously reconfigured within their individual testimonies.

In this connection, most critics now acknowledge the marked homoeroticism of Owen and Sassoon's poetry, but it has

received little sustained attention until very recently, perhaps, in part, as Featherstone suggests, "because it compromises [their] exemplary status as [anti-war poets]" (105).[11] In particular, though, two complementary critical positions shed light on the important subject of sexuality and the War poets. In the first example, in a brilliant analysis which appropriately blurs rigid distinctions between Sassoon's participation in the War, his autobiographies, and his struggle to consolidate a sense of personal coherence, Christopher Lane advances a persuasive argument when he speculates that the War "produced the right conditions for him to bind otherwise disparate elements of his personality," given that the War was "synecdochic to a generic reorientation of sexuality at the time" (200). In yet another explicit reading which privileges the variable of sexuality, J. Campbell argues that hostility directed at non-combatants, particularly women, is largely due to the fact that Owen and Sassoon were caught in an "epistemological bind created by contradictory gender tropes" ("Ethics" 828). According to Campbell's reading, contradictory locations as officers and poets, respectively, heightened and contrasted active and passive modes of behaviour, intensifying and polarizing their conflicts of gendered location ("Ethics" 830). Although Campbell's analysis is highly suggestive, when it is compared with Lane's work on the same subject, it becomes clear that its articulation of gender and ethical confusions, paradoxically, remains too

schematic. While I do not wish to minimize the significance of sexuality altogether, I support Lane when he astutely concludes that "the pursuit of homosexual truth places an impossible demand on this period's diffuse constituents and diverse representation of same-gender desire" (5).[12] In the clever formulation of Guy Hocquenghem, "the unification of the practices of homosexual desire under the term `homosexuality' is as imaginary as the unification of the component drives of the ego" (148).

Clearly, though, as recent criticism of Great War poetry indicates, sexuality is a factor which cannot be set aside in any analysis of the complex co-implication of structural and historical trauma within the male homosocial contexts of the trenches. How does homosexuality inflect Great War testimony, then? In a suggestive remark which enables some preliminary consideration of this question, Eve Sedgwick writes that "in the vicinity of the closet, even what **counts** as a speech act is problematized on a perfectly routine basis" (3). She goes on to define "`closetedness'" as "the speech act of a silence," a comment which underscores the multiple determinations of any speech act implicated in a trauma testimony which is also constructed through the medium of poetry (Sedgwick 3). Thus, although homosexuality, "whether disguised, dishonest, or latent," cannot be transformed into "a key to all biographical enigma and an elemental truth that pervades literary representation," critics must strive to

remain attentive to the tropes and lacunae which configure this elusive variable in the shadow of the Wilde trial (C. Lane 5). Unlike approaches which isolate sexuality from other complicating facets of subjectivity, reading Great War poetry as a mode of "love poetry" between men (Lilly 64), or those which concentrate exclusively on issues which ignore the instabilities of desire, my attention to this variable highlights the manner in which both overt and subtle conflicts of attraction, repulsion, allegiance, and disaffiliation are also necessarily implicated in the encompassing dynamics wrought through participation in historical trauma.

Combat Subcultures and Officer Poets

In one of Owen's very last poems, "Smile, Smile, Smile," the "deep, horizontal comradeship" which Benedict Anderson describes in relation to what must be considered not merely the "imagined community," but the phantasized community, of the nation (16), is expropriated by veterans and combatants:

> Nation?--The half-limbed readers did not chafe
> But smiled at one another curiously
> Like secret men who know their secret safe.
> (This is the thing they know and never speak,
> That England one by one had fled to France,
> Not many elsewhere now, save under France.) (18-23)[13]

Sassoon expresses something similar when he writes, "we were the survivors . . . We were carrying something in our heads which belonged to us alone, and to those we had left behind us in the battle" (MIO 161). Yet as Douglas Kerr discerns, in Owen's poem the soldiers are "**protecting** their difference like a secret, a dark one" (181). In this connection, Diana Fuss notes that "the figure inside/outside, which encapsulates the structure of language, repression, and subjectivity, also designates the structure of exclusion, oppression, and repudiation" (IO 2). When confronting this poem from the outside, Kerr can only speculate on the meaning of the smile it commemorates: "is it like a shared psychopathological symptom, indicating and masking trauma?" or "is it the germ of fascism, military coup, revolution?" (182). In my own view, the smile functions as an overdetermined signifier which exploits a tacit, wordless mode of understanding linked to traumatic knowledge. In fact, the smile functions as a "secret password," a gesture by which the combatant "names himself and asks against all odds for a reciprocal identification" (Laub "BW" 63). Anticipating the perspective of trauma theory on the dynamic between the survivor and the secondary witness, however, Desmond Graham appropriately insists on the reader's inability to stabilize the meaning of the smile: "in the end their experience remains secret: a secret even our compassion cannot claim fully to enter"; "we do not understand, because if we believe that we do, then any chance of understanding

will be lost" (77).

The testimony underscores the misinterpretation of the wordless password by those who, quite ironically, lay claim to an authoritative interpretation of the silence which invests the smile with its ambiguity as a signifier: "people in whose voice real feeling rings/Say: How they smile! They're happy now, poor things" (25-26). The smiles of the "half-limbed readers" (18) are interpreted as a repudiation of the combatants' own association with lack in the service of a dominant fiction of masculinity, a fiction which is also supported by imperialism, capitalism, and militarism. In fact, the smiles of the disabled mime the ideological specularity presumed to render the War coherent, even as these same signs rearticulate the combatants' recognitions of the linkages of masculinity with loss, trauma and melancholia. "Smile, Smile, Smile" thus foregrounds the problem of trauma and its communalization through its phantasy of a covert conspiratorial withdrawal from the prevailing fictions of masculinities and the War, fictions integral to the ideologies of the English nation, as this poem demonstrates.

While the smile is wordless, a baffling and unstable synecdoche for membership within a closed system, the poem itself is densely overwritten with allusions and journalistic intertexts, exploiting modes of ventriloquism, stylization, and pastiche in the service of its exposure of modes of misrecognition premised upon the fiction of unimpaired

masculinity. The poem alludes to popular song and the speeches of political leaders, including those of French Premier Clemenceau and the British Minister of Labour, and it employs slogans and abstractions supposedly speaking on behalf of the combatants: "the sons we offered might regret they died/If we got nothing lasting in their stead./We must be solidly indemnified" (10-12). In this manner, Owen's testimony dramatizes its own invasion by "extra-literary social dialects" which actively decenter "its own language territory," to cite the evocative language of Mikhail Bakhtin (287, 399). In opposition to Bakhtin's polarized conception of the genres of the novel and poetry, though, this poetic testimony is structured by an "internally dialogized interillumination of languages," and it appears to willingly relinquish hegemony over its achievement of a unitary or privileged language (363). The disabled veterans do not speak within the corrupt sea of slogans which compete to misrecognize them. "Smile, Smile, Smile" enacts its contests between social groups through the marked over-representation of civilian language communities and the strategic under-representation of the veterans whose claims are consolidated within parentheses. The highly-wrought tensions in this testimony may be attributed to its encoding of traumatic knowledge, as well as to the crisis of witnessing it inevitably enacts and continues to engage through its phantasmatic repudiation of interpellation in the service of its vision of combatant communalization.

"Like secret men who know their secret safe": "Smile, Smile, Smile" is clearly informed by special codes of conduct which govern army fellowship (20). During combat, communities are created in conditions of mortal danger which are commonly designated "Brotherhood" formations. The code of the Brotherhood is "inchoate--anecdotal, referential" because the protocol of group survival demands that experience becomes "hermetic . . . . isolated in time and space, free from external influence, and unknowable to the uninitiated" (Hansen et al. 131). Or, to cite a more colloquial formulation of group survival, defined as "the ultimate mystery of the First World War," Keegan declares that "men whom the trenches cast into intimacy entered into bonds of mutual dependency and sacrifice of self stronger than any of the friendships made in peace and better times" (FWW 427). However, rather than referring to these bonds as "the ultimate mystery," citing the bond between Achilles and Patroclus represented in Homer's Iliad as a crucial literary precedent, Shay maintains that "the reality of combat calls forth the language and emotion of the earliest and strongest relationships in every place and era" (40). While such relationships are most frequently described through a fraternal register, it must be understood that the experience of combat fellowship often approaches the intensity of early relations with a maternal figure (Shay 42).

The primacy of the family structure premised on the paternal function is radically decentered during combat, even

as the collectivities of War define themselves through reference to this "image of unity" (Silverman 42). Such images of group unity are critical to survival under fire, and are "fuelled by the extreme emergency of being together in mortal danger" (Hansen et al. 237). But the conditions of mortal danger which inform the allegiances of Owen and Sassoon to their fellow combatants have most often been ignored in literary criticism. Contrary to Caesar's view of the "troubling" nature of the "celebration of love between men which takes place in a context of massive violence," it would indeed be surprising and disturbing if such massive violence did not mobilize the fellowship he describes (154). In fact, combat both undermines and consolidates the coherence of martial masculinities. Recalling Freud's discussions of binding in the aftermath of the death drive, the Brotherhood may be understood as an organization which repeatedly attempts to effect the operation of binding in the aftermath of the rending events which occasion massive death and loss and the dread and anxiety which these engender (Silverman 63).

Owen placed enormous value on his relationships in the army. After receiving the Military Cross following an assault on the Fonsomme Line (1918), he pauses to express greater pride in the offhand praise of one of his men (CL 584). Famously, Owen's final letter to his mother describes the War as "a great life" in which he is surrounded by "a band of friends" exceeding all others (CL 591). Moreover, in a notable

comment to Sassoon, he allies his poetic vocation with the interests of the common soldiers when he declares that "I don't want to write anything to which a soldier would say No Compris!" (qtd. in Kerr 219). Owen's own dramatic death just one week before the Armistice has no doubt contributed to his posthumous construction as a spokesperson for the troops (cf. Stephen PP 196). Certain critics, however, maintain that both Owen and Sassoon display "massive condescension" toward the private soldier, severely qualifying the validity of their claims to any genuine fellowship (Caesar 159; cf. Kerr 220). The poetic testimonies of Owen and Sassoon often "dissolve the bounded idea of the self" in order to achieve metonymic extension with the community of frontsoldiers (DuPlessis 149). Yet their gestures of belonging often exist in decided tension with their status as officer poets.[14] Both Sassoon and Owen served as junior officers; both men were in charge of a platoon, which potentially amounted to four units of ten to fourteen men, or approximately forty to sixty soldiers, although this number fluctuated. Near the end of the War, both Owen and Sassoon acted as temporary Captains of their companies, at which time they each had four junior officers serving under them (Owen CL 584; Moeyes 56).

Undoubtedly, the subject-positions of officer and poet contradict claims of horizontal immersion in the collective life of the platoon; yet, phantasy enables such multiple locations and fluidities. The peculiar contradictions inherent

in these combined modes of masculinity are evident in one of Sassoon's diary entries (1916): "no good being out here unless one takes the full amount of risks, and I want to get a good name in the Battalion, for the sake of poetry and poets, whom I represent" (D 51). In this example, martial masculinity, the taint of effeminacy, and the desire for fraternal affiliation are conflated in a compensatory phantasy of mastery and unity. However, it seems clear from service records, diaries, and letters, as well as from the poetic testimonies, that the roles of poet, officer, and fraternal combatant were alternating or overlapping positionalities, which were not invariably subservient to a phantasmatic identification with mastery, particularly in view of each man's temporary confinement at Craiglockhart. Although Kerr maintains that Owen could not represent the common soldier, because "he did not really speak their language" (220), he omits from consideration the multiple subject-positions enabled by phantasy as well as the shared psychology of trauma which bound the members of the platoon to one another.

As a junior officer in command of frontline troops, each man was caught within the tensions which necessarily existed within his "hybrid" rank position (Moeyes 49). Undoubtedly, such tensions complicated the subject-positions of victim, perpetrator and bystander by which both Owen and Sassoon negotiated their status as poets and participants in the War. Illuminating these contradictory roles, Dennis Winter

describes the officer as "a man apart" when out of the line; however, "in the line all was changed. Trappings like insignia, saluting, social distance gave way to survival and were largely omitted" (59-60). It is important to point out, then, that this body of Great War poetic testimony, which enacts unstable and complex crises of witnessing between combatants, attests to a compelling and contradictory range of enunciative positions, significantly complicating its address to civilian readers. A highly nuanced model of relationship is required for the purposes of this discussion, one which is capable of accounting for the competing and overlapping subject-positions of officer, poet, and fellow combatant. These roles are expressed through tensions between lateral versus metaphorical modes of affiliation: it is a "lateral network of relationships that assumes a community of particular shared objectives rather than interchangeability among its members" (Sommer 109). As officers, it is evident that, in addition to their hierarchical relationships, Owen and Sassoon often bore lateral relationships to their men, which, at times also modulated into provisional modes of metaphorical identification; their poetic testimonies bear witness to intense and shifting modes of identification with the platoon unit in contexts of danger and duress.

Yet it is also true that the testimonies of both Owen and Sassoon, in distinct ways, are also complicated by hierarchies of rank and class. One of Owen's most famous poems, "Insensi-

bility," for example, relies on the careful cultivation of class distinctions in its portrait of "Tommy Atkins." Ironically, Owen refused to mourn this stereotype of working-class masculinity prior to his enlistment: "I regret the mortality of the English regulars less than that of the French, Belgian, or even Russian or German armies: because the former are all Tommy Atkins, poor fellows, while the continental armies are inclusive of the finest brains and temperaments of the land" (CL 282).[15] "Insensibility," however, engages "Tommy Atkins" as a complex point of convergence for the multiple subject-positions of the speaker. Through his identification with the working-class figure, the painful oscillations of energy which are invested in the overwhelming tasks of mourning are temporarily resolved: "Happy the lad whose mind was never trained:/His days are worth forgetting more than not" (34-35). This poetic testimony engineers its aggression toward civilian indifference through its de-privileging of hierarchy in the service of the lateral and metaphorical bonds of trauma, which render the working-class soldier, both uneducated and numb, an exemplary model of psychological survival:

> We wise, who with a thought besmirch
> Blood over all our soul
> How should we see our task
> But through his blunt and lashless eyes? (40-43)

In catastrophic conditions, the survivor "undergoes a reversible form of symbolic death in order to avoid a permanent physical or psychic death" (Lifton BC 173). Thus, the speaker, who is unable to defensively bind his susceptibilities to the repetitions of traumatic exposure, projectively reconstitutes the "Tommy" as an exemplary subject-position within the devastating psychological landscape of War.

By way of contrast to the construction of the "Tommy," though, the first stanza of Owen's poetic testimony conducts a self-reflexive consideration of another mode of response to trauma: the poet's role. The poet is obligated to performatively engage the mourning of the platoon: "The front line withers./But they are troops who fade, not flowers,/For poets' tearful fooling" (6-8). Even the poet's mode of insensibility is evident in his habitual privileging of metaphor. But in the context of historical trauma, metaphor can only be meaningful if it consciously foregrounds the ruptures it creates: men are thus described as "gaps for filling:/Losses, who might have fought/Longer" (9-11). The poet's role is transformed by the imperative mission of the witness, a role which is metonymically linked with the dead, "gaps for filling," created through indifference and the fact that "no one bothers" (11). The numbing of the soldiers, who "laugh among the dying, unconcerned" (30), only postpones their mourning, which the witness-poet undertakes to voice.

"Insensibility" attests to the fragmentation and reorganization of subjectivity effected by overwhelming experience. Like "Smile, Smile, Smile," however, this testimony deplores perceived failures of civilian witnessing which redouble the psychic necessities of numbing. Even as the speaker identifies with the uniquely burdened witness through the testimonial act of the poem, the simultaneous idealization of the private in "Insensibility" attests to the phantasy of a symbolic death which would obviate both the anxieties of fragmentation and the need for the reconstitutive energies of dyadic exchange. If "Insensibility" makes any claims for a combat subculture, a fraternal formation, it clearly asserts a Brotherhood bound by traumatic experiences, rather than a brotherhood which effaces class or rank. This poem holds in tension the various subject-positions of poet, officer, and combatant in the service of its condemnation of modes of civilian immunity hostile to the "eternal reciprocity of tears" (59), a phantasy of perpetual empathic exchange which obviates distinctions and reconciles the competing modes of identification which complicate the mourning tasks of the witness in this testimony.

Sassoon's poems are also divided by distinct modes of affiliation with his fellow soldiers. The "arch personifications" of Sassoon's "Conscripts" confess the speaker's sexual attraction to upper-class men even as he acknowledges their inability to endure the conditions of the Western Front:

"many a sickly, slender lord who'd filled/My soul long since with lutanies of sin,/Went home, because they couldn't stand the din" (P. Campbell 89; Sassoon 22-24). However, the officer goes on to reveal his temperamental and class prejudices against ordinary soldiers in no uncertain terms: "the kind, common ones that I despised/(Hardly a man of them I'd count as friend),/What stubborn-hearted virtues they disguised!" (25-27). In this verse, desires and duties are polarized, heightening tensions within modes of masculinity. While irony is clearly directed at past "poetic attitudes," profound discomfort is expressed as a result of the speaker's ostensible identification with the law: "They looked at me/Reproachful; how I longed to set them free!" (Wilson 310-11; Sassoon 11-12). Such discomfort suggests an inability to reconcile military authority with other desired identifications. Under his command, the muses of poetry are also conscripted into military service: "Rhyme got sore heels and wanted to fall out" (10). In this "watershed poem," martial masculinity and its authority actively demand the conscription and vigilant disciplining of other subjective positions and desires, an impossible performance of unity which clearly encourages the proliferation of the fluid and overdetermined locations of phantasy (P. Campbell 90). Sassoon's self-divisions and competing identifications do not stabilize as a result of his military authority; the uniform rhyme and rhythm of "Conscripts" only underscore its play of subject-positions and

desires, a shifting series of energies temporarily arrested through the medium of verse.

In general, though, Sassoon's representations of his men become less and less idealized throughout his active service. Near the end of the War, for example, the oppositions between high and low culture explored in "Conscripts" are transvalued by Sassoon in homage to the men of his platoon. In "Dead Musicians," the speaker privileges "slangy speech" and the rhythms of ragtime and fox-trot (18). He disaffiliates himself from the cultural icons of his youth, "Beethoven, Bach, Mozart," claiming,

> You have no part with lads who fought
> And laughed and suffered at my side.
> Your fugues and symphonies have brought
> No memory of my friends who died. (13-16)

In the absence of the men, the gramophone now serves as a vehicle of phantasy, enabling the speaker's communion with conjured "ghosts" (19). These identifications with the working-class dead demand the repudiation of previous modes of cultural self-recognition. Similarly, in "Twelve Months After," the men of Sassoon's platoon have all been killed. In this poem, the use of the demotic attains the poignancy of understatement and affection (11-14). And in "The Dream," privates are not described as stoical exemplars, but rather as

men overcome with exhaustion after three winters in the War (22). Now the officer rather than the common soldier is metaphorically linked to Christ in the service of a powerful identification with martyrdom: "upon my brow/I wear a wreath of banished lives" ("Dead Musicians" 11-12).[16] As his sense of grief and responsibility increases, Sassoon longs to escape from the "secret burden that is always [his]" by erasing all distinctions of rank and class through death, a phantasy of collective union and belonging: "O brothers in my striving, it were best/That I should share your rest" ("Reward" 11-12).

"Lieu-tenant" is a word which foregrounds substitution, "to stand in the place of an other" (J. Campbell "Ethics" 826). As the analyses of "Insensibility" and "Dead Musicians" attest, both Owen and Sassoon conceive of themselves in crucial roles as witnesses to their men, compelled to both intense loyalty and profound guilt. In fact, following Lifton, Winter analyzes the bulk of Great War poetry as the "literature of the guilt of the survivor," although he fails to develop specific insights from this general observation (GW 291). Yet a careful consideration of this dynamic is essential to an understanding of Great War testimony. At the front, there was no sense of "survival priority": as a result, the survivor could not reconcile mass deaths with beliefs or convictions which mediated death in relation to existing cultural norms (Lifton BC 145). Under such conditions, in Owen's words, psychological numbing "best solves/The tease and

doubt of shelling" ("Insensibility" 14-15). In graphic detail, for example, Sassoon's "Trench Duty" evokes the sudden shock of random death without resolving or even articulating the bewildering admixture of guilt and pleasure which results: "Five minutes ago I heard a sniper fire:/Why did he do it? . . . Starlight overhead--/Blank stars. I'm wide-awake; and some chap's dead" (12-14).

So long as the War continued, officers could not truly develop "an animating relationship to guilt," a relationship which "exists when one can derive from imagery of self-condemnation energy toward renewal and change" (Lifton BC 139). As Kerr suggests, scripts of generational betrayal which adapted the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac could also function as a suppressed narrative of the officer's relationship to his men (222). For instance, in a letter in which he describes his role as a commanding officer to new recruits, Owen aligns himself with a traditional Christian icon of mercenary betrayal and suicidal guilt, Judas Iscariot: "with a piece of silver I buy him everyday, and with maps I make him familiar with the topography of Golgotha" (CL 562).[17] However, in contrast to Owen's self-loathing poetic idealization of his own men as Christ-figures, the actual dynamic was typically reversed under combat conditions: "in the high-stress situation of front line and battle, men tended to transfer their loyalty to the officer as an idealized figure who might be able to control danger" (D. Winter 61). Under the pressure

of such idealization, in cooperation with the accumulated weight of prior personal, moral, and religious convictions, the officer had to contend with his own vitality and leadership even as he experienced his accountability to the dead (Lifton BC 145).

A sense of accountability to the dead acts as an animating guilt which propels both Owen and Sassoon back to the Front after their respective periods of convalescence at Craiglockhart. In this manner, guilt underwrites their transformative social and individual visions of military service. As Owen exclaims in "The Calls": "I heard the sighs of men, that have no skill/To speak of their distress, no, nor the will!/A voice I know. And this time I must go" (25-27). The compulsion to bear witness to the men displaces an emphasis on hierarchical privilege or culpability. Rather, witnessing, which involves lateral and metaphorical modes of identification with the platoon, involves the struggle to reconcile participation in the War with a moral vision of leadership. Near the end of his life, for example, Owen links his roles as officer and poet, but feels that his task as a witness remains incomplete: "I came out in order to help these boys--directly by leading them as well as an officer can; indirectly, by watching their sufferings that I may speak of them as well as a pleader can. I have done the first" (CL 580). Similarly, Sassoon phrases his famous "Soldier's Declaration" (1917) in terms of his compulsion to be a spokes-

person for the frontsoldier (MIQ 207). In a more lyrical mode, "Banishment" attests to Sassoon's compulsion to bear witness, and in so doing, return to the Front and the possibility of moral action: "Love drives me back to grope with them through hell;/And in their tortured eyes I stand forgiven" (13-14). Both Owen and Sassoon enact a partial transformation of their survivor guilt through creative acts of witnessing, by which they phantasmatically reposition themselves into facilitators of griefwork and agents of communalization, in spite of their status as officers. However, it is not surprising that the conflict engaged by these competing modes of identification, especially in view of their roles as officers to front-line troops, involves the alternation of melancholic projection and internalization of unmanageable guilt and grief.

A suffocating sense of responsibility is evident in many of Sassoon's poems of "static" or "numbed guilt" which are haunted by the dead (Lifton BC 139): "O martyred youth and manhood overthrown,/The burden of your wrongs is on my head" ("Autumn" 8-9). Revisited in the hospital by "the homeless ones, the noiseless dead," in "Sick Leave," which was originally published under the title, "Death's Brotherhood," Sassoon is rebuked: "`Why are you here with all your watches ended?/. . . . Are they not still your brothers through our blood?'" (2, 7, 13). The circular nature of affiliation with the dead is most evident in "Return," in which the speaker accepts the leadership of the dead in whom he discerns his

"living strength"; in turn, they are "quickened in [his] blood" (Sassoon 10-12). In this poem, the Brotherhood, an organization which encompasses the living and the dead, is understood as a collective which can only bear witness to itself, a community which is bound to its trauma, an "entropic combination of fact and phantasmagoria" without access to externalization (Hansen et al. 243). Combat subcultures forged under circumstances of massive threat and loss often incorporate the dead within their provisional models of the dyadic interchange necessary to process trauma. The dead, however, exiled from speech or protest, constitute an enormous "**referential debt**" which can burden the testimony with the task of an impossible articulation (Felman 115).

Death Encounters and Communalization Dynamics

The basis of Brotherhood remains the encounter with death, which is everywhere evident in these testimonies. "Eyeballs, huge-bulged like squids" mediate the reader's apprehension of traumatic knowledge which exceeds narrative representation (Owen "The Sentry" 22). And in "Dulce et Decorum Est," for instance, we read of the speaker's apparently timeless vision of traumatic witnessing: "In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,/He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning" (Owen 15-16). The imagery of eyes rendered helpless, blinded, frozen, fixated, or possessed of wordless and terrible wisdom permeates the poetry of both Owen and

Sassoon, testifying to that which remains in excess of available frames of reference, that which has been perceived, but awaits its passage into the pathways of memory to be assimilated. For instance, a soldier in "A Night Attack" is described in terms of the "terror and ruin" which "lurk behind his gaze" (Sassoon 18). It is clear that these eyes were a summons to other combat survivors. In this connection, Owen describes a look "more terrible than terror . . . . a blind-fold look . . . . It will never be painted, and no actor will ever seize it" (CL 521). I interpret these staring blind eyes in light of the non-narrative, visual and involuntary nature of the imagery fundamental to the "exceptional presences" of traumatic memory (Hartman "TK" 537). The eye is such an over-determined image in literatures of trauma because it symbolizes the inability of the mind to close itself, in that it is the source of both consciously-directed witnessing and dissociated, involuntary flashback.

Owen's "The Next War," published in the Hydra (1917), signals the constitutive role of the death encounter in the phantasies which shaped combatants' sense of group identity: "Oh, Death was never enemy of ours!/We laughed at him, we leagued with him, old chum" (10-11). The poem connects the bonding of the men with their mutual condition of "mortal dependency" in the face of danger and horror (Shay 36): "We chorused if he sang aloft,/We whistled while he shaved us with his scythe" (Owen 7-8). Paradoxically, death is celebrated as

the basis for the War, rather than any external cause, principle, or national affiliation: "when every fighter brags/He fights on Death, for lives; not men, for flags" (Owen 13-14).[18] "The Next War" indisputably links the shared encounter with death to the communalization dynamics of the platoon. In this manner, it makes a critical contribution to Owen's "masculine psychology of the survivors of unimaginable violence" (Featherstone 107). Although it is undoubtedly a slighter effort than a poetic testimony such as "Spring Offensive," it goes some way toward answering the latter's final question, "Why speak not they of comrades that went under?" (46). Combat subcultures frequently operate under "a silence taboo," and they do so in order to maintain strategies "essential for numbing" (Hansen et al. 238).

Bonds between combatants are vehemently dissociated from heterosexual norms by both Owen and Sassoon. Among other issues, this rhetorical move signals the manner in which modes of identification between combatants are premised upon shared encounters with death. Even poems of fellowship, then, which articulate an exclusive society of frontsoldiers, manifest their concern with communalization dynamics. For example, "Their Frailty" contrasts the survival of the Brotherhood with the passionate partiality of heterosexual attachments, exclusive dyads which shun the overwhelming and collective tasks of griefwork: "Mothers and wives and sweethearts,--they don't care/So long as He's all right" (Sassoon 11-12). Similarly,

Owen rejects the specificity of heterosexual attachment for the functional cohesion of the unit, symbolized by its shared equipment and susceptibility to injury: "love is not the binding of fair lips" but is "Bound with the bandage of the arm that drips;/Knit in the webbing of the rifle-thong" ("Apologia Pro Poemate Meo" 19, 23-24).

Notably, in a series of apostrophes in "Greater Love," Owen highlights the contrast between heterosexual passion and a "pure" love arising through circumstances which demand sacrificial substitution: "O Love, your eyes lose lure/When I behold eyes blinded in my stead!" (5-6). The attachment between men in War is premised upon the acknowledgement of their mutual subordination to loss and lack. Significantly, the poem ends with a prohibition: "Weep, you may weep, for you may touch them not" (24). In Owen's adaptation of John 20: 15-17, the weeping of women signals their exclusion from the men's binding fellowship, fellowship premised upon an intimate knowledge of death and its effects. It is presumed that these women have never been under fire, subjected to the bayonet with "limbs knife-skewed," nor been shot with "flame and hail" (8, 23). The triangle comprised of Mary Magdalene, Christ and God is thus reworked to allegorize the gender asymmetry effected by the trenches.

While "Greater Love" is widely considered a misogynist poem, and "an attack on women specifically," I propose to inquire into its "impactions of homo/heterosexual definition"

(Campbell "Ethics" 833; Sedgwick 9). Owen's aggressive subversion of the priority of heterosexual attachment reveals the manner in which the assertion of male homosocial desire can only be made culturally intelligible through the terms of that dominant discourse. It rejects dyadic exchange premised on the "kindness of wooed and wooer" in order to privilege the contexts which sustain and shape fidelity to the combat unit (3). Dyadic exchange is radically redefined and circumscribed through the repudiation of desire which does not encounter death: "Your dear voice is not dear,/. . . ./As theirs whom none now hear,/Now earth has stopped their piteous mouths that coughed" (15-18). The prohibitions which normally govern the physical expression of desire between men within civilian contexts are redirected at the grieving woman, who is interdicted from the sight or handling of the Great War dead, a prohibition which would effectively aggravate unresolved mourning. "Greater Love" attests to the cultural centrality of heterosexual attachment even as its norms are linked with a rhetoric of contamination and impoverishment. Through its phantomization of heterosexual attachment, it contests inclusive models of communalization, and repudiates all participation in the griefwork of civilians.[19] While this poem undoubtedly captures and exploits the "irresolvably unstable" nature of the binary oppositions between heterosexuality and homosexuality, it also reveals the manner in which the boundaries of the Brotherhood code are articulated through the

elaboration of phantasies in which prohibitions and taboos effectively subvert the regulation of attachment and desire within civilian contexts (Sedgwick 10).[20]

The significance of communalization dynamics in the testimonies of Owen and Sassoon is evident through the number of their works which strenuously disaffiliate the platoon from the values of other groups, including the military bureaucracy, the Press, and the Church, groups which I now address in serial fashion. As a whole, these anti-institutional poems reiterate contexts of empathic failure in the face of the death encounter, revealing the centrality of traumatic knowledge to the informal protocols of combat subcultures. Not surprisingly, then, in Sassoon's satires of the military bureaucracy, generals and upper echelon officials are granted special scorn.[21] Commenting on the generals of the First World War, Keegan signals his overriding sympathy for the infantryman: "the impassive expressions that stare back at us from contemporary photographs do not speak of consciences or feelings troubled by the slaughter over which those men presided" (FWW 312). In keeping with Keegan's contemporary perspective, Sassoon demonstrates that even soldiers who support their General are destroyed "by his plan of attack" ("The General" 7). Sassoon's anti-military poems frequently employ bathetic rhymes in the service of pointed aggression toward the military chain of command: "He was our leader, and a judge of port--/Rode well to hounds, and was a damned good

sort" ("The March-Past" 5-6). Such bathos highlights the unacknowledged realities of death and injury occurring within the ranks. Significantly, it has been speculated that this poem is an attack on Sir Henry Rawlinson, one of the leaders of the Somme offensive (Wilson 315).

"The March-Past" relies on a pun (Corps/corpse) which effectively subordinates the chain of command to the sinister and dehumanized rule of Death: "the corpse-commander was a Mute;/And Death leered round him, taking our salute" (Sassoon 11-12). In actuality, during the Great War the Corps commander was in charge of approximately fifty thousand men; "with fluctuating personnel, all the corps commander could do was to show `keenness' and `put on a show' probably at the expense of the men he handled" (D. Winter 54). By way of contrast to such large units of men, Sassoon's satires of the military bureaucracy are informed by the values of the most intimate units in the army, namely the company, platoon and section. Particularly within the units of platoon and section, combatants "construct their own social order, not merely to survive physically, but also to survive psychologically and spiritually"; as Sassoon's testimonies indicate, the military organization was perceived to violate "the only organization whose sole objective was the members' survival," the platoon (Hansen et al. 131, 129).

Sassoon's testimonies also carefully disaffiliate the intimate units of the army from the institution of the Press,

which is condemned for its failure to highlight the gap between the death encounter and the linguistic register. And, like the military bureaucracy, the Press is also condemned for its failure to enable the communalization of griefwork. Once again, the ability of another to acknowledge death functions as a critical index of the vital mirroring necessary to the combatant's establishment of social trust. Such trust is withheld from the journalistic enterprise as it is represented in "The Effect," which ruthlessly works to expose the experiential gulf between language and death in a grotesque phantasy: "`**He'd never seen so many dead before.**'/The lilting words danced up and down his brain,/While corpses jumped and capered in the rain" (Sassoon 7-9). The "lilting words" are revealed as sounds stripped of context or meaning; the gap between these sounds and the specific bodies they signify is then rendered absurd and obscene through their correlative in the dancing corpses, corpses whose behaviour repudiates the reality of death in accord with the meaningless nature of the words they imitate. Appropriately, the final line of this satire conflates bodies and market wares to hideous effect, dramatizing the results of "corpselessness" on the civilian imagination, in a perverse conflation of sensationalistic War reporting and consumer advertising: "`**Who'll buy my nice fresh corpses, two a penny?**'" (Booth 21; Sassoon 18).

Similarly, in "Editorial Impressions," the spectatorial gaze of the Press is sharply contrasted with the experiences

of an injured soldier. This poem constructs a parody of witnessing: "I hope I've caught the feeling of `the Line,'/And the amazing spirit of the troops./By Jove, those flying-chaps of ours are fine!" (Sassoon 11-13). It must be recalled that civilians experienced corpses through "a series of verbal descriptions": casualty lists, telegraphs and letters functioned as the only evidence of the War's "physical consequences" (Booth 25, 28). For others, whose loved ones were missing, death was only finally registered after many years through "the expiry of hope" (Keegan FWW 150). On the other hand, through his angry testimonies, which declare an enforced and explicit gap between the Front and Home, Sassoon refuses to relinquish the corpse, a symbolic marker whose specificity and physicality cannot be forsaken without betraying the dead.

The Church, the traditional mediator of the corpse, serves as a complex target of attack in the poems of both Owen and Sassoon. Christ's consolatory resonances had been evacuated and nullified by the War, even as he remained a powerfully ambivalent symbol of suffering and sacrifice. According to Sassoon, the phantasmatic identifications enabled by Christianity were unable to facilitate the griefwork of the trenches: "Is He a God of wood and stone,/While those who served him writhe and moan,/On warfare's altar sacrificed?" ("The Prince of Wounds" 13-15). Owen's poem, "At a Calvary Near the Ancre," addresses this crisis of religion and

communalization by repudiating the corrupt teachings of priests and scribes who serve the state, valorizing "the greater love," by which a man may die for his friends, thereby appropriating Christ's words to serve the "survival code" of the intimate fighting unit, in which "things promoting survival are moral; those threatening it are evil" (Hansen et al. 130, 237). In a similar vein, one of Sassoon's most famous poems, "They," mocks the rhetoric of a Bishop who proclaims that "the boys" will have "`challenged Death and dared him face to face'" (6). When the soldiers reply to the Bishop, testifying to serious injuries, he is unable to acknowledge their suffering, nor its effective repudiation of his fanatical nationalistic rhetoric, as he opts to hide behind an evocation of Divine inscrutability: "`The ways of God are strange!'" (Silkin QB 141; Sassoon 12). In the face of the men's catalogue of loss and injury, the Bishop does not revise his heroic vision of masculinity, underscoring Silverman's argument regarding the manner in which war "must solicit civilian belief in the dominant fiction" (62). As a result, in the poetic testimonies of Owen and Sassoon, such as "Christ and the Soldier," in which the "Prince of Peace" is reduced to serving as "an observation post for the attack" (Sassoon 42), the grid of participant-positions engaged by the scene of the Crucifixion is transposed to the circumstances of the Great War, wherein the figures of Christ and the Church are now associated with the bystanders and perpetrators of the

combatant's suffering.

