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Experiments in Literature: The City between Demise *and* Revival

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"TANTA VIS ADMONITIONIS INEST IN LOCIS." CZERNOWITZ COME SPAZIO LETTERARIO DELLA MEMORIA[1]

CHIARA CONTERNO*

ABSTRACT. This essay draws on contemporary debates on the importance of Jewish literature in twentieth-century German culture. Particularly, it analyses the lyric poetry of a specific city, Czernowitz, an historical town in Central Europe characterized by a complex cultural stratification. In Czernowitz, the presence and interaction of different ethnicities, languages and religions led to the development of a particular kind of literature in German by Jewish authors. Although this fertile cultural production ended abruptly due to the Shoah and subsequent diaspora, the culture of Czernowitz left an indelible trace on lyric poetry in German. The exiled authors wrote many poems on their native town. Based on the theories of Aleida Assmann (*Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Handlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*), this essay analyses some poems by Rose Ausländer, Klara Blum, Alfred Gong, Else Keren, Ilana Shmueli, considering the close relationship between memory, trauma and testimony.

KEY WORDS: Czernowitz, Exile, Memory, German-Jewish Poetry, Shoah

Già Cicerone aveva intuito la fondamentale importanza dei luoghi per la costruzione di spazi culturali della memoria: "tanta vis admonitionis inest in locis" si legge in *De finibus bonorum et malorum* (V, 2). Partendo da questo presupposto, in *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*, Aleida Assmann riflette sul ruolo e sul significato dei luoghi per la memoria (Assmann, 1999: 298-339). Nel suo studio Assmann individua alcune tipologie di luoghi a seconda della loro storia e di come questa è stata rielaborata dalla memoria umana. Una prima categoria è quella dei *Generationenorte*, luoghi che acquisiscono senso per legami familiari e affettivi. Sono caratterizzati da uno stretto rapporto tra gli uomini e lo spazio geografico. Lo spazio determina le forme esperienziali e vitali dell'uomo e questi impregna il luogo con le proprie tradizioni e la propria storia (Assmann, 1999: 301-303).

1 Questo lavoro è stato realizzato grazie alla borsa di studio dell'*Institut für Kultur und Geschichte Südosteuropas* (IKGS, Monaco di Baviera) e alle ricerche svolte nella biblioteca dell'istituto, così come nella *Staatsbibliothe*k e nella *Universitätsbibliothek* di Monaco di Baviera.

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Vi sono poi i *Gedenkorte*, contraddistinti da discontinuità, cioè da un'eclatante difformità tra passato e presente. Sono definiti *Gedenkorte* i luoghi la cui storia è stata interrotta bruscamente[2] e in cui è avvenuto qualcosa di estremamente anomalo o si è sofferto in maniera incomparabile. Nella memoria storica del luogo svolgono un ruolo prominente persecuzioni, stragi, umiliazioni e sconfitte. La storia interrotta si materializza nelle rovine e nei relitti che si elevano dall'ambiente come resti estranei con cui il presente non intrattiene più alcun rapporto (Assmann, 1999: 308-309). Pierre Nora ha chiamato questo passaggio da un luogo in cui si stabilizzano forme di vita a un luogo che ne porta solo le tracce con l'espressione francese *lieu de mémoire* (Nora, 1997; Nora, 1990; sui "luoghi della memoria" si anche veda Calzoni, 2007: 531-545). Un *Gedenkort* è ciò che resta di qualcosa che non c'è e non vale più.

Affinché questi *Gedenkorte* continuino ad esistere, è necessario raccontare una storia che supplisca la realtà scomparsa. In questo senso gli *Erinnerungsorte* sono i frammenti dispersi di un contesto di vita che è andato perduto. Con l'eclissi e/o la distruzione di un luogo non termina, infatti, la sua storia. Il luogo conserva dei relitti materiali che diventano elementi di racconti e quindi punti di riferimento di una nuova memoria collettiva. Il luogo e i suoi relitti necessitano ora di spiegazioni; il loro significato deve essere assicurato da una tradizione linguistica. La continuità distrutta non può venire ristabilita, ma il ricordo permette di ricollegarvisi (Assmann, 1999: 309). Ciò che il tempo prova a cancellare viene in parte ripristinato dallo spazio fisico con i suoi relitti. Ne deriva una "topologia della storia". I luoghi diventano "indimenticabili" nella misura in cui vengono "tradotti" in "memoria" (Assmann, 1999: 328).

Un luogo, però, trattiene le memorie solo se ci sono degli uomini che si preoccupano di ricordare. Questa preoccupazione di assicurare il ricordo è importante soprattutto nelle situazioni di forzato oblio come è successo durante il periodo nazionalsocialista e la Seconda Guerra Mondiale.[3] In riferimento ai luoghi 'traumatici' e 'traumatizzati' delle persecuzioni antisemite Assmann introduce la definizione di *traumatische Orte*. Non solo portano con sé ferite insanabili, ma neanche la loro storia non può essere narrata a causa dell'inaudita traumaticità delle vicende che li hanno travolti (Assmann, 1999:

2 Assmann parla anche di paesaggi sacri e mitici—"Heilige Orte" e "mythische Landschaften"—e di luoghi esemplari della memoria—"Exemplarische Gedächtnisorte—Jerusalem und Theben" (Assmann, 1999: 303-308).

3 La "preoccupazione di ricordare" si è diffusa in maniera preponderante dagli anni Ottanta nei territori dell'Europa centro-orientale, dove le persecuzioni sono state particolarmente crudeli. Le generazioni successive a quella dei perseguitati si impegnano per mantenere vivo il ricordo e quindi creano monumenti che commemorino il passato.

328). I *traumatische Orte* sono i luoghi in cui si sono verificati eventi che si sottraggono a qualsiasi attribuzione di senso.[4]

Czernowitz, la città che fino al 1918 appartiene all'impero austro-ungarico, dal 1918 al 1940 è territorio romeno, dal 1940 al 1941 è controllata dell'Unione Sovietica, dal 1941 al 1944 torna sotto la Romania alleata della Germania, nel 1944 viene riconquistata dall'Armata Rossa e diventa poi città ucraina, è un *Erinnerungsort* ("luogo della memoria") a pieno titolo (sulla storia di Czernowitz si veda Heppner, 2000). È un *Generationenort*, ma è anche e soprattutto un *Gedenkort*. Sebbene si possa raccontare la sua storia—e quindi non possa essere denominata un *traumatischer Ort* secondo la definizione di Aleida Assmann—Czernowitz porta su di sé i traumi delle persecuzioni. Il passaggio da *Generationenorte* a *Gedenkorte* ed *Erinnerungsorte* o, riprendendo il gioco linguistico di Pierre Nora, da *milieu de mémoire* a *lieu de mémoire* si verifica in seguito alle fratture e rotture di cornici di significato culturale e contesti sociali (Assmann, 1999: 338). *Generationorte*, *Gedenkorte*, *Erinnerungorte* e *traumatische Orte* si sovrappongono in uno stratificato paesaggio della memoria (sul rapporto tra trauma e memoria si veda Busch, 2007).

Nella rielaborazione mnestica la storia di Czernowitz non è ricordata secondo rapporti e distanze temporali esatti, in quanto la memoria non è retta da regole temporali ferree. Il legame arbitrario tra temporalmente vicino e temporalmente lontano rende i luoghi della memoria "luoghi auratici" (Assmann, 1999: 337-339), in cui si cerca un rapporto diretto con il passato. Questa zona osmotica, in cui ci si aspetta che i *Gedenkorte* ristabiliscano un contatto con gli "spiriti del passato", spiega la magia attribuita ai luoghi della memoria. E in questo senso i luoghi della memoria assumono anche connotazioni mitiche.[5]

Sul concetto di "aura" ha riflettuto anche Walter Benjamin in "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit". Con "aura" Benjamin intende: "Ein sonderbares Gespinst aus Raum und Zeit: einmalige Erscheinung einer Ferne, so nah sie sein mag" (Benjamin, 1991: 440). Secondo Benjamin l'aura consiste nel collocare in un lontano passato ciò che è tempo-

4 Secondo la classificazione di Assmann Czernowitz non è un "luogo traumatico" *strictu sensu* perché di Czernowitz può essere raccontata la storia. Auschwitz, invece, è un "traumatischer Ort".

5 Cfr. *Mythos Czernowitz. Eine Stadt im Spiegel ihrer Nationalitäten* (Afsari und Pollack, 2005). Dopo la presentazione delle varie nazionalità residenti a Czernowitz, il volume chiude con "Czernowitz—Mythos und Wirklichkeit", un contributo polifonico di Sergij Osatschuk, Martin Pollack, Jurko Prochasko, Karl Schlögel ed Eduard Weissmann, moderato da Georg Aescht (193-219). Tra i molti interessanti lavori su Czernowitz si ricordano: Bornemann, Tiefenthaler und Wagner, 1988; Schlögel, 1991; Wichner und Wiesner, 1993; Cordon und Kusdat, 2002; Kublitz-Kramer, 2003; Corbea-Hoisie, 2003; Werner, 2005; Popovici, 2010; De Villa, 2012.

ralmente vicino. La sacralità dell'aura sta, quindi, in una sensazione di distanza. Pertanto, un luogo auratico è un luogo in cui diventa percepibile l'inavvicinabile lontananza del passato. I *Gedenkorte* e gli *Erinnerungsort*e sono infatti "uno straordinario intreccio di spazio e tempo" che fonde presenza con assenza, presente e passato.

Oltre al famoso passo della "Bremer Rede" in cui Paul Celan definisce la sua terra d'origine "eine Gegend, in der Menschen und Bücher lebten" (Celan, 1983: 185),[6] rendono questa regione *Gedenkort*, *Gedächtnisort* ed *Erinnerungsort* le liriche di altri poeti nati a Czernowitz. In seguito vengono considerate alcune poesie che 'ricordano' Czernowitz e in cui viene esplicitamente menzionato il toponimo. Le liriche, in cui non compare il toponimo, vengono considerate per integrare quanto affermato dalle altre. Le autrici e gli autori di questi testi sono poeti ebrei originari di Czernowitz e poi emigrati.

Ilana Shmueli

Con una certa dose di umorismo, nella seguente poesia di Ilana Shmueli[7] (1924-2011), l'io lirico ricorda la città natale, poi abbandonata. Come tutte le liriche esaminate in questo lavoro, si tratta di una poesia con una forte base autobiografica:

Czernowitz mein schwarzer Witz:

Ohne Boden war die Heimat
meine Heimat die mich schulte
Wurzeln in den Wind zu schlagen

Pseudo-Sprache
Pseudo- Dasein
Maskeraden
Purimspiele

umgetrieben auf dem Kreuzweg
Wien—Paris und Przemsyl

Pseudo-nyme
Phraseo-nyme

6 "... un territorio in cui vivevano uomini e libri."

7 Dopo la conquista di Czernowitz da parte delle truppe sovietiche Ilana Shmueli sfugge alla deportazione, si rifugia nel ghetto di Czernowitz e in seguito emigra in Israele. Conosce Paul Celan sin dalla giovinezza, lo incontra nuovamente a Parigi nel 1965 e a Gerusalemme nel 1969. I due poeti tengono anche un carteggio, poi pubblicato (Celan und Shmueli, 2004). Si veda inoltre Shmueli, 2010.

Größenwahn und
Ungenügen

Kunst
und Sturz
und Höhenflüge
Czernowitz mein schwarzer Witz

(Shmueli, 2012: 65)

Il testo vive dei contrasti che lo costituiscono: la patria è senza suolo e pertanto insegna all'io lirico a "non curarsi delle radici"; "megalomania e/ insufficienza", "cadute e voli ad alta quota" la caratterizzano. I versi trasmettono una sensazione di sradicamento e insicurezza. Descrivono una pseudo-realtà in cui dominano lingue e identità fasulle. L'esistenza assume tratti carnevaleschi ("Maskeranden"; "Purimspiele") che non sono però latori di allegria, bensì di quell'"umorismo nero" che, menzionato nel titolo e nell'ultimo verso, incornicia la poesia. I travestimenti menzionati sono indice delle negoziazioni identitarie dell'io lirico in esilio ("Wien—Paris und Przemsyl"). Esilio, in cui l'io lirico deve assumere altre identità, patteggiare e assimilarsi per essere accettato. L'irriducibile frattura identitaria che vive è portata alla luce dalla struttura grafica del testo, in cui dominano versi costituiti da un'unica parola, talvolta spezzata ("Pseudo-Sprache/Pseudo-Dasein"; "Pseudo-nyme/Phraseonyme"). La fioritura culturale di Czernowitz, per decenni culla di un sorprendente sviluppo artistico e letterario, persiste in quell'"arte" ("Kunst") che apre l'ultima strofa ed è, però, subito ridimensionata dalla "caduta" ("Sturz"). Gli alti voli, o forse voli pindarici, ("Höhenflüge") assumono le parvenze di voli di Icaro.

Nel volume momorialistico, *Ein Kind aus guter Familie. Czernowitz 1924-1944*, la stessa poesia segue un breve testo in cui Ilana Shmueli prima ricorda il fiorente passato della città e poi sottolinea il fatto che ogni esule conserva e ricrea nella propria memoria la sua personale Czernowitz: "Ich würde sagen: jeder Czernowitzer hat sein privates, persönliches Czernowitz" (Shmueli, 2006: 95).[8] In effetti ognuno dei poeti considerati in questo lavoro ci consegna un'immagine originale della propria città. Sono frammenti di una realtà scomparsa, diventata 'mitica', e ricomposta, in parte arbitrariamente, dalle rielaborazioni mnestiche di ciascuno.

8 L'omonima poesia compresa in *Ein Kind aus guter Familie. Czernowitz 1924-1944* (95-96) presenta una suddivisione in versi leggermente diversa rispetto a quella citata in questo lavoro.

Klara Blum

Un'altra voce femminile che ricorda Czernowitz è quella di Klara Blum (1904-1971).[9] Blum rimane a Czernowitz solo fino al 1913 quando fugge a Vienna con la madre che, per condurre una vita indipendente e poter soddisfare la sua brama di conoscere, si separa dal marito. Il primo periodo nella capitale austriaca è rievocato nella poesia autobiografica *Mutter*:

Mutter

1913

[…]
Wir sind hier unter deinem Mädchennamen,
Ich weiß schon, Mutter, ich versteh dich glatt,
Ich sage niemandem, woher wir kamen:
«Aus Czernowitz? Ja gibt's denn diese Stadt?»

So schön sind hier in der Pension die Zimmer,
So kahl, so frei, so einfach und so klein,
Du wirst studieren dort beim Lampenschimmer,
Wirst die gescheiteste Studentin sein.

Ich heule plötzlich los—du weinst verstohlen:
Nein—Kindertraum ist unser stolzes Glück,
Die Polizei wird mich zum Vater holen
Und du … du kehrst von selber dann zurück.
[…]

(Blum, 2001: 293)

Dai versi emerge lo stretto rapporto che lega le due donne. A sottolineare la distanza—quella concreta e quella percepita—dalla città d'origine contribuisce il fatto che l'io lirico cerca di rimuovere la città dalla sua mente: "Non dico a nessuno da dove veniamo:/da Czernowitz? Ma esiste questa città?" Più che di lontananza si potrebbe parlare di una presa di distanza. In *Mutter* Czernowitz è la città in cui non si vuole tornare per timore di essere ancora sottomesse al controllo del padre e marito. Solo l'intervento delle

9 Klara Blum nasce e trascorre l'infanzia a Czernowitz. Nel 1913 emigra a Vienna con la madre. Nel 1929, convinta sionista, emigra in Israele, ma dopo poco ritorna delusa in Austria. Si avvicina al comunismo, nel 1934 vince una borsa per un viaggio di studio in Russia che si trasforma in un soggiorno duraturo. Nel 1935 riceve la cittadinanza russa. Nel 1937 si innamora del regista e giornalista cinese Zhu Xiangcheng. Quando questi scompare, non crede che possa essere stato deportato, bensì suppone che sia andato in Cina per una missione segreta. Klara Blum riesce a raggiungere la Cina soltanto nel 1947 e vi rimane fino al termine della sua vita. Adotta il nome cinese di Zhu Bailan.

forze dell'ordine, attivate dall'uomo, potrebbe costringere le due donne a tornarvi. Czernowitz è in questa poesia un *Generationenort sui generis*, in quanto l'io lirico desidera restarne lontano. Qui sta però anche la chiave di volta. La separazione forzata dal luogo d'origine e la cesura che ne deriva nella vita della protagonista—così come dell'autrice—trasformano il *Generationenort* in un *Gedenkort* ed *Erinnerungsort*.

In altre poesie, infatti, Czernowitz diventa il *Gedenkort* a cui ci si sente indissolubilmente legati. Il focus si sposta sugli anni trascorsi nella città o, più in generale, sulla storia e sulle vicende degli ebrei nella città. Nelle quartine a rima alternata di *Czernowitzer Ghetto*, ad esempio, Klara Blum descrive la miseria del quartiere ebraico. Nonostante le mura del ghetto siano cadute più di un secolo prima, gli ebrei costituiscono ancora un gruppo separato all'interno della popolazione e sono spesso vittime di ingiustizie e soprusi. Tuttavia, si distinguono per il "Witz", lo *humor* e la forza di reagire. L'ironia "tira a scherzi con la sfortuna" e il "popolo, mezzo soffocato e gemente nei vicoli dei paria,/schernendosene continua a vivere":

Czernowitzer Ghetto

Die alten Gäßchen ziehn sich eng zusammen.
Der Boden hinkt und holpert im Zickzack.
Aus schweren Leuchtern zucken kleine Flammen.
Der Witz treibt mit dem Unglück Schabernack.

Die Augen funkeln, doch die Wangen blassen,
Der Kaftan reißt, die Schläfenlocke bebt,
Wenn, halb erstickt in seinen Pariagassen,
Ein Volk noch stöhnend, höhnend weiterlebt.

Die Mauer fiel vor mehr als hundert Jahren,
Und dennoch blieben sie im dumpfen Nest.
Das Elend hielt sie an den Schläfenhaaren
In ihrem engen alten Ghetto fest.

(Blum, 2001: 294-295)

Gli ebrei di Czernowitz sono dotati di un'enorme resistenza morale, di una forza d'animo in grado non solo di sopportare le avversità, ma anche di combatterle con l'ironia. Dal punto di vista stilistico, al destino avverso di cui i versi raccontano si oppone una forma regolare che, se da un lato pare stridere con il contenuto, dall'altro, invece, fa da contrappeso alla triste sorte dei protagonisti. Sul tentativo di contrapporre al caos della realtà un cosmo poetico ordinato ha riflettuto anche Ruth Klüger nelle pagine di *Weiter leben*, testo autobiografico in cui la scrittrice racconta della sua giovinezza durante

il nazionalsocialismo e delle condizioni di vita e di sopravvivenza in un periodo in cui era difficilissimo continuare a vivere:

> Es sind Kindergedichte, die in ihrer Regelmäßigkeit ein Gegengewicht zum Chaos stiften wollten, ein poetischer und therapeutischer Versuch, diesem sinnlosen und destruktiven Zirkus, in dem wir untergingen, ein sprachlich Ganzes, Gereimtes entgegenzuhalten; also eigentlich das älteste ästhetische Anliegen. Darum mußten sie auch mehrere Strophen haben, zum Zeichen der Beherrschung, der Fähigkeit zu gliedern und zu objektivieren. Ich war leider belesen, hatte den Kopf voll von sechs Jahren Klassik, Romantik und Goldschnittlyrik. Und nun dieser Stoff (Klüger, 1992: 125-126).

Ruth Klüger suggerisce che la forma poetica, ossia ciò che è esteticamente Bello, assume una funzione "terapeutica" e salvifica. Lo stesso vale per molte liriche di Klara Blum, che alla forma regolare accostano l'insistenza sulla capacità degli ebrei di Czernowitz di ridere delle proprie disgrazie. Oltre a *Czernowitzer Ghetto*, si pensi anche a *Jung-Czernowitz*: "Da, wo die Gäßchen sich zusammenzogen,/Der Witz das eigne Unglück höhnte wild" (Rychlo, 2004: 53).[10] Lo *humor* e la capacità di schernire la propria sfortuna svolgono una funzione redentrice, costituiscono una strategia di difesa contro le avversità, permettendo agli ebrei di continuare a vivere e lottare.[11] Nella stessa direzione va *Erst recht!*:

> Erst recht!
>
> In den Ghettos von Fokschani,
> Kischenew und Czernowitz,
> In den alten, krummen Gassen,
> In des Elends grauem Sitz,
> Lebt ein Wort, das auch den stärksten,
> Mächtigsten Bedrücker schwächt,
> des Geschmähten, des Gehetzten
> Altes Judenwort: „Erst recht."
>
> (Blum, 2001: 306)

"Erst recht!" è un'espressione idiomatica—traducibile con "tanto più forte", "tanto più decisi", "non arrendersi"—a cui si ricorre quando si è stati colpiti

10 La poesia *Jung-Czernowitz* è uscita in Blum, 1941: 38-39. Simile è un passo di *Moskau*, poesia, però, non rimata: "Ich liebe manche andre Stadt: ich liebe/Die kluge Czernowitzer Judengasse,/Darin der Witz das eigne Unglück höhnt" (Blum, 1944: 55).

11 Questa caratteristica richiama alla mente la poesia di Ilana Shmueli, *Czernowitz mein schwarzer Witz*.

da avversità, e, ciononostante, non ci si arrende, bensì si è "tanto più decisi" ad andare avanti.[12]

Nonostante la miseria, le vessazioni e le ripetute persecuzioni, in molte liriche l'io lirico si riconosce "figlia della *Judengasse*". Talvolta la comunità ebraica nel suo complesso sostituisce la famiglia da cui l'io lirico discende. Ecco un'altra particolare declinazione di *Generationenort* che si basa sulla comunanza religiosa, a scapito del legame di sangue. Questo senso di appartenenza al popolo ebraico si rafforza in concomitanza con le persecuzioni, quando Klara Blum è ormai da anni in esilio. In *Czernowitzer Ghetto*, ad esempio, l'io lirico confessa di imparare dalle esperienze negative vissute nel quartiere ebraico. Questa 'dura scuola' le ha dato la forza e gli strumenti per liberarsi da ogni forma di vincolo e giogo, anche dalla stretta realtà del quartiere ebraico. Pertanto Czernowitz è vista come luogo generazionale della memoria, da cui però poi ci si svincola:

Ich bin dein Kind, du alte Judengasse,
Und lern aus allem, was mein Volk erfährt.
Stark, wenn ich denke, stärker, wenn ich hasse,
Aus jeder Schwäche schmiede ich ein Schwert.

Lehr du mich, lehr, von hier mich loszubringen,
Mühsal zu tragen, Hunger, Krankheit, Leid
Und alle Fragen, alle zu bezwingen
Allein mit meiner wilden Redlichkeit.

An deine Mauer drückt ich meine Stirne.
Von heute an gehorch ich mir allein.
Folg meiner Galle. Folge meinem Hirne.
So geh ich recht. Es kann nicht anders sein.

(Blum, 2001: 297)

Fatta eccezione per *Mutter*, in cui la città natale è associata al controllo paterno, nella lirica di Klara Blum Czernowitz è un *Generationenort* positivo che lascia un *imprinting* indelebile nella formazione della poetessa. La combattività e la resistenza all'oppressione, di cui Blum diventa paladina, sembrano derivare da lì.

Sulla sua terra d'origine Blum torna in altre poesie, ad esempio *Grimmiger Lebensbericht*. In questi versi, che confermano la forza e la combattività insita nell'animo dell'io lirico, la "Judengasse" è paragonata al grembo degli avi,

12 "Erst recht" potrebbe anche derivare da una discussione delle *Tosafot* (aggiunte, glosse) e indicare una regola interpretativa, che funziona come un sillogismo, secondo cui in una sezione della Torà alcune cose possono essere 'tuttavia' permesse o "tanto più" proibite.

immagine dalle connotazioni materne. La "Judengasse" diventa una sorta di 'matria' dell'io lirico. Le si accosta la patria, identificabile con il variopinto insieme di genti residente in Bucovina (vv. 8-9):

Grimmiger Lebensbericht

Geboren auf Europas Hintertreppen,
Geneigt zu Pathos und Verstiegenheit,
Bereit, des Denkens schwere Last zu schleppen,
Und unter dieser Last noch sprungbereit,
Wuchs ich heran als Kind des Pulverfasses,
Vom Zündstoff voll der Liebe und des Hasses.
Die Judengasse ist mein Ahnenschloß,
Mein Vaterland ein bunter Völkertroß,
Der rastlos wilde Eigensinn mein Erbe.
[…]
Paris 1947

(Blum, 2012: 52-54)

Una conferma del forte senso di appartenenza al popolo ebraico viene da *Herkunft*, poesia in cui Klara Blum ripercorre le tappe della sua vita ponendo una particolare attenzione alla terra natale che ha forgiato il suo modo di essere e di scrivere, aspetto sottolineato nella seconda strofa che introduce alcuni elementi tipici della Bucovina: la presenza della "Buche" ("faggio") e il multilinguismo:

Herkunft

Du siehst mich an mit Augen fragend groß.
Wähnst du, daß ich geschlagen, fluchbelastet
Die Welt durchirre, herd- und heimatlos,
Gehetzter Fuß, der nirgends ruht und rastet?
Du irrst. Mein Los ist seltsam, doch nicht hart.
Fünf Länder haben mir ihr Sein entfaltet.
In ihrem Schicksal wurzelnd, ihrer Art,
Hab ich mich selbst gefunden und gestaltet.

Geboren bin ich, wo die Buche rauscht,
Die Donau aufklingt trüb im Unglücksahnen,
Der Slawenlaut sich trotzig mischt und tauscht
Mit Schönheitsdurst und Lustklang des Romanen,
Wo heut der Femestrolch sein Szepter schwingt …
Die kahlgeraubten Felder hungrig stöhnen …
So fühl ich's, daß es Vers um Vers durchdringt,
Was ihr durchlebt, geknechtete Rumänen.

Und meine Lehrzeit formte eine Stadt,
In grauer Anmut alternd, sanft, gelassen,
Mit ihrem jungen Proletariat,
Witzsprühend kühnen, trotzdurchglühten Massen.
Gebeugt von tausend Fragen grüble ich,
Im Ohr noch Mozarts feine Freiheitstöne …
Mein Wien, mein Wien, sag, wann befreist du dich,
Altholde Mutter hoffnungsvollster Söhne?

Zersplittert Volk mit festgefügtem Geist,
Noch blitzend unterm Hieb der Mörderknute,
Mein Herz, wohin es auch der Zeitstrom reißt,
Bleibt Fleisch und Blut von deinem Fleisch und Blute.
Hält—leicht verwundbar—Todesstürme aus,
Hartnäckig in der Liebe und im Hasse.
Ich bin nicht heimatlos. Ich bin zuhaus
In Ost und West in jeder Judengasse.
[…]

(Blum, 2012: 50-51)

Nonostante il continuo errare, l'io lirico rivela di non aver avuto un "duro" destino e di sentirsi a casa in tutte le "Judengasse[n]" del mondo. Il continuo girovagare converge sempre in quel punto di riferimento sicuro e costante che è l'appartenenza ebraica. Come la comunità ebraica conferisce senso e ordine alla vita vagabonda dell'io lirico, così la poetessa Klara Blum cerca di domare il destino errante di cui racconta attraverso una forma poetica estremamente regolare, costituita da strofe di otto versi a rima alternata, con prevalenza di giambi.

