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BOUNDARIES AND TRANSGRESSIONS

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Contents

Foreword

Boundaries and Transgressions

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Welcome to Issue 10 of *Oxford Research in English (ORE)* – the publication of our tenth issue is a milestone and just cause for celebration and reflection. Founded by a stalwart band of graduate students at the Faculty of English at the University of Oxford, the first issue of *Oxford Research in English* was published in 2014. On the theme of *Margins*, it contained just three research articles and a feature interview with an early career researcher, but embodied the spirit of the publication in important ways that would shape its growth over the next six years. While the *ORE* began as a publication opportunity for presenters at the Faculty's annual English Graduate Conference, it continues to strike a balance between featuring the work of Oxford graduate students of English and the wider world of graduate research in English and related fields. Charlie Dawkins, the convenor of the 2014 English Graduate Conference, described the challenge the conference committee faced in finding a theme that would answer to any kind of research in English literature and language, across time periods. They settled on *Margins*, "a clearly expressed idea that is also fundamentally inclusive"[1], and a pithy expression that captures the journal's intent to be both incisive and generously welcoming.

Perhaps it is not an exaggeration to describe the *ORE* as pushing at, even transgressing the boundaries, of both "Oxford" and "English". While the spring issue of the journal draws its submissions from the annual conference, its autumn issue is based on a themed call for papers, open to graduate students in English and related fields at any university. The journal is a site of conversation, even contestation, with papers on topics ranging from pirated editions of Robert Burns' poetry in America[2] to narrative precari-

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1   Charlie Dawkins, 'Margins Conference: June 2014', *Oxford Research in English*, 1 (2014), 4-5 (p. 4).
2   Arun Sood, '(Post)-Revolutionary Print Networks: Pirated Editions of Robert Burns' Poetry in The United States of America, 1787 -1859', 2 (2015), *Oxford Research in English*, pp.

ty in Victorian Realism,[3] and visual quotation in digital culture in the form of the GIF as meme.[4] Both the feature interviews and research articles can be seen as going some way to reinventing the discourse and conceptual frames of their respective fields. In fact, the *ORE*'s published works seem to be directly descended from the riotous beginnings of English as a course of study of Oxford, rather than Matthew Arnold's dreaming spires or the gentle tinkling of sherry glasses in senior common rooms. As Peter D. McDonald recounts at length, English at Oxford began with a long-standing debate between viewing the discipline as one of a number of modern languages to be included within the *Literae Humaniores*, and those who wanted a distinct school. Scholars who supported the latter were further divided in their views as to whether English should find its basis in an Anglo-Saxon ethnic and national identity, or in maintaining links with a classical tradition of studying Latin and Greek.[5] Published articles in the *ORE* continue this debate about what exactly constitute the boundaries of literary studies in English, as opposed to English literature. The range of articles is notable, examining the semiotics of literary objects as varied as Soviet film,[6] rhyme in Early Modern theatre in England[7] and the racial politics of urban space in America.[8]

In the spirit of encouraging further scholarly exchange, the *ORE* remains staunchly non-partisan in terms of period and literary canon. The journal is also strongly supportive of graduate research work, and many of our authors publish their first articles with us. The scope and rigour of the work that the ORE is privileged to receive is also illustrated in the current issue, which contains six peer-reviewed research articles originally presented at the Oxford English Graduate Conference on 7 June 2019, as well as a feature article, and two book reviews, corresponding to the conference theme of Boundaries and Transgressions. Each of these pieces en-

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23-36.

3   Matthew Connolly, '(Water)Craft and Narrative Precarity in Victorian Realism', *Oxford Research in English*, 7 (2018) pp. 111-130.

4   Claire Speares, ' "Here's Looking at You, GIF": Visual Quotation in Digital Culture", *Oxford Research in English*, 4 (2016), pp. 29-40.

5   Peter D. McDonald, *Artefacts of Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 57.

6   Julia Alekseyeva, 'A Stony Stone, a Cinematic Cinema: Shklovskian Estrangement in Dziga Vertov's Kino-Eye', *Oxford Research in English,* 9 (2020), pp. 9-30.

7   Molly Clark, ' "Agreeing Sound": Rhyme, Authorship, and Control in the Early Modern Theatre, *Oxford Research in English*, 7 (2018), pp. 59-84.

8   Maddie Mitchell, 'Race, place, and urban space: Teju Cole and Ta-Nehisi Coates in relation to the sociology of the streets', *Oxford Research in English*, 8 (2019), pp. 37-54.

gages with the notion of boundaries, exploring how aesthetic signification articulates cultural categories, while exceeding these.

As a constitutive schema of many ontological systems, boundaries exert a territorialising function. From national imagining and the legal rights of citizenship, to the materiality of the body's boundaries and constitutive binaries between human and non-human; between social propriety and the exuberant and creative transgressing that results,

The concept of boundaries very much coheres in the modern notion of identity and the individual. When John Locke theorised the human mind as empty of all innate qualities, before acquiring information about the world through the senses, in turn converting these into ideas against which subsequent sensations were measured, this was the beginning of the category of the individual we popularly know it, and of identity as a "distinctive, enduring subjective core."[9] In *How Novels Think*, Nancy Armstrong further theorises how the fictional protagonist in his individuality indicates how novels are rhetorical additives to their socio-historical contexts, supplementary but never subsumed in their radicality.[10]

This dreaming at the edge of the boundary, as it were, is what characterises the pieces that have been published in Issue 10: Boundaries and Transgressions. We open with Diana Little's 'Among the imbedding calx:' Calcareous Memory and Voice in Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head*, which examines how the chalky instability and porousness of the locality comes to stand for the erasure of memory. What Little calls Smith's "itinerant, inconsistent voice" evokes the unstable, fluctuating nature of the place, allowing deep geological timescales and the transient nature of a human perspective to intermingle. Following with the theme of transgressive and unexpected spatiality, Frederick Morgan examines the medieval Shrine Madonna as a corollary of dislocated and grotesque spaces in the works of the fourteenth- to fifteenth-century anchorite, Julian of Norwich. Manuscript and sacred art object, when understood comparatively, underscore the importance of an encounter with the otherworldly. The experience of revelation, of our gaze directed, not heavenwards, but in contemplation of the body of Christ as textual boundary, is the central concern of 'The Articulation of Christ's Bones' by Sigrid Koerner. Koerner's excellent article

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9   Jonathan Rée, 'Cosmopolitanism and the Experience of Nationality,' in *Cosmopolitics: thinking and feeling beyond the nation* ed. by Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), p. 86.

10   Nancy Armstrong, *How novels think : the limits of British individualism from 1719-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 4.

is a visual feast that explores the materiality and representation of divine suffering in a medieval manuscript.

The second half of the issue examines the importance of transgressing social conventions as a key concern. Our feature article, by George Manning, examines the limits of feminine anger in Old Norse sagas, with a lively recounting not just of cross-dressing scenes but the limits of masculinity as performance for the female characters of the *Íslendingasögur*. Marta Bernabéu's comparative essay explores *Wuthering Heights* alongside a modern-day adaptation, namely, Michael Stewart's *Ill Will: The Untold Story of Heathcliff* (2018). Heathcliff's all-encompassing pain is a source of affective disruption of the physical and emotional boundaries of other characters. Our last two research articles are restorative readings of texts where the maintenance of boundaries leads to violence. In 'Those Beastly Boys: Boyhood Cruelty to Animals in the School Story from Hughes to Kipling', Hannah Marmaro discusses the wanton stoning of birds by boys from the perspective of Victorian Animal Studies, and makes a case against the normalised violence of childhood games. Finally, Serin Gioan presents a playful reading of the *chanson de geste of Huon de Bordeaux*, and the *chanson de geste of Tristan de Nanteuil*, treating gender in these two medieval French courtly works as a space in which to transcend societal expectations. Rounding off the issue are two astute book reviews on *This Is Shakespeare* (2019) and *The Culture of Dissent in Restoration England: 'the wonders of the Lord'* (2019).

While the notion of boundaries is typically associated, in these troubled times, with repression and essentialism, the pieces in this issue demonstrate how boundaries are meant to be transgressed, joyfully, and with a keen sense of wonder towards new forms of relationality. In this milestone issue of *Oxford Research in English*, our young graduate researchers show us how critical practice in 'English' reflexively examines literary practice in the world at large.

'Among the imbedding calx:' Calcareous Memory and Voice in Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head*

Diana Little

> Ah! who is happy? Happiness! a word
> That like false fire, from marsh effluvia born,
> Misleads the wanderer [...]
> *I* once was happy, when while yet a child,
> I learn'd to love these upland solitudes,
> And, when elastic as the mountain air,
> To my light spirit, care was yet unknown
> And evil unforeseen[.]1
>
> Charlotte Smith, *Beachy Head*

Smith's melancholy dismissal of 'happiness' or 'false fire' in *Beachy Head* (1807) echoes her widely read volume *Elegiac Sonnets* (1784), which famously questions, 'Ah! why has happiness– no second Spring?'² Smith's pervasive unhappiness, spurred by an unfortunate marriage and a lifetime of financial instability, led and continues to lead readers to interpret her poetry as biographical in theme and content.³ Still, critics often read the white, chalky cliffs featured in *Beachy Head* as categorically opposed to or unconcerned with matters of human happiness.

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1   Charlotte Smith, *Beachy Head*, in *Charlotte Smith: Major Poetic Works*, eds. by Claire Knowles and Ingrid Horrocks (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2017), 255-257; 282-286. All future references to Smith's poems refer to this edition. Line numbers will be indicated in parentheses adjacent to the relevant passages from *Beachy Head*. References to Smith's notes will be indicated in parenthetical citations detailing the page and note numbers.
2   Smith, 'Sonnet II: Written at the Close of Spring,' 14.
3   See: Bishop C. Hunt, 'Wordsworth and Charlotte Smith: 1970,' *The Wordsworth Circle*, 35 (2004), 8-91 (p. 82).

Stuart Curran notes how the cliffs present 'a counter reality'[4] to human society, suggesting that the area's anthropocentric history – the military battles won and lost, the living conditions of the labouring inhabitants – is inevitably eclipsed by the complex ecology and deeper geological history of the landscape. While it is true that Smith, to borrow Kevis Goodman's phrase, contemplates 'a history that precedes and exceeds her' in *Beachy Head*,[5] Curran's estimation of the 'irreducible alterity' of Beachy Head overlooks Smith's considerable efforts to map her personal history onto the landscape that was once her childhood home. As the above passage demonstrates, the cliffs evoke past memories of 'upland solitudes' and carefree moments, just as they conjure strange and foreign objects including calcified seashells and even an incomplete elephant carcass. Smith's emphatic insertion of her lyric '*I*' reminds us that we are not witnessing Beachy Head through a disembodied camera lens, but through her eyes, through her past and present experiences of the landscape.

Yet *Beachy Head* is not Smith's nostalgic recovery of a past home or past happiness. On the contrary, Smith's fascination with what lies 'Among the imbedding calx' (386) of Beachy Head reveals the chalky instability and strangeness of the locality. As Anne Wallace notes, *Beachy Head* displays 'a deep, porous terrestrial honeycomb inhabited not by distinct, categorizable figures but by ingrown, interleaved forms with unstable boundaries, forms moving through each other without a decisive terminal point.'[6] There are various birds or 'inmates of the chalky clefts' (20), for example, that imbed themselves within the cliff face and perforate the inanimate rock with pockets of vitality. There are also non-living fossils that preserve memories of distant geological revolutions. In this sense, the porousness of Beachy Head, its ability to house objects and memories of other times, places and people, is what undermines both the local character of Sussex and Smith's personal identification with the area. 'Calx' or calcareous chalk thus becomes a central concern for Smith, since it characterises Beachy Head as an active yet delicate landscape that is at constant risk of rupturing, changing, or disappearing altogether. As a writing utensil as well as a natural substance, chalk also questions the durability of the written record, and more specifically the durability of inscribed memory. Those

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4   Stuart Curran, 'Introduction,' in *The Poems of Charlotte Smith*, ed. by Curran (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. xxvii-xxviii.
5   Kevis Goodman, 'Conjectures on Beachy Head: Charlotte Smith's Geological Poetics and the Ground of the Present,' *ELH*, 81 (2014),. 983-1006 (p. 998).
6   Anne Wallace, 'Interfusing Living and Non-Living in Charlotte Smith's Beachy Head,' *The Wordsworth Circle*, 50 (2019), 1-19 (p. 7).

topographical features that make Beachy Head so porous – the malleable nature of chalk, the eroding force of the sea – therefore also prompt fears of displaced, perished, or disintegrated memory. By transgressing the boundaries between personal, communal, and environmental memory, Smith allows the fragmented, eroding landscape to undermine the coherence of her own voice as well as the locality of Sussex. What Smith demonstrates in her stratified poem is that her lyric 'I' is not only a local but a sedimentary subjectivity, one that is layered, varied, and often prone to disintegration.

An Exile at Home

The soil in and around Beachy Head is particularly heterogeneous, since it contains a mixture of rocks, animals, and skeletons that gesture to strange forms of life and distant historical events. The elephant bones that were once excavated from the chalky soil are among the most bizarre and transgressive phenomena that Smith encounters in the poem. Addressing the Roman Emperor Claudius's invasions of Britain, Smith questions,

> What time the huge unwieldy Elephant
>
> Auxiliary reluctant, hither led,
>
> From Afric's forest glooms and tawny sands,
>
> First felt the Northern blast, and his vast frame
>
> Sunk useless[.] (412-416)

Here, Smith describes the Elephant as a 'reluctant' stranger to Britain, a non-native creature that was taken from its home and rendered immediately 'useless' in such foreign surroundings. Smith details the excavation of one such 'vast frame' in the accompanying note, which explains how

> In the year 1740, some workmen digging in the park at Burton in Sussex, discovered, nine feet below the surface, the teeth and bones of an elephant [...] The Romans under the Emperor Claudius probably brought elephants into Britain. [...] It has therefore been conjectured that the bones found at Burton might have been one of those elephants, who perished there soon after landing. (p177n1)

Though it is only 'conjecture' whether the elephant bones are in fact remnants of Claudius's invasion, Smith considers it the most likely explanation as to how an elephant, 'which is never seen in its natural state, but in countries under the torrid zone of the old world' (p177n1), found itself

on – and later in – Sussex soil. Of course, modern natural historians have noted that the assumed remains of Claudius's elephants are in fact the skeletons of extinct mammoths which, unlike modern African elephants, did once inhabit northern Europe. Still, it was nevertheless largely believed that mammalian fossils and skeletons were the remains of living species that inhabited unexplored regions of the earth.[7] As Smith wanders around Beachy Head, she is forced to confront the fact that her home is littered with fragments of other homes, homes which encourage her 'I' to wander to different places and times.

The bones, however, are not simply remnants of a foreign invasion or distant land. They also embody local folklore and memory, as Smith notes how 'The wondering hinds, on those enormous bones / Gaz'd; and in giants dwelling on the hills / Believed and marvell'd' (416-420). Her accompanying note affirms that 'The peasants believe that the large bones sometimes found belonged to giants, who formerly lived on the hills' (p178n1). The bones are thus misunderstood remains, products of 'Afric's forest glooms and tawny sands' that have been made to memorialise local giants, who were often considered the architects of the English landscape and of mysterious landmarks such as Stonehenge.[8] Smith suggests that Sussex was at least in part formed by supernatural or superhuman figures, for she states quite affirmatively that giants 'formerly lived on the hills' and claims in the same note that 'The devil also has a great deal to do with the remarkable forms of hill and vale.' She of course acknowledges that the bones did not once belong to a giant but to a much more realistic and foreign animal. Still, the bones appear simultaneously local and foreign due to their association with this folklore, which is evidently a pillar of local identity for the community and for Smith. The elephant bones are in this regard regional phenomena that both construct and disrupt the local character of Beachy Head, and in doing so demonstrate that one can be both at home and displaced at the same time.

When it comes time for Smith to evaluate her own attachment to Beachy Head, it is unsurprising that her childhood memories of Sussex, fond though they may be, are haunted by an inescapable sense of displacement and fragmentation. After claiming, '*I* once was happy' (emphasis

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7   Nicholas Rupke, 'Caves, Fossils, and the History of the Earth,' in *Romanticism and the Sciences*, eds. by Andrew Cunningham and Nicholas Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 241-262 (p. 245).

8   Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 70.

Smith's), the poet goes on to show how, though in childhood 'care was yet unknown, / And evil unforeseen:'

> – Early it came,
>
> And childhood scarcely passed, I was condemned,
>
> A guiltless exile, silently to sigh,
>
> While Memory, with faithful pencil, drew
>
> The contrast; and regretting, I compar'd
>
> With the polluted smoky atmosphere
>
> And dark and stifling streets, the southern hills
>
> [...] Haunts of my youth! (286-297)

Alluding to her family's relocation to London in 1757, Smith describes her adolescent self as an 'exile' of both Sussex and memory, someone 'condemned' to reminisce about better days whilst remaining painfully aware that those days are behind her.[9] The dash preceding 'Early it came' emulates the rapid but irrevocable shift that occurred in Smith's childhood, acting as a syntactical rupture that separates the 'upland solitudes' from 'the polluted smoky atmosphere' of London just as it separates two past versions of Smith's self. Here, Memory draws 'the contrast' to Smith's London existence, ensuring that Smith's past always 'haunts' her present in a pernicious, harmful fashion. Memory is a divisive force for Smith, who isolates moments that led to her happiness or unhappiness but in doing so ensures that the girl who was once 'elastic as the mountain air' is not the same Smith who went to school in Kensington. Nor is she the same Smith speaking to us now. While memory might have offered writers 'the capacity of recognising oneself in the world' as Frances Ferguson suggests, autobiographical writing often revealed that the person writing was a stranger to the past self on the page.[10] The Miltonic echoes in this passage further

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9   Loraine Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 13.

10   Frances Ferguson, 'Romantic Memory,' *Studies in Romanticism*, 35 (1996), 509-533 (p. 514). Jonathan Culler argues that memory is a crucial element in the development of the lyric 'I,' whose 'distinguishing feature is the centrality of subjectivity coming to consciousness of itself through experience and reflection.' The past and present merge in the lyric to create a 'lyric now,' which, like consciousness, is beyond time. Smith's reflections, however, do not yield a single 'I' nor a 'lyric now' so much as multiple selves that occupy their own disparate temporalities. Jonathan Culler, *The Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), pp. 2, 226.

highlight the severity of Smith's childhood rupture or fall from innocence. For Smith, her exile is as irrevocable as Eve's exile from Eden; just as Eve was cast out for awakening 'mans polluting Sin,' so was Smith ushered into a 'polluted' existence in London. Smith may be allowed to return to Sussex, but she is, like the elephant bones, 'no longer at home in her former home.'[11]

Smith's simultaneously local and displaced sense of self moreover complicates typical critical approaches to Romantic loco-descriptive verse. Critics have rightly noted that poets of this period often used local imagery or dialect to give the impression that their lyric 'I's' were either reflections or products of their localised upbringings.[12] There is also a common critical assumption that a local 'I' equates to a holistic or grounded 'I.' According to Labbe, Smith's numerous appeals to Sussex should create a kind of poetic comfort-zone in which 'the self can be derived *from* landscape, and hence naturalised: Wordsworth *in* the Lakes, Smith *on* the Downs.'[13] 'Locality' for Labbe connotes a sense of belonging that individuals attach to a physical 'place,' which in turn becomes a natural birthing place of the self. Not all localities are created equally, however, nor are the poets that they form. Sussex may act as a 'locality' for Smith, yet the Smith we experience in *Elegiac Sonnets* and *Beachy Head* is not necessarily attached to the landscape; she describes a past self that is certainly 'naturalised' and seemingly imbedded in the 'turf' and 'flow'rs' but remains distant in time and memory, always out of reach. What constitutes a local poet or voice in the Romantic period thus needs to be reconsidered in light of *Beachy Head,* which presents an incurably fractured poet whose internal diaspora is mirrored in and created by the locality that, according to critics, is supposed to preserve and unify the self.

Calcareous Ruin

As Smith wanders around her old home, she continues to find natural objects that align the deeper, geological history of the landscape with her

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11   John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. by Barbara Lewalski (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), X. 630. For other references to 'pollution' in *PL*, see: X. 167, XII. 110, and XII. 355. Goodman, 'Conjectures on Beachy Head,' p. 988.

12   Michael Nicholson, '"Rural Architecture:" Local Lyric and Cumbrian Culture in William Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads,' *Genre*, 48 (2015), 405-433 (p. 406).

13   Jacqueline M. Labbe, Writing Romanticism: *Charlotte Smith and William Wordsworth, 1784-1807* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 78.

personal memories and mimic her own sense of displacement. She finds a number of fossilised seashells imbedded in the Downs, for example, that seem to emerge from her memories rather than the chalk in which they were formed:

> Ah! hills so early loved! in fancy still
>
> I breathe your pure keen air; and still behold
>
> Those widely spreading views, mocking alike
>
> The Poet and the Painter's utmost art.
>
> And still, observing objects more minute,
>
> Wondering remark the strange and foreign forms
>
> Of sea-shells; with the pale calcareous soil
>
> Mingled, and seeming of resembling substance.
>
> Tho' surely the blue Ocean (from the heights
>
> Where the downs westward trend, but dimly seen)
>
> Here never roll'd its surge. (368-378)

After describing her past and present experiences of Beachy Head, Smith suddenly addresses the 'strange and foreign forms / Of sea-shells,' fossils which force Smith's personal memories of the 'hills so early loved' and the geological history of Beachy Head to collide. In this sense, the passage descends into deeper layers of time, working through Smith's present and past before excavating the environmental memories that exist beneath the soil. Her note to the above passage further blends personal memory with natural history, for she describes how

> Among the crumbling chalk I have often found shells, some quite in a fossil state and hardly distinguishable from chalk. Others appeared more recent; cockles, muscles, and periwinkles, I well remember, were among the number; and some whose names I do not know. A great number were like those of small land snails. It is now many years since I made these observations. (p176n1)

Claiming to 'have often found' such fossils, Smith catalogues shells that have 'appeared more recent,' possibly during her trips to area in the early 1800s, as well as those that she examined years, perhaps decades earlier. Though she focuses on the history of fossilized 'cockles, muscles, and per-iwinkles,' Smith repeatedly returns to her own history, stating 'I well re-

member,' and 'It is now many years since I made these observations' in order to illustrate how the shells have penetrated layers of time and memory.

The fossils captivate Smith not because of their beauty or singularity but because they, like the elephant bones, are transgressive objects that do not belong in the Downs. Stating, 'Tho' surely the blue Ocean [...] Here never roll'd its surge,' Smith struggles to understand how these seashells could have travelled so far from the coast. She also carefully considers the composition of the shells, noting that their white surfaces have 'mingled' with the 'pale calcareous soil' around them. According to their altered, petrified appearances, the shells have absorbed aspects of their surroundings, turning white to match their new environment whilst preserving their original, 'foreign' shapes. Smith continues to question the shells, positing,

> Does nature then
>
> Mimic, in wanton mood, fantastic shapes
>
> Of bivalves, and inwreathed volutes, that cling
>
> To the dark sea-rock of the wat'ry world?
>
> Or did this range of chalky mountains, once
>
> Form a vast bason, where the Ocean waves
>
> Swell'd fathomless? What time these fossil shells,
>
> Buoy'd on their native element, were thrown
>
> Among the imbedding calx: when the huge hill
>
> Its giant bulk heaved, and in strange ferment
>
> Grew up a guardian barrier, 'twixt the sea
>
> And the green level of the sylvan weald. (378-389)

Here, Smith imagines multiple origin stories for the shells, though neglects to confirm or deny any of them. Her first hypothesis, which postulates that the shells were actually formed on land and made to 'mimic' seashells, suggests that the shells are in fact native objects made either on or from the calcareous chalk. Her succeeding hypotheses, however, follow a diluvial model that assumes the shells were 'thrown' from 'their native element' – the ocean – and deposited 'Among the imbedding calx,' which, due to its malleable nature, was capable of lodging the displaced objects within itself. Once again Smith's blank verse echoes Milton's, her description of

'when the huge hill / Its giant bulk heaved' closely resembling Raphael's description of God's separation of land and water:

> Immediately the Mountains huge appear
>
> Emergent, and thir broad backs upheave
>
> Into the Clouds, thir tops ascend the Skie:
>
> So high as heav'd the tumid Hills, so low
>
> Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
>
> Capacious bed of Waters[.][14]

The way in which Beachy Head 'heaved' out of the water like the 'tumid Hills' in Raphael's account suggests that the fossils are divine in origin, remnants of God's creation.

Yet Smith's note to this passage does not credit *Paradise Lost* or the Bible but a much more secular text: Gilbert White's *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* (1789).[15] Though White does not explicitly claim that the 'chalky mountains' in Sussex once 'formed a vast basin, where the Ocean waves / Swell'd fathomless,' he does discuss the roads in Selborne, which are 'by the traffic of the ages, and the fretting of water, worn down through the first stratum of our freestone, and partly through the second; so that they look more like water-courses than roads[.]'[16] Here, White notes how 'the fretting of water' through the ages has created many of the thoroughfares in Selborne, passages that enable not only humans but other animals, plants and inorganic matter to traverse through the landscape. Smith pursues this notion, expanding it to account for the irregular formation of the Downs as well as the displacement of forms that would otherwise exist on the ocean floor.

Smith's inquiries reflect eighteenth-century natural historians' particular interest in fossilized seashells, which were among the most common yet diverse fossils one could find. The frequency with which fossilized shells appeared in expected and unexpected locales ranging from beaches to mountain valleys suggested that they, perhaps more than any other fossil, preserved memories of major geological phenomena such as the pro-

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14   Milton, *Paradise Lost*, VII. 285-290.
15   See p176n2.
16   Gilbert White, *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* (London: B. White and Son, 1789), p. 11.

phetic Deluge or even Creation itself.[17] James Hutton (1726-1797), now considered one of the fathers of modern geology, argues in *The Theory of the Earth* (1795) that all land formations originated 'at the bottom of the sea' and thus bore traces of sediment and life one would expect to find under water.[18] Hutton, who believed that the visible layers of sediment were 'living testament[s] of God's divine purpose,' helped usher in a new approach to geological studies that viewed the earth not as a senseless, disordered mass but as a historical ledger as old as time itself.[19] By the beginning of the nineteenth century, then, the earth increasingly came to be seen as a 'silent archive,' as a 'monument of its revolutions' and thus a source of memory in its earliest form.[20]

As Noah Heringman demonstrates, however, such fossils were 'too thoroughly inscribed with scientific meaning and historical narrative' in this period and thus risked rendering the rock record and all of the memories it contained illegible.[21] Conflicting information about the origins and formation of fossils circulated in abundance throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,[22] no doubt inspiring Smith's exasperated outburst in *Beachy Head*, 'Ah! very vain is Science's proudest boast, / And but little light its flame yet lends [...] since from whence / These fossil forms are seen is but conjecture' (390-394). According to Goodman, Smith's use of the term 'conjecture' would have evoked the eighteenth-century practice of 'conjectural history,' which sought 'to reason from observed particulars,

17   Francis Haber, 'Fossils and the Idea of a Process of Time in Natural History,' in *Forerunners of Darwin: 1745-1859*, eds. by Bentley Glass, Owsei Temkin, and William Straus (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959), pp. 222-264 (p. 223). See also: Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, *The Epochs of Nature* (1778), trans. by J. A. Zalasiewicz, Anne-Sophie Milon, and Mateusz Zalasiewicz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), p. 112. Buffon believed that the sea floor was cast upward during the fourth epoch due to intense volcanic activity; any creatures that had previously lived underwater were now part of the newly created continents and left to petrify under the gradual accumulation of sediment.

18   James Hutton, *The Theory of the Earth* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1795), I. 26.

19   John Wyatt, *Wordsworth and the Geologists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 105.

20   Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 247.

21   Noah Heringman, *Romantic Rocks, Aesthetic Geology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 176.

22   See, for example, Oliver Goldsmith, *A History of the Earth, and Animated Nature* (London: J. Nourse, 1774), VII. 16. Goldsmith briefly entertains the idea that fossilized sea-shells could be the "capricious productions of Nature," but nevertheless supports a diluvial hypothesis.

to phenomena one could not see, and thence to systematic knowledge.'[23] Arriving at 'systematic knowledge' nevertheless required natural historians to make significant jumps in logic, which unsurprisingly generated conflicting lines of reason between these 'observed particulars' – the fossilized seashells – and the 'phenomena one could not see' – how they were deposited so far from the ocean. Smith presents us with more than one hypothesis about the seashells, but she ultimately fails to make that leap from what she can touch and observe to what she considers scientific fact. Not only are the fossils potentially displaced memories, they are also illegible objects that cast doubt on the geological history of the area.

Smith's fascination with the seashells then merges scientific interest in fossil formation and geological revolutions with a wider interest in displaced persons, objects and memories in the Romantic Era. As Curran notes, displacement was a 'transcontinental European phenomenon' during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries due to the eruption of international conflicts – the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, and the partitioning of Poland, all of which forced nationals to leave their home countries as either refugees or enlisted soldiers.[24] Poets of the period became captivated by displaced persons and how their nostalgic yearnings for a lost home served as expressions of national identity or local belonging. According to Svetlana Boym, '"I long, therefore I am" was the Romantic motto.'[25] Smith, for example, addresses the French refugees seeking asylum from the Reign of Terror in her other extended narrative poem *The Emigrants* (1793), which is similarly set along the Sussex coast. The displaced seashells in *Beachy Head* even bear a number of uncanny similarities to the disenfranchised French refugees in *The Emigrants*. Here, Smith describes

> the lorn Exiles; who, amid the storms
>
> Of wild disastrous Anarchy, are thrown,
>
> Like shipwreck'd sufferers, on England's coast,
>
> To see, perhaps, no more their native land,

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23   Goodman, 'Conjectures on Beachy Head,' p. 995.

24   Curran, 'Romanticism Displaced and Placeless,' *European Romantic Review*, 20 (2009), pp. 637-650 (p. 640).

25   Svetlana Boym, 'Nostalgia and its Discontents,' *The Hedgehog Review*, 9 (2007), pp. 7-18 (p. 13).

> Where Desolation riots: They, like me,
>
> From fairer hopes and happier prospects driven,
>
> Shrink from the future, and regret the past.[26]

This passage captures the plight of the exiled refugees crossing the Channel to the south coast of England, but it may as well describe the seashells being cast upon the Downs; both the shells and the refugees are 'thrown' from either their 'native element' or 'native land,' carried away from their original homes by the ocean's 'surge' or 'disastrous Anarchy,' which is figured here as a 'stormy' body of water that casts off the emigrants as 'ship-wreck'd sufferers.' Not only do the shells exhibit traces of the chalky hills, they also act as geological doubles of the refugees. Though displacement was a transnational issue confined to neither a specific people nor a specific place in the Romantic period, this portrait of emigration is highly localised for, like *Beachy Head,* it depicts Sussex as a buffer zone between England and the rest of the world.[27] By this estimation, nowhere is displacement more acutely felt than in and around Beachy Head.

This is certainly true for Smith, who experiences that same sense of 'regret' for and division from the past as she watches the emigrants arrive from her elevated vantage point on the Sussex Downs. Smith's identification with the emigrants, 'They, like me, / From fairer hopes and happier prospects driven,' implicates her within this narrative of personal, national, and environmental dispossession. Here, Smith does not wish us to read her as simply unhappy, but as a rootless exile, separated from her home even as she is standing on it. Though Curran argues that Smith 'creates her own identity in the poem by absorbing their emptiness' and loss, Smith has demonstrated in her sonnets and later in *Beachy Head* that she has possessed this 'emptiness' since she was a child.[28] The arrival of the French emigrants only highlights what she already feels, and what she has elsewhere expressed: a temporally and spatially diasporic sense of self, one

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26   Smith, *The Emigrants*, II. 10-16.