"Anthem for Doomed Youth," though, must be considered a poetic testimony which articulates a vision of working-through massive psychic trauma which excludes the Church if only to incorporate other consolatory practices which Owen's elegy designates as modes of memory-work, unaffiliated with organized religion. For instance, its reference to "bugles calling for them from sad shires" highlights, in relative terms, the more acceptable and meaningful rituals of the army in confronting the specter of its own dead (8). However, the octave of the sonnet, sundered from its sestet, rejects the rituals of the Church as "mockeries" (5); accordingly, the "patter" of rifles mocks the "meaningless repetition of paternosters" (Hibberd QP 111). In his interpretation of this work, Johnston remarks that "Christianity has lost contact with the very reality it is called upon to interpret" (177). Yet, Johnston's comment fails to stress the aggressive and selective rejection of Christian rituals which this elegy performs. In my reading, the systematic invocation of ceremonial symbols deriving from funerary practices reveals the task of the sestet to be the relocation of ceremonial mourning rather than its displacement.

Many post-Holocaust interpretations of this poem argue that its project of articulating a mode of anti-consolatory mourning is rendered a failure. In particular, the sestet has been dismissed as "a disappointing and sentimental shimmer of

Brookean melancholy" (Parfitt 161-62). And in the words of Geoffrey Hill, "the fact that Owen employs irony in this poem cannot alter the fact that he takes thirteen lines to retreat from the position maintained by one. If these men really do die as **cattle**, then all **human** mourning for them is a mockery . . . " (7). Hill's indictment hinges upon his valorization of melancholia in the context of mass death. The dilemmas contingent upon addressing scenes of massive psychic trauma in contexts of state-sponsored violence or genocide are mapped onto Owen's poem by Hill, a poem which undoubtedly serves as one of the first examples of an elegy which attempts to formulate a response to collective catastrophe (cf. Ramazani 70). In this respect, "Anthem for Doomed Youth" marks a significant cultural precedent. But, in particular, Owen's sestet is singled out for its culpable role in promoting a model of consolatory exchange or even quietist "reconciliation which recreates the homogenizing political subjectivity of the nation-state" (Frazier 110). However, rather than considering "Anthem for Doomed Youth" to be "a sonorous, but rather confused poem" (Hibberd OP 109), I believe that the anti-clerical imperative which governs its anti-consolatory vision signals only a partial and specific repudiation of consolation, enabling it to struggle with the difficult issue of reformulating an appropriate context for mourning within the secular and culpable nation-state, a series of groups divided by distinct objects of identification, fractured and polarized

into competing participant-positions by the Great War.

In what ways, then, does this poem recuperate and reformulate an anti-clerical model of public mourning? "Anthem for Doomed Youth" is a collective elegy, a point of critical significance. Just as the dead have no specific identities, repeatedly disinterred amidst the "stuttering rifles' rapid rattle," those who mourn them are not specified as being related to the fallen through kinship or affiliation (3). In fact, fluid modes of readerly identification are suggested through an emphasis on children. In Hirsch's relevant and striking formulation, children are "less individualized, less marked by the particularities of identity," so that they may "invite multiple projections and identifications" (13). The sestet, then, the sestet seeks to reformulate the nature of the civilian witness in positive terms, inviting a "series of identifications across temporal, spatial, and cultural divides" (Hirsch 6). Children typically invite protective modes of phantasmatic identification; yet, here they are appointed mourners. They do not speak "any voice of mourning": the silence of the sestet contrasts radically with the jarring auditory clamour of the octave (6). The sestet effectively foregrounds its translation of funerary ritual into the psychological behaviours of individuals, emphasizing the sacrality and significance of communalization rituals which include civilians. In this connection, as Shay affirms, "the social horizon of the unscarred soldier encompasses not only

his family and other civilian ties but also all those military formations to which his unit belongs and with which it cooperates" (23).

Yet the gulf between the combatants and these witnesses is undoubtedly highlighted through the break between the octave and the sestet, signifying the posttraumatic fissures which constellate various War-torn communities along experiential, ideological, and ethical lines. Significantly, the octave calls attention to its ongoing mission to commemorate the dead in the midst of the War's continuing violence. Thus, grief and loss cannot be localized or subjected to closure. In contrast to the octave, though, in the sestet, the "drawing-down of blinds," suggestive of a a household in mourning, can be understood as a figurative effort to enclose and shelter the fallen, who are radically unhoused and exposed: "And **each** slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds" [my emphasis] (Owen 14). In this manner, the sestet confirms Booth's perceptive remark that "architecture becomes the site at which war may be imaginatively transformed into a civilian experience" (43). However, rather than signalling "the closure of the poem itself with every reading," the final line of the sestet emphasizes a recursive and repetitive process of mourning which significantly qualifies its model of "compensatory economics" (Ramazani 73). The Great War dead remain a call to ongoing memory-work, to interiority and introspection. Such memory-work cannot be bound to a finite, clerical

referent, such as a candle, or a pall, or a bunch of flowers, or even a grave. Rather, in the face of the "shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells," the external trappings of ceremony are internalized by a collective which performs and over-performs acts of "commemorative vigilance" in the absence of graves or established sites of memory (Nora 289).

"Anthem" triangulates a trajectory of memory involving the dead and the dying, the poet-combatant, and grieving witnesses. Many of the combatants are themselves "boys" whose eyes will soon share the traumatic memories of the front-soldiers; such knowledge will contain "the holy glimmers of goodbyes" (Owen 11). The poet speaks on behalf of the collective he mourns, and his own voice "seems overwhelmed by the sounds of destruction" (Ramazani 72). The foregrounding of silent images of empathy and receptivity in the sestet contrasts markedly with the octave's relentless simulation of battle through onomatopoeic excess. Although the elegy rejects a religious mode of symbolic immortality, following Lifton, it continues to privilege modes of continuity involving forms of biological and natural inheritance. This poem reformulates the elegy in conditions of mass death, however, conditions in which the poet must construct a specific mode of cultural continuity with his audience: he is compelled to specify the nature of his readership in the service of a need to communalize grief and trauma as well as to indirectly prohibit and condemn modes of denial, collusion, and ignorance. To sum up

my interpretation of "Anthem," then, I maintain that it is an extremely fragile testament. In this poem, Owen's formulation of mourning encompasses both civilians and combatants, a vision of communalization which he does not return to in his mature testimonies (1918). Instead, in his final year, in the absence of a perceived readership responsive to the ethical dimensions of death and suffering, he highlights failures of communalization.

Notably absent in "Anthem" are the speaker's own struggles with death, the sights of the dead, or the loss of specific comrades. In this connection, commenting on the nature of death in combat during the Vietnam War, Shay offers the compelling observation that "when the corpse disappeared from the battlefield the thread of grief snapped at its origin" (59). By way of contrast, no helicopters removed the bodies of soldiers killed in the muddy fields of France, and they infused the everyday lives of soldiers with their smells, disturbing postures and perpetual presence. Corpses come to represent "the persistent return of the past" (Booth 63). For instance, in a letter to his mother, Owen describes the dead "whose unburiable bodies sit outside the dug-outs all day, all night, the most execrable sights on earth . . . . to sit with them all day, all night . . . and a week later to come back and find them still sitting there, in motionless groups, THAT is what saps the `soldierly spirit'" (CL 431-32). The grief-work of soldiers on the Western Front was deritualized through

a chronic exposure which was part of both routine and re-traumatizing events. This desacralization of the dead potentially led to a prolonged immersion in abjection, a sense of horror which "emerges when exclusions fail, in the sickening collapse of limits" (Ellman 181).

The sacralization of bonds among combatants, and in particular, the sacralization of attachment with a special comrade, acts as a protection against such deeply violating and disorienting exposure. But the loss of this primary bond can be catastrophic; such is the drama demonstrated in Sassoon's elegies for David Thomas. Although Sassoon enlisted in the first year of the War, I agree with Caesar when he claims that "the first, most crucial factor in intensifying his response to the war, was the death of Thomas" in 1916 (74).[22] After Thomas's death, Sassoon earned the nickname "Mad Jack" for his reckless raids and night patrols in No Man's Land. By his own admission, revenge supplanted grief: "I used to say I couldn't kill anyone in this war; but since they shot Tommy I would gladly stick a bayonet into a German by daylight" (Sassoon D 52). Many years later, Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man recalls the effects of Thomas's death: "as for me, I had more or less made up my mind to die; the idea made things easier. In the circumstances there didn't seem to be anything else to be done" (Sassoon 280). When Caesar interprets Sassoon's response to Thomas's death as a determination to live out "the Christian-Romantic heritage in all its

violence" (77), however, he fails to attend to the specific dynamics of this traumatic loss, a loss which clearly engages aspects of both structural and historical trauma.

Sassoon wrote several elegies for his friend Thomas. "The Last Meeting," for instance, is full of the traditional imagery and Orphean motifs of pastoral elegy: "his name shall be/Wonder awaking in a summer dawn,/And youth, that dying, touched my lips to song" (III 16-18). However, in a series of other poems written in 1916, Sassoon alludes to a desire to resurrect his friend through violence. Shay describes this state of mind as "the berserk state," the "most important and distinctive element of combat trauma" (75). The "berserk state" is a complex result of betrayal and bereavement in extreme circumstances, so that uncommunalized loss and rage culminate in numbed and disconnected waves of exaltation, intoxication and frenzy, because the body is mobilized in response to a chronic sense of emergency.[23] Owen also attests to such a state in his description of an engagement in which he won his Military Cross: "I lost all my earthly faculties, and fought like an angel"; fittingly, he signs this letter, "Wilfred and more than Wilfred" (CL 580). Furthermore, an allusion to the berserk state of dehumanized fury is evident in the cryptic conclusion of Owen's "Spring Offensive," which specifies "superhuman inhumanities" in association with "immemorial shames" (42-43). In "A Mystic as Soldier," Sassoon seems to treat this special physiology of trauma as his muse,

demanding, "O music through my clay,/When will you sound again?" (11-12).

In Sassoon's "The Poet as Hero," the speaker registers a drastic change in behaviour and self-identification indicative of the "berserk state":

> For lust and senseless hatred make me glad,
> And my killed friends are with me where I go.
> Wound for red wound I burn to smite their wrongs;
> And there is absolution in my songs. (11-14)

As Shay perceptively concludes, "at some deep cultural and psychological level, spilling enemy blood is an effort to bring the dead back to life" (89). Translating this phenomena into the terms of my own project, the berserk state is constituted through the inability to mourn, given that the combatant is driven to communalize his trauma through the reassertion of fidelity to the dead. In this connection, Herman helpfully observes that "the revenge fantasy is often a mirror image of the traumatic memory, in which the roles of perpetrator and victim are reversed" (189). By assuming the perpetrator participant-position, the combatant strives to exorcise the unbearable loss and ward off the irrational guilt which often arises through a feeling of substitutory identification with the dead (Shay 70). The loss of the special comrade is wildly overdetermined by investments which link him

exclusively with the process of communalization in the mind of the bereaved soldier. In this manner, the berserk state signals the absolute significance of processes of working-through grief in contexts of historical trauma. Because the communalization of trauma is necessary for mourning, events triggered by the loss of the special comrade reveal the manner in which the sacrificial dynamics of the berserk state seek to redirect the implosion of the combatant's psychological and social bonds. Ultimately, though, mourning is foreclosed when the communalization of grief is routed through violence which vainly seeks to resuscitate the dead.

In Owen's "Futility," the speaker's social and moral horizon has also shrunk to one individual (Shay 28). In this elegy, however, dejection rather than violent behaviour is associated with the melancholia of profound grief. "Futility" rejects the traditional structure, meter and rhyme of the sonnet, highlighting the manner in which "breakdown is dispersed in multiple transformations" in Owen's testimony (Kerr 203). The sonnet is broken into two halves, a symbolic articulation of a broken dyad in accord with this testimony's preoccupation with abysmal grief. Its arrested, understated, monosyllabic lines perform the halting tones of speech of someone in the throes of a resonating catastrophic loss, a loss which rapidly implodes all sense of affiliation, continuity, or meaningful change, states of mind which register the impact of sudden bereavement through the death-equivalents

of separation, disintegration and stasis (Lifton BC 175). The elegy topples into despair once the distinction between sleeping and waking is abandoned in an admission of the finality of death, a distinction which attests to the desire of the speaker to postpone or even repress the work of mourning.[24]

The "chaotic and sweeping" series of elegiac questions which conclude the poem eloquently attest to the disorganization of the ego in the face of profound grief: "Are limbs, so dear achieved, are sides/Full-nerved, still warm, too hard to stir?" (Ramazani 75; Owen 10-11). In this connection, Peter Sacks helpfully observes that "one obvious function of elegiac questioning is to set free the energy locked in grief or rage and to organize its movement in the form of a question that is not merely an expression of ignorance but a voicing of protest" (22). However, there are no answers to the questions posed in "Futility," and the speaker remains mired in grief, rage, and protest. In Kerr's accurate phrase, this elegy is left "rudely open" (287). Isolation, emphasized in the turn from the dialogue of the opening lines to the final despairing utterances, is unusual in Owen's body of work; yet, bonds with other combatants are ruptured here, and the absence of any empathic presence seems absolute. The final lines are comprised of accusations repudiating origins: "Was it for this the clay grew tall?/--O what made fatuous sunbeams toil/To break earth's sleep at all?" (Owen 13-14). In fact, the **mise-**

en-scène of this staging of abandonment is the family: "the procreative sun is wooed to behave like a mother, but it does not accept the invitation" (Kerr 34). The implosion of all modes of socially-mediated exchange or recognition in the final lines suggests that this testimony ultimately devolves upon the repudiation of parental functions, the "fatuous sunbeams" which are powerless to reconstitute the beloved body or even aid in the communalization of its loss (Owen 13).

In another of his famous testimonies, Owen creates an unusual context for the communal reworking of trauma in "Strange Meeting." This testimony dramatizes a posthumous encounter between adversaries who recently confronted one another in hand-to-hand combat. Although death has been inflicted through the bayonet, a particularly gruesome and intimate weapon, kinship between the speakers is instantly registered through facial expressions which convey traumatic knowledge, namely the stare, the "piteous recognition in fixed eyes," as well as the "dead smile" (Owen 7, 10). As the testimony reveals, the perpetrator and the victim are bound to one another through a compelling dynamic of unconscious knowledge (Owen 4, 38). "Strange Meeting" unites the unlikely dyad of enemies. The power of this testimony inheres in its representation of the corpse communalizing his own death with the very man who killed him. "Strange Meeting" thus enacts a confrontation between the polarized participant-positions of perpetrator and victim. In this poem of "shared recognition in

extremis," the men are "locked in oblivion, yet also exhausted, traumatized, virtually catatonic victims of stress" (Zeiger 17). The "sudden and unnervingly detached lucidity" of the dead man's revelation concludes the poem and the elliptical ending highlights the unique and compulsive bond between men bound within the realm of traumatic actions and events (Graham 62).

Because the poem simultaneously addresses the relative positions of victim and perpetrator within combat, it can be interpreted to reveal a splitting of the ego typical of instances of melancholic mourning (cf. Ramazani 81). More generally, through its device of the narcissistic double, it explores the complex co-implication of mourning tasks in the aftermath of War. The "strange friend" rather prophetically bears witness to the cultural legacies of loss and waste which will haunt the postwar world, which will remain locked within a blind submission to patterns of aggression and victimization:

> Now men will go content with what we spoiled,
> Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
> They will be swift with the swiftness of the
> tigress.
> None will break ranks, though nations trek from
> progress. (26-29)

The dead man highlights the urgency of his own role in the cultural reconstruction necessary in the aftermath of massive historical trauma. Perceived from a confusing and competing range of participant-positions, historical trauma, a series of consciously and unconsciously interconnected events, demands a complex appreciation for "the truth untold/The pity of war, the pity war distilled" (Owen 24-25). Significantly, though, this vision of revelation is offered by the victimized double, indirectly revealing the difficulties of combining the poetic role with the stance of the perpetrator, a move which underscores the bifurcations by which "pity" enacts its alliances with sympathy. In its alliance with the poetic role, pity is represented as a mode of understanding historical trauma which transcends the patterns of repetition and compulsion which are constitutive of its events: "truths that lie too deep for taint" (36). However, Owen's articulation of "pity" involves "emotional identification with the victims of war" (Ramazani 80). Yet, emotional identification can never be channelled independently of the specific investments and self-divisions which configure the context in question. A pure position with respect to historical trauma cannot be achieved: the melancholic self-divisions which structure "Strange Meeting" only serve to dramatize the dilemmas of articulating a viable location from which to bear witness to the Great War.

Abjection and the Primary Witness: Owen's "The Show"

Commenting on "The Show," Simcox declares without qualification that he knows "no more terrifying poem in the English language" (143). In a more qualified corroboration, Jon Silkin maintains quite correctly, I think, that "nothing in Owen's work exceeds the horror of this poem" (OB 215). Owen encourages these verdicts when he classifies this testimony in relation to the "horrible beastliness of war" (WP 98). Arguably, then, in "The Show," more than in any other poetic testimony by either Owen or Sassoon, "the abiding sense of meaninglessness and loss of self that results from prolonged, traumatizing exposure" to the horrors of warfare is evident (Hansen et al. 65). As a result, I choose to conclude my exploration of death encounters and communalization dynamics with this testimony. "The Show" objectifies the War in relation to abjection, a threshold state which, in the midst of historical trauma, also signals the potentially annihilating power of witnessing. As Kristeva addresses the subject in her famous work, Powers of Horror (1982), states of abjection function as "safeguards," the "primers" of culture, visceral modes of intelligence which indicate zones of self-shattering proximity (2). Accordingly, abjection does not have "a definable object"; "abjection is above all ambiguity," that which "disturbs identity, system, order" (Kristeva PH 1, 9, 4).

Abjection in "The Show" takes cannibalistic worms as

objects, objects whose overdetermined meanings indicate the displacement and condensation of several phantasies. My reading of Owen's poem emphasizes the manner in which the overlapping and polarized roles of the trench soldier, commanding officer, survivor, perpetrator and witness serve as the combined and true locus of abjection in this poetic effort. In other words, "The Show" manifests a dramatic crisis of self-witnessing. Clearly, this poetic testimony reveals profound disturbances of identity which are precipitated through successive crises of assimilation and accommodation. Illuminating the severity of such crises, dissociation, a survival mechanism of combat, actively decenters the self-representations in this work. For example, the disembodied speaker remains suspended over the scene until an emotion of "terror" causes him to fall to the ground: "I reeled and shivered earthward like a feather" (Owen 23-24). Kristeva characterizes the complex impact of abjection upon the lived experience of subjectivity as "a vortex of summons and repulsion [which] places the one haunted by it literally beside himself," a description highly relevant to the condition of the speaker in "The Show" (PH 1). The consciousness of the speaker is not unified by his plunge to earth, nor is the repulsive imagery of the poem salvaged by any "resolving irony" (Silkin OB 215).

Related crises are also suggested by Owen's description of his participation in the battle at Savy Wood, the battle

experience which likely informs "The Show." Discussing this experience, Owen writes "when I looked back and saw the ground all crawling and wormy with wounded bodies, I felt no horror at all but only an immense exultation at having got through the barrage" (CL 458).[25] Owen's own retrospective restaging of his traumatic experience at Savy Wood emphasizes the intimate encounter with the death of a comrade as its most exceptional element: "poor old Cock Robin . . . . lay not only near by, but in various places around and about, if you understand" (CL 456). Similarly, death is personified throughout Owen's testimony: "the corpse, the most sickening of wastes, is a border that has encroached upon everything" (Kristeva PH 3). Moreover, in an image which conflates horror, fragmentation and dismemberment, Death and the speaker(s) enact a perverse pedagogical exchange wherein

> He, picking a manner of worm, which half had hid
> Its bruises in the earth, but crawled no further,
> Showed me its feet, the feet of many men,
> And the fresh-severed head of it, my head. (26-29)

The testimony thus ends with the radically dissociated speaker examining his own head, severed from its body in the earth.

In contrast to Hibberd's suggestion that the poet "had to be able to separate himself from the conflict and see it as a whole," then, it is important to point out that the act of

witnessing precludes any access to such a totality (OP 127). "The Show" reveals that the speaker's horror cannot be divorced from his participation. The speaker can never occupy the roles of the indifferent gods, roles evoked in the epigraph by Yeats which heads Owen's poem, nor may the speaker share the lofty plight of Thomas Hardy's "Spirit of the Pities" in the Dynasts, a work which also influences the poem (Hibberd OP 127). Rather, the speaker remains mesmerized before the proliferation of incidents which cannot be situated within any narrative of ethical differentiation or meaningful struggle: "those that were grey, of more abundant spawns,/ Ramped on the rest and ate them and were eaten" (19-20). The speaker is helpless to intervene; his most significant activity resides in the fragmented and self-fragmenting actions of watching, looking and seeing.

The disembodied state of the speaker, however, contrasts dramatically with the poem's meticulous attention to anatomical and topographical detail. For example, the human body and its vulnerability are mapped onto the earth and its inhabitants: the "sad land" is "pitted with great pocks and scabs of plagues"; it has a "beard," and "myriad warts"; it possesses "mouths, or deep wounds deepening" (3, 5, 6, 11, 15). As Hibberd suggests, such imagery corresponds to a "rotting face" (OP 134). Accordingly, although "The Show" initially describes the uncoiling of "thin caterpillars," successive metonymies increasingly emphasize their kinship

with maggots: "long-strung creatures," "strings," "abundant spawns," "a manner of worm" (7, 12, 17, 19, 26). Needless to say, the caterpillars are not transformed into butterflies; rather, these are creatures who demonstrate a "protozoic obscenity," namely, the violation and collapse of all boundaries and prohibitions, combining reproduction, aggression, consumption and putrefaction (Blunden qtd. in Graham 87). The poem certainly reveals that the abject involves "those fragile states where man strays on the territories of **animal**" (Kristeva PH 12). Quite indirectly, concerned only to register his own disgust and bafflement in response to this poem, Johnston betrays a profound knowledge of the nature of abjection when he writes that "The Show" displays "an imagination torturing itself to the point of collapse," in its manner of combining and instilling masochism, nausea and anguish (189, 190).

While the first part of Owen's poem dramatizes the divorce between the roles of survivor and perpetrator, the conclusion of the poem enacts the struggle to reconcile the conflicting and overlapping roles of survivor, witness and perpetrator within the context of his military rank as an officer. The dismemberment of the caterpillar, specifically its decapitation, is intimately involved in the speaker's failure to bear witness to his men (Kerr 209). Headless, the men are without eyes or advocate; their experiences remain inaccessible to the individual charged with the ethical task of protecting them, both physically and psychologically.

Moreover, the speaker's own dismemberment attests to the physical, psychological, and symbolic convergence of traumatic contexts which disintegrate potential recuperative connections between an integrative psychic infrastructure, martial masculinity and an authoritative gaze. The dissolution of the subject in the face of cumulative catastrophic experiences is ultimately signalled by the processes of projection and disavowal which counteract the phantasy of self-recognition staged in this testimony.

Coda: The Civilian Witness and the Ethics of Literary Testimony

After exploring the poetic testimonies of Owen and Sassoon in relation to the dynamics of combat subculture, their contradictory explorations of subject-positions, and the centrality of the death encounter, among other issues, this analysis will conclude by returning to a consideration of the testimonial interpellations of the civilian witness. Many testimonies by Owen and Sassoon simultaneously exclude and anticipate a civilian audience, an unresolvable oscillation which registers a collapse of witnessing central to their experience of War, a collapse of witnessing most powerfully dramatized in "The Show." Rather than being understood as an exaltation of "passive suffering" (Yeats xxxiv) or as a deplorable form of self-righteous "combat elitism" (Campbell "Ethics" 833), the dichotomy between combatants and civilians

which pervades the poems of Owen and Sassoon must be understood in terms of the dynamic interplay between the overwhelming experience of trauma and the process of enabling its representation, however partial, through the literary testimony. In this connection, rejecting the hypothesis of a "civilian conspiracy of incomprehension" (Booth 29), Caesar instead suggests that "one might legitimately inquire what kind of civilian response Sassoon wished for" (93). This discussion redirects Caesar's emphasis: how does ethical relationship, the demand for an acknowledgement of difference, between the survivor and the witness, the combatant and the civilian, both precede and configure their poetic testimonies? As Sommer maintains in a distinct but related context: "this insistence on relationships can, in fact, be understood as the testimonial's goal" (130).

Before proceeding to a discussion of the combatant-civilian dyad as it is represented in Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est," as well as in Sassoon's "Blighters" and "On Passing the New Menin Gate," more general signals of the communicative impasse between combatants and civilians must be noted. Significantly, the trauma testimonies of Owen and Sassoon embody resistance to integrative reading strategies. Combat trauma exceeds the representational resources of realism, for which Great War poems are usually celebrated, precisely because such trauma violates the integrative frameworks which order perception. Ricoeur, for instance, refers to such

integrative frameworks in the phrase, "the prenarrative quality" of human experience ("MR" 142). More specifically, trauma "breaks the coherence of the syntagmatic chain with indentations, fissures, **lacunae**," compelling "the reader to encounter the text and its representations from and in a place that is relative rather than absolute" (Easthope PP 170). Such indentations, fissures, and lacunae dramatize that "it is precisely the unknowable extent to which our statement differs from itself that performs **us**" (Johnson 66). However, it is important to acknowledge that neither Owen nor Sassoon explicitly informs the reader that combat experience is unrepresentable; rather, their poetic testimonies often indict external structures, social or cultural, which resist those modes of representation mediated by testimony.

Traumatic knowledge tends toward the figurative and metaphoric language characteristic of poetry. Representations of traumatic knowledge are heightened through their unassimilable juxtaposition with accepted narratives which structure civilian experience. Such juxtapositions embody challenges to those modes of organization which structure narrative knowledges, as in the example of involuntary traumatic recall in "Conscious": "And here and there/Music and roses burst through crimson slaughter" (Owen 11-12). In "The Rear-Guard," Sassoon's "heap of broken images," presented without discernible sequence or symbolic resonance, anticipates The Waste Land: "Tins, boxes, bottles, shapes too vague to know;/A mirror

smashed, the mattress from a bed . . . " (4-5). A provocative effort to instill shock is achieved in "Glory of Women" precisely through the evocation of shattered civilian expectations surrounding the ignominies of death and burial in the trenches: "While you are knitting socks to send your son/His face is trodden deeper in the mud" (Sassoon 13-14). The departure of the soldiers from civilian sequences of everyday life is clearly rendered in "The Dreamers" where the men pine to participate in banal routines but are "mocked by hopeless longing to regain/Bank-holidays, and picture shows, and spats,/And going to the office in the train" (Sassoon 12-14).

Moreover, the testimonies frequently indicate the complete suspension of narrative awareness arising through prolonged exposure to horror, which involves the rupture of temporal and/or affective sequences: during an attack, "time ticks blank and busy on their wrists,/And hope, with furtive eyes and grappling fists,/Flounders in mud" (Sassoon "Attack" 11-13). In "Exposure," there is no future: "We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy" (Owen 12). "Survivors" actually traces the psychological devolution of combatants through a set of sharp contrasts: "Men who went out to battle grim and glad" are transformed into "children . . . . broken and mad" (Sassoon 9-10). Elsewhere, ironic tribute is offered to the emotional constriction induced by repeated confrontations with danger which have overwhelmed the

mind's ability to respond: "Having seen all things red,/Their eyes are rid/Of the hurt of the colour of blood for ever" (Owen "Insensibility" 23-25). In another example, the speaker testifies to the alarming suspension of affective sequences which govern civilian narratives: "For power was on us as we slashed bones bare/Not to feel sickness or remorse of murder" (Owen "Apologia Pro Poemate Meo" 7-8). The Great War testimonies of Owen and Sassoon reveal what a story bound by a beginning, a middle, and an end, cannot: the "exceptional presences" of these disjunctive traumatic knowledges of combat (Hartman "TK" 537).

The collapse of narrative traced in connection with trauma in these examples is intimately allied with the field of relationships which narrative configures, ethics. It is the function of the external witness to act as a "guardian" of the testimony, whereas "the absence of an **addressable other** . . . . annihilates the story," in Laub's phraseology ("BW" 68). Civilians were often perceived to possess "annihilating" intent by combatants: "cursed are dullards whom no cannon stuns,/That they should be as stones./ . . . . By choice they made themselves immune" (Owen "Insensibility" 50-54). Such perceived "immunity" gave rise to the desire to overwhelm the affective and narrative boundaries of civilians through a process which Shay specifies as the "coercive communalization" of trauma. In this process, the externalization of trauma is achieved through the violation of civilian safety and psychic

integrity (191). As Shay sums up this complex conflation of mourning and aggression, the "audience is no longer made up of listeners; the survivor has made them victims" (191-92). The mode of "rampant grief" manifest in the dynamics of coercive communalization reveals the tenacious and interlocking patterns of repetition and transvaluation which animate the conflicted dyads comprising the Great War's unique grid of participant-positions.

The dynamics of coercive communalization are at work in Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est," where the speaker deploys mimetic strategies in order to situate traumatic knowledge in a narrative framework which will result in the forced integration of overwhelming experience. The sequential ordering of perception essential to mimetic representation is slowed and exaggerated to heighten the haunted affect and temporal dilation characteristic of traumatic knowledge which the speaker strives to induce in his reader:

> If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
> Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
> And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
> His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
> If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
> Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
> Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
> Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,--

My friend . . . . (17-25)

The speaker here attempts to export the civilian into a timeless world of traumatic engagement, characterized by wide-eyed horror and terrorized listening. This testimony fore-closes the possibility of any appropriative identification through a phantasy of fusion which would overwhelm the civilian's capacity for symbolization. Such fusion remains a phantasmatic projection of communalization, however, an anticipatory strategy, highlighting the observation that "the personal myths of the reader are never . . . shattered by reading. Only trauma can accomplish that kind of destruction" (Tal 122). But while George Griffith maintains that Owen merely uses "poetry to exhort us not to believe poetry" in his refutation of Horace, in my view, the manner in which "Dulce et Decorum Est" foregrounds the **mise-en-scène** of the testi-monial act between the survivor and the witness renders the traditional categories of reader and writer the "inescapable subject[s]" of trauma testimony (39). In particular, Owen makes a determined address to a cultural continuum of writers whom he has read, writers ranging from Horace to Jessie Pope, the original addressee of this poem, writers whom he now coercively positions as readers in relation to the trauma which they once actively repudiated.

The desire to achieve coercive communalization of trauma is most notoriously expressed in Sassoon's "Blighters" with

its evocation of an avenging tank turned on a crowd of spectators "who celebrate corpses while keeping them at bay" (Booth 29). The tank performs its "Lurching to ragtime tunes" in accordance with versions of the war in music-hall entertainments (Sassoon 6). This poetic testimony resolves the crisis of communicability between civilians and combatants through the forcible introduction of the death encounter inherent in traumas of combat. The function of such a phantasy of coercive communalization is to **create** a bond of sacralization between the "riddled corpses round Bapaume" and the civilians who participated in the War's social definition, a bond which is otherwise understood to be absent, without a relational context (Sassoon 8). The complex punning of the title, "Blighters," plays on connotations of home, a serious wound ("blighty"), casual slang, and "blight," which involves destruction through parasitism. The connotation of parasitism highlights the understanding of ethical violation which compels this poetic testimony: through trauma, the speaker will transform spectators, those whose relationship to trauma is parasitic, not into witnesses, those whose relationship to trauma is both committed to co-implication and difference, but into **survivors**, those whose relationship to trauma has no immediate recourse to processes of mediation. "Blighters" thus illustrates both the imperative to testify and the difficulty of testifying. Its un-making of ethical relationship recapitulates the repudiation of ethical relationship at the heart of

many traumatic aftermath experiences of combatants.

Almost ten years after the war, in "On Passing the New Menin Gate," Sassoon continues to deplore the civilian response to the dead:

> Here was the world's worst wound
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Was ever an immolation so belied
> As these intolerably nameless names?
> Well might the Dead who struggled in the slime
> Rise and deride this sepulchre of crime. (9-14)

A "pile of peace-complacent stone," a monument, outside all sociality, restages the encounter with the failed empathic dyad, commemorating the failure of the social context to renarrativize itself in the face of the event rather than to affirm its identity (7). Remembrance is reduced to "pomp," the engraving of casualty lists which defy and obliterate individual sacrifice within national narratives (Sassoon 6). The speaker despairs of any secondary witnesses responsive to his anger; he issues no warning or imperative to the reader but rather offers his approval to an uprising of the dead. The monument is interpreted as a form of "false witness" which has the capacity to retraumatize the survivor (Lifton T 139). In this case, the memorial of the event constitutes an appropriation of trauma, a traumatic repetition. "Who will

remember?"--the speaker, then, a survivor, is compelled to bear witness to the event; he must obey the summons of "the world's worst wound" and function as a **living memorial** to the unburied dead, condemning the incapacity of the world to acknowledge the trauma (Sassoon 1, 9). Such a gesture reveals the repeated collapse of witnessing which utterly disables the mourning responses of the survivor. In fact, many of Sassoon's poems achieve their closure through irony; such a strategy reveals the unresolved dilemma of address in his poetry which frequently oscillates between gestures which strive to heighten affective shock in the reader and those which aim to foreclose any appropriative response through the assertion of an unaligned combatant community. Poetic testimony configures meaning-making in relation to trauma, then, as well as enacting contests in relation to its social reception.

Sassoon's strategic uses of irony can be understood as active resistances to mourning, given irony's inability to mediate bereavement (Winter SM 115). Rather than functioning as "interlocutors between communities in mourning," as Winter argues (SM 221), Owen and Sassoon engage "resistance to mourning" as a strategy by which they may sacralize their relation to their fellow combatants, and foreclose the feared misrecognitions of civilian appropriations even as their poetic testimony itself configures their experience in relationship to phantasmatic identifications, and is enacted in quest of communalization (Herman 189). Their poetry retains

this urgent address, its enabling anticipation of an/Other, which is the ethical pre-condition of testimony. Ethical relationship configured by the act of poetic testimony is clearly expropriated in the forcible death encounters of "Blighters" and "Dulce et Decorum Est," poems which attempt to violently redirect the dynamic dissolution of the testimonial act, an act which I demonstrate to be absolutely paramount to the survival and legacy of these melancholic mourners of the Great War.

Chapter Five

Notes

1. This phrase is taken from Sassoon's "Lamentations."

2. In this connection, one critic makes the interesting suggestion that Owen "became an established poet after the Second World War partly because his work could then be contained within a distant and mythologized context of the First" (Featherstone 53). While the iconic status of Owen and Sassoon may now be assured, Graham supports Featherstone's general argument when he maintains that "we tend to read Owen slackly, assuming that we already know what he is saying" (24). Even an appreciative critic of Sassoon writes that his satires may "play into the hands of those who see the poetry of the war as one-dimensional and lacking in any intellectual depth" (Stephen PP 205).