Jung-Czernowitz è invece costituita da quartine a rima alternata:

Jung-Czernowitz
Da, wo die Gäßchen sich zusammenzogen,
Der Witz das eigne Unglück höhnte wild,
Wo sich der Armen Rücken keuchend bogen,
Die Not sie an den Schläfenlocken hielt.—

Wo ich einst stand in tobenden Gedanken,
Die Stirne angepreßt dem Mauerstein,
Wirr, achtzehnjährig, doch schon ohne Wanken,
Entschlossen, mir zu folgen ganz allein—

Da steht nun, achtzehnjährig, eine zweite.
(Ich sah sie nie und seh sie dennoch gut.)
Ihr Auge überglänzt die freie Weite,
Der Weite Glanz auf ihrer Stirne ruht.

Schlank die Gestalt und stürmisch die Gebärde,
Die Brauen grüblerisch, gebräunt die Hand
Aus ihrer Stimme tönt die Heimaterde,
Befreites, völkerbuntes Buchenland.

Du hörst darin der Doina Wohllaut klingen,
Treuherzig summt dazu ein Schwabenlied,
Es rauschen der Ukraine Sturmesschwingen,
Indes der Judenscharfsinn Funken sprüht.

Da, wo die Armen einst in Ghettogassen
Dem Brot nachspürten, listig, ängstlich-dreist,
Da greift sie heut zur Arbeit, stolz, gelassen
Und ruhig, stolz entfaltet sich ihr Geist.

Wo im Kasino bunte Lichter lohten:
»Ihr seid zur Schmach bestimmt, drum haltet still«,
Wo mich der Heiratsmarkt einst feilgeboten,
Da wählt sie heut zum Gatten, wen sie will.

Die Buchen wiegen ihre Vogelnester,
Der frische Pruth die freie Stadt umfließt—
Gegrüßt sei, schöne unbekannte Schwester,
Du junges Czernowitz, sei mir gegrüßt.

(Rychlo, 2004: 53)[13]

In questa poesia l'io lirico guarda a Czernowitz dall'esterno e la riscopre diversa, ringiovanita. Il testo non rievoca soltanto la storia della città, ma offre anche un confronto tra la Czernowitz di un tempo e quella—che si suppone—attuale. In realtà, considerato il fatto che la poesia esce durante la seconda Guerra Mondiale (1941), si tratta di un "sogno", di una "visione idilliaca" in cui Czernowitz prospera in un clima pacifico e libero: Czernowitz assurge a *Gedenkort*. Alla città viene accostata una fanciulla diciottenne—un possibile *alter ego* della poetessa—la cui vita appare più libera di quella dell'io lirico quando vi risiedeva: "Dalla sua voce risuona il suolo della patria,/terra di faggi[14] li-bera e variopinta di popoli". Armonia caratterizza la vita della giovane che ode voci e canti in romeno, tedesco, ucraino, e percepisce l'acume ebraico, simboli della pacifica convivenza delle diverse culture. Con maestria l'autrice avvicina la giovane ragazza e la "giovane Czernowitz" al punto che le due figure sembrano coincidere. Questa sovrapposizione culmina nella strofa fina-

13 La poesia esce in Blum, 1941: 38-39.

14 La Bucovina in tedesco è chiamata *Buchenland*, terra di faggi.

le, in cui la città ringiovanita, viene personificata e apostrofata calorosamente nel saluto dell'ultimo verso.

Else Keren

Czernowitz abita anche i ricordi di Else Keren (1924-1995),[15] amica della poetessa Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger. In *»… damit ging ich über den Pont des Arts«. Gedichte* Keren ci consegna un'istantanea in cui Czernowitz appare "lontana come l'eternità":

Czernowitz

Leblos weiss
wie eine alte Mutter
die Stadt
dort ewigkeitsfern

Erkaltete Tränen
hängen
über ergrauten Leuchtern
am verlassenen Tisch

Tote Flamme
fremder Abend
vergangenheitslila
von dort bis heute

(Keren, 1983: 18)

In questa lirica dominano i termini che ribadiscono la vecchiaia, il passato, l'estraneità e l'assenza di vita; i sostantivi connotati positivamente e che trasmetterebbero speranza vitale vengono resi negativi dagli aggettivi che li accompagnano: "Leblos", "weiss", "alte Mutter", "ewigkeitsfern", "erkaltete Tränen", "ergrauten Leuchtern", "verlassenen Tisch", "Tote Flamme", "fremder Abend", "vergangenheitslila".

Le categorie spazio-temporali si fondono, collocando il testo in una profondità spaziale e temporale incolmabile e conferendogli un carattere "auratico". In effetti Else Keren redige questa poesia in Israele molti anni dopo aver abbandonato Czernowitz. L'immagine è quella di una città che si è arrestata in un momento preciso: la fuga. La città perde l'originaria funzione protettiva, rassicurante e materna. Ora è "senza vita", "pallida", con "lacrime fredde" appese "a lampade incanutite/sul tavolo abbandonato". Subitanea l'a-

15 Else Keren nasce e trascorre l'infanzia e la giovinezza a Czernowitz. Nel 1945 emigra con la famiglia a Bucarest e poi a Parigi. Nel 1949 si reca per un viaggio in Israele e non fa più ritorno in Francia.

ssociazione con la fuga dall'Egitto dopo la cena frugale a base di pane azzimo ed erbe amare. Al di fuori del contesto biblico, viene alla mente Pompei pietrificata dalla lava. Czernowitz porta le tracce del trauma che l'ha travolta. L'ultimo verso ("da là ad oggi") ripropone l'intreccio delle categorie spazio-temporali e soltanto la rivisitazione attuata dalla memoria permette di rompere l'incantesimo della pietrificazione e di recuperare il passato.

La stessa combinazione è presente nel breve testo in prosa che apre l'antologia di Else Keren, "CZERNOWITZ—ewigkeitsfern" (Keren, 1983: 3). Questo brano ci offre un'altra immagine della città natale che non è più immortalata nel momento della partenza repentina. Qui la memoria rievoca gli anni spensierati della giovinezza, quando Else Keren si ritrovava presso la "Habsburgshöhe", con gli amici, in particolare con Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger, a cui dedica anche una poesia, e Paul Celan. Di quest'ultimo Keren racconta che mentre passeggiava per la "Habsburgshöhe" leggeva poesie ad alta voce e parlava di Kafka e Rilke. Il brano chiude con l'incombere della guerra, l'interruzione dei pomeriggi ameni tra amici e la crescente consapevolezza che la loro giovinezza sarebbe presto bruscamente terminata. Proprio nelle lunghe serate trascorse nei nascondigli, durante la Second Guerra Mondiale, Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger scrisse le poesie che ad Else Keren fu poi dato di conservare.[16]

Alfred Gong

Alfred Gong (1920-1981)[17] ci consegna una "topografia" poetica della Bucovina e in particolare di Czernowitz:

> Topographie
>
> Auf dem Ringplatz zertrat seit 1918
> der steinerne Auerochs den k.und k. Doppeladler.
> Den Fiakerpferden ringsum war dies pferdapfelegal.
> Vom Rathhaus hing nun Rumäniens Trikolore

16 Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger raccolse le sue poesie in un album che dedicò all'amico Leiser Fichmann. Sulla via della deportazione Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger riuscì a dare l'album ad un amico che lo passò a Else Keren la quale doveva consegnarlo a Leiser Fichmann. Questi lo portò con sé nel lager e lo riconsegnò ad Else Keren, quando, tornato dal Lager, decise di fuggire in Israele via mare. La nave su cui viaggiava fu silurata e Leiser non sopravvisse. Grazie ad Else Keren le poesie di Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger giunsero in Israele. Lì furono pubblicate in forma privata dal suo insegnante Hersch Segal. In seguito ci furono altre edizioni. Ecco le più recenti: Meerbaum-Eisinger, 2013a; Meerbaum-Eisinger, 2013b; Meerbaum, 2014.

17 Alfred Gong nasce e cresce a Czernowitz dove conosce Paul Celan e Immanuel Weißglas. Nel 1941 viene costretto a trasferirsi nel ghetto di Czernowitz e poi deportato in Transnistria. Riesce a fuggire a Bucarest, da dove fugge in seguito alla salita al potere del comunismo. Attraverso Budapest raggiunge Vienna dove resta fino al 1956 quando emigra negli Stati Uniti.

und die Steuerbeamten nahmen Bakschisch
und sprachen rumänisch. Alles andere sprach:
jiddisch, ruthenisch, polnisch und ein Deutsch
wie z.B.: »Ich gehe fahren mich baden zum Pruth.«
Auch hatte Czernowitz, wie Sie vielleicht nicht wissen,
eine Universität, an der zu jedem Semesterbeginn
die jüdischen Studenten von den rumänischen heroisch
verprügelt wurden.

Sonst war dies Czernowitz eine gemütliche Stadt:
die Juden saßen im Friedmann bei Fisch und Piroggen,
die Ruthenen gurgelten in Schenken und Schanzen,
die Rumänen tranken vornehmlich im Lucullus
(wo, wie man annehmen darf, auch der junge Gregor von
Rezzori an einem Viertel Cotnar mäßig nippte).
Den Volksgarten nicht zu vergessen, wo sich sonn- und
feiertäglich Soldaten und Dienstmädchen bei vaterländischen
Märschen näherkamen. Wochentags schwänzten hier
Gymnasiasten. (Gelegentlich konnte man dem Schüler
Paul Celan mit Trakl unterm Arm bei den Tulpen begegnen.)

So ging das halbwegs geruhsam bei 1940.
Da kamen die Sowjets friedlich zu Tank
und befreiten die nördliche Bukowina.
Die Rumänen zogen ohne Schamade
ordentlich ab in kleinere Grenzen.
Die Volksdeutschen zog es reichheimwärts.
Die Juden, bodenständiger, blieben.
(Die eine Hälfte verreckte in Novosibirsk,
später die andere in Antonescus Kazets.)
Die Steppe zog ein und affichierte ihre Kultura.
Die Gräber blieben unangetastet
bis auf weiterem Ukas.

(Gong, 1980: 13-14)

Il succedersi delle diverse dinastie viene descritto con una certa dose di ironia (Shchyhlevska, 2009: 140). L'immagine del bovide di pietra che sul Ringplatz calpesta l'aquila bicipite della monarchia imperial-regia allude alla presa del potere da parte dei romeni. Ciononostante gli altri gruppi linguistici ed etnici convivono in un clima relativamente pacifico, come emerge dall'uso contemporaneo di diverse lingue: "gli esattori delle imposte […]/parlavano romeno. Tutto il resto parlava:/jiddish, ruteno, polacco e un tedesco/del tipo : «Io vado fare bagno in Pruth.»"

Ad un'attenta lettura si percepisce che questa topografia è sì "multiculturale", ma non "interculturale", perché le diverse etnie frequentano luoghi di-

versi e sono suddivise in settori stagni che non convergono. Uno dei pochi luoghi in cui si incrociano è l'università che degenera però a teatro di ripetuti episodi antisemiti, presentati da Gong con la consueta ironia. Tra i cittadini di Czernowitz Gong ricorda altri due scrittori: Gregor von Rezzori, ritratto mentre sorseggia "Cotnar", e Paul Celan, sorpreso a passeggiare nel Volksgarten con Trakl sottobraccio. In effetti, Trakl fa parte delle letture canoniche nella Bucovina dove aveva molti estimatori sia tra i comuni lettori che tra i poeti.

Se fino al 1940, tutto sommato la vita a Czernowitz scorre in maniera relativamente tranquilla, le cose mutano con l'arrivo "pacifico" delle truppe sovietiche che "liberano" la Bucovina del Nord. È l'inizio della fine, soprattutto per la popolazione ebrea: "(Una metà crepò a Novosibirsk,/l'altra più tardi nei campi di Antonescu"). Il fatto che Gong inserisca questi versi tra parentesi, come fossero un inciso, trasmette la precarietà e l'insignificanza dei perseguitati. E viene subito alla mente la figura del *Muselmann* di cui parla Primo Levi, poi ripresa da Giorgio Agamben (Agamben, 1998).

Il ritratto di Czernowitz che Gong ci consegna non è edulcorato. Gong riesce a delineare un quadro relativamente lucido e disincantato della realtà grazie alla distanza temporale e allo sguardo ironico che conferma quanto Keren, Blum e Shmueli affermano nelle loro poesie a proposito degli ebrei di Czernowitz. L'ironia disarma e smaschera. Permette di reagire e di continuare a vivere.

Rose Ausländer

L'autrice che si è confrontata in maniera più consistente con la sua città natale è Rose Ausländer (1901-1988).[18] L'antologia *Grüne Mutter Bukowina* (*Verde madre Bucovina*), curata da Helmut Braun e uscita nel 2004 per i tipi di Rimbaud (Aachen), raccoglie tutte le poesie dell'autrice che tematizzano la sua terra d'origine, Czernowitz o più in generale la Bucovina. Il titolo della raccolta, che riprende un verso di *Bukowina III*, allude allo strettissimo legame esistente tra la poetessa e la sua patria, tanto che spesso nelle liriche la figura

[18] Rose Ausländer nasce a Czernowitz. Nel 1916 fugge con la famiglia attraverso Budapest verso Vienna, dove frequenta il ginnasio. Ritorna a Czernowitz nel 1920. Assieme al compagno di studi—e primo marito—Ignaz Ausländer lascia la Bucovina nel 1921 e si trasferisce in America. Torna a Czernowitz per assistere la madre nel 1927, occasione in cui conosce Elios Echt con cui fa ritorno a New York nel 1928. La coppia torna a Czernowitz nel 1931. Rimanendo fuori dall'America per più di tre anni, perde la cittadinanza americana. Si separa da Hecht e si trasferisce a Bucarest. Nel 1939 si reca nuovamente in America, ma torna dopo poco a Czernowitz per assistere la madre malata. Riesce a sopravvivere alle persecuzioni antisemite nel ghetto di Czernowitz. Alla fine della guerra, dopo un periodo a Bucarest, si trasferisce a New York dove rimane fino al 1964, quando torna in Europa, prima a Vienna e poi a Düsseldorf. Nel 1972 si ritira nel Nelly-Sachs-Haus della città, dove rimane fino alla morte.

della madre e la Bucovina si sottendono a vicenda.[19] In seguito vengono considerate alcune liriche significative.

Bukowina I

Tannenberge. Grüne Geister:
In Dorna-Vatra würzen sie
das Harzblut. Alte Sommermeister
treten an ihre Dynastie

Felder im Norden. Buchenschichten
um Czenowitz. Viel Vogelschaum
um die Verzauberten, die den Gesichten
vertrauen, ihrem Trieb und Traum.

Die Zeit im Januarschnee versunken.
Der Atem raucht. Die Raben krähn.
Aus Pelzen sprühen Augenfunken.
Der Schlitten fliegt ins Sternverwehn.

Der Rosenkranz in Weihrauchwogen
rinnt durch die Finger. Sagentum
und Gläubige. In Synagogen
Singen fünftausend Jahre Ruhm.

(Ausländer, 2004: 12)

Bucovina I, suddivisa in quattro strofe a rima alternata, ci consegna quattro diapositive di Czernowitz e dei suoi dintorni. Le prime tre strofe si concentrano sul paesaggio, colto in diverse stagioni. Si tratta di un paesaggio metaforico: gli abeti verdi del primo verso vengono personificati e apostrofati come "Grüne Geister" ("Spiriti verdi") e "Sommermeister" ("Maestri d'estate"). Attorno a Czernowitz si levano i faggi ("Buchen") da cui deriva anche il nome tedesco della regione ("Buchenland"). Gli uccelli prendono la parola e il loro vociare pare quasi imitare il plurilinguismo della zona ("viel Vogelschaum") (Hainz, 2008: 163). La terza strofa proietta il lettore in una situazione invernale in cui l'elemento naturale e umano si intrecciano. "Il fiato fumante è accostato al canto dei corvi. Dalle pellicce sfavillano occhi scintillanti. La slitta vola verso stelle disseminate." Il passaggio definitivo dalla sfera naturale a quella umana avviene nella quarta strofa che ritrae cristiani ed ebrei mentre adempiono le funzioni dei loro culti: il rosario tra l'incenso e i millenari canti ebraici. L'armonia che caratterizzava la natura delle prime strofe anticipa l'armoniosa convivenza di fedi diverse della quarta.

19 A questo proposito si veda Miglio, 2012: 45-58. Si veda anche Braun, 2004: 131-159.

Nel complesso Rose Ausländer ci consegna un'immagine pacifica e serena della sua terra d'origine. È un'immagine in parte edulcorata. Se fino alla Prima Guerra Mondiale la convivenza dei diversi gruppi culturali è relativamente pacifica, non vi sono però molti scambi e rapporti tra loro. Con la presa del potere da parte dei romeni, la situazione muta, il tedesco, ad esempio, cessa di essere la lingua ufficiale. Il processo di edulcorazione riscontrabile nelle poesie è dovuto alla rielaborazione mnestica di Rose Ausländer che a Czernowitz, in realtà, ha trascorso solo l'infanzia e una parte della giovinezza. Nelle sue opere la poetessa ricorda questo periodo come il più felice (Braun, 2004: 137). Czernowitz resta la patria lontana e abbandonata di un'esistenza in transito.

Un'altra fotografia "mnestica" della Czernowitz di una giovane Rose Ausländer è contenuta in *Erfahrung III*:

Erfahrung III

Morariugasse
hier wohnen wir

Wagenräder begleiten
die Wiegenlieder meiner Mutter

Gassenkinder brüllen und
zerren sich an den Haaren

Eine Prozession zieht vorüber
Regen fällt auf die Fahnen
dann wölbt sich ein Regenbogen
über ein Lächeln

Öffne die Fenster
zur Wirbelwelt
der Morariugasse

(Ausländer, 2004: 13)[20]

La "Morariugasse" che incornicia questa poesia è la strada in cui abitava la famiglia di Rose Ausländer. Il verso iniziale e quello finale sembrano le ante di una finestra che si aprono sulla realtà esterna, sulla vita brulicante della "Morariugasse", sineddoche di tutta Czernowitz. L'io lirico racconta dei bambini che giocano e litigano, di carri che passano e accompagnano i canti e le ninnenanne della mamma. Riferisce poi di una processione religiosa e dell'apparire

[20] Questo è l'unico di Ausländer citato nel presente lavoro in cui Czernowitz non viene nominata esplicitamente. È stato considerato perché nomina la via in cui viveva l'autrice.

di un arcobaleno che, seguendo alla pioggia, potrebbe alludere ad una ritrovata armonia tra etnie e fedi diverse. In chiusura l'io lirico si rivolge al lettore e lo invita ad affacciarsi sul brulichio della sua via. Questi due ricordi idilliaci (*Bukowina I* e *Erfahrung III*) ci riconducono ai *Gedenkorte*, ai luoghi auratici della memoria che tentano di ricreare una realtà che nella forma di un tempo non esiste più. Le parole con cui Ausländer chiude il saggio "Erinnerung an eine Stadt", "Eine versunkene Stadt. Eine versunkene Welt"[21] (Ausländer, 2004: 117), rivelano che la poetessa ne era consapevole.

La seguente poesia è dedicata allo scrittore jiddish Elisier Steinbarg (Si veda Eidherr, 2002: 151-156), ammirato e amato a Czernowitz:

In memoriam Elisier Steinbarg

Czernowitz
Heimat der Hügel
Hoch der Balkon
über Rosch

Wer wußte um ihn
Zwerg mit dem Riesenhaupt
Steinbarg Elieser
Erlöser von Stein und Berg

Czernowitz
Heimat der Träumer
Hoch das Haus
über Rosch

Da lebte der Mann
halb Riese halb Zwerg
in Mansarde
verwandelte Arche

Da wurde die
Erde untergebracht
keinem Ding
war Atem versagt

Maulwurf und Maus
Rose und Ring—
kein Körper blieb tot
solang Elieser lebte

(Ausländer, 2004: 85-86)

21 "Una città scomparsa, un mondo scomparso."

Stainbarg è uno dei più importanti rappresentanti della letteratura in lingua jiddish dell'inizio del Ventesimo secolo. Rose Ausländer lo stima molto, si prodiga per la diffusione delle sue opere e traduce dallo jiddish in tedesco la sua favola in versi, *Der Amerikaner* (Kruse, 1996: 111-112). Inoltre, gli dedica un'altra poesia, *Dichterbildnis*, in cui celebra la sua missione artistica, e lo menziona nei testi in prosa "Alles kann motiv sein" e "Erinnerung an eine Stadt".[22]

In *In memoriam Elisier Steinbar*g viene riconosciuto a Steinbarg il merito di saper dare voce a qualsiasi tema e di sapersi adattare ad ogni situazione letteraria e di vita. Czernowitz viene definita "patria delle colline" e "patria dei sogni". Se il primo epiteto si riferisce alla conformazione geografico-naturalistica della città, situata in una zona collinare, il secondo richiama altri passi in cui Rose Ausländer sottolinea la "Schwärmerei" degli abitanti di Czernowitz che si entusiasmano per l'arte e si infervoriscono per la fede. In "Erinnerungen an eine Stadt", ad esempio, Ausländer annota: "Czernowitz war eine Stadt von Schwärmern und Anhängern. Es ging ihnen, mit Schopenhauers Worten, «um das Interesse des Denkens, nicht um das Denken des Interesses»" (Ausländer, 2004: 116). Tra le letture preferite degli abitanti di Czernowitz spiccano le opere di Karl Kraus, Friedrich Hölderlin, Rainer Maria Rilke, Stefan George, Georg Trakl, Else Lasker-Schüler. Fino alla Seconda Guerra Mondiale la parte più colta della popolazione è talmente immersa negli interessi e nelle attività culturali che conduce uno "stile di vita inconsueto" caratterizzato da "estraneità rispetto alle vicende del mondo e disattenzione nei confronti della realtà che si stava rabbuiando". Tale atteggiamento è espressione di un'esistenza condotta nel mondo delle idee e degli ideali, considerata "più sostanziale" di quella reale. Tra amici ci si ritrova per discutere con passione di questioni filosofiche, letterarie, artistiche e cantare canti tradizionali.[23]

L'evasione dalla realtà concreta in quella sognata dell'arte, che nell'anteguerra avviene per diletto e passione, durante la Seconda Guerra Mondiale diventa una fuga dalle persecuzioni e dalla triste quotidianità. La cultura e l'arte diventano un rifugio che permette di continuare a vivere. L'alternativa è abbandonarsi alla disperazione:

> Czernowitz 1941. Nazis besetzten die Stadt, blieben bis zum Frühjahr 1944. Getto, Elend, Horror, Todestransporte. In jenen Jahren trafen wir Freunde uns zuweilen heimlich, oft unter Lebensgefahr, um Gedichte zu lesen. Der unerträglichen Realität gegenüber gab es zwei Verhaltensweisen: entweder man gab sich der Ver-

[22] Interessante è il fatto che in "Erinnerungen an eine Stadt" Rose Ausländer ricorda che Celan non si era cimentato con la traduzione di Steinbarg per la difficoltà dei suoi testi (Ausländer, 2004: 115).

[23] Gli artisti di Czernowitz erano sostenuti e appoggiati dai concittadini che manifestavano apertamente il loro interesse e fruivano delle loro opere (Ausländer, 2004: 114-115).

> zweiflung preis, oder man übersiedelte in eine andere Wirklichkeit, die geistige. Wir zum Tode verurteilten Juden waren unsagbar trostbedürftig. Und während wir den Tod erwarteten, wohnten manche von uns in Traumworten—unser traumatisches Heim in der Heimatlosigkeit. Schreiben war Leben. Überleben (Ausländer, 2004: 8).

Tra gli "amici" con cui si ritrova, Ausländer ricorda Paul Celan che le viene presentato da un amico nel 1944 (Ausländer, 2004: 8). Questi incontri tra "amici poeti" (su questa generazione di poeti si veda Motzan, 2003: 193-229), su cui è stato detto e scritto molto, si svolgono presso Rose Ausländer o presso la famiglia Ginninger e diventano la sede di letture poetiche e di accese discussioni su poesie e traduzioni dei partecipanti. Rispetto agli altri, Rose Ausländer appartiene alla generazione precedente ed è già una poetessa matura e affermata. Per tale motivo viene considerata un punto di riferimento dai più giovani scrittori. La critica riferisce che in questi incontri Paul Celan e Immanuel Weißglas conducessero delle vere e proprie competizioni di traduzione sulla base di sonetti di Shakespeare o di poesie di William Butler Yeats, Oscar Wilde e Wystan Hugh Auden (Helfrich, 1998: 197-198; cfr. Guțu, 1992: 43-54; Braun, 2004: 67-78; Guțu, 2010: 88; Conterno, 2014: 193-194). Probabilmente questi scambi di idee e opinioni hanno contribuito allo sviluppo di immagini comuni riscontrabili successivamente nella lirica di diversi poeti della Bucovina.

Lo scarto tra gli anni precedenti la Seconda Guerra Mondiale e quelli del conflitto e delle persecuzioni, che sta alla base della trasformazione del significato dell'evasione nel mondo incantato dell'arte, è rappresentato chiaramente nel seguente testo:

> Czernowitz vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg
>
> Friedliche Hügelstadt
> von Buchenwäldern umschlossen
>
> Weiden entlang dem Pruth
> Flöße und Schwimmer
>
> Maifliederfülle
>
> um die Laternen
> tanzen Maikäfer
> ihren Tod
>
> Vier Sprachen
> verständigen sich
> verwöhnen die Luft

Bis Bomben fielen
atmete glücklich
die Stadt

(Ausländer, 2004: 54)

Il titolo colloca la poesia in un determinato spazio temporale: prima della Seconda Guerra Mondiale. Quello che riguarda questo arco di tempo viene presentato nelle prime cinque strofe che—come l'ultima—non seguono nessuno schema tradizione. Il testo, privo di interpunzione e senza alcuna regolarità formale, pare riaffiorare dai ricordi dell'io lirico che racconta senza mai diventare protagonista. I confini irregolari dei gruppi di versi sembrano i contorni incerti di un sogno o di una visione di una realtà scomparsa. Come in *Bukowina I* il componimento apre con una descrizione del paesaggio. Czernowitz è qui rappresentata come la città collinare pacifica circondata da boschi di faggi, attraversata dal Pruth a cui lati si distendono prati. La presenza umana, segnalata dai nuotatori e dalle zattere, appare perfettamente integrata nella natura ed è parte di questo idillio in cui prosperano i lillà. Soltanto i maggiolini che, danzando vicino alle lanterne, vanno inconsapevolmente incontro alla morte destano sospetto e gettano un'ombra cupa che viene subito ridimensionata dalla terzina con l'assonanza di "v" e "ver" in cui viene celebrato il plurilinguismo di Czernowitz: "Quattro lingue/si intendono/viziano l'aria."