27   Susan Wolfson, 'Charlotte Smith's Emigrants: Forging Connections at the Borders of a Female Tradition,' *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 63 (2000), 509-546 (p. 509); Michael Wiley, 'The Geography of Displacement and Replacement in Charlotte Smith's The Emigrants,' *European Romantic Review*, 17 (2006), 55-68 (p. 57).

28   Curran, 'Romantic Poetry: The I Altered,' in *Romanticism and Feminism*, ed. by Anne Mellor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), pp. 185-207 (p. 200).

that belongs to neither home nor away just as it 'shrinks from the future' and 'regrets the past.'

Smith nevertheless differs from the French emigrants in that her displacement is psychological rather than physical; whereas the emigrants have been forced from their native land, Smith is allowed to remain on Sussex soil, which suggests that the landscape instead displaces itself from her. Smith's awareness of this natural dispossession comes to the fore in *Beachy Head.* The seashells may mirror other displaced persons and objects, but they juxtapose personal and national displacement with environmental displacement and in doing so demonstrate that not only is displacement a natural phenomenon, but that the idealised lost home is a myth or construction that rarely captures the heterogeneity of the physical place being memorialised. Rather, Smith's description of the 'imbedding calx' portrays the landscape as an active force composed of a substance that is always in the process of 'imbedding,' taking in that which does not belong. Her nostalgia is thus always marred by the awareness of how both she and Sussex have changed; the internal fragmentation that she experiences finds a grim companion in the ever-shifting landscape.

The calcareousness of Beachy Head also characterises the area as one of natural and inevitable dispossession. Smith describes the chalky composition of the cliffs numerous times in the poem, but only uses the term 'calcareous,' a technical term for chalk or calcite limestone, in reference to the seashells, which are 'with the pale calcareous soil / Mingled.'[29] On the one hand, Smith's use of 'calcareous' proves that she has done her reading; 'calcareous' was a favoured word amongst eighteenth-century natural historians, and almost always appears in discussions about the formation and composition of fossils.[30] Smith may claim, 'I have never read any of the late theories of the earth, nor was I ever satisfied with the attempts to explain many of the phenomena which call forth conjecture in those books I happened to have had access to on this subject' but her use of 'calcareous,' along with other scientific terms such as 'bivalves,' 'inwreathed volutes' and 'calx,' demonstrates that she is engaging with the particular rhetoric of those 'late theories' that similarly attempted to plumb the deeper memories of the earth (p176n1).

On the other hand, however, Smith's use of 'calcareous' exemplifies her anxieties about Beachy Head and its ability to preserve memory, either

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29   'Calcareous | calcarious, adj.' OED Online. March 2019. Oxford University Press.
30   See: Hutton, *Theory of the Earth*, I. 23, and John Playfair, *Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory of the Earth* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1802), iii; 5.

environmental, communal, or personal. Though widely used in early geological texts, 'calcareous' was not only a technical term that described the composition of marine fossils; it also connoted decay and deterioration for natural historians, who used it to signpost eroding, chalky localities. White, for example, describes how the houses in Selborne 'are divided from the hill by a vein of stiff clay (good wheat land), yet stand on a rock of white stone, little in appearance removed from chalk; but seems so far from being calcareous, that it endures extreme heat.'[31] Though Selborne borders Sussex and possesses its own traces of chalk, the area reaps the inland benefits of 'stiff clay,' deep soil, and rocks that maintain their shapes even in 'extreme heat' and rain. Sussex in comparison possesses 'waveworn rocks' and shallow soil that is 'reluctant most' to the farmer's labour (110; 193). By White's estimation, to be 'calcareous' is to be weakened, prone to rapid disintegration and decay. Goldsmith also notes that, while such calcareous fossils are often found in chalky landscapes, it is rare to find a fossilized shell in a complete state, since 'It is supposed by [natural historians] that chalk, marles, and all such earths as ferment with vinegar, are nothing more than a composition of shells, decayed, and crumbled down to one uniform mass.'[32] When Smith observes the shells, then, she is likely aware that she is surrounded by a 'uniform mass' of similar objects that have not fared as well; for every whole and preserved memory that she finds, she walks on a greater number of lost memories that have been pulverised through time.

When critics address Beachy Head, they rarely pay much attention to what it is actually made of, choosing instead to explore how the cliff provides a literal and figurative platform for considering that which lies beyond Sussex or Smith's present moment.[33] Those living in and travelling through Sussex in this period, however, could not help but notice the precarious position of the beautiful yet unstable cliffs. In his travelogue *Observations of the Coasts of Hampshire, Sussex, and Kent: Relative Chiefly to*

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31   White, *The Natural History of Selborne*, p. 2.

32   Goldsmith, *A History of the Earth*, VII. 13.

33   Lily Gurton-Wachter, for example, claims that Smith's focus lies primarily on distant and invisible threats from across the Channel, not on the numerous fissures within the cliff itself. Kevis Goodman alternatively argues that Smith 'seeks to comprehend the ground of Beachy Head as simultaneously local and global' and in doing so reconceptualises nature as an 'overall historical process' that structures geological history, human history and individual experience into strata that form a single 'totality.' See: Gurton-Wachter, '"An Enemy, I suppose, that Nature had made:" Charlotte Smith and the Natural Enemy,' *European Romantic Review*, 20 (2009), 197-205 (p. 197). Goodman, 'Conjectures on Beachy Head,' pp. 986-987.

Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Summer of the Year 1774 (1804), William Gilpin notes that 'The cliff on which Brighthelmstone stands, is composed of a mouldering clay; and the sea has gained upon it, at least fifty yards in the memory of man.'[34] Though Gilpin is often heralded as the founder of the picturesque, which critics tend to associate with static and idealised landscapes, his focus here is not on the picturesque beauty of the Sussex coast but rather on the rapid erosion of a landscape that is quickly falling into the sea.[35] Considering that the coast has changed 'in the memory of man,' geological or deep time is accelerated around Beachy Head. Formations that according to Buffon and Hutton took entire epochs to form can be swept away in a matter of decades. Sussex for Gilpin is thus a world in flux, one that resists any reified image of picturesque beauty and poses an actual threat to its inhabitants, who are at risk of falling off of the cliffs or succumbing to the powerful ocean tides.[36] Such is the ironic nature of calcareous material; though it is as Hutton suggests a crucial element in fossil preservation, it is also capable of destroying the landscape in which those fossils are preserved. 'Chalk,' concludes Gilpin as he moves east of Beachy Head, 'disfigures any landscape.'[37]

Memory Erased

Any kind of local attachment or identity that Smith derives from the landscape is ultimately subject to this chalky disfigurement. Smith's itinerant, inconsistent voice is ironically local in this regard since it does not try to mask the fluctuating, transgressive character of her home. She is rather highly sensitive to images of calcareous ruin, for she describes how

> One dark night
>
> The equinoctial wind blew south by west,

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34   William Gilpin, *Observations of the Coasts of Hampshire*, Sussex, and Kent (London: Cadell and Davies, 1804), pp. 42-43.

35   Robert Mayhew, 'William Gilpin and the Latitudinarian Picturesque,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 33, (2000), . 349-366 (p. 349). See also: Timothy Costelloe, *The British Aesthetic Tradition: From Shaftesbury to Wittgenstein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 145.

36   Zoe Kinsley, 'William Gilpin at the Coast: A New Perspective on Picturesque Travel Writing,' *The Review of English Studies*, 6 (2016), 322-341 (p. 337).

37   Gilpin, *Observations*, p. 45.

Fierce on the shore;– the bellowing cliffs were shook

Even to their stony base, and fragments fell

Flashing and thundering on the angry flood. (715-719)

Beachy Head here is certainly not static; the shaking 'stony base' again portrays the cliff as an active force, one that blurs the boundaries between animate and inanimate.[38] Not only does this active landscape often cause death, it is also unable to memorialise the dead. The 'fragments' falling from Beachy Head evoke a similar image from Smith's 'Sonnet XLIV: Written in the Church Yard at Middleton in Sussex,' in which

The sea no more its swelling surge confines,

But o'er the shrinking land sublimely rides.

The wild blast, rising from the Western cave,

Drives the huge billows from their heaving bed;

Tears from their grassy tombs the village dead,

And breaks the silent sabbath of the grave![39]

In this sonnet, 'the imbedding calx' of Beachy Head is instead figured as 'the shrinking land;' both images depict active landscapes, yet the later emphasises the eroding force of the sea that weakens the calcareous soil. The 'village dead' in their 'grassy tombs' are the victims of this erosion, as the receding cliff displaces the dead into the ocean. Memory is another victim. As Thomas Laqueur notes, the village churchyard served as the physical and spiritual centre of rural communities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The churchyard formed what he calls 'an intelligible "congregation of the dead"' that preserved the history of the community and its people.[40] Yet this communal anchor is ripped away in Middleton, a coastal village much like the one around Beachy Head. Not only has Sus-

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38   Tobias Menely, 'Late Holocene Poetics: Genre and Geohistory in Beachy Head,' *European Romantic Review*, 28 (2017), 307-314 (p. 310). See also: Denise Gigante, *Life: Organic Form and Romanticism* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 107.

39   Smith, 'Sonnet XLIV: Written in the Churchyard at Middleton in Sussex,' 85.

40   Thomas Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), p. 112.

sex drastically altered in 'the memory of man' as Gilpin suggests, but the area itself alters – and in extreme cases destroys – man's memory.

The churchyard is not the only memorial at risk along the Sussex coast. *Beachy Head* concludes with the tale of Parson Darby, the 'hermit of the rocks' who 'long disgusted with the world / And all its ways' shunned civilization and lived in a cave directly beneath Beachy Head (708; 673-674). This cave became the hermit's memoir as well as his home; here he 'Chisl'd within the rock, these mournful lines, / Memorials of his sufferings' in addition to the various 'sufferings' of the drowned sailors who would often wash up near his cave (726-727). The transfer of human 'Memorials' to the rock record again forces personal, communal and environmental memory to collide; what were Darby's concerns are now the concerns of the cliff, which can no longer appear indifferent to matters of human happiness or suffering when these exact emotions – emotions that recall Smith's earlier question, 'Ah! who *is* happy?' – have been carved into rock. The hermit's inscriptions in turn place *Beachy Head* within the wider tradition of inscription poetry, which, as Geoffrey Hartman has shown, emerged as a genre in its own right in the Romantic period.[41] Poems such as Wordsworth's 'Lines Left Upon a Seat in a Yew Tree' and 'To Joanna,' for example, 'move psychology closer to archaeology' by framing nature not as the thing that is written about but the thing that is written on.[42] The inscription carries a certain immortal quality, since any inscription will likely outlive its author. When Wordsworth reprinted 'To Joanna' in the 1800 edition of *Lyrical Ballads,* he added the note, 'In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several Inscriptions upon the native rock which from the wasting of time and the rudeness of the Workmanship has been mistaken for Runic. They are without a doubt Roman.'[43] These inscriptions may have been worn down by time, but they have nevertheless survived through the centuries. When Wordsworth makes his own inscription, 'I chissel'd out in those rude characters / Joanna's name upon the living stone,'[44] he is thus aware that the 'living stone' will, like the Roman monuments, bear Joanna's name and memory long after he has passed.

Smith has nevertheless shown that such marks or 'scars' on Beachy Head are easily made, and just as easily destroyed (20; 461). Whether or

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41   Geoffrey Hartman, *The Unremarkable Wordsworth* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 32.

42   Ibid., p. 33. See also: *Heringman, Romantic Rocks*, p. 151.

43   Wordsworth, 'Note to "To Joanna,"' in *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose*, ed. by Nicholas Halmi (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2014), p. 141.

44   Wordsworth, 'To Joanna,' in Halmi, 83-84.

not an inscription will last the ages thus depends on the locality in which it is inscribed. After Smith's frequent allusions to the 'wave-worn rocks' and 'crumbling chalk' in and around Beachy Head, it is difficult to believe that the hermit's inscriptions will survive much longer than the hermit himself. Once again, the calcareousness that distinguishes Sussex from other localities also controls what memories are able to take root, or rather be inscribed, here. Smith notably leaves the hermit's lines out of her poem, concealing them from her reader and acting as if they had already vanished. *Beachy Head* is of course famously unfinished, so it is impossible to know whether Smith intended to include the hermit's lines or not. Still, her concluding lines, '[Darby's] spirit, from its earthly bondage freed, / Had to some better region fled for ever', close the poem with an almost epitaphic finality that suggests that Darby's poetry 'fled' – or rather washed away – with his 'spirit.' (729-730).

Yet there remain those who *did* read the hermit's lines before they could be erased by the ocean, and while we cannot know what exactly these lines said or memorialised, the locals who found his 'drown'd cor'se' and discovered his cave become by default the gatekeepers of his memory (723). In this sense, the inscriptions preserve communal memory not only because they memorialise a number of dead local sailors but because they rely on living members of the community to disseminate the hermit's sentiments.[45] Smith shows us, however, that the Sussex locals are as reliable as the cliffs they live on when tasked with preserving these local memories. In the note that offers some biographical information about Parson Darby, Smith acknowledges, 'it is above thirty years since I heard this tradition of Parson Darby (for so I think he was called): it may now be forgotten' (p188n3). Here, Smith considers herself one of the few people alive who remembers Darby's tale – a sad thought made all the more grim by the fact that Smith had died before *Beachy Head* was published.

She elsewhere demonstrates that the locals have an unfortunate habit of allowing their local history to fade from memory. She describes, for example,

> The pirate Dane, who [...] sleeps unremember'd here;
>
> And here, beneath the green sward, rests alike

---

45   Kari Lokke, 'The Figure of the Hermit in Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head*', in *Labbe, Smith in British Romanticism*, pp. 45-56 (p. 52).

> The savage native, who his acorn meal
>
> Shar'd with the herds, that ranged the pathless woods [...]
>
> All, with the lapse of Time, have passed away,
>
> Even as the clouds with dark and dragon shapes,
>
> Or like vast promontories crown'd with towers,
>
> Cast their broad shadows on the downs: then sail
>
> Far to the northward, and their transient gloom
>
> Is soon forgotten. (426-438)

Here, memories of the 'pirate Dane,' who commemorates the Danish invasions of Britain in the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman periods, pass away along with the history of the 'savage native.' Smith compares such individuals and the historical events or epochs that they represent to ephemeral 'broad shadows' that momentarily shade the surface of the landscape but leave no visible marks once they pass. The marks they leave on local memory are just as ephemeral. Smith does not blame the locals for allowing these communal memories to fade; she recognises that a labouring farmer is 'Unheeding' of 'such inquiry,' and 'with no care / But that the kindly change of sun and shower, / Fit for his toil the earth he cultivates' (396-398). Preoccupied by the needs of the present – the upcoming harvest, the necessity of 'sun and shower' – the daily labourer rarely has time or energy to consider the problems of the past. Still, in letting Darby's lines and local memory gradually slip away, the Sussex locals mimic the calcareousness of their material surroundings.

Smith, however, does not necessarily exhibit this same calcareousness in her attention to local character and memory. Since she made the effort to record these regional myths, events, and persons in her final years of life, she is less forgetful than her local counterparts. *Beachy Head* is in this sense not only Smith's last attempt to reclaim her childhood home but her last attempt to preserve in writing what is left of these personal and communal memories. Parson Darby's name may have faded from local memory, but Smith ensures that his name survives in print. Smith's constant allusions to Sussex in her poetry and novels similarly ensure that, in spite of the calcareousness of the landscape and Smith's pervasive sense of displacement, readers always consider her a born-and-bred Sussex poet. The way in which she addresses personal, communal and environmental

memory ultimately suggests that she herself attempts to write her memories into the rock record, unstable as it may be.

Still, any attempt to fix memory in Beachy Head through writing resists the fluctuating nature of the locality that she may be trying to preserve. For this reason, Smith includes a number of written records within the poem that are either unfinished, partially lost, or, like the hermit's inscriptions, at risk of being lost. She describes another hermit, one who did not live in the cliffs but in the forest, where he wrote 'love-songs and scatter'd rhymes, / Unfinish'd sentences, or half erased' that were 'sometimes found' by those passing through (573-575). As with *Beachy Head,* an unfinished work in itself, all that exists of the hermit's poetry are fragments, 'Unfinish'd sentences' that, by the very nature of their incomplete existence, gesture to what is lost or absent. She also describes the arrival of the Normans on the south coast of England, writing,

> Contemplation here,
>
> High on her throne of rock, aloof may sit,
>
> And bid recording Memory unfold
>
> Her scroll voluminous[.] (117-120)

Here, Smith figures history or 'recording Memory' as a 'scroll,' as a written record of the Norman invasion. Yet she has shown that the 'throne of rock' on which 'Contemplation' sits is far from stable or reliable; what would happen to this 'scroll' if the throne were to break? We can recall that Smith conceives of her own memory as a written record when she describes how 'Memory, with faithful pencil, / Drew the contrast' to her lamentable London-based adolescence. Pencil, which could refer to either a graphite pencil or paintbrush in this period, nevertheless lacks the fixity of printed text which, as Elizabeth Eisenstein has famously argued, is to a certain extent able to reproduce and standardise knowledge.[46] In this regard, Smith's memories are, like the hermit's poetry, at risk of becoming 'half-erased' or lost.

Even more ephemeral are chalk pencils. Sketching chalk, a coloured crayon that resembled chalk in texture, was a popular tool for artists seeking to sketch picturesque landscapes and grand prospects before set-

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46 'Pencil, n.' OED Online. June 2019. Oxford University Press. *Elizabeth Eisenstein, The Printing Press as an Agent of Change, Volume I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 80.

ting them in watercolour.[47] 'Chalk' was also commonly used in this period as a verb to mean 'to rub, mark, or inscribe with chalk.'[48] In the context of *Beachy Head,* then, not only is chalk an unreliable writing surface, it is also an unreliable writing utensil. To claim that *Beachy Head* aims to preserve these personal and local memories that are in danger of being forgotten is thus to ignore the ways in which Smith meta-poetically questions the durability of the written record; while preservation is undoubtedly on Smith's mind, she is also aware that writing or print cannot wholly stabilise what is by nature an unstable landscape and community.

Smith moreover demonstrates that the act of writing about the self, of setting one's memories in pencil or in print, does not necessarily help one discover a consistent or coherent lyric 'I.' Scholars of autobiography have argued, however, that writing about one's own life – the obstacles one has faced, the environment in which one grew up, and the people one has come into contact with – in the eighteenth century was not only an act of reflection but an act of creation; the writer's past actions were often made to follow a coherent progression or plot, and any incongruities of the past could be smoothed away or simply erased from the written record, which was treated as factual and authoritative.[49] By this estimation, Smith, who spent her entire adult life writing about her home and her various misfortunes, should have at some point created a consistent poetic persona. Yet the only consistency Smith seems to know is that of her own internal division. This is reflected in Smith's sporadic 'I,' which appears a mere eighteen times in the 730-line poem. Her intensely personal fragments often give way to comparatively objective meditations on British naval history, or even allow other voices to intrude, such as the hermit of the forest, whose ballad stanzas interrupt Smith's blank verse. In this sense, *Beachy Head* brings together what John Anderson calls a 'mosaic' or 'elliptical self-referential collage' of fragments that each present their own nuanced version of Smith.[50]

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47   'Chalk, n.' OED Online. June 2019. Oxford University Press. See also: *Ann Bermingham, Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 133.

48   'Chalk, v.' OED Online. June 2019. Oxford University Press. See also: Samuel Johnson, 'To Chalk,' in *A Dictionary of the English Language: In Which the Words Are Deduced from Their Originals, and Illustrated in Their Different Significations by Examples from the Best Writers* (London: J. and P. Knapton, 1755), p. 357.

49   Patricia Spacks Meyer, *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 301.

50   John Anderson, 'Beachy Head: The Romantic Fragment Poem as Mosaic,' *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 63 (2000), 547-574 (p. 551).

The Smith we see in *Beachy Head* is certainly not smoothed over; she makes no attempt to hide the inconsistencies in her memory, nor the inconsistences that these memories create in her lyric 'I.' She also reveals the inconsistencies in her home, and in doing so calls for a reconceptualization of local boundaries and subjectivity. When we consider how local landscapes were often the progenitors of the lyric 'I' in this period, it is thus important to acknowledge that not all local voices were created equally. Being a local bard is both a blessing and a curse for Smith, whose poetic persona is as calcareous as the locality in which it was originally formed.

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Fraught Boundaries: Julian of Norwich and the Shrine Madonna

FREDERICK MORGAN

Discussions of space in any artistic work are hampered in the first instance by the many senses of the term. 'Space' can be used to discuss the geometric, mental, notional, social, theoretical, infinite or resolutely finite.[1] What is more, because art can produce these spaces *ad infinitum*, space in art is subject to the artist's capacity for inflationary production. It can be conjured, expanded, contracted, dismissed or abstracted in accordance with the needs of the producer and the interpretation of the audience. No wonder then, that Henry Lefebvre dismisses any attempt at the study of space in art: 'the problem is that any search for space in literary texts will find it everywhere and in every guise: enclosed, described, dreamt of, speculated about'.[2] While this multiplicity clearly presents us with a critical challenge, this does not mean that it is an unproductive area of enquiry. With regards to the primary focus of this essay, the works of fourteenth- to fifteenth-century anchorite, Julian of Norwich, Laura Miles clearly demonstrates the importance of spatiality in *Revelations of Divine Love*: 'Julian again and again returns to approachable spatial metaphors of enclosure and inclusion'.[3] However, it is clear that Julian does more than merely make

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1   This essay will contend primarily with the sense of 'physical extent or area; extent in two or three dimensions', s.v. 'space', *The Oxford English Dictionary* <www.oed.com> [accessed 6 February 2020]. Hereafter OED.

2   Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donal Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 15.

3   Laura Saetveit Miles, 'Space and Enclosure in A Revelation of Love', in *A Companion to Julian of Norwich*, ed. by Liz Herbert McAvoy (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer Group Ltd,

use of spatial metaphor; she makes use of the multiplicity Lefebvre describes. It is true that Julian's space appears 'in every guise', but this essay contends that the boundaries between these guises are difficult, porous, and above all, productive. To quote Mary Davlin, we must realise, like 'historians of art', that 'space is syntax, a component in the expression of meaning'.[4]

To borrow from spatial metaphor, this essay essentially forms a structural diptych. In the first section we will cover the dislocated spatiality evoked in Julian's writings and examine her relationship to the apophatic tradition exemplified in texts such as the Middle English *Deonise Hid Diuinite*. The second section discusses this use of difficult space in relation to the dislocated bodies of Shrine Madonnas. These figures of Mary open to reveal figural sculpture within and so negotiate – in their own forms – the representational boundaries problematised in Julian's writings. This comparison is not intended to proffer causal links, but instead aims to explore the manifestations of these concepts across genre, medium and geographic boundaries. As Sally Moore and Barbara Myerhoff argue, 'any part [of a culture], can by a series of chains, be shown to touch, though often at some considerable remove, many others'.[5] That point of contact ('touch') between all these works is a tension of competing spaces that challenges the audience with ruptures that simultaneously demand and deny interpretation.

I

In *Physics*, Book IV, Aristotle establishes a clear definition of what he terms 'place': 'Now a "place," as such, has the three dimensions of length, breadth, and depth, which determine the limits of all bodies'.[6] Fundamentally it is the geometric place which holds a body, 'it appears that place is a surface-continent that embraces its content after the fashion of a vessel'.[7] As Lefebvre observes, this can be conceived of in terms of a primi-

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2008), p. 327.

4   Mary Davlin, *The Place of God in Piers Plowman and Medieval Art* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 5–6.

5   Sally F. Moore and Barbara G. Myerhoff, *Secular Ritual* (Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1997), p. 11.

6   Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. by Phillip H. Wicksteed (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), p. 283.

7   Ibid, p. 315.

tive space; tactile, bodily and relational. In other words it is the distance between the self and the earth felt underfoot, the self and the hand that holds; in short, 'it is first of all *my* body'.[8] This is a geometric space that can be seen, felt, even measured in its subjective bodily units – arms, legs and fingers. Moreover, this is the space (at least initially) that Julian evokes in her vision of God in Chapter 51 of *Revelations*:

> The place that our Lord sat on was symple, on the erth barren and desert, alone in wilderness. His clothing was wide and syde, and ful seemly as fallyth to a lord. The color of his cloth was blew as asure, most sad and fair. His cher was merciful, the colour of his face was faire browne with ful semely featours; his eyen were blak, most faire and semely, shewand ful of lovely pety; and within him an hey ward, long and brode, all full of endles hevyns (*LT* 51/96–101)[9]

The scene opens with a form in geometric 'place'. A body, like our own, sitting on an earth below and surrounded by a wilderness stretching out on all sides. The narrator's description functions as an approach through this geometric space; drawing in from an expansive view of landscape to the clothing of the figure, before finally focussing on the 'faire browne' face. It is at this point that Julian makes an abrupt shift. The familiar 'ful semely' features give way to striking black eyes and from these we move inward. Though Julian continues to describe motion in geometric terms, 'within him an hey ward', we have entered a totally different kind of space, abstract and absolute. Mary Davlin notes that 'a sense of place in literature can express itself in realistic concrete description of physical environment or simply in a reliance upon the directional language of prepositions'.[10] In this

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8   Ibid, p. 184. Italicisation authorial.

9   Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love: The Short Text and The Long Text, ed. by Barry Windeatt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). All subsequent references are to this edition and are incorporated into the body of the essay. Long Text/Short Text are abbreviated to LT/ST respectively. Quotations are referenced (LT/ST, chapter number/line number(s)). All indented quotations will be rendered in modern English in the footnotes. This is not an act of translation, so much as transliteration for those unfamiliar with Middle English orthography. That said, more obscure words have been substituted to aid comprehension where appropriate. *The place where our Lad sat on was simple, on the earth barren and desert, alone in the wilderness. His clothing was ample, and full seemly, as falleth to a Lord. The colour of his cloth was blue as azure, most sad and fair. His cheer was merciful, the colour of his face was fair brown, with full seemly features; his eyes were black, most fair and seemly, showing full of lovely pity; and within him and high-ward, long and brode, all full of endless heavens.*

10   Davlin, p. 9.

passage, the audience must negotiate a difficult transition between these two 'senses'. The issue is not that the new language of abstract movement does not have a meaning of its own.[11] Rather, it is that the concrete dimensions have not acted as we might expect: a new paradigm has opened up but this does not mean that we lose our sense of the physical environment we have left behind. Instead, its geometric spatiality runs into and confuses Julian's shift into the symbolic.

Julian's narrative motions of 'within him and hey ward' are both accepted symbolic movements, part of a 'sociolect' of tropes and images.[12] We move *into* the self and *up* towards the divine.[13] Indeed, later in the passage, Julian interprets the vision in these terms: 'And this was shewid in a touch wher I sey "Myn understongyng was led into the lord", in which I saw him'. Yet, in Julian's text this symbolic ascent into the Divine is the culmination of a movement *through* depicted reality, *towards* the figure in the desert. In other words, a movement through real space runs into and becomes conflated with a symbolic motion through abstract space. This spatial trip makes for uncomfortable reading, as readers resist the momentum dragging a geometric understanding across the hidden boundary and into the abstracted interior. This point of breakdown is exacerbated by Julian's final paradox. Having delivered us to 'endless hevyns' we find it bound ('long and brode') by the spatiality of the preceding paradigm.[14] It is in this confusion, this tangle of spatial frameworks, that we find the point of 'rupture' identified in our introduction; a point where the text's underlying spatial frameworks are stretched to the point of breakdown. As this essay will argue throughout, this is not an accidental break but a conscious disruption.

An awareness of the difficulty posed by these spatial breaks is demonstrated by the sensitivity with which Julian (or contemporaneous scribes) handle these points of tension. We can see this clearly in the emendations

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11   'Absolute space does have dimensions, though they do not correspond to dimensions of abstract (or Euclidean) space. Directions have a symbolic force,' Lefebvre, p. 236.

12   Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. by Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), pp. 18–19.

13   Davlin stresses the latter point: 'height is an especially significant spatial symbol, suggesting immense distance [...] and the "otherness" or transcendence of God,' p. 39

14   We might note similar contradictions in LT 67/2–4: 'I saw the soule so large as it were an endles world [...] In the midds of that syte sitts our Lord Jesus'. Though Julian does caveat this by noting that the heaven is only seemingly endless, she nonetheless evokes an endless space that once again exhibits the features of boundedness (a centre). As Nietzsche observes: 'in infinite time and in infinite space there are no terminal points.' Friedrich Nietzsche, *Le Livre du philosophe* (Paris: Aubier-Flammarion, 1969) quoted in Lefebvre, p. 181.

and expansions made between the Short and Long versions of *Revelations*. Chapter 13 of the Short Text provides us with another of the referential clashes previously discussed:

> Fulle merelye and glalye ure Lorde lokyd into his syde and beheld and sayde this worde – 'Loo, how I lovyd the' […] And with this same chere and myrthe he loked downe on the right syde, and brought to my mynde whare oure Lady stode in the tyme of his passion, and sayde, 'Will thowe see hire? (*ST* 13/1–8)[15]

In this passage Christ addresses us with the imperative ('Loo' ['Look']) to gaze as he does into the open wound as he hangs on the cross. This is clearly an abstracted gaze, Christ's position in space is figural rather than bodily. He does not merely gaze *into* himself, he gazes at his own broken organs: see 'my herte be clovene in twa' (*ST* 13/3-4). To gaze *within* himself Christ's sight must be considered separately from its wider bodily context and so his spatiality becomes abstracted. In other words, we do not (instinctively) contort his imagined body to twist round on itself so the face can gaze inside its own flank. In this sense we, like Julian, make a distinction between 'bodily' and 'gostly' sight (*LT* 51/4). Christ is present, gazing, and imploring us to look into an abstracted space.

Gaston Bachelard classifies this momentary abstraction as an 'image' that is the 'product of an absolute imagination, [which] owes its entire being to the imagination'.[16] This image, by its nature, is a product of the instant and so resists verification: 'to verify images kills them'.[17] Julian's contorted Christ functions in the instant as an image in abstracted space but descends quickly into the uncanny when we attempt to verify its spatiality. This is why the next evocation of the gaze is so jarring ('And with this same chere and myrthe he loked downe on the right syde'). The conjunction returns the reader to the idea of sight but this is no longer the abstracted 'image'. Instead, we are presented with the tropic glance down from the cross towards Mary standing beside him in geometric space. This is an

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15   *Full merrily and gladly our Lord looked into his side and beheld and said these words: 'Look, how I loved thee' [...] And with the same cheer and mirth he looked down on the right side, and brought to my mind where our Lady stood in the time of his passion and said: 'Will thou see her?'.*

16   Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by Maria Jolas (New York: Penguin Books, 2014), p. 74.

17   Ibid, p. 88.

image that recurs throughout religious art of the period, as can clearly be seen in the Dutch Crucifixion Diptych.[18]

Fig. 1
Rogier van der Weyden
The Crucifixion, with the Virgin and Saint
John the Evangelist Mourning c.1460
Philadelphia
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Oil on panel

In this altarpiece the position of Mary and John clearly allows them privileged access to Christ's wound. John is positioned so that his gaze forms a horizontal line across the two panels, while Christ's closed eyes gesture down at the mourning Mary below.[19] Indeed, these gazes are what draw a connection across the framed boundary; John gazes across, while Mary's and Christ's downturned faces create an offset mirror effect that clearly conveys the close bond between them. The diptych evokes the spatial relationship drawn on by Julian in the preceding extract and demon-

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18   All images are credited in the appendix.
19   I say 'gesture' because at this point in the narrative passion Christ is dead. Julian's conflation of his lifeless head falling limply with the active gaze represents a temporal breakdown which complements her spatial dislocation.

strates the importance of these tropic dimensions; we return to Davlin's notion of 'space as syntax'.[20] However, by evoking this tropic scene, Julian unsettles the fragile dislocation of Christ's gaze and body, established in the preceding imagery.[21] We should be sensitive to the contemporary significance of this dislocation. The crucifixion is a familiar space, a central image embedded into Christian consciousness. The conflation of abstracted and geometric seeing problematises both by appearing to conflate their respective spatial practice. In so doing, Julian's text breaks down the 'radical' distinction Bachelard establishes between metaphor and image and so threatens to 'verify' Christ's abstracted gaze.