3. The traditional link between elegy and consolation is opposed within the "Preface," a point elaborated by Silkin in "Owen: Elegist, Satirist, or neither; a reply to Dominic Hibberd" in Stand 21.3 (1980), 33-36. Silkin argues that it is precisely the combination of anger and compassion which makes Owen a "complex and powerful poet" (35). Yet, in opposition to Silkin, Hibberd remarks that "to accept the elegiac element in Owen's 1918 poems is not to deny that they contain social criticism, but it is to recognize that their subject is indeed `pity' and that in defining it they make extensive use of literary tradition" (OP 142).

More recently, Kerr bypasses the Silkin-Hibberd debate, claiming that Owen was surely in "grim, covert, antagonistic dialogue with the genre" of elegy, and that his "campaign of disconsolation" was central to his role as a war poet, a role which combined the effects of both satire and pathos (290, 295). These debates on the nature of the elegiac impetus in Owen's work also echo wider debates on the problematic status of mourning specific instances of twentieth-century historical trauma.

4. S. Gilbert (1999) summarizes her own argument as follows: "testimony to the shell shock of the First World War fostered just the literary shock of the new that in so many ways exploded those `conceptual reifications' assumed by the historically consolatory genre of the elegy" (189). It is important to point out the distinctions between Gilbert's very general and undeveloped use of trauma theory, as she adapts Felman and Laub, and my own interest in particularizing the application of trauma theory to this period, through the widest possible range of theorists and avenues. To my knowledge, no other published work pursues these connections.

5. As Slinn declares, "the concept of the performative is now a complex accretion, continuously evolving over the last thirty-odd years from its introduction into philosophy by J.L. Austin, through its qualification by speech act theorists such as John Searle and Paul Grice and linguists such as Emile Benveniste, through poststructuralist critiques by Jacques Derrida and Shoshana Felman and its adoption in rhetorical criticism by Barbara Johnson and J. Hillis Miller, to recent use in poetry studies and a burgeoning appropriation by anthropology, queer theory, and performance studies" (60). Although Slinn mentions Felman, he does not highlight the significance of theories of the performative to trauma scholarship, an area which has begun to receive extended attention. For instance, see Drama Trauma: Specters of Race and Sexuality in Performance, Video, and Art by Timothy Murray (London: Routledge, 1997). In particular, Felman's work theorizes testimony in relation to Austin's speech act theory, building on The Literary Speech Act: Don Juan with J.L. Austin, or Seduction in Two Languages, trans. Catherine Porter (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1983).

In addition to Slinn's extensive bibliographic citations on "the concept of the performative," I would also add Mary Louise Pratt, A Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1977); Tania Modleski, "Some Functions of Feminist Criticism; Or the Scandal of the Mute Body," in Feminism Without Women (New York: Routledge, 1991), 35-58, in which she argues that feminist criticism has "a performative dimension" (46); Peggy Phelan, Unmarked: The Politics of Performance (London: Routledge, 1993); "Gender as Performance: An Interview with Judith Butler," by Peter Osborne and Lynne Segal, in Radical Philosophy 67 (1994), 32-39.

6. As J. Campbell (1999) suggests, "trench lyric criticism has itself striven to become the trench lyric in prose form" (214). In An Adequate Response (1972), for instance, Lane concludes his treatment of Owen with an endorsement of the last two stanzas of "Insensibility," declaring that "the rebuke is, shamefully, still deserved" (163). Similarly, Fussell (1996) cites the same Owen poem as his inspiration in the writing of his landmark work of Great War criticism (DB 266).

The projection of guilt also alternates with its internalization: Caesar (1993) analyzes his own investments in his research in the following manner: "this book is the result of my endeavors to understand my own voyeurism; to understand what it was that was attractive about war poems. Sadomasochistic love, I suggest is the key to such understanding" (235). More recently, at a conference I attended in 1997, a speaker hectored the audience, allying himself with Owen and other victim-combatants, in spite of the fact that the audience was comprised of interested scholars like himself.

7. For instance, Owen's use of half-rhyme has received extensive (and justified) attention, dating from D. Welland's Wilfred Owen: A Critical Study (London: Chatto & Windus, 1978). Interestingly enough, on the other hand, Moeyes describes Sassoon's War poetry as "his least characteristic work--his writings are as isolated and insular as was Sassoon the man: they have no place in the canon of English literature, they are not representative of the literary period they were written in . . . " (265).

8. Compare my hybrid category with J. Campbell's "oxymoronic" hybrid, "the trench lyric": "the trench lyric constitutes a formally conservative, realistic text based on the direct combat experience of the junior officer class . . . . The trench lyric is written from the point of view of a direct observer, and its legitimacy depends upon the putative accuracy of its representation of its writer's experience in the trench" ("CG" 204-205).

9. For a more extended treatment of Owen's relationship to Romantic and Victorian traditions, see Sven Backman, Tradition Transformed (Lund: Gleerup, 1979).

10. For other critical commentary on Althusser's categories of interpellation and ideology, other than those provided by Macey, Silverman, and Butler, see Easthope (1989) and Francis Mulhern, "Message in a Bottle: Althusser in Literary Studies," in Althusser: A Critical Reader, ed. Gregory Elliott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 159-76.

11. Stallworthy's comments in his biography, Wilfred Owen (London: Chatto & Windus, 1974), on "latent or suppressed homosexuality" as a poetic theme in his biography of Owen (141), have generally yielded to a more complex treatment of sexuality in Owen's life and work, although articulations of the relationships between desire, poetic representations, and object choice are often confused. Occasionally, critics continue to balk at the consensus which emphasizes the significance of same-sex desire to scholarship on Owen. For instance, in a dissenting voice, Fred Crawford, author of British Poets of the Great War (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna UP, 1988), declares that "discussions of Owen's `homoerotic tendencies,' particularly in the absence of evidence, frequently border on silliness" (173), although it is unclear what would constitute appropriate "evidence." In a similar vein, Simcox (1987) writes,"we have to be careful not to confuse homosexual tendencies with homosexual conduct" (22).

Although Hibberd makes an important contribution to the study of Owen through his meticulous and suggestive readings of the early poetry, other critics reach more tentative conclusions. In Owen the Poet (1986), Hibberd declares that "the homosexual element in his verse became conspicuous in

1915" (43); in Wilfred Owen: The Last Year, 1917-1918 (1992) Hibberd highlights the significance of Owen's engagement with the former members of Wilde's inner circle (88). Kerr (1993) writes more circumspectly: "the male body becomes established as a central theme of his work, a focus for his curiosity, desire, and pity. And for him the question of writing modern poetry was henceforth never quite to be separated from the question of sexuality" (271). Stephen (1996) reproduces, rather than analyzes, the main terms of the debate when he states: "I do not know if Owen's and Sassoon's homosexuality was the catalyst that worked upon their poetic sensibility to produce their greatest work, or if it was merely one of many features. I suspect it was the former, and that their work can only be fully appreciated if it is seen as love poetry and not war poetry" (191). Although J. Cutbill describes Owen's homosexuality as "The Truth Untold," in his article of the same name (New Statesman 16 Jan 1987), recent work by J. Campbell (1997), and C. Lane (1995), among others, introduces a theoretical component into the effort to address the significance of homosexuality to the Great War poetry of Owen and/or Sassoon.

In contrast to the commentary on Owen and same-sex desire, debates on Sassoon's homosexuality do not focus on biographical speculation, due to the plenitude of available documents and personal correspondence (for discussion of his letter to Edward Carpenter in 1911, see Moeyes 25). However, as Wilson's biography of Sassoon (1999) attests, discussion of his homosexuality remains problematic for many reasons, foregrounding the need for dialogue between scholars of Great War poetry and recent developments in gender studies, lesbian and gay studies, queer theory, psychoanalysis, and cultural studies.

12. For discussions of the representation of same-sex desire within this period, other than C. Lane's book, see "Toward the Twentieth Century: English Readers of Whitman," in Eve Sedgwick, Between Men (New York: Columbia, 1985), 201-17, as well as her book, Epistemology of the Closet; also see "Fear of Flying, or Why is Peter Pan a Woman?" in Marjorie Garber's Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing & Cultural Anxiety (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 165-85; The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde, and the Queer Moment (New York: Columbia, 1994) by Alan Sinfield; Effeminate England: Homoerotic Writing After 1885 (New York: Columbia UP, 1995), by Joseph Bristow; "Post-traumatic Style: Oscar Wilde in Prison" in Post-traumatic Culture: Injury and Interpretation in the Nineties (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1998), 129-52, by Kirby Farrell.

13. For a more detailed critique of Anderson's definition of the nation as an "imagined community," see Easthope (ENC 8-11).

14. As Moeyes states, "a second lieutenant would be in the trenches with his men, know about their living conditions, and one of his duties would be to act as a censor," reviewing the letters of his men (33). While officers enjoyed greater privileges than lower ranks, their casualty rates were much higher than those for common soldiers, because, among other duties, officers were responsible for leading their men into battle.

Owen was commissioned as a second lieutenant into the 14th Brigade, Manchester Regiment, 5th Battalion, and went into the line with A Company, 3 Platoon; a few months later he was shifted to B Company. He was promoted to full lieutenant in December 1917, and later served as a temporary Captain in October 1918 with the Manchester Regiment. Owen won his Military Cross in October 1918.

After serving for a brief period as a private, or trooper, in a cavalry unit, the Sussex Yeomanry, Sassoon was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, serving in its 1st, 2nd, and 25th Battalions throughout the War; he was promoted to full lieutenant in July 1917, just days prior to the submission of his famous letter of protest to his Commanding Officer. He later served as a temporary Captain with the 25th Battalion; the 1st and 2nd Battalions RWF "maintained a policy of aggressive patrolling in no man's land" (Moeyes 36). Sassoon won his Military Cross in June 1916, and was recommended for several other decorations throughout the War.

15. The name, "Tommy Atkins" dates back to 1829, "when Wellington chose this name as an example for the account book of the soldier" (D. Winter 51).

16. By way of contrast to "Dead Musicians," in "The Redeemer," the English soldier is typified as Christ, stoical, loyal, and full of good humour, who is "not uncontent to die" (Sassoon 26). In this poem, the officer does not separate himself from the rest of the party, emphasizing shared hardship: "We were soaked, chilled, and wretched, every one" (8).

For an interesting discussion of ideals of the male physique which derive their complex associations from the traditions of Western art, see Gregory Woods, Articulate Flesh: Male Homo-Eroticism and Modern Poetry (New Haven: Yale UP, 1987), especially "The Male Body," where he describes the figure of Christ as a "reincarnation" of Apollo, and the figure of Saint Sebastian as a "vertically constrained Narcissus," the "ideal patron saint of the male, homosexual masochist" (9, 29).

17. See Matthew 26: 14-25, 27: 3-5.

18. This poem can also be read as a "passport" to membership within the community of combatants constituted through

Sassoon's testimonies in The Old Huntsman; Owen garners his epigraph from the last poem in that collection, which Sassoon addressed to Graves (Kerr 191). In the fall of 1917, Owen wrote Sassoon a letter in which he declared as follows: "Know that since mid-September, when you still regarded me as a tiresome little knocker on your door, I held you as Keats + Christ + Elijah + my Colonel + my father-confessor + Amenophis IV in profile. What's that mathematically?" (CL 505).

19. See Fuss, "Inside/Out," on "a certain preoccupation with the figure of the homosexual as specter and phantom, as spirit and revenant, as abject and undead" (3); Owen's "Greater Love" seems to reverse these emphases. In particular, reversing the terms of Fuss's formulation of "negative interiorization," it could be argued that "Greater Love" seeks to expose "the [heterosexual] as the abject, as the contaminated and expurgated insides of the [homosexual] subject" (3).

20. For another interesting discussion of a poem which may explore "impactions of homo/heterosexual definition" (Sedgwick EC 9), see Daniel Pigg's close reading of Owen's "Disabled" in The Explicator 55.2 (1997): "written in a period of semantic change, Owen's metaphorical `queer disease' contains a jarring resonance that partakes of that diversity of meaning at the same time that it is a victim of that multivalence" (93-94).

21. Significantly, Owen does not excoriate nor satirize senior command and staff officers in his testimonies (cf. Kerr 217).

22. For an account of the relationship between Thomas and Sassoon, as well as an account of Thomas's death after being wounded in the throat during a wiring party expedition, see Wilson's biography, Chapters 9 and 10.

23. Contrast Shay's dynamic approach to combat experience with Joanna Bourke's far less discriminating account in An Intimate History of Killing: Face to Face Killing in Twentieth-Century Warfare (London: Granta, 1999). Her general deprivileging of trauma is markedly undermined by her own claims regarding "the traumatic character" of her research for the book (ix).

24. In this connection, also see Sassoon's "The Dug-Out": **"You are too young to fall asleep forever;/And when you sleep you remind me of the dead"** (7-8).

25. In April, 1917, Owen describes the experiences which led to his eventual stay at Craiglockhart in the following manner: "For twelve days I did not wash my face, nor take off my boots, nor sleep a deep sleep. For twelve days we lay in holes, where at any moment a shell might put us out. I think the worst incident was one wet night when we lay up against a railway embankment. A big shell lit on the top of the bank,

just 2 yards from my head. Before I awoke, I was blown in the air right away from the bank! I passed most of the following days in a railway Cutting, in a hole just big enough to lie in . . . . " (CL 452-53).

PART TWO

VI. Jacob's Room as Counter-Monument: The Cenotaph, Cultural Memory and Commemoration After the Great War

And what can this sorrow be?

Virginia Woolf, Jacob's Room (1922)

Introduction

Sir Edwin Lutyens's design for the Cenotaph, one of the most important and widely recognized British memorials to the Great War dead, was commissioned in 1919 and officially unveiled in its permanent form in November 1920.[1] The Cenotaph, which designates a "sepulchral monument erected in honour of a deceased person whose body is elsewhere" (OED), was an appropriate architectural form in the aftermath of a War which retained so many of the material remains of the dead in its service. But the burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey, a solemn event which also took place in 1920, ensured that an unknown if symbolically nominated corpse also functioned as a key point of ritual for the Great War bereaved. Significantly, Jacob's Room, a fiction which configures the life and death of a British soldier, Jacob Flanders, in relation to alternating registers of presence and absence, is a work which Woolf undertook during this critical period of reconstruction which followed the Armistice. As I argue, the Cenotaph and the occupied Tomb of the Unknown

Soldier function as critical presences, if ostensibly absent intertexts, in Jacob's Room. Accordingly, my discussion poses questions which concern the role of this famous fictional work in performing and engaging the labours of mourning and commemoration in the aftermath of the Great War, questions which necessarily situate Jacob's Room in dialogical relationship with the architectural foci of the nation's bereaved: Lutyens's Cenotaph in Whitehall and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey. All three of these cultural artifacts were situated in a cultural context insistently and variously shaped by social imperatives to ritualize and remember the fallen and bereaved. My own investigation thus supports David Cannadine's claim that "interwar Britain was probably more obsessed with death than any other period in modern history" ("WD" 189).

But in her diary, on the day after Armistice Day, 1918, Woolf recalls the extremes of "tipsy ribaldry" and profound disillusionment which marked the disoriented nature of the postwar ceremonies of the peace: "there was no centre, no form for all this wandering emotion to take" (D1 217). Certainly, the cultural mediation of traumatic knowledge in the aftermath of the Great War was a momentous and ongoing task, a collective task in which Woolf herself was subsequently to play a critical role through her many fictional productions. Among the heterogeneous and contradictory processes implicated in the "cultural codification" of traumatic knowledges in the

immediate aftermath of the Armistice, I focus my discussion on the distinct registers of architectural memorials and fiction, respectively (Tal 6).[2] A comparative exploration of these commemorative media proves mutually illuminating to an understanding of the haunted postwar politics of remembrance. The Armistice most certainly did not signal the end of the War experience but rather "the beginning of a process in which the experience was framed, institutionalized, given ideological content, and relived in political action as well as in fiction" (Leed xi). In light of post-Armistice processes of cultural reconstruction, I question the manner in which the distinct but interrelated media of narrative and monument perform or contest the commemorative work of the nation.

In the wake of massive trauma, Woolf's fiction directs its critique of war through its questioning of the commemorative impetus of both narrative and monument. The novel is even conceived as "spectral architecture," with "no scaffolding; scarcely a brick to be seen" (Novak 104; Woolf D2 13). Woolf's archaeology of funerary ornament and historical periodization undermines the status of the Cenotaph as effective symbol for the sacrifices of Unknown Soldiers (cf. Handley 130). In fact, the novel both names and narrates the life of a particular casualty, Jacob Flanders. In response to this fact, Karen Smythe adroitly classifies the fiction as a "cenograph" (70). By naming and narrating the life of Jacob Flanders, however, Woolf challenges the reassuring consensus

surrounding the uncertainty and anonymity of the Unknown Soldier. Even as the fiction undermines any single narrative perspective on Jacob, it critiques the practices which legitimate and facilitate his eventual status as commemorative object and "iconic presence" (Kazan 702). Unlike the Cenotaph, then, which remains geographically fixed before the spectator, Jacob's Room, an interactive and fluid fiction which often undermines its own authority, may be interpreted as a "counter-monument," a "skeptical antidote to the illusion that the seeming permanence of stone somehow guarantees the permanence of a memorial idea attached to it" (J. Young "CM" 295).[3] Although "monumentality as an aesthetic category is as historically contingent and unstable as any other aesthetic category" (Huyssen 199), Woolf's sustained interrogation of the monument throughout Jacob's Room foregrounds the animating intelligences of active memory-work in anxious repudiation of the "paralyzing awareness of secondarity" typically fostered by "the seeming permanence" of historical artifacts (Rabaté 188; J. Young "CM" 295).

Accordingly, Jacob's Room marks and anticipates the "memorial projections and preoccupations" which shape the dynamic relationships among the reader, the narrator and the uncertain and evolving specter of the doomed soldier (J. Young "CM" 283). Any consideration of the female narrator, for instance, who is ten years older than Jacob, must acknowledge her departure from the allegorical roles women have traditionally

played in the commemoration of the nation, given that her mediation of Jacob contests any unproblematic consideration of his cultural location or inheritance (128).[4] In the words of William Handley, the narrator performs a role which contradicts "the removed and impassive aspect of the absolute epic past that denigrates the idiosyncratic individual and elevates the national group" (131). The narrator's interventions and speculations disrupt and reconfigure the coherence of commemorative practices after the War, practices which sought to secure a unified adherence to the primacy of masculine values and sacrifices (Sherman "MMM" 103). As Edward Bishop maintains, Jacob's Room perpetually "leaves us on the verge of identification"; the narrator exemplifies counter-memorial practices when she encourages the reader to "fill in the gaps and at the same time recognize that they can never be conclusively bridged" ("JR" 148; VW 48). Constitutive of the fiction's very counter-monumentality are its emphases on the changeability of those modes of remembrance which buttress the ossifications and aggressions of British history. In this manner, Jacob's Room exploits the "ambivalent temporalities of the nation-space," addressing the manner in which attention to the displacement or reconfiguration of acts of memory may ultimately engender a complex awareness of the range of simultaneous identifications which must cooperate to sustain the linkages of individual memory, historical nation, and public monument (Bhabha 294). In order to develop my

interpretation of the oppositional memory-work of Jacob's Room, however, I must first elaborate upon the cultural contexts which shaped the two celebrated memorials which continue to focus Remembrance Day services of remembrance, the Cenotaph and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior.

The Cenotaph and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior

According to Anderson, "no more arresting emblems of the modern culture of nationalism exist than cenotaphs and tombs of Unknown Soldiers" (17). Yet, "the competing narratives of commemoration construct and disseminate knowledge about the nation" in a variety of ways, offering "judgements, assigning blame, prescribing obligations" (Sherman "BN" 466). Lutyens's monument, for instance, resists explicit national narrative and eschews apparent political engagement through its adoption of Greek commemorative architecture. Such an apparently apolitical form only "masks the depth of its political engagement" (Sherman "BN" 466). Woolf's Jacob's Room, on the other hand, both interrogates and politicizes the memory-work of her characters, often in explicit relationship to Greek statuary and architecture, as one aspect of its wideranging exploration of Western cultural memory and war. Interestingly enough, though, in another work, an essay entitled, "On Not Knowing Greek" (1925), in spite of her selfconscious description of the imaginative convergence of ancient Greece and modern Britain as an unknowable and variable object, a complex site

of transferences deriving from "incongruous odds and ends," Woolf writes there in unwitting corroboration of Lutyens's design: "it is to the Greeks that we turn when we are sick of the vagueness, of the confusion, of the Christianity and its consolations, of our own age" (13). As the overlapping emphases of both Lutyens's design and Woolf's minor essay demonstrate, the idea of ancient Greece served a variety of projective phantasies in the search for an adequate object of consolatory and compensatory identification after the Great War.[5]

Undoubtedly, then, the design of the Cenotaph indissociably links ancient Greek culture with the tasks of modern cultural and personal mourning. Any close inspection of this monument, then, must also consider that Lutyens's Neo-classical memorial repudiates traditional Christian reference: it is non-figural, non-denominational, minimalist and "elemental" in design (Winter SM 103). Significantly, it is constructed on geometrical principles reflecting the architect's commitments to theosophical views: "hypothetically, the four corners would meet 1000 feet above; all the horizontal lines are radials of circles from a common centre at 900 feet below ground" (Hussey qtd. in Gradidge 77). As Jane Brown contextualizes Lutyens's famous design in relation to his other projects, "the Cenotaph was another mathematical pilgrimage in search of the sublime" (171). Yet, given the associations of the Cenotaph with the actions of mourning and memory, its

linkage with the sublime arguably poses particular challenges to such actions. As Kristeva speculates, for instance, "the `sublime' object dissolves in the raptures of a bottomless memory," it "expands memory boundlessly" (PH 12). Such a simultaneous expansion and displacement of memory necessarily engages both oblivion and abjection. As LaCapra suggests, the terror and elation of the sublime are intimately related to the radical transcendence afforded by the survival of the self-shattering death encounter (HMA 34).[6] Also in this connection, citing Immanuel Kant's concept of the "arithmetical sublime," it is notable that Laqueur describes the mass cemeteries in France constructed after the War as an attempt to accommodate the facts of "stupendous mortality," of loss of life on an unrepresentable scale ("NB" 130). To what extent, then, given Lutyens's own pursuit of the sublime, can the Cenotaph be considered to effect a "transvaluation" of the trauma of mass death and mutilation, complicating any discussion of its powerful conflation of Greek form, mourning and the Great War (LaCapra HMA 35)?

As if to hopelessly complicate this vexed rhetorical question on Lutyens, however, Woolf's own construction of implicit relationships among Greece, the Great War and the sublime also demands clarification. For, in her minor essay on Greek language and literature, she juxtaposes the "sidelong" affective failures of the poetry produced by Owen and Sassoon, a body of work manifestly in the throes of the Great War and

its numbing impact, with the apparently uncompromised responses to the sublime death encounter found in ancient Greek culture: "they could march straight up, with their eyes open; and thus fearlessly approached, emotions stand still and suffer themselves to be looked at" (10). Woolf's discussion indirectly highlights the manner in which "classical republican discourse draws subliminally on the warrior ethos as the very measure of civic virtue" (Dowling 7). Moreover, both Lutyens's memorial and Woolf's excerpts from Greek literature in this essay restage "the primal scene of republican polity," a primal scene which links the nation-state to the sacrificial economies of substitution inherent in Hellenic warrior codes, codes which also played a prominent part in the War memorials of other nations, including Germany (Dowling 49; Mosse 72). By rejecting a figurative repertoire, Lutyens's memorial encourages a diverse array of interpretive perspectives on the Great War even as it legitimates the sacrificial call of the nation to arms in the single inscription chosen by the architect, "The Glorious Dead."[7] With this inscription, Lutyens's monument celebrates the martyrdom of the soldier in the service of the nation. In the "cultural work of commemoration," then, as instanced by the Cenotaph and one of Woolf's minor postwar essays, both private and collective losses are retroped in relation to the centrality of masculine sacrifice (Sherman "MMM" 85).

An emphasis on the unquestionable centrality of masculine

sacrifice deriving from ancient classical societies was most spectacularly dramatized in modern Britain by the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. The "consecration of anonymity" in the selection and burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey aimed to produce a "unity" which transcended "struggles to interpret its history and define its identity" (Sherman "BN" 465-66). But although the name of the soldier remained unknown, other rituals explicitly identified the body with the nation, with a range of specific military engagements, with the earliest phases of the War fought by the British Expeditionary Force, as well as with Christian modes of consolation (Laqueur "MN" 163). The epitaph commemorates

A BRITISH WARRIOR
WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR
1914-1918
FOR KING AND COUNTRY.[8]

The bodies of six men killed in the very first year of the War were exhumed from the major theatres of the Western Front: Ypres, the Somme, Cambrai, the Aisne, the Marne, and Arras (Gregory 25). Although these specific sites of mass death were symbolically incorporated into the national burial ceremony, they continue to defy any dissolution into official cartographies of place. Especially for veterans in the immediate aftermath of the War, they marked powerful allegiances and

unique, unassimilable traumatic losses. Sassoon's responses to a variety of Great War memorials should remind us that many veterans who had actually encountered countless corpses in frontline service were unable to enact any phantasmatic identification with the physical remains of the body, unlike civilians. As Gregory affirms, "ex-servicemen, both in 1920 and in subsequent years, seem to have felt little towards the Unknown Warrior" (27).[9] Their individual, local and communal identifications with place could only be provisionally subordinated to a metanarrative of national loss if they were ritualistically incorporated into the ceremony. Although the body of the Unknown Warrior was reportedly chosen by a blind-folded officer at Ypres, the privileging of this site would elicit little controversy given its repeated significance in major British actions throughout the War.

The combined memorial sites incorporated into the ceremony attempted to effect the symbolic unification of the collective losses and traumas of British nationhood: "men and women yearned to revitalize a decomposed male hero who was thought capable of soothing personal pain and stilling civic strife" (Bourke 211). The body was selected and returned "in a great coffin made of oak from a tree at Hampton Court Palace," which, incidentally, may find its ironic equivalent in Woolf's reference to "a mass of putrid carrion at the base of an oak tree" (Gregory 25; JR 170). During the ceremony, the King served as "Chief Mourner" and "the royal family, individual

families and the national family were all conflated" (Cannadine "BM" 140). The coffin itself was interred beneath the statue of William Pitt (1708-78). Although the burial of the Unknown Warrior beneath Pitt, "the Great Commoner," figured "a community in which social rank had evaporated," such a "projected classless community" actually generated profound ambivalence for elites (Gregory 25; Darrohn 100, 103).[10] Yet given the presence of a physical body, so pivotal to the traditional ceremonies of private mourning, it is not surprising that the Unknown Warrior's very anonymity facilitated phantasmatic identifications associated with the anguished spaces of civilian grief. Simultaneously, through this ritual of burial, the Warrior could be inserted into the overlapping narratives of the military, the nation and Christianity. In contrast to the Cenotaph, then, Christian iconography and symbolism played an important role in the ceremonies informing the burial of the Unknown Warrior. As the final line on the epitaph reads, "In Christ Shall All Be Made Alive," a promise of ultimate resurrection. Interestingly enough, the soldier was even buried with "a handmade crusader's sword that resembled a cross," rather than any modern industrial weaponry (Laqueur "NB" 135). In this connection, Mosse incisively concludes that "the nation represented itself through pre-industrial symbols in order to affirm its immutability" in seeming defiance of modernity (90).

While the Church and the cemetery represent the

traditional social spaces of private mourning, the Cenotaph configured a civic space of mourning. Located within the symbolic center of government and Empire, the public site deprivileges both locality and community, underscoring instead the intimate transposition of nation, monument, and individual memory-work. In this way, loss and trauma are symbolically recuperated and bound within an economy of substitution which aims to facilitate amongst the bereaved "a ghostly intimation of simultaneity across homogeneous empty time" (Anderson 132). In fact, the public demanded Lutyens's design as a permanent structure; it initially attracted 400,000 visitors in the first three days (Homberger 1430). Perhaps the popularity of this monument is explained by Winter's perceptive comment that the Cenotaph "is a form on which anyone could inscribe his or her own thoughts, reveries, sadnesses" (SM 104). In a manner distinct from, but related to, the latter-day Vietnam Veterans Memorial, then, the Cenotaph can be discussed as "a screen for myriad cultural projections" (Sturken 133).

As Winter's description of the Cenotaph correctly implies, commemoration "deploys and organizes not only memory but forgetting" (Sherman "MMM" 84). Even as Lutyens's memorial was designed to facilitate efforts toward symbolic repair, its very design was premised upon a construction of the Greek historical past which served as "a screen on which desires for unity [could] be projected" (Gillis 9). Thus, symbolic repair is always implicated in modes of transference which may

implicate the monument in the fetishization of loss (cf. Homberger 1430). Even as a memorial may serve as a critical emblem which facilitates the working-through of mourning, the same memorial may also function to "relieve viewers of their memory-burden," a burden which assumes great significance in light of the problematic insertion of the artifact into narratives of national legitimation (J. Young "CM" 273). For example, in this connection, historian Bob Bushaway speculates that rituals of remembrance ultimately "resulted in the denial of any political critique of the Great War" because discourses critical of the British nation or its representatives were accused of heaping dishonour upon the dead (137, 160). Privileging the paradoxical link between forgetting and commemoration, Robert Musil charges that monuments themselves inevitably function to deflect remembrance, rapidly repelling attention and interrogation, regardless of political circumstance: "there is nothing in the world as invisible as monuments" (qtd. in Sherman "A" 206). Jacob Flanders certainly supports Musil's claim when he deplores the "intolerable weariness" of "looking at monuments" after he arrives in Greece (187). Surely, it is the very banality of the Cenotaph in the midst of the seething urban centre of London which now calls for comment; as Dyer attests, "over the years, passing by in a bus or on a bike, I have seen the Cenotaph so often that I scarcely notice it" (19).

The Allegorical Work of Elegy

But precisely by exploiting an awareness of the paradoxical and contradictory investments which shape the creation and perception of monuments, Jacob's Room relentlessly returns the burdens of historical memory to the reader. Woolf's counter-monument reconfigures the reader's engagements with modes of cultural memory and mourning after the Great War in a variety of ways. Commenting on the novel's most explicit linkage of War and loss, Jacob's death, John Mepham points out that "the novel ends with the wound of grief wide open, mourning scarcely begun" (152). Similarly, Booth declares that "the narrator has positioned readers in a way that makes ducking the shock of his death impossible" (45). Yet, given Woolf's manifest project of narrating the Great War through the historical continuities which constituted it, thereby dispersing the traces of his death, any shock which is associated with Jacob's demise must arise through the fact that the novel avoids representation of the precise circumstances of his end, a strategy which forestalls closure and compels a recursive preoccupation with the text's insistent troping of loss. Woolf effectively devolves the impact of catastrophe upon the narrative which precedes his death through disruptions, portents, and images which often destabilize fixity of meaning and generally diffuse constructions of character and setting.

For example, the melancholia of unresolved loss permeates

the text and becomes attached to a wide range of signifiers: a melancholy wind, "melancholy papers," the "melancholy" sounds of the Atlantic on winter nights, the "melancholy" of looking at the stars, the "forlorn" nature of letters, which become "phantoms of ourselves," the melancholy of history, the "melancholy tolerance" inspired by extramarital affairs, the melancholy of boredom, and so on (39, 43, 70, 79, 125, 133, 196, 200). Even cottage smoke has "the look of a mourning emblem, a flag floating its caress over a grave" (62-63).[11] The War itself is staged in relation to the violent disruption of pastoral settings, such as "a volley of pistol-shots suddenly in the depths of the wood" (26, 39, 134). When Bonamy cries out Jacob's name in grief at the conclusion of the novel, not surprisingly, natural imagery marks the conscious irruption of the finality of loss: "suddenly all the leaves seemed to raise themselves" (247). In this connection, Fussell observes astutely that the pastoral typically functions as an ambivalent register of catastrophe, "an English mode of both fully gauging the calamities of the Great War and imaginatively protecting oneself against them" (GW 235). Certainly, the carefully cultivated garden cemeteries for fallen soldiers, "vast cities of the dead," attest to the significant need to recuperate pastoral settings after the War (Bushaway 150).[12]

Woolf's construction of gender also bears the decisive impress of catastrophe. Femininity is exemplified in the novel by a fixation on various degrees of unresolved or reprojected

loss. For instance, Mrs Jarvis habitually roams the moors when unhappy, Clara Durrant and Fanny Elmer remain painfully preoccupied with Jacob in his absence, Jinny Carslake becomes a mystic, Sandra Wentworth Williams habitually displaces a sense of lack through her affairs with young men, and Miss Julia Hedge even broods upon the imagined extinction of women altogether. And as one critic quite appropriately remarks, there is a "remarkable proliferation of maimed men in the novel," men who remain the relics of various wars, accidents and disfigurements (Minow-Pinkney 47). Thus, once again highlighting Silverman's diagnosis of the **mise-en-scène** of pervasive cultural crisis, an occasion marked by the collapse of systems of meaning contingent upon the symbolic presence of masculinity, Jacob's Room foregrounds the feminine exhibition of melancholia in the face of masculinity's castrated status.

Moreover, the abiding cultural codes which ally masculinity, military sacrifice, and the nation underwrite the crisis-ridden linkages of loss, trauma and masculinity which Woolf inflects through her constructions of gendered roles. At the opera, for example, Clara is able to experience "the sweetness of death in effigy" through a performance of Richard Wagner's Tristan and Isolde (91). As a result of the performance, "the Queen of England seemed a name worth dying for" (90). In this manner, the opera stages masculine presence through feminine lack: "the romantic conventions idealize a delicate and threatened womanhood, needing strong defense by

chivalric warriors" (Phillips 144). Thus, the imminent deaths of young men in the Great War are embedded in the "widespread nineteenth-century imaginary of triumphal architecture, stable origins and mythic grounding of the nation" embodied in the music of Wagner (Huyssen 201).

Of course, the text can also be discussed in relation to other varieties of loss and symbolic disorganization. In fact, many critics of Jacob's Room foreground linkages between reading, writing, interpretation and loss. According to Roger Moss, for instance, "the book mourns not just Jacob's death, but the death--or distance from life--inherent in the writing of a book" (43). In another context, Makiko Minow-Pinkney declares that the novel is infused by an "awareness of a catastrophic unhinging of meaning and being" (35). And, lastly, to paraphrase Bishop's lively and persuasive engagement with the novel, along with the recognition of Jacob's cumulative losses, the reader experiences the sadness attendant upon the recognition of her own interpellation into ideology ("JR" 173). Notably, all three of these critical interpretations privilege the text's performative relationship to mourning in an allegorical mode.

In connection with this mode of representation and interpretation, Kristeva speculates that melancholia occasions a "necessarily heterogeneous subjectivity" because the divided affective state is stranded between "two extreme thematics" of meaning and nonmeaning, a division exemplified by the alle-

gorical work of elegy (BS 100, 101). Paradoxically, then, the allegorical work of elegy "endows the lost signifier with a signifying pleasure, a resurrectional jubilation even to the stone and the corpse . . ." (BS 102).[13] In light of Kristeva's speculations, a reading of Jacob's Room as an allegorical elegy may attest to the compelling nature of Walter Benjamin's claim, based on his study of German Baroque drama, that allegory is a rhetorical device which "best achieves melancholy tension" (Kristeva BS 101).[14] Certainly, in Woolf's novel, "melancholy tension" is only sharpened by the determined reiteration of the impact of subjective processes on perception and interpretation: "nobody sees any one as he is . . . They see a whole--they see all sorts of things--they see themselves . . ." (36). According to the narrator, Jacob functions as a sign of loss which actually serves our desire to deny absence by being endowed "with all sorts of qualities he had not at all" (97). In this manner, attesting to Kristeva's claims, the lost signifier is endowed with a melancholy signifying pleasure. Within the allegorical work of elegy configured by Jacob's Room, the past and the present are inseparable from projections and revisionary emphases, a melancholic distillate suspended over the question of the interrelations between the nation, the young man, the corpse, and the reader's own ambivalent engagements with memory.