Su questo concetto Ausländer torna frequentemente nei testi in prosa: "Hier begegnete und durchdrangen sich vier Sprachen und Kulturen: die österreichisch-deutsche, die jiddische, die ruthenische (ukrainische) und rumänische" (Ausländer, 2004: 47). Sebbene nel 1918 Czernowitz sia passata sotto il controllo romeno, fino alla Seconda Guerra Mondiale il tedesco resta la lingua dell'*intellighenzia* e della cultura. La vicinanza ad altri idiomi conferisce al tedesco della Bucovina una particolare colorazione e cadenza, differenziandolo da quello parlato a Vienna, il punto di riferimento culturale per eccellenza. Secondo Ausländer è proprio la compresenza di più lingue e culture su uno stesso territorio a favorire lo sviluppo di e l'interesse per la letteratura e in particolare la poesia. Per indicare questa presenza eterea, eppure influente, Ausländer ricorre all'espressione "in der Luft liegen" ("sono nell'aria"), ribadendo così anche la velocità di diffusione e di trasmissione. Anche la sua stessa vocazione artistica sarebbe riconducibile all'*humus* multietnico e plurilingue in cui si è formata:

> Warum schreibe ich? Vielleicht weil ich in Czernowitz zur Welt kam, weil die Welt in Czernowitz zu mir kam. Jene besondere Landschaft. Die besonderen Menschen. Märchen und Mythen lagen in der Luft, man atmete sie ein. Das viersprachige Czernowitz war eine musische Stadt, die viele Künstler, Dichter, Kunst, Literatur- und Philosophieliebhaber beherbergte (Ausländer, 2004: 6).

Ma questo idillio si spezza, come afferma l'ultima strofa, al "cadere delle bombe", segno dell'irrompere della storia con la "S" maiuscola—si pensi alla terza "Frankfurter Vorlesung" di Ingeborg Bachmann—nella vita dei singoli e della comunità. La guerra sconvolge il sereno corso degli eventi e ridesta i trasognati abitanti di un mondo incantato. Se da un lato è indiscutibile, il fatto che il conflitto e le persecuzioni abbiamo travolto la pacifica città collinare e spezzato l'incantesimo, dall'altro bisogna però relativizzare quanto Ausländer riferisce sull'anteguerra. Per quanto serena fosse la convivenza tra le diverse etnie e culture, non si può parlare di intensi rapporti tra le varie parti. Piuttosto, si può parlare di reciproca (e opportunistica) accettazione (Reichmann, 2001: 77-96).[24] L'immagine che Ausländer ci consegna è frutto di una appassionata rielaborazione mnestica. Czernowitz viene elevata a *Gedenkort* per eccellenza, la sua storia viene ricostruita sulla base di ricordi lontani trasfigurati dalla memoria.

Un'altra forma di rielaborazione mnestica viene proposta dalla seguente poesia, con cui termina il nostro percorso nella memoria poetica di questi eterogenei scrittori accomunati da un simile destino, segnato dalla persecuzione e dall'esilio:

Czernowitz I

«Geschichte in der Nußschale»

Gestufte Stadt
im grünen Reifrock
Der Amsel unverfälschtes
Vokabular

Der Spiegelkarpfen
in Pfeffer versulzt
schwieg in fünf Sprachen

Die Zigeunerin
las unser Schicksal
In den Karten

Schwarz-gelb
Die Kinder der Monarchie
träumten deutsche Kultur

[24] Peter Motzan ritiene che la nostalgica retrospettiva di Rose Ausländer produca una sorta di "straniamento". Cfr. Motzan, 2001: 42. Si veda inoltre: Motzan, 2003: 198; Conterno, 2013: 292-293.

Legenden um den Baal-Schem
Aus Sadagura: die Wunder

Nach dem roten Schachspiel
wechseln die Farben

Der Walache erwacht—
Schläft wieder ein
Ein Siebenmeilenstiefel
steht vor seinem Bett—flieht

Im Ghetto:
Gott hat abgedankt

Erneutes Fahnenspiel:
Der Hammer schlägt die
Flucht entzwei
Die Sichel mäht die
Zeit zu Heu

(Ausländer, 2004: 78-79)

Attraverso il riferimento al mondo animale Rose Ausländer illustra con ironia la convivenza dei diversi gruppi linguistici (Martin, 2008: 163). Spicca in particolar modo il riferimento alle carpe in gelatina che tacciono in cinque lingue, verso che richiama i sopracitati passi in cui la poetessa decanta il multilinguismo della terra natia. Lo sguardo ironico, però, suggerisce questa volta un certo disincanto nei confronti della reale situazione della Bucovina e nello specifico di Czernowitz. La rielaborazione mnestica pare qui edulcorare meno la realtà rispetto alle altre poesie esaminate. Ricorrendo a stereotipi e immagini simboliche la poetessa accenna alla popolazione zingara che legge le carte, ai rappresentanti della monarchia austro-ungarica dalla bandiera giallo-nera e al Baal-Schem-Tov, il fondatore dello Chassidismo la cui sede si trova a Sadagora.

L'*Enjambement* tra il sedicesimo e diciassettesimo verso indica una prima cesura storica, definita "gioco di scacchi rosso" e probabilmente identificabile con l'arrivo dell'Armata Rossa a Czernowitz nel 1940 e il conseguente ritiro romeno. Nell'ultima strofa Ausländer fa riferimento ad un successivo sconvolgimento: Czernowitz ritorna sotto il controllo romeno. La drammaticità degli eventi e la celerità del loro corso viene sottolineata dagli *Enjambements* dell'ultima strofa che attraverso l'immagine del tempo ridotto a fieno elimina qualsiasi speranza di fuga e di salvezza. Le vittime più colpite da questo alternarsi bellico sono gli ebrei a cui è impedito ogni tentativo di fuga. Il tragico destino è rappresentato graficamente nel testo che incastra a tenaglia tra lo "Schachspiel" e l'"erneutes Fahnenspiel" i versi sul ghetto. La guerra travolge

gli eventi e irrompe nel ghetto, dove sembra non esserci più alcun Dio: "Dio ha abdicato". Questo verso ricorda *Psalm* e *Es war Erde in ihnen* di Paul Celan in cui Dio viene relegato a spettatore passivo e appellato come (o forse meglio, sostituito) da "nessuno". Sulla stessa linea si muove Hans Jonas che in "Das Gottesbegriff nach Auschwitz. Eine jüdische Stimme", per spiegare l'esistenza del male estremo nel mondo e l'indifferenza di Dio nei confronti del suo dilagare, arriva a sottrarre a Dio l'attributo dell'onnipotenza:

> Aber Gott schwieg. Und da sage ich nun: nicht weil er nicht wollte, sondern weil er nicht konnte, griff er nicht ein. Aus Gründen, die entscheidend von der zeitgenössischen Erfahrung eingegeben sind, proponiere ich die Idee eines Gottes, der für eine Zeit—die Zeit des fortgehenden Weltprozesses—sich jeder Macht der Einmischung in den physischen Verlauf der Weltdinge begeben hat […] (Jonas, 1984: 82).[25]

Quel che resta in questo paesaggio desolato è solo la memoria che, edulcorata o meno, permette di andare avanti. *Erst recht!*

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25 Altri filosofi che si sono confrontati con il ruolo di Dio durante la Shoah sono stati Richard L. Rubenstein e Emil Fackenheim. Cfr. Conterno, 2014: 216-219.

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THE HUNGRY TIDE: CLIMATE SUSTAINABILITY EN ROUTE FROM ANCIENT TEXTS TO MODERN FICTION TO HUMANITY

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ABSTRACT. In the wake of religion's influence in the climate discourses gaining momentum globally, this paper highlights how environmental/climate fiction can effectively be a powerful mediating tool to disseminate the ecological wisdom and relevance of our mythologies. Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* termed as a "canonical text for environment critics" by Greg Garrard, is a Hindu mythology informed novel. A close eco-critical examination of this novel reveals Hindu myths at the base of an embedded ecology of the native inhabitants of the Sunderbans islands. Applying Magpie like sorting method in identifying traces of myth oriented attitudes and practices in the novel, the study establishes that if extended this eco-mythological influence can be exerted beyond particular ecosystems, and towards encompassing the larger canvas of human existence. Having observed the visible signs concurrent to Joseph Campbell's vision of a new, living contemporary mythology, the study seeks to set parallels between these integrative concepts with the Protagonist of the novel, Piya's model of a Conservation project. The paper caveats the discussion with an acknowledgement to the extremities our religious-mythological beliefs can draw the vulnerable minds to. However, along these lines, the qualifications of our religious/legendary mythologies and the discerning capabilities of human mind are relied upon to let art provide a gateway to our ancient wisdom for identifying and address the pressing issues of concern to our planet's well-being.

KEYWORDS: fiction, climate, well-being, contemporary mythology

> O Mother Earth. Sacred are thy hills, snowy mountains and deep forests. Be kind to us and bestow upon us happiness. May you be fertile, arable and nourished of all. May you continue supporting all people and nations. May you protect us from your anger. And may no one exploit and subjugate your children (Prithvi Sukta, *Atharveda* 12.1.11).
>
> Guys, the ice caps are melting now. Where are those stories? (Chris Ross, review to Mark Martin, ed., *I am with the bears*)

Although India has frequently been prone to some or other kind of natural disaster (landslide, cyclone, cloud burst, drought, earthquake, forest fire,

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flood, hailstorm, landslides, epidemic, frost, cold wave and heat wave, etc.) due to its diverse geological circumstances, the increased frequency, volatile pattern and cataclysmic impact have put many factors under scanner. While amid the alarming din of Whys, Hows, Wheres and Whens of the Environment/Climate/Meteorological/geological scientists globally, people are still struggling to rehabilitate mentally to the unpredictability of catastrophes under/upon/above the ground, and the Indian think tanks of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) are busy assessing and addressing the hazards, the *Karma* theory in common public discourse hints at a strange phenomenon: *Kaliyug aa gaya* (Kaliyug has arrived). In Hindu mythological record of the evolution of earth, 'Kaliyug' is the last of the four Hindu mythological era (*yug*) culminating in *Pralaya* (End of the World). It is the age of a gradual process of physical, behavioural, moral and spiritual decrepitude. And this contextualisation of this Hindu cosmological age goes for any kind of anomaly witnessed in personal, social, environmental, religious or political behaviour. This contextualises youth disorientation, exceeding materialism, unethical and criminal bull-dozing of natural habitats, societal deterioration, religion fanaticism/skepticism, suffocating corruption, and the destructive weapons of the revengeful nature.

That man has overestimated his potential and has now to be set right through such wrath of Gods is the laymen perception in India about the natural phenomenon of Global Warming resulting in Climate Change leading to unstable seasonal cycle which further sets a process of ecological imbalance rendering this already exhausted earth a scapegoat in the Man versus Nature battle of supremacy. Interestingly, it is this apparent irrationality of our mythical and mystical perception which has gained a real momentum in the wake of growing concern for the fast deepening environmental crisis. Fluctuating atmospheric pressure, erratic seasonal patterns and dwarfing powerlessness before portentous recurrence of natural blows has compelled even scientists to align their enquiries into these phenomena with the corresponding discourses of other streams of knowledge as well. Moreover, by all accounts, the enormity of it forbids us to assign the reason to the natural process of generation—degeneration-regeneration like the glacial-interglacial periods to the natural process of geological temperature reduction and increase. "eminent scientists are suggesting that science alone is not enough to solve the planetary environmental crisis and that we must recreate for ourselves a sense of place within the biosphere that is steeped in humility and reverence for all life" (David Suzuki, in Fowler-Smith, http://louisefowlersmith.com.au/-tree_veneration.pdf).

A holistically integrated and interdisciplinary perception on cosmological, evolutionary, anthropological, sociological, psychological queries is sought now. Significantly, mythological field happen to be the only common junction

for everyone to board the train of cultural/psychological/conceptual/factual clues to their destination. The relevant wealth of literature available in physical/virtual libraries prove that mythological concepts/archetypes/patterns have become the yardstick to pit for or against a culture specific world-view. Even Darwin's Evolutionary Theory could not escape their influence and "implied a new [creation] myth of the past" (Berry, in Gowan Dawson, 2007: 43). Lynn Townsend White, Jr., stated one basic truth in his contentious essay, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis": "What people do about their ecology depends on what they think about themselves in relation to things around them. Human ecology is deeply conditioned by beliefs about our nature and destiny—that is, by religion" (Lynn, 1967: 1203-1207).

The recent developments in the ecological field have necessitated a recourse to mythologies. Ecological crisis is a universal concern which encompasses every human being and dissemination of knowledge, awareness and accountability for all is required. Pure/applied/social scientists have tapped the right spot, the sensitivity of people towards their respective religions/mythologies; to re-read them from ecological perspective to revisit and revive their respective world-views. And that has proven effective as well: the kind of religious involvement we see today in re-orienting people towards restricting excessive consumption of things directly/indirectly responsible for aggravating the greenhouse effect, and thus help in mitigating the catastrophic impacts of global warming. The recognition of the potential of literature to influence and shape ideologies has naturally necessitated its role in generating mass ecological conscience by wearing in ecological facts. Consequently, they have a new yardstick to be measured: eco-criticism that grades them according to their portrayal of human-nature relationship. I extend the definition of 'literature' to include the ancient literature of various cultural mythologies also, being conscious of its fundamental role in forming civilizations.

According to Cheryll Glotfelty, "the ecocriticism taken on Earth-centered approach for the study of the literature […] Ecocriticism expands the notion of 'the world' to include the entire ecosphere. If we agree with Barry commoner's first law of ecology, 'everything is connected to everything else', we must conclude that literature does not float above the world in some aesthetic ether, but, rather, plays a part in an immensely complex global system, in which energy, matter, and ideas interact" (Glotfelty, 1996: xix). Seen from the critical lens of ecocriticism, Hindu mythology, with a traditional oral/written literature ranging from the Vedas (1500-1000 B.C.)/ Upanishads/Puranas/Manu-smiriti/epics to Arthshastra to Meghdootam/ Abhigyanshakuntalam to endemic indigenous records, are widely known to be effectively ecocentric. Vishnu Sharma's Panchtantra is a perfect example of animism. "Ether, air, fire, water, earth, planets, all creatures, directions, trees, plants,

rivers and seas, they are all organs of God's body; remembering this, a devotee respects all species" (*ŚrimadBhagavata Mahāpurāna* 2.2.41).

This ecocritical potential of allegorically represented human-nature relationship has been stated in the mythological archives; organised or unorganised religious/folkloric/legendary records. Keeping the time-specific way of representation in view, the eco-psyche of ancient Hindu seers and writers has been recognized and has continued to influence people since then. Literature on the versatile relevance and testimonials of Hindu mythology lies in abundance globally. The limited scope of this study allows citing only a few examples from writers of conservationist view: From the recognition of the astronomical and mathematical concepts of Bhaskara and Aryabhat, the well-known indulgence of C. G. Jung, a psychologist and Joseph Campbell, a mythologist is well known. Noted physicist Fritjof Capra in *Web of Life* asserts that "In Hinduism, Shiva the Cosmic Dancer, is perhaps the most perfect personification of the dynamic universe… The metaphor of the cosmic dance thus unifies ancient mythology, religious art and modern physics" (azquotes.com).

Kapila Vatsyayan, renowned Indian scholar of classical dance, theatre, architecture and art historian, writes on the embedded ecology of Hindu myths in her extensively informative article, *Ecology and Indian Myth* and seeks "to revive the collective psychical memory of this heritage, to draw attention to the myths, art and ritual, science, religion and philosophy in India, the strategies through which this holistic worldview of ecological balance was articulated." Armed with the metaphoric but logical proofs, she emphasises that, "The work of scientists, programmes of afforestation, rural and urban sewage systems have only to reach out for support and reinforcement in Indian art. Indeed, Indian architecture, sculpture and painting is the most effective, aesthetically pleasing, symbolically loaded message totally contemporary and valid statement of the ecology and concern—if only it could be utilised " (ignca.nic.in). Vandana Singh, an environmentalist, physicist, and the Hindu eco-theological author of numerous short stories like the climate change based *Indra's Web* sees the epic Mahabharata as climate change "huge saga with hundreds of smaller stories interspersed with the larger one… cosmic and local implications of great events, and small events ending up to be of enormous significance" (strangehorizons.com).

Sthaneshwar Timalsina in his essay "The Body of Goddess, Eco awareness and Embodiment in Hindu myth and Romance" analyses the "embodied cosmology and ecological vision" in Hinduism (in Deepak Shimkhada, and Phyllis K. Herman, eds, 2008: 273). Also, Klostermaier in his essay "Hinduism, Population and Environment" tells how Hindu traditions contain deep ecological wisdom and the seed of ideas that might be developed into a contem-

porary ecology… (in Harold Coward, ed., 1995: 150) and Indian tribes "constitute ecological isles of sustainability" (Coward, 1995: 151) living by their myths. *In Dharma and Ecology of Hindu Communities: Sustenance and Sustainability*, Pankaj Jain tells about the ecological activism born of *Dharma and Ecology of Hindu communities* (2011: 4). Meera Baindur also, in her book *Nature in Indian Philosophy and Cultural Traditions*, explores the environmental philosophy of Indians as a source of "ecological consciousness" (2015: 122).

Prasenjit Duara's *The Crisis of Global Modernity: Asian Traditions and a Sustainable Future* a work of "historical sociology considers alternative approaches and resources in Asian traditions—particulary of China and India" (Duara, nus.edu.sg). He favours "the capacity of culture to create personal and collective commitment, a problem of hope and sacrality […] the transcendent or utopian truths they propose with symbols and rituals of sacred authority… no movement of major social change has succeeded without compelling symbols and affective power (Duara, in Ghosh). Going by the Hindu eschatology, the current age phenomenon of climate change cannot be assigned only to the Universal law of cyclic process of Creation, Sustenance and Dissolution, but to a greater extent it is anthropogenic downward spiral of values. Moral degradation go hand in hand with geological and geographical erosion when majority of people are:

> reservoirs of mental distress, disease, old age, destruction of religious principals, sorrow, lamentation and fear… misguided by the principal of time, very restless by nature, full of lusty desires, extremely sinful, very and violent… use religion as a means of livelihood… people in general will simply become hypocrites, liars, and cheaters… the earth will restrict the production of food grains, the currents of rivers will flow very rapidly… clouds will shower rains very irregularly and the land will not yield sufficient crops… in the third quarter of kaliyuga, there will be an upsurge of unwanted population… mother earth… (will) become emaciated due to great distress (Kalki Puran, 1:22-37).

The suffocating pursuits of possessions, predatory industrialism, diminishing world resources and reducing wildlife habitats are testimony to that. Despite the apocalyptic view of futurity, Hindu mythological hymns nowhere tend to fatalism; in fact there's seen a vision of health, prosperity, harmony and peace through disciplined lifestyle: "Oh lords of bliss and vitality! Drive away the distress from our home in all the directions! Suppress the calamities at far itself! Let here be prosperity and glory!" (*Rig Veda*, 6.74.2)

Hindu cosmological view projects us still thousands years away from Dissolution but the rate at which rampant abuse and misuse of nature is going and are bypassing the visible consequences, we are accelerating the process. Still, although modern consumerist culture has had a debilitating effect on

the spiritual constitution of man and retrieving the natural loss it has incurred is impossible, the resultant impact can surely be moderated through conservation policies, campaigns and field activities. Christopher Manes aptly says that "to regard nature as alive and articulate has consequences in the realm of social practices. It conditions what passes for knowledge about nature how institutions put that knowledge to use" (quoted in Philippon, 2004: 340).

The environmentally concerned souls have attested it. Religious, legendary and folk tales have proved to be a great mechanism in modelling climate sustainability. Efforts in that direction are on internationally, nationally and locally. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indi-genous Peoples and other conferences on environment and sustainable development, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Earth Charter Initiative, Forum on Religion and Ecology, worldwide NGOs, Alliance of Religions and Conservation, various Religious teachers/ preachers/ saints and their associations, movements, declarations are indicative of the urgency of addressing this 'cultural issue' from a comprehensive ethical perspective. In her enlightening essay titled "Water, Wood, and Wisdom: Ecological Perspectives from the Hindu Traditions", Vasudha Narayanan digs "resources in the Hindu religious and cultural traditions that can inspire and motivate Hindus to take action" to find out if "the many Hindu philosophies and communities value nature and privilege the existence of plants, trees, and water?" She comes up with a positive answer and goes on enlisting various supporting examples from ancient Hindu texts, traditions, philosophies, and ideologies regarding the ways in which "the problem of ecology has been addressed" through sacralising the nature: Earth, Air, Mountains, Rivers, Forests, and their inhabitants. Taking Hindu concept of Dharma in its right context as "righteousness, set of duties", not as "religion", her analytical study introduces "Hindu Dharma and Artha text and practices as resources of ecology", wherein eco aestheticism, laws have been set against environmental pollution (Manu Smiriti) and provision of punishment against damaging the ecosystems are mentioned (Kautilya, amacad.org).

Although majority of Indian have been rendered intellectually bankrupt in this regard, conservation oriented tradition of India still underpin the belief system of the indigenous inhabitants of our diverse bio-spheres where they share a symbiotic relationship with their surroundings and maintain what we call "sustainable development" formula permeating their local rituals and myths. Their philosophy is: "Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong" (Sri Isopanisad, I).

The Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) is also loosing base due to the depressive predicament the onslaughts of modern industries have pushed its possessors in. The official website of C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre (CPREEC), a Centre of Excellence of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India lists the ecologically critical Cultural heritage and sacred sites, with informative articles on sacred, animals, gardens, groves, mountains, rivers, water bodies, plants, sites, caves, and seeds. There are thousands of such ecosystems in India whose natives maintain the interdependence and interconnectedness of deep ecology of what Capra names "Web of Life".

> For nature, as we know, is at once without and within us. Art is the mirror at the interface. So too is ritual; so also myth. These, too, "bring out the grand lines of nature," and in doing so, re-establish us in our own deep truth, which is one with that of all being (Joseph Campbell, 2002: 101).

Interestingly, thanks to the spread of eco-prefixed inquiries like eco-criticism, the modern literature, especially fiction has also started to be seen as environmentally informed. Adam Trexler argues that the novel has become an essential tool to construct meaning in an age of climate change. "The novel expands the reach of climate science beyond the laboratory or model, turning abstract predictions into subjectively tangible experiences of place, identity, and culture" (Adam Trexler, 2015: introduction). Seen from subaltern lenses, myths in India, as elsewhere, have become the victim of cultural hegemony w here those in power, the politician cum Industrialists cum cultural mediators appropriate the place of cultural property in our lives and thus render its intrinsic value as that of the "Other". To re-navigate the ecological wisdom of mythology to the masses, the onus now is fiction, with its mass-appealing potential, act as a redemptive tool for our culture's ancient histories to mine out the precious ore and process it to a shape fitting this goal. In fact the new genre, climate fiction, is solely centred upon the climatic concerns and their impact on the bio-spheres. "New challenges from globally spreading pollution, wildlife extinction, climate change and increasing environmental injustice to vulnerable communities in the global south has stimulated poets and fiction writers to increase their attention to environmental dangers" (Westling, 2013: 106). Ghosh is one of them.

Interestingly, Amitav Ghosh, himself an anthropologist, is very vocal about anthropogenic climatic crisis and advocates the power of myths to address this cause. Echoing Nathanial Rich's call for "a new type of novel to address a new type of reality" and Barbara Kingslover's necessitation of "another way to bring information to people" to "understanding the scientific truths about the world" (climaterocks.com). Ghosh suggests "a different, non-programmatic response to climate change: a re-acquaintance with the ancient

and religious ideas of virtue and its renaissance in the field of virtue ethics… an apologetic for why the cultivation of virtue is an appropriate response to the challenges of climate change (Ghosh, historyofthepresent.org). Modern fiction, before the recent onset of Climate Fiction (cli-fi), excluding the future-based science fiction, contextualised mythology and nature both but for effecting some magic-realism, romanticism or aestheticism, not situating them in the narratives of the present milieu as a subtle means of commentary upon it. This essentially applies to the present global crisis which according to Ghosh is "The Great Derangement" (wordpress.com); the catastrophic result of the excessive pursuit of modernity, and calls for literature to be the bridge for the latent ecological archetypes in our "collective unconsciousness" (Jung) to pass into our Consciousness. Besides, the mirror of literature is like films, an effective media to navigate our thinking through their (re)-presentation. It is true "the challenge for the contemporary artist is to rediscover sacredness in the world and to initiate a new cultural coding for the ecological age that will aid in the development of an age of ecological awareness/ concern" (Fowler-Smith). Interestingly, the scope of imagination-powered narratives renders authors the liberty to venture into spaces where, "in order to mobilize people the strictly scientific and apocalyptic rhetoric are combined with appeals to religious sensitivities" (Nugteren, in Barbara Schuler, 2014: 34). Ghosh wonders: "If you are from my part of the world, climate change hits you in the face. What is of much interest to me is why the arts, which are meant to be in the avant garde, have been so slow to recognise this. It is a profound challenge to all our procedures" (theguardian.com). Ghosh "argues that despite a long history of human artistic engagement with the "earth as a protagonist" in social narratives, nonhuman actors are strikingly absent in the contemporary novel… that humanity needs a compelling alternative to this idea and that artists and other actors in the cultural sphere need to think creatively about what these alternatives might look like and how they might be enacted" (wordpress.com).

Having the first-hand experience of terrestrial life and aquatics in Sunderbans, Ghosh provides an answer to his own perplexing question "If there is anything distinctive about human beings, as a species, it consists, I believe, in our ability to experience the world through stories" and wonders "What then are the tales that animate the struggle over Nature that is now being waged all around the world?" (Wild-Fictions—WF, outlookindia.com) His novel, *The Hungry Tide*, is part of such refined climate fiction which weaves mythology, history and current planetary crisis together and validates myths as a shaping tool of an environmentally aware unconscious and a comfort-corner, especially for the indigenous communities stuck in an existential crisis. A close inquiry exhibits the multi-level workings of mythological concepts in the novel. Set in the ecologically and geographically dynamic and sensitive

archipelago, the tide country of Sunderbans, it is a unique narrative. It unfolds the circumstances following the arrival of an NRI cetologist, Piya in Sundarbans for her research on Gangetic & Irrawady Dolphins, coinciding with the visit of Kanai, a cosmopolitan translator, to his aunt Nilima who runs an NGO called Badabon at Lusibari, an island. Parallel to Piya's venture, the note-book of Nirmal, Nilima's idealist husband, keeps us informed with the mythological and historical moulds that have cast the islander's set of ethics and saturates their "lived experience" (Ghosh, WF). Ghosh doe Like the *Sutradhar Suta* (narrator) ancient stories, Nirmal re-counts both the mythological and historical Creation stories of the islands out of which, the former has taken over as a dominant discourse for the inhabitants. Found in the texts, "Bon Bibir Karamoti or that Bon Bibi Johuranama (The Miracles of Bonbibi or the The Narrative of Her Glory)", it is the tale of Bonbibi (the lady of the forest), the guardian spirit of the islanders, who, assisted by her brother Shah Jongoli, defeats the demon Dokhhin Rai (disguised as tiger) who ruled the wilderness and preyed on stray humans. She divides the islands between habitable and inhabitable for humans and the demon respectively with certain terms and conditions relating to their not encroaching each other's habitat. In fact, humans, under her assured guardianship, are more bound to keep the sanctity of pact, respect the demon's domain. Ghosh comments:

> The most important of the beliefs that relate to Bon Bibi have to do with regulation of human need. Indeed, the Bon Bibi legend is, at bottom, a parable about the destructiveness of human greed: its fundamental teaching is that in the relationship between the forest and the sown there can be no balance, except by placing limits on human need. For Bon Bibi's devotees, the parables translate into a belief that the forest must never be entered except in circumstances of demonstrable need (Ghosh, WF).