This was clearly a point of difficulty recognised by the editors of extant manuscripts. Though the fraught conjunction ('And with this same chere…') remains in the Long Text, the second gaze is broken from the first by a chapter break. These chapter breaks are clearly marked in surviving manuscripts of the Long Text such as BL Stowe MS 42 (Fig. 4). Of course, this split might be explained partly by the additions made to the passage. In Chapter 23, Julian builds further on the abstracted spatiality of the body-less Christ, so that rather than merely gazing into himself 'he led forth the understondyng of his creature be the same wounds *into* his syde within'.[22] Either the concrete evocation of abstracted motion or the pressure of more text could plausibly have prompted the restructuring of the original passage. However, the popularity of the devotional tropes evoked by Julian belie any suggestion that the break at this point was mere chance. In a culture 'immersed in religious imagery' it seems unlikely the evocation and problematisation of these recognisable tropes would have gone unnoticed.[23] Indeed, though speculative, the placement of the break may plausibly be explained as an attempt to mitigate the interpretive unease engendered by the Short Text. Even if this was not the case, we can reasonably claim not only that Julian was creating ruptures between different spatial practices, but also that these points of tension were recognised either by Julian herself, or by later scribes.

The most obvious parallel for this productive breakdown can be found in the tradition of the *via negativa*. Indeed, a confrontation with the limitations of knowledge – with confusion – is in some sense a desired out-

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20 Davlin, p. 6.

21 Windeatt suggests that Julian was clearly referring to a 'traditional' positioning of Mary, p. 221. For further examples see Fig. 5.

22 Italics are my own.

23 Davlin, p. 5.

come of apophatic theology. By offering a familiar portrait of Christ and then denying us an understanding of what lies within him, Julian clearly demarcates the limitations of human understanding. As she notes a few lines after her description of God in the desert, 'we owen to knowen and levyn that the Fader is not man' (*LT* 51/112–3). What is more, the fallibilities of human understanding are an important theme in Julian's writing: not only does she refer to Pseudo-Dionysius directly but she stresses elsewhere the importance of accepting human limitations.[24] As she writes in Chapter 10: 'If God wil shew thee more, he shal be thy light. Thee needith none but him' (*LT* 10/8-9). That said, this is not an assertion that Julian necessarily read any specific works, but instead that she was clearly aware of their wider cultural significance. In this sense, the unapproachability of God's divine space – the difficulty of the transition – might be seen as an important didactic function of the passage. Vincent Gillespie and Maggie Ross argue further that Julian's paradoxes are important catalysts for spiritual revelation: contradictions that allow 'the creative tension between conflicting significations to generate a precious stillness, a chink in the defensive wall of reason that allows slippage into apophatic consciousness.'[25] Paradox functions within this model as an escape from language and from rationality's cerebral frameworks. By escaping reason, 'she is led into the annunciation of truths whose annunciations deny language'.[26] In this respect, Julian's evocation of ruptured space places her within a recognised pseudo-Dionysian tradition.

We can see similar spatial breakdown in the Middle English translation of *De Mystica Theologia*: *Deonise Hid Diuinite*. As the text notes, God is:

> euermore free – wiþinne alle creatures, not inclusid; wiþouten alle creatures, not schit oute; abouen alle creatures, not borne up; bineþe alle creatures, not put doun; behynde alle creatures, not put bak; before alle creatures, not dreuen forþe.[27]

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24   *LT* 18/19-20 – I am accepting Barry Windeatt's claim that Julian conflates St Denis and Pseudo-Dionysius into a single figure in this passage, cf. Windeatt, p. 213.

25   Vincent Gillespie and Maggie Ross, 'The Apophatic Image: The poetics of effacement in Julian of Norwich', in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England*, ed. by Marion Glasscoe (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 1992), p. 56.

26   Ibid, p. 63.

27   *evermore free – within all creatures, not included; outside all creatures, not shut out; above all creatures, not borne up; beneath all creatures, not put down; behind all creatures, not put back; before all creatures, not driven forth,* from *Deonise Hid Diuinite,* in *The cloud of unknowing, and related treatises on contemplative prayer*, ed. by Phyllis Hodgson (Exeter: Catholic Records Press, 1982), p. 124.

The text evokes a divine spatiality which manifests itself as a litany of con-tradictions. In each case the interpreter is offered and then denied a di-mension of spatiality; we are denied the chance to *place* God. He is up but not above, below but not under, and so on. The variations systematically dismantle geometric space and continually re-invoke its dimensions, forc-ing the reader to linger at the point of breakdown. There are many simi-larities between this tortured spatiality and Julian's own use of paradoxical space. However, key differences remain. Julian places stress on the sign by forcing it to bear two conflicting signifiers – both symbolic and realistic spatiality – but in this apophatic text we are denied the chance to make these connections. The signs lose their referentiality and the repeated vari-ations contribute to this vacuum for, as Roland Barthes observes, 'to repeat anything excessively is to enter into loss, into the zero of the signified'.[28] Barthes defines this loss, this 'disfiguration of language', as a kind of "bliss", but this is not a release which Julian grants us.[29] *Hid Diuinite* enjoins the reader to be "drawen […] to þe souereyn substancyal beme of þe godliche derknes, alle þinges þus done awey".[30] It functions as an escape from mean-ing, escape through the 'chink' that Gillespie and Ross describe. Julian's use of space forces us to confront our alienation from God but this does not mean that we can 'do away' with spatiality. Ultimately, we must return back to meaning, back from the point of breakdown to a new sense of a conflicted sign. This is clearly true of the 'Lord sitting in the desert' scene previously discussed: both the approach to the figure in the desert and the symbolic movement within have meaning. The sensation of being torn between them and then overcoming this rupture is the reader's primary experience of these transitions – not so much an "escape" as an uneasy suspension. This is much closer to model of negation evoked by T. S. Eliot in *East Coker*: 'To arrive where you are, to get from where you are not, | You must go by a way wherein there is no ecstasy.'[31] The reader is forced to negotiate a fraught return to meaning across an interpretive break.

These ruptures are 'uneasy' because the mind resists being torn between competing frames of referentiality. This at least is the argument made by Lefebvre, who asserts that no system, 'no science of space', can accept 'con-

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28   Barthes, p. 41.

29   Ibid, p. 37.

30   *Deonise Hid Diuinite*, p. 120. *drawn [...] to the sovereign substantial beam of the Godlike darkness, all things thus done away.*

31   T. S. Eliot, Four Quartets, <http://www.davidgorman.com/4Quartets/2-coker.htm> [accessed 05 December 2018].

traditions in the nature of space'.[32] These contradictions are threatening because they unsettle human attempts to rationalise the world. Fundamentally, this is the source of the unease generated by Julian's use of spatial transitions. These transitions are 'grotesque', at least in the technical sense espoused by Geoffrey Harpham. That is, they are works that 'both require and defeat definition'.[33] These moments are fleeting, Harpham argues, because artwork resists being 'dominated both by metaphor and metonym [...] the mind would not rest on that knife edge'.[34] However, it is exactly this knife edge over which Julian lingers when she conflates perceptions of geometric and abstract spatiality. In so doing her writing chips away at the boundaries between these different kinds of perceived space. Lefebvre might argue that all these representational spaces exist on a continuum, but this does not conform with our perception (our 'science') of that space.[35] Julian evokes demarcated categories but runs them into each other. These collisions create unsettling breaks – 'ruptures' – in the integrity of her representational space.

II

The *Rites of Durham*, a detailed description of Durham Cathedral's inventory as it stood in the sixteenth century, gives us a valuable insight into pre-reformation materiality. It devotes considerable attention to the description of 'a merveylous lyvelye and bewtifull Immage of the picture of oure Ladie socalled the Lady of boultone'.[36] This statue is distinguished by one special property:

> the Lady could be made 'to open [...] from her breaste downdward. And with in þe said immage was wroghte and pictured the Immage of our saviour, merueylouse fynlie gilted houldinge vppe his handes, and holding betwixt his handes a faire & large crucifix of Christ all of gold'.[37]

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32   Lefebvre, p. 292.

33   Geoffrey Harpham, *On The Grotesque* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 3.

34   Ibid, p. 123.

35   Ibid, p. 6.

36   *Rites of Durham*, ed. by T. J. Fowler (Durham: Andrews & Company, 1903), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x004440571;view=1up;seq=12>   [accessed   5 December, 2018], p. 30. I have expanded all abbreviations.

37   Ibid, p. 30. *to open [...] from her breast downwards. And within the said image was wrought and pictured the image of our saviour, marvellously finely guilded holding up his*

Though outwardly conventional, the depiction of Mary was periodically opened so that, 'euery man might se pictured within her, the father, the sonne, and holy ghost, moste curioslye and finely gilted'.[38] This statue did not survive the reformation but Elina Gertsman clearly identifies it as an English example of a medieval 'Shrine Madonna', a tradition of opening statues that flourished between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries (also referred to as 'Vierge Ouverte').[39] Over forty continental examples survive and, as Gertsman notes, there are considerably more documented cases (like the Lady of Boulton) that have left no material remains.[40] The textual traces of the Lady of Boulton hint at an object which negotiated – in its own form – the uneasy boundary encountered in the previous section. Namely, a form caught between bodily and abstracted space. This is a tension that Gertsman clearly identifies when she describes the Shrine Madonna as 'fraught: it is a threshold, a boundary, and so a marginal space'.[41] In this 'fraught' spatiality we find a possible parallel for Julian's ruptured transitions. Indeed, this is a form which sits resolutely on the 'knife edge' that Harpham describes and over which Julian lingers. It should be stressed once again that this is not a comparison that makes the case for causal links. Instead, we are looking for a similarity of function, a similarity which might allow us to better place Julian's ruptured spatiality within a wider cultural context.

Of course, while it is worth evoking the textual relic of an insular example, we cannot reduce the Shrine Madonna to a written description. Its power is a product of its material form and this is ill-served by encompassing everything in text or even in a dialectic of 'object as text'. As Gertsman notes, the Shrine Madonna 'invites a long gaze, and it invites a wandering gaze'.[42] For these visual purposes (and lacking surviving English examples of the practice) we shall be using a continental example from the early fifteenth century:

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hands, and holding betwixt his hands a fair and large crucifix of Christ all of gold.

38   Ibid., p. 30.

39   Elina Gertsman, *Worlds Within: Opening the Medieval Shrine Madonna* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), p. 3.

40   Ibid, pp. 2–3.

41   Ibid, p. 19.

42   Ibid, p. 11.

Fig. 2
Shrine Madonana
c.1400
Paris
Musee de Cluny
Wood

As viewers we are confronted with Mary's body in a state of perpetual transition. The arms of the interior – bodily arms like ours, emerging from a chest like ours – push apart its own outer form and reveal within a body melded into a throne for God the Father. The act of opening the statue is, by necessity, a negotiation of different kinds of spatiality. In this case the negotiation is a difficult one. We can see this clearly when we compare the Shrine Madonna's body to Bachelard's evocation of the idealised casket:

> from the moment the casket is opened, dialectics no longer exist. The outside is effaced with one stroke, an atmosphere of novelty and sur-prise reigns. The outside has no more meaning. And quite paradoxical-

ly, even cubic dimensions have no more meaning, for the reason that a
new dimension – the dimension of intimacy – has opened up.[43]

Bachelard clearly demarcates a point of transition (the act of opening the lid) and then effaces the 'outside'. This transition from one spatiality to another is seamless but this rhetoric of the instant 'moment' does not apply to the Shrine Madonna. Our 'long gaze' does not allow for the effacement of the geometric, bodily space of the unopened figurine. The new bodily interior is caught between an abstraction (a throne for the infinite divine) and its anatomically whole upper half.[44] Indeed, the revelation of the 'new dimension' is afforded only by means of corporeal arms pushing at the body from within. These hands push and grasp in geometric space (a space we intuitively understand) but they grasp and push against a representation of heavenly space. As was the case with Julian's narrative transitions, we find ourselves caught at the boundary between abstraction and referentiality. However, while Julian merely lingers, the materiality of the Shrine Madonna allows it to remain balanced on Harpham's 'knife edge'. In this case the material object escapes the subject's attempts at definition. The Shrine Madonna allows the viewer to sustain an alien way of seeing and in this sense, to quote Bill Brown, 'inanimate objects organise […] the animate world'.[45] The materiality of the object facilitates a way of looking that pushes the viewer into an interpretive hinterland. Incapable of 'instantly' negotiating the transition from one dimension to the other, we gaze suspended between two referential frames: the infant Christ hangs from superfluous arms, which in turn hang suspended on the heavenly space of the half-corporeal throne.[46] This is a representational space in which neither abstract nor geometric spatiality can predominate.

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43 Bachelard, pp. 85–86.

44 It should be stressed that the architectural symbolism is not in of itself noteworthy. Indeed, there is clear scriptural basis for the discussion of Mary in architectural terms, (take for example Ezekiel 44: 1–2: 'This ȝate schal be closid […] for the Lord God of Israel entride bi it'). However, in the case above we are not allowed to lose the sense of the bodily Mary in our appreciation of the figural architecture. All Biblical quotations are taken from the Late Version of the Wycliffite Bible as found in *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his Followers*, ed. by Josiah Forshall & Frederic Madden, 4 vols, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1850). In using this material, I am not attempting to make any claims about Julain's relationship to the Lollards.

45 Bill Brown, 'Thing Theory', *Critical Enquiry*, vol. 28 no.1, (2001), 1–22, (4).

46 It should be noted that the old hands are often visible even after the Madonna is opened (Figs. 6–8).

This is an unsettling interpretive state. Indeed, as this essay has argued, our experience of these objects is characterised by Harpham's definition of the 'grotesque'. We are being confronted with an object that 'both requires and defeats definition', a contradiction which may in turn spur a subjective emotive reaction.[47] In my personal – and unavoidably subjective – case, this reaction takes the form of deep unease.[48] However, it is this very difficulty that allows the Shrine Madonna to engage with its miraculous subject matter. As Gertsman writes, the Shrine Madonna, 'predicated in the rhetoric of revelation engage[s] with the two seemingly incommensurable spaces: the finite body of the virgin and the infinite world within her womb'.[49] This engagement is achievable only by means of the uneasy – or grotesque – suspension. The meeting of the earthly and the divine in Mary's womb becomes a point of spatial rupture because the Shrine Madonna attempts to represent both simultaneously. While there is certainly a gesture towards the apophatic, like Julian the object never affords the viewer an escape into contemplative space. We cannot abandon either referential frame (Mary as mother and Mary as divine vessel) and so we are torn between the two. Hence, a fraught suspension becomes the means of engagement with one of the central figures in Christian pantheon.

I maintain that a similar case can be made in regard to *Revelations*. The theological possibilities of difficult reconciliations can be seen in the parable of the Lord and the Servant:

> The lord lokyth upon his servant ful lovely and swetely, and mekely he sendyth him to a certain place to don his will. The servant, not only he goeth, but suddenly he stirith and rynnith in grete haste for love to don his lords will. And anon he fallith into a slade and takith ful grete sore. And than he gronith and monith and wallowith and writhith, but he ne may rysen ne helpyn hymself be no manner wey. (*LT* 51/8-13)[50]

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47   Harpham, p. 3.

48   It is important to caveat this statement as one person's experience of these objects. I am aware that some find the open Shrine Madonnas beautiful, but to separate this analysis entirely from my own emotive response would be dishonest. My unease prompted much of the underlying research which built towards this paper. Of course, whatever emotive response they engender it is clear that these objects do prompt a reaction and I maintain that they are certainly grotesque in the value neutral sense that Harpham puts forward.

49   Gertsman, p. 48.

50   *The Lord looks upon his servant full lovely and sweetly, and meekly he sends him to a certain place to do his will. The servant not only goes, but suddenly he stirs and runs in great haste for love, to do his Lord's will. And before long he falls into a valley and takes great sore. And then he groans and moans and wallows and writhes, but he may not rise, nor help himself in any manner of way.*

The spatial framework of the vision is ostensibly clear: this is geometric spatiality, albeit a vague one. The narrative is built on a series of third-person verbs placing and shifting the figures across, away, towards, and down. As Julian explains, there are two interpretations of the servant. The first is that he represents Adam. In this case we have a moral fall explained with reference to a familiar symbolic geography of divine distance and moral verticality. Adam, and by implication all men, are at a remove from the moral height of the Father. This didactic message is explained in resolutely geometric terms. The servant cannot see God because, writhing in the hollow, 'he cowde not turne his face to loke upon his lovyng lord' (*LT* 51/14-15). This frustrated gaze relies upon a clear relational framework: the servant cannot see the lord because his view is obstructed by their relative positions. This is striking because Julian dismisses the visual imagery as she expounds its implications: 'at this poynte the shewing of the example vanished, and my lord led forth myn understondyng in syte and in shewing of the revelation to the end' (*LT* 51/50–51). This 'sight' proves to be divine, it is 'how God beholddith alle man and his fallyng' (*LT* 51/82–3), not the earthly vision that Julian has earlier conjured. At this point we are confronted with a collapse of the spatial and abstract into a single category. We are presented with a 'gostly understondyng' (*LT* 51/7) but one underpinned by an insistently geometric spatial framework. This paradigm is further complicated by the second sense introduced by Julian. Affecting a temporal collapse, Christ falls simultaneously with man.[51] This is not a moral fall but a fall from heaven into 'the maydens wombe, falling into the taking of our kynde' (*LT* 51/217). Christ falls through what we have established as symbolic space into flesh. More precisely into a valley ('slade'), with all its resonances to the swollen abdomen of a pregnant mother.[52] At this point the variation of writhing, twisting, moaning takes on a new potent signification.[53] These do not constitute a metaphor for the iniquity of sin, they are the movements of a baby felt against a pregnant

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51   Note the resonance with 1 Corinthians 15:21: 'Deeth is bi a man, and bi man is aȝenrisyng fro deth.'

52   'slǎde' (n.): '(a) Low-lying ground, a valley; a flat grassy area, glade', *Middle English Dictionary Online*
<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED40756/track?counter=1&search_id=2898090> [accessed 10 December 2018]

53   My thinking on these movements was influenced by Vincent Gillespie's seminar: '"The Moderhede of Kynd Love": conception, labour, and delivery in the theology of Julian of Norwich', *Medieval English Research Seminar,* 10 October 2018, English Faculty Building, Oxford.

stomach. Finally, Julian expands these potent movements to encompass all of Christ's life 'he myte never rysen al mytyly from the tyme that he was fallen into the maydens wombe till his body was slaine and ded' (*LT* 51/228–30). This 'fall' relies on the same geometric framework as the simultaneous fall of Adam but it upsets the underlying abstraction. Adam feels the heavy impact of original sin in the 'slade', but this point of contact has now become tangible; the press of a baby against a mother, the trials of a turbulent life and the fleshy torments of the passion. Once again, the competing referential frames strain at Julian's spatiality.

However, it is exactly this interpretive strain that allows the passage to engage with Christ's dual nature. Only by bringing us to an interpretive 'knife edge' can Julian attempt to present Christ as an aspect of the Godhead simultaneously kicking against Mary's womb. The same may be said of the simultaneous motion of Adam and Christ, which strains at the underlying representational framework but resolutely binds the suffering of Christ to the moral fall of man. If these are complex conflations it is because, like the Shrine Madonna, Julian's text engages with 'seemingly incommensurable spaces'.[54] It is in this sense that the breakdown and rupture of spatial frameworks is productive. To approach Christ necessitates an engagement with a duality that simultaneously demands and denies comprehension. To understand Christ's space – the space of the womb (of man) and the symbolic movements from the Father into that flesh – the reader must enter a dimension that evokes and defeats the frameworks by which they might attempt to categorise it. If Julian's spaces are grotesque (again in the technical sense advanced by Harham) it is because Christ is a fundamentally grotesque subject. As a result, Julian's attempts to lead the reader's 'understonymng […] into the lord' (*LT* 51/124), necessitate a journey into a space which defeats classifications. Returning briefly to the opening passage and the man sitting in the desert, we can readily see how this model might apply: the movement within brings us closer to the Father and his endless heavens only by unsettling and alienating our spatial frameworks. What results is a confrontation with the difficulty of God facilitated by means of a language which Julian makes difficult. David L. Clarke argues that there is an ever-present threat of alienation in language: 'this unnamed and unnameable Other, moreover, can always, at any turn, performatively disrupt human pretensions to knowledge, especially where those pretensions concern language'.[55] As we have seen, this is a perform-

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54   Gertsman, p. 48.

55   David L. Clarke, 'Monstrosity, Illegibility, Degeneration' in *Monster Theory: reading*

ative disruption achieved through language, but what Julian ultimately unsettles is our sense of place. In moving towards God, we move closer to an inevitable alienation. At this point we should return to the 'Lady of Boulton' and to the account that survives of the figure in use: 'and euery principlai dai the said immage was opened'.[56] Though regular, the opening of the Durham Shrine Madonna was nonetheless an event, and that the primary experience of the statue would be with the familiar exterior. The opening of the Shrine and the unsettling encounter previously described should therefore be seen in this light; as a 'performative disruption of human pretensions to knowledge'.[57] Ultimately, this is what Julian achieves: an alienation of the familiar images of Christ affected through an alienation of familiar spatial frameworks. Gertsman argues that the Shrine Madonna 'openly participates in [...a] discourse of alterity'.[58] I argue that it is in this wider cultural discourse that we should ultimately place and attempt to appreciate Julian's use of dislocated space.

Of course, to argue for appreciation is not to suggest that we can fully comprehend the unsettling spaces evoked in *Revelations.* However tempting it may be to explain or rationalise our way around these interpretive suspensions, doing so would reduce these feelings to ideas. Confrontation with the uncanny, with the difficult, is arguably a reader's primary experience of these passages. In this sense the experience is 'apophatic'. These moments create a sense of alienation, but this alienation is not *from* meaning but instead sustained *in* broken meaning. A sense of dislocation is afforded by the continued habitation of ruptured spatial paradigms. Bachelard writes that the poetic space 'cannot remain indifferent space, subject to measures and estimates of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination.'[59] To analyse how these spaces function – the brief of this essay – is the work of the surveyor (complete with measures and estimates). Yet, their power must be understood in terms of the immediate habitation of a space which is close to God and yet so interpretively unsettling. Ultimately, Julian affords the reader a sense of revelation only at the cost of a countervailing alienation. And so, like the Shrine Madonna's broken body, the interpretive dislocation of Julian's writings facilitates an otherworldly encounter.

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culture, ed. by J. Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996), p. 41.

56   *Rites of Durham*, p. 30.

57   Clarke, p. 41.

58   Gertsman, p. 82.

59   Bachelard, p. 19.

Understanding these moments in terms of encounter (or 'experience') is important because it allows us to properly appreciate how Julian shapes and mitigates these moments. Gillespie and Ross argue that Julian's showings demand to be taken "globally, not locally" and it is in the wider relational world of Julian's showings that we find the mitigation of these moments of interpretive unease.[60] Turning for the last time to the Shrine Madonna, we should take note of the feature which remains unchanged throughout the bodily transition. The preservation of the face is a key component of almost all extant Shrine Madonnas and a single point of continuity through the process of opening.[61] This is true of even the most abstracted bodies, such as that of the Virgen Abridera de Allariz (see below). Though this may reflect a subjective experience of the aforementioned 'encounter', this benevolent gaze has the potential to take on potent significance:

Fig. 3
Virgen Abridera de Allariz,
Shrine Madonna
c.1280
Allariz
Museo de art Sacro del Convento de Sancta Clara
Ivory

An outward gaze affords the viewer a sense of personal recognition. This sense of personal encounter represents one possible escape from the uncanny transitions previously discussed and this same visage provides an assurance of divine affection that mitigates many of the difficulties posed

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60   *Gillespie and Ross*, p. 58.
61   I have yet to come across a Shrine Madonna that breaks this rule. For further examples see Figs. 6–8.

by those transitions. I am reluctant to assign an intentionality or even a universality of experience to this benevolent gaze, but it is a useful vehicle with which to explore Julian's writings; what must be caveated as personal experience in the Shrine Madonna is much more clearly demarcated in *Revelations*.

The divine gaze and the accompanying assurance of divine presence form an important backdrop against which we experience Julian's spatial ruptures. 'The face of the crucifix' (*LT* 3/20), sitting at the foot of Julian's bed, is the starting point for her subsequent visions and a continual physical presence. Variations and refraction of this gaze are evident throughout the visions and indeed at all of the points of transition discussed in this essay. This can be seen most clearly in the interpretive lenses applied to the running servant. As Christ falls into the womb and we fall with Adam into sin, Julian assures us that the Lord 'loked upon his servant continually – and namely in his fallyng' (*LT* 51/101–2), whether or not he is himself seen. The approach towards the Lord sitting in the desert is marked by this same gaze conveyed by those striking black 'eyen'. These are both the point of entry to boundless heavens and an assurance of his benevolence, as Julian explains, 'the semely blakhede of the eyen was most according to shew his holy sobirnes' (*LT* 51/121–2). Even as we look in at the figures of the text, Julian ensures that they gaze back at us. Though these assurances may not be points of engagement in their own right, this gaze permeates our experience of Julian's text. Our response is mitigated, shaped and mediated by an ever-present voyeur, and the assurance of love that presence provides. Ultimately, this is one of the means by which we affirm that 'al shal be wele' (*LT* 27/24–5) and the means by which alienation touches on the sublime. The unease of the interpretive knife edge is never an unease felt in isolation.

Where then does this leave us? If we have moved over the course of this essay, it is by engaging with medieval culture beyond the textual. This is challenging because the evidence we have is necessarily fragmentary. Yet comparison has a utility beyond the establishment of causal links. Gilles Deleuze writes that to understand something, 'you should look for a completely different idea, elsewhere, in another area, so that something passes between the two which is neither the one nor the other'.[62] This essay sits at the tenuous boundary between the Shrine Madonna and Julian's text. It is this space that provides a point of entry and its unease is mitigated only

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62   Gilles Deleuze and Claire ParnetMa, *Dialogues II*, trans. by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Haberjam, 2nd edn., (London: Continuum, 2002), p. 10.

by whatever insight that entry affords. In this case, insight into a spatiality which is broken, uneasy and, more importantly, revelatory. As we have seen, Julian makes use of this uneasy interdependence to encompass the difficult spaces of the divine. In this fashion, for a tortured moment, the reader might come close to the incommensurate space behind those enigmatic eyes.

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Appendix

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 Image reproduced courtesy of The Philadelphia Museum of Art, <https://www.phil museum.org/collections/permanent/102845.html>a [accessed 6 December 2018]

Fig. 2 Image reproduced courtesy of mybrokenfiat.com, http://www.mybrokenfiat.com/blog/vierge-ouvrante-awesome [accessed 6 December 2018]

Fig. 3 Images reproduced courtesy of user 'Josercid', https://www.flickr.com/photos/88068852@N05/9255266095/in/photostream/ [accessed 6 December 2018]
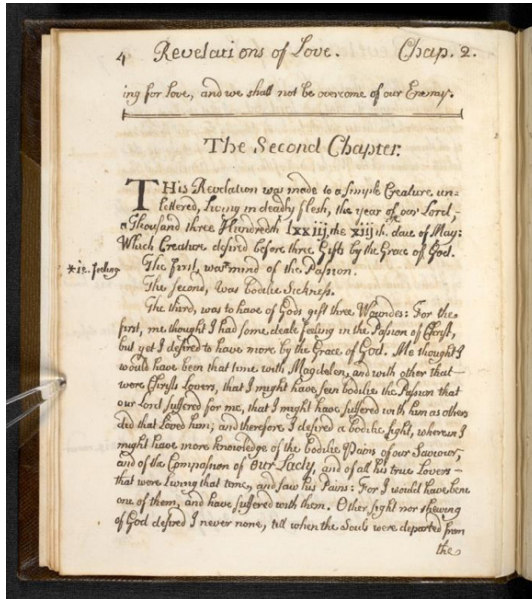
Fig. 4
Seventeenth century
BL Stowe MS 42
Image reproduced courtesy of The British Library, https://www.
bl.uk/collection-items/the-long-text-of-julian-of-norwichs-rev-

elations-of-divine-love [accessed 6 December 2018]

Fig. 5
Pax, The Crucifixion
c.1400
Oxford, The Ashmolean Museum.
Image my own

Fig. 6
Shrine Madonna
c. 1410
Vienna, Dom Museum

Image reproduced courtesy of the Dom Museum, http://www.dommuseum.
at/en/collections/diocesancollection/?o=47 [accessed 6 December 2018]

Fig. 7 Shrine Madonna
Fifteenth century
Autun, Musée Rolin
Image reproduced courtesy of user 'Patrick' https://www.flickr.com/photos/mo-
rio60/12011944803/in/album-72157639798580576/ [6 December 2018]

Fig. 8
Shrine Madonna
c. 1300
New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Image reproduced courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, https://www.
metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/464142 [accessed 6 December 2018]

The Articulation of Christ's Bones on f.68ᵛ of British Library Additional MS 37049

Sigrid Koerner

In the last quarter of the fifteenth century, a Carthusian monk drew a diagram of Christ's Passion that depicted the divine body pulled almost out of recognition. The image-text on f.68ᵛ of British Library Additional MS 37049 (Fig. 1) consists of fourteen paired stanzas, each linked by a brush-work passion scene. Running down the folio's fore-edge are the seven liturgical hours of the passion – Matins, Prime, Tierce, Sext, None, Evensong, and Compline – with accompanying stanzas that describe what happened to Christ during each. All the conjoining stanzas of the folio's gutter edge, barring one exception, speak as Christ and identify a particular hurt he sustained to exhort the reader to connect it with one of their own faculties – the five senses (hearing; sight; smell; taste; touch) and two ethical qualities (consent; free-will). For example, we read that at 'none' 'Cryste did dye'; the central picture shows him deceased, bleeding from his side-wound; in the connected left-hand stanza, Christ announces that easel and gall defiled his sense of taste, so you should stay away from 'vn-lefull taste' [unlawful taste]. Reading left-to-right, then, moves one from a description of a Passion event, through a portrait of his suffering body, and into a lyric enjoiner to link his experience to our own senses and abilities. The subject of this article, however, is the almost-discrete shape into which the scribe-artist parceled this text – fourteen paired lozenges with bulbous ends, joined together by a lumpy, vertical chain. I argue that this textbox gives us a glimpse of Christ's ribs, holy bones that again and again in late medieval passion narratives were pulled apart so radically they could be numbered.

Fig. 1
BL Additional 37049, f.68ᵛ
British Library Digitised Manuscripts
http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_37049_fs001r
(Accessed 28/06/19)

Jessica Brantley and Marlene Villalobos Hennessy have written the most sustained critical accounts of Additional 37049. They show f.68ᵛ to be a rough-rendered version of a devotional diagram called the Table of the Seven Acts of the Passion, but here with added verses.[1] While this

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1   Marlene Villalobos Hennessy, 'Morbid Devotions: Reading the Passion of Christ in a late Medieval Miscellany – London, British Library MS 37049' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 2001), p. 36; Jessica Brantley, *Reading in the Wilderness: Private Devotion and Public Performance in Late Medieval England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 201.

statement is clearly true, I believe their readings undermine the extent to which this page connects Christ's suffering body to the materiality of the text and thus adds its own interpretative framework to the Table of the Seven Acts. The verses speak *as* Christ, exhorting the viewer to visually and affectively '[b]ehald' his suffering body. My first section will outline this connection between Christ's hurt body and the manuscript page, one which runs throughout Additional 37049.