Mourning the Proper Name

Furthermore, the name "Jacob Flanders" signals the allegorical significance of this constructed figure. Significantly, the narrator seemingly alludes to the ceremonial number of men exhumed from the Western Front after the Armistice when she notes that "the flesh and blood of the future depends entirely upon six young men. And as Jacob was one of them, no doubt he looked a little regal and pompous as he turned his page . . ." (146). Is Woolf, then, disturbing memorial practices underwritten by a profound and unspoken taboo, when the narrator effectively poses as "the busy-body who `discovered' the Unknown Soldier's name" (Anderson 17)?[15] Jacob's surname, a portent of mud, rain, and disastrous, if anonymous, mass extinction in Flanders, where "Jimmy feeds crows," is itself a highly-charged site of memory in the British cultural imagination (131). When Jacob is still a boy, the narrator associates the torrential rain with the perspective of an exposed soldier who could very well be lying in the sodden fields of Flanders: "eyelids would have been fastened down by the rain. Lying on one's back one would have seen nothing but muddle and confusion . . ." (13). By 1921, "Flanders" had also acquired other resonances, namely the poppies sold by the British Legion. With this appeal to the public, another icon of remembrance was invested with symbolic meaning. Although the poppy was formerly associated with oblivion and forgetting, it now mediated divided memorial allegiances involving the commemoration of the dead and the

nation's ongoing "obligation to the living," a pressing conflict not formally recognized by the Cenotaph nor by the burial of the Unknown Warrior (Gregory 104). In a variety of suggestive ways, then, Jacob Flanders allegorizes Britain's ongoing conflicts of commemoration.

Most prominently, "Flanders" links Jacob to battles fought in the first year of the War after the German invasion of Belgium. In Bishop's words, Jacob is dead "before he is born into the text, his patronymic already a citation from the text of the First World War" ("JR" 154). While his last name may signify the fact that Woolf's character "dies an accidental victim of the history of others," his first name, Jacob, is also a citation, taken from the Biblical text of Genesis, which recalls the founder of the twelve tribes of Israel, highlighting questions of inheritance as well as the primacy of patriarchal genealogies (Moss 40). In the context of his death in the Great War, then, Jacob's proper name effectively dramatizes the undecidable nature of his simultaneously privileged and deprivileged relationship to the nation. Ultimately, the character serves as an overdetermined object of memorial investment which Woolf must both articulate and disarticulate in connection with the historically-mediated inequalities of Britain.

Also of general relevance to any discussion of Jacob's name is the German cemetery at Langemarck, which memorializes a battle with the British in the first year of the War. This

cemetery coincidentally displays the following citation from Isaiah (43:1): "But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: `Fear not for I have redeemed you; **I have called you by name** and you are mine" (Laqueur "NB" 125). The "commemorative hypernominalism" of Great War memorials, with their endless lists of names, reveals "a powerful anxiety of erasure" borne out of the convergence of the modern democratic privileging of subjectivity and the mass extinctions of these identities occasioned by the conflict (Laqueur "MN" 160; "NB" 132). In the absence of the bodies of the dead, mourning rituals were displaced onto "the inscribed name" as the only available site of phantasmatic identification and investment, a highly circumscribed if publicly visible site which could occasion a wrenching retroping of loss, effecting an "elision of bodies and names" (Sherman "BN" 456).

Similarly, at the beginning and the ending of Woolf's fiction, repeated cries of Jacob's name fail to summon his presence. For example, when Jacob is first called from his solitary play on the beach, we are informed that "the voice had an extraordinary sadness. Pure from all body, pure from all passion, going out into the world, solitary, unanswered, breaking against rocks--so it sounded" (5). The rupture between the name and the individual embodiment of the name constitutes an abyss which undoubtedly engages a parody of nineteenth-century realistic conventions (Phillips 122), an

exploration of aspects of the arbitrariness of language (Minow-Pinkney 31), as well as a concern to address the social determinants of subjectivity as these constitute a locus of interpellative anxiety for the reader (Bishop "JR" 155). However, Woolf's preoccupation with naming in Jacob's Room must also be addressed in light of the historically-specific crisis of mourning and commemoration after the Great War, a crisis in which the links between thousands of names and bodies were severed, and subsequently reconstituted through memory-work which undertook to mourn by "breaking against rocks" at designated memorial sites.

History, Memory and Phantasy

Woolf's fiction displays an astonishing attentiveness to commemorative sites from diverse civilizations, religious creeds, cities, and temporal periods: "at length the columns and the Temples whiten, yellow, turn rose; and the Pyramids and St Peter's arise, and at last sluggish St Paul's looms up" (225). The "piled grey rocks" of Phoenician funerary ornaments are evoked, along with "the tombs of crusaders in cathedrals" (245, 66). In particular, London's monumental accretions, archives, memorial cultures and rituals are persistently engaged, from the British Museum, a "vast mind" which is "sheeted with stone," to Nelson's column, to "the bristling head of golden hair" on The Monument, erected after the Great Fire of 1666, to the "rose or ram's skull" which inscribes the

doorways of Jacob's eighteenth-century rooms (148, 121, 227, 246). Through juxtaposition and allusion, multiple monuments and memorial occasions are effectively engaged as intertexts which effectively destabilize memory, rendering it an unknowable object of scrutiny. However, this relentless attention to the past should not deflect consideration from the manner in which Woolf is actually constructing a retrospective narrative of the Great War through her cumulative and creative engagement with Britain's construction of its national history.

For example, the text incorporates the burning of Guy Fawkes in effigy on Parliament Hill as an anniversary which enables an exploration of ceremony, sacrifice and national identity. Ultimately, Guy Fawkes is an effigy, or copy, of Jacob, who is surrounded and infiltrated by numerous inanimate images of masculinity and other cultural likenesses, such as Julian the Apostate, who died young in war and had "became so enthralled with Hellenic culture that he attempted to restore the pagan gods" (Bishop VW 39). More specifically, though, Guy Fawkes Day is an occasion in the "national Protestant calendrical memory" which commemorates the Catholic Gunpowder Plot (1605) to blow up King and Parliament (Cressy 71). Reportedly, Guy Fawkes was found in the cellars of Westminster Palace, with thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, and he and other conspirators were later tortured and executed. In the twentieth century, the anniversary of this conspiracy serves as a "polysemous occasion," and Guy Fawkes "[takes] on the roles of

all-purpose bogeyman and carnival grotesque," a complex figure of phantasy, projection, and abjection (Cressy 76, 79). In a pointed parallel, Jacob himself is pronounced a beautiful and appropriate object of ceremonial attention at the anniversary celebrations of Guy Fawkes Day. He is wreathed with flowers and grapes "until he looked like the figure-head of a wrecked ship," a metaphor for the nation (100). Just as the fifth of November serves as an occasion of "recurrent reconstruction, re-making and adaptation to changing concerns" (Cressy 87), so Woolf absorbs the anti-Catholic holiday into an opportunity for exploring the memory-work occasioned by the Great War. Although the sacrifices of Jacob Flanders and Guy Fawkes to national interests may be historically remote and ostensibly discontinuous, Woolf contrasts Jacob's passive acceptance of adulation and heroization with Guy Fawkes's dangerous embrace of revolutionary action even as they seem to meet a comparable fate.

The text foregrounds its attentiveness to cultural traces and commemorative media through its construction of Jacob, a construction which foregrounds its own provisionality, like the sculptures of the Greeks, who "never bothered to finish the backs of their statues" (206). However, even before Jacob is described to us, we confront a rock, one which demands that "a small boy has to stretch his legs far apart, and indeed to feel rather heroic, before he gets to the top" (6). In this manner, the linkage between heroism, masculinity and

monumentality becomes established. This pattern of relationships both precedes and configures Jacob's performance of a gendered identity, a role which culminates in his participation in the War, a war in which "great towns--Paris--Constantinople--London" become "black as strewn rocks" (223). Like the stone he seeks to climb as a boy and defend as a young man, when Jacob Flanders stares, not a muscle of his face moves (80). He seems "unconscious," even as destiny itself "is chipping a dent in him" (80, 160, 128). Furthermore, as we are told, "his feeling for architecture was very strong; he preferred statues to pictures" (207). But although Jacob can marvel at the heads of women bearing unbearable weight at the Erectheum, when Madame Lucien Gravé, living embodiment of the "fleshy grotesque," swivels her Kodak in his direction, he recoils into "violent disillusionment," longing for cloistered male society (210). As Handley encapsulates the dilemma, the "contemporaneity" of photography, "like the novel, frames the ordinary, mortal individual, not the sculptured epic or heroic type" (117).

Yet in contrast to living beings and obviously provisional contemporary media, the aesthetic object seemingly excerpted from history is imperishable, and can serve a variety of narcissistic ends, as phantasy, ideal, and mirror. For example, Fanny's "statuesque, noble, and eyeless" image of Jacob corresponds with the "battered Ulysses" housed in the British Museum, a sculpture contemplated in order that she

might receive "a fresh shock of Jacob's presence, enough to last her half a day" (238). In this case, "the beautiful object" appears "as the absolute and indestructible restorer of the deserting object," demonstrating that it is "sublimation alone" which "withstands death" and recurring loss (Kristeva BS 98-99, 100). But, paradoxically, in this regard, the thematics of loss and mortality in Jacob's Room are most effectively conveyed through the fiction's restless itinerary of objects constructed in the pursuit of immortality and timeless presence: sculptures and monuments. Thus, with wry humour, Woolf blurs the boundaries between animate and inanimate objects: "his head might have been the work of a sculptor, who had squared the forehead, stretched the mouth, and left marks of his thumbs and streaks from his fingers in the clay" (157). By constructing a portrait of an artist which is imbued with the traces of the flawed artifact, Woolf highlights the categorical instabilities among perception, reality, phantasy, and creation which shape our ongoing investments in both objects and others.

Notably, to adduce a dramatic example of such categorical instabilities, Jacob's imminent death is presaged by Clara's terrible intuition before the high bronze statue of Achilles, "the sculptured epic or heroic type" (Handley 117). This monument was erected by English women and dedicated to the Duke of Wellington in Hyde Park (233). Walking past the monument through crowds, in addition to Clara's intuitions,

Julia Eliot experiences an intimation of "a curious sadness, as if time and eternity showed through skirts and waistcoats, and she saw people passing tragically to destruction" (234). The statue of Achilles which serves such disturbing visions recalls "the cultural memory of that most magnificent of Victorian funerals, that of the Duke of Wellington in 1852," whose body was followed by a riderless horse, with his boots mounted in the stirrups (S. Smith VWM 2). The commemoration of Wellington through innumerable biographies and national honours served many competing claims, including "xenophobia, modernism, chivalry, patriotism, individualism, classicism"; he crystallized both resistance and anxiety toward the specter of "foreign threat," namely the revolutionary legacies of France and Napoleonic conquest (Pears 218). The uncanny recurrence of the riderless horse at Wellington's monument on the eve of the Great War dramatizes the manner in which historical events may reconfigure the significance of previous commemorative markers. As if to presage the final ironic linkage between the deaths of Jacob Flanders and the Duke of Wellington, the young undergraduate possesses biographies of him in his Cambridge room, along with a Manual of the Diseases of the Horse (48-49).

The return of Wellington's galloping horse signals important transformations in attitudes to death and mourning occasioned by the Great War. By eliciting the futile nostalgia which attended the dreams of a war of movement dominated by

cavalry in the midst of the bitter stalemate of the trenches, the galloping horse also invites revised conceptions of military command in a War fought by volunteers and conscripts. Moreover, the consolidation of English national identity through the symbolic rejection of France under Wellington's leadership was radically transformed by their mutual mobilization against the personified German enemy. More generally, through a series of images linking masculinity with monumentality, culminating in the convergence of Greek and Victorian models of military heroism at Wellington's monument, Woolf carefully highlights the cultural projections which ceaselessly mediate Jacob's identity but cannot adequately mirror his fate. By linking him with heroic norms of masculinity, Woolf ironizes Jacob's iconic status as an object of phantasy and projective identification, challenging the reader to subject classical and military codes of masculinity to active interrogation, rather than passively acceding the burdens of memory to the stone monuments erected in the aftermath of the War. So, in a satirical vein, it is the homosexual Richard Bonamy, and one of Jacob's principal mourners, who appears to have inherited the nose of the Duke of Wellington (214).

In another reference which combines humour and gravity in its conflation of the living and the dead, the narrator contrasts "the immortal quiescence" and "fixed marble eyes" of eighteenth-century political sculptures with active leaders on

the eve of the Great War, remarking that "altogether they looked too red, fat, pale or lean, to be dealing, as the marble heads had dealt, with the course of history" (241). It comes as no surprise, then, that in the midst of battle, British soldiers are likened to "blocks of tin soldiers" who descend "with composed faces into the depths of the sea; and there impassively . . . suffocate uncomplainingly together," like stones (216). Through these images which constitute a broad critique of monumentality, Woolf reveals that Edwardian society and Lutyens's Cenotaph are bound in an inextricable and culminating partnership. Indeed, even Whitehall's monuments are annexed to the war effort, described as a "tethered grey fleet of masonry" (240). In Jacob's Room, Britain is unable to contend with the legacy of its own traditions, and the culture transmutes its burdens of the past into a tragic and circular renewal of "commemorative vigilance" at the Cenotaph (Nora 289).

Monumentality and Modernity

Reflecting on the circular and deadening weight of the historical imperative to remember the past, Friedrich Nietzsche hectors, "what is the use to the modern man of this `monumental' contemplation of the past?" (qtd. in J. Young TM 4). In accord with Nietzsche's indictment of "`monumental' contemplation," canonized culture in Jacob's Room is compared to stone, possessing ponderous weight and monumentality, like

the British Museum, which "stood in one solid immense mound" (148). Power and privilege are articulated in relation to sculptured stone; masculinity seems to take its cue from Greek heroic statuary. At Cambridge, "communal retrospection" instills graduates with "confidence by providing them with an intellectual and moral ancestry" (Soffer 211); accordingly, "great boots march under the gowns" headed by "sculptured faces" (38). Jacob's course of study at Cambridge is almost exclusively concerned with the classics, and his reading is described through military metaphors: "one reads straight ahead, falling into step, marching on, becoming (so it seems) momentarily part of this rolling, imperturbable energy, which has driven darkness before it since Plato walked the Acropolis" (150).[16] When Jacob's essay defining history as the biographies of great men is left out in his rooms to be discovered by the narrator, she defies conventional proprieties by entering there (48). Unlike the experiences of the female narrator, though, Jacob's experiences at Cambridge encourage him to feel like "the inheritor" of the past, of "old buildings and time," of civilizations which "stood round [him] like flowers ready for picking," and historical ages which "lapped at [his] feet like waves fit for sailing" (57, 101).

In particular, Jacob's love of monumental contemplation enables him to feel that "the whole sentiment of Athens was entirely after his heart; free, venturesome, high-spirited"

(102). He conceives of Greece as a shield protecting him from civilization; but although he sits reading overlooking Marathon, contemplating history and democracy, his elite privilege is unable to protect him from "the unseizable force" of history (217). In fact, even as the Parthenon may be "likely to outlast the entire world," the cultural practices which lead Jacob to revere ancient Greece and its monuments over and above the questions of his own age and status are the same forces which propel him toward the War (206). The ancient monuments of Greece effectively efface the cultural traces of its own social exclusions, injustices and animating contests, injustices which also define prewar British society (189). But these monuments only seem to "guarantee permanence and to provide the desired bulwark against the speed-up of time, the shifting grounds of urban space, the transitoriness of modern life" (Huyssen 200). For Jacob Flanders, "the Greek spirit" which functions as a congratulatory point of origin for the West serves as a deceptive refuge from contemporary history, an "illusion" of totality and harmony. Accordingly, the Great War is most powerfully represented in the novel by the image of "darkness" which "drops like a knife over Greece" (245). In the concise viewpoint of Jonathan Bate, this image reveals the War "as a threat to Western civilization and the tradition of Arcadias that reaches back to Theocritus" (160). Even more pointedly and persuasively, Minow-Pinkney argues that with this image Woolf exposes the idea of Greece as a sustaining

Arcadia, an embodiment of "nostalgia for a utopia of the full sign" (32).

Yet the Acropolis, focal point of the sacred geography of Greece, is itself a monument to the military victory of Athens over the Persians in the Persian War in 480-478 BCE. At the time of its construction, Thucydides reproached Pericles for adorning the city "like a harlot," and its costly construction contributed to Athens's losses in the Peloponnesian War (qtd. in Janson 124). Eventually, the Parthenon served five different religious faiths in succession: the Virgin Mary displaced the virginal Athena; it was then a Byzantine Church, a Catholic cathedral and a Turkish Mosque (Janson 124). Its statuary, the Elgin Marbles, referred to in Jacob's Room, were removed to the British Museum in the early nineteenth century. In Jacob's view, the "silent composure" of this monument, which seems durable and immutable, repudiates the mass culture which surrounds it, the "blistered stucco" and the "new love songs rasped out to the strum of guitar and gramophone" (206). However, in spite of Jacob's tentative questionings of Empire within view of the plains of Troy, a site soon proximate to the terrible bloodshed on the Gallipoli Peninsula, the Acropolis by itself remains "inert" and "amnesiac" without the active work of human memory, a site whose specificities have been forgotten rather than a site charged with the ongoing possibilities of memory and reconstructive cultural imagination (J. Young TM xiii). As the narrator questions,

"there was the Acropolis; but had they reached it? The columns and the Temple remain; the emotion of the living breaks fresh on them year after year; and of that what remains?" (224). Emotion, recollection and memory are tenuous and shifting states, never fully embodied and unburdened in the process of transference to the monument or memorial site.

To what extent can any monument actively embody the commemorative impulse which motivated its construction? Like the ancient Roman fortress which has become a playground for twentieth-century children, Jacob's Room actively interrogates the relationships among memory, phantasy and historical change (17). Jacob's dead father, for example, is memorialized with a false epitaph which Betty Flanders thought would serve as "an example for the boys" (15). But his actual worth has become an "unanswerable question"; his voice has merged with that of the church bell in "the voice of the dead" and his memory has merged with graveyard relics in the mind of his widow (15, 16). Similarly, Florinda carries "the photograph of a tombstone beneath which, she said, her father lay buried"; in actuality, this tombstone functions as an iconic substitute for stable or prosaic origins, and it serves her speculative fancies instead (104). However, in opposition to such acts of phantasy and fiction, the ossification of memorial engagement represents another pole of the commemorative process. Scarborough's Aquarium is designed to house a "monster shark" which is effectively diminished and made somewhat obscene by

being viewed and commemorated, a process which results in the ferocious predator being transformed into "a flabby yellow receptacle, like an empty Gladstone bag in a tank" (18-19). This image also neatly satirizes the nineteenth-century prime minister, William Gladstone, whose marble head continues to preside over the conservatism of political affairs in England (cf. Phillips 132).

Shifting modes of memory are also discontinuously attached to landscape, transforming geographies and revealing their perpetual implication in social practices. For instance, Woolf likens the landscape along the Cornish coast to a "screen" (64). Along this coast, a basin has been constructed for purposes of ritual sacrifice, "to hold, an historian conjectures, the victim's blood . . . but in our time it serves more tamely to seat those tourists who wish for an uninterrupted view of the Gurnard's head" (64, 68). This brief excerpt attests to the perpetual construction and reconstruction of sites of memory. Local tourism, ironically linked to the leisured contemplation of an apparently unchanging natural scene, has perhaps supplanted the ritualized protocol of pre-industrial slaughter, a discontinuity which also suggests the changing functions of public stoneworks from rites charged with communal, and even sacred, functions, to the leisured spectatorship of the monied classes. Woolf's detailed attention to landscape highlights the manner in which the natural and the historical may be conflated along with the

living and the dead, the animate and the inanimate. Moreover, the excerpt is also suggestive of the manner in which classed subject-positions engage in distinct memorial practices.

In fact, as J. Young points out, it is only by "creating common spaces for memory" that "monuments propagate the illusion of common memory" (TM 6). At St. Paul's Cathedral, which remains "haunted by ghosts of white marble," the scrubbing woman, Mrs Lidgett, rests beneath Nelson's tomb, "whose victories mean nothing to her, whose name she knows not"; nonetheless, he stands on a column surveying the cityscape (86, 87, 121). Similarly, Old Spicer, a jute merchant, who has never visited the Cathedral, even though he has worked across from it for fifty years, is disappointed after he finally visits it, declaring it "a gloomy old place" (87). Because of its ambiguous memorial evocations, statuary serves the narrator's strategy of challenging readerly expectations; for instance, a decorous image of "a green clock guarded by Britannia leaning on her spear" mediates an account of Jacob's exchange of pleasantries with a prostitute (142). But in particular, Mrs Lidgett and Old Spicer exemplify an oblivion to official sites of memory through which Woolf clearly undermines the correlations between the commemorative imperatives of national or historical artifacts and the actual work of memory they may inspire.

But although Mrs Lidgett and Old Spicer may not bear the burdens of monumental contemplation, Woolf constructs the

vagrant population of London in a manner which links their unique memorial burdens to the primeval past. In the midst of the simultaneous survival of a bewildering array of historical markers and occasions, London serves as an overdetermined landscape in the novel, inhabited by "a homeless people, circling beneath the sky whose blue or white is held off by a ceiling cloth of steel filings and horse dung shredded to dust" (88). The death of public space is signalled by the manner in which the overpopulated expanses of London must be governed by the semiotics of underground travel: "large letters upon enamel plates represented in the underworld the parks, squares, and circuses of the upper"; for many, these sites remain "eternally white letters upon a blue ground" (88). As a result, public spaces are appropriated by street merchants, vagabonds, and prostitutes, like the "old blind woman" in front of "the Union of London and Smith's Bank" singing, "not for coppers, no, from the depths of her gay wild heart" (89). In spite of her defiance of urban temporalities, "the encroachments of business and city life," the old woman is associated with a phantasy of escape from social regulation by being constructed as an embodiment of folk memory, a "guardian of primeval instincts," a mythic construction which coalesced in the Edwardian period (Crowther 106).

Similarly, the "battered woman" who sings at Regent's Park Tube Station in Mrs Dalloway is linked with "the knotted roots of infinite ages, and skeletons and treasure," a figure

whose memory of love and courtship is represented as timeless (106). The street woman, a transferentially-mediated cultural marker in Woolf's texts, registers the contradictions of modern capitalist temporality. As Gillian Beer observes, Woolf frequently explores "the simultaneity of the prehistoric in our present moment" (17). Yet the street woman, the embodiment of prehistoric or primeval realities, is only rendered meaningful in opposition to the commodity-driven urban environments of production and consumption which characterize London. As Terdiman comments, "commodities veil the memory of their production from their consumers, as from the very people who produced them," cutting off the past from the present (12). The street woman bears the projections and burdens produced by commodity culture, which is premised upon accelerated change and increased consumption. Thus, as the novel reveals, women's upper-class fashions "suppress the memory of their own process": the dress "changes; drapes her ankles--the nineties; then it amplifies--the seventies; now it's burnished red and stretched above a crinoline--the sixties" (Terdiman 12; JR 19).[17]

Juxtaposing these ambivalent constructions of temporality, Woolf's narrator displays a refined historiographical consciousness which mediates the fiction at a double remove from the reader. Glimpsing newly-lettered tombstones amidst the ancient monuments of London, the narrator suddenly asks, "but what century have we reached? Has this procession from

the Surrey side to the Strand gone on for ever?" (155). In an act of historical imagination, the narrator transposes the fourteenth-century identity of a pilgrim with a twentieth-century drunk, "tied round with old clouts of clothing such as pilgrims might have worn" (155). Such historiographical play is a pronounced marker of the postmodern novel, but it is also clearly evident in the ramblings and disruptions of Jacob's Room. Woolf's narrator participates in "a modernity that is by definition never contemporaneous with itself, since it constantly projects, anticipates, and returns to mythical origins" (Rabaté 3).

The narrative's historiographical and mediated attention to memory is particularly compelling in a description of Betty Flanders at night in the Roman fortress. She is positioned amidst a "rich accumulation" of ghosts: "did the bones stir, or the rusty swords? . . . the legends on the tombstones could be read, brief voices saying, `I am Bertha Ruck,' `I am Tom Gage'" (183). This Roman camp is presented to us as an archaeological site, dense with the stratified history and remains of a thousand years. On the site, a church, five hundred years old, strains "to hold the dead and the living" (183). On the moor, Tom Gage's epitaph commingles with Roman skeletons and Betty's lost darning needles and garnet brooch, providing a habitat for foxes (184). The site is over-determined by lives and events even as it continues to serve the local and recent memory-work of Betty Flanders, who has

been brooding on her son's reticences in letters from Europe. Betty's unsuccessful search for her garnet brooch in the Roman camp, which was a present from Jacob, ultimately yields to the more complex and painful memorial work of contending with his untimely death in his room, as she raises his shoes in the air, poignantly demanding, "what am I to do with these, Mr Bonamy?" (247).[18]

Conclusion: The Unstable Dynamics of Memory

When we respond to historical monuments, archives and traces, we necessarily engage what Woolf describes as the "deep deposit of mud--memories, abandonments, regrets, [and] sentimental devotions" which characterize the work of memory (205). Transferential relations to the objects we commemorate are inevitable; as the narrator declares, "a profound, impartial, and absolutely just opinion of our fellow creatures is utterly unknown" (96). Although it is "no use trying to sum people up," Woolf's exploration of the life of Jacob Flanders within prewar society configures our own contemporary memory-work in relation to the Great War (37). "Over him we hang vibrating": her unique textual site for postmemorial engagement with the War places commemoration in question even as her fiction inspires complex acts of remembrance by belated generations of readers situated beyond the immediate aftermaths of either combat or bereavement (98). Aiming to catch "the unseizable force of history" within its nets

without being torn to ribbons (217), her novel functions as a site for memory-work which eschews monumental form with its inevitable "trajectory of decomposition" (Winter SM 98). By engaging the successive (re)inscriptions, speculations and processes of critique which constitute the ongoing interplay of culture, commemoration and historical events, Woolf's counter-monument shifts our attention from the reification of memory and its conflation with timeless, static registers and constructed national events. Instead, Jacob's Room emphasizes the unstable and evolving dynamics of memory, dynamics which invite counter-memorial interventions and practices at every stage of the commemorative process, including "the activity that brings monuments into being," the "ongoing exchange between people and their historical markers," as well as "the concrete actions we take in light of a memorialized past" (J. Young "CM" 296).

Chapter Six

Notes

1. Along with J. Young, I view all memory-sites as memorials, and do not insist upon any intrinsic differences between monuments and memorials throughout my own discussion; "insofar as the same object can perform both functions, there may be nothing intrinsic to historical markers that makes them either a monument or a memorial" (TM 3).

2. Also see Gaynor Kavanagh, "Museum as Memorial: The Origins of the Imperial War Museum," Journal of Contemporary History 23 (1988), 77-97.

3. Although J. Young discusses the counter-monument in relation to present-day German commemorative dilemmas, by citing Lewis Mumford and modernist art historian Rosalind Krauss, he highlights the fact that the discourses of counter-monumentality may actually derive from modernist critiques of memorial spaces: "to some extent, this new generation of artists in Germany may only be enacting a critique of `memory places' already formulated by cultural and art historians long skeptical of the memorial's traditional function" ("CM" 272-73). Moreover, as Young declares, his research on memory "is meant to serve also as a broad critique of the memorialization process at large. As such, it should not only add an important dimension to Holocaust studies, but also heighten critical awareness of all memorials, of the potential uses and abuses of officially cast memory, and ultimately of the contemporary consequences that past events hold for us in their memorial representations" (TM xiii).

Compare Young's notion of the counter-monument with Hynes's concept of the "anti-monument": "anti-monuments, whether they are histories or diaries, poems or paintings, or novels, are monuments of loss: loss of values, loss of a sense of order, loss of belief in the words and images that the past had transmitted as valid. They testify to disconnection from the past, and to consequent dislocation, and to a sense of impoverishment" (AWI 307).

More generally, Huyssen asks, "to what extent is the monumental a hidden dimension within modernism itself?"; in his view, "our own monumental seduction" is the Internet, "a monumentality of miniaturization" (198, 206).

4. See Marina Warner, Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of Female Forms (New York: Atheneum, 1985).

5. Greek language and literature had a complex and over-determined significance for Woolf, associated with her relationship with her brother Thoby, who read Greek literature at Cambridge. She describes him as "that queer ghost" in her

diary (275) long after his untimely death (1906), a death which immediately followed their travels together to Greece. For this reference, see The Diary of Virginia Woolf: Volume 3, 1925-30, ed. Anne Olivier Bell (London: Hogarth P, 1980); for this reference, I am indebted to Judith Hattaway, "Virginia Woolf's Jacob's Room: History and Memory," in Women and World War 1: The Written Response, ed. Dorothy Goldman (London: Macmillan, 1993), 29.

Woolf's only formal education was a study of Greek at Kings College, London; she continued her studies in the language with her tutor, Janet Case. For a more extended discussion of her relationship with Thoby and its analogues, see Madeline Moore, "Virginia Woolf and the Good Brother" in Virginia Woolf: Texts and Contexts, ed. Beth Rigel Daugherty and Eileen Barrett (New York: Pace UP, 1996), 157-76. For a more general discussion of the cultural meanings of ancient Greek culture for the Victorians and Edwardians, see Herman.

6. According to Kristeva, "the abject is edged with the sublime. It is not the same moment on the journey, but the same subject and speech bring them into being" (PH 11).

At various moments, Woolf is preoccupied with the sublime in Jacob's Room: "if the exaltation lasted we should be blown like foam into the air. The stars would shine through us" (165).

7. Lutyens's commemoration of the war dead can be contrasted with contemporary intractable struggles over commemorative sites relating to the Holocaust in Germany, struggles which revolve around the memorialization of crimes perpetrated in the name of the nation. See J.E. Young (1997).

8. For the full text of the inscription, see Hynes (AWI 280).

9. See Sassoon's sequence, "The Road to Ruin" (1933).

10. In this connection, in her private writing and correspondence, Woolf seems to demonstrate a marked resistance to "the micro-communalizing of memory" between members of distinct social classes, an attitude to commemorative practices which contrasts dramatically with Jacob's Room (Childs, informal communication). As Darrohn also points out, on June 7, 1918, Woolf describes "the horrible sense of community which the war produces, as if we all sat in a third class railway carriage together"; in her jaded estimation, such a state of affairs "draws one's attention to the animal human being more closely" (D1 153). Moreover, commenting on Peace Day celebrations, July 19, 1919, Woolf sums them up as "a servants festival; some thing got up to pacify & placate `the people' . . . . I can't deny that I feel a little mean at writing so lugubriously; since we're all supposed to keep up the belief that we're glad & enjoying ourselves" (D1 292-93).

More vehemently, in her diary entry for November 12, 1918, the day after the declaration of the Armistice, Woolf freely vents her class-bound prejudices: "disillusionment began after 10 minutes in the train. A fat slovenly woman in black velvet & feathers with the bad teeth of the poor insisted upon shaking hands with two soldiers . . . . she & her like possessed London, & alone celebrated peace in their sordid way . . . . Perhaps the respectable suppressed what joy they felt . . ." (D1 216-17).

11. This passage echoes the language of Woolf's diary entry on Armistice Day, 11 November, 1918, an entry which serves as one of the epigraphs for my Preface (see D1 216).

12. See Philip Longworth, The Unending Vigil: A History of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (London: Constable, 1967).

13. I am indebted to Smythe's formulation of the elegy as "a repeatable paradigm, a model of mourning, for the reader" (65). I am also indebted to her discussion of Kristeva's linkage of mourning and allegory (71).

14. For a moving discussion of Benjamin's own experiences of the Great War, see Martin Jay, "Against consolation: Walter Benjamin and the refusal to mourn," in War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century, ed. Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 221-39.

15. As Cannadine notes, after the ceremonies in November 1920, "**The Times** produced a special, four-page **Armistice Day Supplement**, and the papers were filled, not only with accounts of the ceremonial, but with fanciful essays in which the life of the Unknown Warrior was re-created" ("WD" 224).

16. For a discussion of the local war memorial movement in Cambridge after 1918, see Ken Inglis, "The Homecoming: The War Memorial Movement in Cambridge, England," Journal of Contemporary History 27 (1992), 583-605.

17. Commenting on Woolf's evocation of "a primeval counter-history," Leena Schröder argues that "this `pre-history' destabilizes the constructions of nationalism and Empire that comprise Our Island Story" (330, 331). See "Mrs Dalloway and the Female Vagrant," Essays in Criticism XLV (1995), 324-46. However, I find Ernest Gellner's suggestive discussion of this matter more convincing. Gellner argues that "nationalism is not what it seems, and above all it is not what it seems to itself . . . . nationalism is, essentially, the general imposition of a high culture on society, where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority . . . . in place of a previous complex structure of local groups, sustained by folk cultures reproduced locally and idiosyn-

cratically by the micro-groups themselves . . . . But this is the very opposite of what nationalism affirms and what nationalists fervently believe. Nationalism usually conquers in the name of putative folk culture" (64-65). Thus, according to Gellner, and in accord with the views of Anderson and Bhabha, ambivalent registers of temporality sustain the construction of the nation, which is itself mired in contradictions, exclusions, and projections. See "Nationalism and High Cultures" in the collection, Nationalism, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994), 63-70.

18. Martha Carpentier interprets Jacob's shoes as "a tragicomic image of his castration, the empty phallus, the debris of phallogocentrism" (148); see her essay, "Why An Old Shoe? Teaching Jacob's Room as **l'écriture féminine**" in Re: Reading, Re: Writing, Re: Teaching Virginia Woolf, ed. Eileen Barrett and Patricia Cramer (New York: Pace UP, 1995), 142-48. By way of contrast, S. Smith, citing the reference to throwing slippers at weddings in the novel (JR 234), argues that the final image of Jacob's shoes adds greater irony to previous references to the Duke of Wellington: "the old English custom of throwing old shoes at weddings makes the final image of Jacob's Room all the more tragic: it should have ended with Jacob's wedding rather than his death" (VWM 2).

PART TWO

VII. Specters of the Peace: The Mediation of Traumatic Knowledges in Mrs Dalloway[1]

> Peace is rapidly dissolving into the light of common day.
>
> Virginia Woolf, Diary, November 15, 1918

> How does traumatic knowledge become transmissible--how can it extend into personal and cultural memory?
>
> Geoffrey Hartman, "On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies" (1995)

Introduction: Melancholia and Repetition

How does Woolf's novel mediate the aftermath of the Great War? Mrs Dalloway, "a novel of reverberating ambiguity," raises many questions relevant to the conjoined issues of trauma and mourning (Allan 24). While Mrs Dalloway highlights the manner in which combat trauma problematizes fictional representation, it is important to point out that the novel both critiques and inevitably participates in the contests which attend the cultural transmission of traumatic knowledges. In fact, Mrs Dalloway engages the challenge of bearing witness to trauma on many levels. My analysis primarily concerns the fictional representation of this demanding mode of relationship between the veteran and the civilian, but, once again, I insist upon the active agencies of the reader in

his or her capacity to be engaged as a secondary witness to the manner in which traumatic knowledges are represented. Given Woolf's multidimensional exploration of witnessing, discussion of the novel needs to carefully reconsider the terms of comparison between Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith as well as widen the scope of any discussion of the textualization of trauma beyond the dyad of civilian and veteran.