However, greed takes over one of the dwellers, Dhona who takes a poor boy, Dukhey along on his expedition to the wild forest, and ends up in a bargain with the demon to barter the boy for cart-loads of honey and wax. He abandons the innocent boy in the forest, who calls Bonbibi for rescue from the predator. Bonbibi rescues her and again ousts the demon who, with the help of a mediator, is allowed to resettle in the wilds with an assurance of human fear and respect towards him in lieu of him not harming humans. Nirmal makes an insightful observance noticing the reference of "atlas": "this legend had perhaps taken shape in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, just as new waves of settlers were moving into the tide country. And was it possible that this accounted for the way it was formed, from elements of legend and scripture" (Nirmal, HT).

Besides, Nirmal sets direct parallels between the mythological and scientific truths about the existence of Ganges which makes the myths more profoundly real for the child Fokir. Nirmal brings home the relevance of certain beliefs of the islander towards maintaining an ecological balance. On their way to Garjontola island, when Kusum, her son Fokir, and Horen make "genuflections" before crossing "the chimerical line" in the mohona, that "Bonbibi had drawn to divide the tide country" to separate the "realm of human being from the domain Dokkhin Rai and his of demons" and expect Nirmal to "feel the fear… Because it's the fear that protects you", he finds that looking "more closely" the "ordinary face" of Horen has now acquired "an alertness, a gravity, a sharpening of the eye… the tension": all human practically requires to be armed with on a tiger's territory. Their myth makes them consider the human friendly dolphins as "Bonbibi's messengers" and thus, in the absence of a scientific explanation of their behavioural pattern, their belief keeps them from harming this mammal. Jessica Schmonsky accords with this hidden sense of equilibrium: "Belief systems have a considerable effect on environmental attitudes and can therefore play a major role in ecological conservation practices […] seemingly, one of the most popular forms of conservation through folklore is by taboos or trepidation. When humans regard plants and animals, stars and planets, rocks and soil as integral parts of their world, then they take certain actions to protect or manage them, either indirectly by tradition, ritual or taboo" (Schmonskz, ecology.com). Although Nirmal died with guilt of not acting upon his philosophy of interconnectedness: of "the trees, the sky, the weather, people, poetry, science, nature" But in a way, he has left behind his own myth, contained in the notebook, for the young to live by.

On the other hand, Piya seems to take over where Nirmal leaves; she acts on what he only believed in. If Nirmal could not bring himself, bound by his position as an educationist to believe in the Bonbibi myth and went to her shrine in Garjontola only after retirement from job, Piya observed no such limitations. Nirmal could not live up to his ideals even if he has an apocalyptic vision for the island due to "a minuscule change in the level of the sea" and sees "the signs of death… everywhere: the vanishing birds, the dwindling fish, the land, being reclaimed by the sea"; whereas Piya braves everything once the clarity of her conservative goal dawns on him. Her pure devotion to her profession recalls the *Karma yoga* propounded by Sri Krishna: "Whosoever, controlling the senses by the mind, O Arjuna, engages himself in karma yoga with the organs of action, without attachment, he excels. Do thou perform your bounden duty, for action is superior to inaction (*Bhagvad Gita*, yogamag.net). Her "bounden duty" is that of studying the behavioural patterns of dolphin's "endangered species" and mapping their "specific movement corridors" for their conservation (Ghosh, 2005: 105). Out in the field

for her assignment, "it was the exclusion of intimate involvements that made a place into a field and the line between the two was marked by a taboo she could not cross except at the risk of betraying her vocation" and this makes her brush off the idea of a "personal entanglement" with Fokir (Ghosh, 2005: 94). It seems she has seen through the "optical illusion" of this myriad shaped world. The concept of *nishkam karma* (motiveless action/duty) translates into her guiding principle as she tells Kanai, "if I thought giving up my life might make the rivers safe again for the Irrawady dolphins, the answer is yes, I would" (Ghosh, 2005: 253). In fact she remains indifferent with compliments regarding her tough job and says, "I am just doing my job" (Ghosh, 2005: 250). Like Lord Vishnu, the saviour, caretaker, and preserver of the world through incarnation, Piya believes "it has fallen to her to be the first to carry the report on current situation and she knew that she could not turn back from the responsibility" (Ghosh, 2005: 247) and "if she was able to go through with it, it would be enough; as an alibi for a life, it would do; she would not need to apologize for how she had spent her time on this earth." The rare anomaly witnessed in Fokir's behaviour towards the encroaching tiger again exemplifies Krishana's *Karma* theory; an action is good or bad in the context of the particular situation in which a normally good deed becomes a bad one and vice versa.

The extremely feared tiger, after several killings in human habitats, would have become a constantly present deadly threat if not killed. Fokir tells, "when a tiger comes into a human settlement, it's because it wants to die" (Ghosh, 2005: 244). Fokir's joining hands in the killing of the encroaching tiger seems to be an "ethical justification" also as the tiger is taken as disguised demon Dokkhin Roy and he could be punished if he crosses the boundary set by Bonbibi: "but again, unchecked exploitation is not given a divine and therefore, societal sanction" (Guha).There is yet another interesting link between the 'crab' ruling her zodiac sign (cancer) and the crabs Fokir catches while leading her to the dolphin's pool, occasioning Piya's insight "that this w as an errand that would detain you for the rest of your life" (Ghosh, 2005: 105). She believes "maybe the ancients had it right after all. Perhaps it was the crab that ruled the tide of her destiny" because "they were Fokir's livelihood and without them (crabs) he would not have known to lead her to this pool where the Orcaella came." She starts to believe connected to this "key stone species", being part of the "bio-mass" (Ghosh, 2005: 119).

Her venture on the tidal rivers climaxes with Fokir's death in a sudden and intense storm, but not without sowing the seed of her dream project for the cetacean protection. Fokir's role is instrumental in that. Although the novels provides a Campbellian Hero Journey pattern after which Piya's journey to the Sundarbans can be profiled but the focal inquiry here is myths

regulated conservational attitude of the islander limits that scope. Piya represents what "ecocritic Ursula Heise describes as an eco-cosmopolitan consciousness… In contrast to state dependency on global capital and disconnection from the local,… who evince it a deeper understanding of and connectedness with one other and with their natural environments" bordering on the Hindu world view (Weik von Mossner, 2006/2007: 120-144).

With Fokir, Piya's association boils down to the elemental level. In fact her quick and natural affinity to Fokir, despite their "different worlds, different planets", is in stark contrast with her guarded interaction with Kanai and an unfriendly encounter with the 'weasel-looking'' forest guard and his aide, Mejda. She reminds Kanai of a "textual scholar poring over a yet undeciphered manuscript: it was as though she were puzzling over a codex that had been authored by the earth itself" (Ghosh, 2005: 222). Her discovery of "so much in common" between Fokir and her, irrespective of their educational, social, cultural differences, resonates the Hindu concept of primordial oneness. This is also exemplified when on the tidal waters with Fokir, she inadvertently goes back to link her present experience with that of other waters in South East Asia and can fore see the fate of the Orcaella (Dolphin) here like that of the Mekong Orcaella.

The perfect generic synergy they mutely share makes them the epitome of the *Prakriti* ((Nature's female creational force)—*Purusha* (Primitive Cosmic Male, masculine force of creation) symbiosis for Creation. These "two different aspects of the manifest Brahma" are described extensively in *Purushsukta* and *Bhagvad Gita*. It is only in unison with *Prakriti*, the dynamic energy with a potential to produce that *Purusha* the "non-attributive static, inactive consciousness" takes form and "set in process the entire creative process" (Jayaram V, hinduwebsite.com). *Prakriti* cannot create independent of *Purusha* who is "The Ancient, The Omniscient… The Witness, The Guide, The Bearer, The Enjoyer" (Jayaram V). Although Piya is conceptually informed and experienced about ventures on waters, the "indifferent", "unconcerned", "utterly unformed", "clean", "silent" and "negligent" extraordinary "observer" and of "fugitive sullenness" Fokir is in contrast to Piya's "spirit and heart… true extraordinariness." Like the *Adi Purusha*, he is like a magnet "who could inspire and hold such constancy" so as to make Moyna, his wife crave him "in the same way a potter's hands might crave the resistance of unshaped clay" (Ghosh, 2005: 263).

Although unmindful of her purpose, is rendered expressive while 'traversing' the water with her. With a 'masculine innocence', the initial "puzzled frown'' gives way to the "enthused" "impatient" "quite pleased" "more explicit" Fokir. In fact the easy and apathetic way he takes the prospect of his own death, make him exist on some metaphysical level. He is at home on

waters and starts shedding his 'barriers' when he is actively but unintentionally involved in Piya's pursuit, as she observes "he's very different when he's out on the water… that she had been able to offer him something that mattered, whatever it was… It's like he's always watching the water—even without being aware of it… with such an incredible instinct. It's as if he can see right into the river's heart." Even the dolphins who are Fokir's long time "friends" "recognised" Piya, too. His "sure" wisdom, stamina, and sharp senses guide in the tricky waterways and slippery mud shores, lead her to her destination, save her from the crocodile and from drowning and protect her in the violent storm at the cost of his own life. Piya, who has been travelling for years while on the sea ultimately intuitively reaches out to him and identifies their shared love for waters, though on different planes, resulting in a spiritual union:

> The idea that to "see" was also to "speak" to others of your kind, where simply to exist was to communicate… What greater happiness could there be than this: to be on the water with someone you trusted at this magical hour, listening to the serene sound of these animals? […] In any other circum stances she w ould not even have considered heading into forest cover of that kind but w ith Fokir it was different. Somehow she knew she would be safe […] At the sight of him, her heart lifted and she was assailed by both hope and a sense of relief: she was certain he would know what to do, that he would find a way […] that it had proved possible for two such different people to pursue their own ends simultaneously—people who could not exchange a word with each other and had no idea of what was going on in one another's heads—was far more than surprising: […] she saw something in his expression that told her that he too was amazed by *the seam less intertwining of their pleasures and their purposes* […]. I think *we could achieve a lot, working as a team* […] It was beautiful while it lasted (Ghosh, 2005: 221).

Their perfect chemistry is in resonance with the concept of *Prakriti* and *Purusha* co-producing after Dissolution, and Piya 'the material cause' recognises it, from smaller acts of co-ordination in putting the dead carcass of young dolphin back in water and steering the boat in the stormy waves to a greater cause. And when the "spell" of a primordial like connection between them renders the mediation of Kanai vanish during Fokir's tale of his inborn affinity with the tide country: but that's how it is in nature, you know : for a long time nothing happens, and then there's a burst of explosive activity and it's over in seconds. Very few people can adapt themselves to that kind of rhythm—one in a million, I'd say. That's why it was so amazing to come across someone like Fokir." Working with anybody else "wouldn't be the same" (Ghosh, 2005: 221). She confesses to Nilima, "I'd never have been able to find you on m y own" and experiences an "icy feeling of abandonment" without Fokir.

Piya, as if the Mother Nature (Earth)-incarnate of Hindu mythology, "grimly" recounts with a "parched weariness" the apocalyptic symptoms of the environmental decay: "There seem s to have been som e sort of drastic change in the habitat, … some kind of dramatic deterioration… When marine mammals begin to disappear from an established habitat it means something's gone very, very wrong" (Ghosh, 2005: 220). She is very troubled at the human threat to the sea creatures' lives due to illegal trading, killing and the paraphernalia in the name of guarding their natural habitats, which results in their unnatural deaths; "a harbinger of catastrophe for an entire population" (Ghosh, 2005: 252). Her following emphatic and empathetic words are a validation of the ecological design of Creation in Hinduism and wake-up call to save our planet:

> It was what was *intended*—not by you or me, but by nature, by the earth, by the planet that keeps us all alive. Just suppose we crossed that imaginary line that prevents us from deciding that no other species matters except ourselves. What'll be left then? Aren't we alone enough in the universe? And do you think it'll stop at that? Once we decide we can kill off other species, it'll be people next… people who're poor and unnoticed (Ghosh, 2005: 249).

Fokir is like the *Fakir* or *Bauley*, a ritual specialist of the Sunderban islands who accompanies the inhabitants "to ensure safety in the forest… provide protection to the workers in forest… has a verbal repertoire of divine origin… either learned the Arabic mantras from a Fakir or the mantras came to them in a dream directly from Bonbibi (Schmalz, 2012: 77). He accomplishes for Piya what the legal system-appointed guard failed miserably to do, and is the embodiment of the knowledge, experience and resourcefulness of indigenous people of the tide country. Like the traditional *Bauley*, Fokir's role is "irreplaceable" for Piya as she has "faith in what he does" (Schmalz, 2012: 78). Even Horen is a *bauley* who is believed to "know the m antras that shut the m ouths of the big cats. He knows how to keep them from attacking us" (Ghosh, 2005: 203). David Abram's words validate this participative observance, interaction, and reciprocity in our eco systems: "Nature itself articulates, it speaks… the human voice in an oral culture is always to some extent participant with the voices of the wolves, wind, and waves-participant, that is, with an encompassing discourse of an animate earth" (quoted in Philippon, 2005: 34).

Fokir's mother, Kusum, demonstrates how somebody we revere and owe our life to, reaches mythical heights and sustains her/his beliefs through us. Kusum, "very spirited" like a storm, a *jhor*", steeped in her beliefs, comes at par with Bonbibi when Fokir credits his world-view which we find to be purely ecologically sustainable from his harmless boat and fishing tools to restricted utility to compassionate attitude to nature, to her, sees her face

"Here, here, here, here. Everywhere", and dies an unregretful death on the place of Bonbibi's shrine, Garjontola island, validating his dream in which her mother had called him there to be one with her. On the other hand, in a kind of magic-realism instance, Kanai seems to have gone through a change from a modern, "egalitarian… , meritocratic" womaniser to a clean-hearted, rooted person with humility, at the intervention of Bonbibi: like Fokir said, his scary experience at the Garjontola island showed him what he needed to know; his true element, whereby he is more in touch with nature within/out instead glimpsing through "a rear-view mirror, a rapidly diminishing presence, a ghost from the perpetual past that was Lusibari" (Ghosh, 2005: 183).

What Ghosh tells of the myth of Bonbibi holds true for the various mythological elements permeating the whole narrative: "the Bon Bibi legend uses the power of fiction to create and define a relationship between human beings and the natural world. Nowhere does a term equivalent to 'Nature' figure in the legend of Bon Bibi, yet nowhere is its consciousness absent" (WF). There is no direct mentioning of climate change or global warming except some scattered discreet but loaded hints: besides Nirmal's observance of the signs of death, he also notices: "What was happening here… was that the wheel of time was spinning too fast to be seen. In other places it took decades, even centuries […] Could it be that the very rhythm s of the earth w ere quickened here so that they unfolded at an accelerated pace?" (Ghosh, 2005: 186). Moyna's reference to the impending extinction of fishes due to the use of "new nylon nets" which are "so fine that they catch the eggs of all the other fish as well", Piya's feeling of "a smell or rather a metallic savour" in the waters, and Horen's experienced observance on the cyclone's coming "quicker" than he expected, are some hints at the crisis disturbing the surroundings. However, studying the mythological strands infusing the personal, social, cultural, and natural set up, gear life at every level towards ecological balance, albeit some forewarnings which will be taken up later.

This anthropocentric tale very deftly links the two temporally far-flung kinds by and subtly insinuates the authenticity of the traditional ethos and wisdom in understanding the nuances of utility as well as sustainability of natural sentient/non-sentient resources. Ghosh does it by what Klaus says "wed(ing) local ancient traditions with modern science and technology,… align(ing) age-old sensibilities with the realities of the late twentieth century, so as to have continuity as well as sustainability, decency as well as prosperity,... to harmonize nature and humankind, economy and ethics, on the basis of wisdom as well as science" (Ghosh, 2005: 152) weaving the myth of Bon Bibi together with the current story and the integration is so fool proof that the reader is rendered indecisive in ascertaining which one is the main plot and which, the sub-plot. In fact, paralleled with the immediate story of Pia's

research project and the ensuing adventurous exposure to the real predicament of the sea creatures and their human counterparts, the islanders, the Bon Bibi story with its ecological implications seems to be the ever imposing wall like presence that provides foot printing for Pia to decode, empathise and appreciate the islanders' simple but sound philosophy and ecological foundation of their life. She realizes how through the Bonbibi story in their veins, their environment has become their religion unconsciously, guiding them in their thoughts and actions. Fokir's impeccable mapping of the waterways, keen insight and an unconsciously shared concern for the ecological balance helps Pia decipher the metaphysical streaks in a superficially bland tribal scene. Through him we are also able to learn "to trace the ethical basis of various resource utilization and conservation strategies" adopted by Indian indigenous communities and their *Weltanschauung* (*world view*) (Gupta & Guha).

According to Garrard, who calls *The Hungry Tide* a "canonical text for environmental critics" says, "ecocriticism traces this mediation… the interplay between local myth and scientific knowledge, and tensions between human place and climatology… an interesting field to explore the interconnection between science and literature… including ancient literature as well" (Garrard, 2014: 210). Filtered through this eco-critical observation intersected with mythological undercurrents, the novel, being thoroughly informed with mythology induced ecological suggestions fall in line with Middleton's idea of "the pervasive need for narratives that will make sense of the connections between past, present and future as part of some greater order"(in Levene et al, 2010: 228). In fact, the relevance of mythical tales and their contextualisation in this novel makes both encompass G. D. Wood's vision of "an interdisciplinary project between the climate change disciplines of climatology, geology, geography, and environmental science; political, eco-nomic, and cultural history; and qualitative cultural sources like 'poems, diaries, newspapers, paintings, folklore, etc." (qtd in Trexler and Johns-Putra).

One of the interesting quality of Mythical stories is that we find in them some character/situation which we can identify with, and it is immensely cathartic. The inhabitants of the Sunderbans islands collectively find their counterpart in Dukhey, the poor boy in the story of Bon Bibi, who is ditched by his master and is left for Dokkhin Rai to feed upon. He is saved by Bon Bibi and her brother Shah Jongoli after being invoked by him. It seems that before the devouring desires of the demonic outside world, the indigenous people have nothing but this support system to keep psychologically strong in surviving. What can be a better example of the system of ensuring ecological balance by forbidding encroachments upon each other's habitat (Man and Nature) than that which is devised in the Bon Bibi myth. Problem ensues when the boundaries get disturbed and with the continuous and fast paced

process of climatic volatility due to global warming, such problems translate into disasters. The perfect example of the maintenance of an ecologically sustainable lifestyle is witnessed when Fokir, along with other islanders joins to kill a tiger which ambushes the cattle shed; the same islanders revere the tiger with fear within its habitat as it is taken to be the disguised form of the mythological demon, Dokkhin Rai and but according to the myth of Bon Bibi, the boundaries must be respected.

The Hungry Tide, in a non-confrontational and empathetic manner, proves to be an informative and transformative education in ecology, magic/social realism. Echoing the prophetical accounts in Hindu ancient texts and folklores about perpetual moral/spiritual degradation, the microsomal apocalyptic vision seems to have realized when Moyna, the ambitious and understandably materialistic wife of Fokir loses him to Nature. It is like losing a part of a living heritage. Moyna, Nilima's protégé for me, represents the exclusivists, who are charmed by such ecosystems, want to control it, but never understand it truly. Recalling and reversing Ghosh's image of "the twin strands of the double helix that makes life possible", I feel mythology and history have been presented in the novel as "the paired strings of a helix" of ecological development (Ghosh, amitavghosh.com). Reflecting Markley's decoding of the complex interactions between "the dynamic processes of acculturation and acclimatization" (quoted in Adam Trexler and Adeline Johns-Putra, 2011: 185-200) of the islanders, the novel, if analysed with the "eco-cultural" approach, reaches the pedestal of a new mythology, a living one.

The novel seeks in the end to present a model for our planet's ecological management and possibly, reconstruction, in wake of the complexity cause and effect chain of climate change. In line with what Dan Bloom's, the founder of the term Cli-Fi, vision of "a world where humans cling to hope and optimism" and of a solution to "the climate problems using our brains and our technology" (greenschools fiction). Maitrayee Misra highlights how in this novel, "the myth transcends the boundaries of space and culture, carrying within the religio-social-economic equation along with the conservation of ecology" (academia.edu). Further, Richa in her paper, "Eco-theology and the Notion of Multiculturalism in *The Hungry Tide* and *Sea of Poppies*, writes how "subaltern myth of Bonbibi provides an answer to the question of sustainable development of humans and non-humans." Such an ecotheology does not view the world of man as a colonizing agent (155). The novel represents "theology as an alternative to the contemporary corporate greed of ecological exploitation providing space to both the humans and non-humans" (in Prabhat K. Singh, 158). However, granted as the role of constructive mythology is in their lives, the novel draws our attention to the frictions and fractures in such a sustainable world view of the indigenous people, pressed from within or without. The natives like Dilip Choudhury who "trafficked in

women", the greedy, ill-informed, and lecherous launch owner Mejda, and the tough, "ambitious and bright" Moyna, who has "had the forethought to figure out how to get by in today's world… wants to make a success of her life" and who carelessly ignorant of Fokir's precious traditional ecological wisdom, tauntingly wishes "if her husband had a little more gyan (*knowledge*) and a little less gaan (*song, the Bonbibi song*)… her life would be a lot easier" (Ghosh, 2005: 177, italics mine). Ghosh recently posted that "the forested islands of the Sundarbans are increasingly considered a trafficking hotspot as climate change impacts—such as worsening cyclones, sea level rise and loss of land to erosion and saltwater—mean worsening poverty and living conditions, and more desperation." Such precarious circumstances suffice to dwindle anybody's faith system.

On the other hand, the threatening intrusion of the Industries and the over-domination of the government agencies and officials cause the firm ground of belief slip away from under the feet of the natives. Ghosh comments that "the people who live in India's forests have had to contend, since colonial times, with a pattern of governance that tends to criminalise their beliefs and practises" (WF). Piya's encounter with the corrupt, rude and threatening guard in the novel and the diesel-run motorboats polluting the rivers and killing their creatures while frequenting the rivers to guard the forest reserves and in turn, doubly disturbing the centuries old ecological balance, with dangerous consequences not only for the environment but working deviously at every level. The scary abhorrence of the islanders for Forest department officials is best reflected in Kanai's ironic statement: "if you're caught between a pirate and a forester, you should always give yourself up to the pirate. You'll be safer" (Ghosh, 2005: 245). The Morichjhapi massacre exposes the tilted and twisted perception of the authorities regarding forest and wildlife preservation in which the human loop, the most crucial one to maintain the ecological balance and conserve the extremely valuable bio-diverse heritage.

Nevertheless, despite these unfavourable circumstances and the dangers of beliefs turning into dogmas in the absence of the lived, hands-on experience of them by the natives, Amitav Ghosh ends the novel on an optimistic note. And that points to the need to have a story which is not anthropocentric. A myth which makes sense at "ecological, bio-physical, and psychological level" (Vatsyayan) like the Bonbibi's in Sunderbans does, as illustrated in Ghosh's declaration: "The one place where tigers have held their own is in the Sundarbans where, despite an inordinate number of animal-related fatalities, people still display a general willingness to coexist with the species—for which more is due, in all probability, to the Bon Bibi legend than to any governmental project" (Ghosh, WF). With Piya and Fokir's association, their spiritual union, and the germination of a new paradigm of a living myth takes

place: a model which is not exclusivist but includes all, serving individual as well as a larger purpose.

Like Campbell predicted that "an active, effective mythology would need to be in harmony with the science of 2000 AD., rather than that of 2000 BC" (Practical Campbell), Piya, after the fatal cyclone, comes pregnant with an idea which, when it takes place, will in fact develop into such a myth. Strangely at home at Lusibari after Fokir's death, Piya develops a unique affinity with Moyna to the effect that Nilima had mistaken "the one for the other", as if they are the embodiments of two, the manifest and the Non-manifest aspects of Creator: Moyna's grief was all too plainly visible in the redness of her eyes, while Piya's face was stonily expressionless, as if to suggest that she had retreated deep within herself… Piya's demeanour echoes the lull, the nihilism before creation, carrying "the guilt, the responsibility" on Fokir's account, meditating on Krishna's mandate on of 'giving back' in lieu of what is taken (Ghosh, 2005: 325). Echoing Ghosh that "what we're facing here is a problem of the collective… climate change cannot be addressed as a sum total of individual decisions" (elle.in).

In the epilogue of the novel, Piya's "impressionistic" report on dolphin sightings with fokir, shared through internet, is to be invested in by agencies of intermingled interests. Piya gears up to initiate an integrated Conservation project, a kind of Cooperative society, named after Fokir, based at Badabon trust run by the "pragmatic" Nilima, in lieu of sharing the funds, assigning the managerial powers to Moyna, involving the fishing community, funds from various global sources; all contributing commensurately (Ghosh, 2005: 328). So properly networked, it seems to be a distant progeny/ successor of mythology only, by "articulating a new form of social configuration resulting from the endangered river Dolphins (Garrard, 2014: 217). Piya's science and technology aided project pits their hero aspect with their villain aspect exposed in their exploitative and destructive use: "beautiful, harmonious, equitable, sustainable, egalitarian, non-destructive technology" and the "gigantic technology which is apocalyptic, destroying thousands of homes, hearts, habitats, ecology, geography, history, and finally, benefiting so few, and at such great cost" (Patkar).

> Advances within the field of physics and biology, the development of depth and transpersonal psychologies, and the emergence of consciousness research (cognitive science and artificial intelligence) and information technologies—particularly the internet—provide a medium through which the collective imagination recasts the universe and our role in it. The same archetypal energies and forces of nature personified in gods, demons, and myth remain in play, but the dynamics are depicted in terms and imagery more befitting *Star Trek* than Homer's *Odyssey* or the *Bhagavad-Gita* (Practical Campbell).

Piya's Hand-held "monitor"… connected to the satellites of the G lobal Positioning System" stands as such a "medium". Treasuring all the routes Fokir took to show her a dolphin, mapped "a sinuous zigzag line"... That one map represents decades of work and volumes of know ledge. It's going to be the foundation of my own project" (Ghosh, 2005: 328). The same goes for our collective unconscious as well; it is also "the only piece of equipment that survived" storing the archetypal patterns of ancient stories. We also just have to switch it on and tap the "key to access the memory", and since the provided "data" is "crucial to our project" of maintaining the ecological balance, credit has to be given to the source; our ancient myths.