In order to see Christ's ribcage here, we must first recognise how frequently in medieval passion narratives Christ is stretched so hard his joints pop. As my second section will clarify, this is not just a painful detail, but rather the mechanism through which verse 18 of the penitential Psalm 21 is revisited in the crucifixion, so that the Old Testament comes to foreshadow the New: 'They have numbered all my bones. And they have looked and stared upon me'.[2] Christ's bones have not, to my knowledge, been seen alone on a manuscript page before and scholars have regarded the metaphor of Christ's body as a page as a primarily dermal one.[3] My second section concludes by introducing a fairly under-studied poem – 'The Dispute Between Mary and the Cross' – which, like the scribe of f.68ᵛ, figures the separation of Christ's bones in the crucifixion as a way of opening him up to verse lineation.[4]

My final section puts forward the visual case for seeing Christ's bones in the textbox of f.68ᵛ and then addresses its theological and artistic implications. The scribe-artist did not mark out his shape before starting. His free-hand drawing not only allows us to detect an organic shape within a formal table – it also bears witness to a particular kind of distortion. The right-hand stanzas crowd out the left and, on the page's gutter edge, the lines curving around the stanza's left-hand sides curl inwards too tightly, must be broken and redrawn, so that we imagine that the pen is being pushed into the scribe's palm. David Areford has discussed devotional pages that claim to measure and diagrammatise Christ's body; here, he argues, the viewer's body becomes the 'reference-point for gauging the rel-

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2   Psalms 21:18, Douay-Rheims, http://www.drbo.org/cgi-bin/s?q=Psalm+21&b=drb&t=0 (accessed 28/05/19).

3   See especially Sarah Loleet Noonan, 'Bodies of Parchment: Representing the Passion and Reading Manuscripts in Late Medieval England' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Washington University, 2010), http://openscholarship.wustl.edu/etd/26237 (accessed 09/01/20).

4   *The Minor Poems of the Vernon Manuscript*, II, ed. by F. J. Furnivall, EETS o.s. 117 (London: Published by K. Paul, Trench, N. Trübner & Co: 1892-1901), pp. 612-26.

ative bodily dimensions for Christ'.[5] The textbox of f.68ᵛ disrupts this easy transfer of measure, not only because it announces the presence of the drawing hand – an intermediary between the historical body and its representation – but also because the textbox articulates a stretched measure, a painful distortion. As the flesh separates from the bone, Christ is pulled beyond human measure, just as in 'The Dispute' opening Christ's body up to lineation paradoxically makes it less recognisable as a whole. Discerning Christ's ribcage on f.68ᵛ, then, accesses a tension between making Christ accessible in his pain – which is what the poem of the 'Hours' tries to do – and representing that incredible pain – which is what the drawings and, I argue, the textbox try to do.

The Body as Book

It is a critical commonplace to state that late-medieval readers and scribes were aware of the idea of Christ's body as a page.[6] The metaphor emerged in the twelfth century and continued into the late Middle Ages, flourishing under the culture of affective piety, the emotional devotion to Christ's humanity, as well as what Gail McMurray Gibson calls 'a growing tendency' in the fifteenth century 'to see the world saturated with sacramental possibility'.[7] The word became flesh, and that sacred flesh could be accessed through base vellum scored with words. Christ is the wan folio upon which the sharp scourges and spears write a text of salvation. The metaphor found perhaps most leverage in the intersection between text and image on the manuscript page, but was also an ever-valent devotional reading practice, what Sarah Kay calls a 'suture […] a disturbance in the field of symbolisation' that short-circuits metaphor so that the skin described *in* the text simply and self-evidently aligns with the surface *of* the text.[8] This figure has prompted many scholars to think about the relationship between a devotional text and the body of Christ, as well as the materiality, and ethics,

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5   David Areford, 'The Passion Measured: A Late-Medieval Diagram of the Body of Christ' in *The Broken Body: Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture*, ed. by A. A. MacDonald, H. N. B. Ridderbos and R. M Schulsemann (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), pp. 211-238 (p. 238).

6   H. Leith Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 139-42.

7   Gail McMurray Gibson, *The Theater of Devotion: East Anglian Drama and Society in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 6.

8   Sarah Kay, 'Legible Skins: Animals and the Ethic of Medieval Reading', *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies*, 2.1 (2011), pp. 13-32 (p. 15).

of a manuscript page.[9] It is also a way of reading that I think is latent not only in f.68[v], but also at work throughout Additional 37049.

Additional 37049 is an illustrated miscellany thought to have been made by Carthusian monks in Yorkshire around the middle or third quarter of the fifteenth century. At 270 x 200 mm, it is a little smaller than A4 paper.[10] Its first two folios are vellum and clearly part of a different project; the remaining ninety-three are paper and consist of a broad range of excerpted or paraphrased texts, often devotional in nature, and compiled in what James Hogg calls a 'somewhat haphazard manner'.[11] He maintains that parts of the manuscript existed in separate booklets for a short time, before being bound together.[12] However, just as Douglas Gray could comment on the aims and scope of the manuscript as a whole, I will treat f.68[v] as if it is in dialogue with the rest of the manuscript.[13] Additional 37049 is striking in its uniformity. It is the work of four scribes but scribe A, who I believe made f.68[v], was more prolific than the rest.[14] The images — usually drawn in the same brown ink as the text and then tinted with coloured wash — are similar in style but serve many different functions: some are labelled allegories, some illustrations of historical moments, some complicated diagrams featuring many freehand textboxes. Equally striking is the way in which the manuscript not only figures Christ's stippled, bleeding body, but also seems to link that blood to the manuscript's organisation and rubrication.

For even when the sacred body is not directly represented on a manuscript page, it can be accessed through graphemes and paraph marks. In discussing the figure of Christ as a book, Sarah Noonan departs from Kay, who asserts that the accidental scrapes and cuts in parchments' sur-

9   Bruce Holsinger, 'Of Pigs and Parchment: Medieval Studies and the Coming of the Animal', PLMA, 124.2 (2009), pp. 616-623.

10   Detailed record for Additional 37049, British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts, https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=97&CollID=27&NStart=37049 (accessed 27/07/19).

11   James Hogg, 'Unpublished Texts in the Carthusian Northern Middle English Religious Miscellany British Library MS. ADD. 37049', *Essays in Honour of Erwin Stürzl on his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. James Hogg (Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur: Universität Salzburg, 1980), pp. 241-84 (p. 245).

12   Ibid., p. 250.

13   Douglas Gray, 'London, British Library, Additional MS 37049: A Spiritual Encyclopaedia', in *Text and Controversy from Wyclif to Bale*, ed. by Helen Barr and Ann M. Hutchinson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 99-116 (p. 99).

14   Ibid., p. 99.

face powerfully represent the flaying narratives written on them.[15] Instead, Noonan emphasises the importance of 'interpretive hierarchies of script lay-out and decoration', which the metaphor of Christ's body as a living text investigates, regardless of whether the page is vellum or paper.[16] Additional 37049 seems to be very much in touch with this mode of representation, which links the patterning of Christ's flesh to what Malcom Parks calls *ordinatio*, the visual means by which a scribe or compiler organises a body of writing. Noonan's primary example is an anonymous, unillustrated fifteenth-century devotional lyric called 'Christ's Passion ABC'.[17] The poem, written around the same time as Additional 37049, explains that children learn to read with a book nailed to a wooden board called an 'a.b.c'.[18] It continues by equating the black letters and 'paraffis. greete and stoute. Rede as rose' [paraph marks large and thick, red as roses] on its own surface to the wounds of Christ, so that 'bi þis book men mai diuine cristis bodi ful of pyne' [through this book one may discern Christ's body full of pain]. The alternating red and blue paraphs punctuating each letter of the alphabet, then, are supposed to be read as wounds.

Although not stated explicitly, Additional 37049 seems to share this connection between Christ's wounds and the rubrication of the text. The scribes used two reds: a bright red ink, which they used for rubrication, and a rusty wash. In all but one example, the scribes use the wash for normal human blood;[19] but they almost always use the rubric ink for Christ's blood.[20] It might be presumptuous to read a theological point into what might be a purely aesthetic choice – the ink is after all brighter – but the consistency of this practice betrays a connection between rubric and wound. We see this in action on f.72^v, where Christ's blood is used as a mark of *ordinatio*, streaming out to section the written material, directing the reader's eye across a complex melee of instructions. Additional 37049

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15   Kay, 'Legible Skins', and 'Original Skin: Flaying, Reading and Thinking in the Legend of Saint Bartholomew and other Works', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 36.1 (2006), pp. 35-74.

16   Noonan, 'Bodies of Parchment', p. 37.

17   Witnessed in Harley 3954 (c.1420) and Bodley 789 (mid-1400s). Noonan also mentions Gonville and Caius Cambridge MS 174/95 (late-1400s), but says this text differs substantially. Ibid., pp. 482-3. For the edited Harley version, see: 'An ABC of the Passion of Christ', in *Political, Religious and Love Poems*, ed. Frederick J. Furnivall, EETS, o.s. 15 (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1866), pp. 244-50.

18   Oxford MS Bodley 789, f.152^r.

19   ff. 12^r-14^r; 16^r; 16^v; 38^v; 39^v; 40^r; 42^r; 42^v; 43^r.

20   ff. 17^r; 19^r; 23^r; 24^r; 30^r; 33^r; 36^v; 37^r; 45^r; 60^v; 61^v; 62^v; 67^v; 68^v; 72^v; 73^r (only exception is Abel's blood on 69v, which could conceivably be sacral).

also contains many drawings of Christ's body stippled with wounds from the scourges. When the scribes drew pages, they tended to use the same kind of mark-making to 'write' them as to 'scourge' Christ, visually linking the two.[21]

The so-called 'Short Charter of Christ', on f.23ʳ (Fig. 2), compounds this association. It belongs to a group of poems that describe Christ as a legal document.[22]

Fig. 2

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21   ff. 17ʳ; 23ʳ; 24ʳ; 30ʳ; 33ʳ; 37ʳ; 45ʳ; 67ᵛ; 68ᵛ; 91ʳ.

22   For all versions, see Mary Caroline Spalding, *The Middle English Charters of Christ* (Bryn Mawr: Bryn Mawr College, 1914). For discussion of the texts' development, see Laura Ashe, 'The "Short Charter of Christ": An Unpublished Longer Version, from Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 6686', Medium Aevum, 72 (2003), pp. 32-48.

In this witness, Christ stands behind a page-within-a-page, which bears the poem. The text announces in legalistic terms his 'graunt' of salvation in return for the 'rent' of charity and love. At the bottom of the page-within-a-page hangs a mandorla-shaped seal from two ties, as if it were a formalised legal document. The text gestures toward this painted object:

> In witnes of whilk þinge.
> My awne seal þer*to* I hynge.
> And for þe more sikirnes.
> Þe wounde i*n* my syde þe seal it is.[23]

> [In witness of which thing,
> My own seal thereto I hang,
> And for the greater surety,
> The wound in my side the seal it is.]

Like the folio itself, this assertion is a series of flat and self-referencing layers. Christ hangs his own seal onto the document and, to make it more binding, the seal already exists as a gap in his side. Within the painted seal sit the letters 'ihs', a heart with a side-wound dripping blood (a wound within a wound) and multiple dots representing Christ's many flesh-wounds. The side-wound, then, 'is' the seal, and the seal in turn contains the side-wound, just as the meta-page is a projection of Christ's flecked body behind it 'al to-torne'. The red splashing that marks the line-initial letters visually rhymes with his stippled flesh and the two radiating droplets of the 'S' initial look like the bursting wounds on his hands and feet, so that the document appears more like an extension, or a projection, of Christ's hurt skin.

In aligning itself visually and textually with the 'Short Charter', f.68ᵛ invites us to view it as another stand-in for Christ's body. 'The Hours' employs legalistic language to describe the passion: Christ suffered 'strange payne/ To by our saules agayne' [strange pain / To buy back our souls]; he is 'sore wounded' to 'safe mans saule fro losse': to save man's soul from

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23   I have italicised my expansions.

being lost, but also, some might argue, as a surety against loss. This line is repeated, this time spoken by Christ, who says, 'rewfully I hange on þe rode. / To safe fro los mans saule' [ruefully I hang on the cross / To save from loss man's soul] adding to the overall impression that he is a kind of legal document, that parsing his body is a redemptive act.

Furthermore, the 'Hours', like the 'Short Charter', speaks as Christ. The reader is asked six times to 'take hede', to fully apprehend the events outlined before us; the 'Short Charter', likewise, asks us four times to 'Witnes' both the events of the passion and the painted document. In 'þe syght' stanza, Christ exhorts the reader to 'Behald man and se / What payn I suffred for þe'. Sarah McNamer has demonstrated that 'behold' was not just a synonym for look but also an injunction to establish a physical link between yourself and the subject of your gaze.[24] Because Christ asks us both to '[b]ehald and se', he implies a qualitative difference between the two; the reader is meant to engage with the page both as something upon which to train the eye and to grasp affectively. This injunction is written next to an image of Christ being 'scowrged with grete swynk' [scourged with great effort]. He looks directly out of the page, displaying his punctured body, front-on; two torturers on either side turn towards him and raise their flails. The first letter of each line of this stanza is splashed with red, and these rubricated letters curve around image's edge so that they appear to describe flail's trajectory. This makes it almost seem that Christ's blood flecks out from the whips to mark out the poem's *ordinatio*. This dynamic flux between rubrication and pictorial representation compounds the connection between body and text on this folio, a connection which will help us access a subtle image of a body stretched out of measure that I believe can be traced in the roughly limned textbox.

Christ's Articulated Bones

Again and again in late-medieval descriptions of the passion, Christ is stretched so radically that his bones separate and can be counted. This was a well-established trope in vernacular devotional literature and Passion plays from England, the Low Countries, and the Rhineland.[25] Frederick P. Pickering wrote what James Marrow calls the 'comprehensive study of the

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24   Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Compassion in the Late Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press: 2009), p.137.

25   J. W. Robinson, 'The Late Medieval Cult of Jesus and the Mystery Plays', PMLA, 80.5 (1965), pp. 508-514 (p. 508).

actual stretching and nailing of Christ to the cross';[26] the primary author-
ities he names for this moment are Pseudo-Anselm's *Dialogus* and Pseu-
do-Bonaventure's *Mediationes vitae Christi*.[27] In Pseudo-Anselm, Christ
is crucified *jacente cruce*: Christ is nailed down supine, cross raised and
slipped into a mortise (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3
Jacente cruce, The Sobieski Hours (c. 1430-40), f.186[v]
facsimile Robin Mackworth-Young
(New York: Academic Press Inc., 1977)

Pseudo-Bonaventure offers an alternative mode (*erecto cruce*) in which
Christ climbs a ladder up the standing cross, turns, and is then nailed:
'Þey haled hem harde, tyl þe cros kraked; / Alle þe ioyntes þan brasted at-

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26   James Marrow, *Passion Iconography in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages
and Early Renaissance: A Study of the Transformation of Sacred Metaphor into Descriptive
Narrative* (Kortrijk: Van Ghemmmert, 1979), p. 223.
27   Frederick P. Pickering, *Literature and Art in the Middle Ages* (London: Palgrave Mac-
millan, 1970), p. 241.

wynne' [they pulled him vigorously until the cross creaked / all the joints then burst asunder].[28] This is a moment an English-speaking Carthusian like our scribe-artist would find hard to avoid, featured as it in the work of two of the most disseminated vernacular writers of devotional texts in the late medieval period — the Carthusians Richard Rolle and Nicholas Love.[29] Furthermore, Additional 37049 paraphrases, quotes, and even features two labeled portraits of Rolle, so it highly likely that this scribe read or heard read Rolle's *Meditations*, which both contain images of stretching.

Pickering insists that these scenes – and all extraneous details of the crucifixion that multiplied over the course of the late Middle Ages – are not there to build a realistic torture narrative. Rather, they exist to bind the crucifixion to what was seen to be prophetic of Christ's death in the Old Testament. As Jesus says in Luke 24:44: 'all things must be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me'.[30] So Christ is stretched because his bones must be displayed, in order to link the crucifixion back to Psalm 21:18: 'They have numbered all my bones'.[31] As Love writes, after his description of the stretching *erecto cruce*:

> Jesus was nailede harde vpon þe crose, hande and foote and so streynede and drawn þat as he himself seiþ by þe prophete Dauid, þat þai mihten telle and noumbre alle hees bones.
>
> [Jesus was nailed forcefully onto the cross, hand and foot and was so strained and stretched that, as he himself says through the prophet David, that they could count and number all his bones.][32]

28   Pseudo-Bonaventure, *Meditations on the Supper of our Lord, and the House of the Passion*, trans. Robert Manning of Brunne, ed. by J. Meadows Cowper, EETS, o.s. 36 (London: N. Trübner & Co, 1875), pp. 662-3. For the origins and variants of this text see Sarah McNamer, 'The Origins of the Meditationes vitae Christi,' *Speculum*, 84.4 (October 2009), pp. 905-55.

29   Nicholas Love, *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Christ*, ed. M. G. Sargent (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2003), p. 175; Richard Rolle, Richard Rolle: Prose and Verse, ed. S. J. Ogilvie-Thomson, EETS s.s. 293 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 289.

30   Luke 24:44, *Douay-Rheims*, http://www.drbo.org/chapter/49024.htm (accessed 12/12/18).

31   Psalms 21:18, *Douay-Rheims*, http://www.drbo.org/cgi-bin/s?q=Psalm+21&b=drb&t=0 (accessed 28/05/19).

32   Streinen v.2(c), Middle English Dictionary in Middle English Compendium, ed. Frances McSparran, et al (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library, 2000-2018), https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED43247/track?counter=1&-

Similarly, the speaker in the earlier *Wohunge of Ure Lauerd* sees Christ 'swa to drahen' [so drawn apart] that one 'mai in his bodi / euch ban tel-len' [might count each bone in his body].[33] Psalm 21 is at the heart of the liturgy for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday; it was a text 'of singular importance' in the medieval Passion liturgy, and verse 18 was its most 'widely known application'.[34] The separation and numeration of Christ's bones thus carries much Christological weight.

Many Passion narratives, indeed, offer ancillary situations in which Christ is stretched. The *arma Christi* poem 'The Symbols of the Passion' describes the pillar's role:

> To þe piler, lord, al so
> With a rop þey boundun þe to;
> Þe sinewes from þe bones brast,
> So hard hit was draw and streyned fast;[35]
>
> [To the pillar, lord, also
> With a rope they bound you to,
> The sinews from the bones burst,
> So forcefully it was drawn and stretched tightly]

Christ is stretched with ropes over the circumference of the cylinder, which bursts his sinews from his bones. Christ's joints also sometimes burst when the cross slips into its mortise. In the York crucifixion, the sol-diers '[h]eue vppe' [heave up] the cross and slide it into the mortise 'so all his bones / Are asoundre' and one can 'telle / Þe leste lithe in hym' [count / the smallest joint in him].[36] Strikingly, in the Towneley crucifixion, ap-parently dissatisfied with their earlier bout of stretching *jacente cruce*, the

search_id=2673170 (accessed 20/12/19).

33   *Þe Wohunge of Ure Lauerd*, ed. W. Meredith Thompson, *EETS* o.s. 241 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 34, ll. 509-11.

34   Thomal H. Bestul, *Texts of the Passion: Latin Devotional Literature and Medieval Society* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), p. 28.

35   *Legends of the Holy Rood: Symbols of the Passion and Cross-Poems in Old English of the Eleventh Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. Richard Morris, *EETS* o.s. 46 (London: N. Trübner & Co, 1871), p. 180, ll. 74-6.

36   lith, n.1 (a), *Middle English Dictionary; The York Plays: A Critical Edition*, I, ed. Richard Beadle, *EETS* s.s. 23-24 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 'Crucifixion', ll. 223-9.

torturers lift the already-erect cross and thump it back into the mortise to again 'breke ilk ionte in hym' [break each joint in him].[37]

The Christ who appears in devotional literature, moreover, is often simply a stretched one, regardless of whether the work mentions the episode of stretching. The moment resolves into an aesthetic. Words like 'streyn', 'rack', 'drawe' occur again and again in late-medieval passional texts. Rolle's *Meditation B* never actually narrates the moment of stretching, but the Christ envisioned is continually broadening: 'me thynketh I se þy body on þe rode al blody, and streyned þat þe ioyntes twynnen; þe woundes now opyn, þy skyn al to-drawen recheth so brode' [I think I see your body on the cross all bloody, and stretched so that the joints detach, the wounds now open, your skin all drawn apart stretches so wide].[38] Rolle's image limns the boundary between stasis and action. Initially, 'streyned' appears to be a past participle — I see your body all bloody and stretched. But what follows implies that this is not a state of being but happening before the speaker's spiritual gaze; they see the body stretched in the present tense, the wounds *now* open, the skin 'recheth so brode'. Stretching, then, is both a fixed aesthetic, and a dynamic, destabilising process. Rolle's intensifying prefix 'al to-', which acts like the German 'zer-' to indicate division, destruction or pulverisation, implies that, by the end of the sentence, Christ is on the brink of dissipation.[39]

Christ's attenuated bones also appear in visual art. Of course, they are never wholly bared, as he ascended to heaven whole. But they are articulated in what are known as *Pestkreuze*. In these Y-shaped crosses, Christ's downward weight heaves open his attenuated ribcage, making his bones numerable. In this life-sized example from Cologne (Fig. 4), the ribs are represented as stacked lines, reminiscent of the rung-like shapes in the textbox of f.68ᵛ.

37   *The Towneley Plays, I*, ed. Martin Stevens and A. C. Cawley, *EETS* s.s. 13-4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 'Crucifixion,' l. 309.

38   Rechen, v.8 (c), *Middle English Dictionary; Rolle, Prose and Verse*, p. 301, l.377-9.

39   To-, pref. (2), *Middle English Dictionary; Handbuch zur Deutschen Grammatik: Wiederholen und Anwenden*, ed. Jamie Rankin and Larry D. Wells, 6th edn (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2016), p. 448.

Fig. 4
Crucifixus Dolorosus, c.1370
H 162 cm Cologne, Rheinishes Bildarchiv, No. A 362.

A near-contemporary version from Wrocław takes this further, with 'distended veins […] made from pieces of string soaked and coiled round the limbs' so that the body's internal linear structures appear to burst out.[40] Such crucifixes were known in England; in 1306 the Bishop of London reprimanded the German artist Thydeman for producing such a *crux horribilis,* a horrible crucifix. He objected to it not only because its Y shape did not match that of true cross, but also because it was so popular with Londoners.[41]

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40   Roland Recht, *Believing and Seeing: The Art of Gothic Cathedrals*, trans. by Mary Whitall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 198.

41   Tanya Jung, 'The Phenomenal Lives of Moveable Christ Sculptures', (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland, 2006), p. 24.

Scholars treat the metaphor of Christ-as-book as primarily dermal. The poem 'The Disputation Between Mary and the Cross', however, figures the dislocation of Christ's bones as a way to make his suffering legible. The poem is a duologue between the Virgin and the personified cross.[42] Overall, it is very much in touch with the metaphor of the body as a book: 'His Bodi was Book' (l.196); the 'book on bord was sprad' (l.200). But in making this claim, the poem focusses less on skin and more on the unravelling of internal linear structures. Like Rolle's *Meditation B*, 'The Dispute' does not describe the stretching of Christ as an event; the moment 'whon rechyng ropus gan hym reche' (l.491) [when stretching ropes did stretch him] occurs continually, so that stretching as less an episode than an ever-valent material possibility, that opens Christ up to be read.

Mary looks at the cross and says:

> Serwe I seo, þe veines fleo, from blodi bon.
>   […]
> fflesch and veines nou fleo atwinne;
> Wherfore I rede of routhe. (ll.4-9)

> [Sorrow I see, the veins flow, from bloody bone.
> […]
> Flesh and veins now flow asunder;
> Wherefore I read of pity.]

She neatly equates the image of 'serwe' with the fluent unravelling of internal linear structures. She 'rede[s] of routhe', she both advises the cross to be merciful and reads a text of pity in the now-lineated body of Christ. Read/red puns abound in the poem: 'Al is red; Rib and Rugge; / His bodi bledeþ aȝeyn þe bord' (l.144-5) [all is red; ribs and spine / his body bleeds against the board]. The ribs and spine are scarlet with blood, but they are also read, like a document pinned to a board of wood, or a page bound between boards.

The body this poem presents – from which the bones are endlessly disengaging – is unstable, almost unimaginable. Elaine Scarry writes about how difficult it is to perceive the physical pain of others, which seems to belong 'to an invisible geography'; the Gospels, she writes, counteract this through 'extreme materialisation, the exposure of the interior of Jesus'.[43]

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42   Furnivall, *The Minor Poems*, pp. 612-26. Line-numbers are listed in the body of text.

43   Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 3, 215.

The continual pulling-apart of linear structures, veins from the bone, flesh from the veins makes Christ legible in his pain. But in that process, he dissolves as a somatic whole. I believe this contradiction is at the heart of f.68[v]; the scribe-artist used Christ's interior structure – the attenuated rib-cage – to organise the passion, to make it legible. But in charting this stretched measure, he makes it only just recognisable as a body.

Christ's Bones on the Page

The scribe-artist of f.68[v] parceled his text into one broadly-discrete shape – fourteen lozenges with bulbous ends, joined in the middle by a lumpy, vertical channel. I will argue that it not only looks like a ribcage, but also that the roughness of the illustration, the tension between the represented form and that form's execution is not merely a mistake, but a vivid testament to the human body charting an impossible measure.

The textbox has a skeletal aspect. The stylised quality of its rung-like structure does not preclude it from being skeletal. Medieval artists seldom sketched human bones from life because boiling off the meat consumed a lot of fuel.[44] When the bones of Christ do appear in crucifixion scenes, furthermore, they were often highly stylised. Roland Recht comments that *Pestkreuze* are not realistic: 'the strongly-marked ribs are parallel lines, the network of protruding veins spreads across the surface of the limbs with the regularity of netting'.[45] However, stating that the textbox looks like bones and that the actual look of bones is inessential is not a persuasive argument. The visual context in which the page is set is also important. As Gray comments, Additional 37049 is 'macabre'.[46] The manuscript contains twenty ribcages and five skeletons, whose ribcages are not shown. Judging from the paucity of scribes working on the manuscript, the scribe of f.68[v] likely drew some of them.[47] Furthermore, all the ribcages look like

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44 Jack Hartnell, *Medieval Bodies: Death and Art in the Middle Ages*, (London: Profile Books, 2018), p.101. Scholars have shown that fresco painters in Istria based their human skeletons on miscellaneous mammal bones; A. Petaros, T. Culina, A. Suran, A. Skrobonja, 'Anatomical Motifs among Medieval Folk Artists: Osteological Interpretation of Two Dance of Death Motifs', *Journal of Anatomy*, 223.2 (2013), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3724204/ (accessed 12/12/18).

45 Recht, *Believing and Seeing*, p. 198.

46 Gray, 'A Spiritual Encyclopedia', p. 101.

47 Skeletons with ribcages: ff.19[r]; 31[v]; 32[r]; 32[v]; 33[v]; 34[r]; 34[v]; 35[r]; 36[r] (three); 38[v]; 43[r]; 69[r]; 82[r]; 82[v]; 83[r]; 83[v]; 84[v]; 84[r]. Skeletons without ribcages: ff.39[v]; 40[v]; 42[r] (two); 42[v].

the textbox of f.68ᵛ in that they consist of a central channel out of which segments radiate. We can compare it to the ribcage on the folio's facing page(Figs. 1 and 5).

Figs. 1 (left) and 5 (right)
Additional 37049 f.68ᵛ f.69ʳ

F.68ᵛ is a version of a Table of the Seven Acts of the Passion, which appears in the De Lille Psalter.[48] The De Lille diagram is far more elegant that of 'The Hours': it is ruled and symmetrical; the text fits perfectly into the textboxes and there are no visible corrections. So, if this diagram constitutes in some sense the scribe-artist's aim,to read a further allusion into his drawing is to pervert his purpose.

It is plausible, though, that the scribe-artist overlaid this pattern with a further visual metaphor. Villalobos Hennessy has foregrounded the poem's allusive visual potential, the way 'each verbal and visual tableau on

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48   British Library MS Arundel 83 II, f.131ʳ. British Library Digitised Manuscripts, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=arundel_ms_83_f001r. Villalobos Hennessy 'Passion Devotion, Penitential Reading and the Manuscript Page' (2004), pp. 213-252 (p. 222); Brantley, *Reading in the Wilderness*, p. 200.

this page could also function as the seed for a much larger meditation'.49 She argues the 'Hours' encourages readers to regard not only 'real, actual images (such as here in the manuscript)' but also the 'mental images' they had encountered in texts such as Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes* vitae Christi.50 The page, then, encourages the reader to not only see before them a table, a page that represents the body of Christ, but also the ghost-image of all passion tableaus. I have furthered her claim, arguing that the text encourages us to recount a specific image from Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes*, namely, Christ's articulated bones. As Pickering writes, 'the more one reads in medieval exegesis, the more disciplined, the less free and popular will devotional works, even the enormously inflated texts of the later Passion Plays, appear'; that is, vernacular devotional works might seem spontaneous or rough, but often turn out to have been carefully wrought from existing doctrine.51

The stretched Christ, however, is not a straightforward image; it simultaneously opens Christ up to lineation, allowing the Old Testament to exegetically shine through the new, but it also makes Christ less recognisable, less somatically whole. In the early Tudor play *Christ's Burial* (c.1510), Christ's stretched aspect reminds Mary Magdalene of a page:

> Mawdelen: Cum hithere, Ioseph, beholde & looke
> How many bludy letters beyn writen in þis buke,
> Small margente her is.
>
> Iesephe: Ye, this parchement is stritchit owt of syse.52
>
> [Magdalen: Come here Joseph, behold and look
> How many bloody letters are written in this book,
> Little margin here is.
>
>
> Joseph: Yes, this parchment is stretched out of size.]

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49   Villalobos Hennessy, 'Passion Devotion', p. 250.
50   Ibid., p. 240.
51   Pickering, *Literature and Art*, p. 144.
52   *The Digby Mysteries*, ed. by F. J. Furnivall (New York: New Shakespeare Company, 1882), p. 180, ll.271-74.

Like the stippled Christs that adorn the pages of Additional 37049, there are so many red letters cramped onto Christ's body that there is little 'margente' left. Joseph's reply is crucial here; the stretching of Christ is not just part of preparing a document; it warps the page, he is 'stritchit owt of syse', and therefore made less legible. A margin is a reading aid that lets the eye rest and absorb the information on the page; a text without a margin feels uncomfortably expanded, does not fit the measure of the human body reading it. This intimates that the text of suffering is not a seamless interface between the body of the devotee and the body of Christ.