Mrs Dalloway may be interpreted as a global exploration of the manner in which the complex dynamics of melancholic mourning shape the reception and transmission of trauma in postwar society. Contrary to the wide-ranging considerations of memory, nation, and monument conducted in Jacob's Room in the absence of any images of the Great War memorials so recently subject to ceremony in Whitehall, the Cenotaph and the Unknown Warrior mark publicly accessible commemorative sites in Mrs Dalloway. The latter novel charts the complex interaction between private and public processes which render failures of cultural reconstruction in the wake of the War symbolic rather than literal monuments to arrested mourning. These failures of mourning implicate veterans and civilians, international treaties, domestic politics, as well as gender and class relations. While critics have frequently offered persuasive and trenchant discussions of one or more of these aspects of the novel, my own interpretation foregrounds a wide range of postwar losses in the service of its overt

theorization of Mrs Dalloway in relation to its problematic enactment and figuration of witnessing.[2]

In postwar London, interpretation is the only explicit connection between Clarissa and Septimus, civilian and veteran, respectively, in a text which poses the nature of their connection as its overriding enigma. This discussion of Mrs Dalloway destabilizes the familiarities of their fictive relationship through its exploration of Clarissa's role as a "belated witness" to the traumatic aftermath of combat (Felman 108). Clarissa's mediation of Septimus's death reveals the complex psychoanalytic and social dimensions of bearing witness to trauma, however belatedly or indirectly. Septimus does not reassimilate into civilian life after his war experience; rather, his death disperses his traumatic experience into traces, which are then (re)configured by civilian communities. Such (re)configurations are the objects of cultural contestation in Mrs Dalloway. As Peter Knox-Shaw points out, the fiction engages the "fierce controversy over the plight of afflicted ex-servicemen which held a central place on the national stage during the years of the novel's gestation" (99). Woolf's representations of veterans and civilians, then, which engage issues of trauma, narrative and communalization, are implicated in the political and ethical contests which constituted membership in these social groups in the aftermath of the Great War.

In addition to an emphasis on the "cultural codification"

of combat trauma (Tal 6), psychoanalytic concepts which illuminate the reception and transmission of trauma prove central to an analysis of Clarissa Dalloway, whom I consider not only a belated witness, but a "melancholic witness," because she is unable to engage in any gesture of mourning which acknowledges the loss embodied in Septimus's suicide. Clarissa's inability to mourn Septimus's death signals her participation in a postwar melancholic culture, entrapped by, and unable to acknowledge or ritualize its losses. As Susan Searles also indicates, "despite the fact that crying, sobbing and weeping occur repetitively in Mrs Dalloway, the overall sense of the novel is one of barrenness" (116). In this connection, Woolf's representation of individual trauma invariably implicates a range of collective roles, repercussions, and entanglements which both recall and perpetuate the Great War's constellation of participant-positions. The fiction thus invites speculations on various forms of social resistance to trauma, and the manner in which denial, evasion, transvaluation, and other self-protective gestures seek to ward off secondary trauma (cf. DeMeester 661). Mrs Dalloway explores the complex co-implication of modes of melancholia in postwar society, unmourned losses which lead to repetitive re-enactments of traumatic injury, signalling the importance of the reader's ongoing ethical role in relation to the textual representation of traumatic knowledges.

While acts of empathic witness may enable an individual

survivor to avoid chronic entrapment in trauma repetition, the collective nature of posttraumatic social dynamics, involving constellations of accusation, victimization, complicity, guilt, denial and shock, requires that modes of cultural reconstruction both specify and mourn "haunted objects" in the aftermath of historical trauma. "Haunted objects" may be likened to palimpsests of historical losses which continue to occupy the cultural field and occasion dislocations of identification with, and continuity between, family, gender, religion, and nation, among other modes of subjectivity. Shell shock, for instance, which I discuss at length in Chapter One, remains a "haunted object" in Mrs Dalloway, a stubbornly polyvalent sign, both occasioning its compelling translation into cultural tropes and its defiance of any final fixity within narrative discourse. Furthermore, any consideration of the construction of Septimus Smith must situate him in relation to another trope of return: the postwar "theme of the return of the dead, a return longed for, dreamed of, dreaded, and both physically and symbolically realized in many parts of Europe after the Great War" (Winter SM 18).

But as Tate maintains, the return of War itself remained a devastating threat to postwar peace: "by the time the novel was published, it was becoming clear that further disasters--direct consequences of the war and its settlement--were unavoidable" (170). Tate's observation suggests that Woolf's novel may be read in relation to a dread of trauma repetition

through its preoccupations and representations of postwar life. In the late 1930s, Woolf likens the impending repetition of World War in the "black night" of Europe to a wailing child: "but it is not a new cry, it is a very old cry" (TG 362).[3] This "very old cry" recalls the posttraumatic impasses of mourning detailed in Mrs Dalloway; during the interwar period, peace itself can be considered a phantasm, a "recurring dream that has haunted the human mind since the beginning of time" (Woolf TG 365). Contrary to the claim that "Mrs Dalloway is no ghost story" (S. Smith "RGW" 317), then, in my viewpoint, the novel variously conjures up the specter(s) of the peace, illuminating the War's legacies of loss, which were both personal and collective, obvious as well as incalculable.

(Re)constructing Combat Trauma

Focus on Clarissa's "reading" of Septimus's death has predominated in critical discussion of the novel. Literary scholars have traditionally privileged Woolf's own assertion that Septimus is intended to be Clarissa's "double" (vi). Certainly, as Ronald Granofsky observes, the **Doppelgänger** is common in novels attentive to extreme states of experience: "where human identity is threatened by trauma in a fictional work, the symbolic depiction of the category of number is one way to portray the process" (24). Yet, critics have often failed to acknowledge the discursive contexts which also work to undermine linkages between Septimus and Clarissa.[4] While

there is little doubt that "the activity of the novel . . . sustains [Clarissa's] claim" to an affinity with Septimus, and even "calmly receives our outrage," Beer's emphasis on the convincing nature of their "kinship" fails to consider crucial distinctions between a range of emotional responses, including empathy, affiliation and identification (CG 55). Another critic declares that "the bond between Septimus and Clarissa should be understood as a common sense of victimization by the war and by patriarchal values" (Usui 151). Civilians and veterans, however, require greater differentiation: what are the similarities between surviving the Front and surviving the cumulative, daily repressions of civilian life? Such a general comparison elides the dynamics of traumatic knowledge produced under combat on the Western Front, highlighting the ethical and representational challenges which traumatic experience poses in the process of its translation into narrative contexts.

Yet precisely because traumatic knowledge exceeds narrative representation, assimilation and communalization of trauma for the survivor requires enabling narrative contexts; the witness, then, is crucial to the survivor's ability to configure overwhelming events. Because Mrs Dalloway is a fiction, however, its representation of traumatic knowledge is not configured by the dyad of witness and survivor in the urgent act of the testimony. But Woolf's fictional mediation of trauma is nonetheless implicated in the problems of

translation and transmission which attend the aftermath of traumatic experience. Such dilemmas of translation and transmission are foregrounded by the text's attention to the double-edged nature of narrative in relation to trauma. Narrative may engender tyranny or enable the connections of community. As Caroline Webb discerns, "reading Mrs Dalloway we confront the positive and negative implications of our desire to make sense through connection" (280). In particular, assimilative reading strategies which collapse the distinct cultural locations of Clarissa and Septimus fail to confront the noncongruence of narrative representation and traumatic experience to which the act of witnessing paradoxically pays tribute.

Mrs Dalloway emphasizes the disjunction between narrative representation and traumatic experience in its construction of Septimus. In this connection, as Daniel Ferrer affirms in his intriguing study of Woolf, "this intense squinting of the mind indicates a vision that refuses the canons of linear perspective" (17). The novel constructs the consciousness of Septimus in terms of traumatic temporality: a timeless present, proliferating with dense imagery, metaphor, repetition and hallucination. Combat trauma overwhelms the frameworks of narrative, and the knowledge it produces is disjunctive, non-narrative and temporally dislocated; trauma resists emplotment.[5] By representing Septimus through the "unassimilable forms" of traumatic knowledge, the text

acknowledges the exceptional challenge to narrative assimilation embodied by the veteran (Caruth "RP" 156). Chronology and sequence are shattered and distorted: "the word `time' split its husk; poured its riches over him; and from his lips fell like shells, like shavings from a plane . . ." (90). The troping of secrecy, revelation and transformation is recurrent: "why could he see through bodies, see into the future, when dogs will become men?" (88).

Similarly, literature reveals coded messages to Septimus: "the secret signal which one generation passes, under disguise, to the next is loathing, hatred, despair" (115). He both anticipates and fears narrative, succession, sequence: things are drawn "to one centre before his eyes, as if some horror had come almost to the surface and was about to burst into flames" (18). Thus, the novel reveals the "perpetual troping" of dissociated traumatic experience (Hartman "TK" 537). Affective sequences are absent; he cannot feel. Septimus's identity is without a temporal frame and instead collapses into simultaneous and overdetermined forms: he is a "lord of men," a "drowned sailor on a rock," as well as "the last relic straying upon the edge of the world" (87, 89, 121). Significantly, he is also described as a "giant mourner," who has "legions of men prostrate behind him" (91); as S. Smith points out, such a mourning is impossible to complete ("RGW" 314). Lucrezia's hatmaking can only provide a provisional context of sequence and safety to intervene in the veteran's

circles of traumatic temporality (94).

Simultaneously, however, Mrs Dalloway participates in the process of cultural codification of massive historical trauma through its strategic emplotment of the veteran. Such codification invalidates Karen DeMeester's claim that "the modernist narrative form of Woolf's novel brilliantly mirrors the mind of a trauma survivor like Septimus" (650). Instead, in view of Ferrer's insightful reading, "we might wonder whether the project announced as `a **study** of insanity' is not an attempt to thematize and objectify it: whether this desire to juxtapose does not come from a need to mark limits, to excise, exorcise, exclude" (8). While traumatic knowledge exceeds sequential contexts of understanding, requiring dense metaphorical registers, the reader is also supplied with a chronological narrative of Septimus's life and given aetiological cues to interpret his shell shock. Moreover, the reader is offered a physiognomy and class profile for Smith: "angular, big-nosed, intelligent, sensitive profile; but not his lips altogether, for they were loose . . . he was, on the whole, a border case . . . one of those half-educated, self-educated men" reminiscent of Leonard Bast from Howard's End, who is also framed within conflated class and eugenic contexts (109).[6] In this connection, for instance, William Herman rather shrewdly notes that Septimus is "judged and placed" against the standards of a classical education: "when Woolf describes his reading she cannot resist affirming his working

class status by the notation `Aeschylus (translated)'" (258-59; Woolf MD 115). In spite of Mepham's countervailing claim that Bradshaw is subjected to his own treatment by Woolf's narrative (140), through its symptomatic construction of Septimus in relation to class and eugenic markers, Mrs Dalloway also enacts the process of abjecting the veteran, which ultimately contributes to those cultural processes which work to "[shed] the corpse from the social fabric" (Tate 168).

Certainly, the reader is offered a clear chronology of Septimus's early life and enlistment, followed by an indication of homosexual relationship with his officer, whose subsequent death "just before the Armistice" Septimus is unable to mourn (112). Critics disagree on the aetiological cues provided to the reader regarding the veteran's stipulated madness; while one critic strenuously maintains that his condition is "the direct result of the trauma he sustained during the First World War" (DeMeester 653), another maintains that his madness "cannot be completely attributed to shell shock," but must embrace aspects of "homosexual panic" (P. Smith 50). But as Knox-Shaw deduces, particularly concerning the loss of Evans and the panic which ensues, such an incident constitutes a "locus classicus" in contemporary accounts of war trauma and serves to plot a "paradigmatic case" of shell shock: "at every point his symptoms coincide, indeed, with those listed prominently in contemporary writing on shell-shock" (103-104). Similarly, pointing out the relevance of the

1922 Report of the War Office Committee of Enquiry into "Shell-shock," Sue Thomas concludes that "the language, ideas and recommendations of the Report may be seen to have inspired her portrayal of Septimus Smith and his treatment at the hands of doctors" (56). Thus, Smith's "madness" is constructed from composite narratives, which may also presumably incorporate Woolf's own experience, serving to emphasize the cultural and textual emplotment of the veteran within existing and often implicit interpretive frameworks.[7]

Yet Mrs Dalloway also explicitly probes medicine as an institution which has the capacity to tyrannize through the imposition of narrative. At his death, Septimus retains some awareness of the conventions of the social genre which now define his spoiled identity. His last words before suicide, "I'll give it you!" ensure his location within a narrative which defines his disordered state as "cowardice" and "lack of proportion": "it was their idea of tragedy, not his or Rezia's . . . Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing" (195). The veteran, however, defies any imposed norms of integration and Holmes's response to the suicide is couched in terms of narrative betrayal: "who could have foretold it? A sudden impulse, no one was in the least to blame . . ." (196). The human propensity to impose narrative is referred to as "Human nature," "the repulsive brute, with the blood-red nostrils" (120). Such narrative tyranny is chiefly explored through the categories of Proportion and the more sinister form of

Conversion, both of which highlight the sacrificial economy of the medical profession practiced by Holmes and Bradshaw (130). These aspects of "monumental time," the product of "all the complicities between clock time and figures of authority," constitute a configuration which overwhelms the traumatic simultaneity of Septimus (Ricoeur TN 122). The translation of traumatic experience into narrative contexts renders it uniquely vulnerable to appropriation or resistance by those in a capacity to receive its transmission. As Tal observes, "for the veteran, the price of reintegration is the revision of memory to coincide with hegemony's newly produced consensus" (14). In Mrs Dalloway, though, Septimus's traumatic memory defies such revisionary processes in death.

Also of interest is the manner in which Mrs Dalloway draws upon what René Girard terms a "scapegoating theme," in order to expose medicine as a "scapegoating process" ("GS" 112). Woolf calls upon several distinct traditions of imagery involving persecution or the sacrificial economies of group processes: Christianity, pagan ritual, and Darwinism.[8] Septimus is described as the "scapegoat, the eternal sufferer"; such a representation conflates the trench soldier with Christ in an iconic image of sacrificial suffering purged of aggression (32). Septimus is in fact identified as "the greatest of mankind," who is "lately taken from life to death, the Lord who had come to renew society" in explicit linkage with Christ (32). In this context, he identifies the crowd as

"a few sheep," a highly ironic pastoral allusion reinforcing the Christian topography (33). Traditions of pagan agricultural myth are also alluded to: Septimus is described as "a young hawk," that "hawk or crow which, being malicious and a great destroyer of crops, was precisely like him" (191, 194). Similarly, the War is described as having broken a plaster cast of Ceres (112). Darwinian and Christian tropes are combined: "they hunt in packs. Their packs scour the desert and vanish screaming into the wilderness. They desert the fallen . . . . so he was deserted. The whole world was clamouring: Kill yourself, kill yourself, for our sakes" (117-120). Stranded between veteran and civilian communities, Septimus is constructed like "ritual victims" who "tend to be drawn from categories that are neither outside nor inside the community, but marginal to it" (Girard VS 271). Such a liminal position reveals the significance of processes of communalization crucial to the veteran's attempt to reclaim a role in civilian society. But such processes of communalization are absent in Mrs Dalloway. In Eileen Barrett's trenchant perspective, "the London Woolf portrays not only is insensitive to his suffering but requires his sacrifice to maintain its belief in the justness of war" (26).

Specters of the Peace

Postwar society is not merely unwilling to facilitate a working-through of the personal and collective legacies of

loss engendered by the War, but actually seems unable to accommodate the communalization of Septimus's war trauma. According to Michael Seidl, Mrs Dalloway participates in "modernism's rewriting of our conception of the everyday," wherein "all of the characters partake of a madness similar in kind if not in degree to that of Septimus" (53-54).[9] Such a "pathology of the everyday" is also consistent with my designation of postwar London as a "melancholic culture" (Seidl 57). As Clarissa reflects, her age is a "late age of [the] world's experience," an era that "bred in them all, all men and women, a well of tears" (11). In this connection, Beer also affirms that the novel concerns "the failure of feeling, and the fear of failing to feel, which marks the community of her time and writing" (55). Arrested or disordered grief pervades the novel. However, it is important that combat trauma engendered by a historical limit-event like the Great War not be conflated with structural traumas commonly designated by issues such as the Oedipal passage. Contrary to the claim of Elizabeth Abel, for instance, the Great War cannot be reduced to a symbolic marker which exemplifies the developmental impasses of female oedipalization, serving as "a vast historical counterpart to male intervention in women's lives" (41). Rather, a variety of issues pertaining to the modes of structural trauma which Abel highlights, as well as instances linked explicitly to historical trauma, combine in the novel, attesting to a series of highly fractured subjectivities

within Mrs Dalloway.

Undoubtedly, the Great War continues to constitute a "lieu de trauma" rather than a "lieu de deuil" (mourning site) (LaCapra HMA 44). Although the Armistice has been declared almost five years prior to the setting of the novel, the psychosocial effects of the War continue. Many characters display a range of tactics or behaviours which demonstrate resistances or inabilities to mourn the War. In particular, Clarissa summons up the image of the monarchy in order to express her own phantasy of postwar unity and closure: "the King and Queen were at the Palace" (5). However, her invocation of closure is punctuated by the recollection of the tragic losses of other civilian women of her class: "the War was over, except for some one like Mrs Foxcroft at the Embassy last night eating her heart out because that nice boy was killed . . . or Lady Bexborough who opened a bazaar, they said, with the telegram in her hand, John, her favourite killed; but it was over; thank Heaven--over" (5). Thus, although Clarissa struggles to work through aspects of her own residual losses linked to Bourton, her affirmation of the pastness of the past is interrupted by two vivid instances of women enduring bereavement due to the Great War's historical impact. Lady Bexborough, who opens the bazaar in spite of her calamity, the loss of her son, functions as an object of phantasy for Clarissa, who contemplates looking just like Lady Bexborough in another life, "very dignified, very severe"

(12). Among other issues, this fetishization of public stoicism reflects Clarissa's insularity from the War's immediate effects. However, even her own consciousness of time is altered by the War's historical presence in the most quotidian ways: time is divided into before and after, even as she pauses before the window of a glove shop (13).

Other civilians are affected by the War in a variety of ways. Like Clarissa's Uncle William, some do not survive to see the Armistice: confined to his bed rather than the trenches, he "had turned on his bed one morning in the middle of the War," declaring, "I have had enough" (13). On the other hand, Mr Bowley cries in a sentimental access of emotion, thinking of "poor women, nice little children, orphans, widows, the War--tut-tut" (25). In contrast to Bowley's sentimentality, Richard Dalloway merely sharpens the urgency of communicating his love for his wife by recalling the slaughter of the War, concluding that his life was "a miracle" (150). The majority of civilians in the novel pursue an "illusion of immunity" from the War (Levenback "CD" 4). For instance, Miss Helena Parry is described as "an indomitable Englishwoman, fretful if disturbed by the war . . . which dropped a bomb at her very door," distracting her from her botanical passion (234). In a similar vein, Millicent Bruton, "a spectral grenadier," has "the thought of Empire always at hand" as she undertakes her scheme of emigration (235, 236).[10] Debate is occurring on the deferred effects of shell shock in

the Commons, a debate which itself attests to the belatedness and ongoing significance of civilian acknowledgements of postwar realities (240).

For Septimus, the War continues in spite of the declaration of the Armistice; he hallucinates the physical presence of the dead in London. In Regent's Park, sparrows sing to him in Greek, "from trees in the meadow of life beyond a river where the dead walk, how there is no death" (31). However, this very denial of death conjures a vision of Evans: "Evans was behind the railings!" (31). In another hallucinatory **mise-en-scène**, Septimus's own singing elicits a response from the corpse: "the dead were in Thessaly, Evans sang, among the orchids. There they waited till the War was over . . . " (91). Thus, Evans does not merely signal the spectral return of a singular unmourned veteran, but the horrifying return of the multitudinous dead, who have awaited the peace. Accordingly, Septimus "could not look upon the dead"; mistaking Walsh for Evans, he finds that "no mud was on him; no wounds; he was not changed" (91). Rather than being a "reaffirmation of loss," the dead man seems to repudiate his experiences of the trenches, and by extension, the War itself (Ferrer 37). The hallucinatory specter of Evans acts as a "screen" which enables Septimus to recall the War and repudiate it simultaneously (183); in this case, mourning is not facilitated through repetition. Rather, it is to be noted that "this process of repetition is organized around a figure's

return" rather than a figure's absence, revealing the belated integration of trauma (Ferrer 38). The veteran's perceptions repeatedly recall and retrope the gap in self-narrativization involving Evans's death. Oscillating between states of mania and abjection, Septimus indicts himself as a failed witness to Evans's passing.

In turn, Lucrezia Warren Smith must contend with her husband's distress in virtual isolation. Prior to his suicide, the dislocated Lucrezia, away from her beloved home and family in Italy, is numb and self-involved in the face of her husband's protracted grief and mental chaos. Invoking a pragmatic but rather perverse model of postwar normativity, Rezia reflects that "everyone has friends who were killed in the War" (86). Lucrezia strives to make sense of her suffering, a suffering intimately bound up with postwar realities: "why should **she** be exposed? Why not left in Milan? Why tortured? Why?" (85). As a result of her marriage to a veteran, Lucrezia must also contend with the burdens and stigmas associated with the effects of delayed trauma. In her sympathetic manner, she writes down her husband's disorganized thoughts, and even resists burning Septimus's papers on account of the fact that "some were very beautiful" (193). These writings attest to the veteran's struggle to work through his losses and bear witness to his experience(s) of the death encounter, the chief mourning task of the trauma survivor. Even within the contexts of civilian life, however,

Septimus remains mired in dichotomous perceptions of the world deriving from the participant-positions of victim or perpetrator. Rezia herself escapes such projected constructions just before the suicide: "she was with him" (195).

Accordingly, after Septimus's death by impalement on metal railings, a gruesome death which acts out the horror of the War, we read that in contrast to her previous failures of understanding, "Rezia ran to the window, she saw; she understood" (120, 195). Significantly, though, in the absence of viable aid, Rezia adopts the veteran's compulsive vision of the "trapping roles" of trauma, a vision which comprehends the intervention of Bradshaw and Holmes in relation to the perpetration of trauma: "she saw the large outline of his body dark against the window. So that was Dr Holmes" (Laub "EWW" 81; Woolf MD 197). In the absence of a "social context that affirms and protects the victim" (Herman 9), however, the reception of trauma and the experience of trauma may lose meaningful distinctions: "she had asked for help and been deserted . . . . They had been deserted" (128-29). Not surprisingly, then, in the drugged aftermath of the suicide, Rezia fashions a defensive pastoral phantasy of union and partnership with her husband. When she summons an image of "a flag slowly rippling out from a mast" in order to reflect that "men killed in battle were thus saluted," she seeks to resituate her loss within normative, publicly-mediated codes of conduct and thereby impose a redemptive interpretation on

the tragedy, a tragedy of the peace. As Levenback writes, "what is of importance to Woolf is not the effect of the suicide on Rezia, but the absence of [its] effect in the postwar world" (VWGW 77). Yet, the portrait of Rezia itself attests to the impact of institutionalized failures to confront the War's effects in the postwar period.

Miss Kilman also continues to bear the belated effects of the hostilities, but as a civilian with emotional ties to Germany, she attempts to bear witness to other national experiences of the War: "there were people who did not think the English invariably right" (170). Her personal struggles are weighted with the stigma of her affiliation with a defeated nation, one systematically allied with the perpetrator position in world affairs. In Gay Wachman's shrewd summary of her character, "she's the predator who fails; one can't get much more abject than that" (345). Although Kilman is a civilian woman in England, postwar social configurations continue to be organized by the traumatic grid of participant-positions which polarize Britain and Germany. Kilman's dilemma is complex: "why should she have to suffer when other women, like Clarissa Dalloway, escaped?" (169). Kilman has lost her job as a result of her pro-German sympathies: "the family was of German origin; spelt the name Kiehlman in the eighteenth century"; moreover, she has also lost a brother, presumably in the trenches, a loss which is neither explained nor explicitly mourned (161). Her sense of loss and degradation attests to an

impoverishment of emotional resources akin to chronic melancholia: she likens herself to "a wheel without a tyre," feels "shocks of suffering," and is about to "split asunder" in the face of rejection (170, 173, 172). She is both "a great child" and "an unwieldy battleship," and a clerk feels she is mad, like Septimus (169). When she goes into Westminster Cathedral, she seeks transcendence through God, striving to become "bodiless," to be rid of the external and internal markers of class, gender, and national affiliation which constitute her as an outcast, even as other English people pay homage to their losses at the tomb of the Unknown Warrior in the Abbey, a distinctly British icon of embodied consolation (174). The communalization of Kilman's traumatic losses, however, is not facilitated by any civic memorial.

Kilman's abjection by Clarissa must be linked to more than differentials of class or sexuality. In fact, she is a figure who not only exemplifies "the ghosting of the lesbian," but the ghosting of the defeated nation within England (Castle qtd. in P. Smith 4). In this connection, it may be helpful to contextualize Kilman's abjection in relation to the repudiation of Teutonic origins which had previously inspired many centuries of Anglo-Saxon racial myth in England. In spite of Richard Dalloway's pleasure in being "ruled by the descendant of Horsa" (153), a mythological narrative of origins which commonly served to legitimate Anglo-Saxon supremacy based on Germanic inheritance, "not much was heard in England about

Teutonic excellence after World War I" (MacDougall 2, 129). In short, Kilman allegorizes many aspects of English relations with Germany in the postwar period. In this respect, like Septimus, Kilman represents a specter of the peace, "one of those spectres with which one battles in the night": "it was not her one hated but the idea of her, which undoubtedly had gathered into itself a great deal that was not Miss Kilman" (14). Interestingly enough, when Kilman is described as "one of those spectres who . . . suck up half our life-blood, dominators and tyrants," such a description echoes representations of the monstrous Hun which informed Wartime propaganda (15).

Furthermore, Germany's humiliation was inscribed and enforced by the Treaty of Versailles (1919), and the enormous hunger of the nation after systematic blockades and rationing can be linked to Kilman's insatiable appetite. Notably, in support of my allegorical reading of Kilman's character, Clarissa estimates that Kilman's appetite could be constrained by her allegiances, in that she would "starve herself for the Austrians" (170, 14).[11] Both Kilman and Clarissa are locked in a profound hatred for one another, and each occupies both victim and perpetrator positions alternately. As J. Hillis Miller keenly observes, the German music of Richard Strauss, "Allerseelen," which is sung by the old woman outside the Tube station, signals "the day of a collective resurrection of spirits" (398). However, there is little pretence of any

collective mourning of the dead in an England which has disaffiliated itself from Europe after the War. Disallowed from burying their dead on French or Belgian soil like the English, "the Germans were obliged to excavate mass graves in obscure locations to contain the remains of their casualties" (Keegan FWW 5). In contrast to the British Cenotaph, the German effort to create a national monument in 1924 only produced bitterness and dissension: "instead of putting the dead to rest, the whole experience exacerbated the sense that the dead were still not at peace" (Whalen 185).[12] Even in postwar London, then, Germany remains one of the pre-eminent specters of the peace.

The "violent explosion" of a backfiring dignitary's car is another scenario which recalls the origins of the First World War, specifically, the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, when "the world wavered and quivered and threatened to burst into flames" (17, 18). Highlighting her own historiographical play, the narrator describes the manner in which "curious antiquaries, sifting the ruins of time," will later examine the crowd's apprehension of the dignitary from the vantage of geological time: the crowd will then be comprised of "bones with a few wedding rings mixed up in their dust," but "the face in the motorcar will then be known" (20). History selectively records the appearances of dignitaries and royalty. However, the masses of people which animate and propel events are not a traditional part of such accounts. In

this instance, though, the car acts as a kind of screen memory for the crowd: "something had happened . . . in its fullness rather formidable and in its common appeal emotional; for in all the hat shops and tailors' shops strangers looked at each other and thought of the dead; of the flag; of Empire" (22). The metonymic chain, the dead, the flag, the Empire, testifies to the Great War's absorption into a historiographical narrative of nationalism. While "the surface agitation of the passing car as it sunk grazed something very profound" (22), the passing car elicits the same sacrificial enthusiasm as the recent War: men "seemed ready to attend their Sovereign, if need be, to the cannon's mouth, as their ancestors had done before them" (23). The Great War remains a "lieu de trauma" precisely because it has not been worked through, but rather continues to inspire the crowd's uncontrolled transferences and phantasies of acting out nationalistic sacrificial narratives. In this manner, the Great War "continues to be kept before the reader, its consequences and aura still palpable in Bond Street five years after the peace" (Knox-Shaw 106).[13]

Insulated from the effects of the War in Europe, Peter Walsh, who has been in India, returns to London and feels admiration for the "marble stare" achieved by "weedy" boys marching on Whitehall as they carry a wreath to the Cenotaph (66). In a pointed irony, the next generation already carry "on their faces an expression like the letters of a legend

written round the base of a statue praising duty, gratitude, fidelity, love of England" (66). Walsh threads through the gallery of monuments to "the black, the spectacular images of great soldiers," but he distances himself from military discipline, citing "the troubles of the flesh" (66, 67). Standing under Gordon's statue, pitying its posture, he recalls his own boyhood fascination with the hero defeated at Khartoum; "poor Gordon, he thought" (67).[14] Walsh achieves a phantasmatic identification with the Empire: he feels that "civilization" is "dear to him as a personal possession; moments of pride in England; in butlers; chow dogs; girls in their security" (71). As his stroll reveals, five years after the War, militaristic models of masculinity have been reasserted. Life itself seems to have been entombed with the Unknown Warrior, and "drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by discipline" (66). As Bourke notes, "in the interwar years, attempts to remember the wartime body and to reconstruct a new type of masculinity failed to provide an alternative to either Kitchener or the Unknown Warrior" (252). Peter, who is "dependent upon others," and "not altogether manly," and whose "susceptibility" has reportedly been his "undoing" in Anglo-Indian society, is a character "who must constantly enact hypermasculinity in order to maintain his heterosexual identity in male-dominated society" (MD 207, 204, 198; P. Smith 62). Certainly, Peter's identification with Whitehall's monuments cannot be extricated from his own phantasmatic

identifications with stylized and stoical exemplars of the masculinity he fails to enact, given his own "astonishing accesses of emotion," namely his "bursting into tears" with Clarissa (104).

Walsh's preoccupation with Clarissa attests to the rever berating shock of her rejection, a shock which has still not been assimilated. Even after the elapse of decades, "he stood there thinking, Clarissa refused me" (64). Superlatives and absolutes are repeatedly called forth in his reflections on her: "it was impossible that he should ever suffer again as Clarissa had made him suffer"; "Clarissa had sapped something in him permanently"; "it had spoilt his life, he said . . . One could not be in love twice"; their parting "had mattered more than anything in the whole of his life" (103, 208, 251, 82). He is driven to replay aspects of their relationship at Bourton even as he is apparently on the verge of marrying another woman in India. Apparently unable to work through his transference to Clarissa, he remains bound in a compulsion to repeat the past: "she kept coming back and back like a sleeper jolting against him in a railway carriage" (99). This unmasterable past floats above him and Clarissa like a permanent fixture of their acquaintance: "there above them it hung, that moon" (54). Enthralled by the complex of emotions and associations she elicits, he perceives Clarissa as a "terror" and an "ecstasy" (255). As Smythe correctly discerns, his "invocational speech act creates the figure of Clarissa

. . . her present image is his consolation for the loss of her love thirty years before" (72). The novel's final image of Clarissa, then, signals Peter's profound, unassimilated ambivalence; thus, she takes her place among the Great War's many "ghosts of the interregnum" in the novel's superimposed landscapes of grief (Rabaté 231).

When Walsh falls asleep in Regent's Park, his phantasies of relations with various female incarnations of desire eventuates, unexpectedly, in a vision of an archetypal image related to war, the **mater dolorosa**, the grieving mother. Within this dream, he is sought by "an elderly woman" who seeks "over the desert, a lost son," to be "the figure of the mother whose sons have been killed in the battles of the world" (75). In this vision, the "solitary traveller" walks down the street of a pastoral village where "the evening seems ominous; the figures still; as if some august fate, known to them, awaited without fear, were about to sweep them into complete annihilation" (75). The dreamer here approaches the specter of the Great War, "some [August] fate"; Peter is caught up in an uncanny scene which highlights his belatedness, his unformulated knowledge and anticipation of disaster. The elderly woman stands at a door "with shaded eyes, possibly to look for his return" (75). The "dream-work" employs the displacement of psychic elements, "visions which ceaselessly float up, pace beside, put their faces in front of, the actual thing," and the condensation of psychic

elements, "myriads of things merged in one thing" (74). In this manner, the dream-work has effectively conjured and disguised the unconscious import of Walsh's promenade through Whitehall. Significantly, he is called back, in a repetition summons, to the contemplation of War beyond his initial phantasmatic and "oneiric production" of desire in which "compassion, comprehension, absolution" are vouchsafed to him by a placating maternal figure (Ferrer 37). Yet, the transmutation of this original image attests to his role as an unwitting bystander or accidental spectator, filled with the dread of some imminent catastrophe. Peter's dream betrays the unmourned monumentality of the Great War in London in 1923, the dilemmas posed by the collective nature of traumatic knowledge, as well as the mystery of his own individual accountability or involvement. The compulsion to replay the affective upheaval of the War manifest in his dream reveals the belated personal and social processing of an event which eludes the narrative mastery accorded to it in nationalistic accounts.

The limitations of nationalistic narratives are particularly pronounced with respect to the political aftermath of the Great War: Clarissa "could feel nothing for the Albanians, or was it the Armenians? but she loved her roses (didn't that help the Armenians?) . . ." (157). The conflation of Albanians, Armenians and roses highlights her collapse of public conflict with private consolation, a

pattern reiterated in relation to the combat veteran. Moreover, her inability to isolate the Turks as the perpetrators of the mass atrocities undertaken against the Armenians foregrounds her ignorance and confusion in the face of already intractable dilemmas of accountability and intervention in international relations, another formidable specter of the peace. As Clarissa is dimly aware, the Armenians were "hunted out of existence, maimed, frozen, the victims of cruelty and injustice" (157); the "Armenian Question" testifies to the continuing dynamics of the Great War, and to issues of national culpability. According to a retrospective account by David Lloyd George, Prime Minister during and after the crises of War (1916-22), "the action of the British Government led inevitably to the terrible massacres of 1895-7, 1909 and worst of all to the holocausts of 1915" (qtd. in Tate 156). Under the Lausanne Treaty signed in July, 1923, the Armenians received no effective protection from the Turks. In Mrs Dalloway, Richard's committee is in the process of negotiating this very treaty (Tate 159).

Postwar Conservatism

A member of the Conservative Party, Richard is reported to appreciate "continuity; and the sense of handing on the traditions of the past" (153). He is linked to "the public-spirited, British Empire, tariff-reform, governing-class spirit" of the administration of Stanley Baldwin, who was

Prime Minister in June 1923 (100). Baldwin "expressed a desire to look beyond the catastrophe of war, to revitalise the myth of a simpler, nobler England" (Greenslade 240). Compared to a shop assistant in the novel (225), he was chiefly known for his bungled negotiations of Britain's massive War debts to the United States (Tate 160). His government outlined an apparently "depoliticized conservative patriotism, but one essentially English and rural in its imagery, evoking nostalgic and parochial images of a `golden age' of rural life" (Lynch 19). Accordingly, as Walsh speculates, Richard "ought to have been a country gentleman" since "he was at his best out of doors, with horses and dogs" (97). More importantly, however, when Richard deplores the reading of Shakespeare's sonnets, describing such reading as "listening at keyholes" (98), a viewpoint which meets with Clarissa's approval, their mutual embrace of "a special kind of emotional economy" governed by conservative values suggestively highlights the wider ramifications of policies which were instrumental in British negotiations of postwar settlements which effectively ignored the plight of a country such as Armenia (Light 212).