What Nilima thinks about "the mystery of Fokir and his boat, writing a log of their journeys and locking it away in the stars… "It w ould be good to have a m emorial for Fokir, on earth as well as in the heavens" is a very potent and loaded indication towards our responsibilities to acknowledge the dynamic role of our mythologies. Amitav Ghosh does exactly that through *The Hungry Tide*. He knows very well "how literature, legends and folklore have influenced our responses to nature and wildlife" and the Fokir project materialises that response. If, as Ghosh believes, the distinctive quality about "human beings, as a species", consists "in our ability to experience the world through stories" (Ghosh, 2005: 132), stories like that of Fokir, "the efficient cause" of the Project's creation, fills the vacuum. Our mythological lessons of sustenance are like a word which "vanish into (y)our memory, like an old toy in a chest, and lie hidden in the cobwebs and dust, waiting to be cleaned out or rediscovered?" (Ghosh, 2005: 78) It exhorts us to convey an all-inclusive cultural heritage instead of giving a distorted view partaking of only "history, family, duty, language" so that they keep drawing their own module of conservational management (Ghosh, 2005: 79).

Interestingly, Ghosh mostly blurs the line between fact, fiction and folklore which in turn leaves the novel open to interpretations from the perspective of eco-mythology/neo-archetypal, eco-historicism, eco-criticism, or eco psychology but the outcome of any type of ecological reading of the novel boils down to a single conclusion: the mythic imagination, historical records and the culmination of the current fictitious story offer a route to personal transformation of the novel's character as well as the reader. The answer to Louise Fowler-Smith's question as to if it possible for the artist to change how we perceive the environment to the extent that people change the way they respond to and inhabit is certainly affirmative.

Ironical as it may appear, my proposition regarding supposed measures to safe-guard the eco systems and mitigate the negative outcomes of climate change starts with an "if", as in if the danger is still distant. If we feel responsible enough to see through the rapid occurrence of the microcosmic apocalyptic disasters, the need to spearhead majority into contributing in the

maintenance of ecological balance through sustainable changes is urgent. That calls for a stimulus that works for them and what is better than the well-tried and witnessed; religion. If, as apprehensions go and experience exposes religion as Marxian "Opium" let this drug act according to the diagnosis, not as a tool to addiction.

Myths have always been subject to multiple and varying interpretations, like an elephant in a dark room is. Presently, they are required to be seen through the ecological perspective as to how environmentally sustainable approach underlines the chronicles of theses religious allegories. Looking minutely, they are informed with therapeutic, preventive, spiritual and aesthetic powers of nature. They are potential conservative tools. The ancient seers did not know the rational/experimental way of revealing the exactitude of natural occurrences but has to be credited with conceptualising such phenomenon like the one regarding some underground shifting of the support system to keep the surface intact assigned as the trigger to earthquakes occurrence; the ancient people would probably not understand the phenomenon of tectonic plates and fault lines better than as some degraded demonic spirit or some other motifs. Climate change, in Naomi Klein's words, "is a civilizational wake-up call, a powerful message delivered in the language of fires, floods, storms, and droughts" (thischangeseverything.org).

India, superficially, known as a land divided into varies religious/ethnic sects and communities, castes and sub-castes, is a land that provides equal variety of healthy alternatives to address an issue of personal, social and natural import. *The Hungry Tide* bears testimony to the truth that instilling eco-ethics in people through fact and reason is harder than linking religion with the ecological concerns and igniting reverence to any trace of advocacy towards respecting or safeguarding natural habitats. What Hindu religion/mythology contains in its vast and diverse form is garbed truths with a scientific bearing. These alternatives were based in their mythic world view which has greatly transformed into dogmatic beliefs or have taken a back seat in the wake of overall growth induced by scientific and technological development. This vast range of Hindu faith's scientific articulations, resulting from a long process of observational, experimental, and calculative studies, pronounced in line with the corresponding times, generally live up to the hype they have been accorded. The choice of applying our discerning power rests with us to enable us to follow an orthopraxic guiding principle; to overlook or discard the unscientific, exploitative and unreasonable practices, un-layer the ritualistic verbosity to reveal a deeper meaning. As Makarand Paranjape concedes, "humanity's very survival depends upon our capacity to make a major transition of consciousness, equal in significance to earlier transitions from no-

madic to agricultural, agricultural to industrial and industrial to technological… a new combination of technology and spirituality" in a way where concept of ecology is embedded in the time to follow (fore.yale.edu).

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PROFILES OF HISTORY-MAKERS. JOSEPHUS' *AGAINST APION*

AURELIAN BOTICA*

ABSTRACT. The following study takes a historical and analytical approach to one of the most important works in Jewish apologetics, namely Josephus' *Against Apion*. In a way similar to the Christian apologists of the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, Josephus arguably felt the pressure of living as a second class citizen in the Roman Empire. The history of anti-Jewish sentiments goes back to several centuries before Josephus and it certainly had much to do with the unique practice and religious views of the Jewish people. The characteristics had not changed at the time when Josephus lived. He definitely felt the pressure of Greek antagonists such as Apion and others. Our study will introduce the background of the writer Josephus, a short history of the conflict, and then will proceed to analyze the arguments that Josephus developed against the views of Apion. As the reader will notice, Josephus emphasized both the historical as well as the philosophical/theological proofs that Judaism was a superior faith, one that did not deserve the criticism of Apion. Likewise, Josephus sought to undermine the historical ground on which Apion rested his own views. The Greek writings or history-makers, Josephus will argue, certainly are in no position of academic superiority to the Jews. Their own writings and history-making suffer from inherent incosistencies and cannot offer one a model to criticizing other worldviews. The study will end with a synopsis of the argument that Josephus developed against Apion.

KEY WORDS: Josephus, Apion, Judaism, Apology, History, Bible

Introduction and Historical Background

Josephus (cca. 37-100 AD) was a Judean born, Jewish historiographer, who wrote his most important works from exile in Rome (for general background data see Per Bilde, 1988). Even though he took active part in the Jewish War against Rome, Josephus did not fit the typical imagine of the Maccabean revolutionary. Having been captured by the Romans, Josephus offered his aid to the leading Roman general Vespasian, predicting that he was to become the next emperor of Rome. Gaining Vespasian's favor, Josephus was offered a comfortable pension and the environment where he could put his scholarly skills to work. It was in Rome where Josephus composed his main works *The Jewish War*, *Antiquities*, and *Against Apion*. In this sense, one may include Josephus in the long and illustrous line of literary expatriates.

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Even though he is best known for *The Jewish War* and *The Antiquities*, Josephus took a more apologetical and rhetorical approach in *Against Apion*, and did so with some degree of success. We must begin by saying that the issue of "history writing," in the objective sense that we practice it today, is not a modern achievement. Rather, the problem has been raised and debated since early antiquity (Brian Croke, 2012: 405-436, for scholarship on the degree of influence that the ancient historiographers had on late-antiquity writers such as Eusebius). Josephus' *Against Apion* illustrates the sensibilities that such classical authors felt when they trated this path. Josephus approached the issue by raising the question *of wrong history writing*—both deliberate and unintentional—particularly in relation to efforts on the part of "certain individuals" to "discredit the statements in my history concerning our antiquity" (all direct quotations will be taken from Henry St. John Thackeray's translation, *Josephus, Against Apion*, LCL, ed. J. P. Goold, 1926, 1993, Book I, 1). This statement raises certain expectations, one of which would be to assume that Josephus argued for the *antiquity* of the Jewish nation. In other words, that his will be a work dominated by historical concerns. In doing so, however, the author will shift his attention later to topics that have direct bearing on Israel's religion, ethics, constitution, culture, customs, and the like. This is especially the case in Book II, where Josephus will answer his critics and uphold the superiority of Jewish religion. While the arguments in Book II assume his initial concern with proving the antiquity of the Jewish nation, they now take the form of an intellectual debate where the names of Moses, Plato, Socrates, Anaxagoras, and ideas like the nature God, Jewish legislation, morality, and education predominate.

Now, Josephus' reaction was only natural on his part, considering the anti-Semitic sentiments that marked the age in which he lived. For example, David Balch named Apollonius Molon and Apion as two of the more important rhetoricians who made "specific invectives against the Jews". Apollonius Molon was a contemporary of Josephus and a well known rhetor who taught Cicero and other Roman authors. According to Josephus, Molon accused the Jews of atheism, that is, "of not worshipping the gods as other people", and for being misanthropes, that along with "being cowardly at some times, and reckless at others" (David Balch 13.1-2, 1982: 102; for Apion, see also E. Schurer, vol. 3, 1986: 600; see also N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Sculard, eds., *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 1970). Apion was a Greek grammarian and head of the Alexandrian school. It is likely that he was motivated in his polemic by direct contact with the academic leaders of the Jewish community in Alexandria. He also wrote "fantastic stories concerning the exodus of the Jews from Egypt", as well as malicious assertions in regard to the Alexandrian Jews and the worship and customs of the Jews in general (Schurer, vol. III.3, 1986: 605). As Kasher argued, it is likely that "*Contra Apionem* was intended

to debate with the followers of Apion in Roman society—such as Tacitus, for instance," who held several of Apion's opinions (L. H. Feldman, and J. R. Levison, 1996: 151; concerning other anti-Semitic contemporary authors of Josephus, Kasher mentions Frontinus, Quintillian, Martial, Democritus, Nicarchus, Epictetus, Plutarch, and Juvenal).

In short, *Against Apion* comes to us rather as an encyclopedic apology on behalf of Judaism in general. Moreover, in Cohen's view, "*Against Apion* is not just an apology; it is also an essay in historiography and historical criticism" (Cohen, 1988: 1). However, given Josephus' expressed purpose to deal with the antiquity of the Jewish nation, we would want to argue on behalf of the *historiographic character* of his work—framed in an apologetic style—and only then on its theological, philosophical, and cultural dimensions, which together make up the apology proper.

Nevertheless, even though Josephus deals with a host of other themes in this work, the notion of reporting on, and interpreting historical facts accurately, comes at the forefront of his treaty. In the following pages, however, we want to focus on Josephus' treatment *of history writing* in Greece, particularly in light of the apologetical concerns that shaped his arguments.[1] In other words, given his own background in history writing, we will ask what was the profile of the *true historian* in Josephus' own understanding, and how did he use that ideal in order both to criticize his opponents and to validate the ancient historical roots of the Jewish nation. Specifically, we will review Josephus extended argument in Book I, 1-56, and then will reformulate it a summary logical outline. By having access to the structural flow of his argument one will be in a better position to evaluate Josephus' logic, we believe, and thus form a reasonable opinion on whether he fulfilled or not the purposes he previewed in the introduction.

The Modernity of the Greek Culture

In the introduction, Josephus informs Epaphroditus about a problem that is related both to his previous writings and implicitly to the renown of the Jewish nation. He saw his statements on the antiquity of the Jewish nation maliciously challenged on the basis their failure to satisfy the criteria of Greek historiography; namely, "the fact that it has not been thought worthy of mention by the best known Greek historians" (*Against Apion* I.2).[2] As a response

1 Our main concern here is to analyze the nature of Josephus' argument against the Greeks. As such, we will try to focus as much as possible on his criticism of Greek historiography. This means that his references to Jewish or Oriental historiography will be discussed only insofar as they contribute to a better understanding of this topic.

2 Kasher, 1996: 151, notices that Josephus' debate has a personal dimension, or, "to be more precise, is related to the criticism of his work by Greek authors who rejected the reliability of his writing in *Antiquitates Judaicae*." As such, Josephus' attempt to undercut

to this problem, Josephus will answer systematically first, by calling as witnesses the most trustworthy of the Greek authors on antiquity, second, pointing out the self-contradictory statements of his critics, third, offering reasons for why the Jewish nation lacks the recognition of certain historians, and fourth, pointing out to authors whose references on Israel support her antiquity (*Against Apion* I.4-5).

In an ingenious, but debatable move, Josephus argues that historical truth must be based on facts alone.[3] This is the first of the few general premises he will establish in order to question the validity of Greek historiography. He also claims that Greek culture seems to be relatively new, especially when compared with Oriental nations like the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and the Phoenicians (and their ancestors). If this statement is correct, then Greek historiography—as a well-defined discipline which often probes into the remote past—is new as well.

Josephus next analyzes the origins of Greek *writing* by referring to the Phoenicians as the people who made possible the Greek alphabet. That Josephus was generally correct on this issue has been confirmed by modern scholarship as well (on the origins of the alphabet in the Ancient Orient, and the contribution of the Semites to the 22 letter alphabet, see R. S. Hess, 2003: 491-97; L. McFall, in G. Bromiley, 2, 1982: 657-663; P. Schmitz, in D. N. Freedman, 4, 1992: 204-206; B. K. Waltke, M. O'Connor, 1990: 7; B. S. J. Isserlin, in J. Boardman, vol. III/1, 1982: 794-818, esp. 799; Schmitz, in N. D. Freedman, 4, 1992: 203-206; Z. Harris, 1936, 1990: 1-6; Lipinsky, vol. 2, 1994: 83-84; C. H. Rollston, 1930, 2011: 12ff., and Orly Goldwasser,

the authority of Greek historians comes as an implicit effort to validate his own work. Concerning the charge of "malice", Shaye Cohen (1988: 4) explains that Josephus might have been inspired by classic Greek criticism. A revealing example of how this works is Plutarch' *On the Malice of Herodotus*, where he attacks Herodotus for letting prejudiced dictate his sense of history.

3 Cohen (1988: 8) believes that, while Josephus' theory of history writing was basically sound, it may have not appeared so to a Greek audience, especially to "those Greeks who believed in the notion of progress and admired inventors and discoverers." That the Greeks were capable of writing more scientific history is proven by the school of Cleidemus and Androtion, "who wrote local histories of Attica based on documentary evidence", and by Aristotle and Philochorus, who "collected and published records of public and religious institutions, games, and literary competitions." However, "the principal historians of the Hellenistic age, disregarding documentary evidence and the technique of history writing, aimed, as a general rule, not at being accurate and learned, but readable", with an emphasis on rhetoric and romantic emotionalism. It is not clear whether Josephus himself was motivated or not by political reasons when writing his historical treaties. We want to maintain that if his argument in *Against Apion* is sound on internal, logical grounds, then there should be no reason to question the conclusions he reached. Note also "Historiography, Greek", in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

March/April, 2010, accessed 3/24/2010. For "the influence of the Canaanite/Phoenician script on "linear consonantal alphabet used for Aramaic", see also S. Kaufman, in D. N. Freedman, 4, 1992: 173-78). And so, as a discipline Greek literature came late on the stage of culture; at least not earlier than the work of Homer, which is the most ancient undisputed piece of literature.[4]

In the view of Josephus, Greek *philosophy* too was influenced by Oriental thought, as "the world unanimously admits" that Pythagoras and Thales were, "in their scanty productions on the disciples of the Egyptians and Chaldeans" (I.14). Finally, Greek historians such as Cadmus of Miletus, Acusilaus of Argos, "and any later writers who are mentioned, lived but a short time before the Persian invasion of Greece" (Acusilaus lived "before the middle of the fifth century. In general, he is recognized not as a historian, but as an early mytographer who commented and corrected Hesiod' genealogies and wrote epic legends in prose, see J. B. Bury, 1958: 18). Again, Josephus draws the implicit conclusion that not only Greek historiography, but also Greek culture in general is new in comparison with the Oriental civilizations; which, of course, the Jewish nation was a part of.

This was an argument that Philo, another Jewish author, developed a few decades before Josephus. According to Philo, the Hebrew Scriptures were the highest form of philosophy and Plato was, in fact, a follower of Moses (note M. Leonard, 2012: 21). In this sense Josephus believes that "it is absurd that the Greeks should be so conceited as to think themselves the sole possessors of a knowledge of antiquity and the only accurate reporters of its history" (I.15).

Problems with the Greek Historians

Beginning with Book I.15, Josephus focuses exclusively on the topic of historiography. He argues that anyone can easily discover that the Greek historians did not use factual knowledge when they wrote history; the assumption being that common access to truthful reports about a given incident would yield a unified historical account. Kasher notices here a rhetorical device employed by Josephus in order to involve "the readers in the difficulties, planning, and submission of the writing." This method, he believes, "is intended to create a feeling of closeness, on one hand, and, on the other, to guide the readers to the desired channels. In the next paragraph Josephus also uses *flattery*, by giving compliments to his readers, as he asserts that readers better informed than himself would know about the discrepancies found in certain

[4] Dating *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* has proved notoriously difficult. "Literary evidence gives at least a terminus *ad quem* in the seventh century, when Terpander is said to have recited Homer at Sparta, though we must admit that there is always a possibility of his text having been altered and the indications of date being additions." *Homer*, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

Greek authors, as if he would almost insult one's intelligence should he point them out to his readers (Kasher, 1996: 160).

In the long list that follows, Josephus points to some of the *bona fide* Greek historians as examples of mutual contradictions. The names presented here alternate between local and national, or even universal historians. The reference to the Attic affairs "between the authors of the 'Atthides'" is not at all incidental. As mentioned above, Cleidemus and Androtion founded in the fourth century "a more scientific if less ambitious school of historiography". As Bury shows, one of the criteria considered when writing history was to use "documentary evidence" in the form of public (official) documents from the life of the city (Bury, 1958: 18ff).[5] In essence, Josephus appeals to few of the more reliable historical accounts in order to underline their lack of unity and agreement.

Having listed these inaccuracies, Josephus then considers the international historian Herodotus, who was, Josephus contends, criticized by "everybody". Using humor and irony with reference to Herodotus was also meant to underscore the fragility of this discipline as practiced by the Greeks (Bury, 1958: 44, 65, for the notion that Herodotus was interested in both Greek and Eastern civilizations). Bury, however, thinks that "the contrast of Hellenic with oriental culture... is the keynote of the history of Herodotus." Shaye Cohen (1988: 3-4) points to some problems with Herodotus' history. He refers to Plutarch's *On the Malice of Herodotus*, who "catalogued seven ways in which a historian, in this case Herodotus, evinces malice", and thus produces a work that is prejudiced and distorted. Another author, besides Manetho, Ctesias, and Strabo (mentioned by Thackeray, *Against Apion*, 171), who criticized Herodotus, accusing him of distorting the facts, was Aristophanes (see "Herodotus", *The Oxford Classical* Dictionary). As scholars have shown, in order to illustrate the differences between them, he created fictional dialogues (for example, the one between Croesus and Solon) in order to illustrate his points. His history was also marked by political interests ("history is distorted in the interest of politics"). For example, he adopts a pro-Athenian stance when he "set forth the mytho-historical claims of Athens to a hegemony of the Greeks, and represents Athens as asserting those claims at the time of the Persian war" (Bury, 1958: 44. 65). In Bury's view, however, this "is an anachronism... for Athens was a member of the Peloponnesian confederacy, and the strife for supremacy had not begun." Without underestimating Herodotus' value, Bury characterizes his work as "that of a historian who cannot help being

5 Bury also believes these historians were in fact chroniclers who recorded the local events in the life of Athens. The documents themselves were the equivalent of our modern day archives, and, although not entirely free of political or other forms of prejudice, in general they were more reliable than the more polished works of Herodotus or Thucydides.

partial" and who "exhibited a strong bias in the preference given to Athenian sources."

In this sense, Josephus seeks to paint a rather "hopeless" scenario, where even episodes such as the Persian wars, ranked among the highest on the list of critical events, lack unified documentation (Kasher, 1996: 176).[6] In particular, Josephus mentions Thucydides, also known to have written "the most accurate history of his time" (I.18) (see "Thucydides", *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*). Even according to modern scholars, Thucydides "saw more fully, inquired more responsibly, and reported more faithfully than any other ancient historian." Yet, some aspects about his description of the war between Athens and Sparta did not escape criticism of later historians. Thucydides collected material on the war for a long period of time. Furthermore, considering the fact that his opinion on the "true cause" of the war "was not formed until after the fall of Athens, that the speeches might have been partly fictional, and that the final form of his book might have been the work of editors, it is not difficult to understand why Josephus focused on his work.

A more skeptical position is taken by M. I. Finley, who does not "believe that it is possible to 'save' even Thucydides once it is held that the issue is one of honesty, of morality, in twentieth-century terms. He quotes one phrase from Thucydides that "has exercised commentators for perhaps two centuries, with no prospect of the difficulties." Namely, that his method "has been, while keeping as closely as possible to the general sense of words that were actually said, to have the speakers say what, in my view, was called for by each situation" (Finley, 1986: 14). But again, the fact that the speeches were not entirely accurate, does not mean that all other descriptions of events must have been fictitious as well.

Reasons for the Inconsistencies

Josephus believes that among the "many other causes" responsible for the errors of Greek historians, two merit a separate analysis. The first comes as "the more fundamental" and it assumes that the errors of later historians were caused in part by the original neglect of the Greeks to keep official records of current events" (I.20). Josephus refers here to early historians that antedated even Herodotus (for an informative discussion on the earliest forms of Greek history, see Bury, 1958: 15-17). Hence, he could not find any

6 According to Kasher, Josephus often used the rhetorical technique of the "ranking system". One of the instances is this paragraph, where twice he begins with less important and then moves to more prominent authors. In the first instance he concludes that Herodotus was criticized by everybody, and in the second case, he draws a second conclusion by reminding the readers that even the great Thucydides has been criticized by some historians.

historical document going back earlier than 621 B.C.E (see Thackeray's dating, 1926, 1993: 173). That is, when the laws of homicide were drafted by Dracon for the Athenians.[7] This statement may be another implicit effort on the part of Josephus to show not only the first cause of the inconsistencies, but also to undermine the entire discipline of Greek historiography. The historian who lacks credible and old sources concerning his own history ought to have little else to say about other people's more ancient histories. Then Josephus concludes this segment with another axiom: the lack of any basis of documentary evidence, helpful both in informing some and correct others, accounts in the main for the inconsistencies among different historians (I.23).

The second cause, as he sees it, is related less to the process and more to the motivation behind the proper writing of history (I.25). And here "motivation" can be expressed itself in different ways. In some cases, the Greek historians aimed for *recognition*, not necessarily for historical truth. As such, they "criticized the facts" or the more established historians "as the road to reputation". Josephus also portrays their activity as a "contest-like" rivalry, in which *literary style* and *originality* replaced the historian's obligation to find the truth, as it was (Cohen, 1988: 8).[8] For them, choosing a subject had to do

7 Josephus may be correct here. As Bury argues (1958: 30, 33), the birth of Greek historiography came only in the fifth century, with the Persian conquest. Prior to that event, Greek historiography was still influenced by the epic and genealogical traditions of Homer and Hesiod, which are classic examples of mythology overlapping with history. Thus, "the genealogical principle, lying at the base of their historical reconstruction, hindered the Greeks from drawing a hard and fast line between the mythical and the historical age." Concerning the "autochthonous" Athenians, Bury cites Hellanicus, who instead of relying on stone or other types of inscriptions found in Athens, used traditional genealogies and placed several military events that occurred the same archonship in a time frame which spanned over three archonships" (see the period of the Fifty Years). It is not improbable, then, that the sources used by many subsequent historians (like Ephorus and Diodorus) depended in fact on the debatable chronicles of Hellanicus and Thucydides, the major historians of the fifth century.

8 Cohen concurs with Josephus when he explains that unlike the Hebrew understanding of history, the Greek historians "interpret their data and, through their labor and dedication to truth, create a work of art and a monument for the future." Apparently, Socrates and Plato's inquisitive approach in finding the truth influenced the Greek historians as well. As Cohen points out, for the Greeks "human knowledge is advanced through argumentation and through trial and error... Debate allows the truth to emerge. Such is the Greek conception—and ours." Cohen believes that Josephus' approach toward history would have seemed unintelligible to an educated Greek reader. This is debatable. That a Greek reader would view history writing as an art, where debate and style and originality valued more than just laying down bare facts, may be true. But Cohen does not mention Josephus' charges of rivalry, personal interests, and fame seeking among the Greek historians. Where these charges genuine, or did Josephus commit one more *ad hominem*, as he had just accused the Greeks of doing? Also, Josephus' axioms concerning history seem to presuppose a shared tradition on the historiographical method among his readers. And then, even the Greek obsession with debate—as a means to find

more with the prospect "of outshining their rivals". Furthermore, others sought "popularity by encomiums upon cities or monarchs". Now, it is beyond the scope of this paper to establish whether these charges were entirely accurate or not. Yet we see no compelling reason to question the integrity of at least some, since the evidence mentioned so far points unequivocally to problems among the older and more contemporary Greek historians.

Josephus alludes to another axiom here, namely, that "the proof of historical veracity is universal agreement in the description, oral or written, of the same events" (I.26). Evidently, the criterion of universal agreement is indeed quite demanding, and it is unlikely that any historical work—if required—would have met such a demand. Cohen is probably right to identify here a strong *biblical view of history*, where "historical truth is not created or discovered by human inquiry." In addition, "if witnesses confirm one another's words, their testimony is true. If they contradict one another, their testimony is false." However, one need not forget the nature of an apologetical argument and the rhetorical context in which these claims are made. Josephus's point, essentially, is that in history, unlike literature—where the Greeks' eloquence and ability are unparalleled—there must be a certain agreement among different accounts describing the same event.

One final aspect in Josephus' criticism of the Greeks is related to the way some of his contemporaries described the Jewish war. Josephus explains that "we have had so-called histories even of our recent war published by persons who never visited the sites nor were anywhere near the actions described" (I.46). And yet they put together a few hearsay reports and "miscalled their productions by the name of history." Apparently, Josephus thought that his association with the Jewish War invested him with enough credibility to criticize any person whom he thought misrepresented the events of the War (see Thackeray, who mentions Justus of Tiberias (*Vita*, 336 ff.) as the author of a

the truth—somehow presupposes an objective reality to be discovered (in this case, to arrive at a correct knowledge of historical truth, regardless of the art and skillfulness with which this may be presented). We have seen how Hellanicus and Herodotus did not escape the charge of favoritism. Why the outrage that followed, if not because historical truth had been perverted—or so their critics thought—by their pro-Athenian allegiance? This is not to say that Josephus' theory of history was not influenced by his Judaism. However, we cannot but wonder whether Josephus was so ignorant as not to understand how history writing was viewed among the intelligentsia of the Graeco-Roman Empire. He seems to have grasped the Greek world-view quite well when he depicted Moses and the Jewish religion in a way comprehensible to a pagan audience. Why would he err in the matters of history, when he showed a clear awareness of the critical issues (on literature, history, culture, etc.) that were debated in his time? Momigliano (in Silvia Berti, 1994: 58) makes a quite suggestive remarks, namely, that as presented by Hellenistic Judaism, the "Jewish ideals and conceptions—above all, monotheism—appeared to echo in Greek philosophy under different forms."

rival history of the War, although there must have been other attempted histories as well). While Josephus does not offer any specific details concerning the errors of the so-called historians, he questions their knowledge not only of the events, but also of the geography of the sites where the War took place. In other words, not only did they not witness the events, but they made no effort to visit those places in order to form a better opinion concerning the War.