The page of 'The Hours' is a testament to uneasy interface. In it we can plainly see a human hand trying to record in some sense the 'syse' of Christ, the measure of his pain. Measurements of the full, historical span of Christ, taken from the column, were commonly used in the Middle Ages as apotropaic amulets.[53] Some devotional texts in the Middle Ages claimed to relay – in actual or condensed form – such measurements.[54] David Areford writes about a German woodcut (c.1490) depicting the wounds of Christ; at the centre is a mandorla-shaped side-wound flanked by two scrolls that declare: 'This is the length and width of Christ's wound which was pierced in his side on the Cross'. They promise seven years indulgence for whoever kisses the painted wound. As Areford writes, 'the effectiveness of this reconstruction depended on the viewer's own body, which was the essential reference-point for gauging the relative bodily dimensions for Christ'.[55] The images' power is unlocked when you apply your crescent-shaped orifice to the reproduction of Christ's equally crescent-shaped wound. Although f.68ᵛ makes no actual claim to stand in for Christ's historical measure, it is, like Areford's woodcut 'a kind of devotional diagram of the body of Christ'.[56] F.68ᵛ lays out the hurt his body sustained in a temporal matrix in order that we remember and identify with that experience, drawn into, what I have argued to be, his articulated bones.

This diagrammatised body, though, it not a seamless transfer of measure. The mediation of the human hand is everywhere evident on the page, so it is worth understanding how this image was executed. It would have

53   C. F. Bühler, 'Prayer and Charms in Certain Middle English Scrolls', *Speculum*, 39, 270-278; Ernst Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 8 (1954), pp. 83-150.

54   D. Vance Smith, 'The Inhumane Wonder of the Book', *Chaucer Review*, 47.4 (2013), pp. 361-371 (p. 364).

55   Areford, 'The Passion Measured', p. 238.

56   Ibid., p. 214.

made sense to first draw the central images, and so divide the two columns of text before writing them. The scribe, however, seems to have broken the lines of verse in the right-hand column not according to where the illustration is but according to how long the line is. Some figures, moreover – like the right-hand torturer – fit so neatly around the text's edge, they must have been drawn around it. Furthermore, the scribe did not break any lines in the last stanza (presumably realising he was near the bottom of the page); this means the tomb is pushed far right of the page's central axis. It is clear, then, that scribe first wrote all the right-hand verses, then drew the illustrations, then began the left-hand verses. These, having little room, justify themselves around the illustrations and are cramped into the gutter edge so that, as Mary Magdalene says in *Christ's Burial*, 'smal margente ther is'.

The rib-like rungs of the textbox fit around the three corrections in the poem, so it seems that the artist drew them after he wrote and corrected his stanzas. These lozenges do not, however, fit around the corrections made to the rubriced 'towchyng' and 'tastynge', so it appears the correction of the rubrication occurred after the text was outlined. This makes sense, just in terms of ease; he used brown ink first to write and correct the text and then to draw the Passion scenes and textbox; he then changed to red ink to cross out the corrected words, splash the line initials, and paint Christ's wounds. Looking at this page, then, one can really feel the movement of the artist's hand, which drags and justifies downwards and to the right – the movement of a hand trained to write in the Latin alphabet.

This page is thus a powerful testament to what the enclosed Carthusians were supposed to do – 'preach with their hands' by copying sacred texts.[57] This human hand took to articulating the sufferings of Christ and in so doing reflected its own edges, its own measure. On f.23ʳ (Fig. 2) we can also see a hand's left-to-right movement, where dots of red ink blotted onto the scribe-artist's hypothenar muscles and stamped twice back onto the page, to the left of the painted foot. At each rounded edge of the textbox on f.68ᵛ, moreover, the scribe-artist lifts his hand once — often more than once — to re-orient the curves, which he tends to draw too tightly. This is especially obvious on the gutter edge, where he must draw a curve towards his own hand, curling his fingers towards his palm and thus rounding off

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57 I am paraphrasing Guigo I, the so-called second founder of the Carthusian Order, quoted in David J. Falls, *Nicholas Love's Mirror and Late Medieval Devotio-Literary Culture: Theological Politics and Devotional Practice in Fifteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 14.

the semi-circle too early – see especially the semi-circles around 'towchy-ng' and 'smellyng'. From the way the first four left-hand rungs overlap, it is clear that he is drawing them from the top of the page down; he moves as he was trained to move, lifting the pen where it meets his own flesh.

Conclusion

Translating the measure of Christ onto a page, or indeed into a book, is not a seamless process. D. Vance Smith says the relationship between the form of a text and the holy measures it tries to represent is 'troubled' because 'the measure of the body of Christ appears only after writing has already determined the size and shape of the text'.[58] F.68^v illustrates this conundrum perfectly. The scribe-artist wrote the text, then filled in the body, and the span of Christ is altered not only because of poor planning but also because of the constraints of the human hand. Yet reading Christ's bones into f.68^v further complicates the already 'troubled' relationship between holy body and holy text, because it gestures towards a stretched measure, human being literally out of joint. This begs the question: is there a relationship between the torturer's stretching of Christ and the warping presence of the human hand on this page? And, to what extent is the roughness of this image intentional? This essay made the case for seeing f.68^v as a representation of the articulated bones of Christ, but its scope is only broad enough to gesture to the implications of this. What is clear, though, is that the page is a dynamic testament to a human hand charting the span of an envisioned and distorted body.

By positing the textbox of f.68^v as a representation of Christ's drawn ribs, this article has tried to expand the discourse around Christ's body as a page. As we have seen from 'The Dispute', this metaphor can also encompass internal linear structures – Christ's 'Rib and Rugge' can be 'red' against the cross's wooden board (l.144). The metaphor, furthermore, does not always endow the passion with pat legibility; rather, the text of suffering is often warped or compromised by the crafting of it.

This article further suggested that the image's roughness produces a generative tension between the represented and the representation. The contemporary South-African artist William Kentridge delivered a lecture

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58   Smith, 'The Inhumane Wonder', p. 369.

series called *Six Drawing Lessons*, outlining both his politico-philosophical background and his approach to the open page, an approach which I think can inform our sense of this work. Kentridge describes trying to draw a mutilated human body:

> Over the paper hovers a projection of the figure, but overlaying it too are all the other bodies: Goya's spread-eagled man from *The Third of May*; Giotto's *Massacre of the Innocents*; the flayed skin of Marseus. But then they too are too far from the paper. Right up against the paper, the activity of finding the image is just the material and the belief that this material will transform itself back into the image[.][59]

The act of drawing one hurt body conjures 'all the other bodies', the famous hurt bodies of Western art; similarly, we might imagine that when the Carthusian monk approached *his* page with the intent of producing a 'deuowte meditac*ioun*' he saw, hovering over it, both the Table of the Seven Acts, his model, and the fervently remembered images of the crucified Christ, stretched abroad on the cross. Kentridge also testifies to the way in which mark-making constricts and delimits all the possible images that could have been made; the act of 'finding the image' rests in an uncomfortable dialectic between 'the material' – the plane of the paper, the depositing of pigment on the page – and the mental picture, the 'idea of the image'. It is in this sense I read the textbox of f.68�v; the page is a dynamic witness to the human hand trying to delineate a radically wounded body, a body that stretches beyond the page and hovers over it like an after-image in the eye.

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59   William Kentridge, *Six Drawing Lessons* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014), p. 93.

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Is Rage Ever Permissible? The Gender-Contingent Boundaries of Anger in the *Íslendingasögur*

Geⁿorge C. Manning

T he post-medieval term *Íslendingasögur* (Sagas of Icelanders) describes a corpus of texts that are similar in style, content, and chronotope: characterised by laconism and a façade of stark objectivity, these sagas depict a largely consistent social world dominated by the intra- and extra-familial relationships, conflicts, and feuds of Icelanders that, broadly speaking, take place in and around Iceland between 870 AD (the beginning of the settlement of Iceland) and a few decades after 1000 AD (Iceland's conversion to Christianity). Though likely indebted to a complex oral heritage, the *Íslendingasögur* were committed to vellum – most probably by male clerics – from the thirteenth century; aside from some later exceptions, the vast majority were written down in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[1] The intertextual coherence of the society detailed in the *Íslendingasögur*, as Gareth Lloyd Evans notes, 'makes [them] particularly amenable to sustained readings of gender identity and construction'.[2] Moreover, such coherence also lends itself to sustained readings of emotional identity and construction, and, therefore, the nexus between gender and emotion.

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1   For a concise yet comprehensive explanation of the term *Íslendingasögur*, see Gareth Lloyd Evans, *Men and Masculinities in the Sagas of Icelanders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 4-5. Evans, following other critics, employs the useful Bakhtinian term 'chronotope' to capture a sense of time and space simultaneously (p. 4, footnote 4). It should also be emphasised that, though some of the *Íslendingasögur* are not set in Iceland, all of them concern Icelanders. On male clerics writing down the sagas, see Heather O'Donoghue, *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 23.

2   Evans, *Men and Masculinities*, p. 5.

When Skarpheðinn attempts to suppress his rage in *Brennu-Njáls saga*, he states *ekki hǫfu vér kvenna skap […] at vér reiðimsk við ǫllu* (we [Skarpheðinn and his brothers] do not have the disposition of women, that we become angry over everything).[3] In doing so, he explicitly genders the expression of anger, or, at least, irascibility as a dispositional tendency, as feminine. Whilst Sif Rikhardsdottir writes that his remark emphasises that all 'demonstrative emotive behaviour was considered to belong to a feminine domain,'[4] William Ian Miller astutely interprets Skarpheðinn's comment as gendering 'easily-aroused anger as feminine, [and] slow anger as masculine': by saying that he will not behave like a woman by growing angry over *everything*, Skarpheðinn also implies, conversely, that growing angry is permissible for men in some special cases, presumably depending on circumstantial severity.[5]

Sif Rikhardsdottir introduces the term 'emotive script' to conceptualise a conventional code of emotional behaviour to which a particular 'emotive literary identity' adheres.[6] Saga-society's masculine ideal exalts what Slavica Ranković has termed the '"no reaction" formula' (whereby men are expected to suppress their anger, maintain an inscrutable poker face, and channel their emotion into considered and delayed action to exact vengeance), a sentiment succinctly put by the eponymous hero of *Grettis saga* when he states *[þ]ræll einn þegar hefnisk* (only a slave takes vengeance immediately).[7] The emotive script for male characters, then, holds easily-aroused anger as feminine and advocates emotive sobriety.

Skarpheðinn comments on anger in this way when he learns that he has, along with his father and brothers, been subjected to *níð*-insults by Hallgerðr. *Níð*-insults invoke the *ergi*-complex, as Evans calls it, and with it the implication that the male recipient is *argr,* an adjective which we might translate as 'effeminate' or 'cowardly' but that bears a deeper, defamatory connotation that the man that it describes takes 'the receptive role in

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3   *Brennu-Njáls saga*, p. 114. All translations are my own.

4   Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017), p. 132.

5   William Ian Miller, 'Emotions and the Sagas', in *From Sagas to Society: Comparative Approaches to Early Iceland*, ed. Gísli Pálsson (Enfield Lock: Hisarlik Press, 1992), pp. 89-109 (p. 100).

6   Sif Rikhardsdottir, pp. 27-32.

7   See, for example, Slavica Ranković, 'The Exquisite Tempers of Grettir the Strong', *Scandinavian Studies* 89 (2017), 375-412 (384); *Grettis saga*, p. 44. In *Men and Masculinities*, Evans argues that the masculine ideal exalts physical prowess and honour, among other qualities, and holds that a character 'must be both willing and able to exact due vengeance' (p. 25).

homosexual anal sex'.[8] Such a defamation required the humiliated victim to 'challenge his adversary to battle, or avenge himself by blood-revenge'.[9] Skarpheðinn's father, Njáll, is called *karl inn skegglausa* (Old Beardless), an emasculating jibe, given that beards 'were synecdochic with manhood', and the Njálssons called *taðskegglinga* (dung-beardlings), insinuating that they use manure as follicular fertiliser, or, worse still, have either engaged in 'sloppily performed coprophagy' (as Miller puts it), or anilingual bestiality.[10] Whilst the Njálssons do exact vengeance later by killing the man who versified the insults at Hallgerðr's request, it is remarkable that even insults severe enough to warrant a slaying are not severe enough to warrant emotive expression (although the brothers' somatic responses, including facial reddening and perspiring, do betray their true feelings). We might wonder just how severe a situation must be before a saga-man is permitted to be demonstratively angry.

Bergþóra, Skarpheðinn's mother, then goads her sons to take vengeance. She attempts to provoke them through emasculation by retorting *[r]eiddisk Gunnarr þó fyrir yðra hǫnd* (Gunnarr [Hallgerðr's husband] grew angry on your behalf), thereby attempting to code anger as masculine, and compounds this by twice expressively raging herself, verifying Skarpheðinn's remark.[11] She assumes the role of 'female whetter', a ubiquitous stock figure of the *Íslendingasögur*.[12] The saga-author uses the verb

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8   Evans, *Men and Masculinities*, p. 19, see also p. 18, 24.

9   Preben Meulengracht Sørensen, *The Unmanly Man: Concepts of Sexual Defamation in Early Northern Society*, trans. Joan Turville-Petre (Odense: Odense University Press, 1983), p. 32.

10   See *Brennu-Njáls saga*, p. 114; Oren Falk, 'Beardless Wonders: "Gaman vas Sǫxu" (The Sex was Great)', in *Verbal Encounters*, ed. Antonina Harbus and Russell Poole (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), pp. 223-46 (p. 234); Miller, *Why is Your Axe Bloody?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 105.

11   *Brennu-Njáls saga*, p. 114.

12   Recurrently in the sagas male characters are cast as reluctant to exact vengeance initially and are goaded by female characters into taking action. Rolf Heller found fifty-one examples of the female whetter in the *Íslendingasögur*, and Jenny Jochens and William Ian Miller have since found yet more examples (see Heller, *Die Literarische Darstellung der Frau in den Isländersagas* [Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1958], pp. 98-122; Jochens, *Old Norse Images of Women* [Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996], p. 192; Miller, 'Choosing the Avenger: Some Aspects of the Bloodfeud in Medieval Iceland and England', *Law and History Review* 1 [1983], 159-204 [p. 181]). Jochens, following Judith Jesch, argues that male authors created the stock figure to absolve male characters of the blame for their violence (see Jochens, *Images*, p. 201, 203, and Judith Jesch, *Women in the Viking Age* [Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991], p. 191). Saga-men tend not to acquiesce straightaway; saga-authors frequently cast male characters as berating the whetting ritual by uttering a version of the well-worn

geisa to connote her second fit of rage; the verb occurs on only one other occasion in the *Íslendingasögur*, in the same saga, when Hallgerðr attempts to goad Gunnarr to take vengeance earlier. Having described Hallgerðr's raging in this way, the saga-author states that Gunnarr *gaf eigi gaum at því* (Gunnarr took no notice of this), emphasising that it is a performance that is *meant* to be noticed.[13] *Geisa*, then, seems to connote a particular kind of raging that is part and parcel of the whetting ritual. Evidently, it is socially permissible for female characters to rage, and, moreover, it is useful, as, in Bergþóra's case, it allows her to mobilise her sons to take vengeance and reinstate her family's honour. We ought to bear in mind that, though reigning supreme *innan stokks* (within the household), female characters were typically excluded from participating in the androcentric legal, political, and blood-feuding spheres.[14] By raging, female characters can take action in a man's world, facilitating their social agency and mobility.

There are many more examples of angry saga-women who demonstrate this. In *Heiðarvíga saga*, for instance, Þuriðr successfully rages to mobilise her sons to avenge their brother's slaying.[15] Þuriðr's extreme emotional rampaging borders on burlesque, indicating that she is deliberately amplifying and exaggerating her anger to provoke a reaction in her sons; the saga-author depicts how *[g]ekk hon útan ok innar eptir gólfinu eiskrandi* (she walked up and down over the floor foaming with rage).[16] The intensity of the verb *eiskra* (meaning 'to roam, foam, or screech with rage') recalls the goading capacity of the verb *geisa*, used to describe Bergþóra and Hallgerðr.[17] Moreover, her comportment recalls the anger of *berserkir*, antisocial, bullying stock-figures in the *Íslendingasögur* whose *berserksgangr*, literally meaning 'berserk walking/motion' but often translated as 'berserk

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saga-proverb *eru köld kvenna ráð* (cold is the counsel of women). Whilst their counsel may be cold, the whetting process is, conversely, often rage-fuelled and exaggerated as a result, as Bergþóra demonstrates.

13   *Brennu-Njáls saga*, p. 99.

14   See, for example, Carol Clover, 'Regardless of Sex: Men, Women, and Power in Early Northern Europe', *Representations* 44, 1-28 (p. 2).

15   See *Heiðarvíga saga*, pp. 276-9.

16   *Heiðarvíga saga*, p. 277.

17   *Cleasby-Vigfússon* glosses *eiskra* 'to roam or foam with rage' (see Richard Cleasby, Guðbrandur Vigfússon, and William A. Craigie, *An Icelandic–English Dictionary* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957], s.v. 'eiskra', p. 124). Keneva Kunz translates *eiskrandi* as 'screeching with rage' (Keneva Kunz, trans., 'The Saga of the Slayings on the Heath', in *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders*, vol. 4, ed. Viðar Hreinsson [Reykjavík: Leifur Eiríksson Publishing, 1997], pp. 67-129 [p. 104]).

fury', acts as a belligerent energy to fuel their martial prowess.[18] They are the antithesis of the Self-Controlled Saga-Hero to whom they so often fall victim. This aligning with *berserkir* emphasises the extent to which the emotive script for female characters juxtaposes the emotive script by which saga-heroes were expected to abide.

Elsewhere, in *Gísla saga*, a man called Refr directs his fierce-tempered wife Álfdís to rage wildly and abusively to prevent Gísli's pursuers from finding him.[19] The plan works and Gísli remains undiscovered. The fact that Álfdís is cast as feigning a credible performance of anger suggests that raging was socially permissible for female characters, and, on account of her successfulness, shows that anger can be advantageous when wielded by a saga-woman. Her raging also emasculates Gísli's pursuers, forcing them to leave empty-handed and feeling *mikinn mannskaða* (great shame), and Gísli himself, cowering in the bed (an undoubtedly sexualised locus) while Álfdís lies on top of him and valiantly protects him, is emasculated also. There is a sense that Álfdís actually assumes a near-masculine social position through her raging.

It is an intriguing paradox, therefore, that, whilst Skarpheðinn casts the expression of easily-aroused anger as feminine for male-sexed characters, saga-women, I contend, can infiltrate the masculine domain and function in a near-masculine way – albeit momentarily – through an expressive burst of anger. This notion – that male-sexed characters might be feminine, and female-sexed characters might assume a near-masculine position despite employing the same emotional *modus operandi* – runs contrary to Carol Clover's important interventional 'one-sex, one-gender' spectral model of saga-society gender, where all characters were judged according to a gender that was 'something like masculine', 'regardless of their sex'.[20] Evidently, sex is significant: although these female characters assume a near-masculine societal position, their emotional comportment is only coded near-masculine on account of the *femaleness* of their bodies; paradoxically, if they were male, then their emotional comportment, in line with Skarpheðinn's comment, might be considered feminine.

The character that best demonstrates the agency and social mobility that anger can afford is Ólof in *Víglundar saga*. Like Álfdís, she feigns or at least amplifies her anger, but what is so intriguing is that she also feigns

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18   See Roderick Dale, 'Berserkir: A Re-examination of the Phenomenon in Literature and Life' (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Nottingham, 2014), pp. 71-2.

19   *Gísla saga*, pp. 84-8.

20   Clover, 'Regardless of Sex', p. 18, 13, 9.

maleness and masculinity. We have seen that Skarpheðinn suggests that the femininity or unmasculinity of anger is dependent on circumstantial severity, and yet Skarpheðinn, despite being subjected to grave insults that warrant fatal action, still attempts to conceal his anger. In this vignette, Ólof triumphs over her attempted rapist by pretending to be a raging saga-man called Óttarr. Through the duality of her masculine, male disguise and her masculine, female true identity, Ólof demonstrates the usefulness of anger for saga-women in overcoming saga-men, but, more significantly, indicates that anger can be considered 'masculine' for saga-men in some cases.

Jealous of the respect that Ólof's husband Þorgrímr commands, Einarr hopes to provoke him to avenge the rape of his wife to preserve his honour. He predicts that his rage-fuelled vengeance will enact his downfall. The plot to provoke anger, however, is foiled by anger. At Ólof's instruction, her maid dons Ólof's mantle and sits in the sewing room. When Einarr tries to seduce the woman he believes to be Þorgrímr's wife, *[í] þessu kom maðr í stofuna bláklæddr ok helt á brugðnu sverði. Maðrinn var ekki stórr vexti, en allreiðugligr var hann. Þeir spurðu hann at nafni, en hann nefndist Óttarr* (at that moment a blue-black-clothed man came into the room and he brandished a drawn sword. The man was not very big, but he had an extremely angry appearance. They asked him what he was called, and he said he was called Óttarr). When Óttarr lies that Þorgrímr is almost home, Einarr and his brother Jǫkull jump up and, seeing a band of men approaching, flee. After the episode, the saga-author reveals that the band of men was actually a herd of cattle, and that Óttarr was Ólof in disguise.[21]

The female-sexed Ólof 'performs' masculinity by staging culturally recognisable masculine features.[22] The saga-author indicates that Óttarr is male by using *maðr*. Although this is problematic (Evans concedes that, whilst it probably does mean 'man' here, it can be used non-gender-specifically to mean 'person'), masculine pronouns (such as *hann*, 'he') are used in this passage.[23] Holding an unsheathed sword, he is aggressively ready for combat. Throughout the sagas, weapons often represent the Lacanian phallus, that is, a 'transcendental signifier' of masculine power 'to which the subject relates "without regard to the anatomical difference of the sex-

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21   *Víglundar saga*, pp. 76-8.

22   The scene recalls Judith Butler's notion of gender performance. See *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990).

23   Evans, 'Female Masculinity and the Sagas of Icelanders', in *Old Norse Masculinities*, ed. Gareth Lloyd Evans and Jessica Hancock (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, forthcoming).

es'".[24] Óttarr's sword symbolises potent masculinity, and, held upright and unsheathed, is a conspicuous phallic symbol, directly paralleling, as well as resisting, Einarr's penis – similarly 'unsheathed' in its erect state – that would enact Ólof's rape.

Whilst Óttarr's weapon is wielded to meet Einarr's 'weapon', Jenny Jochens notes that, in general, women who use arms in the *Íslendingasögur* are markedly unsuccessful.[25] In this episode, however, the brothers (and, perhaps, the audience) consider Óttarr authentically male, and the sword, brandished by an ostensibly male agent, bears the threat of successfully executed violence that is masculine. His anger, then, is functioning as a volatile belligerent energy to fuel and bolster Óttarr's martial prowess, akin to the *berserksgangr*. Kirsten Wolf points out that, whereas women who cross-dress and 'imitate' men elsewhere in the *Íslendingasögur* – such as the cross-dressing, axe-wielding Freydís in *Grænlendinga saga* – are still recognisably female despite their male garb, Ólof conceals her sex and instead 'simulates' maleness.[26] Ólof reads from the male emotive script and emotes according to male emotional practice. As Wolf observes, 'Ólof's maleness is, from a practical point of view, essential for her success'; Ólof must outmanoeuvre the male assailant by becoming male herself.[27]

Whilst Ólof's masculine performance is mostly successful, the saga-author suggests that it is problematised by her physique, stating that *[m]aðrinn var ekki stórr vexti* (the man was not very big). Óttarr's slight stature could, at best, suggest that he is, despite brandishing a sword, unthreatening, and, at worst, might betray his true identity. The masculine gender performance is not sufficient to conceal (what the saga-author considers to be) the physiological reality that women tend to be smaller than men. The saga-author, however, writing that Óttarr is short *en* (but) he is angry, suggests that intemperate rage compensates for, and counteracts, this potentially unmasculine feature, rescuing the almost compromised gender performance and facilitating Ólof's triumph over Einarr. It is also noteworthy that the saga-author uses the adjective *allreiðugligr*, which we

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24 Carl Phelpstead, 'Size Matters: Penile Problems in Sagas of Icelanders', *Exemplaria* 19 (2007), 420-37 (p. 434). See Jacques Lacan, 'The Signification of the Phallus', in *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), pp. 281-91 (p. 285).

25 Jochens, *Images*, p. 159.

26 Kirsten Wolf, 'Transvestism in the Sagas of Icelanders', in *Sagas and the Norwegian Experience / Sagaene og Noreg: 10th International Saga Conference / 10. Internasjonale Saga-konferanse* (Trondheim: Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet, 1997), 675-84 (p. 680). See *Grænlendinga saga*, pp. 265-7.

27 Wolf, 'Transvestism', p. 680.

might translate as 'of an extremely angry appearance', where the adjective *allreiðr* (extremely angry), used in many other saga-scenes, would suffice. The *-ligr* suffix may be a hint from the saga-author that the rage is being feigned, or at least exaggerated, for the performance, rather than being cast as genuine. As Evans suggests, the gendered performance is 'best shown through […] extreme anger' and remedies Ottarr's problematic physique.[28] The saga-author's intimation that anger is masculine contrasts the promotion of self-restraint for saga-men elsewhere in the *Íslendingasögur* and the male emotive sobriety championed by Skarpheðinn. We may understand, therefore, that male rage may be justifiable and thus socially permissible in special circumstances, a category into which this defamatory seduction scene would surely fall.

In order to understand the effectiveness of Ólof's anger fully, we must analyse the behaviour of the recipients of her anger. Óttarr's name, meaning 'a thing to be feared' (*ótti*), is echoed in the line that follows his introduction, where the saga-author tells us that the brothers were *nökkurr ótti af þessum manni* (somewhat afraid of this man). This mild fear escalates when Óttarr tells them that Þorgrímr is close by. The fear that the performance induces indicates its success. Their terror is embodied in their reaction: they immediately *spretta upp* (jump up) and leave. Óttarr's clothing may also indicate the fear-inducing power of his anger. Wolf has shown that *blár*, which I have translated as 'blue-black', 'originally meant simply a dark colour'.[29] She therefore argues that it should be grouped alongside *svartr* (dark) and *blakkr* (black).[30] Surveying the entire corpus of Old Norse-Icelandic literature, Edel Porter and Teodoro Manrique Antón, though tracking *sortna* (to grow black) and *svartr* (dark) instead of *blár* (blue-black), demonstrate that blackening was associated with anger and fear.[31] Moreover, *blár* evokes the black bile of humoral theory, an excess of which was linked to melancholia in the Hippocratic tradition.[32] *Blár* cloth-

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28   Evans, 'Female Masculinity'.

29   Wolf, 'Basic Colour Terms in Old Norse-Icelandic: A Quantitative Study', *Orð og tunga* 15 (2013), 141-61 (p. 159). See also Wolf, 'The Colour Blue in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature', *Scripta Islandica* 57 (2006), 55-78 (p. 74).

30   Wolf, 'Basic Colour Terms', p. 159.

31   Edel Porter and Teodoro Manrique Antón, 'Flushing in Anger, Blushing in Shame: Somatic Markers in Old Norse Emotional Expressions', *Cognitive Linguistic Studies* 2 (2015), 24-49 (p. 36, 38).

32   Stanley W. Jackson, 'A History of Melancholia and Depression', in *History of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology*, eds Edwin R. Wallace and John Gach (New York: Springer, 2008), pp. 443-60 (p. 444). Outlined in the fourteenth-century manuscript *Hauksbók* (pp. 181-2), the humoral theory was evidently known in medieval Iceland.

ing is frequently worn by slayers: in *Hrafnkels saga*, for example, Hrafnkell is wearing *blám klæðum* (blue-black clothes) when he slays Einarr and Eyvindr, and the eponymous hero of *Valla-Ljóts saga* wears a *blám kyrtli* (blue-black tunic) when he kills Halli.[33] This recognisable symbol of death would compound the brothers' fear. The first detail that the saga-author discloses when Óttarr enters is the colour of his attire. The fear-inducing clothing forebodes the fear-inducing rage, before Óttarr's name corroborates that he is indeed 'a thing to be feared'.

When Óttarr's true identity is revealed, the saga-author emphasises the colour of his attire once again: *inn bláklæddi maðr var Ólof sjálf* (the blue-black-clothed man was Ólof herself). When Ólof is introduced, the saga-author describes her as *furðu kurteis* (very gracious), and explains that she is called *inn geisli* (the Radiant) because she is *fríðust* (the most beautiful).[34] Unlike Álfdís' short-fused disposition, Ólof's gentle disposition contrasts her hot-tempered performance, suggesting that her anger is a deliberate pretence to intensify her performance, just as her gloomy disguise, also connoting her raging, contrasts her radiance. If dark colouring symbolises anger and fear as Porter and Antón show, then Óttarr's blackness is essential to his constructed identity (as 'a thing to be feared') and his emotional comportment (fear-inducing anger).

When the brothers discover that they have been deceived, the saga-author writes that *þóttust þeir hafa farit mikla smánarferð* (they realised that they had undertaken a most disgraceful journey). Their emasculating disgrace clarifies the comparably masculine social position that Ólof has assumed. Interestingly, Ólof's husband does not grow angry when he learns of the events. Þorgrímr explains that he will not pursue vengeance since *Einarr kom ekki sínum vilja fram* (Einarr was not able to have his way) and indicates that he does not want to compromise his friendship with Einarr's father, Hólmkell. Evans suggests that 'Þorgrímr's lack of reaction could be read as impotent'.[35] Þorgrímr's prioritisation of his relationship with Hólmkell over avenging his honour is recurrent. The attempted rape sparks a feuding sequence that manifests in various transgressions against Þorgrímr, and, time and again, his desire to preserve his relationship outweighs his desire for retaliation. This is paralleled in *Brennu-Njáls saga*, where Gunnarr refuses to exact vengeance on Njáll because he values their friendship more than his honour; Ármann Jakobsson suggests that this

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33   *Hrafnkels saga*, pp. 104-5, 128-130. *Valla-Ljóts saga*, pp. 245-6.

34   *Víglundar saga*, p. 64.

35   Evans, 'Female Masculinity'.

homosocial relationship borders on the homoerotic.[36] Ironically, when Víglundr, Þorgrímr's son, does not immediately avenge an attack from Jǫkull, Holmkell's son, because he sustains a head injury, Þorgrímr calls his son's bandages a *faldr* (headdress), calls him a daughter, and demands to know why he did not retaliate.[37] This emasculating scene, however, reiterates Þorgrímr's own chronic inaction; perhaps his intention is to deflect his own unmasculinity onto his son. Þorgrímr's unmasculinity serves to emphasise that his wife's angry cross-dressing performance renders her sufficiently masculine.

The saga-author reveals Óttarr's true identity by stating *inn bláklæddi maðr var Ólof sjálf* (the blue-black-clothed man was Ólof herself). The saga-author uses the gender-specific reflexive pronoun *sjálf* (herself) to pertain to Ólof, emphasising her femaleness. As we have seen, *maðr*, though usually meaning 'man', can signify the non-gender specific 'person' or 'someone'. In a forthcoming chapter, Evans ingeniously turns to Jack Halberstam's concept of 'female masculinity' – 'masculinity without men' – to theorise masculine yet female-sexed saga-characters.[38] Analysing this scene, Evans argues that 'Ólof clearly adopts a masculine performance, but it is one that is still linked to a female body and so must not be regarded merely as masculinity — but rather as *female* masculinity.'[39] Ólof's rage, produced by the female body but adhering to the male script, is also a product of 'female masculinity', and contrasts what might be considered a typical emotional performance where the gender of the emotive script is the same as the biological sex of the agent adhering to that script (e.g. a male-sexed character adhering to the male script). We might understand her performance, then, to be a fusion of both male masculinity and female masculinity. Evans' forthcoming analysis focuses on episodes in which female characters are unmistakably masculinised by donning masculine attire, yet Halberstam, exploring the re-gendering of M from male to female in the James Bond film franchise, also allows for his term 'female masculinity' to include women who assume masculine social positions without simulating masculinity in such obvious ways.[40] With this in mind, we might wonder whether, by infiltrating a masculine domain

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36   *Brennu-Njáls saga*, p. 91. Ármann Jakobsson, 'Masculinity and Politics in *Njáls Saga*', *Viator* 38 (2007), 191-215 (p. 205).