Although John Hessler appropriately situates Clarissa Dalloway within a "mercantile world view" which previously embraced Moll Flanders, Emma Woodhouse, and other English heroines (126), he fails to provide any nuanced discussion of Clarissa's unique postwar context. However, based on Alison

Light's study of femininity and conservatism between the Wars, I think speculation is warranted on the affinities between Mrs Dalloway and Mrs Miniver, a stoical English character who weathers the Blitz during the Second World War with a cheerful reserve reminiscent of Lady Bexborough, the woman Clarissa "admires most" for her stoical composure in the face of her son's death (11). Light persuasively maintains that after the devastating losses and ruptures of the War, conservatism, even at its "least articulate level," served as "a fertile source of fantasy, inspiration and pleasure," a trend which reconstituted domesticity as "a new locus for the ideal of a continuous and stable national history" (17, 16, 211). In this connection, Clarissa's espousal of a "culture of privacy," as well as her extreme anxiety regarding class discriminations, along with her "minimalist management of emotional and social life," link her behaviours and beliefs with the specific postwar cultural shifts identified by Light (12, 13, 212).

Spiritualism may also be considered an aspect of postwar conservatism in contexts of mass death.[15] As Bourke suggests, "spiritualism was the transcendental equivalent to cremation"; "immaculate bodies" were suspended in a state beyond the "mortification" and "putrefaction" of the heaps of rotting bodies familiar to civilians from images and stories of the trenches (234). More generally, spiritualism was a mode of response to the Great War which explicitly repudiated the finality of death; it subjected the object of loss to a

revised topography, endowing the dead with the presence of the living. According to Cannadine, "if Armistice Day was the **public recognition of bereavement**, the Spiritualist movement, by contrast, was the "**private denial of death**" ("WD" 227). Furthermore, Winter argues that it took collective forms and constituted an important modification of existing concepts of community, given the pronounced "importance of kinship--familial or socially defined--in the process of coming to terms with bereavement in wartime" (SM 30). Although she does not mourn any relatives who died fighting in the War, throughout the novel, Clarissa muses on "a transcendental theory" of unseen life after death, "so that to know her, or any one, one must seek out the people who completed them; even the places" (200). In the same vein, Peter recalls Clarissa's youthful belief that "the unseen might survive, be recovered somehow attached to this person or that, or even haunting certain places, after death" (200). Even in her fifties, Clarissa imaginatively fashions a concept of the afterlife as she strolls through London: "on the ebb and flow of things, here, there, she survived, Peter survived, lived in each other, she being part, she was positive, of the trees at home . . . being laid out like a mist between the people she knew best . . ." (11). In part, Clarissa's creation of "fictive kin" may be understood as a mode of response related to the "[deepening]" of "older languages of loss and consolation" in the wake of the Great War (Winter SM 46, 76). As Winter indicates, after

the Armistice "fictive kinship" constituted "the hidden pre-history of many . . . forms of collective remembrance" ("KR" 47). For instance, when Clarissa "recognizes her affinity to the clerk and war veteran whom she has never met, the moment is clearly meant to signify the multiple transcendence of social boundaries" (Darrohn 101). Paradoxically, however, Clarissa consoles herself with specters; among the living, her empathic limitations are often highlighted.

Clarissa's spiritualism takes its non-denominational icon in the form of her elderly neighbour: "somehow one respected that--that old woman looking out of the window, quite unconscious that she was being watched" (165). The unwitting nature of the specular image consoles Clarissa, fulfilling a narcissistic phantasy of completion, extension, and connection. As Hessler correctly points out, in this phantasy, "the `other' is not historical, the encounter with it not at all conditioned by material factors; it is instead mystical, eternal, ineffable, unchanging" (131). Love and religion, which call for tremendous libidinal investments, exposing the ego to the labours of transference and working-through, call for explicit and external commitments; Kilman's institutional faith clearly engages Clarissa's defenses. Love and religion destroy "the privacy of the soul," a privacy which seems to be generated from a libidinal energy in some measure withheld from its objects, free to circulate because it is ultimately bound by the ego (165). This pursuit of contiguity governs

Clarissa's selection of fictive kin. Clarissa's spiritualism thus both suspends and anticipates mourning; it exposes the limitations of her imagination of community even as it seeks to reconfigure the possibilities for local connection. Her parties are certainly underwritten by her spiritualist creed in that they represent "an offering for the sake of an offering" (159). Yet, these parties can also be understood to effect "the perpetuation of a moribund society," in which the "communion" they create is "momentary" and fleeting, in no way embodying any challenge to an established conservatism which presumes a general social complacency regarding postwar realities (Miller 401).

Introjection and Incorporation

Notably, Clarissa grieves the lack of "something central which permeated" in her personality and her social interactions, "something warm which broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of man and woman, or of women together" (40). Even within her married life, "she could not dispel a virginity preserved through childbirth which clung to her like a sheet" (40). These laments signal a loss of her capacity to broaden her identity through what the neo-Freudians Abraham, Torok and Rand specify as the process of "introjection." They view introjection as "the basic principle of mental organization"; accordingly, obstacles to introjection are understood as "forces of mental disorganization" (Rand "I" 7). Their

formulation is particularly relevant to literatures of trauma because introjection designates "the continual process of self-fashioning through the fructification of change," namely the "ability to survive shock, trauma, or loss" (Rand "I" 7, 14). Introjection involves the continual reorganization of personality in the wake of mourning serial losses; this concept "appears to be a synthetic enlargement of abreaction, binding, working out, working-through, and the work of mourning" (Rand "I" 9). In the wake of historical trauma, though, the combined processes identified by Rand, namely abreaction, binding, working-through, and mourning, may be countered by a complex of forces resistant to these processes, involving repression, repetition compulsion, the death drive, acting out, and melancholia.

To account for ruptures, or transitional gaps in the psyche in the wake of an inability to mourn, however, they resort to the concept of incorporation. Rather than identifying a process of gradual or protracted assimilation, incorporation, which indicates "the refusal to introject loss," must be understood as an "instantaneous and magical" process which aims to preserve a "secretly perpetuated topography" (Torok SK 113; Abraham and Torok SK 125). Highlighting the ossification which may occur as a result of the construction of a memorial, they compare an internal landscape of loss to a graveyard, in which the ego may take the role of the "cemetery guard" (Abraham and Torok SK 159).

Extending the metaphor, Torok suggestively remarks that, "like a commemorative monument, the incorporated object betokens the place, the date, and the circumstances in which desires were banished from introjection: they stand like tombs in the life of the ego" (SK 114). Thus, given their productive conflation of internal and external landscapes of loss, Abraham, Torok and Rand enable a reading of posttraumatic subjectivity in relation to both public and private topographies of mourning. In spite of its global attention to impasses of memory and mourning, to modes of cultural incorporation which repudiate the need for change in the wake of loss, involving shell shock, Germany, the Armenian genocide, the monarchy, masculinity, and conservatism, Mrs Dalloway's most extensive treatment of the co-implication of trauma and mourning must be considered Clarissa's belated encounter with the veteran's death. I interpret this encounter in a symptomatic fashion as a means of foregrounding the combined failures of witnessing and mourning in postwar London.

Clarissa Dalloway: A Melancholic Witness

Why does Clarissa, a wealthy Westminster society lady, feel that "it was very, very dangerous to live even one day" (10)? News of Septimus's death, while it activates fears of mortality and ageing, also recalls a specific traumatic scene from childhood: "always her body went through it, when she was told, first, suddenly, of an accident; her dress flamed, her

body burnt" (241). As Culbertson illustrates, the body's responses to events are "prior to any narrative": "they obey none of the standard rules of discourse: they are the self's discourse with itself and so occupy that channel between the conscious and unconscious that speaks a body language" (178). Significant to Clarissa's recurring and vivid body languages in response to disaster may be a previous scene of witnessing, a scene which only Walsh recalls: "to see your own sister killed by a falling tree (all Justin Parry's fault--all his carelessness) before your very eyes, a girl too on the verge of life, the most gifted of them, Clarissa always said, was enough to turn one bitter" (101). In Abel's incisive words, "this offhand presentation both implants and conceals an exaggerated echo of Clarissa's own split experience" (33). For instance, memories of Sally Seton are also informed by dread of trauma repetition: "a presentiment of something that was bound to part them," as if "she had known all along that something would interrupt, would embitter her moment of happiness" (44, 46). While such dread may suggest displaced affect relating to her sister's death, the displacement of traumatic affect which continues to mark her life, even in middle age, signals the ongoing impact of unassimilated encounters with mortality. Clarissa's incorporation of Septimus's death must be related to her previous inabilities to introject loss.

Clarissa undergoes a highly complex and even elliptical

series of responses to the veteran's suicide. For instance, she feels a fleeting sense of public complicity (243); empathy and compassion are also significant, if provisional, aspects of her response. In fact, her complex reflections in relation to Septimus's death reveal the transferential challenges issued by the trauma survivor to the trauma witness: psychic confrontation with the fundamental facts of existence, particularly in terms of the witness's own relationship to death. As Laub observes, "the listener can no longer ignore the question of facing death; of facing time and its passage; of the meaning and purpose of living; of the limits of one's omnipotence; the great question of our ultimate aloneness . . . " ("BW" 72). Such issues embrace Clarissa's pre-existing preoccupations throughout the day. While she is not placed in a position which requires the reception of oral testimony, nonetheless she must cope with the affective resurgences of unconfronted past events upon learning of the veteran's suicide. As discussed at greater length in Chapter Three, the trauma witness must strive to cope with such transferential challenges in the midst of a simultaneous commitment to co-implication and difference with respect to the trauma (cf. Laub "BW" 58). Yet Clarissa's response to Septimus ultimately gives way to a rapturous mode of affirmation which breaches any such poised contention of boundaries. Her interpretation of the veteran's death can be partially understood as an inability to grieve or confront mortality, resulting in an act

of appropriation implicated in the very critiques which the text launches against those who seek to impose, coerce, or confine a particular narrative understanding on those subject to traumatic knowledges. In fact, in Clarissa's response, the defensive processes engaged by the resistance to trauma are successively activated and rendered apparent.

The traces of Septimus's trauma are confronted with immediate resistance and shock: "Oh! thought Clarissa, in the middle of my party, here's death" (240). As Tate wryly observes, however, "the **idea** of death might have entered her party, but its physical presence remains elsewhere" (164). The idea of death at a party is out of any expected sequence and presents obstacles to narration and accommodation. Clarissa seeks out the Prime Minister and Lady Bruton, a search which reenacts and affirms an archaic sense of abandonment: "there was nobody" (241). Such a sense of abandonment combines with a sense of narcissistic injury related to the disruption of her party. Her initial shock then modulates into prohibitive outrage and anger: "what business had the Bradshaws to talk of death at her party?" (241). Loss is then troped, rendered figurative as a shilling thrown into the Serpentine (241). The mortality of her own generation is uppermost in her mind: "they would grow old" (241). In quick succession, she confronts topographies of loss in superimposed dimensions, even reenacting the crisis engendered by Lady's Bruton's exclusion earlier in the day which "made the moment in which she had

stood shiver, as a plant on the riverbed feels the shock of a passing oar and shivers" (38). The experience of time, after subjection to shock, dilates, introduces a gap in the ability to emplot the life story, given other successively unmourned losses. Thus, a sense of abandonment leads very quickly to Clarissa's meditations on death: "she feared time itself, and read on Lady Bruton's face, as if it had been a dial cut in impassive stone, the dwindling of life" (38). She succumbs fully to a state of unmediated lack, identifying herself as "shrivelled, aged, breastless" (39). The attic room with its bed anticipates her coffin: "narrower and narrower would her bed be" (40). No resolution has occurred with respect to some liminal or transitional passage, as revealed through her literal hesitation: she felt "as she stood hesitating one moment on the threshold of her drawing-room, an exquisite suspense, such as might stay a diver before plunging" (39).

At this point, it is useful to recall Santner's discussion of "narrative fetishism" in terms which apply most explicitly to Clarissa's formulation of the veteran's death: it is "a strategy of undoing, in fantasy, the need for mourning by simulating a condition of intactness, typically by situating the site and origin of loss elsewhere" (PLR 144). In fact, Clarissa's narrative of the veteran's suicide repudiates the necessity for grief; rather than representing a loss, his death symbolizes an apotheosis of defiance, communication, consummation (241-42). Clarissa's transvaluation of trauma

configures her linkage of death and the sublime: "death was an attempt to communicate, people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them . . ." (242). Such a transvaluation leads to Clarissa's explicit affirmation of the suicide, signalling its status as narrative fetishization: "but what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him--the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away while they went on living" (244). Clarissa's substitution of herself for the veteran reveals the imperilled status of traumatic knowledge subject to narcissistic implosion.

The Great War does not play any part in her speculations, even though she is informed, "`he had been in the army'" (240). As is consistent with Santner's account of "narrative fetishism," the site and origin of loss is situated elsewhere. Bradshaw's tyranny, his capacity to "[force the] soul" is indicted, even though she is responsible for inviting the doctor to her party (242). She also relates the site of loss to some structural trauma, the child's transition to adulthood, which instills some originary sense of abandonment, "the terror," or "the overwhelming incapacity," "this life, to be lived to the end" (242). Her first question as to the motivation for the suicide, "but why had he done it?" is transformed to, "had he plunged holding his treasure?" (241, 242). Such thinking is explicitly redemptive. The "treasure" Clarissa envisions relates to her experiences at Bourton, her

creed on the necessary "privacy of the soul," which inevitably links death and the sublime: "`If it were now to die, 'twere now to be most happy'" (242). Thus, "even as Mrs Dalloway refers, with biting irony, to scapegoat mythology, it depends on it for its own dramatic structure" (Darrohn 102). The chain of associations which equates death and preservation reveals that "Septimus's suicide consolidates the society he leaves behind, creating a greater sense of belonging at Clarissa's party" (Squier 117). Clarissa's narrative fetishization of an untimely death is suggestive of a complex evasion of, and entrapment in, grief. In Mark Spilka's opinion, an opinion supported throughout my own analysis, Clarissa fails to enter into "any confrontation at all of that unworked burden of grieving, loss, defilement, guilt, and anger which her hapless double has had to bear for her, and of that telltale inability to feel which makes her own defense of the soul's privacy so suspect" (73).

The dynamics of Clarissa's response to the veteran's suicide raise general questions concerning the role of ego boundaries in Mrs Dalloway. As Walsh reflects after his imaginative pursuit as a "romantic buccaneer" through the streets of London, "one makes up the better part of life . . . all this one could never share--it smashed to atoms" (70). During such an enactment of phantasy, Walsh, in a manner similar to Clarissa, explores the fundamental investment of subjectivity in its own narrative positions, its own

interpretive acts. In Ricoeur's view, appropriation is not a "taking possession" but a "divestiture" of the ego through the act of reading ("A" 95). Jean Wyatt's perspective on the novel, for instance, corresponds with this view: "[Clarissa] emerges from fusion with Septimus radiant with new vitality and expanded awareness" (125). Certainly, the act of bearing witness to the trauma survivor will involve a demanding affective exchange; such exchange, however, requires the witness's ongoing achievement of a recursive and reflexive self-awareness. Fusion, exemplified in Clarissa's response, displaces any encounter with difference. In my view, then, the issue of ethical engagement with the traumatic experience of the veteran is not adequately addressed in an emphasis on the interpretive interchangeability of narrative positions.

Where is the alterity, the "**affront to understanding**" embodied by traumatic experience to be found in Clarissa's response (Caruth "RP" 154)? In fact, affinities, echoes, and chains of imagery throughout the text link Clarissa with Septimus. Clarissa's bodily imagining of his death actually heightens our knowledge of the suicide (Tate 478). But, as Webb points out, many of the text's other characters are implicated in the chains of imagery they share: "Woolf's narrative interweaving challenges the exclusive parallel she has invited us to construct" (290). Despite this textual mode of communalization, during his distress, Septimus has no consistent or responsive witness. Before his suicide, the

beating of his heart echoes the funeral dirge from Cymbeline, "Fear no more" (182).[16] And after death, his "belated witness," Clarissa, does not function as a "guardian" of his testimonial act (Laub "BW" 58). Rather, the veteran functions as an enabling narrative context for existing social arrangements. Clarissa's meditations on Septimus's death require contextualization in relation to the struggle of veterans to achieve communalization of their trauma. Her reactions to the suicide transform the unassimilable aspects of traumatic knowledge into "forms of mediation" for her own subjectivity (Steedman 108). Clarissa's endorsement of his death affirms the "privacy of the soul" against the incursions of coercive narrative, even as her response translates the alterity of his traumatic experience into the terms of her own narrated self-identity.

Although S. Smith makes an interesting argument when she asserts that "Clarissa serves as an example of non-pathological mourning that does not depend upon Freud's formula of the ultimate freedom of the ego from the lost love object" ("RGW" 316), it remains clear that Clarissa's melancholic preoccupations dominate her psychological life. In particular, memories of Bourton are revisited throughout the day, a topographical site which continues to denote the shared psychological entrapment of Clarissa and her peers in the past (cf. P. Smith 63). In a general sense, the novel's simultaneous evocation of Bourton and the Great War as memory-sites which continue to entrap the characters attests to its complex

evocation of overlapping configurations of loss. Bourton, a pastoral site which recalls passages of structural trauma, disruption and fixation, precedes the historical trauma of the Great War, but continues to inform the perceptions of the latter event. The prominence of Bourton in Woolf's narrative of aftermath also registers the collective significance of idylls of rural life in the consolidation of conservative postwar politics. In this manner, Mrs Dalloway addresses the complex interpenetration of contexts which inform postwar failures to acknowledge the losses of the War.

Conclusion: The Dilemmas of Reception

Without explicitly naming the War, Walsh muses that "those five years--1918 to 1923--had been, he suspected, somehow very important" (77). As Mrs Dalloway dramatizes in such a compelling fashion, the Armistice by no means signalled the end of the War experience. When Richard Dalloway contemplates the War dead, "thousands of poor chaps, with all their lives before them, shovelled together," he reflects that, in spite of the halting of traffic for the laying of a wreath, the War dead, whose ranks Septimus has joined, are already "half forgotten" (150). So too, in Mrs Dalloway, veterans are "half forgotten": the narrative's complex interweaving of the issues of individuality and universality affirms but ultimately collapses difference between the veteran and civilian communities (Miller 392). Alternately, Booth concludes that

the novel has both cautionary and exemplary status with respect to its representation of civilian-veteran relations: "civilians can at least begin to approach the experience of war by directing imaginative energy toward it. The suggestion is modest but honest: to claim access to more would be presumptuous" (168). Yet Clarissa's own presumptuous claims regarding the veteran enable the reader to witness her failure to sustain the transferential challenges involved in the affective and ethical stance of bearing witness to trauma. Similarly, critical practices which conflate the incommensurable experiences of veterans and civilians cannot commemorate trauma's resistances to narrative and understanding and may constitute a form of "false witness" (Lifton T 142). Because of its textualization of traumatic experience, then, Mrs Dalloway, which conjures the many specters of the peace prior to the Second World War, specters variously associated with the returning figure of the shell-shocked veteran, foregrounds the ongoing and difficult role of the reader in configuring ethical contexts for the narrative's translation and transmission of traumatic knowledges.

Chapter Seven

Notes

1. This chapter is a significantly revised and expanded version of an earlier essay, "Veterans and Civilians: The Mediation of Traumatic Knowledge in Mrs Dalloway," published in Virginia Woolf and Communities: Selected Papers From the Eighth Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf, ed. Laura Davis and Jeanette McVicker (New York: Pace UP, 1999).

2. For example, on the construction of Septimus and on relations between veterans and civilians, see Suzette Henke, "Virginia Woolf's Septimus Smith: An Analysis of `Paraphrenia' and the Schizophrenic Use of Language," Literature and Psychology 31.4 (1981), 13-23; Thomas (1987), Ferrer (1990), Greenslade (1994), Knox-Shaw (1995), Booth (1996), and DeMeester (1998); on international and domestic politics, see Tate (1998); on race and/or class, see Hessler (1990), Phillips (1994), Allan (1995), Schroder (1995), and Darrohn (1996); on gender and sexuality, see Emily Jenson, "Clarissa Dalloway's Respectable Suicide," in Virginia Woolf: A Feminist Slant, ed. Jane Marcus (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1983), 162-79; Abel (1989), Wyatt (1986), P. Smith (1997), and Wachman (1997), among others; for general considerations of Woolf and mourning, see Spilka (1980), Mepham (1983), Smythe (1992) and S. Smith (1995). Also see Laura A. Smith, "Who do We Think Clarissa Dalloway is Anyway? Research into Seventy Years of Woolf Criticism," in Re: Reading, Re: Writing, Re: Teaching Virginia Woolf, ed. Eileen Barrett and Patricia Cramer (New York: Pace UP, 1995), 215-21.

3. I am indebted to Searles's discussion, in spite of its distinct emphases, for recalling this reference to me from Three Guineas (118).

4. For an alternate discussion of the Septimus-Clarissa dyad in Mrs Dalloway, see Ferrer; he engages the Freudian concept of the double, "a substitute who has ceased to reassure," a "conjuring of death," in relation to Woolf's memoir, "A Sketch of the Past" (12).

5. Contrary to DeMeester, I would avoid any conflation of modernism and shell shock, as when she claims, "the ultimate paradigm of the trauma survivor and hence modernist man emerged in the aftermath of the First World War--the shell-shocked war veteran" (652).

6. While Greenslade (1994) also compares Howard's End and Mrs Dalloway, contrary to my own qualified position on the novel's simultaneous critique and deployment of eugenic discourses, he concludes rather dramatically that "no novelist before [Woolf]

had exposed this value system as clear-sightedly and rigorously; none, significantly, after her. In this respect Mrs Dalloway is both the first and the last fiction to deconstruct the fictions of degeneration" (228).

7. On the question of biography, I am in agreement with Ferrer when he notes that, "contrary to appearances, to bring the figure of the author in here is not an easy way out, because such an answer brings with it a host of other questions. How can an author be the double of the double of one of his or her characters . . . . How can a novel be linked to a suicide which took place twenty years **after** it was written?" (10). According to Thomas, it was the potential congruence between hysteria and shell shock which "may have given Woolf the confidence to utilize her own experiences of mental breakdown in conjunction with details of the **Report** in portraying a shell-shock sufferer" (50).

In this connection, also see Spilka, who declares that Woolf "was engaged from childhood on in a conflict as devastating in its toll on feelings and relations as the First World War . . . . Her form of shell shock was domestic and familial . . ." (46); moreover, Spilka also claims that Woolf may be considered "a civilian casualty of World War II" (123). Squier declares that "Septimus functions as a scapegoat not only for Clarissa but also for her creator . . . we may infer that he defuses the anxiety and antagonism Woolf felt toward the traditional role expectations she inherited from her mother and was taught by her half-brother . . ." (120).

For other salient discussions of Woolf's life which may have a bearing on her construction of Septimus, see Stephen Trombley, `All That Summer She Was Mad': Virginia Woolf and Her Doctors (London: Junction, 1981); Louise DeSalvo, Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on her Life and Work (New York: Ballantine, 1989), as well as her essay, "Virginia Woolf, Incest Survivor," Virginia Woolf Miscellanies, ed. Mark Hussey and Vara Neverow-Turk (New York: Pace UP, 1992), 164-71; Toni McNaron, "The Uneasy Solace of Art: The Impact of Incest on Virginia Woolf's Aesthetic," in Women's Studies International Forum (Spring 1992), 36-49; Thomas C. Caramagno, "The Lure of Reductionism in Psychological Treatments of Woolf's Life," in Virginia Woolf and the Arts, ed. Diane Gillespie and Leslie Hankins (New York: Pace UP, 1997), 320-26; Madelyn Detloff, "Imagined Communities of Criticism: `Wounded Attachments' to the Icons of H.D., Gertrude Stein and Virginia Woolf" in Virginia Woolf and Communities, ed. Laura Davis and Jeanette McVicker (New York: Pace UP, 1999).

8. For a more wide-ranging discussion of the role of evolutionary concepts in the novel, see Elizabeth Lambert, "Proportion is in the Mind of the Beholder: Mrs Dalloway's Critique of Science," in Virginia Woolf: Emerging

Perspectives, ed. Mark Hussey and Vara Neverow (New York: Pace UP, 1994), 278-82.

9. For other characterizations of group processes in Mrs Dalloway, see Allen McLaurin, "Consciousness and Group Consciousness in Virginia Woolf," Virginia Woolf: A Centenary Perspective, ed. Eric Warner (London: Macmillan, 1984), 28-40; also see his "Virginia Woolf and Unanism," in The Journal of Modern Literature 9.1 (1981-82), 115-22. Miller may also be helpfully consulted in this connection.

10. Although Lady Bruton's emigration project relates to orphans, Stephen R. Ward points out that "by early 1921 over 42,000 ex-servicemen had emigrated, primarily to Canada and Australia" (22). See "Great Britain: Land Fit For Heroes Lost," in The War Generation: Veterans of the First World War, ed. Stephen Ward (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat P, 1975), 10-37.

11. According to Granofsky, "one biological function that proves to be powerfully symbolic of much that is involved in the human experience of trauma is eating" (14). Also see Allie Glenny, Ravenous Identity: Eating and Eating Distress in the Life and Work of Virginia Woolf (New York: St. Martin's P, 1999).

12. "Soon after his assumption of the Chancellorship, Nazi writers began to represent Hitler, the `unknown corporal,' as a living embodiment of the `unknown soldier' Weimar Germany had failed as a state to honour" (Keegan FWW 6).

13. Commenting on the significance of the aeroplane in the novel, Beer maintains that "it is no war-machine. Its frivolity is part of postwar relief. It poignantly does **not** threaten those below" (276). Yet, it is only in the shadow of the recent War that the aeroplane could seem both frivolous and poignant.

14. See Bourke's discussion of Lord Kitchener, who took over the Indian Campaign after the death of Gordon, and who later mobilised the men known as "Kitchener's Army" in the Great War. Although he drowned in 1916, his body was symbolically resurrected in 1926, signalling the recuperation of modes of masculinity linked with heroism and authority in the interwar period: "in those dark, divisive days in 1926, only a hero such as Kitchener could put everything in order again" (243).

15. See Carrie Doehring for discussions of trauma and spirituality in Internal Desecration: Traumatization and Representations of God (Lanham, MD: UP of America, 1993): "the metaphor of traumatization as a desecration of the inner sanctum and the smashing of internal representations of God is

a potent way to describe the impact of traumatization on one's God representations and systems of religious meaning . . . . one must sift through the rubble and reconstruct the experience of desecration, while mourning the loss of the inner sanctum and all that was associated with it . . . . Reconsecration may happen in the ordinary moments of reconnecting with everyday life . . ." (137).

16. This lietmotif from Cymbeline (IV.ii) highlights the manner in which the postwar effort to bury the dead also engages the repetition of previous ceremonies, premature interrments, belated returns, and confusions of identity.

PART TWO

VIII. "Death's Sure Meeting Place": Mourning the Somme in David Jones's In Parenthesis[1]

No one sings: Lully lully
for the mate whose blood runs down.

David Jones, In Parenthesis (1937)

. . . finally only the names of places had dignity.

Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms (1929)

Introduction

David Jones participated in battles at the Somme and Passchendaele. These names of battlesites during the Great War constitute a traumatic idiom for frontsoldiers, a metonymic register of experiences which consolidate communities of eye-witnesses under the aegis of the death encounter. These words resist civilian assimilation: "it is as if they put themselves in quotation marks against the will of the speaker" (Bakhtin 294). The very unassimilability of these names, with their aura of hermetic and harrowing experience, continues to invite the postmemorial engagement of subsequent generations. In The Ghost Road, for example, the Somme and Passchendaele are treated as typologies for distinct modes of senseless slaughter in the lexicon of combatants (Barker 252). And Stephen O'Shea, a recent cultural commentator motivated to conduct a

tour of the trenches, compares the two battles which, rightly or wrongly, continue to be attributed to the incompetence of Sir Douglas Haig (Stephen PP 45), in order to privilege the catastrophic significance of the Somme: "much more so than Passchendaele, the lone syllable of the Somme sounds a death knell" (79). In reference to the Somme, he claims that, "for the British, there is no more ironic landscape on the European continent" (O'Shea 79). In the same spirit, Winter describes the massive British monument at Thiepval by Lutyens (1932), inscribed with over 73,000 names of missing soldiers who fought and died in the region, in terms of the decisive "impossibility of triumphalism" (SM 107). All these postwar commentators are imaginatively compelled to serve as secondary witnesses to the historical trauma of the Somme, working through the contradictory emotions of "guilty fascination, incredulity, horror, disgust, pity and anger" in their accounts, emotions evoked by the images of "long docile lines of young men . . . . plodding forward across a featureless landscape to their own extermination inside the barbed wire" (Keegan FB 260).[2]

The Somme, a river in the region of Picardy in France, designates a devastating series of battles fought on the Western Front during the Great War. Because battles took place in this region throughout the War, Malcolm Brown identifies the Somme as "`a macro microcosm' as it were, of the whole conflict," and he is also surely correct to maintain that the

region now constitutes "a landscape of the mind" (xxix, 331). More specifically, the Somme usually connotes the famous offensive of July 1916 which was designed by military command in order to relieve French losses at Verdun; the British subjected the enemy trenches to a five-day bombardment, in the expectation of virtually eliminating the German positions before employing the cavalry to end the war of attrition in a successful sweep of the abandoned ground (cf. Jones IP 143). In fact, however, the first day of fighting on the now notorious first of July produced the greatest number of British casualties of any single day in the conflict: 60,000 wounded and, among this number, 20,000 dead. In the Somme region alone, given its centrality throughout the Great War, it is estimated that "the British and the Germans together suffered more than 800,000 dead" (Forché 65). Approximately ten bodies continue to be unearthed there each year (Middlebrook 314).

British losses were sustained by an army almost exclusively comprised of civilians who enlisted in locally-based battalions. As a result, "soldiers never really left that aura of feelings that surround a father, a brother, a friend" (Laqueur "MN" 160); particularly after this major offensive, local communities were implicated in complex networks of bereavement. Hence, this battle has a unique and momentous place in the cultural memory of Britain. Dyer describes the Somme engagement as "the core experience and

expression of the Great War" (127). And speaking as a world-renowned military historian with intimate connections to many veterans of the Great War, Keegan remarks without exaggeration that, for the British, the Somme "was and would remain their greatest military tragedy of the twentieth century, indeed of their national military history" (FWW 299). Compelling evidence for Keegan's verdict is manifest in the persistent preoccupation with this battle. A widespread perceived inability to mourn the mass deaths occasioned here is dramatized by the striking melancholy of Hughes, who insists that "the underworld of perpetual Somme rages on unabated" ("NG" 71).[3]

In British historiography, literature and oral narrative, then, the Somme functions as a "lieu de mémoire," a memory-site created "by a play of memory and history," which is both related to and distinct from the commemorative fervour which embraces other battles on the Western Front (Nora 295). Various British constructions of the Somme still engage its traumatic character, highlighting the composite and heterogeneous modes of memory configured by this site. For example, groups continue to undertake pilgrimages to France in order to gain some knowledge of the landscape which seemingly swallowed thousands of particular men in its mud; such a memorial practice, however, is distinct from the combat experience which frequently constituted an encounter with mass death. Thus, a veteran's memory-work may embrace diverse modes of engagement, or it may never surmount the entropic dynamics of traumatic

reenactment. The interaction of oscillating modes of memory-work, experienced recursively by the veteran, can be understood to register a "sedimentation of mourning tasks" in the ongoing struggle to reconstitute identity in relation to a place often invested with both numinous and apocalyptic significance through the repeated endurance of self-shattering events (Santner SQ 29). Such a densely layered struggle to work through the physical, psychological and cultural topography of the Somme is enacted in Jones's In Parenthesis, which was published almost twenty years after the Armistice.

How does In Parenthesis reconstruct the historical trauma of the Somme? Recursive memory-work is the focus of this examination of Jones's book, which is a highly mediated textualization of the combat experience, culminating in the battle for the German-occupied Mametz Wood, "some bastard woods as Jerry was sitting tight in" (138). The Mametz offensive was one in a series of conflicts subsumed under the Battle of the Somme. As Gerald Gliddon observes, "possibly more has been written about Mametz Wood, than any other wood, feature or village in the Somme area" (290). However, unlike the accounts of this battle by other members of Jones's regiment, the Royal Welch Fusiliers, including those written by Sassoon, Wyn Griffith and Graves, Jones's "associative" mode of thought frequently works to "enforce analogies and similarities" in relation to the Somme (Bergonzi AP 96).[4] Jones's "associative" method is an important occasion of

debate among literary scholars, including Fussell, Evelyn Cobley, and Thomas Dilworth, who enumerate the implications of his representational strategies from diverse perspectives. But, as I argue, Jones's recourse to precedent is crucial to his reconstruction of historical trauma: "the problem is how this process of comparison takes place and the functions it serves" (LaCapra RH 111).

Precisely by situating the Somme within an "associative" framework, then, Jones constitutes the site as susceptible to the psychoanalytic task of mourning, albeit within additional complicating and qualifying contexts of ambivalence, melancholia, and projective nostalgia, a nostalgia which bears a significant relationship to the preoccupations of the author with Wales and its cultural survival (cf. Spitzer 96).[5] All of these elements attend Jones's attempt to work through and reconstitute the experience of historical trauma. Accordingly, this chapter foregrounds the Somme as the privileged occasion for the provisional recuperative poetics of In Parenthesis. Bypassing an exclusive reliance on realistic representation, the work constructs intertextual parallels between the Somme and other sites of loss, particularly the battles of Camlann and Catraeth, important defeats in the history of Wales, as a means of generating a genealogical context in which to situate the Somme. To this end, In Parenthesis marshals a plethora of vivid and obscure cultural precedents in order to facilitate the working-through of an occasion of mass death. Attention to

ystoryeau, a Welsh word which means "the national inheritance of ancient traditions," enables the affirmative tasks of the work, which has recourse to "a viable, empowering legacy" by which to reconstitute shattered symbolic relationships (Bromwich qtd. in Gwyndaf 419; Santner SQ 30).

Yet while In Parenthesis certainly "enacts a quest to heal the memory of violence," it must also be noted that its effort to mourn the Somme is invariably complicated by a range of losses engendered by modernity, chiefly involving the artist and his/her dislocation from locality (Whitaker 33). In this connection, Jones maintains on many occasions that his vocation as an artist and his subscription to Catholicism committed him "to locality, to epoch and site, to sense-perception, to the contactual, the known . . . the conserved; to the qualitative and the intimate" ("CM" 167). In response to such a vision of community, Wyschogrod perceptively discerns that "history written under the sign of autochthony must be heroic history, a tending and preserving of the past, an incessant remythologization of the divine origin, of how it was in **illo tempore**" (225). While Wyschogrod's insight is highly relevant to any consideration of Jones's work, in fact, the topography of the Somme commemorated by In Parenthesis demands careful consideration of its conflation of numerous phantasies of place. In this regard, the Somme may be understood as a series of transferential sites in intimate transposition, including a mythical and unified Britain deriving

from ancient Wales, as well as its perceived opposite, modern, industrial Britain, where "waste-land meets environs and punctured bins ooze canned-meats discarded" (75). Shattering experiences necessarily yield modes of memory-work constellated in complex associative relationships to a range of geographical sites.