As Bury believes, the interest of the Greeks in geography and history seems to have been kindled by the works of Hecataeus. He "was, first and foremost, a geographer", and one of the "founders of geographical sciences" (Bury, 1958: 11-12). Herodotus too was influenced by the Hecataean School to such an extent that some critics believe the geographical sections in his work on the War might have been originally intended as a separate geography (Bury, 1958: 40-41). It is likely, then, that Josephus accused these historians on the basis of not respecting the canons of proper historical investigation (here, investigation of the war), of which geography was an important dimension.[9]

The Religious Background to Jewish Historiography

One of the rhetorical techniques that Josephus used several times in *Against Apion* was *the contrast*. In one instance, Josephus compared the Greek recording of ancient events with the Oriental, and in particular, the Jewish tradition. He argued that the Egyptians and the Babylonians had a more secure way of preserving "their chronicles from the remotest ages", by entrusting the priests and the Chaldeans with this task (I.28-40). In Israel too those who recorded and kept the historical records were "men of the highest character" and devoted to the service of God. Mentioning the role religion here is hardly incidental, for Josephus will argue that, given the stringent divine commands toward purity, the Israelite priests kept an accurate record of genealogies in order to prevent "abnormal" marriages and thus maintain the purity of the priestly lineage (and implicitly keep the covenant boundaries laid out by Moses). Thus, "the most convincing proof of our accuracy in this matter is that our records contain the names of our high priests, with the succession from father to son for the last two thousand years" (I.36). In essence, their piety served as a *controlling mechanism* in the process of recording the genealogies, since not every person, but only those of the highest spiritual (like the prophets) were entrusted with "writing a clear account of the events of their own

9 Setting this argument right before his description of the War was not accidental. He was a direct actor in the war and had an intimate knowledge of the geography of Palestine. As such, by raising the objection of witness and geographical knowledge, Josephus strengthened his own credibility and offered a new argument against the supremacy of the Greeks in the field of history.

time just as they occurred" (I.38). As such, though Jewish history lacks the artistic sophistication characteristic to Greek literature, it did not distort the truth, and furthermore, it does not display the inconsistencies found in the myriads of Greek accounts.

Conclusions

We believe that, since Against Apion is a work of apologetics that follows closely the rhetorical canons of the Graeco-Roman tradition, it should be possible to trace a logical diagram, or a sketch, on the basis of which Josephus construed his arguments. (For an informed analysis on the rhetorical structure of *Against Apion*, see Aryeh Kasher's *Polemic and Apologetic Methods of Writing*, and J. R. Levison and J. Ross Wagner's *The Character and Context of Josephus' Contra Apionem* in L. H. Feldman and J. R. Levison, 1996). We believe this outline will offer a better picture of the argument that Josephus laid out against his critics.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Problem

a. Jewish history discredited
b. Not mentioned by major Greek historians

2. Solution

a. Convict detractors of malignity and falsehood
b. Correct others' ignorance
c. Instruct interested listeners concerning the truth of Jewish antiquity

3. Plan

a. Call as witnesses the most trustworthy Greek authors
b. Present their reasons on why the Jews lack some international recognition
c. Point out their self-contradictions
d. Offer proof of outside recognition of the Jewish nation

II. GENERAL ANALYSIS OF GREEK CIRCUMSTANCES

AXIOM: truth must be based on facts alone, especially historical truth

1. The discipline of history is new in Greece (as well as arts, writing, legislature, etc.)
2. Therefore, they cannot claim superiority in a discipline which presupposes antiquity

3. Oriental culture is ancient, whereas Greek culture is not
4. Geographical and historical circumstances obliterated memory of the past
5. Greeks late in learning the alphabet, which they inherited from Phoenicia
6. Oldest Greek poetry is Homeric, and even that is disputed and has inconsistencies
7. First major historians, Cadmus and Acusilaus, lived shortly before the Persian war
8. First philosophers were disciples of Oriental cultures (Egyptian and Chaldeans)

CONCLUSION: With such a basis, the Greeks have no right to claim superiority

III. PARTICULAR ANALYSIS

1. Greek historians produce mere conjectures, not factual data
2. They often contradict each other when describing the same event
   Examples: Hellanicus, Acusilaus, Ephorus, Timaeus, Herodotus, Thucydides
3. Minor histories need not be mentioned, when major events have contradictions
4. **Two reasons** for inconsistencies in Greek histories
   a. Neglect of early Greeks to keep records of current events
      i. **Example**: The Athenians, known for patriotism and late legislature (Dracon) and the Archadians, late even in learning the alphabet
   b. Greek historians motivated by personal agenda, display of skills, desire to succeed

FIRST CONCLUSION: Lack of documentary evidence led to later contradictions

AXIOM: Proof of historical veracity is universal agreement in description of the same events

SECOND CONCLUSION: In matters of historical veracity, Greeks cannot be trusted

IV. ANALYSIS OF ORIENTAL CIVILIZATIONS

1. Egyptians and Babylonians were careful when recording their chronicles

2. Phoenicians used the alphabet before the Greeks, in order to record daily-life affairs
3. Jewish ancestors selected men of highest character to record the genealogies
4. Concern to maintain priestly purity led to scrupulous accuracy in recording
5. Names of High Priests cover 2000 years, from father to son
6. Only a few people (see prophets) were inspired and recorded events as they happened

CONCLUSION: Jewish books are few, not myriads, are correct and record all past time.

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MEDIUMS IN LITERARY SETTINGS: THE LEVERAGE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE MODERN NOVEL

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ABSTRACT. Literary theorists have always been in search of new ways of expression and new experiments, so much so with reference to the modern novel like, for instance James Joyce's *Ulysses*, *Dubliners*, or *Portrait of the Artist*. Generally, modern writers made use of theoretical notes or *marginal*ia in order to approve or disapprove of certain terms and ideologies, and to set forth their distinct aesthetic philosophy well into the 20th century. The fact that modern writers such as Joyce were in a constant process of changing perspectives and denouncing Realism's infatuation with objectivity can be traced back to their common habit of leaving behind works unfinished just to have a glance into the newly launched technologies on the market, and to put to the test the functionality of subjectivism through the stimuli mediated by scientific discoveries such as waves communication, atonality or techniques similar to the stored-program architecture. The question remains for us, and for the modern writers as well, how far will the employment of these mediums push the writer's inner experience into drawing back from society to create styles which allow for one way or both ways communication. In Joyce's case, we feel, there is a constant peril of misusing concepts like "experience" and "technics" when we analyze his novels, which is why this study debates on the nature of Joyce's epistemology at the very impact with urban technology, concluding that this approach to technology leaves Joyce's work unfinished and open to ongoing interpretations.

KEY WORDS: modernism, technology, Joyce, style, epistemology

Introduction

On the 6th of December, 1933, the Hon. John M. Woolsey of the United States District Court (Southern District of New York) moved to lift the ban imposed on James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and thus for the first time in American history gave way to "free letters" coming from an international author in the era of Modernism. Now, this judge's decision and the necessity thereof might seem strange to us today, however it came after many years of trials and attempts to introduce the American public to the so-called literary products deemed "subject to seizure, forfeiture and confiscation and destruction" (Joyce, 1990: ix). Undoubtedly, Joyce was already known to American literary theorists, and perhaps to some adventurous readers back in the 1930', since his book was released in Paris in 1922. But that did not make its reception in the United States less scandalous, being instantly tabulated in the "early obscene"

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genre. And understandably so, since in 1934, that is, one year after judge Woolsey lifted the ban, Random House in New York published *Ulysses* with a major and a minor in terms of aiding the reader understand Joyce's style. The major would be a special letter sent by James Joyce himself in 1932 and embedded in this first American edition, right after the statements of attorney Morris L. Ernst, and judge Woolsey, the three letters functioning quite well as an introduction to the book. It is worth noticing here that Joyce himself complained to Mr. Cerf, the publisher that until then he was unable to find a publishing house to accept his writings for publication in a volume, including his *Dubliners* and *Ulysses*. The minor, on the other hand, came years afterwards, when in 1961 the book was reset for an unabridged text which does not, however, include chapter titles, thus leaving the reader with important handicaps as to the time, the correspondent episodes between Joyce's *Ulysses* and Homer's Greek legend of Odysseus, and the need to dissociate between the real life of the city and the internal experience of its characters, or whatever they make of their time in the city. The present paper is an attempt to understand Joyce's travel through the city that shapes his epistemic values, however not at the expense of his own style/technics of rendering this experience.

Joyce from Experience to *Tekhné*

For Joyce's readers it is no secret that the author had quite de few phobias made public through his novels, letters, and other writings. In addition to Joyce's outspoken fears like cynophobia or astraphobia (see a thorough presentation in Richard Ellmann, 1982: 514), through his character Stephen Dedalus in *Ulysses* he is said to have been afraid of water in general, as he rarely used to bathe—see Buck Mulligan's remark to Haines in chapter Telemachus (James Joyce, 1990: 15). This, in turn, completes his personality by building a trademark along his anxiety circle. Which anxiety, we are told, is to vanish only after Stephen takes a pint of spirits (Joyce, 1990: 18), probably an allusion to Joyce's drinking habits in which he lured from his adolescence. Due to the fact that this remark is made in the first chapter of *Ulysses*, we do not actually see Stephen drunk in Telemachus: since the time span in this chapter goes from 8.00-8.45 AM, the moment is postponed for a later, more proper hour. But if it wasn't for Joyce's serial publication of *Ulysses* in "The Little Review", where he stood by a version of the novel containing chapter titles, we would not be able to trace these character trademarks in the first and subsequent American editions, since there is nothing in the opening of the novel to suggests that Dedalus resembles Homer's Telemachus in any way.

From the introductory page of *Ulysses* we are acquainted with Stephen, Joyce's alter-ego, as the "fearful Jesuit" in Mulligan's words, the two living in

the same tower apparently with no other purpose than having mild debates as how to "Hellenize" Dublin. There is also a personal story in Joyce's life where he as a young man lived in a similar tower for a few months, after his mother's departure and away from a drunken father, however always surrounded by other controversial circles of youngsters. Since the tower itself looked "down on the water and on the mailboat clearing the harbor mouth of Kingstown" (Joyce, 1990: 5), i.e. Thalatta, in Mulligan's words, or the sea, it is understandable, apart from his few enemies there, why in the closing page of this first chapter Dedalus would hand over the key to his room never to return to the tower again.

On the other hand, recent critics of Joyce's writings are trying to make a point on many pages, noticing that Joyce's problem with *tekhné* in his great novels like *Ulysses*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, or *Dubliners* is twofold. He is first and foremost using his style to confuse his readers about certain physical locations which every connoisseur of Dublin would immediately spot with as little effort from the author as possible. Joyce's manifest spatial intention to make his novel a living book of Dublin in his time is indeed confusing, since his imaginary walk through the city resembles driving his readers on no-entry streets, a process which is not only irrational, but also counter-productive for sightseeing (Valérie Bénéjam, John Bishop, 2011: 11-12). However, there are other readers of Joyce who warn us that, if in the *Portrait* the complexity of Joyce's style stems from the character's battle with entering adulthood (hence the book's "general scheme of gradually growing up"), the intricate episodes in *Ulysses* follow a similar pattern, with yet an important difference. Here, "growing"/ "increasing" the complexity stems from the external requirements of the reader, intended to take a difficult journey from the very beginning up to the end:

> In the reference to the wanderer who longed for Ithaca there may be an implication that Joyce wanted his readers to apprehend their own experience of his novel as a kind of Odyssey—that after struggling through the increasing difficulties of his method… they should feel, on coming to the comparative simplicity and calm of "Eumaeus" that they had at last reached shore (Charles Peake, 1977: 165).

This is not to say, however, that Joyce does not follow a linear road map of Dublin starting from his home in Eccles Street no. 7, passing St. George's Church in Hardwick Place, the Belvedere College (Joyce's former Catholic and somehow elitist alma mater in Denmark Street), Parnell's Statue (iconic for Joyce's sense of patriotism and reverence gathered in the historical figure of a conational), the Rotunda Maternity Hospital in Parnell Square, the famous Gresham Hotel and the General Post Office both on Connell Street, etc. down to O'Connell Bridge. This is Leopold's, Joyce's other character first half of his trip through the North side of the city, and it also describes half of

his one-day adventure in the novel. The second half of the trip, on the other way, takes him to Southern Dublin.

This second trip becomes fairly proportionate after crossing the Liffey River, and revolves around the old House of the Irish Parliament—in Joyce's days the Bank of Ireland visited by Stephen Dedalus in the novel—the traditional Protestant Trinity College, also known as the University of Dublin; Sweny's in Lincoln Place, "where chemists rarely move", because Dublin rarely knows any change, down the gorgeous park St. Stephen's Green. The excursion itself is roughly 4 miles long; nevertheless, we are right to guess that for Joyce that would have been a shorter trip than his daily mileage (for a reconstruction of Joyce's daily stroll habits, see http://www.dochara.-com/tour/itineraries/joyce-tour). At this specific point in our study we shall not make other important allusions as to the type of *tekhné* Joyce uses through Dedalus, which is ontologically different from the *tekhné* in Bloom's case, except for what his ethnicity involves.

If Bloom walked the city to and fro, his way of knowing a place is through walking great distances. Moreover, he is the wandering Jew of the novel, as Marilyn Reizbaum simply notices in *James Joyce's Judaic Other*. In other words, although it has been said that there is almost no research into this character's Jewishness, we do not necessarily have to benefit from the said research in order to be able to acknowledge the gap between the "Hellenistic" type, the young Dedalus, and the old, more intricate and complex Bloom, with his Jewish-like blueprint over Dublin: "… it is as though readers of *Ulysses* have believed… the notion that Jews were never persecuted in Ireland because they were never let in, and that therefore Bloom's Jewishness is a mythical, essentially irrelevant aspect of his character… Joyce was making conscious what was unconscious in his immediate culture" (Marilyn Reizbaum, 1999: 10). So far in Joyce's story, the type of character determines the kind of travel, which is always accompanied by old and new narratives such as the events surrounding Dublin's educational institutions or the descent into Hades portrayed by the funeral of Paddy Dignam.

Resuming our path to Joyce's spatial *tekhné* in *Ulysses*, the confusion for the reader is not caused by the map itself, but is highly related to the degree in which the common traveler through Dublin is able to use Joyce's *episteme* as an orientational skill. The story itself is a web of intricate and intimate passages of feelings and experiences which, as Bénéjam shows, are not

> represented "in terms of ends and means"... ; technical objects are granted being, if not human being, and even the potential for speech… The novel locates the imagined urban community of Dublin in the simultaneous connection of the city's inhabitants through infrastructure, and it threads that connection through the deep temporality of the city's nomos, Dubh Linn (Bénéjam, 2011: 21-22).

Secondly, or at least so he implies, the author attempts to give us a recognizable map of the city so that in the event of its destruction we could still remember the places as they once were. But if in the first instance we faced a problem with Joyce's travelling style, as he drove us through the city on no-entry streets so to say, in this second instance we are driven by a visually impaired guide, since Joyce had almost lost his vision by the time his novels were being published. And if nowadays this visual difficulty is not a secret anymore, we still let ourselves guided by Joyce most of the times at our own expense. This is now our experience, no Joyce's, and it should be an eye-opener: Joyce does not pay attention to what meets the eye, like we do when we try to decipher what he imagined for us (and isn't it ironic how we rarely perceive the very danger in this game!); the more Joyce imagines Dublin by his own map, the less we acknowledge that this is not a real map. It is rather a hyperbolic image of his city as seen by a man with an optical challenge. For instance, Joyce does not act in his novel like a tourist would, because the amount of time and storytelling about the city, apart from being told in the past tense, are given tens of pages of hard content. As Charles Peake notices,

> The formal parallelism of the techniques of the "Telemachia" and the "Nostos" is the most emphatic indication of Joyce's intention to lead the reader into and out of the complexities of the novel. In the *Portrait* Joyce has already introduced narratives expressive of different ages: one could label… the technique of the first chapter of the novel "narrative boyish", and the technique of the fourth "narrative adolescent" (Charles Peake, 1977: 166).

Consequently, the hero's *episteme* of the city is not a recounting of the things seen, but more appropriately a remembrance (evocation in its twofold meanings, both "recreation" though imagination, and "summoning" of the spirit of the city) of things past, which cannot be accounted for after only one day-trip through Dublin.

Because Joyce knows the city in his own way and time, he does not just pass through points of interest such as Belvedere College or Trinity College, to give just two fashionable examples of Dublin's cultural attractions. Even though the latter is a 16th century old academic institution with a prestigious history, Joyce is determined to share with us a personal comment in disregard of this university's achievements. Joyce almost takes an oath not to ever enter this building, because, as a former Belvedere graduate himself, his principles would prevent him from attending as a visitor, even if his bishop granted him a permission letter. A Catholic by name, Joyce translates his optical difficulty for his character Leopold Bloom, a Jew by birth from an Eastern country, who later on converted to Catholicism when he asked Molly's hand in marriage. The rivalry in time between these two educational places of Ireland is well known, and it might have amounted to cultural and political

conflicts between Irish Protestants and Catholics as early as the opening of the Catholic University of Ireland in Dublin in 1854, later known as University College Dublin, and here's how Peake elaborates on this again:

> The adoption of a different technique of presentation for every chapter in *Ulysses* is, essentially, a development of the stylistic variation in *Dubliner*s and the *Portrait*, where the style of each story or episode is controlled by two interacting factors—its place in the book as a whole, and the nature of the incident, situation, character and mood to be represented. In the short stories, for instance, the first-person narrative of "Araby" is determined by its place among the stories of childhood and the Romantic rhythms and images reflect the boy's emotional condition, while, in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" the detached, dramatic manner reflects the shift to "public life" as well as suggesting the superficiality of Dublin politics (Charles Peake, 1977: 164).

That is why the no-entry sign is, again, not problematic for Joyce, especially in part two of the novel, which corresponds in Hellenistic terms to Ulysses' one time stop on the "pleasure" island, and it expands his visual field to a new level. Even the religious terminology in *Ulysses* is linked to Joyce's experience both with the city and its "trenches" and with the Catholic school he attended in his youth. His *tekhné* at this point involves terms like "cardinal", "church", "pope", and "exorcism" for depravation mediums such as the brothel in part two of the novel, but this lexicon is also specific to the practice of the Catholic priests known for their exorcist curricula, see, for instance the Irish priest Malachi Martin, himself a fellow of both Dublin's Jesuit Belvedere College and Trinity College, for whom the practice of exorcism works both ways, as inner cleansing from demons and as casting them out (see Joseph P. Laycock, 2015: 227-229).

The purge of old sins in Leopold Bloom's one-day life can be considered as a metaphor for his modernist technicality, while the road trip stands for its vivid epistemology, precisely because it is a remembrance of a lifetime in a daytime. When in 1911 Joyce tried to have his *Dubliners* published in Ireland as a novel addressing current and pressing issued related to the "liberation" of his country "under the British rule", i.e. an exorcism by any means "legal, social, ceremonious" (see http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/an-irishman-s-diary-1.466859), his attempt was a prequel of the author's strive with his own/national past, and it also was a novel of evocation. His imaginary space is not a whim, as it so often happens in literature and art in general. Joyce has to see this way or not see at all, and this is a self-imposed exercise which allows him to make a living in the real world.

This experience, then, stems from his *tekhné* and his imaginary cartography, a mania competently explained by Bénéjam. Joyce's style proves hectic in *Ulysses* because while trying to write a map of Dublin for his readers in

order to integrate them into the narrative process of his wok, he nevertheless expands the narrated time (*kairos*) at the expense of the time travelled or quantity time (*kronos*), and because of this there is no way Bloom's trip through Dublin as presented in the novel could ever be completed in one straight day. The narrated time is the felt time, or better known as quality time, the personal action in the novel which comes timely, and it is up to the narrator how much or intense he feels, or for how long.

The difference between *kairos* and *kronos* in the modern novel beginning with Joyce and Proust is significant because *kairos* expands time according to the intensity and duration of a second/minute/hour in the mind/conscience and soul of the character. *Kairos*, thus, takes the felt content of *kronos* (*chronos*) always with the help of something the author experienced/saw/sensed in his distant/recent past (hence its technicality), in order to "evoke" that sensation left unexplained in the past. *Kronos* as chronological time is what happened in the meantime and it functions as an exploratory journey. (For a comparative study of these two concepts in the modern novel, and for kairos as the "fleeting"/liberating moment opposing destiny in both theology and politics, see Hugh Rayment-Pickard, 2007; Vítor Wethelle, 2012; also for *kairos* as a certain short time in the divine history (*chronos*) with close implications on human history, see Jerry Vardaman, and Edwin M. Yamauchi, 1989: 5-13). The accent on *tekhné* in Joyce's novels involves even details related to the way Homer's work might be approached in a Modernist manner, hence:

> Eumaeus is the 16th chapter of *Ulysses* and the opening episode of the third and final division of the book, Nostos or Homecoming... According to the schema of Joyce loaned to Valery Larbaud, the scene of the Eumaeus episode is the cabman's shelter reputedly run by James Fitzharris, the former Invincible... The time at which the action begins is after midnight. The organs of the episode are the nerves. The art of the episode is navigation. The episode's symbol is the sailors. And its technics is narrative (old) (Nicholas Fargnoli, 1996: 67).

With this in mind, the writer could pass through a certain building in less than one minute, but his felt time might as well be allocated sixty pages in the novel, a very statutory disproportion in modern and postmodern literature, although a very necessary consequence of the experience which models the author's *tekhné*. In this context, one of the few episodes in *Ulysses* whose time span actually makes sense as *krono*s (and as comprehensive *kairos*, even if his myriad of personal details and flashes seize our attention questioning this sense of reality) is the funeral of Patrick "Paddy" Dignam from the chapter "Hades". The episode recounts the very story of Elpenor and the character dies in the same way, thus raising awareness of the situation of drunkards in Dublin just as it once did in Odysseus' time. The remarkable style with which Bloom remembers his old friend and the possibility of attempted suicide by

being drunk, thus the trip to Hades of, first the dead man and then, his mourners, seasons the narrative with picks from Graeco-Roman myths and last rites. But this that is not all to it.

The burial scene in *Ulysses* is anticipated by Bloom's own burial in water at the public baths, while the image of the decomposing body is anticipated by Bloom's own scent after using the soap bought from the chemist, which happens one chapter prior. His fear of worms, grave holes, and darkness is but a conclusion of his immersion in water from the chapter "Lotus Eaters", and there is no way the writer can hide his fear, since he defined and expressed it so clearly. Interestingly enough, Bloom attempts to wash away his old sins and his city's dirt (see the chapter "Dirty Dubliners") with new products like expensive scented soap, but this remains an intention nonetheless, since from buying up to using the cleansing object, Bloom has to visit "The Mother Church". The first impression of "the Church" is later spoiled in "the haunts of sin", as Bloom's dialogue with Mrs. Breen unfolds: "(Bloom): Not so loud my name. Whatever do you think of me? Don't give me away. Walls have ears. How do you do? It's ages since I. You're looking splendid. Absolutely it. Seasonable weather we are having this time of year. Black refracts heat. Interesting quarter. Rescue of fallen women Magdalen asylum. I am the secretary… " (Joyce, 1990: 443 ff.). The only purpose of using the synecdoche here and elsewhere in the book, we gather (such as Mother, Black, Brother, Miriam/s, etc., and even Bloom), is to function as a grand metaphor for Joyce's plan revealed in Bloom and Stephen's final dialogue.

As the story goes, Stephen, the boyish man whom Joyce introduced from the very first pages as being aquaphobic, meets Bloom, the "waterlover, drawer of water, watercarrier" (Joyce, 1990: 671), and a father-figure for the fainting Dedalus arises. The contrast between Stephen/the future/the artist/the writer/the reader/water hater (but otherwise expected to be clean), and Bloom/the past/the scientist/the sailor/the traveler on and between waters, can be followed in time, since up to their last encounter they supposedly met when Stephen was 5, then 10, and then 10 years afterwards. However, the emphasis here is not on Stephen and Bloom, as it once was in the *Odyssey* on Telemachus and Ulysses. Things are clear on this, since perhaps the only character on which Joyce really focuses is Molly/Penelope, to whom he bestows an entire monologue chapter at the end of his novel. Joyce's technical apparatus is not about his characters. It is mostly about soothing his readers after their difficult travel inside his novel and according to his experiences, so much so that in the end, here and in *Dubliners* or the *Portrait*, "what Joyce had done… was to try to capture the impalpable essence of experience, temperament or mood through style" (Charles Peake, 1977: 166).

Any debate on the concepts of *tekhné* and *episteme* in Joyce's *Ulysses* involves this kind of approach, namely a distinct sense of variation between Stephen's

way and Bloom's way, and it is unequivocally related to the shape Joyce's technique takes in the proximity of each of these characters. Following Stiegler's interpretation of *tekhné* in Joyce's novel, a path that combines "humanity, technics, and language" as they must have originally formed a bonding, Bénéjam, like Stiegler hardly sense this sort of ambivalence in Joyce's rendition of *tekhné*. In Stephen's case, as a "fearful Jesuit", his outspoken phobias become the objects he encounters on his way to "growing up" and they proportionately objectify his fears of water, thunderstorms, etc.

A good example here would be the lively description of the sewage system with its urban functions, or the power station functioning for the city (an idea that Michael Rubenstein, in the chapter "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Urban Planner" from Bénéjam's, 2011: 122, borrows from Berndt Stiegler, 1998: 1). In Bloom's case the only fear is oblivion (symbolized by worms, grave holes and darkness), which is why the entire novel is an act of remembrance. Stephen and Bloom's *episteme* resulting from their encounter with technics is disruptive, once again, since the first is a Catholic, while the second was born Jewish and has a Jewish-like experience with the city of Dublin as with any other city for that matter. Bloom is not afraid of technical obstacles; however, he is fearful his memories might not be well preserved. This fear would be one of the reasons why the reader cannot partake in Bloom's personal travel, while on the other hand he is well accustomed to Stephen's misty ways to maturity, which is always a daily issue. To state that these two characters render a unique *episteme* in this novel would equal to assuming that Joyce himself had a bipolar conscience. It is more appropriate, however, to notice the different measures used by Joyce to make sense of Bloom's status in his work:

> … the thematics of Jewishness gives way to a poetics of Jewishness... The poetics of Jewishness encompasses the language of psychoanalysis; the "minor" language of the colonized subject: *mauscheln* (the hidden language of the Jews); the Jewish joke..., "the language of the outlaw", the very technics of Joyce's work, especially in *Ulysses*. These technics enlist the psychological phenomena of repression and displacement... (Marilyn Reizbaum, 1999: 9).

Stephen's attempt to "Hellenize" the city corresponds to his need to animate the objects or the technical system of his city in order to better understand the urban world and overcome the phobias it unleashes. His vivid sense of things also corresponds to a younger age of human history, i.e. younger than Bloom, hence Stephen's urban image is different from Bloom's wandering self and his sense of displacement. In other words, it is difficult to simply assume that in his *Ulysses*, Joyce "forges another relations to technique", in

Stiegler's words (1998: 1), because this humanity-technics-language relationship (Neil R. Davison, 1998: xii-xiv)[1] is far more complicated and is used to make sense of the past.