37   *Víglundar saga*, p. 89.

38   Evans, 'Female Masculinity'; Jack Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (London: Duke University Press, 1998), 1.

39   Evans, 'Female Masculinity'.

40   Halberstam, pp. 3-4.

in their anger and gaining agency in a man's world, the raging Bergþóra, Hallgerðr, Álfdís, and Þuríðr discussed above also exhibit a modality of 'female masculinity'.

To conclude, then, this vignette clearly demonstrates the power that anger can give women in an androcentric saga-society to overcome the boundaries of their gendered sphere and compete against male characters. Moreover, with Bergþóra, Hallgerðr, Álfdís, Þuríðr, and Ólof raging for a variety of reasons with varying severity, it seems that, as Skarpheðinn suggests, female anger really is more easily-aroused than male anger in the *Íslendingasögur*, and that this is socially permissible. Finally, as we have seen, the credibility and success of Ólof's angry cross-dressing performance shows that male anger was *not* exclusively considered feminine. Whilst the '"no reaction" formula' is undoubtedly preferable for male characters (just one example of a raging identity that is ostensibly a masculine male cannot refute this), it seems that we have found a scenario that is circumstantially severe enough to warrant anger in a male character without it being coded feminine. The saga-author could have developed Skarpheðinn's comment more explicitly: 'We do not have the disposition of women that we become angry over everything, but that is not to say that we cannot become expressively angry in severe scenarios, and this is, in fact, permissible for men.'

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Transgressing the Boundaries of the Outsider in *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and *Ill Will* (2018)

Marta Bernabeu

Emily Brontë's Heathcliff, from *Wuthering Heights* (1847), is considered a Byronic character by most scholars, a devilish force by Brontë's fellow Victorians, and even the victim of the story.[1] Be that as it may, Heathcliff's status as outsider is at the centre of any interpretation. The extremes to which he is subjected, both in the novel and critical reception, contribute to his controversial image and detachment from other characters in nineteenth-century fiction. It is worthwhile to remember that Charlotte Brontë, Emily's older sister and author of *Jane Eyre* (1847), claimed in a letter to her publisher that Heathcliff 'exemplified the effects which a life of continued injustice and hard usage may produce on a naturally perverse, vindictive, and inexorable disposition.'[2] Contemporary debates around the figure of Heathcliff still echo Charlotte's in a way, as they fail to reach a more thorough understanding of his persona. Two hundred years of criticism, in which Emily Brontë's character has been discussed from a wide array of approaches,[3] are not seemingly enough to at least

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1   See Patsy Stoneman, 'Rochester and Heathcliff as Romantic Heroes', *Brontë Studies*, 36 (2011), 111–18; Nicola Thomson, 'The Unveiling of Ellis Bell: Gender and the Reception of Wuthering Heights', *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 24 (1995), 341–67; Miriam Allott, 'Wuthering Heights: The Rejection, of Heathcliff?,' *Essays in Criticism*, 8 (1958), 27–47; Carolyne A. Van Der Meer, 'Branwell's Role in the Creation of Heathcliff', *Brontë Society Transactions*, 25 (2013), 42–52.

2   Charlotte Brontë, quoted in Juliet Barker, *The Brontës: A Life in Letters* (New York: Overlook Press, (1998), p. 203.

3   See Terry Eagleton, 1975, *Myths of Power: A Marxist Study of the Brontës*, 2nd ed (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1988); Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1979); Elsie Michie, 'From Simianized Irish to Ori-

make an attempt to delve deeper into the richness of Heathcliff's affective spectrum and explore its many layers. For instance, Kathryn Hughes dismisses *Wuthering Heights* as a 'hot mess', arguing that 'part of the problem, of course, is that [the characters] all sound the same, speaking at a hysterical pitch, as if straining to make themselves heard over a permanent gale'.[4] In a similar way, Hephzibah Anderson reduces the figure of Heathcliff almost exclusively to his 'toxic love',[5] thus snubbing his circumstances, and the fact that Catherine Earnshaw is as problematic and psychologically complex as he is, as Susan Gilbert and Sandra Gubar maintain.[6]

Both Catherine and Heathcliff, but perhaps especially Heathcliff, are perceived by some readers and other characters in *Wuthering Heights* as alien, almost non-human. This occurrence resonates with one of the first critical reviews of *Wuthering Heights* which declared that 'Emily Brontë's 'imagination was sometimes superhuman—always inhuman'.[7] In fact, Heathcliff is constantly constructed as the Other, even stigmatised as 'inhuman' and associated with 'animality'[8] by various characters in *Wuthering Heights*. However, it can be added that he shapes himself, beyond being an outcast and Other, as an outsider, since the word *outsider* connotes a person for whom a part of one's self willingly wants to remain separate from one's society often to vindicate one's difference. Supporting this claim, the *OED* defines *outsider* as 'a person who is isolated from or not integrated into conventional society, either by choice or through some social or other constraint'.[9] In any case, the figures of the outsider, the outcast and the Other are enormously relevant to today's representations of identity building through space. This is especially the case regarding the physical and affective borders that separate the inside from the outside, that is, the

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ental Despots: Heathcliff, Rochester and Racial Difference', *A Forum on Fiction*, 25 (1992), 125–40; Eric P. Levy, 'The Psychology of Loneliness in Wuthering Heights', *Studies in the Novel*, 28 (1996), 158–77.

4   Kathryn Hughes, 'The Strange Cult of Emily Brontë and the "Hot Mess" of Wuthering Heights', *The Guardian*, 21 July 2018, < http://bit.do/eV2Qj> [accessed 22 June 2019].

5   Hephzibah Anderson, 'Heathcliff and Literature's Greatest Love Story Are Toxic', *BBC Culture*, 30 July 2018, <https://bbc.in/2M1wHKp> [accessed 29 January 2019].

6   Gilbert and Gubar, p. 273.

7   G. K. Chesterton, quoted in James Hafley, 'The Villain in Wuthering Heights', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 13 (1958), 199–15 (p. 202) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3044379> [accessed 25 January 2019].

8   Ivan Kreilkamp, *Minor Creatures: Persons, Animals, and the Victorian Novel* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), pp. 64–65.

9   'Outsider', in *The Oxford English Dictionary* [online] <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/133984> [accessed 22 April 2019].

experience of people who stand at the threshold of society due to their gender, race or social class, amongst other concerns, such as sexuality and health. For them, borders are materialised as denied opportunities, social exclusion, and even the denied right to have a dignified identity. This relationship is most evident in how certain emotions or affects, such as pain and desire, help construct and transgress the very boundaries imposed on the self. Thus, affect (understood as 'how we are touched by what comes near'[10]) is intrinsically linked with space, for our capacity to shape our identity and lodge ourselves in the different places that form human society entirely depends on the physical and consequent affective limits imposed on bodies.

In this context, affective agency is to be understood as an *animatedness*[11] that enhances the capacity to act. This *animatedness* provokes a movement which 'exert[s] a politicizing force'[12] stemming from the affectations of a body at the mercy of social and political borderlands. In the case of Heathcliff, it can even be said that he gathers this agency or animation by orientating himself towards the pain he suffers at the encounter of the above-mentioned borders. In this respect, it should be noted how 'Heathcliff's revenge efforts and disrespect for the social order reveal his abjection, further defining his status as a continual outsider'.[13] In other words, he continually shapes himself as an outsider precisely by resorting to his pain in order to make visible his situation and vindicate the right to have a space. What is more, the affective space he builds is intended to disturb other characters' affective and physical spaces, as well as to transgress the hostility present in *Wuthering Heights*' narrative frames by its very force. On this note, Michael Stewart's *Ill Will: The Untold Story of Heathcliff* (2018), tries to reimagine the spaces Heathcliff inhabits when he leaves Wuthering Heights in search of his mother and origins. This journey from Wuthering Heights to Liverpool, where he believes his mother could be, is also marked by Heathcliff's own reflections about racial and class oppression. Thus, *Ill Will* participates in the complexity of the outsider laid out in *Wuthering Heights*, highlighting the coarseness of the original text and

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10   Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, 2010), p. 22.

11   Sianne Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (Massachusetts, 2005), p. 91.

12   Ngai, p. 96.

13   Jennifer Lodine-Chaffey, 'Heathcliff's Abject State in Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights', *Brontë Studies*, 38 (2013), 206–18 (p. 210) <doi:10.1179/1474893213Z.00000000069> [accessed 29 January 2019].

characters,[14] acknowledging the many layers of its making, and not crafting an unproblematised afterlife.

The novelty of this research lies primarily in the attempt to explore the idea of pain as a place to gather affective agency in order to transgress boundaries in *Wuthering Heights* alongside a neo-Victorian text about Heathcliff's story, *Ill Will*, thus making a significant contribution to the fields of Victorian, neo-Victorian and Brontë Studies. Accordingly, Heathcliff's affective vindication and transgression will be analysed taking into account Steven Vine's and Ben Anderson's studies on space and affect, among other scholars. Furthermore, Rachel Ablow and Sara Ahmed's considerations about pain and orientation along with Jacques Derrida's notion of *hostipitality* will also be used as the theoretical framework for the analysis. To that purpose, the first section of this essay will deal with the idea of Heathcliff's orientation towards pain in order to gather agency and visibility to disrupt the affective boundaries that perpetuate hostility in *Wuthering Heights*. This section will also tackle how this newly vindicated affective place is also key for Heathcliff's own sense of identity shaping, which further asserts his status as an outsider. In the second section, it will be shown that there is not an initial orientation to pain in *Ill Will*, as the character of Heathcliff intends to move away from it by transgressing physical space in his journey to find his mother. Nevertheless, Stewart's tale succeeds in reversing hostility precisely by re-orientating the narration towards Heathcliff and his relationship with pain as a place of dwelling, identity-building and agency-grasping.

Affect, Space and the Outsider in *Wuthering Heights*

Edward Relph claims that 'to be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places: to be human is to have and to know *your* place.'[15] This is true insofar as space, and especially social space, is indeed integral to human experience. The social, political and physical boundaries imposed on a place, undoubtedly affect its inhabitants and passers-by. In particular, outsiders often suffer the hostility of those who consider

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14   Michael Stewart, email to Marta Bernabeu, 19 June 2019. In Stewart's words, 'As for the use of violence, it was really an attempt to restore the coarseness of the original novel, which has been lost over time [. . .] The novel scandalised and shocked Victorian readers, in a way that it doesn't now. Notions of coarseness change over time, and I was trying to find a contemporary way of re-booting the violence that Emily [Brontë] intended'.

15   Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London, 1976), p. 1.

that they belong in a different place from what they deem their own. It is logical, then, that Heathcliff is so often considered inhuman, as not only does he not have a legitimate space, but he is also entirely clueless about his origins and is constantly reminded that Wuthering Heights is not his home. A destitute foundling whose racial difference and social position is repeatedly addressed by other characters—he is called 'gypsy', 'vagabond', and 'black villain' in *Wuthering Heights*.[16] This is intended to remind us, as Vine notes, how 'Heathcliff comes from outside, from the other, introducing an instability into the world that precariously incorporates him, and he is never stably lodged in any of the social places he assumes'.[17] He is indeed unstably lodged because he is continuously constructed as Other in the novel, but the painful realisation of his outsiderness makes him disturb the very same oppressive forces that dictate these boundaries. The instability that Vine mentions is, in nature, an affective instability that intends to disrupt the normalisation of the boundaries that divide people and strip them of the right to lodge themselves and feel at home at any place where they have the need to do so.

Borders, boundaries and limits are social and political, as well as physical. They are cultural too and, therefore, affective in the sense that they deeply influence the emotional and mental life of the individuals shaped by their impositions and restrictions. In the case of Heathcliff's experience, the limitations and violence he suffers at Wuthering Heights come as a result of the unspoken boundaries that dictate his fate as a racially different destitute foundling. Hindley Earnshaw's violent abuse is emphasised by Nelly Dean's narration, even putting forward that 'the master's bad ways and bad companions formed a pretty example for Catherine and Heathcliff. His treatment of the latter was enough to make a fiend of a saint'.[18] Hindley, Catherine's brother, mistreats Heathcliff, especially when he becomes master of Wuthering Heights, because he sees him as a 'parasitic'[19] body through the prism of the artificial boundaries attached to space and the regulation of bodies. On that account, he continually abuses and degrades him in an attempt to assert his power over the Heights and remind

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16   Emily Brontë, 1847, *Wuthering Heights*, ed. by Keith Carabine and John S. Whitley (London, 2000), pp. 35, 40, 81.

17   Steven Vine, 'The Wuther of the Other in Wuthering Heights', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 49 (1994), 339–59 (p. 341).

18   Brontë, p. 46.

19   Carroll, Joseph, 'The Cuckoo's History: Human Nature in Wuthering Heights', *Philosophy and Literature*, 32 (2008), 241–57 <https://doi.org/10.1353/phl.0.0025> [accessed 27 June 2019], p. 249.

Heathcliff that he does not belong anywhere near there. In consequence, Catherine tells Nelly that she cannot marry Heathcliff although she loves him, since neither has the right to hold property nor capital as a woman: 'Nelly, I see now, you think me a selfish wretch; but did it never strike you that if Heathcliff and I married, we should be beggars? Whereas, if I marry Linton, I can aid Heathcliff to rise, and place him out of my brother's power'.[20] Therefore, Hindley's behaviour is determined by his entitlement to degrade and abuse a racially different Other who has neither the means nor rights to claim ownership of space. Similarly, Catherine's words show a consciousness of these limits and an attempt to realistically approach them so as to achieve a final goal; to support herself and help Heathcliff by marrying Edgar Linton.

These social and physical boundaries can be regarded as affective in that they influence the view and judgement that the individual has of his or her world, as well as his or her capacity to act. Steven Brown and Ian Tucker indicate that 'an attention to affect' makes it possible to discern how persons and characters differ from each other and from other creatures by taking into account 'the number and complexity of the planes of experience that intersect'.[21] That is, how the many layers of experience of the individual, which can be said to be determined by the above-mentioned boundaries, affect them, and the possibilities they leave for the individual to react to these experiences. In other words, affect can be understood as how a body affects and is 'affected in turn'.[22] Thus, attention to affect makes it possible to discern how the politics of hostility, as constructed by surfaces and boundaries, affect the shaping of the figure of the outsider, the creation of an inside and outside through the construction of boundaries, and their possible transgression. For that matter, Ahmed claims that 'it is through emotions, or how we respond to objects and others, that surfaces or boundaries are made: the "I" and the "we" are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others'.[23] In *Wuthering Heights*, apart from the hostility that comes about by the projection of these boundaries in the form of abuse and affective abjection for Heathcliff, his constant displace-

20   Brontë, p. 58.

21   Steven D. Brown and Ian Tucker, 'Eff the Ineffable: Affect, Somatic Management, and Mental Health Service Users', *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, (Durham, 2010), 229–49 (p. 233).

22   Brian Massumi, quoted in Ben Anderson, 'Becoming and Being Hopeful: Towards a Theory of Affect', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 24 (2006), 733–52 (p. 735) <doi:10.1068/d393t> [accessed 6 March 2019].

23   Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh, 2014), p. 10.

ment and reminder by other characters that he does not participate in the 'we' and the multi-framed narrative of the novel further reinforce the hostility present at these borders.

In Brontë's novel, the reader is meant to trust Nelly because she appears to be the voice of reason and gentleness, producing a sense of hostility in the reader towards the outsiders, Heathcliff and Catherine.[24] Apart from deciding what to include in her story and how to present it to Lockwood, who is also an unreliable narrator himself, she refers to Heathcliff as a 'black villain', often alludes to the fact that the Earnshaws have 'violent dispositions' and remarks that Catherine's 'genuine disposition'[25] is also somehow violent and savage-like. In some manner, Nelly's narration symbolises society's compliance to man-made boundaries, as well as its propagation masked by a pretence of good-will. This is not to say that the character of Nelly is the ultimate 'villain of the piece',[26] as it cannot be said that people are fully aware of their upholding of the established order. Nevertheless, it is crucial to identify, in terms of representation, how this bias is representative of this order and helps perpetuate the very boundaries that affect the individual. With this in mind, Heathcliff uses his orientation towards pain to corrupt the limits that create boundaries and generate hostility towards himself. Precisely, Ahmed defines 'orientation' as the starting point of the body's dwelling, a 'here' from which 'the world unfolds'.[27] In the case of Heathcliff, as the discussion will show, Heathcliff's starting point turns into his pain, which constitutes his only certainty, dwelling and sense of self.

His 'world unfolds' in relation to his suffering so as to refuse to be just an outcast by becoming an intentional outsider who corrupts the spaces other people try to seclude him in. In a way, Heathcliff carries and embodies the *wuther*—a concept taken from Vine's definition of the process of *wuthering*. Following Vine, this process entails 'a movement of othering: a passing of boundaries'[28] that merges the interior and exterior. That is, although Heathcliff is *outside*, he is also in this in-betweenness that the wuther offers, in a constant affective struggle with the borders that are imposed on him. The idea of the wuther as an affective place that is embodied

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24 Hafley, p. 208. See also Arnold Krupat, 'The Strangeness of Wuthering Heights', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 25 (1970), 269–80, (p. 271).

25 Brontë, pp. 94, 50.

26 Hafley, p. 199.

27 Sara Ahmed, 'Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology', *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 12 (2006), 543–74 (p. 545).

28 Vine, p. 340.

seems to match Anderson's notion of 'affective atmospheres', which involve this status of roaming in the in-betweens, the inside and the outside and the blurring of their boundaries. As he puts it, an affective atmosphere is 'perpetually forming and deforming, appearing and disappearing, as bodies enter into relation with one another. They are never finished, static or at rest'.[29] Here, the correlation between affect and space is also explicit by the implication that affective borders ensue in the relationship between bodies, which are determined by physical boundaries as well.

The fact that Anderson bestows on them a 'perpetually forming' quality is especially relevant to this discussion, for if the wuther is to be considered an affective atmosphere, then there exists an intentionality of continuously constructing this space when 'bodies enter into relation with one another'. Translated into *Wuthering Heights*, that would be the moments when Heathcliff enters in relation with other characters and their affective atmospheres, which replicate the physical boundaries whilst also containing some of their own. In this scenario, Heathcliff's wuther acts as a colliding force, a reminder of the artificiality and injustice of the borders enacted by bodies through its painful and violent disruption of these affective and physical spaces. In fact, there is a type of dynamic, Gaston Bachelard argues, that distorts and destabilises the limits of the threshold, the being or non-being, and the person who participates in the in-betweens creating a sort of 'dizziness'.[30] In the case of Heathcliff, although it is worth highlighting that this disruption affects the process of identity shaping of the outsider, whose spaces are undefined and untraceable, it is key for them to transgress the artificial oppositions that are created by others. Most specifically, pain brings about both a knowledge of these limits and the possibility to violate them. Suffering provokes a desire to move forward, beyond any boundaries, to *walk past* painful experiences and encounters in a metaphorical sense. Thus, the process of wuther construction certainly contributes to the dizziness Bachelard talks about, for the intensity of Heathcliff's pain is used not only as a vindication of identity, but also as a force that gives him agency to destabilise the borders that try to enclose him in an *outside* or an *inside* in the first place. In this scenario, 'to suffer can mean to feel your disagreement with what has been judged as good.

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29   Ben Anderson, 'Affective Atmospheres', *Emotion, Space and Society*, 2 (2009), 77–81 (p. 79) <doi:10.1016/j.emospa.2009.08.005> [accessed 21 February 2019].

30   Gaston Bachelard, 1957, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by Jolas M. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 221.

Given this, suffering is a receptivity that can heighten the capacity to act'.[31] In *Wuthering Heights*, the wuther's agency is mainly materialised as visibility, the ultimate disruption to other characters' narratives about himself.

Visibility, in the case of Heathcliff, comes with a certain agitation or violence that effectively disrupts, one way or another, other characters' physical and affective spaces. This is illustrated at one point in the novel when Heathcliff declares: 'I have no pity! I have no pity! The more the worms writhe, the more I yearn to crush out their entrails! It is a moral teething; and I grind with greater energy, in proportion to the increase of pain'.[32] In this particular instance, it is evident how Heathcliff's corruption is affective because it tackles the moral righteousness of those who perpetuate unjust social and political boundaries. By indicating that what he is doing is 'a moral teething', he is implying that the suffering he is inflicting upon those who cause him pain is justified on moral grounds due to the fact that it comes from the unjust and artificial boundaries and narratives he is forced to comply with. What is more, he voices how his agency to destabilise borders or effectuate this 'moral teething' grows stronger 'in proportion to the increase of pain'. John Galvin uses Elin Diamond's considerations on catharsis to suggest that affect 'always "situates the subject at a dangerous border," a border where being is in some way "seized," [. . .] causing us to "suffer a disturbance in the totalizing vision that affirms consciousness and mastery"'.[33] This is precisely what Heathcliff intends to do: make his wuther visible so as to question the mastery of the borders and narratives that attempt to leave him placeless, without an identity and the capacity to act. *Wuthering Heights*' multiple narrators, in concordance with its characters, allow but a restricted space for Heathcliff to voice his own affective reality. Nevertheless, the reader is able to sense the violence of his wuther, since it is one forced upon other characters and himself in order to disrupt the totalising vision of a story that attempts to leave him behind.

Heathcliff intentionally dwells on his suffering as a form of claiming the wuther, which he uses as a vindication of his identity and a way to reclaim a space and visibility. Furthermore, Heathcliff lodges himself in his pain on purpose in order to have a space in which to *orientate* his identity as distinct from other people's identities. Heathcliff's nuanced affective expe-

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31   Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, p. 210.
32   Brontë, p. 111.
33   Elin Diamond, quoted in John Glavin, 1999, *After Dickens: Reading, Adaptation and Performance* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 26.

rience makes him more of an intentional outsider in the sense that, after being conceived of by others as an outcast and Other, he uses his conditions to become an intentional outsider so as to transgress the affective and physical borders imposed on him. In the same way that Ablow argues that Martineau 'used her illness as a source of power',[34] it can be said that Heathcliff intentionally lingers on his suffering as a form of vindicating his right to have an identity that is perpetually denied to him. Nevertheless, as *Wuthering Heights* eventually suggests, 'the transformation of the wound into an identity is problematic'.[35] By being affectively hostile to himself as a way to gain power over his identity, Heathcliff ends up imprisoned in his wuther—that is, availing himself to the very same cycle of abuse and violence that he has been subjected to—as he sees no certainty in moving forward from it. This is obviously problematic because, in Nelly's words, 'treachery and violence are spears pointed at both ends: they wound those who resort to them, worse than their enemies.'[36] However, this statement can still be deemed judgemental, especially as it remains ambiguous if Heathcliff would have gained a sense of identity, visibility and agency without his continuous resorting to pain.

Reversing Hostility and Re-Orientating the Outsider in *Ill Will: The Untold Story of Heathcliff*

In contrast to *Wuthering Heights*, *Ill Will* presents first-person narration as a way of bestowing reliability to Heathcliff's story by giving voice and visibility to a major outsider. Naturally, the narrative still seems biased, being a subjective first-person account, but it provides an opportunity for the outsider to reverse hostility. Through Heathcliff's first-person narration, it is possible to discern in a more straightforward way than in *Wuthering Heights* how he is constructing himself as an 'affect alien', a term coined by Ahmed to make reference to a type of 'troublemaker who violates the fragile conditions of peace',[37] giving up any kind of happiness, so as to function as 'an unwanted reminder of the stories that are disturbing, that disturb an atmosphere.'[38] Disturbance, as it has been mentioned in the previous section, is understood as transgression of the different atmospheres that

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34   Ablow, p. 52.

35   Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, p. 32.

36   Brontë, p. 127.

37   Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, pp. 60–61.

38   Ibid, p. 67.

contribute to the establishment of physical boundaries. Consequently, the orientation towards pain that the outsider takes produces certain movements that generate agency, which in some cases brings forth violence, questioning the status quo by its very force. This is especially conveyed in *Ill Will*, for the character of Heathcliff is constantly dwelling on those moments that have caused him suffering in an attempt to motivate him to find his past and leave behind his pain. Nevertheless, as it will be shown, his *hostipitality* to pain—or what can be seen as an attempt of orientating himself in a different direction from his wuther—ends up further re-orientating him towards it. *Ill Will* not only traces Heathcliff's journey around England in search for his mother, but it also records Heathcliff's affective journey and progressive transformation into an affect alien.

From the very beginning, Heathcliff's main impetus for starting his journey is revealed: his memory of Catherine saying that it would degrade her to marry him. By signalling his relationship with Catherine as the emotional precondition of the action of the story, the affective space that Heathcliff constantly occupies in his narration throughout the novel is thus introduced. This space, which is the wuther, is nevertheless used by Heathcliff as an escape way rather than an avowal of his outsiderness at the start of his travels. In fact, he views it as a possibility to find an identity and an existence outside his pain. However, his pain still seems to be key to gain affective agency to embark him on his journey, since, directing his thoughts to Catherine, Heathcliff tells her: 'Perhaps in a peculiar way your cruelty would prove useful to me'.[39] In this moment, he is directly addressing how the suffering he had been put through acts as animatedness that compels him to act and have his own saying in his story. Moreover, it forecasts how the tearing pain he suffers every time he remembers Catherine prompt him to start his travelling around England and become the cuckoo other characters thought he was: 'And I heard your voice, Cathy. That it would degrade you to marry a man as low as me. Oh, I'd get money all right. I'd show you'.[40] Heathcliff's thoughts and efforts in finding where he is from seem to be chiefly directed by the suffering that emanates from this memory, which at the same time makes him constantly ponder his race and class status.

Together with these considerations, *Ill Will*'s preoccupation with the reversal of narrative hostility, giving voice and visibility to Heathcliff, and its concern with how affect and space influence the outsider and serve

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39 Michael Stewart, *Ill Will: The Untold Story of Heathcliff* (London, 2018), p. 131.
40 Stewart, p. 18.

as locus of transgression, both re-visits and contributes to the complexity of *Wuthering Heights* from a modern perspective. That is why it can be considered a neo-Victorian text, having neo-Victorianism being defined by Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn as an 'act of (re)interpretation, (re)discovery and (re)vision concerning the Victorians'.[41] Apart from other issues and characters that deserve a more in-depth analysis, *Ill Will* revisions the character of Heathcliff in line with contemporary takes on how society blames individuals who are systematically oppressed on various levels, and how the impossibility to escape from the spaces they are assigned to inevitably provokes a disturbance that stems from the individual's conflict with these spaces. In addition, *Ill Will* rediscovers these issues, but bestows on them a force that is only hinted at in *Wuthering Heights*, acknowledging this conflict and putting it at centre stage. The reader hears from Heathcliff what he feels when being called a parasite, and how his vulnerability to pain ultimately bestows on him an animatedness that transgresses other people's spaces by its violence, as he tells Catherine that 'Why indeed, Cathy? It was difficult to explain to this girl how years of ill treatment affect you. How you get used to it [. . .] That they are your social superiors, and you are their servant, to be used and beaten at their whim'.[42] Hence, although Heathcliff's brutality is still unashamedly displayed and the roughness of his discourse made explicit, the reader cannot but feel disturbed in equal measure by the pain that others inflict upon him and choose to ignore.

In a similar way to *Wuthering Heights*, homelessness or *unhomeness* is one of the central motivations of its characters, if not the most pressing planes of existence of Heathcliff, whose wanderings are prompted by his overriding need to find a place to settle, to root himself. In this regard, *Ill Will* follows a pattern of a driving desire for the concepts of home, belonging and identity which Hila Sachar identifies in the different cultural reproductions of Brontë's tale.[43] Consequently, *Ill Will* establishes itself in the tradition of reinterpreting or adapting the treatment of these issues in *Wuthering Heights*. From the first chapter of Stewart's novel, introduced in italics and using the stream of consciousness technique, Heathcliff alludes to the fact that he feels 'unloved and unhomed'.[44] *Unhomeness* here match-

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41   Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn, *Neo-Victorianism: The Victorians in the Twenty-First Century, 1999—2009* (London, 2010), p. 4.

42   Stewart, p. 87.

43   Hila Shachar, *Cultural Afterlives and Screen Adaptations of Classic Literature: Wuthering Heights and Company* (London, 2012), p. 6.

44   Stewart, p. 1.

es the description made by Masgrau-Peya, who states that being *unhomed* is not the same as being *homeless*. As she argues, '"unhomeness" is most readily identified in the experience of migrants and post-colonial people, for whom geographic and cultural dislocation are defining traits'.[45] In comparison to *Wuthering Heights*, *Ill Will* places a special emphasis on this dislocation, which can be seen as a contemporary view on the experience of migrants and post-colonial people, as Masgrau-Peya argues. Heathcliff himself articulates this dislocation when he begins to question the familiarity of the places he has spent years calling home, such as the moors: 'Where are you? Somehow you are lost. The moor so familiar, but you don't recognise the landscape [. . .] You are somewhere. You are nowhere. You are here [. . .] You don't know who you are, where you came from. You don't even know your own name'.[46] This sense of loss that is expressed here by Heathcliff is indeed the result of the revaluation that the pain he suffers is a consequence of not having an identity and a place bestowed on him.

The correlation between affective and physical space is made explicit by Heathcliff's journey to find a home and an identity in *Ill Will*. Affectively, by searching for his mother, and physically, by his intention to be lodged in a place where he can build a life for himself without the constrictions that he wishes to leave behind. In order to illustrate how space and affect are integral to his experience as an outsider, *Ill Will* incorporates the image of Heathcliff as a 'cuckoo' that Nelly introduces in *Wuthering Heights*:[47]

> That I was a foreign infant, a parasite. But I found out later that when the infant cuckoo hatches, it pushes all the other eggs out. So in fact I wasn't a cuckoo at all. I was the one who had been pushed out of the nest, first by Hindley, then by you, Cathy. Or maybe that's what I should do. Go back to Wuthering Heights and kick you all out of the nest. I'd enjoy doing that. Be the cuckoo you all thought I was.[48]

This excerpt is particularly relevant to the discussion because it links affect, identity and outsiderness with how space determines the relationship Heathcliff has with these issues. By the realisation that he is regarded as a

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45   Elisenda Masgrau-Peya, 'Towards a Poetics of the "Unhomed": The House in Katherine Mansfield's "Prelude"' and Barbara Hanrahan's "The Scent of Eucalyptus"', *Antipodes*, 18 (2004), 60–66 (p. 60) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41957352> [accessed 23 Jan 2019].

46   Stewart, pp. 5–6.

47   Brontë, p. 24.

48   Stewart, pp. 148–49.

'parasite' and a 'cuckoo' by others, Heathcliff is acknowledging the very dynamics of how boundaries work and how he is affectively tainted by them. In addition, his reflection leads him to become aware of the fact that '[he] was the one who had been pushed out of the nest', thus anticipating how he is the one being deprived of a space from the beginning. His longing for an affective and physical home to root himself and construct his desired identity is what motivates him to search for his origins. However, there are several moments such as this one in which he is conflicted as to whether he should really leave all behind or go back and disturb the artificial limits, by any means, that so unjustly have pushed him out. As he puts it, 'maybe that's what I should do. Go back to Wuthering Heights and kick you all out of the nest. Be the cuckoo you all though I was'. That is, to transgress their spaces and affective atmospheres by becoming an affective alien, the ultimate outsider, the cuckoo in the nest that he had never been from the start.