Jones's remarkable treatment of the War's traumatic slaughter at the Somme, the "fields of holocaust" (162), merits a discussion which carefully considers his efforts to create an attempted site of mourning for the events which took place there. When considered as a "lieu de deuil," a complex cultural mediation, which undertakes provisional and qualified reconstructive gestures in relation to the Somme, its general significance with regard to the ongoing cultural tasks of addressing many other sites of mass death and atrocity in the twentieth century becomes apparent (LaCapra HMA 44). The analysis which follows will thus consider the highly complex question: how does In Parenthesis endeavour to perform **Trauerarbeit**, or the work of mourning, in relation to historical trauma (Freud "MM")? To this end, through the critical incorporation of various visions of mourning offered by Freud, Sacks, Santner, Laub, and Jay, among others, I foreground the serial negotiations of ambivalence entailed by the reconstruction of the Somme as a site of memory, a formidable dilemma in itself, which necessitates an exploration of the veteran's vexed interpellation of an audience, the alterna-

tions of the **heimlich**, the canny, and the **unheimlich**, the uncanny, in representations of trench life, and, by way of conclusion, I examine the contradictory contexts which nourish Jones's reconstructive project, a project predicated upon critiques of the nation and modernity.

In the service of my rereading of In Parenthesis, I address the general studies of Fussell and Cobley, as well as the expert research conducted by Dilworth in particular, in addition to the work of Jonathan Miles, Kathleen Staudt, Ward, and William Blissett, among other specialists of this justifiably celebrated and idiosyncratic text. However, my explicit emphases--trauma and mourning--differ markedly from those of my critical predecessors. Accordingly, I also engage the theoretical contexts provided by Benjamin, Bakhtin, and Adam Newton, as well as perspectives central to scholarship on trauma, memory and mourning invoked throughout previous chapters. Jones's work, in spite of its persistent use of the present tense, remains governed by a "spectacular bereavement" manifest in its imperative to recollect and reconstitute the past, so that it must also be considered a site of memory in its own right, one which both seeks to codify and contradict the manner in which "the sea of living memory has receded" (Nora 300, 289). In the shadow of World War Two, In Parenthesis exemplifies the manifold complexities of mourning the Somme, a historical and imaginative event which constitutes a palimpsest of cultural and individual losses, a palimpsest

which both "reveals and conceals its contents," a haunted topography profoundly implicated in efforts to unravel the fateful legacies of the Great War and its aftermath in Britain, as these legacies were configured in relation to region, nation and epoch (Lewty 64).

The Somme: An Ambivalent Site of Memory

In his "Preface" to In Parenthesis, Jones isolates the Somme as an ominous turning-point in the lives of the infantry serving "their harsh novitiate" on the Western Front (70). As he remarks, "from then onward things hardened into a more relentless, mechanical affair, took on a more sinister aspect" (ix). In his own estimation, "the period of the individual rifle-man . . . seemed to terminate with the Somme battle" (ix). Jones's deliberate contrast between the Boer War and the Great War after the Somme signals a decisive rupture of material and imaginative precedent. In this manner, In Parenthesis explicitly contrasts the nature of previous wars with the Somme. For example, at one point, the infantry's criticism of the military bureaucracy hinges upon the leadership's inability to contend with the changing circumstances of warfare: "Reg'mental's superb but he can't get over the second Boer War" (142). But, ironically, in spite of their ambivalent opposition to the military leadership, before the battle the soldiers find themselves in the accidental position of "cockaded men of privilege" who "pointed with their batons

where the low smoke went before the forming squadrons on a plain," a grim and absurd implied comparison suggestive of Napoleon at Waterloo (150). In its tragic context, the parallel merely foregrounds the powerlessness and imminent slaughter of the infantry, who must wait "helplessly, white-faced, and very conscious of their impotence" (86). Prior to the Great War, "the bloodiest battle" involving Britain was Waterloo, yet as Martin Middlebrook points out, the losses on the first day of fighting on the Somme "stand comparison, not only with other battles, but with complete wars" (264, 265). In the face of such unprecedented slaughter, Jones's account of war consolidates the primacy of the frontsoldier experience, in whose name "all distinguishing marks were better resisted for as long as possible" (140).

Certainly, the shattering impact of industrial weaponry defies any illusion of agency which the infantry entertain prior to their arrival in France: it is described as an "on-rushing pervasion, saturating all existence . . . . a consummation of all burstings out; all sudden up-rendings and rivings-through . . . all unmaking" (24).[6] With their "apprentice-wisdom shocked," due to "the mk. IX improved pattern of bleedin' frightfulness," undertakers and coffin makers prepare in advance for the mass death which ensues (40, 115). The Somme bombardment is likened to a technological terminus, "a malign chronometer," appointing a "prearranged hour of apocalypse" (135). In this setting, even the "fixed-stars" are

"frighted," mountains are obliterated, "conflagrations change the shape of the sky," and "tottering perpendiculars lean and sway; more leper-trees pitted, rownsepykèd out of nature, cut off in their sap-rising" (120, 116, 39). Within this landscape, nature itself seems to retain the projections of the grid of participant-positions which configures historical trauma: "nature has become at once power source, feared enemy, and victim, but only because man has made it so" (Lifton BC 344). As Philip Pacey notes, "if Paul Nash was the visual artist who most convincingly depicted the `outrage on Nature' that was the landscape of war, David Jones is, of all writers of the war, the one for whom this aspect of it is most significant" (30). Not surprisingly, the fate of the infantry is foreshadowed by the "signs" provided by the blasted landscape, the "withered" yew-trees of France (120).

Natural and cultural modes of "symbolic immortality" are alike compromised by industrial warfare (Lifton BC 21). In the battle for Mametz Wood, for example, Aneirin Lewis, a Welshman "for whom Troy still burned," dies "unwholer limb from limb, than any of them fallen at Catraeth," because "properly organized chemists can let make more riving power than ever Twrch Trwyth" (89, 155). In this instance, "properly organized chemists" not only enable men to wreak unprecedented physical destruction, but they effectively disable the transmission of cultural memory and its complex transgenerational fictions of affiliation. Clearly, "the fact that this corpse is none other

than Aneirin Merddyn Lewis, who is so acutely aware of his chivalric past, gives this image stark significance" (Eaves 57). In chivalric legend, the Boar Trwyth was pursued by Arthur, and, in the words of Jones, it "stands in Celtic myth like the Behemoth of Job" (211 n40). Thus, the displacement of this principle of natural and mythic chaos signals the uniqueness of the Great War and its status as a terrifying shibboleth of destruction.[7] Even Dai Greatcoat, a transhistorical witness for the infantry soldier throughout history, dating from the time "when bright Lucifer bulged his primal salient out" (84), is Missing in Action at the close of In Parenthesis, a potential candidate for the Thiepval memorial.

For Jones, the uniqueness of the Somme, in relation to the fate of the infantry, the destructive power of industrial weaponry, and its rupture of natural and cultural continuities, only serves to highlight its status as a threshold event. Like the "Janus-wise emplacements" of the text, the Somme both embodies and defies comparable, continuous military contexts (66). In this respect, In Parenthesis shares with Jacob's Room a profound historiographical consciousness born of the accentuated awareness of the dissociation between the past and the present. Commenting on his life in the trenches, for example, Jones attests: "I suppose at no time did one so much live with a consciousness of the past, the very remote, and the more immediate and trivial past, both superficially and more subtly" (xi). Such a retrospective consciousness is

clearly informed by a sharp disjunction between past and present modes of warfare: "a rubicon has been passed between striking with a hand weapon as men used to do and loosing poison from the sky as we do ourselves" (xiv). As Benjamin observes in a corroborating viewpoint, "through gas warfare, the aura is abolished in a new way" ("WA" 242). The Great War demanded that the cultural contexts of past warfare which nourished the imagined coherence of identity were simultaneously subjected to radical dispersal and vigilant scrutiny, as in Jones's comparison of the trenches with the contexts of Henry V, "Mr. X adjusting his box-respirator" and "`young Harry with his beaver on'" (xiv).

Historiographical vigilance, then, was accelerated by the introduction of unprecedented technology: poison gas, the machine gun, the trench-mortar, and the steel helmet.[8] These changes are clearly registered in the dialogue of In Parenthesis: "it used to be fourteen in and five out regular--knew where you were--everything conducted humane and reasonable--it all went west with the tin hat . . . " (114). Such heightened diachronic awareness signals a crisis of personal and cultural memory due to the "acceleration of history"; as Nora incisively acknowledges, "to interrogate a tradition, venerable though it may be, is no longer to pass it on intact" (287). In Parenthesis interrogates and embodies a tradition which allegedly concludes at the Somme: it foregrounds the potential extinction of cultural memory, contending with the Great War's

fragmentation by constituting itself through commemorative vigilance in the face of the "deritualization" of war (Nora 289). As Eksteins declares, "Jones looked on the Somme offensive as the last great action of the old world" (211). Thus, the Somme is constructed as a "lieu de mémoire" which bears the traces which testify to its ambivalent relationship to the past. In this manner, Jones reconstructs the Somme in reference to "**memory on the point of disappearance**--an exquisitely liminal recollection of recollection, frozen just as it passes into oblivion" (Terdiman 44).

While In Parenthesis reconstitutes the Somme as both a unique and comparable event in relation to previous wars, literary critics often foreground the "archetypal" status of the Somme as it is mediated by Jones. For example, Dilworth supports such a reading when he maintains that "the Somme offensive contains all battles . . . . the scale of modern war makes this battle capable of symbolizing all previous battles" (95). This interpretation highlights similarities between comparative contexts without any attention paid to the differences generated by cultural precedents. Although Dilworth selectively highlights unique features of the Great War in other contexts, his assertion here of the Great War as an "archetype" encourages consideration of its events expunged of their unique historical dimensions. Exclusive attention to the Somme in a context of timeless repetition obviates any sustained reflection on the need to mourn its events. Yet a need

to mourn the events of the Great War is evident in the manifest compulsion to repeat and restage its elements in relation to its traumatic legacies (cf. Eksteins).

An emphasis on the War as "archetype," then, ignores the transferential dynamics it configures among historians, literary critics, and survivors, including Jones. For instance, even though Jones disclaims the status of In Parenthesis as a "`War Book,'" declaring that "it happens to be concerned with war," he also highlights his own status as a survivor formerly overwhelmed by the traumatic events he represents in the same document, observing that "at the time of suffering, the flesh was too weak to appraise" (xii, x). As Silkin is correct to maintain, in opposition to Jones's own explicit pronouncement, "of course, in many senses In Parenthesis is a `War Book' (QB 316). Like Blissett, I believe that the work must be comprehended in relation to Jones's specific postwar position of enunciation ("IP" 258). In my view, it is not merely "the scale of modern war" noted by Dilworth which enables the Somme to bear a densely associative relationship to other wars, but its status as a historical trauma which compromises efforts of psychic mastery and effectively counteracts efforts to resist the force of its transferential field, a field which reconfigures and transforms prior historical events and contexts of explanation, enabling the event to defy any definitive historiographical closure.

The manner in which In Parenthesis mediates the speci-

ficities of the Somme has been subject to especially heated debate since Fussell's discussion of Jones in The Great War and Modern Memory. These debates are invariably bound up with the status of the Great War in relation to mourning in that they question the "ideological implications" of Jones's "intertextual parallels" (Cobley 27-28). In Fussell's provocative reading, the work "poses for itself the problem of reattaching traditional meanings to the unprecedented actualities of the war"; furthermore, "it even implies that, once conceived to be in the tradition, the war can be understood" (GW 146). In his view, the construction of implied parallels between the deaths of the men and "high-powered swordsman and cavalry heroes of romance" is simply "too much for `literature' to bear" (GW 152). In Parenthesis is "ambiguous" in his viewpoint because it does not highlight the disjunction between its recourse to literary tradition and its representations of the realities of trench life. Fussell privileges realism, emphasizing that any textualization of the Great War must commemorate the Somme through the stark reproduction of its particulars. The Great War is thus troped as a site of rupture, fragmentation, and discontinuity which resists the recuperations of aesthetic totality.

Considerations of aesthetics and totality also govern the comments of Cobley in her award-winning book, Representing War: Form and Ideology in First World War Narratives (1993), which discusses Jones at some length. Both she and Fussell

praise In Parenthesis although they also both suggest that the work enacts "an inability or refusal to mourn" through its emplotment of traumatic events (Santner PLR 144). More specifically, Fussell indicts Jones's work for its alleged fetishization of the Great War when he asserts that "the Western Front is not King Pellam's Land," and "it will not be restored and made whole, ever, by the expiatory magic of the Grail" (GW 154). Like Fussell, Cobley also suggests that In Parenthesis succumbs to "narrative fetishism," a fetishism which she perceives to be inherent not merely in Jones's work, but in the modernist project in general (Santner PLR 147). Accordingly, she describes the modernist project as "a nostalgia for closure" satisfied through recourse to a "`mythic method'": "dislocations on the narrative surface are recuperated by a highly allusive deep structure which unifies and synthesizes narrative fragments in an effort to capture some transcendent meaning" (27, 193). In Cobley's summary, then, in contrast to postmodern strategies of representation, modernist practices are typically informed by the assumption that "unity and harmony" can be recuperated "below the surface of fragmentation and dislocation" (187).[9] Although her methodology is quite distinct from Fussell's, both of their approaches generally invalidate the problem of mourning the Somme which Jones undertakes; they ignore the hermeneutic and psychoanalytic implications of aesthetic strategies which represent historical trauma, implications central to my own project.

Thus, although a wide variety of critics with distinct methodologies, including Cobley, properly foreground the ambivalent status of the intertexts, no single critical intervention specifically investigates the potential relationships among this ambivalence, mourning and historical trauma.[10]

Interpellating a Readership

While Jones's reconstruction of the Somme as a site of memory remains ambivalent, suspending the resolution of questions concerning its claims for continuities or discontinuities, ironic or nostalgic perspectives, such ambivalence must also be extended to his interpellation of a readership. Clearly, the combatant who sought to represent his traumatic experiences in writing faced a complex dilemma of audience. Ultimately, as Cobley correctly observes, the writing of a combat narrative is a "memorial act whose motivation is ambivalent," an ambivalence which may be linked to the divided undertaking described as melancholic mourning by Ramazani (8). In this connection, the veteran may never fully master his anxious allegiances in that he must struggle to identify and privilege an audience among fallen comrades, living veterans, and noncombatants. But the veteran must engage a witness to bear witness: he requires an intersubjective context in order to codify harrowing experience through aesthetic means. As Laub and Podell conscientiously outline its complexities, the art of trauma "circumscribes a

double locus, one of witnessing, but also one of emptiness" (99).

To extrapolate, then, the work of Laub and Podell suggests that the combatant's representation of Mametz Wood may never overcome the entropic numbing of death. Significantly, In Parenthesis represents Mametz in relation to the emptiness Laub and Podell describe: "in the very core and navel of the wood there seemed a vacuum, if you stayed quite still, as though you'd come on ancient stillnesses in his most interior place" (181). The text also bears witness to emptiness by delineating the experiential limits which confront the infantryman in the midst of historical trauma, when "the surfeit of fear steadies to dumb incognition":

> Racked out to another turn of the screw
> the acceleration heightens;
> the sensibility of these instruments to register,
> fails;
> needle dithers disorientate.
> The responsive mercury plays laggard to such fevers--you simply can't take any more in. (156)

Even the German enemies, alternately the subjects of hatred, empathy and fear, "come as sleepwalkers whose bodies go unbidden of the mind" when they are taken prisoner by the British (170). For both sides of the conflict, it may be

presumed that in traumatic conditions "the memory lets escape what is over and above"; however, in the involuntary reenactments of the aftermath, memory may fall prey to a "demoniac-pouring" (153). In Parenthesis frequently mimes the experience of trauma and gestures to the experience of emptiness through its language, "its retreat to incoherence--its stop-start rhythms, dashes, or the urgency of adjectives--providing a verbal equivalent of extremity" (Ward 101).

But before proceeding to more detailed engagement with In Parenthesis and its dual negotiation of both authorship and readership, the question of genre requires some careful consideration. The work heightens an already divided relationship to its readership in light of the unstable expectations which govern critical considerations of its genre. Jones himself unleashed such debate by calling In Parenthesis "a shape in words" (x).[11] Ultimately, in a viewpoint which can be traced back to Herbert Read and Johnston, Dilworth argues for its status as an epic, given its "creative fidelity to historical truth" and its exploration of the manner in which "destiny displaces possibility" (53, 148). Furthermore, Dilworth claims that Jones's work is the "only authentic and successful epic poem in the language since Paradise Lost" (367). Like Johnston before him, though, Dilworth devotes no consideration to the vexed status of the epic in the conflicting contexts of twentieth-century society.

Other critics, however, highlight the work's ambivalent

recourse to epic conventions, given Jones's self-reflexive awareness of the decline of the communal traditions which epic conventions engage. In the face of his preoccupations with locality, specificity, and history, for example, Diane DeBell declares that "Jones's In Parenthesis is probably the most private piece of English writing to emerge from that war, and one of the most linguistically and culturally obscure" (163.) Notwithstanding its dense and diverse literary allusions, for instance, the idiomatic jargon of the infantry pervades the text: "gas rattles, two of Mrs. Thingumajig's patent gas-dispersing flappers, emptied S.A.A. boxes, grenade boxes, two bales of revetting-wire . . . the splintered stock of a Mauser rifle, two unexploded yellow-ochre toffee-apples . . ." (90). In support of DeBell's reading, Bergonzi contends that the work does not reach out "beyond the personal to appeal to a system of public and communal values which are ultimately collective, national, and even cosmic" (HT 203).

On the other hand, Staudt rightly incorporates the consolidation of a collective framework of understanding into a modified redefinition of the modern epic: "the effort to define a `we' in imaginative terms, central to Jones's poetic enterprise, may also be a defining characteristic of the epic impulse among poets of this century" (192). In fact, along with Staudt, I interpret In Parenthesis as a metacommentary on the perceived failure of communal contexts for cultural transmission. In the insightful formulation of Featherstone,

"the reader's difficulty in making sense of the connections is not just a personal puzzlement but that of a culture which, in Jones's terms, is no longer able to understand or interpret its own history" (34). Jones's precarious and ambivalent interpellation of a readership is signalled by the "Preface" to In Parenthesis, which contextualizes the relationship between reader and writer in terms of the oral traditions codified by the "Welsh Codes of Court Procedure," wherein "the Bard of the Household is instructed to sing to the Queen when she goes to her chamber to rest" (xiii). The author then remarks, "I have tried, to so make this writing for anyone who would care to play Welsh Queen" (xiii). The poet thus positions his readership in terms of oral tradition and transmission, given that the poet's role within oral culture "safeguarded" and consolidated collective memory in opposition to his/her role in twentieth-century contexts (Jones "DG" 56).

But in striking contrast to the centrality of narrative within oral cultures, Benjamin dates the end of storytelling to the First World War: "was it not noticeable at the end of the war that men returned from the battlefield grown silent--not richer but poorer in communicable experience?" ("S" 84). He goes on to attribute such silence to the combined modern forces of mechanical warfare and capitalism which produced the unmediated shock and violence of the trenches: "in a field of force of destructive torrents and explosions, was the tiny, fragile human body," an experience which cannot be told and

retold "mouth to mouth" ("S" 84). Exemplifying Benjamin's insight, the men in Jones's text are repeatedly described under bombardment, with "all the world shrunken to a point of fear," a correlative for the death encounter: "mortared-canisters careened oblique descent with meteor trail; and men were dumb and held their breath for this, as for no thing other" (154, 99). The "dumb incognition" of trauma renders both telling and witnessing haphazard, perilous, and, at times, impossible (156). The experience of time may speed up and slow down, and ultimately become derealized: one minute may be experienced as a "taut millennium" so that "you can't swallow your spit," even though the noise of the bombardment demands that you "spit in a bloke's ear to make any impression," while the passage of one day into the next under extreme conditions may be likened to a "no-man's-land between yesterday and tomorrow" wherein "material things are but barely integrated and loosely tacked together" (159, 147, 181). Moreover, vision itself, the witnessing faculty, and the primary agent in the sensory registration of catastrophic events, constantly moves in and out of focus within the trench landscape: "solid things dissolve, and vapours ape substantiality" (179).

Not surprisingly, in accord with Benjamin's vision of trench warfare, <u>In Parenthesis</u> is characterized by a remarkable attention to the body and its inalienable sensations: "the fluid mud" which is "icily discomforting that

circles your thighs," and the manner in which "weeping blisters stick to the hard wool of grey government socks" (45, 6). The "raw cold" of winter brings pain; it "rasps the sensed membrane of the throat" (61). In contrast to enlisted men, the reader never transcends her bodily ignorance of the phrase, "moving into the line"; it retains "all the unknownness of something of immense realness, but of which you lack all true perceptual knowledge" (15-16). Such "perceptual knowledge," learned under traumatic conditions, heightens the manifold dilemmas inherent in the communication of combat experience; dilemmas of authorship and audience constitute its self-reflexive genesis. Thus, while poetic testimony both enacts the witnessing of trauma and engages the secondary witness through aesthetic process, the very ambivalence of poetic testimony concerning its intersubjective reception may constitute a recursive gesture to the "emptiness" which occasioned the traumatic experience (Laub and Podell 99).

Yet in a formulation of reception distinct from Benjamin's observations on the demise of storytelling, Bakhtin imaginatively deduces that "every literary work **faces outward away from itself**, toward the listener-reader, and to a certain extent thus anticipates possible reactions to itself" (257). More elaborately, he comments that this orientation toward the listener "introduces totally new elements into his discourse": "the speaker strives to get a reading on his own word, and on his own conceptual system that determines this word, within

the alien conceptual system of the understanding receiver" (282). Bakhtin's formulation of the anticipatory relationship between the writer and reader of a text enables a greater understanding of the particularly vexed nature of the dialogic encounter between the civilian and the veteran in Jones's interwar work. In a manner complementary to Bakhtin, then, commenting on the "interlocutionary relation" between the text and the reader, Newton argues in contrast to Benjamin that "the genius of prose fictional form is to incorporate into itself the promise of transmission and hermeneutic responsibility which traditional storytelling legislates externally" (6, 290). Although In Parenthesis reconstructs the Somme in relation to previous battles in order to situate events within received contexts and histories, without recourse to oral tradition or reception, In Parenthesis must self-consciously generate protocols of reception in recognition of its transmission of trauma into uncertain ethical and hermeneutic contexts.

In fact, in several examples, Jones incorporates the "alien conceptual system" of the (mis)understanding receiver into his work, highlighting the significance of the interlocutionary relationship between the veteran and the civilian in a decidedly negative light. In one instance, the potentially rehabilitated bodies of the maimed are the subject of colloquial civilian dialogue, an intrusive and even obscene presence in the tremendously pathetic and harrowing scenes of

death and destruction at Mametz:

> Give them glass eyes to see
> and synthetic spare parts to walk in the Triumphs, without anyone feeling awkward and O, O, O, its a lovely war with poppies on the up-platform for a perpetual memorial of his body. (176)

During the War itself, Jones documents the manner in which tourists from Whitehall, including military brass and government officials, observe the action from the trenches, "immaculate, bright-greaved ambassadors," who visit "the spirits in prison," and "grace the trench like wall-flowers, for an hour" (93). The decidedly anti-monumental discourse of the soldiers, on the other hand, offers a far more subversive interpretation of the anticipated civilian parades and tourist agendas of the peace. Prior to their entry into the line, Ball and his mates contemplate "rows of Field-Marshals" marching in a "**hara-kiri** parade by Whitehall Gate" in the event of the loss of the War by Land, among their speculations on other potential acts of violence to be perpetrated against civilians (142-43).

In particular, the postmemorial engagement of his readers with the actual geography of the Somme, referred to in the phrase, "a Cook's tourist to the Devastated Areas" (186), is an issue which warrants Jones's marked hostility, a hostility

evoked by what he perceives as "a nightmare of narrative ethics" (Newton 124). In fact, the postwar battlefield tours which Jones anticipated commenced after the Armistice and continue to this day.[12] In a special footnote, Jones insists on the nonanachronistic character of his reference to such tourism:

> I remember we went into details and wondered if the unexploded projectile lying near us would go up under a holiday-maker, and how people would stand to be photo graphed on our parapets. I recall feeling very angry about this, as you do if you think of strangers ever occupying a house you live in, and which has, for you, particular associations. (224 n45)

The overt hostility of Jones's passage bears comparison with Sassoon's "Blighters," a poem which enacts a desire for the communalization of traumatic experience through civilian injuries. Like the parades and monuments at Whitehall, perceived as contemptible charades of recognition or compensation by many veterans, the imagined posing of noncombatants for photographs in Jones's work frames an absolute failure of transferential relations otherwise required in the transmission and reception of traumatic events between survivors and witnesses.

The domestic analogy which informs his discussion of the

trenches enables him to underscore his fear of civilian usurpation, a potential act which defies any receptive mode of attentiveness, and hence, activates a fear of retraumatization through what Elie Wiesel appropriately designates "the ever-repeated scene of the unlistened-to-story" (qtd. in Newton 71). In this manner, Jones's note reveals him to be a conflicted reader of his own testimonial arfifact: he struggles to reclaim a notion of "home" which encompasses locality, community, and nation, even as he signals the exclusions which invariably comprise community through his demarcation of "strangers" and his frequent recourse to the **unheimlich**. In Parenthesis privileges the unique and inalienable bereavements of the infantryman through its incorporation of failed narratives of the transmission and reception of traumatic knowledge, narratives which also function as ethical analogues for the imagined audience of In Parenthesis.

More generally, the work carefully configures a series of intersubjective contexts through its graduated attention to the interpellation of its readership. In Parenthesis is frequently "narrated in the second person and in the present tense"; as a result, "the action is simultaneous with the reader's experience of it" (Johnston 293). Moreover, intersubjective contexts explicitly shape the reception of the text through front and back matter which quite literally place the work "in parenthesis." In this connection, Jones's frontispiece must be considered the reader's first encounter with the

work. Significantly, the drawing by Jones rejects traditional perspective. Instead, a naked, wounded infantryman is splayed against a crowded and chaotic trench scene: "in his psychological and physical desolation, the infantryman personifies the landscape" (Dilworth 63). Disordered paraphernalia of the War resists spatial confinement within the picture frame; "what happens in a corner is as important as what happens at the centre, because there often is no centre" in Welsh aesthetics (Williams qtd. in Blissett AP 115). The viewer is frontally implicated in the suspended posture of the soldier, and is unable to impose traditional visual perspective on the dense, overlapping dimensions of the drawing. Instead, a passive, overburdened body, an anamnesis of the Crucifixion and its "five unmistakable marks" (the title of the final section of In Parenthesis), hangs between the viewer and the visual assimilation of the landscape in chaos. Thus, the book illustration configures the fate of the infantry at the Somme in relation to the traumatic **mise-en-scène** of the New Testament.

After the "Preface," the distinct typography and capitalization of the dedication command attention. Following Jerome McGann, it can be observed that the dedication signals the unique "compositional environment" of In Parenthesis as well as its implication in a "culture of artisanal practices" which exemplify "the craft and the art of the making" (46, 45). In "a culture that largely imagines print as a vehicle for

linguistic meaning," the dedication "foreground[s] textuality" (McGann 74).[13] However, most prominently, the dedication directs our attention to the testimonial and commemorative aspects of the work. Jones honours his fellow infantrymen, including French and German soldiers, and "especially Pte. R.A. Lewis-Gunner from Newport Monmouthshire killed in action in the Boesinghe Sector" near Ypres in 1916-17.[14] The specificity of geographical names in this dedication, conjuring "the ancient **numina** of place," contrasts with the uncertainty regarding time of death and specific grave site (Jones "WVF" 90). As Laqueur points out, in this War, in which bodies were separated from names, "the names recorded at sites on the front and in village squares were the primary sites of mourning" ("MN" 164). The memorial gesture of the dedication implicates the reader in an injunction to remembrance which compels an acknowledgement of the work itself as a potential mourning site: in the "placeless cosmopolis" of the twentieth century, "specific places of memory do not simply arise out of lived experience . . . . instead, they have to be created" (Jones "LA" 38; Laqueur "MN" 160).

In this connection, it is important to consider the fact that Jones contemplated organizing his work in imitation of the printed lists of the dead included in newspapers during the War (Dilworth SM 44). In fact, In Parenthesis makes frequent recourse to the listing of specific men, counties, and regions. In this manner, proper names are charged with the

unassimilable affect and uniqueness of lived experience because "their resonance for individual mourners enhances their value as commemorative signifiers" (Sherman "BN" 446). Moreover, the "logical form" of the name "suggests that its primary function is heterological, that of an ethical place-holder" (Wyschogrod 13). The work thus commences with an inscription of referential debt to a fellow soldier, a mode of debt specified by Felman, which partially contextualizes the work as survivor testimony, which, in turn, signals the reader's status as a secondary witness in relation to the events being represented (115).

Following the dedication, the reader is confronted with an epigraph which explores the nature of war and traumatic memory: "when they had looked, they were conscious of all the evils they had ever sustained, and of all the friends and companions they had lost and of all the misery that had befallen them, as if all had happened in that very spot." This fragment is taken from the story of Branwen in the Second Branch of the Mabinogi; in this story, only seven men return alive from a war in Ireland (Gwyndaf 447). Even so, Jones's engagement with the task of codifying the traumatic experience of the Great War is also fraught with perils, namely confrontation with "the place of the greatest density of silence--the place of concentration where death took place" (Laub "BW" 64). The epigraph thus addresses the veteran's potential entrapment in traumatic experience, a danger inherent to the memory-work

of the survivor. Yet the codification of war requires the recollection of lived horror if the account is not to diminish nor redeem the events subject to representation. As Jones declares in another context, "we must call deaths, deaths, and admit to a real loss" ("ARW" 153).

The epigraph, in turn, contextualizes the reader's challenge of contending with the muted, or secondary transferential challenges implicated in an encounter with traumatic memory. As Dai Greatcoat exclaims:

> You ought to ask: Why
> what is this,
> what's the meaning of this. (84)

Through Dai's reference to the Welsh story of Percivale, who fails to ask the question which would restore the land, the noncombatant reader is given the opportunity to "ask the question that would lead to the restoration of the Waste Land" (Dilworth 114). Such a question may prove too overwhelming, or it may involve defensive reactions, including paralysis, outrage, withdrawal, or "an obsession with factfinding" (Laub "BW" 72-73). In effect, Jones's epigraph signals the manner in which poetic testimony inscribes "the empty circle" of trauma within its recursive constitution and interpellation of a witnessing presence (Laub and Podell 1000).

Next, the allusion to the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

which serves as the title to the first book of In Parenthesis recalls that, like Jones's work, "Coleridge's poem is built around an armature of intersubjective relation accomplished through story" (Newton 7).[15] In the famous Romantic tale, the Wedding Guest is compelled to witness the testimony of the Mariner, who is perpetually seeking provisional release from the incursions of traumatic memory. "The many men so beautiful," the line chosen by Jones as his first chapter heading, is an excerpt from a quatrain which addresses the guilt and abjection of the solitary survivor after the slaying of the albatross:

> The many men, so beautiful!
> And they all dead did lie
> And a thousand thousand slimy things
> Lived on; and so did I. (236-39)

The debt which the veteran bears to the dead is hereby anticipated and foregrounded, recalling the lone survival of John Ball in Mametz Wood, the destruction of his platoon, "a very ghastly crew," as well as his effort to crawl to safety with his rifle hanging on his "bowed neck like the Mariner's white oblation" (94, 184). Numerous references to Coleridge's poem throughout the work support Dilworth's speculation that "Coleridge's poem probably influenced the whole of In Parenthesis from the first year of its composition, when he

executed ten copper engravings" to illustrate that work (92). It can also be speculated that Jones's own metatextual negotiation of ambivalence regarding role identification is indicated by the epigraph. For example, from what subject-position or temporal vantage-point will the events be represented? How will the poet bear witness for the dead? "To whom do the dead belong?" (Felman 116). The guilt and loss entailed by survival are mired in the melancholy of an ongoing fraternal affiliation with the collective fighting unit.

The excerpt from Y Gododdin which heads each section of the work also privileges the poet as a survivor, one of three out of three hundred who lived beyond the battle at Catraeth in the sixth century (Jones 191 n4). In the "Notes," another "armature" configuring the "interlocutionary relations" of In Parenthesis (Newton 7), Jones points out that Y Gododdin "connects us with a very ancient unity and mingling of races; with the Island as a corporate inheritance, with the remembrance of Rome as a European unity" (191-92 n4). This conception of Briton supplies contradictory contexts of identification for the poet. Through such a conception, Jones mediates his relationship to historical trauma through recourse to a metanarrative of stable origins and "tribal unity" wherein the poet commanded a clearly prescribed oral relationship to his audience (R. Jones 271). As Eaves points out, Aneirin, the reputed author of Y Gododdin, "performed a task of considerable importance to the aristocratic society in

which he lived: he sang the praises of the military heroes and mourned their deaths" (52). Through association, Jones positions himself as the poetic descendant of Aneirin in a filiation which enables him to articulate a relationship to war which asserts an inherited means of transmission and consolation. It can thus be speculated that Jones asserts himself as an heir to Aneirin as one means of negotiating the instabilities enmeshed in the interlocutionary relations between twentieth-century writers and readers.

Significantly, Jones closes In Parenthesis with a quotation from the Chanson de Roland: "the geste says this and the man who was on the field . . . and who wrote the book . . . the man who does not know this has not understood anything" (187). By citing this work, Jones does not impose traditional closure on his representation of the Somme. Rather, he dramatically and self-consciously recalls the significance of the ethical exchange between the reader and writer of In Parenthesis. In fact, he asserts a prohibitive signal of potential rupture between the survivor and the secondary witness, given that "war cannot be comprehended at second-hand . . . it is not accessible to analogy or logic" (Hynes ST 1). Jones both asserts and problematizes his authority and authorship through a quotation which foregrounds the horror of fratricide through the inalienable claims of the primary witness. These final lines explicitly delineate an ethical and hermeneutic accountability: they function to

propel the reader to recommence complex engagement with a work which resists the traditional emplotment of beginning, middle and end. Mastery of the text is repudiated on the grounds of its intertextual heterogeneity and refracted representations of trauma. The reader is positioned as an outsider to the events represented, given that the events themselves defy closure for the survivors, who are themselves inserted within a network of textualizations of war. The reader is thus recalled to his or her place in a "testimonial chain" which both precedes and follows the process of engaging with testimonial artifacts (Laub "BW" 71).

Finally, among the intersubjective contexts configured by In Parenthesis, the final postscript encodes a network of Biblical references to sacrifice. In the elegiac coda of the work, the imposition of traditional motifs mediates bereavement. Similarly, throughout the work, the infantry are described as "scape-beasts" in accord with the popular typology for the trench soldier (70). Interestingly enough, then, the motif of the lamb is not subjected to ironic treatment in light of the unprecedented slaughter of British soldiers in the region. Instead, the sacrificial motif generates great pathos in view of the terror and passivity of the men in the line of fire: "they bunch, a bewildered half dozen, like sheep where the wall is tumbled" (167). Jones treats sacrifice as a trope which must be reinvested with its specific cultural contexts in order that it may become a

meaningful analogue for the experiences of the soldier.