Bloom's fears have nothing to do with childhood scary stories; they nevertheless have everything to do with what is going to happen at the end of his travels, since he is not aware yet of the father figure he could be. Through Bloom, Joyce's *Ulysses* stands between the modern and the postmodern era of the novel, since his character makes use of modern technology in order to leave something behind, a heir who fructifies his ancestral experience; nevertheless, he is not the closing voice of the novel, but his wife is, and the last chapter is paramount for the postmodern feminist psychology devoid of punctuation marks, thus written in blank. For this, Bloom's experience in relation to his Jewish ancestral heritage is complete, while his episteme in connection with his urban Irish context is yet to be completed if we are to take into consideration his parental role, and his situation as a modern husband, a circular routing for which his entire map of the city was intended.

Conclusions

For decades now the readers of *Dubliners*, *Ulysses*, *Portrait of the artist*, and other writings produced by Joyce have been wrongly made to believe, in part by attorney Morris L. Ernst's letter occasioned by the success of *Ulysses*' case in the US in 1933, that the publication of such novels would "liberalize the law of (literary) obscenity..., making it impossible (to legally sustain) an attack against any book of artistic integrity, no matter how frank and forthright it may be" (Joyce, 1990: viii). In Joyce's defense, however, his novel(s) is not first and foremost a voice for the freedom of sexual expression no matter what, as many were led to think, a thought that perhaps inspired them to buy the book and read it. Let us remember for a start that this novel is a sample of what European Modernism meant at the turn of the 20th century. It is a book of a search for something apparently inexpressible, which the author sought to express in a way different than the language of the then common people, or the common sense of his contemporaries. Hence, if the book lacks common sense is because the author was not really preoccupied to describe the everyday life of his fellows, as his novel is a personal travel, an individual quest for his own way/experience. Most of all, this novel is highly technical, so that the readers should actually stumble on Joyce's phobias, his intricate

1 Neil R. Davison discusses the technicality of a Jewish portrait in Joyce's work, and notices the stereotype of associating a specific physiognomy to the realistic type of Jew, while the new, modern Jew escapes "categorization" because he is from the gentiles, just like Bloom is an Irish Jew.

experiences with the city and his own definition of marriage, fatherhood, morality, and tradition. If the author proposes from the very first pages of the book that we embark on a voyage throughout the streets of Dublin, this travel is an excuse for him to improve on his style/tecnics by making himself a live experiment. But no Modern experience is ever social; it is as internal as it gets, and if we thought even for a minute that Joyce wanted to share with us something so personal, we might start reading again!

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CAN DEATH BE A HAPPY EVENT? ON THE THEOLOGY OF DEATH WITH NATHANAEL EMMONS (1745-1840)

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ABSTRACT. Death is inescapable. This is an axiom. No matter how one might turn one's life around, at one point in life death will occur. That has triggered a number of perspectives, some more colorful than the others. In some peculiar cases the grim aspect of death turned the debates into despair. Some laugh at it, some do not. The Christian divines meditated on the subject of death and produced works of theological value under the name of "funeral sermons". Some of these sermons name the date, the place, and the name of the dead person/s. We can read what sermons were in the days of Nathanael Emmons, in the 17th century, and draw more or less useful ideas for our use today. Different times required different perspectives on death. Regardless of the times, death leaves an emptiness that must be filled either with hope and peace, or with desolation and anger. Nathanael Emmons presents death in many ways. It is an event that one must think about and prepare for it properly. It is not about sobriety, but about truth. Therefore, he argues in favor of death as a happy event that takes the soul of the believer from this world into eternity and the presence of God. On the same note, death should not be seen as a simple loss for those left behind, but as an opportunity for the renewal of one' values and morals. Death can be happy if considered in the right context. Faith in Christ transforms the terror of death into a joyous event, for the departed, as well as for the living. This essay describes the various ways Nathanael Emmons explains death and its consequences for the living and for the departed. The aim of the essay is to offer a new perspective on death, in the light of contemporary issues.

KEY WORDS: death, hope, sobriety, faith, God

Introduction

Death is an occasion for sobriety, introspection and a sense darkness and separation. Deep thoughts about life and death, worth and value, gain and loss, all peruse the mind when confronted with the death of a person. One does not expect words like 'happiness' to be connected to words such as "death", especially in the context of a funeral, where darkness and respect for the loss are paramount. Yet, Emmons is quite able to explain what he means by "happy death" in the context of the Christian life. For him happiness is not only about the present life, but mainly about the future life. In fact, perfect happiness cannot be achieved in this life. However, perfect happiness is guaranteed through faith in Christ in the next life. Therefore, death is happy

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because it is the beginning of perfection, of perfect happiness, of fulfillment, of an eternity in the unaltered presence of God.

The title of the sermon makes a striking note with the occasion. He preached this sermon at the funeral of Mrs. Lydia Fisk, the wife of a fellow reverend, Elisha Fisk. The sermon is dated July 13, 1805. Emmons structures his sermon on two main points, followed by reflections, as a combination of applications and conclusions. Each of the two main points has a number of sub-points. The main verse for the sermon is Revelations 14:13, which refers to the rest and peace of the saved, once they pass from this life into eternity (Emmons, 1842a: 67). Emmons begins his argument by stating that the Apostle John received the vision about the afterlife with a precise purpose, namely to give assurance and hope to those who are still in this life. There will be a time of peace, there will be a time of rest, and there will be a time of perfect happiness. They will begin from the moment of death. The presence of God, Christ, and all holy beings will ensure a different kind of fellowship, a new world altogether. This is the point where Emmons begins explaining what a "happy death" is (Emmons, 1842a: 67).

What It Means to Die in the Lord

Emmons begins his argument by stating that all humans are naturally in a state of alienation from God. There is no natural desire to draw close to God, through one's own reason or emotion. The alienation is of such nature that it makes man to draw further away from God. On the other hand, argues Emmons, to be in the Lord implies reconciliation with God. The ontological peace is the result of being united by faith with Christ. Once peace with God and unity with Christ are achieved, the result is the right to have eternal life (Emmons, 1842a: 68).

A Conscious Belief in the Being and Perfections of God

Emmons looks at what man does in everyday life and concludes that there is a natural desire and inclination towards disbelief in God. It is not manifested against the idea of God, but against God as the creator, upholder and master of creation. This means that man is naturally inclined to reject God, rather than to accept Him as He is. This leads Emmons to believe that many of his contemporaries, which means, many who lived in England - defined as a "land of light"—lived their lives in utter disbelief and "practical infidelity". He refers to their relationship towards God as "infidelity" because they are not of God and are not saved. By not knowing God, they do not know what God could do for them. Their lives were not only lived out in infidelity towards a God they knew, but whom they reject, but they did not know that God existed altogether (Emmons, 1842a: 68).

At this point Emmons turns his argument into a harsh discourse. He concludes his previous statement with judgement, according to which those "who live without faith must die without hope" (Emmons, 1842a: 68). This statement places a final sentence on the way people think about salvation, death, and the afterlife. Death can be in Christ or not. The renewal of one's soul starts from the death of Christ (Emmons, 1842b: 86). From a Biblical perspective, eternal life depends on one's belonging spiritually to Christ. The image depicted by Emmons has to do with extremes, exclusions, not middle ways and inclusions. There is no possibility for any man to die outside of Christ and reach heaven. This language is quite clear in Emmons. The warning is stern and harsh. The only possible way to get to Heaven is by awakening from "natural stupidity". It goes together with a knowledge based awakening. Stupidity is manifested also through a vain lust for the earthly riches. These do not aid the spiritual life and death, in this context, is the event that relieves them from such desires (Freeman & Cary, 1820: 12). First there is a spiritual awakening from a state of spiritual death, followed or connected by a knowledge awakening, which implies that one will know that there is a God and that this God is righteous. This is moment that signals the beginning of another type of living. From now on deeds will have a different value than before, because God will judge the saved as His own. There will be no exemption from His judgement. In this context, deeds matter due to the new spiritual life of the believer. Yet, in spite of this context, the God Emmons describes is still merciful, but towards whom He chooses (Emmons, 1842a: 68).

The difference between the believer and the non-believer, according to Emmons, is that the later, in spite of being created by God, will not accept the view of a Judge Creator or a merciful Creator. Instead their hearts are filled with enmity, anxiety, and distress. Man can walk a path that leads to death, even if they do not know about it (Emmons, 1842c: 421). At this point, Emmons uses another cruel image of God, and describes Him as a sin-hating and sin-revenging God. These terms are unambiguous. The God Emmons describes is not to be trifled with. He will judge sin as it is, and will not be swayed otherwise. God set the definition of sin, therefore the rule of faith is shaped according to His design. The created is under the right of the Creator, and Emmons argues that God retains the right of choosing whom He will save. Since God is the creator of life, He has sole right to choose and judge (Emmons, 1842a: 68).

Death as Love and Belief in Christ and God

After God has made Himself known to a human being, there is still a reaction of rejection of God, in spite of the fact that He had already convinced man of

His worthiness. This time the rejection is not due to a genuine sinful rebellion, but because one's life is not in full submission to God. In other words, they do not feel worthy in relation to the standard of God's holiness. Emmons mentions a context for such a feeling, namely the sick-bed. This might appear as a righteous and meek relation towards the holiness of God (Emmons, 1842a: 69). God does allow for sin and misery to happen in the believer's life, but also happiness and holiness (Emmons, 1842d: 287). However, Emmons argues that such a state of mind and heart must change, otherwise death will remain a cruel, terrible event, connected to eternal destruction. Although some value their lives only through the carnal and sinful joys of life, when faced with death some look upon all pleasure as futile and irrelevant, in comparison with eternity (Harris, 1736: 250). The solution Emmons offers has to do with a genuine reconciliation with God. On the part of man there is a renouncement of enmity, which has the result of a spiritual union with God. This new reality brings a sense of belonging *in* Christ. The dread and terror of death fade, and happiness in the contemplation of His perfections ensue (Emmons, 1842a: 69).

Death as Love and Dependence on Christ for Forgiveness

Emmons argues in favor of a redefinition of death and he succeeds in the sense that it takes away the unilateral perspective on death—the end/step-forward/gate—and wraps a theologically beautiful argument around it. In this sense he presents death in Christ as an action/event that presupposes, first of all, love for Christ and second, a dependence on Him for forgiveness and acceptance before the council of God. In this context, death becomes not a simple pathway between worlds, but rather an experience constitutive to the human spiritual and physical world. The relationship between Father and Son is displayed through the actions of Christ, ultimately by His sacrifice on the cross. To this relationship chain man is attached through the love of Christ, and through Christ, the love of the Father. Man joins the chain and becomes part of the life of God. The love of Christ is possible only through faith in Him. This aspect is manifested in life as a constant, and although it may fluctuate due to earthly problems, it remains consistent in the faith of Christ. The end is death, but not any kind of death, but a death in Christ. As death is an ever-present event, being in faith, means the believer is in Christ. That is done through the power of the Savior. It was the death of Christ that allows for our death to be happy or hopeful (Emmons, 1842e: 294).

Love and death seem to be intertwined, due to physical aspects, such as the decay of the body. As death is inevitable, the love of Christ leads one's life even through death. In other words, argues Emmons, one who loves Christ in truth, will also be ready to die in Him. In such a relationship death loses its dreadful significance of something that plunges the soul into darkness or

non-existence. Death is not an end for the spiritual life, whether one refers to heaven or hell. All faculties are restored and sharpened. Reason still works, but better (Urijah, 1910: 156). It rather transforms the perception of death as something positive. Death becomes the clarion that calls the believer to the fulfillment of life. Here Emmons quotes the biblical text that refers to the sting and victory of death, arguing that the sting is the sin and the strength is the law. Both lose their power before the believer, because it is Christ that one is in. Since Christ defeated death, the believer does not gain the same power, but is victorious through the Savior (Emmons, 1842a: 69).

Death as a Well-founded Hope of the Favor of God and the Enjoyment of Heaven

Emmons considers the moment of death from the perspective of God, not of man. He argues that God knows man will come into the hour of death, the moments before the passing. In this context Emmons believes God prepares man ahead of time for the moment of death. This event may work in favor of what spiritual life may be (Furness, 1845: 6). Man needs light and comfort in order to see death as God sees it. The change of perspective begins with one's salvation and the teachings about the God's care for His children. The adoption into the family of God, which means that the believer belongs to God, together with the teachings about the future life and the glory of the kingdom of God are meant to be repeated and developed throughout a believer's life, in order to build a conscious and well-argued case that would stand before the terror of death. The examples he gives from the Bible, from the Old as well as from the New Testaments, are to show that man can smile in the faith of death, not because death is easy, but because it is not the end, but a milestone on the path to eternity (Emmons, 1842a: 70–71).

Why Those Who Die in Christ Are Blessed

Knowledge of the Works of God Build the Foundation of Faith

Death can act as an absolute destroyer of hope, of prospects, of future, and, for some, of life. Some prepare for death, others do not, but all can sense death as darkness and the ultimate stumbling block. Nothing can be done to anything or anyone once death occurred. Emmons defines death as a king of terrors, from the perspective of those who are not in Christ. Because none have seen beyond the grave, Emmons considers that for the dying man it is not the physical pain that matters most in the hour of death, but the "apprehension of an opening eternity" (Emmons, 1842a: 70). For the unsaved, the prospect of death brings along a consciousness of meeting the God of wrath, who punishes the sinner in the full power of His judgment. In contrast to the unsaved stand the saved, who react to the same event with joy and happiness. The desire of the saved is to get to the place beyond death, as he/she is convinced that heaven awaits. Here Emmons turns to the patriarchs who desired death with joy after a long and hard life. He also refers to characters from

the New Testament, such as Simeon, Stephen, and Paul (Emmons, 1842a: 70–71). This kind of attitude must characterize each believer, because they deal in truth, not fantasy. The conviction of salvation and forgiveness, transforms their concept of death into one of hope and joy, due specifically to the realities of the after-life.

Death as Blessing Due to an Immediate Entrance into Heaven

Emmons argues with the main verse of the sermon in order to show that there is no sleep or intermediate state between the death of the body and the entrance of the soul into heaven. Rather, there is an immediate entrance into heaven. This is also pointed out with the examples of Enoch, Moses and Elijah. The examples carry on with Lazarus and the "penitent malefactor" who was crucified next to Christ. Any other state, including that of "insensibility" would not prove happiness, but the contrary (Emmons, 1842a: 71).

The reasons Emmons lists for happiness are related to the physical and the spiritual realms. First, he argues that those who die in Christ and are immediately sent to Heaven escape all physical sufferings, as well as all the troubles they face in the earthly life. Humans do not suffer beginning with a certain point in their life, but they are born into suffering. In this passage of the sermon Emmons starts all his statements with the word "here"—as a symbol of bodily life and the entire life of a person—and describes the sufferings, which are "innumerable pains, infirmities, and diseases of the body", the "seasons and all the elements… armed against them", the "public calamities as well as personal afflictions". He turns out to be quite poetic when writes "here they lived and died in a state which was designed and calculated to fill their eyes with tears, and wring their hearts with sorrow" (Emmons, 1842a: 71). The future life of the soul in the presence of God is guaranteed by the death and resurrection of Christ (Hayes & Nagelschmitt, 1914: 138). The "here" is contrasted with the after-life, in which all the sorrows, ailments, and pains of the earthly life are canceled and forever lost. Heaven will offer "pure and positive enjoyments". The moment of death must be thought of in the light of the promises of heaven. These build themselves in practice of everyday life.

If Emmons defines the first blessing as an escape from physical pain, the second blessing is about the escape from natural evil. Take the holiest and most pious man that has ever lived on Earth, place him/her on Earth and, as Emmons points out, even if this man had the greatest love for God and fellow man, the adversity of the world would cause interruptions. Death is seen also as the avenger of broken law (Bethune, 1895: 187). These would eventually amount to a halt in the progress of holiness and love. Thus, one cannot reach the peak of what love could be, due to the troubled life lived out on Earth. However, once death has done its job, the soul is free to be fully holy and

fully conscious of the joys and benevolent affections of Heaven. To this Emmons adds that the relationship of the soul with God, Christ and the Holy Spirit will be perfect and uninterrupted. There will be no instinct to do evil, no desire to replace holiness with sin and there will be no falling away from grace. The intensely longed for perfect relationship with God and one another shall be achieved, without any shadow of evil within it (Emmons, 1842a: 72).

The third blessing is work related. Earthly chores are done in great distress, due to the curse God laid in creation after the fall of man. However, Heaven comes with an end for this kind of labor. However, work will not cease completely. Emmons believes it will be replaced with a different kind of work, and it will be related to the "holy and devout exercises" (Emmons, 1842a: 72). Emmons believes that the saints who will dwell in heaven will be in constant, perpetual activity. Perfect love and perfect admiration towards God will be manifested in constant praise. The saints will then be kings and priests, therefore it will be their duty to act in perfect submission and perfect obedience towards God (Emmons, 1842a). If this image is not a flattering one, and one might consider that there will be no time for one's freedom, there is an aspect that is impossible to avoid. The interpretation of the afterlife is, for the time being, altered by sin. Humans cannot conceive what life without can be. Therefore, the images of heaven must be considered in this light. They do not depict only the riches of Heaven, but appeal also to the issue of submission out of a perfect love, and responsibility towards heavenly matters as a privilege offered by God.

The fourth aspect of the heavenly blessed life has to do with the perfection of one's nature. All intellectual capabilities were limited and affected by sin. Heaven comes with a better offer. Any good thought and holy desire one had on Earth will be expanded and reach "proper vigor and maturity". This implies that all "natural and moral excellence" that was nurtured and implemented in the earthly life will become, no more, no less, than perfect. However, the next life will not provide equality. The souls will not be "equally great, equally good, and equally happy" (Emmons, 1842a: 72), because the justice of God will have rewarded each believer in accordance with their deeds. The justice of God will reward in such a way that none will receive more than due, but all be "perfectly great, perfectly good, and perfectly happy" (Emmons, 1842a: 72).

For Emmons, Heaven is open to those who died at any age. He lists the infant, the child, the youth, the man, the middle-aged, and the aged, as those who will have their natures made perfect. The natures will not be perfected as soon as they die, but in the moment they pass into heaven. At the second coming of Christ there will be no death for those who live in Christ (Shand,

1845: 172). There is no place for imperfection in Heaven, therefore the natures of those who died must be perfected. Emmons uses the story of the Apostle Paul who was taken into the heavens. He then argues that on Earth no man can fully comprehend what is the perfection or the maturity of the human nature. Man cannot know what the perfect mind and the moral perfections are. This will not be the case of those who enter Heaven. The perfect nature will fully understand the history of God's actions in the history of man and the Church (Emmons, 1842a: 73). The blessing, in this case, is the perfection of that was blemished and harmed by sin. This is the final reason Emmons names those who die in Christ as "happy" and their passing as "happy death".

Applications

Life and death are connected in the theological system that Emmons presents. Life is the time span in which one orders one's life and prepares for the moment of death. On the other hand, death is only a moment, but the crucial event that determines eternity. If in life one is a believer in the existence of God, death is the doorway to eternity in the presence of God. This is a defining desire and it should be considered while man is still alive. In this context, Emmons argues that infidelity towards God is stupid, as well as criminal. The only connection between this world and eternity with God is the faith that He bestows upon men. The other side of that eternity is a dark one, in spite of knowing all about God. The knowledge and desire to follow God is based solely upon the word of God. The Bible is a light, but when denied it leaves room for darkness (Emmons, 1842a: 73-74).

Darkness leads to despair and loss of hope. The deniers of God cannot find any rational explanation for anything spiritual, from the existence of God to the existence of the soul. For a Christian such realities are crucial, they are part of the reality of God's presence in one's life. Emmons believes that the more knowledgeable a man who denies God is, the more inner suffering one will have. Only a believer can approximate the pain of an eternity without God, by comparing it to the joy one must feel in Heaven. In this context, Emmons considers death as an antidote to infidelity. He argues in favor of a careful and intense thought process in order to achieve a favorable perspective on eternity (Emmons, 1842a: 74).

The second reflection of Emmons hits the core of false religion and false faith. He presents the case of those who "live soberly, walk uprightly before men, frequently meditate on the shortness and uncertainty of life, read the word of God, observe the Sabbath strictly, call upon God in private and in secret, and perform every external duty" with the specific purpose of "maintain peace of conscience, and banish the fears of death" (Emmons, 1842a: 75).

He labels such practices as "refuges of lies, which naturally tend to utter disappointment and despair" (Emmons, 1842a: 75). In such a context, death proves to be the ultimate destroyer of all false hope. In order to be safe and secure in one's belief, a renovation of heart is needed, as well as reconciliation with God. Inner holiness is paramount for a secure life of faith and a healthy spiritual perspective on life and death. In other words, Emmons concludes that "no external duties, no selfish desires, no mercenary hopes of future happiness, will fit men for heaven", however "nothing short of holy love and purity of heart" (Emmons, 1842a: 75) will prepare the believers for this life, as well as for the next.

Regardless of one's life and endeavors in living with oneself and others, the most important moment to realizes what true faith and honest living is or what dying in the Lord represents, is to actually see one die. It might seem macabre, but many have already seen others die before their eyes. Such an event can be a soul searching, eye opening experience. Peace with God is the result of Christ's death, but salvation is the result of His resurrection (Gurley et al., 1865: 196). Emmons does not go against religion, but rather emphasizes that a religion that removes the fear of death, and replaces it with joy in the face of death, must be a good and desirable one. Death is seen as moment or an event that requires a thorough examination. Consolation is valid for both the ones dying, as well as for the ones who are concerned about their friends (Emmons, 1842a: 76-77).

Emmons mentions Mrs. Fisk only in the ending of his funeral sermon, as a natural conclusion and proof of application of his principles enumerated in the speech. He praises her for the way she conducted her life and for the way she prepared for death, in her case, an expected one. He also mentions that she is like a voice of God for the living, both friends and enemies of God. There is no time to lag behind and postpone preparing for death. Today is the best time, because tomorrow might be too late. The last advice is to accept the call of God, if one hears it (Emmons, 1842a: 76-77).

Death is an unescapable moment. Emmons argues in favor of thinking about this moment well before it ever has a chance to take one by surprise. Since all will die, it is well worth meditating upon it. Regardless of where one starts thinking about it, it is recommended for all to come to the conclusion that death must be considered in the light of who God truly is. Death has a positive and a negative connotation. The argument returns to the death of Christ. Due to his death, the benefits are given to the believers (Mason, 1870: 7). The positive connotation is that if considered correctly, death loses all terror and despair, thus becoming a beacon of hope and a healthy spiritual perspective regarding eternity with God. However, the negative connotation is that if considered improperly, it will only lead to sure despair and negativity, nihilism and an untrue perspective on eternity. The advice that Emmons

gives for all who ponder upon death is that the result must be oriented towards the word of God, the reality of God's justice and the work of Christ on the cross. A true reflection will lead to the inevitable conclusion that God offers hope and joy in face of inescapable death (Emmons, 1842a: 78).

Death in Other Sermons of Nathanael Emmons

Sermon III. Death without Order (Emmons, 1842a: 29–40)

This sermon was preached on November 7, 1802, at the funeral of Mr. Daniel Thurston. He was 54 years old and the biblical text used by Emmons is Job 10:22, but only the words "without order". The main point of his sermon is that God does not reveal to men any design by which he allows death on Earth. However, Emmons argues that there is, indeed, an order, but that is only known by God, while humans can only understand that nothing escapes the sight of God, not even deaths order. While sick, Job meditates on death and Emmons becomes the revealer of this ill man's thoughts. First, Emmons shows that God does have an order in distributing death among men, because death is much too important to be left without control. Death has no preference for age or any other category. However, it strikes only in accordance to God's plan. God is the creator of man, and this implies He is sovereign over man's life. Second, Emmons believes God has no regard for one's bodily strength. Third, God has no regard for one's public or other kind of social status. Fourth, death comes in many forms, and it has not a specific kind of means to kill a certain person. Fifth, God does not take into consideration the character of men. Sixth, there is no specific circumstance in which any man must die. Seventh, God does not consult men before taking one's life.

The second part of the sermon enumerates four reasons for which God sends death without a specific order. First, God proves to man that He does not need the aid of man in order to fully accomplish His plans. Second, God hides the ways He delivers death, to prove His control over creation. Third, God strikes the pride of man, by proving that humanity is and can achieve nothing without Him. Fourth, God hides the way He delivers death in order to make humanity think wisely about the hour of death and being prepared for it.

In this sermon Emmons manages to explain that there is no reason to fear death, even simply because it does not matter when and how one dies. Death is a certain event, it is inescapable, but meditation upon it, in the context of personal and spiritual experience with God, can aid one's understanding of the values that God upholds and explains throughout history. Emmons' sermon is on a positive note, because it aims to prove that this life is passing, but life eternal with God is the ultimate goal of one's faith.

Sermon XI. Hope in Death (Emmons, 1842a: 129–143)
This sermon was preached on October 14, 1814, at the funeral of Mr. Oliver Shepher, who died at the young age of 27. The main verse of the sermon is Proverbs 14:32. He begins the sermon by presenting an apparent axiom, namely that the source of happiness of all mankind is hope. This is in spite of all the shifts and turns of life. At this point he splits people into two categories, the wicked and the righteous. They each have specific hopes. The wicked hope in the trivial values of everyday life, which invariably lead to perpetual disappointments and despair. When faced with death, these false hopes will give birth to unfathomable despair. The righteous, on the other hand, have their hope built upon the spiritual and divine objects. These are the ones that take the believer over despair, the most serious crisis, and are steadfast, even in the hour of one's death. The first point of the sermon is to describe the character of the righteous. The first distinction between the believers and the wicked is in the heart. It is not about understanding, rather than character. The wicked have no trace of the holiness, which fills the life of the believer. One of ways the believers exercise their character is by putting others needs before theirs. Thus they are helping others before they help themselves.

The second main point of the sermon is to prove why the righteous have hope when facing death. Regardless of the way the righteous die, the point Emmons makes is that they should all have a firm foundation of hope in the hour of death. In this context death in an eye-opener, forcing the mind to prospect the countless offences one has done, the justice of the broken law, and the ensuing condemnation. Emmons quotes the Apostle Paul regarding sin as the sting of death. He uses the same quotation in the "Happy Death" funeral sermon. The righteous' thoughts will not distract them from the hope of eternity. The thought of eternity, in spite of the countless unknown facts about it, will not stray the mind and the certainty of one's righteous faith. This is due to the implications that the idea of unity with the holy creatures of Heaven. It is a unity and a fellowship which builds confidence, instead of detracting the attention from the obvious benefit the righteous will have by death. In the end, what Emmons explains in this funeral sermon is that in the face of death the righteous look with hope to what lies beyond it, while the wicked shatter in despair at the prospect of the impending eternity.

Sermon XXIII. Death in the Early Life (Emmons, 1842a: 287-300)
This sermon has a slightly different form than the previous sermons. It appears to have been a funeral sermon delivered at a young person's passing. However, neither the name, nor the age is mentioned, expect for the hint found in the title of the sermon. It is dated November 21, 1824 and the main verse is from 2 Kings 4:20. It seems to be one of the hardest sermons, due to the young age of the departed. Judging from his previous sermons, Emmons

seems to favor the view according to which children can enter Heaven from an early age. There is a message of hope in the ideas of Emmons, because he argues that God must have a wiser plan that includes some sort of purpose for these youthful deaths. Emmons tries to explain some of the reasons God might have to allow the death of the young. The first obvious point he makes is that due to the fact that a great number of children. He even give the example of a most accurate calculation of deaths before the age of 8, done by a European physician, who believes that roughly half the number of the total population on earth dies before this age. If the number is true, than there must be a plan behind it.