At the beginning of the novel, though, Heathcliff asserts that he does not want to dwell on his pain: 'I didn't want to think about my own pain. Best to push it to one side. Ignore it and it would go away. Physical pain was easy to master. The pain inside was much harder to bridle'.[49] This excerpt shows how Heathcliff desires to find his story in order to achieve a sense of self that could momentarily make him forget about his pain. He wants to leave behind his wuther-dwelling so as to find an actual place outside it to construct his home and his identity. This is also conveyed through the fact that the majority of Heathcliff's journey takes place on the roads, on the pathways and at the outskirts of cities. His experience through these places of passage is shaped by his desire to run away from pain or, in any case, *wash it off*. Heathcliff repeatedly ponders his own violence and the fact that its release makes him feel 'cleansed by the act of butchery, as though I was washing something deep inside my soul'.[50] This washing can be interpreted as metaphorical way of relieving him from his never-ceasing painful thoughts, and an analogy of the 'moral teething' that the character of Heathcliff mentions he is set to carry out in *Wuthering Heights*. However, Heathcliff's relationship with pain and his wuther are portrayed in their full complexity by making a parallelism between them and the dynamics of hostility and hospitality he encounters along the way. In other words, the reader is witness to his affective and physical journey

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49   Ibid, p. 75.
50   Ibid, p. 233.

in *Ill Will*, seeing how the dynamics of *hostipitality* to his pain are played out.

Following what Ana Manzanas and Jesús Benito argue, 'Derrida has coined the term "hostipitality" for this aporetic hospitality that deconstructs itself'.[51] Additionally, Derrida himself puts forward that the word '"acceptation" also belongs quite specifically to the discourse of hospitality [. . .] acceptation in latin is the same as acception, the action of receiving, the welcome given, the way one receives'.[52] Taking this into account, being hospitable towards pain can be seen as re-orientating oneself towards it, that is, embracing hostility at its core. Therefore, this involves an acceptance and a different way of receiving the world that begins with the necessity to make visible one's site of struggle. In that sense, Heathcliff is hostile to his suffering in *Ill Will* by trying to suppress his pain and orientating himself in the opposite direction from his wuther. However, it is possible to apprehend in the narration how 'hospitality rewrites the discourse of the border as a line that intermittently either communicates or separates. In hospitality, the line is temporarily deactivated and communication ensues. "That", claims Derrida, "is what hospitality does, blur the border"'.[53] In the case of Heathcliff, instead of communication, what ensues is a recognition of the agency that his pain brings about, as well as an acceptance of his wuther and the possibility of transgressing affective and physical spaces with it. This is another way of taking control of the dynamics of hospitality and hostility that he is subjected to, thus transgressing both the role of the host and the guest that arise as a result of fabricated boundaries.

His hospitality to pain, which involves hostility towards others and himself, comes back as his hopes for a home are shattered and he realises that it is the only way he truly has to transgress the boundaries imposed on him. This is the case, especially as his journey does do not eventually culminate in a sense of identity building; 'in the end, the worm is happy to be trodden on'.[54] Heathcliff's understanding of the inevitability of his suffering precisely illustrates how his re-orientation towards the wuther is further used by Heathcliff to shape himself as an affect alien and vindicate his outsiderness. This resorting to pain is equally necessary for Heathcliff both in *Wuthering Heights* and *Ill Will* to avoid being limited to the affec-

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51 Ana María Manzanas and Jesús Benito, *Hospitality in American Literature and Culture: Spaces, Bodies, Borders* (New York, 2016), p. 4.

52 Jacques Derrida, 'Hostipitality', trans. by Barry Stocker and Forbes Morlock, Angelaki. *Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 5 (2000), 3–18 (p. 7).

53 *Manzanas and Benito*, p. 9.

54 Stewart, p. 88.

tive and physical borders that constantly try to classify him and immobilise him. Although he finally succeeds in gaining this knowledge about his past, it helps Heathcliff reassess his situation and arrive at the following resolution: 'Despite being called a devil, I had been the lamb—too ready to lie down and take my punishment. But now I would become the lion. I would fight for what was mine'.[55] He realises that he has no other option but to become hostile towards others in an attempt to make his suffering visible, and as a consequence of his hospitality to pain. What is more, he grows even more determined to linger on the uniqueness of his wuther, which is further fuelled by the pain that his new-found past—which discloses the abuses his mother suffered—inflicts on him.

Eventually learning that he is Catherine's half-brother, Heathcliff comprehends that the home and the identity he desires to lodge himself in will never be attainable. This is mostly so because he starts to understand how the very concept of home carries negative connotations for him, since it often entails a confrontation 'with difference, with the foreign and with what is considered "distant", forming exclusionary and inclusionary boundaries around nations, countries, cultures, societies and individuals'.[56] At least, that is what he discovers from his experience at Wuthering Heights, which is later replicated in his encounters with other people who continue to see him as undeserving of a space in society. For that reason, *Ill Will* reverses the hostility towards Heathcliff present in *Wuthering Heights* by both introducing Heathcliff's perspective of the story and the complexity of his relationship with affect, space, identity and outsiderness. In addition, it replicates the violence or animatedness that Heathcliff eventually resorts to in an effort to make this hostility visible, which for him involves embracing it at its very core. By making his affective journey visible, as well as his physical one, the narration continues reversing hostility despite the coarseness of Heathcliff's speech and the depiction of his brutal behaviour. In the end, though he declares that 'to feel is to weaken',[57] it is precisely the affective agency he gathers from embracing his wuther what propels him to become 'the devil Hindley named [him]'[58] so as to violate the fragile conditions of peace that perpetuate unnatural and oppressive boundaries.

Conclusion

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55   Ibid.
56   Rosemary Marangoly George, quoted in *Shachar*, p. 6.
57   Stewart, p. 324.
58   Ibid.

In conclusion, this discussion has attempted to show how the boundaries of the outsider, understood as the limits the outsider encounters to moving in a social world and regaining agency in an oppressive environment, are transgressed by their own will in *Wuthering Heights* and *Ill Will*. This transgression, which blurs the borders of the inside and outside and disturbs other character's affective atmospheres, comes from the animatedness or agency that the outsider claims in their construction of his or her affective wuther—shaped by the outsider's orientation to pain. *Ill Will* follows Heathcliff's realisation during his journey that, no matter where he goes or what he encounters, the painful realities he knows, and the ones he cannot know, will always be part of his identity. At the end of Stewart's novel, he admits that he still feels the same pain, not a 'scar' as he envisioned would grow after his travels, but the same old wound: 'You thought after all this time the wound would have scabbed over and healed, leaving just a faint scar in its place. In fact, it is as open and as raw as the day you left, and as fresh, and as wet'.[59] This awareness of the everlasting presence of his wound makes him embrace hostility at its core, so as to further distort the limits between others and himself. It is a distortion that is only possible by his intricate relationship with pain and the agency it gives him to make his affective struggle visible.

Heathcliff's ultimate transgression in Stewart's narrative is making the multiple layers of the outsider's experience visible so as to call attention to all the disturbing stories about ourselves that are buried deep inside us. That is, to call attention to the unacknowledged pain that results from oppression, exclusion and invisibility, and the necessity to stop turning a blind eye to these matters in return for an unruffled life. For these reasons, *Ill Will* can be considered a neo-Victorian text because it rediscovers and revisits these matters in an attempt to reverse hostility at the same time that it keeps the brutal disturbance that the wuther brings about. What is more, its story re-orientates the narration towards Heathcliff and his relationship with pain as a place of dwelling, identity-building and agency-grasping. Hence, although this discussion has aimed to provide an overview of the affective agency of the outsider and his or her correlation with space, further research on these matters could be directed towards carrying out a more extensive analysis on affect and space, as well as other characters in both *Wuthering Heights* and *Ill Will*. In the case of *Ill Will*, the character of Emily stands out as a site of exploration in terms of its parallels with the character of Catherine Earnshaw and the very figure of Emi-

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59   Ibid.

ly Brontë herself, reworked from a perspective that incorporates motives from *Wuthering Heights*, such as the role of ghosts in the story and the development of the characters, as well as pressing concerns surrounding social class and gender. Finally, it seems only fair to mention how *Ill Will*'s contribution could serve as a model for a more comprehensive neo-Victorian fiction on the figure of Catherine, whose story needs a revaluation of the multiple layers of experience that might bind her to her choices and their consequences.

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Those Beastly Boys: Boyhood Cruelty to Animals in the School Story from Hughes to Kipling

Hannah Marmaro

Victorian Animal Studies is haunted by violence, as evidenced by most scholarly collections in the field. One collection's introduction situated itself in 'the histories of violence against non-human beings that mark the *Anthropocene*'s progression' and another collection commented on the 'rather bleak nature' of several of its articles.[1] Yet another noted that 'Martin Danahay's focus on violence reverberates throughout our book'.[2] This focus on violence may be because cruelty to animals was a topic increasingly present in Victorian British culture. Ivan Kreilkamp, for instance, has argued that by the mid-nineteenth century animal suffering 'became a familiar discursive mode'.[3] The study of the interactions between humans and animals in nineteenth-century Britain, then, is integrally tied to ideas of violence, pain, and suffering.

The relationship between the child and the animal in nineteenth-century culture was especially connected to ideas of violence and cruelty. Although the 'cruel child insistently appears within the eighteenth-century English imagination to inflict discomfort and pain' on both animals and humans, one of the most prominent forms of child-animal depictions in nineteenth-century Britain saw children and animals figured as 'sharing a kind of mute innocence that made them particularly defenceless against

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1   Claire Charlotte McKechnie and John Miller, 'Introduction', *The Journal of Victorian Culture*, 17.4 (2012), 436–41 (p. 436); Laurence W. Mazzeno and Ronald D. Morrison, 'Introduction' in *Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture* (London, 2017), pp. 1–17 (p. 13).
2   Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay, 'Introduction' in *Victorian Animal Dreams* (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 1–12 (p. 9).
3   Ivan Kreilkamp, *Minor Creatures* (Chicago, 2018), p. 49.

cruelty'.[4] If depictions of human-animal interactions in Victorian Britain were frequently concerned with violence, then the relationship between child and animal in the nineteenth century was particularly defined by ideas of violence, cruelty, and pain.

But despite these frequent portrayals of child and animal as twinned victims of violence inflicted on them from outside, the figure of the cruel child who inflicts harm on animals had not disappeared. Animal Studies is a nascent field and the critical attention to childhood cruelty to animals in the nineteenth century is limited, although there have been some remarks made on the topic. Ivan Kreilkamp has shown how the Brontë sisters drew on the 'truism of English culture that cruelty to animals led to cruelty and violence against human beings' in their depictions of characters such as Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights* and the bird-killing schoolboy Tom Bloomfield in *Agnes Grey*.[5] And Flegel briefly commented both on how the 'linkage of spoiled children with cruelty to animals was one very much in evidence in the broader cultural imagination', and that often the links between child and animal 'served to register anxiety about the perceived depravity of the children of the poor'.[6] This class dimension of her last point ties in with wider arguments about the nature of violence and class in the nineteenth century, as, for example, J. Carter Wood's contention that '[a]ttitudes towards violence contributed to the construction of middle-class identity and later demarcated a wider sphere of respectable society'.[7] Portrayals of childhood violence towards animals were, therefore, tied to wider social trends concerning violence and were increasingly seen as a trait either of the working classes or of an individual, spoiled child.

What unites discussions of the topic is that they draw almost solely from texts that portray childhood violence against animals as something to be condemned or combated. This focus has been with Victorian Animal Studies since its inception. Harriet Ritvo's seminal study, *The Animal Estate*, argued that although 'public discussion of cruelty to animals became

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4   Heather Ladd, 'This Sport of Tormenting: Cruel Children and Their Animals in British Literature, 1750—1800', in *Cruel Children in Popular Texts and Cultures* ed. by Monica Flegel (London, 2018), pp. 17–40 (p. 35); Monica Flegel, *Conceptualizing Cruelty to Children in Nineteenth-Century England* (Farnham, 2009), p. 65.
5   Ivan Kreilkamp, 'Petted Things: *Wuthering Heights* and the Animal', *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, 18.1 (2005), 87–110 (p. 105).
6   Monica Flegel, *Pets and Domesticity in Victorian Literature and Culture* (London, 2015), p. 156; Flegel, *Conceptualizing Cruelty*, pp. 47, 53.
7   J. Carter Wood, 'A Useful Savagery: The Invention of Violence in Nineteenth-Century England', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 9.1 (2004), 22–42 (p. 35).

a rhetorical battlefield', 'only one side adopted an offensive strategy […] the other side simply attempted to parry these thrusts, denying the cruelty of its practices'.[8] It is this gap, both in terms of childhood cruelty towards animals and the lack of attention paid to the other side(s) of the animal cruelty discourse, that I address in this paper. I examine the school story genre to argue that the ways in which schoolboys were depicted as interacting with animals were inherently tied to the formation of male homosocial relationships. Violence or aggressive actions against animals functioned not only to facilitate said relationships, but also to establish or destabilise an individual boy's identity. Far from simply denying accusations of cruelty, or displacing the notion of childhood cruelty onto the working classes, school stories often actively engage with the concept of aggressive actions towards animals by middle-class schoolboys and attempt to portray them as linked to various aspects of a wider society, thereby justifying childhood violence towards animals as a necessary, even beneficial practice.

The school story offers a fruitful case study for boyhood violence against animals for several reasons, as the setting of these texts is well primed for explorations of masculine identity and relationships. Schools in general, but particularly boarding schools, were often seen in the nineteenth century as a place in which boys could be separated from the feminine influences of the nursery.[9] Secondly, violence is also a hallmark of the genre: as Kirkpatrick notes, '[b]ullyings and beatings are just two of the most obvious themes'.[10] The necessary elements for examining boyhood aggression are fundamental aspects of the school story genre.

This paper will focus on texts by three authors. The first is Thomas Hughes, who published *Tom Brown's Schooldays* in 1857. The long-standing critical stance that, as the first full-length study of the genre put it, the 'school story was born with Thomas Hughes, whose *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857) […] founded a new genre' has been recently discredited, for as Kirkpatrick pointed out Hughes' novel 'drew heavily upon elements of an already well-established genre'.[11] But *Tom Brown* was indeed very popular (it has never been out of print) and it sparked many imitators. As Pesold rightly identifies, the novel 'marks the starting point of the school story as we know it today by constituting the most typical elements of the genre'.[12]

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8   Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1987), p. 130.

9   Ulrike Pesold, *The Other in the School Stories* (Leiden, 2017), p. 10.

10   Robert J. Kirkpatrick, *The Encyclopaedia of Boys' School Stories* (Aldershot, 2000), p. 7.

11   Isabel Quigly, *The Heirs of Tom Brown* (Oxford, 1984), p. 42; Kirkpatrick, *Encyclopaedia*, p. 1.

12   Pesold, *The Other,* p. 38.

Given the importance of *Tom Brown* for the genre, Hughes' novel marks the starting place for this study.

The school stories of F. W. Farrar, *Eric, or, Little by Little* (1858) and *St. Winifred's, or, the World of School* (1862) closely followed *Tom Brown* not only chronologically but also in terms of popularity. Farrar's work has since received little critical attention, other than occasional mentions as a body of work that was 'almost diametrically opposed' to *Tom Brown*.[13] Kirkpatrick notes '[i]ts overwrought sentimentality was in stark contrast to the robust manliness personified by *Tom Brown*', although it was nearly as popular as *Tom Brown* in terms of sales over the nineteenth century.[14] The contrasting levels of sentimentality in the novels of Farrar and Hughes offers a chance to gauge the extent to which boyhood violence towards animals, and the accompanying social network discourse, was spread throughout the genre.

Rudyard Kipling's *Stalky and Co.*, a series of short stories published from 1897 to 1899, offers a seemingly stark contrast to both Hughes' and Farrar's school novels. As Quigly notes, these stories were notoriously disliked by critics and they 'aroused, sometimes still arouses, a frenzy of indignation'.[15] The most common critiques of the stories are variations on the accusation that they 'revel in bullying'.[16] They are an obvious place to turn when looking for explorations of schoolboy violence against animals, but *Stalky* also offers another useful point of contrast to Hughes and Farrar. *Stalky* has been variously termed the 'turning point' for boys' school fiction and the first 'anti-school story', and more generally has been seen as a collection that 'deliberately opposes itself' to the picture of schoolboy life set forth in *Tom Brown*.[17] Despite the tendency to portray these texts as diametrically opposed, as will be shown when it comes to the interactions between boy and animal, they have more in common than has been recognised. These texts vary in terms of popularity as well as perceived sentimentality, allowing for a more complete picture of the function of schoolboy violence towards animals in the genre.

The interactions between boy and animal in these stories are portrayed as embedded in a number of aspects relating to identity and homosocial relationships in nineteenth-century Britain, but there are two related dis-

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13   Ibid.

14   Kirkpatrick, *Encyclopaedia*, p. 2.

15   Quigly, *The Heirs of Tom Brown*, p. 110.

16   John Kuchich, *Imperial Masochism* (Princeton, 2007), p. 142.

17   Kirkpatrick, *Encyclopaedia*, p. 207; Pesold, *The Other*, p. 63; Kucich, *Imperial Masochism*, p. 159.

cursive threads that I focus on. The first considers portrayals of birds to argue that despite differences between the mid- and the late-century school story, the casual tormenting of birds in these stories served to create and maintain friendships, generally speaking. This was doubly important because it came at a time in which masculine relationships were being strained by changing social forces. The second thread concerns the figure of the naturalist. Natural history seemed to offer a means of refocusing unwanted impulses of boys' kindness towards animals. A distinct strand of discourse ran throughout the school stories of the latter half of the nineteenth century that portrayed violence, not kindness, towards animals as an inherent or even desirable boyhood trait. John Miller has remarked that naturalists were 'involved in a range of debates concerning […] the acceptable limits of cruelty, the meanings of violence and the relation of these to questions of human identity'.[18] I aim to augment this range of debates by drawing attention to the anxieties created by kind or caring boys and their relationships to animals, other boys, and wider society.

The dynamic whereby portrayals of the interactions between schoolboy and animal are related to the interactions between humans themselves is also in keeping with the current trends in Animal Studies. In addition to violence, contemporary depictions of said interactions between child and pet were often just as much about the ways that humans related to each other. This dynamic is another often remarked upon fundamental aspect of the interactions between humans and animals in Victorian Britain. Ritvo argued that 'discourse about animals in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England also expressed many human concerns linked only tenuously to the natural world'.[19] Mazzeno and Morrison have also noted how the discourses surrounding the humane treatment of animals were 'the means for Victorian culture to consider the shifting boundaries of social class […] and the benefits and challenges created by the development of modern science'.[20] These areas of discourse that Mazzeno and Morrison identify—social boundaries and developing scientific ideas—are, as will be shown, deeply tied to the aggressive actions that boys take towards animals in many nineteenth-century school stories.

This dynamic, where the ways in which people are portrayed as interacting with animals have just as much to do with the relationships between humans, echoes Eve Sedgwick's famous arguments about homosocial re-

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18 John Miller, *Empire and the Animal Body* (London, 2012), p. 68.

19 Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 3.

20 Mazzeno and Morrison, 'Introduction', p. 2.

lationships in English literature. Sedgwick contended that 'in the presence of a woman who can be seen as pitiable or contemptible, men are able to exchange power and to confirm each other's value', and Sedgwick deems these women 'a solvent that […] goes a long way—for the men whom she leaves bonded together'.[21] Animals, this paper will argue, function in school stories much like women in the stories Sedgwick examined—as a solvent that allows schoolboys to create and maintain the relationships that bond them together. Although only briefly touched upon in this paper, there is room for future in-depth explorations of the place of fraught relationship between boys and animals in cultural notions of cruelty, gender, and sexuality.

How nineteenth-century writers portrayed boyhood cruelty to animals is worth examining partly in order to gain a better understanding of the complex cultural associations attached to the concept of the cruel or violent child in Victorian Britain. But the discourse(s) surrounding the relationship between child and animal, as well as wider ideas regarding violence against animals, are still relevant to us today. Morse and Danahay have argued that the 'Victorian debate over the status of animals has not been superseded but instead translated into a new contemporary political and social context'.[22] The interplay between humans, animals, and cultural ideas about care, violence, childhood, and scientific inquiry have certainly continued into the twenty-first century. Understanding what cultural and social justifications were made for, as well as against, controversial actions such as cruelty to animals may shed some light on responses to humanitarian debates today.

'A Good Honest Pecking': Boys and Birds

Examining the ways in which boys in these school stories interacted with a particular animal, specifically birds, offers a helpful focus. Scholarly attention to birds in Victorian culture is spotty at best, and most of that attention has focused on the connections between birds and women. There is general agreement that birds, and caged birds in particular, were often associated with women in Victorian literature and culture.[23] There has been some work done on the ways in which several of the late-nine-

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21   Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men* (New York, 1985), p.160.
22   Morse and Danahay, 'Introduction', p. 4.
23   See, for example, Martin A. Danahay, 'Nature Red in Hoof and Paw: Domestic Animals and Violence in Victorian Art', in *Victorian Animal Dreams*, pp. 97–119 (p. 110).

teenth-century animal rights campaigns 'made bird protection a wom-
en's issue'.[24] With the exception of Mark Alan Kellet's study of the ways in
which the 'glower of humanitarian reform' turned on the masculine sport
of pigeon-shooting, there has, however, been almost no examination of
connections between boys or men and birds in Victorian culture.[25] This
is particularly lamentable given that the figure of the boy who taunts and
torments birds was a widespread cultural image in nineteenth-century
Britain, from Ruskin's claim that to see a boy throwing stones at sparrows
tells an observer everything they might need to know about the boy's (lack
of) moral taste to poems by Christina Rossetti and others bemoaning the
cruelty that boys show to birds.[26] This paper's examination of boyhood
violence towards animals in the school story not only sheds light on the
complicated web of childhood, animals, and cruelty previously discussed
but also helps address this general lacuna regarding masculinity and birds
in Victorian scholarship.

Throughout the mid-century school stories of Hughes and Farrar, but
particularly in *Tom Brown*, boys casually tease and torment birds. Often
the violence that boys display towards birds is downplayed and normal-
ised. The practice of throwing stones at birds is referred to as 'pecking'
or even 'a good honest pecking' in the novel, and it is an organised sport
to the extent that several of the boys have dedicated 'pecking bags'.[27] This
term, common to the real Rugby school, conflates boy and bird by cast-
ing the boys' stone-throwing in terms of the pecking of a bird's beak. [28]
The use of *good* and *honest* frames the action unequivocally as a positive
or beneficial practice. Violence against birds in *Tom Brown* also plays a
fundamental role in facilitating relationships between individuals. The
most sustained incident of pecking in the novel comes after Tom regrets
not spending enough time with his friend East after befriending Arthur
and Martin. Tom responds by organising an afternoon of pecking and
birds-nesting that successfully integrates East into the Tom-Arthur-Mar-
tin triad.[29] The boys clearly enjoy their time pecking, and any harmful im-

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24   Barbara T. Gates, editor, *In Nature's Name* (Chicago, 2002), p. 92
25   Mark Alan Kellet, 'The Power of Princely Patronage: Pigeon-Shooting in Victorian
Britain', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 11.1 (63-85) p. 69.
26   John Ruskin, *The Crown of Wild Olive* (London, 1866), p. 49; for the bird poems see
Gates, *In Nature's Name*, pp. 113–15.
27   Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 267, 271.
28   For the Rugby term, see Andrew Sanders, 'Introduction and Notes' to *Tom Brown*, p.
403 n. 267.
29   Hughes, Tom Brown, p. 257.

pact on the birds is dismissed and downplayed. Some birds are even cast as willing participants in the sport, as is the case of one 'old blackbird (who was evidently used to the thing and enjoyed the fun)'.[30] This role reversal, where boys peck and birds choose to play games for their own amusement, further delegitimises the harm being done to the birds. By throwing stones at birds, friendships between boys are created and strengthened, and the violence is negated as ultimately harmless. As the birds in *Tom Brown* are not actually harmed, only the homosocial benefits of the violent actions by boys towards birds through activities such as pecking are shown.

If the violent actions that boys take towards birds can create and strengthen beneficial friendships, these same actions can also function as an expression of hostile masculine relationships. After a chastisement by a village wheelwright, 'Tom, to retaliate, commenced a war upon the swallows who dwelt under the wheelwright's eaves, whom he harassed with sticks and stones'.[31] When the Rugby boys are enjoying an afternoon of 'pecking', the activity is portrayed as harmless and beneficial fun, but when Tom is intentionally attempting to 'retaliate' against the antagonistic wheelwright, the same action of throwing stones at birds is depicted as harassment. The birds and stones remain the same, but the key difference between the framing of the two scenes lies in the nature of the relationship between Tom and the other humans involved. Pecking situates the boys as on the same side of the game and is mutually beneficial, but here the swallows take the brunt of Tom's anger towards the wheelwright. In another instance, a group of Rugby boys decide to punish Mad Martin for the bad smells emanating from his chemistry experiments by getting his pet magpie drunk and throwing stones at his pet jackdaws.[32] If violence towards birds can encourage positive masculine relationships, the same actions can also express hostile emotions towards other men and boys. Birds in *Tom Brown* are framed as both willing participants in harmless games that encourage friendships and as a locus for animosities towards other humans. Either way, their function in the narrative is to symbolise and facilitate relationships between humans.

In addition to pecking, birds'-nesting (the practice of raiding eggs from wild birds' nests, often in order to empty and display the shells) in *Tom Brown* also plays a crucial role in forming homosocial relationships by levelling class, social, and generational differences between men and boys.

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30   Ibid., p. 272.
31   Ibid., p. 55.
32   Ibid., p. 251.

During the nostalgic description of Tom's childhood in the countryside, he and the other village boys are said to partake in 'birds'-nesting, in the season, anywhere and everywhere'.[33] The raiding of birds' nests is a universal activity, for although the qualifier of 'in the season' at first ties the practice to a specific time of year, the following 'anywhere and everywhere' pushes against temporal and spatial boundaries. The reader has previously been told that Tom's father had also 'gone birds'-nesting with the farmer whom he met at vestry and the labourers who tilled their fields, and so had his father and grandfather with their progenitors'.[34] Thus raiding birds' nests creates bonds between men of different social classes and connects boys to past generations. The details of the village vestry and the possessive 'their' fields work to tie the activity to a specific place, while the addition of the litany of past generations who had done the same opens up a universalising element in much the same way as 'anywhere and everywhere', both limiting and widening masculine relationships.

Throughout the novel, birds'-nesting is idealised—it is referred to as a 'campaign' and a 'quest' with its own 'lore'.[35] These terms give the activity a martial, even chivalric air, hence ennobling the practice. But that birds'-nesting is a game is crucial in understanding how it functions in *Tom Brown*. The narrator defends both cricket and hunting by saying that 'they are still more or less sociable and universal; there's a place for every man who will come and take his part'.[36] This universalising aspect of hunting, with a place for every man, is echoed in the boyhood tradition of birds'-nesting—men hunt and boys go birds'-nesting. Sports that involve violence towards animals are a ritualistic part of masculine life and create ties between men and boys of different social classes, as well as connecting current generations with those past. The nineteenth-century separation of boys from their family into spheres, such as the nursery and then boarding school, led to a 'growing isolation of middle-class fathers from their sons' and that 'expanding social mobility […] also strained relations between generations'.[37] At a time when the relationships between sons and fathers and between boys of different social classes were being tested, birds'-nesting's ability to repair these social and generational relationships lends a sense of importance and necessity to the practice.

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33   Ibid., p. 60.
34   Ibid., p. 53.
35   Ibid., pp. 257, 268, 263.
36   Ibid., p. 29.
37   James Eli Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints* (Ithaca, 1995), p. 5.

Much like with pecking, the negative impact of birds'-nesting on the birds themselves is negated when the narrator comments that '[w]e boys had an idea that birds couldn't count, and were quite content as long as you left one egg'.[38] This is similar to the other instances of aggressive actions towards birds in the novel that have been portrayed as ultimately harmless for the birds. The novel's year of publication (1857), although, adds crucial context to this dynamic. Petzold has noted that although birds'-nesting had been the focus of 'widespread disapproval' in literature aimed at children from at least the early eighteenth century, starting in the periodical press of the late 1850s there were a 'number of articles [that] present birds'-nesting in a positive light'.[39] *Tom Brown*, then, was an early entry in a series of both fiction and non-fiction working to change popular perceptions of birds'-nesting. By addressing the question of cruelty that had so long been associated with birds'-nesting, and then promptly moving on to show both the important friendships that are a result of the boys' treatment of birds, as well as birds who are content with their treatment, *Tom Brown* is actively working to shift focus away from any potential sentimentality centred on the birds themselves and on to the sociability of the boys. Violence towards birds in *Tom Brown* ultimately downplays the impact on the birds themselves and is portrayed as crucial to a variety of important homosocial relationships.

Despite a somewhat contradictory presence in Farrar's novels, the presence of birds often serves to facilitate and emphasise the homosocial friendships between boys. In Farrar's first school novel *Eric*, the eponymous boy and his pious friend Russell celebrate their reconciliation after an argument by going to the beach and 'throwing innocuous stones at the sea-gulls'.[40] Whether or not the sea-gulls found the stones hurled at them innocuous is not mentioned, because as in *Tom Brown* what is of narrative importance in this scene is the relationship between Russell and Eric. This relationship is facilitated by the casual tormenting of birds. The second scene is when Eric's brother Vernon falls to his death while birds'-nesting with his own friend Wildney.[41] Vernon's death appears at first glance to be an early example of the trend that Petzold identifies in

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38 Hughes, *Tom Brown*, p. 270.

39 Jochen Petzold, 'The End Was Not Ignoble?: birds'-nesting between Cruelty, Manliness, and Science Education in British Children's Periodicals, 1850-1900', in *Time of Beauty, Time of Fear: The Romantic Legacy in the Literature of Childhood*, ed. by James Holt McGavran (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2012), pp. 128–50 (pp. 130–31).

40 F. W. Farrar, *Eric, or, Little by Little* (London, 1860), p. 126.

41 Ibid., p. 260-5.

1870s moralising fiction, where 'bird-nesters come to a bad end, either through being crippled through an accident, or because birds'-nesting is described as a stepping stone on their personal road to immorality'.[42] But this scene is far more focused on the importance of the friendships between schoolboys than it is concerned with the morality of birds'-nesting. Vernon and Wildney had been 'very successful' in birds'-nesting up to this point, and it is only when Vernon ignores Wildney's advice to 'give it up' and attempts to reach a cormorant's nest on his own that he falls to his death.[43] That Vernon died because he was isolated from his fellow schoolboys is emphasised when Eric recovers Vernon's body and cries 'why did I ever leave him?'.[44] Although this scene echoes other devices in the moralistic schoolboy tales that presented 'birds'-nesting as one aspect of a bad or sinful character' leading to the death or injury of the boys involved, in *Eric* the birds'-nesting death arises from Vernon's isolation, not immorality.[45] It is not Vernon but Eric who later falls in with bad company and ignores the advice from his pious friends, thereby building stepping-stones on the road to immorality.

Despite the frequent occurrence of schoolboys going birds'-nesting in these mid-century texts, by the 1890s the practice had largely disappeared from school stories. In Kipling's *Stalky*, during a discussion about the behaviour of Stalky and his friends a teacher comments that 'a little poaching and hawk-hunting on the cliffs, is our salvation' as it is preferable to 'some other offences', yet the boys never actually poach eggs or interact with birds.[46] In an earlier story the character Beetle directly addresses adult assumptions that boys must be going birds'-nesting by complaining that a local grounds-keeper would 'swear we were poachin' too', an idea that Beetle and the other boys think is laughable as 'what's the good of pheasant's eggs?'[47] Boys going birds'-nesting was a common trope of the mid-century school story, but by the end of the nineteenth century the practice is rarely mentioned in school stories outside of some lampooning as an ignorant assumption about the hobbies of schoolboys on the part of adults.