However, while the final page of the work situates the frontsoldier within sacrificial contexts, it also contradicts such contexts with quotations from "Song of Solomon," which assert the equality and inviolable uniqueness of men in repudiation of sacrificial dynamics. Thus, although the first allusion to the lamb derives its meaning from an apocalyptic context, competing contexts of signification and association culminate in an assertion of parity and love: "This is my beloved and this is my friend." In this manner, the elegiac coda signals distinct, overlapping modes of contextualizing the fate and status of infantrymen throughout history, "the essential foot-mob who endure all things" (126). The coda resacralizes and ritualizes deaths which were evacuated of ceremony or communal acknowledgement at the Somme. In this connection, though, Dyer encapsulates the survivor's divided mission to commemorate the Somme, a divided mission which informs all the interpellative registers of the text, when he comments that, "in honouring the dead, survivors testified to their exclusion from the war's ultimate meaning--sacrifice--except vicariously as witnesses" (22).

The Heimlich and the Unheimlich

Like many elements of its interpellative apparatus, <u>In Parenthesis</u> registers the impasse posed by the double temporality of trauma which engages melancholic mourning,

simultaneously resisting and engaging forms of consolation. The work can thus be addressed in relation to both narrative and counter-narrative elements; the latter defy Cobley's claim for the book's "underlying rational structure" (188). Divided into seven parts, the testimony partitions aspects of the frontsoldier experience, demonstrating the slow accommodation of the men to horrific experience. However, their difficulties in accommodating trench experience are evident through the foregrounding of "the uncanny," which constitutes a counter-narrative to the text's liturgical and ritualistic emphases. In this connection, many cultural commentators on the Great War have discussed the "sense of the uncanny" which it inspired, particularly "the overdetermined nature of survival in combat" on the Western Front (Winter SM 65).

In accord with these commentators, In Parenthesis represents the Western Front in a context of "involuntary repetition" wherein events become "fateful and inescapable" and the men "stumble at the margin of familiar things--at the place of separation" (Freud SE 16: 237; Jones IP 70). Freud defines the uncanny as "something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression"; furthermore, he highlights the roles of "infantile complexes . . . . revived by some impression," as well as former "primitive beliefs which have been surmounted" (SE 16: 241, 249). All of Freud's emphases are dramatized by the plight of the trenchsoldiers in

Jones's work. In the trenches, the men are "confined in small dug concavities, wombed of earth, their rubber-sheets for caul," signalling their proximity to a primal state of infantile helplessness highly conducive to uncanny encounters (75-76).

Notably, the sensations of the men prior to the bombardment recall some disturbing primeval prehistory: "oddly stirred winds gusted coolish to your face, that might have borne things webbed and blind" (146). Such a sense of kinship with primordial forces long repressed is also indirectly evoked through descriptions of animals: mules make "their palaeolithic cries against the distant flares," and, in the trenches, rats "furrit with whiskered snouts the secret parts of us" (92, 54). After numerous bombardments, "the cratered earth, of all growing things bereaved, bore that uncreaturely impressiveness of telescope-observed bodies--where even pterodactyl would feel the place unfriendly" (97). The men reencounter "that creaturely world inherited from our remote beginnings" in a displaced topography of "unresponsive narrowing earth," which serves as a shelter but which also anticipates the grave (xiv, 45); "it is this passage from a realm of continuity into one of contiguities that signals the advent of the uncanny--the **unheimlich**--in human experience" (Santner SQ 32). In Parenthesis inscribes its melancholic mourning of the Somme through its attentiveness to the coincidence of structural and historical trauma in the form of

the uncanny.

Uncanny states proliferate in proximity to death, darkness and uncertainty, wherein "the air" becomes "full with rumour, fantastic and credible" (14). Constant exposure to death--the prospect of one's own death, others' deaths, and enemy deaths--consistently threatens the civilian soldier with symbolic collapse. The trenches, an atmosphere overcharged with the simultaneously paralyzing and destructive energies of **thanatos**, the death drive, are characterized by a "bizarre mixture of putrefaction and ammunition," and the frenzy of battle makes "conventional Christian modes of burying the dead and commemorating them" merely "irrelevant" (Winter SM 68, 69). At one point, for example, the bodies of peace and war comingle in an utterly abject encounter:

> the civvy dead who died in the Lord with **Libera nos** and full observance, churned and shockt from rest all out-harrowed and higgledy-piggledy along with those other--wood white with heavy script for mortuary monument, for those shovelled just into the surface soil like dog--with perhaps an **Our father** said if it was extra quiet. (149)

Along with such breaches of ceremony between the civilian and infantry dead, the conventional categorical distinctions between life and death are also subjected to a sickening state of suspension. At Mametz, for instance, the nose-cap on "the

severed head of `72 Morgan" is described as "[paring]" the "heel leather" of John Ball, who lies wounded in the Wood (180). The pervasive fear and anxiety of death is further amplified by "the uncanny effect" of darkness, the "bat-night-gloom" of the Western Front (Freud SE 16: 246; Jones IP 27).

In "Starlight Order," for example, the men must march in "the stumbling dark of the blind," a darkness which nourishes terror and reduces men to "little children," making one soldier feel "like a motherless child" (31, 41, 34). In the wake of alternating surges of exhaustion, numbing and adrenaline, "Judgement wraiths" seem to rise "out of the ground" along with other "Lazarus figures" labouring in the "sepulchre" of earth (41, 43). In this connection, it is to be noted that Freud privileges the ghost as "perhaps the most striking" instance of the **unheimlich** (SE 16: 241). The narration of historical trauma in In Parenthesis, then, actively repeats and (re)presents the specters of death, regression and disintegration which haunted the topography of the Somme. However, in spite of the fact that a trauma narrative may seek to restage and transform an encounter with mass death, testimonial narrative must necessarily work through such specters in tension with its alien and intimate others, the counternarrative forces of the uncanny.

Additionally, In Parenthesis engages with the Somme as a site which both summons and defamiliarizes the oral and cultural contexts of past warfare, generating a series of

uncanny encounters with Western literary traditions. The specific landscape of the Somme, in peace-time, with its "peat-bottomed valley below beech woods and bare chalk downland," its "low plateaux and ridges, separated by the Somme's tributaries" (Keegan FB 207), is charged with the "`grimly voice'" of Arthurian romance under trench conditions (Jones xi). And as Jones testifies, "the day by day in the Waste Land, the sudden violences and long stillnesses, the sharp contours and unformed voids of that mysterious existence, profoundly affected the imaginations of those who suffered it. It was a place of enchantment" (x). Aneirin Lewis, who sings in the darkness "because of the Disciplines of the Wars," recalls Shakespeare's fierce Welsh character from Henry V, Captain Fluellen (42). More generally, the soldiers from Henry V who camp in Picardy and engage in battle at Agincourt are echoed throughout Jones's work: "like Henry's army exactly five hundred years before, they embarked from Southampton, arrived in the area of Harfleur, and subsequently fought at the Somme" (Dilworth 99). In Shakespeare's play, Michael Williams, a soldier in the English army, worries that the dismembered, "all those legs and arms and heads, chopped off in a battle, shall join together at the latter day and cry all, `We died at such a place' . . . " (IV i. 137-40). Such an anxiety regarding the return of the dead signals the numerous uncanny contexts which Henry V elicits in relation to the (re)presentation of the Somme in In Parenthesis.

The Somme, though, is also the demonstrable realm of the canny, the **heimlich**: "it was not that the look of the place was unfamiliar to you. It was one to all appearances with what you knew already" (18). Although Ball's "latch-key" may be "far from its complying lock," the landscape is "green to remind you/of South English places," and, prior to battle, the quarters are frequently "humane with the paraphernalia of any place of common gathering, warm, within small walls" (23, 164, 14). Commonality under many varieties of historical duress is clearly rendered by the work: "they would make order, for however brief a time, and in whatever wilderness" (22). Jones asserts that the men are united by "the same jargon, the same prejudice against `other arms' and against the Staff, the same discomforts, the same grievances, the same maims, the same deep fears, the same pathetic jokes" (x). The trenches sustain "a culture already developed, already venerable and rooted" for the new recruits, who will "tip-toe when they name the place" (49). In particular, the warden of stores, with his "aboriginal mask," is "knit with the texture of the country-side . . . made proper to, the special environment dictated by a stationary war" (91). The assertion of the **heimlich** was a badge of endurance throughout the Great War, and the epithet, "cushy," became a password of hope, camaraderie and survival: as the narrator affectionately and ironically notes, "it appeared to be equally cushy on the whole half-battalion frontage" (76).

The **heimlich**, however, is not asserted in the face of the irreparable losses of comrades. As Staudt illuminates, an emphasis on the sign-making activities of the characters gives way to heightened metatextual interventions during representations of combat: "the narrator of the second half of In Parenthesis relies increasingly on myth and legend to make sense of the men's incomprehensible situation" (54). Traumatic experiences fracture a continuous sense of agency, memory and identity, preventing recourse to the limited salvaging power of ritual. As the moving depiction of Mametz makes abundantly clear, during combat there is neither time nor leisure for burial ceremony when a pause to grieve a cherished platoon mate could result in fatal individual or collective injuries:

> neither any word spoken
> nor no decent nor appropriate sowing of this seed
> nor remembrance of the harvesting
> of the renascent cycle
> and return
> nor shaving of the head nor ritual incising for
> these **viriles** un-
> der each tree. (174)

During the battle, then, the men are "distinguished only in their variant mutilation" (172). The continuity of humanity in its capacity as knower and maker is only asserted against the

shattering of these roles at the Somme through the narrator's poetic imposition of ritualistic contexts and elegiac conventions. The work engages the constant manipulation of parallels and continuities in the face of the mass deaths at Mametz; in this manner, In Parenthesis details the final seconds of many individual soldiers in a sustained sequence which bears witness for "so many without memento," for all those who died with "no maker to contrive [their] funerary song" (163, 155).

In particular, castrative and maternal symbols of the feminine alternately incarnate death and consolation in the final scenes of desolation and terror at Mametz. In this manner, the "strumpet confidence" of "sweet sister death" contrasts with the "influential eyes" and "awarding hands" of the Queen of the Woods (162, 185). Although death at Mametz is random and sudden, the Queen of the Woods defies the "meandering fortune-graph" of the unnatural and violent ends of battle through her particular knowledge of the personality and merit of each soldier (159). With his creative invocation of the Queen of the Woods, Jones exploits a feminine symbol of fertility, compassion, insight, and martial protocol; fittingly, Sacks observes that "our consoling images are most often figures for an immortal but metaphorized sexual force" (7). The Queen decorates German and British soldiers alike with signs of seasonal fertility, namely flowers, berries, and herbs. Her distinct ceremonial acknowledgements of each named and celebrated soldier also function as "demarcations

separating the living from the dead," acts of fundamental significance in the Great War, where the living and the dead frequently inhabited the poisoned landscape together (Sacks 19).

The proliferation of pastoral contexts in the final section of In Parenthesis corresponds to the breakdown of sequential contexts of understanding and action during combat. Cyclic and pagan symbols are invoked in Jones's recourse to symbolic elements, the indirect means specified by Laub and Podell which enable the survivor to contend with the non-narratable fragmentation of traumatic experience (993). By means of its reiteration of conventions, its invocations of ritual, and its intertexts, In Parenthesis stages a moving encounter between mass death and the belated, posthumous assertion of **eros** (Freud BPP 326). Through the "somehow echoing language of dead poets," the Great War is "absorbed" into a seasonal and historical "cycle of repeated occasions," occasions fundamental to the reclamation of the **heimlich** (Sacks 23, 25). In this manner, the Somme is situated in the context of "a viable, empowering legacy," one of the most important tasks of the mourning process (Santner SQ 30). Henry V, Y Gododdin, aspects of Arthurian myth, and the history of Charlemagne are made available as "totemic resources" with which to mediate the War (Santner SQ 30). The intertexts emphasize that the Somme serves as a site of memory which is overdetermined by previous battles and cultural losses.

Through its attentiveness to the overlapping histories of a singular place, In Parenthesis situates itself within an ongoing and interrelated history of mourning and commemoration: "each loss recapitulates a prior loss and each turn to consolation repeats an earlier deflection of desire" (Sacks 18). Repetition is thus a vital agency in Jones's remarkable reconstructive effort to bear witness to soldiers mutilated and unmourned in the scenes of mass death at Mametz.

Melancholia, Modernity, Nation

Jones's complex recourse to cultural precedent represents the outcome of his effort to discover "viable totemic resources," after the Great War, resources which would enable him "to sort out the pieces of a symbolic legacy that could still be safely integrated" (Santner SQ 45). As Laqueur observes, the symbolic legacy of the previous generation was described by many postwar elites as "the `lies of the old men,'" and the repudiation of these "lies" produced a "semiotically arid world" ("MN" 160).[16] Thus, the "Lost Generation" signals the "**disoriented, wandering, directionless**" state of those who had survived the War but were unable to mourn its losses (Hynes AWI 386). And yet it is precisely the loss of transgenerational "inherited legacies and consoling identifications with symbolic, even immortal, figures of power," resources critical to the tasks of mourning, which Jones grieves in the postwar world (Sacks 8). Given that Jones

viewed his own epoch in relation to "symptoms of real loss to man as artist" ("ARW" 152), it is not surprising that he thematized the cumulative losses impacting the twentieth-century artist as "The Break": "in the nineteenth century, Western Man moved across a rubicon which, if as unseen as the 38th Parallel, seems to have been as definitive as the Styx" ("P" A 113). Within the twentieth century, in Jones's perspective, the poet is no longer able to speak on behalf of, or even in relation to, "some contained group of families, or of a tribe, nation, people, cult" ("ARW" 118). As a result, poets are placeless, and cannot readily answer the following questions: "where for us is `this place,' where do we seek or find what is `ours,' what is available, what is valid as material for our effective signs?" ("ARW" 121). In response to these perceived disappearances of meaning, disappearances implicated in the creation, transmission and reception of cultural artifacts, an ongoing melancholia shapes Jones's "apocalyptic imaginary" of the West (Jay "A" 90).[17]

In opposition to the dislocations of modernity, though, Jones perceives that the Welsh embody the continuities of the past and the promise of a unified Britain. In his own words, "however separatist by historical, racial and geographical accidents," Wales is "devoted to the unity of this island" of Britain ("MA" 216). Accordingly, he writes that within the trenches, groups of Londoners and Welshmen, "the children of Doll Tearsheet," bear "in their bodies the genuine tradition

of the Island of Britain" (x). In contrast to Jones's construction of the unified island, however, David Cairns and Shaun Richards point out in their discussion of Shakespeare's Henry V that its veiled inclusion of the Welsh, Scots, and Irish soldiers cannot actually acknowledge "their possession of an alternative language and culture, for to do so would be to stage the presence of the very contradictions which the play denies in its attempt to stage the ideal of a unified English Nation State" (180). In contrast to Shakespeare's rendering of the battle, though, Jones transforms King Harry into Runner Herne, whose instructions inaugurate the hostilities on the uncanny geography of the Somme (Dilworth 100). Also in contrast to Henry V, In Parenthesis concludes with the efforts of the Welsh hero Captain Cadwaladr to restore "the Excellent Disciplines of the Wars," and Jones also invokes "Oeth and Annoeth's hosts," a spectacular fighting force derived from Welsh legend (181, 187). In this manner, a scene of hitherto unparalleled destruction, the Somme, is linked to the promise entailed by the potential reconfiguration of the British nation.

To pursue these connections further, according to mythical report, Cadwalladr, the last of the British kings during the reign of Constantine, was told that the Britons "would not recover their land until the time foretold by Merlin and decreed by God" (MacDougall 11). Jones's work thus signals its participation in traditions of Welsh storytelling

which continuously resurrect celebrated figures of deliverance "who are not allowed to die" but who are exhumed from "the cauldron of rebirth" (421). However, commenting on the death of the Welsh Prince Llywelyn by the English in 1282 in Buellt Wood, Jones maintains that this death amounted to a "national catastrophe" and that "the last remnant remaining of the pattern of a Britain known to Cadwaladr, known to Arthur, known to Cunedda and to the Caesars disappeared" (Gwyndaf 429; Jones "WP" 62). Thus, Jones's conception of Wales remains caught up in an alternating set of emphases which signal a melancholic fixation, in that his phantasy of the "termination" of Wales also necessitates a vision of its "redemptive unveiling after the catastrophe" (Jay "A" 90). The symbolic shattering of the British nation at the Somme through the deaths of so many young men serves Jones's quest to renominate and revive the island through the reconstruction of the ancient topographies and creeds of the Britons.

As Rod Jones suggests, though, such a conception of Wales postulates "a collective subject overriding contradictions" (268). And, according to Gwyn Williams, given that "the frontiers of a Welsh nation have rarely coincided with the frontiers of a Welsh people," the problem of national identity "has been desperate from the beginning" (192, 197). Jones's recourse to the foundational narratives of nationhood is inextricably enmeshed in the imaginative effort to mourn traumatic losses sustained at the Somme. As Ward maintains, In

Parenthesis indicts a process of "civilizational decay" continuous with, and merely exaggerated by, the Great War (111). Does Jones merely displace the losses occasioned by the Somme by projectively resituating them in relation to the loss of Wales and a unified Britain? Or do recapitulations of loss enable a working-through of the Somme and its overdetermined personal and historical contexts? To recollect Santner, the work of mourning proceeds in "symbolically and dialogically mediated doses; it is a process of translating, troping, and figuring loss" (PLR 144). In the end, it must be admitted that both structural trauma and historical trauma are engaged by the reconstructive possibilities of In Parenthesis; the work demands an analysis sensitive to the differences and inter-relationships between these forms of trauma.

Critical discussion must therefore acknowledge that Jones's reconstruction of the Somme bears a projective relationship to the melancholic loss of his national affiliation to Wales, the seat of his father's heritage and language. The Somme is also invested with the loss of fraternal bonds apparently naturalized by previous modes of warfare, described as "the intimate, continuing, domestic life of small contingents of men, within whose structure Roland could find, and, for a reasonable while, enjoy, his Oliver" (ix). The Somme is similarly charged with the unmournable losses of modernity, experienced in relation to region, locality, and accelerated technological change. As Bhabha

observes, "the nation fills the void left in the uprooting of communities and kin, and turns that loss into the language of metaphor" (291). In this connection, David Lowenthal also notes the foundational status of loss in the drive to reconstitute a national heritage: "identity is more zealously husbanded by the quest for a lost heritage than by its nurture when regained" (52).

More generally, it can perhaps be speculated that In Parenthesis, which bears a subtitle which situates the Great War in the context of the maternal relation, serves as a "convoluted expression of distress at the matricidal underpinnings of the modernist project" (Jay "A" 96). Furthermore, recalling Jones's preoccupations with the **heimlich** and the **unheimlich**, Jay suggests that the "conflicted desire to return `home'" signalled by the "uncanny" can be traced to the desire "for reunion with the mother's body" ("UN" 21). In light of such sweeping albeit germane hypotheses, I end this chapter by concluding that the Somme bears the density of numerous transferences and melancholically-mediated losses, bringing them all into degrees of continuous and contiguous contact, complicating the **Trauerarbeit** performed by In Parenthesis. Predominantly, however, in addition to its confrontation with the mass deaths of Ball's platoon, In Parenthesis also locates trauma in the more gradual and comprehensive extinction of cultural traditions, traditions capable of facilitating mourning and mediating the

transmission of song and narrative, as well as trauma testimony. When Jones's readers are summoned to serve as secondary witnesses to his belated (re)presentation of the catastrophe of the Somme, they are simultaneously asked to bear witness to their own estrangement from tradition, and to their own uncertain abilities to participate in acknowledging the collective cultural legacies of loss in the aftermath of the Great War. On the brink of uncanny recurrence, then, another catastrophic World War, In Parenthesis configures its poetics of loss in irresolute relationship to both the West and the Western Front, in a retrospective melancholic mourning for the massive dislocations perceived as inherent features of modernity itself, illuminating the extensive radius which governs the transferential field potentially activated by the haunted topography of historical trauma.

Chapter Eight

Notes

1. The quotation is taken from the epigraph to Part 6 of In Parenthesis from Y Gododdin (133).

2. Notably, Jones observes these historical conditions when he dramatizes the plight of the infantry before the uncut wire in In Parenthesis:

> You stumble in a place of tentacle
> you seek a place made straight
> you unreasonably blame the artillery
> you stand waist-deep
> you stand upright
> you stretch out hands to pluck at Jerry wire as if it were bram-
> ble mesh. (166)

3. For contemporary belated (re)presentations of the Somme, see Pat Barker, Another World (London: Penguin, 1998), Sebastian Faulks, Birdsong (London: Vintage, 1994), and Frank McGuinness, Observe the Sons of Ulster marching towards the Somme, (London: Faber and Faber, 1986). The latter work examines the Irish role in the Somme, July 1, 1916, and it also recalls the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne, July 1, 1690, a legendary historical conflict in the history of Ireland, which is commemorated to this day during the Parade Days in July. Also see note 14 on Francis Ledwidge and Seamus Heaney below.

4. Compare Sassoon, Memoirs of an Infantry Officer (1930), especially the section entitled, "Battle," Wyn Griffith, Up to Mametz (London: Faber and Faber, 1931), Graves, Goodbye to all That (1929).

5. For a critical discussion of Wales and its "invented traditions," see Prys Morgan, "From a Death to a View: The Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period" in The Invention of Tradition, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 43-100.

6. In this connection, in "Personal Narratives and Commemoration," included in War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century, ed. Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), Hynes points out that Sassoon's accounts of his War experiences, including his participation in the battle for Mametz Wood "[commemorate] the brave individual rush into danger, in which the solitary soldier is an agent in his own war, and it does so **because** the modern mass-war that

Sassoon fought in had made that kind of individual gesture obsolete and irrelevant . . . Sassoon's adventures are heroic and pointless; they belong to a lost, idealized past, like the dream of England" (216).

7. For a more comprehensive discussion of Jones's exploration of the Twrch Trwyth, see Miles, "Wales and the Celts," in Backgrounds to David Jones.

8. As Blissett notes, in "To Make a Shape in Words," Renascence 38.2 (1986), 67-81, the title of Part 5 of In Parenthesis, "Squat Garlands for White Knights," refers to "the shrapnel helmet issued in 1916, through witty allusion to Hopkins (`garlanded in squat and surly steel') . . ." (72).

9. Like Ward, Cobley seeks to expose Jones's "nostalgia for a more satisfying communal society" (200). Such a critique is certainly significant, given that Jones's conservative and even alleged "proto-fascist" sympathies continue to be debated in relation to his aesthetic productions (Staudt 21). For more on this controversy, see Dilworth, "David Jones and Fascism," in David Jones: Man and Poet, ed. John Matthias (Orono, Maine: National Poetry Foundation, 1989), 143-59.

In addition to tacit views of the status of the Great War in relation to mourning, Fussell and Cobley also offer implicit evaluations of the strategies of representation which should configure the events described. While Fussell argues for an exclusive mode of ironic emplotment, Cobley valorizes the apparent heterogeneity of postmodern texts which attempt to deploy and dissolve the genre patterns used to constitute and fracture any unitary perspective on events. Yet, as she repeatedly affirms, no text, whether modernist or postmodernist, can ultimately counteract a fundamental blindness to its own assumptions within the purview of a deconstructive framework (17). As Staudt maintains, then, perhaps "the very effort to classify his work as modernist or postmodernist exposes the ambiguities and inadequacies of those labels, yet Jones's work addresses important concerns of both these major twentieth-century trends" (192). In another distinct perspective, in "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth," included in Probing the Limits of Representation, ed. Friedländer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1992), 37-53, White defines modernist modes of representation "less as a rejection of the realist project and a denial of history" than as "a growing awareness of the incapacity of our traditional modes of representation even to **describe** [events] accurately" (52).

10. Many critics implicitly address the Somme as an ambivalent site of memory. To summarize Cobley's position, for example, she maintains that In Parenthesis serves as a contradictory site of inscription: "straight and ironic readers produce

irreconcilable interpretations which are both authorized by the text" (197). And according to Featherstone, "Jones's technique forces the reader to consider historical congruities and incongruities in his interpretation of war, and we are never allowed to settle into any sure perspective of ironic contrast or spurious nationalism" (35). In another example of a corroborating approach to the intertexts, Dilworth argues that "interpretation moves in two directions": "if cultural tradition interprets war, war forces a reinterpretation of cultural tradition" (59). Ward also declares In Parenthesis to be fundamentally ambivalent, in that its intertexts suggest both symbolic continuities and discontinuities simultaneously (115).

11. The text is most often identified as a poem, although it is also discussed as a "war narrative" or a "novel" (Cobley 239-40). Martin Löschnigg, in "Intertextuality, Textuality and the Experience of War: David Jones's In Parenthesis and Otto Nebel's Zuginsfeld" in Intimate Enemies: English and German Literary Reactions to the Great War, 1914-1918, ed. Franz Karl Stanzel and Löschnigg (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 1993), describes Jones's work as an "extended experimental poem" (100), while Hynes classifies the book as a "strange poetic war narrative" (ST 1). Dilworth argues that the work should ultimately be considered a poem, although he also maintains that In Parenthesis "undergoes continual subgeneric metamorphosis" (38).

However, Eaves is in disagreement with Dilworth when she asserts that "In Parenthesis is not definable as a particular art form, and does not fit neatly into any genre. It is a mixture of prose and poetry" (54). In this connection, Gwyndaf supports Eaves when he maintains that "in outlining the Welsh epic tradition, form, as such, is not the crucial factor" (420). Amidst this welter of debate, my own discussion contributes to dissension by privileging the elegiac elements in Jones's work; more generally I treat many elements of In Parenthesis in relation to poetic testimony, as I define that term in my analysis of Owen and Sassoon in Chapter Five.

12. For a recent tour guide to the Somme region, including "The Poet's Walk: Bois Francais and Mametz," see Paul Reed, Walking the Somme, in the Battleground Europe Series (London: Leo Cooper, 1997).

13. Compare the creeds and practices of Eric Gill's community, where Jones became an apprentice, with McGann's discussion of the "materialist aesthetic" of William Morris (45). As Jones comments in "Eric Gill, An Appreciation" (1940), Gill "was a true master in the sense that Morris was a master; indeed, with Morris he had much affinity--he was, in a way, a Victorian person" (EA 297). Also see the chapter, "Eric Gill," in Miles.

14. The battle for Passchendaele claimed many lives, among them, Lance Corporal Francis Ledwidge, who is buried in Artillery Wood Cemetery at Boesinghe (M. Gilbert 353). Ledwidge, an Irish soldier, has been commemorated by Seamus Heaney in both verse and prose.

15. As Newton points out, Primo Levi, a survivor of Auschwitz, chose an epigraph from Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" for his last book, The Drowned and the Saved, a gesture which highlights the general significance of this work for literatures of trauma (124).

16. An even more dramatic resistance to identification with elders and parents was noted by the Mitscherlichs in their work on mourning in Germany after the Second World War (Santner SQ 45).

17. See Miles's discussion of Oswald Spengler's considerable influence on Jones in Backgrounds to David Jones (36-64). As Miles points out, The Decline of the West: Form and Actuality (1917; rev. ed. 1922) was first published to enthusiastic acclaim in Germany at the end of the Great War; as such, this book, which aspired to monumentality, must be read in relation to historical trauma and its aftermath. It was not to appear in England until 1926 (36). Spengler published another work, which also later influenced Jones's vocabulary of cultural decline, entitled, Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life (1931). Also see Staudt, "The Decline of the West and the Optimism of the Saints: David Jones' Reading of Oswald Spengler" in David Jones: Man and Poet, ed. John Matthias (Orono, Maine: National Poetry Foundation, 1989), 443-63. For more general discussions of Spengler and postwar culture, see "Modern Mythology: the Case of `Reactionary Modernism,'" by David E. Cooper, in History of the Human Sciences 9.2 (1996), 25-37; and "Spengler Revisited," in Spiritus Mundi, by Northrop Frye (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1976), 179-98.

Afterword

National Ghost(s): From Testimony to Postmemory

> They call me The Ghost, (which is a point in favour of their latent imaginations.)
>
> Wilfred Owen, Collected Letters (1918)

> . . . the people are ghosts . . . .
>
> Leonard Woolf on Jacob's Room, Diary of Virginia Woolf (1922)

> As regards being dead, however, one of my main consolations has always been that I have the strongest intention of being an extremely active ghost. Let nobody make any mistake about that.
>
> Siegfried Sassoon, Sherston's Progress (1936)

> The First World War goes on getting stronger--our number one national ghost.
>
> Ted Hughes, "National Ghost" (1965)

> Ten years later, throwing off hot sheets, Rivers reflected that the questions the ghosts had asked had all been questions the living people wanted answered . . . . the questions became more insistent, more powerful, for being projected into the mouths of the dead.
>
> Pat Barker, The Ghost Road (1995)

The poetic testimonies and the experimental fictions of primary witnesses and their contemporaries, by writers such as Owen, Sassoon, Woolf and Jones, bear witness to historical catastrophe in distinct, but interrelated ways. This study of specific texts insistently foregrounds the unresolved cultural legacies of the War, as well as the decisive significance of the belated witness in the ongoing transmission and reception of that event. But, beyond the literary productions of civilians and combatants, writers who have rendered that signal trauma a "vicarious past" for successive generations, how are increasingly belated witnesses to continue to engage the historical trauma of the Great War, an event which demands to be situated within the contexts of remembrance created by the present (J. Young "HVP" 670)? Belated engagements with the Great War self-reflexively recall or even explicitly incorporate the event's prior representations: poems, novels, histories, movies and photographs. Moreover, they inevitably foreground their secondary and mediated status, and their engagements must traverse divides of history, gender, and geography, among other modes of difference. Not surprisingly, for example, the historical figure of Rivers is privileged in Barker's Regeneration Trilogy, in large measure because of his secondary and mediated position with respect to combat trauma. In this manner, he dramatizes the dilemmas of reception, dilemmas which the belated reader to some extent shares. Thus, the very modes, medias, and pathways by which traumatic memory

is transmitted are engaged in the work of writers who succeed the generations which survived the Great War. As Froma I. Zeitlin comments in a related context, "far from foreclosing any identification with these events, this very belatedness leads them urgently to seek ways of linking the present to the past" (6).

One means by which historical trauma is transmitted from the past to the present, a means which exemplifies the problematic co-implication of mourning and contexts of mass death, is the spoken and unspoken transmission of trauma from parent to child. This mode of postmemory is foregrounded by two major British authors invoked throughout this study, Barker and Hughes. As Hirsch delineates, postmemory may refer to "the experience of those who grew up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, but whose own belated stories are displaced by the stories of the previous generation, shaped by traumatic events that they can neither understand nor re-create" (8). In Barker's case, postmemorial engagement with the War was apparently precipitated by an ominous silence: the long, near-lethal bayonet scar which traversed her grandfather's body as a result of his service in the War was rendered omnipresent through the virtual absence of stories which accompanied it ("Interview"). In this connection, the phantoms identified by Abraham and Torok may be recalled as a relevant formulation of trauma and its potential transgenerational character: "what comes back to haunt are the

tombs of others," tombs which become buried within the living (Rand SK 172).

Long before recent scholarship theorized the transgenerational transmission of trauma, though, Hughes movingly and disturbingly probed the lingering presence of the Great War in what I can only term "poems of postmemorial testimony." Dramatizing chronic dislocations of identity in response to the unassimilated horrors of the trenches, these poems of exorcism and recuperation both exploit and undermine the instabilities of self-reference. In one example, the speaker describes himself as his father's "luckless double," and he recalls an early childhood spent crawling amongst the horrific landscape created by the previous generation: "jawbones and blown-off boots, tree-stumps, shellcases and craters" ("Out" I 16, 18). In yet another poem, "Dust As We Are," the speaker maintains that he was compelled to serve as his father's "supplementary convalescent" (15):

> And I filled
> With his knowledge.
> After mother's milk
> This was the soul's food. A soap-smell spectre
> Of the massacre of innocents. (34-38)

In this disturbing excerpt, Hughes situates his own childhood development in belated relationship to his father's conscious

and unconscious experiences of the Great War. In this manner, he highlights a transgenerational mode of transference distinct from a phylogenetic inheritance, Freud's speculative psychoanalytic explanation for the collective and unwitting transmission of "dispositions" and "memory traces" of previous generations (MM 127). But in the specific context of Hughes's postmemorial testimonies, and in the more general context of my own analyses of trauma and mourning, Freud's notion of "inheritance" may be reconfigured to serve as yet another register of the myriad spectral agencies of the Great War (cf. Santner "F").

Literature both conjures and serves these spectral agencies. Certainly, the preoccupation with ghosts which characterizes the uncanny psychological topography of the Western Front also informs Britain's subsequent cultural myths and textual productions of the War. In this regard, Owen's platoon mates combined rather bleak comedy with uncanny foresight when they called him "The Ghost"; true to his threat, Sassoon continues to haunt. Yet, even as their voices are summoned to speak to the present in Barker's trilogy, have the questions the "living people" asked been answered as a result of their belated projection into these "mouths of the dead"? The ongoing interrogation of the Great War's witnesses attests to failures of mourning, to "gestures of mourning that cannot be performed," given that these spirits are themselves cultural projections which embody the ambivalences of the

living (Rabaté 229, xvii). It seems appropriate to speculate that new questions will continue to be posed to the ghostly witnesses of the War in a postmemorial literature attentive to the broad collective import of an event which invites complex considerations of the limits and nature of group relationship.

In this connection, it is notable that Hughes emphasizes the peculiarly English character of the Great War ghost which he perceives to be omnipresent, "molesting everybody" ("NG" 70). Do phantoms respect national borders? And given its range of "dispersed and eccentric" definitions, does not the concept of the nation itself depend upon "the phantom of identity" (Kertzer 60, 58)? In what ways, then, do these interanimating phantoms contribute to an understanding of the dynamics of haunting? Hughes's linkage of the Great War and the nation specifies one way of privileging the question of collective mourning processes in the wake of historical trauma; after Santner, the Great War can be considered a constellation of stranded objects, a constellation configuring melancholic identifications constitutive of national discourses. Apparently taking up the issue where Hughes left off, for example, Light wonders at the manner in which loss and absence ground the phantasy of the nation: "is indeed the very idea of English nationality--of something which, in Rupert Brooke's words, could be for ever England--inevitably tinged with the elegiac?" (19). Light's rhetorical question regarding the essential unity of England, a stability construed as purely

the product of retrospective phantasy, suggestively elides two issues arguably pivotal to English group identification: the Great War and Empire. These haunted objects continue to occasion enormous ambivalence. According to Lane, who recollects "Freud's rather schematic account of grief," a melancholic Britain "has yet to record the empire as a lost and irretrievable object; Britain's repetition of commemorative nostalgia signifies conservative blockage, not cultural process" (232). Similarly, Easthope affirms that "England still can neither face nor forget the Empire and loss of Empire" (ENC 31).

In the wake of the numerous losses associated with the Great War and the decline of Empire, literal and symbolic losses which continue to remain relevant to collective processes of identification and mourning in Britain, Hughes's angry native ghost may be compared with Benjamin's helpless specter of modernity, the angel of history who "would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed" ("TPH" 257). Yet collective objects of identification which were forever altered by the War and its legacies can never be fully restored and made whole. Furthermore, the dead cannot be reawakened even though they occasion complex processes of collective mourning and cultural acknowledgement. In a manner both related to, and distinct from, Benjamin's angel of history, then, an angel who is fixated on the past and who is helplessly propelled into the future by the storm of catas-

trophic events which ensures that man-made wreckage and debris "grows skyward" ("TPH" 258), the national ghosts of the Great War are being propelled into the future by a belated post-memorial literature of historical trauma which continues to engage the cultural work of mourning initiated by the witnesses of War. As a collective, transgenerational historical trauma which can neither be definitively understood nor re-created by successive generations, the Great War can only be presented and (re)presented anew in response to the belated questions, the animating ambivalences, and the unresolved losses of the living.

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