One of the first reasons God acts in such a way is to give the appearance of a dying world. The purpose is to make the living more alert to the real spiritual and moral values. There should be a lively endeavor towards rectitude and honesty, not depression and depravation. The second reason is quite harsh, because Emmons argues that God allows the great mortality of children in order to teach humankind about the temporal favors that lie in His hand, not in the hands of men. This idea pictures God as capricious and prone to kill in great numbers just to prove His sovereignty and right to own man. However, Emmons talks about how man changes the values and the right property of God. His conclusion is that had man worshiped God properly, the high mortality rate would cease. A rather light reason is that God takes away children to save them from future evils. There is no doubt in the mind of Emmons that the children who die will go to Heaven. Due to the environment some children are exposed to, God intervenes either to save the child's soul or the life's of others.

The next reason is, again, controversial, because Emmons believes that God may take the lives of young children in order to "moderate" the affections of their parents. God creates a reorientation of affections towards remaining children. The next reason is about how God protects the life of a child by not allowing one's parents to produce a worldly character. In order to preserve the purity of the soul God decides to take away the child from this world. If some parents decide to favor some children in the detriment of others, it appears to Emmons that God is entitled to take one of the children, in order to reorient the parents' perspective on their other children. When God takes away a child, He does it, argues Emmons, to safeguard the purity of the parents' soul. In order to avoid idolizing the child and thus create a distorted character, both in the child and the parents, God may decide to take the child. The last argument that Emmons presents is that the death of a child may be the occasion for the conversion of the parents. Death or the perspective of death is a turning point in the life of any human being.

Regardless of how harsh the reasons God may have to take away the children, Emmons points out that the soul of the dead child is not in any spiritual

danger. He argues that regardless of when a child dies, his soul is safe in heaven. The parents and the close family need to think thoroughly about the reasons the child passed, but the main point is that the soul of the child is safe in heaven. There is no need for any other deed or ceremony to aid the soul of the young child to pass into Heaven, as if the soul would be in a dark place, or a world between Heaven and Hell. The soul of the child is safe with God. It is not the same for those left behind. They can turn the event into something beneficial for their soul or into something that will plunge it into dark despair.

Conclusions

In the theological construct of Emmons death is seen from various perspectives. It occurs in various occasions and is caused by a multitude of reasons. However, for the believers death is only a moment that takes one from this world into the other. Death takes the believer from the world of pain and despair, into the world of Heaven and the presence of God. It is a moment for which people must prepare in due course. There is no proper age when men must think about death and prepare for it. Religion is not a proper environment for meditating of death. A proper consideration of death is the result of personal interaction with the teachings of the Bible and the personal interaction with God. These create a conviction based on the reality of life and the presence of God in this world.

Regardless of how God acts in the life of children or the life of the adults, those who are left behind should understand that God is the patron of life, the sole owner of the rights over men's life. Death is not a negative aspect of life, it is rather an eye-opening event that helps man re-orient one's values in order to better understand the spiritual values of God and the worldly values that must be placed in an orderly fashion with regard to the Creator. Emmons places high value on polishing one's life in accordance to the values of God. Death is not only the passage from this world into the next, but it is also an event that re-orients values, perspectives, morals, and even salvation. Reading his funeral sermons, one senses that in certain aspects he tries to explain too much, perhaps more than even the Bible describes, but in other he is placing his conclusions in good order. He apparently solved the issue of young children's souls, and places them in heaven, without a doubt. The death of children can be both for the good of the child and for the good of those left behind. He does not explain these aspects in the most acceptable manner for contemporary men, but he preached almost two hundred years ago. The religious, political, social, and even sanitary contexts were different. His sermons fell on a different kind of ears. Nevertheless, he was preaching in favor of hope, morals, salvation, and love, even when confronted with severe loss of life.

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THE OTHER IS ONESELF. AN EXPANSIVE DEFINITION OF POSTCOLONIAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT. This paper examines the relationship between war and postcolonial identity in works by a range of African and American writers of 20th century fiction. This inquiry focuses on 'literature of the displaced author', as expressed in fictional writings which show the ways personal trauma are reflective of collective experience. It explores the ways a number of indicative postcolonial writers have presented psychological and political consequences of postwar trauma across generations. It will analyze different forms of violence that animate the genealogy of the postcolonial past and how they impact on the present and, by doing so, seek to explore ways the geography of postcoloniality can be expanded. It explores the relationship between imperialism and totalitarianism as it is manifested in the British, Nazi and American empires of the last two centuries; it suggests continuities into the twenty-first. It argues that World War I and World War II have had a profound impact on shaping the way life has been lived as seen in work by African writers such as J. M. Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer, and Doris Lessing, and Americans, such as Saul Bellow, Cormac McCarthy, and Philip Roth. Through the critical writings of Homi Bhabha, Edward Said and W. G. Sebald to name a few, my thesis establishes the centrality of disorder to the formation of postcolonial identity. My study develops a method for reading canonical texts of postcolonial writers as narratives of protest, transgression, and regeneration, and it seeks to produce an understanding of the problems of fictionalizing complex relations of class, sexuality, gender and race in the context of upheaval.

KEY WORDS: imperialism, postcolonial, postwar, totalitarianism, trauma

> Oh that's how it is people go all over, you never hear what's with them, these days, it's let's try this place let's try that and you never know they's alive or dead, my brothers gone off to Cape Town they don't know who they are anymore… so where you from?
> (Gordimer, *Beethoven Was One-Sixteenth Black and other stories*, 2007: 15)

This paper traces the struggle to survive the reach of empire: living on the frontier, surviving internment, fleeing urban violence. Modes of resistance, expressions of transgression, however tentative and frustrated, and occasional acts of rebellion and escape reveal across geographic boundaries moments of willful rejection of imperial hegemony. Diasporic dislocations and temporary habitations have been shown to occasion public and domestic

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transgressions. Instances of personal growth as seen in Gordimer's fiction can be compared to displays of collapse. Apolitical resignation can be suggestively juxtaposed with the writings of others in which one finds moments of ritualized assertion and ceremonies of resistance.

What post-colonial theorists such as Homi Bhabha, Achille Mbembe, and Elleke Boehmer make clear is that the Holocaust does not belong to the past. Hannah Arendt's analysis of totalitarianism and its origins forbids the sort of reduction that wants to make the Holocaust part of some sort of culture of memory. The resonances of traumatic memory are not to be dismissed; the significance of the events of the past lies in the ways they continue to inform the present. The precondition of totalitarianism described by Arendt (1964) as "world alienation" remains operative; nothing illustrates this sense of mass helplessness better than the specter of nuclear war. What has emerged in recent decades, however, is the threat of total domination. Annihilation has replaced marginalization and oppression as the potential consequence of global conflict. The recent American "war against terror" has, according to Susan Sontag, called forth "the dangerous, lobotomizing notion of endless war" (2007: 123). Theodor Adorno describes a glimpse of what his generation witnessed and, what he warns, threatens ours:

> Cinema newsreel: the invasion of the Marianas, including Guam. The impression is not of battles, but of civil engineering and blasting operations undertaken with immeasurably intensified vehemence, also of "fumigation", insect-extermination on a terrestrial scale (Adorno, 2006: 56).

This paper claims that those who "bear witness" help define the space that "constitutes", according to Bhabha, "the memory and the moral of the event as a narrative, a disposition to cultural communality, a form of social and psychic identification" (1994: 349). The Holocaust may very well be "a powerful prism", as Andreas Huyssen points out, "through which we may look at other instances of genocide" (2003: 14). But such ways of speaking suggest that the Holocaust is an event of the past now to be made use of, rather than a political reality that has permanently shaped our lives. Affording to those who "bear witness", Bhabha states, a full hearing "reinscribes" the "lessons of the past' into the very textuality of the present that determines both the identification with, and the interrogation of, modernity… " (Bhabha, 1994: 354).

Events have left one estranged from modernity in so far as its justification of hierarchy and racial supremacy informs human degradation and domination. Adorno, Sheldin Wolin and Arendt show how new ways of organizing human relations were introduced throughout the 20th century that continue to be put into practice. If, as Arendt makes clear, war is an equalizer, the anonymous mass grows increasingly less able to perpetuate "the imaginaries

of sovereignty" that make Othering reflexive (Mbembe, 2003: 18). The prospect of global conflagration, therefore, presents a challenge to traditional notions of the Other. It is recognized that global war would leave few survivors and, as the saying goes, the living would envy the dead… in the aftermath of nuclear holocaust. The point is that a vital break has occurred in our traditional conception of the Other as one who inevitably poses a threat (Mbembe, 2003: 18). This paper recognizes the emergence of a transnational culture in which the Other can no longer be distinguished from oneself.

Such questions recall Rayment's preoccupation in Coetzee's *Slow Man* (2006): In an increasingly transnational culture, how does one locate one's culture? Disparate events—the Amritsar massacre (1919), Katyn Forest (1940) or My Lai (1968)—can, of course, be studied both in isolation and in their broader contexts. Although Arendt, George Steiner, and Mbembe have focused on those pertaining to Nazism and the Holocaust, their significance for postcolonial studies has been rarely emphasized. These events were in fact of such signal moment that their long-term consequences can be seen as multi-generational and continue to shape the postcolonial world in ways often only narrowly conceived (Johnson & Poddar, 2005).

It is not only a matter for cultural critics such as W. G. Sebald and Steiner who see the centrality of war atrocity; writers such as Doris Lessing, Gordimer and J. M. Coetzee create characters whose memories and experiences were shaped by war. These are writers of widely diverse backgrounds whose narratives nonetheless display converging, trans-generational memories. It is in recognition of Sebald's moral claims that one must consider broadening one's outline. His argument, which I find persuasive, is that 'our inner lives have their background and origin in collective social history' invites a redefinition of the postcolonial (2004: 184). It can be demonstrated that new alignments of comparison are dictated by pervasive thematic similarities that should be accorded significance. Where national contexts might invite narrowing, similarities of experience and response have called for expansion.

It is not only through the discrete examination of individuals that the weight of 20th century embattlement can be measured; it is rather the accrual of war experience, through war-fatigue and cultural exhaustion that informs postcolonial frameworks. Commonalities and similarities can be traced among disparate loci of upheaval. Steiner (1971) and Mbembe (2003) concur in their insistence on making war-remembrance central to understanding culture formation. "Yet the barbarism which we have undergone reflects, at numerous and precise points, the culture which it sprang from and set out to desecrate" (Steiner, 1971: 30). If one could realistically claim that the threat to human existence belonged to the past, these matters would be best left to the expertise of historians; that the potential for the extermination of entire

peoples exists makes understanding its causes and purposes vital to the postcolonial project.

It is in this connection that one is reminded of the prescriptive impulse in the postcolonial project of some authors, especially those who conceive of a radical regenerative project that sees in totalitarianism a living threat. Elizabeth Costello in Coetzee's novel of the same name suggestively argues that the machinery of industrial meat production is to be compared to the butchery of the Third Reich (2003: 63). Understood in this way, and taking seriously Hannah Arendt's warning against modes of domination as an ever-possible way for society to organize itself, Kirsten Holst Peterson and Anna Rutherford skillfully articulate why the postcolonial resists narrowing:

> What one must remember is that fulfilment is a *ceaseless* task of the psyche; that *identity is part of an infinite movement* [my emphasis], that one can only come into a dialogue with the past and future, a dialogue which is necessary, if one ceases to invest in a single (and therefore latent totalitarian) identity. If one invests in identity one locks oneself in an immobile horizon; totalitarian identity was the extreme function of the Nazis. One must be prepared to participate in the immense and specific challenges of a wider community, to participate in what Wilson Harris calls the "complex creativity involved in the 'digestion' and 'liberation' of contrasting spaces" (2006: 142).

Such a challenge is central as I see it to the postcolonial project. Devadas and Prentice embrace this challenge: "Postcolonial critique remains productive to the extent that it brings its commitment to the analysis of all violent sovereignties that have followed colonialism's modern movement" (2007: 3).

The case for this is reinforced by the reality of the Great War. The war veteran is not easily assimilated. Veterans of all stripes often carry the burden of repudiating the forces that seek to uphold a vision of empire. The fears and anxieties experienced by veterans, not to say physical traumas suffered, undermine confidence in authority. Soldiers are among the first to turn their backs on imperial ideology, as are women. As shown to be true of Doris Lessing's memories of living with her war-crippled father, the domestic scenes are war-haunted, frequently with women left to carry the burden of nursing wounded men back to life. Frequently, the soldiers' family members are left wounded in the process by the strain and stress of living with embittered, less than articulate companions. Lessing came to see after many years that the Great War had been the defining event of both her parents' lives. Her female protagonists are scarred by neglect and socially constricting values, constraints against female self-definition, but she never allows it to be forgotten that the source of their despair was the Great War (Lessing, 2008: 170). Hers is a vision shaped by her father's despair.

What one finds within the range of writings I have considered is a concern for personal and social identity. It is the contention of this study that writers frequently do reinforce hegemonic ideologies but they do not always do so. Margery Fee (2006) points out this limitation in Said's conception of an imperialist intellectual dynamic. There is more room for ambiguity and complexity on all sides of the dominant ideology than Said's "consolidated vision" seems to embrace. Fee rightly sees Bhabha as seeking to articulate a more fluid interpretive language:

> It is not possible simply to assume that a work written by an 'Other' (however defined), even a politicized Other, will have freed itself from the dominant ideology. Homi Bhabha says 'there is always, in Said, the suggestion that colonial power and discourse is possessed entirely by the coloniser, which is an historical and theoretical simplification' (Fee, 2006: 171).

In his essay 'Reflections on Exile' Said writes: "Modern Western culture is in large part the work of exiles, émigrés, refugees" (Said, 1994: 173). On the face of it, this seems like one of those statements that cuts to the heart of the matter. Certainly, the writers and artists are there to back up such a claim. Said, however, says this with more than mere numbers in mind. He is seeking to identify a kind of modern sensibility, and it would seem easy enough to locate. Trans-nationality is certainly a key to defining and recognizing contemporary sensibilities, whether they are found among Europeans ruined by the brutality of modern wars or among first and second generation immigrants, refugees, and exiles who move ambivalently between two or more worlds. Said would be right had he said that writers in the 20th century are forced to become 'travel' writers, while insisting, clearly, on the profound differences between forced exile and leisure travel. Exile may be described as a psychological uprooting, but perhaps what is lost is less disturbing when one has belonged through class to a transnational order. As Andrew Smith points out:

> Without the right circumstances of birth or bank account the majority of the world's population remain intractably in place and very distant from the celebration of a newly mobile, hybrid order. Because our world is marked by such disparities—because travel is price-tagged like any other commodity—migration can involve forms of domination as well as liberation and can give rise to blinkered vision as well as epiphanies (Smith, 2004: 246).

It is arguable that Bhabha's sense of the negotiated voice communicating from this "third" space is the inevitable voice of the writer who has lost his or her home and experienced the cultural conditions of diaspora. Such voices as Lessing's and Gordimer's may articulate colonial interests, but such expressions need not be part of the "consolidated" vision found by Said; they

may be said instead to express Bhabha's notion of a 'hybrid' voice born of the circumstance of exile, colonial settlement or expatriation. In *The Location of Culture* he expresses his understanding of this fluid by-play whereby writing is to be understood as much as a negotiation as a description:

> The pact of interpretation is never simply an act of communication between the I and You designated in the statement. The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilised in the passage through a Third space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication of the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy of which it cannot "in itself" be conscious (Bhabha, 1994: 36).

As has been shown, however, the location of that 'true home' remains in doubt. The postcolonial identity instead remains trapped in conditions best described as Kafkaesque. Zadie Smith says, "These days we all find our anterior legs flailing before us. We're all insects, all *Ungeziefer*, now" (2008: 17). Smith identifies that most disturbing of modern realizations, namely, the recognition that the drama of the individual has ended. The individual is nothing. This threat is addressed by Bhabha who warns that 'in the renaming of modernity' one must guard against 'the fact that the hegemonic structures of power are maintained in a position of authority' (1994: 347). While Adorno's attention was drawn to the ordeal of soldiers dying in battle without glory, as insects, the potential for sinking into oblivion without recognition preoccupies Milan Kundera: "Hell (hell on earth) is not tragic; what's hell is horror that has not a trace of the tragic" (2008: 115).

It is a time, Adorno argues, that makes the idea of the home increasingly obsolete because, although it may offer solace, it cannot provide protection: "There is no remedy but steadfast diagnosis of oneself and others, the attempt, through awareness, if not to escape doom, at least to rob it of its dreadful violence, that of blindness" (2005: 33). Unlike Said, who seems in some ways preoccupied with the experience of loss and with what has been lost, Bhabha and others, echoing Adorno, are determined to see what has been and can be gained even with the recognition that what remains can be described as "a kingdom of bones" (Kadare, 2000: 61).

What distinguishes Said's and Bhabha's points of view is their understanding of the past. Said describes well the emotional laceration afflicted on intellectuals torn from their cultural heritage, left adrift in foreign lands, forced to learn new languages and to adjust, as he had to do in the United States. Rightly, he places the exile at the center of the age, without, perhaps, taking proper care to make the important distinctions offered by Chelva Kanaganayakam between the exile, expatriate, refugee, and immigrant (1996: 202). Be that as it may, like Hannah Arendt, Said locates the terrible events of the 20th century at the center of what it means to talk about culture in our time.

This is crucial and a central concern of his. What he cannot seem to bring himself to admit is that the cultures that were lost created the conflicts that bore them away. Said's definition of the exile seems not to be mitigated by an appreciation for the sense of loss that may be imbedded in the culture left behind "in this era of world wars, deportations, and mass exterminations" (Said, 2000: 183).

On the other hand, Said's high praise for the writings of Theodor Adorno suggests an ambivalence that is worth considering. He quotes from what he calls Adorno's "masterwork", *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*:

> [T]he house is past. The bombings of European cities, as well as the labour and concentration camps, merely precede as executors, with what the immanent development of technology had long decided was to be the fate of houses. These are now good only be thrown away like old food cans (1994: 184).

This is not far from what Bhabha sees and properly places this recognition at the center of his definition of postcolonialism:

> The time for "assimilating" minorities to holistic and organic notions of cultural value has dramatically passed. The very language of cultural community needs to be rethought from a postcolonial perspective, in a move similar to the profound shift in the language of sexuality, the self and cultural community, effected by feminists in the 1970s and the gay community in the 1980s (1994: 251).

From this sense of homelessness, Bhabha finds it possible to speak beyond despair. The loss does not function as an obstacle to renewal. Bhabha argues that it is not that culture is lost, but that it is found on the grounds of historical trauma:

> The study of world literature might be the study of the way in which cultures recognise themselves through their projections of "otherness". Where, once, the transmission of national traditions was the major theme of world literature, perhaps we can now suggest that transnational histories of migrants, the colonised, or political refugees—these borders and frontier conditions—may be the terrains of world literature (1994:17).

Part of this project entails identity formation (Bhabha, 1994: 63). There is tension between the desire to break with one's past and the urge to restore. There may be the sense that nothing is left, or that one has left everything behind, for better or for worse.

In numerous passages taken from the works of Lessing, Gordimer and Coetzee, one sees the clash between rival expectations, resulting in responses ranging from disappointment to madness, as in the case of Lessing's Mary Turner, her protagonist in *The Grass Is Singing*. In these exchanges, what

emerges is a glimpse into the inner turmoil wrought by relationships created by imperial associations based on social barriers, those created by class, race or hierarchy. These texts give evidence of the sort of malaise described by Aimé Césaire as an ineluctable part of colonialism:

> What am I driving at? At this idea: that no one colonizes innocently, that no one colonizes with impunity either; that a nation which colonizes, that a civilization which justifies colonization—and therefore force—is already a sick civilization. A civilization that is morally diseased, that irresistibly, progressing from one consequence to another, one repudiation to another, calls for its Hitler, I mean its punishment (1972: 4).

Césaire connects the barbarities of colonialism to the brutalities of Europe's twentieth century wars and beyond to America's continuous use of military force to maintain its global power. His insight is that the imperial enterprise leads eventually to barbarism at home: "Colonization: bridgehead in a campaign to civilize barbarism, from which there may emerge at any moment the negation of civilization, pure and simple" (1972: 3). This is the meaning of the Swede's confrontation with his daughter; in *American Pastoral* Roth skillfully essays the consequence of a war brought home and the burdens heaped on a society that thought it could get away with murder. This is, finally, the reverberation of the quest for imperial expansion, guided by extinction theory and the premise of cultural superiority. The ultimate repercussion is to be found in what John Edgar Wideman, Cormac McCarthy and Don DeLillo set forth, namely, the end of the world.

Bellow and Roth are fascinating examples of writers in the postwar years whose experiences reflect mentalities formed within the orbit of the American empire and the juggernaut of the Cold War. Bellow's Henderson searches for a way to find himself in a postwar environment, where the entitlement and triumph of battle no longer have a place. He rebels against the expectations and oppressions of suburban domesticity, but has nowhere to turn, save for the author's imagined Africa. His adventure is not an escape but a journey of discovery, through which he acknowledges responsibility. He learns to face and admit complicity; he traces the source of his guilt to himself. Roth's hero also has nowhere else to turn, as the world around him falls apart. The war he and his generation conspired to forget or to remember in silence did not prepare him for the war his daughter and her generation chose to bring home.

Roth and McCarthy, however, describe worlds from which they both emotionally and intellectually recoil. Theirs is not a search for flux, but an effort to retreat from the happenings that undermine stability and sanity. Roth and McCarthy create protagonists who are faced with silent menaces. Roth's daughter, a stutterer, rebels by refusing to speak to her father, the Swede.

Eventually, her injuries rob her of the ability to speak coherently. McCarthy's protagonists in *The Road* seek to survive in a silent world, threatened by faceless marauders, cannibals in some instances, who eventually succeed in killing the father. Roth's daughter becomes a kind of lone Other, sporting the urban demeanor and looks of the MOVE members described by Wideman. The Swede finally finds her, a virtual mute, a victim of a terrible sexual assault that left her barely alive and covered in excrement. She is described as living alone under a highway crossing, made vulnerable to the sort of victimization that the MOVE members experienced at the hands of the Philadelphia police.

The political order that devised the machinery of death that annihilated an entire generation in the trenches of World War I had had years of practice in the colonies. It was those experiences that had hardened and equipped that society for the brutalities to come, only this time to be turned against its own people. These principles and capacities were to be extended by the Germans against the peoples of Eastern Europe, with special attention given to the annihilation of the Jews. By addressing the Nazi atrocities and insisting on seeing them as the culmination of colonial logic, Césaire gives coherence to what otherwise might be forgotten as disparate incoherent events, or memorialized for their uniqueness.

What these well-known incidents and events make clear is that the distinction between colonizer and colonized had become irrelevant. The brutalization and dehumanization had become systematic. These writers participate in a project committed to giving voice to those for whom identity is related to the act of historical recovery. These writers are engaged in a kind of struggle against amnesia. This is true of Gordimer and Coetzee as well. The pounding hoofs of the Cossacks reverberate through the writings of Gordimer, at once a reminder of her Lithuanian heritage, and of the connection between South African apartheid and European genocide. Theirs is an exercise in retrieval and recuperation, as a response to cultural fragmentation. Such writers are alert to cultural genocide, if not as physical extermination, then as dilution. They give voice through fiction to Césaire's despairing thought:

> The Indians massacred, the Muslim world defiled and perverted for a good century, the Negro world disqualified, mighty voices stilled forever, homes scattered to the wind, all this wreckage, all this waste, humanity reduced to a monologue (1972: 19).

One looks for an answer to the question of how it is that one can be expected to live with the knowledge of what has been allowed to occur, while facing the prospect of being a witness to or being victimized by further acts of barbarism. There may be divergent explanations, but Bhabha and Said are concerned with what it means for a so-called civilization to have destroyed what

it means for a people to have a home. Gordimer and Coetzee are novelists whose works describe transformations of the kind now taking place around the world in response to the destruction of war. They participate in a project devoted to making life humanly possible in the context of radical upheaval. These writers look to ways of picking up the pieces, but also of making something valuable out of what might seem to be meaningless fragments. Isidore Diala (2000) finds opportunities for recovery and reconciliation in recent post-apartheid writings, particularly those of Gordimer and Coetzee (68). What I have argued is that what has been forged in South Africa can be applied beyond its borders. Trauma can be healed and, if Adorno is right, can be transformative. Reconciliation is one path but, as Sebald makes clear, so is accusation and 'the unremitting denunciation of injustice' (2004: 157).

This inquiry has examined literature of writers at the periphery of empire who have experienced war in the 20th century and suffered its consequences. These writers show collective preoccupations with cross-cultural and transnational experiences expressed in the fictional writings of European, American, and African writers. Displacement and estrangement are central themes in the literary works analyzed here, along with social class and class awareness. As James Clifford puts it, "Not everyone is equally on the move" (2006: 182). What emerges is a realization that the experiences of disparate peoples cannot be categorized easily, because in an increasingly contingent world the provisional has replaced the permanent (Said, 2000: 185). The challenge, then, is to search for a balance between yearning and memory; this is what remains crucial to Bhabha's notion of "inbetweenness" (Clifford, 2006: 157).

What remains crucial to the postcolonial project is the recognition that none has escaped unscathed from the century's upheavals. R. Radhakrishnan argues that one is not merely speaking of adjustments but of alignments, of commitments:

> The challenge theorists face, particularly when they are committed to addressing the collective human condition, is that of critical alignment: how to line up the coordinates of their theoretical model with the contradictory, heterogeneous, and contingent whereabouts of life, existence, reality (2010: 794).

Furthermore, it is Kwame Anthony Appiah's contention that the reader participates in the construction, that neither the act of writing nor the act of reading is apolitical:

> what is necessary to read novels across gaps of space, time, and experience is the capacity to follow a narrative and conjure a world; and that, it turns out, there are people everywhere more than willing to do (Appiah, 2001: 224-25).

This is what binds the colonized and the colonizer and, therefore, points to what Sue Kossew (2000) calls "the possibility of recovery". The postcolonial project is not immune to the promise of belonging and, by implication, of excluding. This is why critics like Sara Suleri (2006) find it necessary to argue for a way of seeing things that eschews binaries that not only violate complexities but also offer complacencies. Strategies of thought that promise exemption from the consequences of what the 20th century has wrought are to be avoided. "Consummate inhumanity", to use Adorno's apt phrase, describes what has taken place (2005: 56). A perhaps even "bloodier age" may come (Gordimer, 1988: 284). Plenty Coups and the Crow leaders were forced by circumstances to forge a new way of looking at things in the face of total cultural extinction. Their challenge, Jonathan Lear (2006) argues, was to acknowledge what had befallen them by sorting out the relationship between Self and Other. "One needs to recognize the destruction that has occurred if one is to move beyond it" (152). This paper seeks to contribute to a comparable challenge. Given fiction's capacity to deal with what we call 'actuality' and to fictionalize its implications, one strives to see patterns of continuity based on the past. The future must remain unknown, but through acknowledgment of shared experience the tension between Self and Other may be diminished.

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