One explanation for the subdued presence of birds'-nesting in the late nineteenth-century school story may simply be that boys were, as Beetle

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42   Petzold, 'The End was not Ignoble?', p. 134.

43   Farrar, *Eric*, p. 261.

44   Ibid., p. 265.

45   Petzold, 'The End Was Not Ignoble?', p. 134.

46   Rudyard Kipling, 'The Impressionists' in *The Complete Stalky & Co.* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 97–118 (p. 99).

47   Kipling, 'In Ambush', in *Stalky*, pp. 29–53 (p. 33).

pointed out, not actually birds'-nesting anymore. They were certainly being warned against the practice, with local legislations against birds'-nesting being proudly advertised in magazines with headlines such as 'birds'-nesting Boys Beware!'.[48] The year before *Stalky* was first published, the journalist Thomas Edward Kebbel published a nostalgic essay bemoaning the disappearance of birds'-nesting from the lives of schoolboys, blaming mandatory schooling and humanitarian campaigns against birds'-nesting for its absence.[49] But even animal rights campaigners could themselves complain about the lack of birds'-nesting by schoolboys. In 1897 Eric Parker, who had long opposed the trapping of wild birds and would be instrumental in passing the 1933 Protection of Birds Act, described how he and his friends 'were the happiest of creatures' when birds'-nesting, and complained bitterly that the 'modern schoolboy […] cannot birds'-nest'.[50] Beetle's derisive comment was one being echoed in the periodical press of the 1890s. The relationship between schoolboy and animal, it is worth noting, also remains a contested one today. Kirkpatrick, in a complaint reminiscent of writers such as Kebbel and Parker, sees the decline of schoolboy birds'-nesting as a distinct cultural loss and bemoans the fact that 'future generations will have little understanding of the natural world'.[51] Over a hundred years separate Kebbel and Kirkpatrick, yet both see birds'-nesting not as a harmful or destructive act against birds but rather as a poignant symbol of an ideal type of childhood and a connection to nature that is in danger of being lost.

Natural History and Male Sociability

Natural history in these texts lends an element of social acceptability to inappropriate actions by boys towards animals. If boys' casual tormenting and teasing of birds facilitates their various homosocial relationships both within the institution of the school and beyond, then what to make of the boy who not only refrains from harming animals but might even display

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48   Joseph Collinson, 'Middlesex Birds: birds'-nesting Boys Beware!', *The Spectator*, 2 May 1896, p. 632.

49   Thomas Edward Kebbel, 'Schoolboys as They Were: A Day's Birds'-Nesting', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, April 1896, pp. 606–12.

50   Eric Parker, 'Private Schools: Ancient and Modern', *Longman's Magazine*, 1 March 1897, p. 448. For his history of bird rights campaigning, see John Cripps, 'Parker, Frederick Moore Searle [Eric]', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/35383> [accessed 9 June 2019]

51   Kirkpatrick, *Encyclopaedia*, p. 8.

kindness towards them? Gates has argued that 'what Victorian natural history writing did, first and foremost, was to build and reinforce a powerful bridges [*sic*]'.[52] Natural history in texts like *Tom Brown* can work as a bridge that connects those outsider boys who are reluctant to participate in violent or teasing activities towards animals with the wider homosocial networks. But it can also, as will be seen in *Stalky*, provide a sort of camouflage for socially unacceptable violence towards animals, lending an air of scientific authority to the tormenting of animals.

Although to some extent casual teasing of animals (such as the throwing of stones at seagulls) works to facilitate homosocial relationships in Farrar's school stories, shared interactions with animals when framed as natural history plays a more prominent role in creating and facilitating said relationships. These interactions are often motivated by the search for knowledge regardless of the impact on the animal subject. In *St. Winifred's*, as a group of teachers are bemoaning '[w]hat a worthless boy' the protagonist Walter must be, Mr. Percival takes issue with the prevailing opinions, declares that he has 'never found a more intelligent companion' and offers up as proof Walter's obvious delight in collecting 'whelk's eggs, and mermaid purses, and zoophytes, and hermit crabs' and so on to take home.[53] Although it is not surprising that it is Walter's desire to learn which prompts the admiration of his teacher, there are aspects of this scene worth examining closer. Walter's behaviour here marks a contrast to the ways in which he interacted with animals before coming to St. Winifred's. At home, he was told to 'observe the little black-eyed squirrel without disturbing him […] to visit the haunts of the moorhen without causing any consternation to her'.[54] At home the emphasis is on Walter observing nature in a way in which his impact on and interaction with animals is kept to a minimum, with the object of interest is emphatically left undisturbed. At St. Winifred's Walter starts his nature collection by removing various sea creatures from their habitat.

Percival's comment about Walter as 'companion' rather than pupil or student is also telling. The two remain close throughout the novel—Walter reflects at one point that Percival is 'almost the only master whose goodwill he very strongly coveted' and Percival that 'his original estimate of [Walter] was the right one after all'—and it is through natural history that

52   Barbara T. Gates, 'Introduction: Why Victorian Natural History?', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 35.2 (2007), (539–49), p. 542.

53   Farrar, *St. Winifred's, or, the World of School* (London, 1910), p. 51.

54   Ibid., p. 11.

the two first bonded.[55] Later in the novel, Walter's interest in natural history gets conflated with his mentorship of the younger boy Eden when a poem is written in which Eden declares to Walter 'I'm a shrimp, I'm a shrimp of diminutive size, / Inspect my antennae and look at my eyes.'[56] Although intended as a light-hearted joke, that Walter would 'inspect' his mentee Eden like he does the animals at the beach highlights how natural history in the novel is not only about a boy's relationship with the animals that he studies but also with the other men and boys around him. At several places throughout *St. Winifred's*, natural history plays an important role in the way schoolboys create and express their relationships with other men and boys.

In Farrar's earlier and more popular *Eric*, the importance of natural history in creating and maintaining schoolboy relationships is far more prominent. The various sea creatures appearing throughout the novel operate as an indicator of the status of the relationship between the brothers Eric and Vernon. Vernon sadly remarks that '[y]ou aren't so kind to me, Eric, as you used to be' and Eric angrily attempts to deny that just because he 'don't admire those nasty red-jelly things, which one may see on the shore by thousands', that does not mean that his relationship with Vernon has changed.[57] But despite his protestations their relationship has clearly suffered owing to Eric's lack of interest. It is Eric's friend Russell who then befriends Vernon by praising his collection of sea-anemones, thus prompting Eric to repent and offer to spend more time with his brother.[58] Vernon's burgeoning interest in natural history signals his attempts to recreate a close relationship with his brother and initiate his friendship with Russell. The prominence of sea anemones in the novel is can be traced to it being published shortly after a 'national craze' for collecting anemones, but in *Eric* this fad is clearly tied to the relationships that boys form with each other in the process of building their collections.[59] Another way in which Vernon's interest in natural history and his collection of sea anemones is linked to his social relationships can be seen in how his friendship with Russell begins when Vernon sadly remarks that despite the many interesting creatures on the beach 'it is rather dull being always by myself'.[60] Removing animals from their habitats under the auspices of scientific in-

55   Ibid., p. 86, 91.
56   Ibid., p. 169.
57   Farrar, *Eric*, p. 58.
58   Ibid., p. 58.
59   Lynn Barber, *The Heyday of Natural History* (London, 1980), p. 13.
60   Farrar, *Eric*, p. 58.

quiry works throughout Farrar's school novels as a bonding pastime between schoolboys. It is also a form of entertainment that both represents a functioning friendship and is the physical means of expressing such relationships. When violence or destructive actions towards animals are combined with an interest in natural history, the masculine relationships that are formed are often closer to those of a mentor-mentee rather than a peer-to-peer friendship, whether between teacher and pupil or an older boy and his friend's younger brother. Natural history in Farrar's school stories, much like the birds'-nesting in *Tom Brown*, offers a way to bridge generational gaps.

The naturalist in *Tom Brown*, by comparison, is a figure set apart from the other boys. Mad Martin, in *Tom Brown*, is the only boy who shares a study not with his fellow students but instead with the many animals he is attempting to raise, and as a result he 'has become an Ishmaelite [i.e., an outcast] in the house'.[61] Martin's nickname stems from his chemistry hobby and the many animals that he tames, rescues, and raises in his study.[62] His interest in animals is non-discriminatory and wide-ranging, as he 'had a passion for birds, beasts, and insect'.[63] More than just interested in animals, Martin is portrayed as almost an animal himself. For example, his study is referred to repeatedly as a 'den' by both the narrator and other boys at Rugby.[64] Martin's characterisation and introduction in the novel portray him as far more closely entwined with birds than other boys. Martin has a penchant for hatching birds' eggs, and Tom notes that Martin is 'currently asserted to have hatched [them] upon his own person'.[65] Martin has literally taken the place of the birds' mother, a replacement that is emphasised when the young birds are referred to as Martin's 'brood' and 'nurslings'.[66] Martin, with his den and brood of chicks, is seen by both narrator and fellow students as something of an animal himself, and specifically a feminised one that nurtures birds rather than throws stones at them. In the intensity of his interest in animals Martin has blurred the boundaries between boy and bird more than the other boys.

It is Martin's kindness towards animals as well as the intensity of his interest in them that isolates him from his fellow students. The other boys are baffled by his choice to spend all of his pocket money and even trade

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61   Hughes, *Tom Brown*, p. 250.
62   Ibid., p. 247.
63   Ibid., p. 250.
64   Ibid., pp. 246–52.
65   Ibid., p. 251.
66   Ibid., pp. 251–52.

the candles from his study for 'birds'-eggs or young birds'.[67] The jackdaws that Martin has raised from eggs in particular are said to be 'the pride and glory of Martin's life'.[68] These jackdaws are a source of tension with the other boys, particularly Tom's friend East. Martin has rigged up a nest outside his study window where he is attempting to raise the aforementioned jackdaws. There follows an extended scene in which East and several other boys 'like the Russian engineers at Sebastopol' attempt to knock down the nest and destroy the chicks, while Martin resorts to a variety of methods to ensure their safety.[69] Chez has argued that in nineteenth-century Britain the 'intimacy between human and companion animal thus required constant self-policing'.[70] This scene can be seen as an attempt on the part of the other Rugby schoolboys to do what Martin has failed to do—a policing of the emotional ties between human and animal that comes from the outside rather than self-imposed. East has his friends to join in on attempts to do to Martin's nest what boys all throughout the novel do to other birds' nests, but Martin in his role as protector and nurturer of birds is alone, unable to muster friends. It is important that the afternoon of birds'-nesting and pecking already discussed (wherein Martin and Arthur's friendship is cemented, and Martin is reconciled with East), is one centred around destroying rather than preserving birds' nests. To protect animals is to be alone, as it is through attacking animals that relationships between boys are created.

Through natural history Martin manages to be introduced into the homosocial relationships that are so crucial to both Rugby school and the novel in general. When Martin first appears in the novel the narrator laments that '[i]f we knew how to use our boys, Martin would have been seized upon and educated as a natural philosopher'.[71] The main problem with Martin's interests, then, is that they are not being channelled into the appropriate forms. Natural history is offered as a panacea that would benefit both Martin and society more generally. This missed opportunity to 'use' boys such as Martin also points to failing relationships between the generations. But where adult mentors fail, the homosocial relationships between boys bridge that gap. Thanks to Arthur's determination to befriend him, Martin is slowly introduced into the wider Rugby social

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67   Ibid., p. 253.
68   Ibid., p. 251.
69   Ibid., pp. 251–52.
70   Keridiana W. Chez, *Victorian Dogs, Victorian Men* (Columbus, 2017), p. 152.
71   Hughes, Tom Brown, p. 250.

network. It is important to note that before befriending Arthur, Martin is mainly seen as caring for and hatching birds' eggs. But when he begins to spend time with Arthur, Martin (at Tom's urging) begins to raid nests in order to empty the eggs and 'glue [them] carefully on to bits of cardboard,' much to Arthur's delight.[72] Martin has gone from preserving eggs in the sense of protecting them from harm to preserving eggs in a scientific fashion that also necessitates the destruction of the eggshell's contents.

This change in his habits is both motivated by his desire to impress Arthur and the way in which the two boys form their friendship. That Martin's scientific endeavours involve destruction is perhaps not surprising, as it has long been observed that natural history in the nineteenth century often involved the interruption of 'existing networks [of] material relations between people, plants and animals wherever it applied itself'.[73] What makes Martin and his eggshells a particularly interesting case is the relationship between care for animals and violence, particularly when considered against Miller's observations about the function of naturalism in the popular empire-adventure fiction marketed towards boys at the end of the nineteenth century. Miller argues that boys' naturalist fiction sought to 'temper the urge to violence' by turning 'away from cruelty in favour of a more restrained model of masculinity'.[74] Here, however, it is Martin's maternal instinct and desire to nurture baby birds that is tempered, and natural history allows him to turn away from care and towards cruelty. Rather than reining in violent tendencies, natural history in *Tom Brown* allows for boys who are dangerously fond of animals to be properly brought into a homosocial network that in many ways requires a level of casual violence towards animals in order to function.

If natural history in *Tom Brown* and Farrar's novels provides a rather straight-forward means for outsider boys to be brought within the school's social networks or to more fully express mentorships, in Kipling's *Stalky* natural history operates as an unresolved paradox. On the one hand, it works to firmly situate and single out boys who care for animals and designate them as effeminate and ineffectual outsiders. At the same time, however, it provides the violent desires on the part of boys such as Stalky and his friends with a veneer of socially acceptable scientific interest. The college's natural history enthusiasts are given the sneering sobriquet of 'Bug-Hunters' by Stalky (an old nickname that has been applied to natural

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72   Ibid., p. 266.
73   Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes* (New York, 1992), p. 32.
74   Miller, *Empire*, p. 70-1.

historians since at least the eighteenth century) and they are a reoccur-ring target of mockery throughout the *Stalky* stories.[75] The 1898 story 'In Ambush' provides a particularly illuminating case study of the aforemen-tioned paradoxical dynamic. Stalky and his friends have had their illicit hideout discovered, and so they pretend to be interested in 'bug-hunting' in order to scour the countryside for a new meeting place, as '[i]n the in-terests of science, bounds were largely relaxed for members of the Natural History Society'.[76] They find one by tracking a fox to its lair and claiming it for their own.[77] There is more than an echo of that famous naturalist Charles Kingsley here, as in his influential *Glaucus, or, the Wonders of the Shore* (1855) he rather over-optimistically proclaimed that the days are over when 'the naturalists was looked on as a harmless enthusiast, who went "bug-hunting", simply because he had not spirit to follow a fox!'.[78] Here we see the school's naturalists allowed greater freedoms, at least part-ly because of their perceived harmlessness—for instance, their leader has 'a gentle little soul'—and it is up to the more spirited Stalky, M'Turk, and Beetle quite literally to follow a fox.[79] When caught out of bounds, the boys are able to escape punishment thanks to the cover provided by the Natural History Society.[80] Tapping into the long history of both popular natural history texts and cultural perceptions of naturalists, the Bug-hunters in *Stalky* are portrayed as useful fodder for boys who are cunning enough to exploit said perceptions for their own purposes, albeit those which are directly at odds with those of the naturalists.

The Bug-hunters, however, in *Stalky* are more than just a useful cover. Stalky and his friends revel in abusing and reviling the naturalists, who are portrayed as passive recipients of Stalky's abuses. In order convincingly to 'look the complete Bug-hunters', Stalky and his friends casually raid the lockers of several naturalists, taking some items and destroying others.[81] The only reference to what the naturalists thought of this raiding in the story is presented later in an aside that Beetle had been seen to 'return his butterfly-net to a tearful fag', as again the naturalists are only seen as helpless victims of the depredations of the stronger boy.[82] This continues

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75   For the term bug-hunters, see Barber, *Heyday*, p. 14.
76   Kipling, 'In Ambush', p. 31.
77   Ibid., p. 32.
78   Charles Kingsley, *Glaucus, or, Wonders of the Shore* (Cambridge, 1859), p. 7.
79   Kipling, 'In Ambush', p. 29.
80   Ibid., p. 47.
81   Ibid., p. 31.
82   Ibid., p. 38.

throughout the collection of stories. In the 1899 'An Unsavoury Interlude', for instance, when the rotting corpse of a cat that Stalky and Co had killed and shoved under some floorboards is discovered, the boys jeer and proclaim '[g]ive her to the Bug-hunters'.[83] Repeatedly, naturalists only appear in *Stalky* as the passive and mute recipients of the abuses meted out by stronger, more cunning boys. Indeed, Stalky once remarks that the much-abused servants of stronger boys 'are dabs at Natural History', as boys who are weak enough to be forced into a form of servitude are naturally suited to the study of natural history.[84] If late nineteenth-century naturalists, such as Robert Baden Powell and others, were striving to portray the violence often accompanying naturalism as 'unfortunate but unavoidable' and 'clearly distinguishable from wanton brutality', then Kipling's schoolboy stories forcibly push back against this framework.[85] Naturalists in *Stalky* are in need of more wanton brutality, rather than less, or they run the risk of becoming prey to stronger boys. And it is the naturalist's care for animals in particular that marks them out as objects of prey. When the boys claim the fox's lair for their own after masquerading as Bug-hunters, Stalky takes pains to distance himself from the naturalists — 'with great deliberation, Stalky spat on to the back of a young rabbit sunning himself [...] Talk of natural history, this is it", said Stalky [...] he spat again approvingly'.[86] Ritvo has talked about how, in response to the RSPCA's campaigns, at times 'lower-class abusers of animals [...] seemed to cherish their offensive treatment of animals as a means of self-expression, or even to flaunt it as a counter to the interpretation of their behaviour imposed from above'.[87] Here we see the same dynamic of flaunting animal abuses in the face of the humanitarian minded. But in Stalky's case it is not an expression by the working classes against the upper- and middle-classes, but rather in the face of challenges from boys within the same middle-class milieu. It is through demonstrating his disdain for and mastery over animals, as well as his contemptuous regard for natural history, that Stalky marks out both his ownership of the lair and his true nature after his pretence at being a Bug-hunter.

Conclusion

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83   Kipling, 'An Unsavoury Interlude', p. 94.
84   Kipling, 'In Ambush', p. 31.
85   Miller, *Empire*, p. 71.
86   Kipling, 'In Ambush', p. 33.
87   Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 149.

Animals in many Victorian school stories, particularly birds in the mid-century school story, operated as a sort of locus point for the ways in which boys interacted with each other. These animals both facilitated and symbolised the network of homosocial relationships formed at the boarding school. The harassment of animals functioned as the medium by which schoolboys interacted with each other as well as with adult men such as teachers or local villagers. Too much fondness for animals could destabilise these important relationships and even be dangerous for the safety of the kind-hearted schoolboy himself. Natural history, then, was often offered as a potential solution that could transfer these dangerous impulses into a more proper outlet, with scientific curiosity replacing the urge to protect or nurture. If a boy's undesirable *violent* impulses were often tempered by the practice of natural history as Miller and others have suggested, often natural history was equally portrayed as compensating for undesirable *caring* impulses. The latter half of the nineteenth century saw a variety of animal rights and humanitarian campaigns in Britain, but there was also a thread of discourse that saw the harming of animals as necessary and beneficial as it allowed the relationships between the men that ran English society to be both created and maintained. It was kindness, not cruelty, that some saw as the unacceptable trait for schoolboys. Critics are quite right in pointing out the ways in which nineteenth-century natural history 'appears as an unholy alliance of domination and destruction: an order of death'.[88] But it is also important to investigate the ways in which contemporary writers, such as Hughes and Farrar, often saw this dynamic as a solution rather than a problem, because it allowed both violent and caring impulses to be reconciled and brought into the framework of the crucial homosocial relationships being forged in boarding schools. As children, animals, and popular fiction continue to receive increasing critical attention, hopefully the connections that boyhood violence towards animals had with Victorian British society will be further explored.

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88   Miller, *Empire*, p. 66.

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Knights, Ladies and those In-Between: Que(e)rying Gender in Medieval French Knightly Tales

Serin Gioan

 '[Q]ueerness can never define an identity; it can only ever disturb one.'[1]

'[W]hat we take to be an internal essence of gender is manufactured through a sustained set of acts, posited through the gendered stylization of the body.'[2]

Many facets of medieval literature demonstrate a nuanced and sensitive awareness of social conventions and what it means to transgress them. Medieval hierarchies and categorization meant that people's place in society was always, at least in theory, fixed and stable. God came above man, who came above woman. *Oratores* (clergymen), *bellatores* (knights) and *laboratores* (workers) should stick to what they were good at, and gender roles were set and ubiquitous. Yet, in certain medieval texts, gender is presented as complex, multi-faceted and evolving, evincing gender theory very much in keeping with modern-day ideas of social construction and identity building (such as late twentieth and ear-

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1   Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 17
2   Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. xv

ly twenty-first-century ideas of gender as acquired and performed rather than innate, as encapsulated by Judith Butler's work). Some medieval authors relished literary play, a way of questioning and challenging societal expectations and the boundaries of appropriate behaviour without risk of serious repercussions. Often, these texts undermine and ridicule existing notions of congruent conduct and modes of being, although their return to a socially accepted ending sometimes results in them being interpreted as fundamentally conservative. However, a safe resolution to a text does not efface the transgressive play preceding it, and in many ways these works merely raise questions about their *denouement* and how successfully it is possible to resolve such contradictory and problematic experimentation. Indeed, some Old French *chansons de geste*[3] depict gender as a fluid, performative and malleable concept.

In *Queer Phenomenology* (2006), Sara Ahmed writes about the individual's orientation as both sexual and physical, highlighting the link between sexual attraction and how we inhabit spaces and share them with others. She probes how personal orientation might affect our direction in life, and how disorientation might make a body seem 'failed' and the 'here' seem strange.[4] If sexuality and gender identity can be viewed as a sort of location within society, being situated on the margins of normative behaviour results in an existence on the boundaries of acceptability, a transgressive mode of being through unconventional expression and identification. Meredith Worthen explains that social violations can take several forms, some of which only make someone appear strange, whereas others undermine the stability of the system itself.[5] Within the texts this paper explores, the characters' actions mark them out as queer in both senses, simultaneously seeming odd to others and exposing the flaws in the existing social framework. Whilst it would be misguided to call these characters "gay" in the modern sense of the word, David M. Halperin comments on the incoherence of the term 'homosexuality' as severed from the past, insisting that we must observe how the past converges to an unstable present.[6] These medieval characters challenge social restrictions and expectations,

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3   Old French epic poems sung or recited by minstrels, mostly dating from the twelfth to the fourteenth century.

4   Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006) pp. 1, 158.

5   Meredith Worthen, *Sexual Deviance and Society: A Sociological Examination* (Oxford: Routledge, 2016), pp. 18-20.

6   David M. Halperin, *How to Do the History of Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 107.

not through a revolutionary desire to upturn the 'cistem'[7] and gain power for themselves, but in order to be true to themselves and to explore the fluidity and complexity of their identity.

This paper will focus on several medieval French courtly works and their exploration of what it means to be a knight, a gendered being, and a self-defined individual. Courtly genres such as *chansons de geste* and romances can be seen as deeply conservative and seeking to shore up social norms through strict gender roles and gendered communities. So, the most famous of these, *La Chanson de Roland*, features only two female characters, Aude and Bramimonde, who possess little to no agency of their own; Aude, Roland's betrothed, dies of grief upon learning of her fiancé's death, and Bramimonde, the Saracen Queen, converts to Christianity and loses her voice and her name when she marries Charlemagne. Some versions of the *chanson* do not even feature Aude, so secondary is she to the development of the story. Although most other *chansons*, such as *La Chanson de Guillaume* and *Raoul de Cambrai*, feature women with more influence, such as Guiburc and Alais, their function is mainly one of nurturing and reconciling, and therefore fundamentally centred on the men for whom they do this.[8] Simon Gaunt notes the 'monologic masculinity' of the *chansons* in their establishment of a male-dominated literary space in which women have no voice.[9] Whilst this may be true when taking a generic approach to the most well-known texts, this is far from accurate for all medieval knightly literature, and several examples reveal a distinctly Butlerian approach to gender, in which presentation and action as a certain gender are what consolidates its reality, not essentializing assignations at birth.

Through two sections, this paper will explore non-conforming texts and characters whose identities are complex and refuse to be reduced to simple labels and roles. The first part will analyse 'Yde et Olive', a section of the *chanson de geste* of *Huon de Bordeaux* in which an assigned female character adopts a masculine persona in which they excel and are confirmed, undermining the notion of 'biological gender/sex'.[10] The second

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7   The established social norms in which cisgender people (those who identify with their assigned gender) are privileged within the system.

8   Penny Schine Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France*, pp. 5-18.

9   Simon Gaunt, *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (Cambridge University Press: 1995) p. 22

10   Assigned female means judged to be female at birth and brought up as a woman. Given the fluidity of characters' performances and identifications, I find it reductive to use gen-

part will cover two gender-bending characters, Blanchandin.e[11] and Aye/
Gaudion from the *chanson de geste* of *Tristan de Nanteuil*, and the way in
which their different approaches reveal gender being used as a method of
gaining freedom from societal restrictions, or as something to be tran-
scended and defied.

'Yde et Olive': girls will be girls

Many scholars make a case for the invisibility of the queer community
during an era in which sodomy was viewed as a sin and a crime.[12] Whilst
historically, medieval homosexuality was treated unsympathetically, as
testified by Peter Damian's desire to eradicate it at the start of the millen-
nium and Anselm's instruction to confess it as a sin in 1102,[13] literature
allowed for the articulation of a discourse exploring non-traditional iden-
tities and relationships. Bernadette J. Brooten claims that 'female–female
relationships remained largely inconceivable, in the sense that categories
for imagining such activity were practically non-existent',[14] and Jacqueline
Murray calls it 'twice marginal and twice invisible'.[15] However, Francesca
Sautman and Pamela Sheingorn challenge this notion of 'a love that dares
not speak its name', claiming that through analysing the silences, gaps and
insufficiencies in texts we can expose the inherent cracks in the system.[16]
It is sometimes precisely through what is unsaid that traditions are un-
done, and through observing how queer identities might function not as
reflections, but as asymmetric shadows of their heterosexual/cisgender

dered pronouns for the gender-ambiguous protagonists of these texts, hence the neutral
"they/them/their" to acknowledge the complexity of their performance of and relation to
gender. "They" functions here as a gender-neutral singular pronoun, replacing he/she.

11   I use a point instead of brackets here as in some modern French queer subcultures to
indicate that the feminine 'e' and identity is not to be bracketed or treated as secondary, but
exists simultaneously and equally to the masculine stem.

12   Jonathan Walker, 'Before the Name: Ovid's Deformulated Lesbianism', *Comparative
Literature*, 58:3 (Summer, 2006). Also see Brooten and Murray below.

13   William Burgwinkle, *Sodomy, Masculinity, and Law in Medieval Literature: France and
England*, 1050-1230 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) p. 31

14   Bernadette J. Brooten, *Love Between Women* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,
2009) p. 62

15   Jacqueline Murray, "Twice Marginal and Twice Invisible: Lesbians in the Middle Ages."
Handbook of Medieval Sexuality, ed. Vern Bullough and James Brundage. (New York: Gar-
land, 1996) pp. 191

16   *Same sex love and desire among women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Francesca Sautman and
Pamela Sheingorn (New York: Palgrave, 2001) p. 18

counterparts, we can explore alternative forms of being within literature. Though not explicitly named as such at the time, these texts allowed for queer interactions and the possibility of a different kind of love.

The thirteenth-century "Yde et Olive", survives in its entirety in only one manuscript, although its adaptation into an Old French prose version, a sixteenth-century English version and a miracle play attest to its transmission and limited but existing popularity. Although it does not explicitly label itself as queer or purport to any revolutionary purpose, it sensitively explores the difficulties of living on the margins of acceptable social roles, disturbing received identities and the process through which we establish them. In this poem, the knight's quest, instead of a normative discovery of conventional heterosexual love, becomes a search away from paternal authority and the incest taboo towards an unconventional identity and marriage. The young assigned female character Yde flees their father Florent's incestuous desire disguised as a knight, excels in combat and weds the King of Rome's daughter, Olive, who supports her unconventional spouse. When Yde is forced to undress, God gives them a penis, so the couple can engender a son and establish their rule. The poem constructs a supportive community in which normative rules are transcended to reach a more personal framework for society. Although the challenging elements are safely reabsorbed at the end of the poem, this papers over the issues, showing the audience that cracks still fissure the text and offer the possibility of seeing through the surface of the text into other interpretations and ways of life.

Firstly, this text transgresses the most fundamental of patriarchal edicts, paternal authority. Yde defies their father by fleeing his forbidden incestuous lust in the uncomfortable scene in which 'en sa cambre a fait mener sa fille/…Le bai[n]g fait faire u sa fille iert baignie'[17] (ll. 6554, 6556). Although Watt argues that '[a]ccording to Claude Lévi-Strauss, the incest taboo is fundamental to the traffic in women which controls the patriarchal economic and social order',[18] in this case, the taboo serves to open access to a new *modus operandi* no longer regulated by the father, and instead of accepting taboo and traffic as interlinked, both are rejected to give a new method of emancipation, not masculine, but not strictly feminine either. Luce Irigaray situates violence against women as invoking the deceased

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17   He has his daughter led to his chambers/…He has a bath prepared in which his daughter is to be bathed
18   Diane Watt, 'Behaving Like a Man? Incest, Lesbian Desire, and Gender Play in Yde et Olive and its Adaptations', *Comparative Literature*, 50:4 (1998), p. 266

maternal body;[19] here it is the fixation on the past image of an idealized woman which threatens Yde within their family. The escape from paternal rule allows Yde to discover a different form of being, at which they excel. Yde joins a band of German warriors, and when they are attacked by the Spanish, 'Des Alemans n'en est escapés pies/Ne soient tout ocit et detrenciét'[20] (ll. 6676-77). A troop of seasoned soldiers is slain, but Yde, new to this way of life, still 'I. Espaignot feri…/Et de son dos le hauberc li faussa/…Si l'abati'[21] (ll. 6654, 6656, 6658). Yde appears to be a natural in combat, outshining the other knights spontaneously despite non-existent training. They easily outwit a group of thirty thieves, and rally the King of Rome's armies until 'Espaignos tante teste trenchie,/En fuies tournent'[22] (ll. 7011-12). Yde has no trouble passing as a man, indeed surpassing their peers in their effortful/effortless display of prowess and knightly valour. As Sautman and Sheingorn write, 'clothing confers on women [*sic*] at least a series of physical qualities that allow them to function as quite credible male warriors – that is, until matters of heart and bed are involved.'[23] Indeed, Yde is a thoroughly 'credible male warrior', and their clothing seems to endow them with the necessary physical prowess to be treated with great respect as a strong warrior wearing their armour. The symbolism and performance of gender play are more important than biological features beneath gendered clothing. All the same, these bodies are formed by experience and do not necessarily conform to expectation. Hence, Yde is 'grant et membru et formé'[24] (l. 6844) by the time they meet the King of Rome due to the rigour of their skirmishes with other knights. In this sense, one is not born a man but becomes one, sculpting the body until it both generates and fits what is expected of it; Yde goes through a sort of late puberty until they reach the societally-condoned definition of what a man ought to be.

Nonetheless, Yde is still not fully within the bounds of conventionality. Diane Watt highlights the term 'bougrenie'[25], which is used to describe

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19   Irigaray, Luce. *Le Corps-à-corps Avec La Mère* (Montréal : Editions de la Pleine lune, 1981)

20   No German escaped unscathed/Without being all killed and hacked apart.

21   She struck a Spaniard…/Then from his back she split the hauberk/…Thus she felled him

22   They decapitated so many Spaniards/That they turned and fled

23   *Same sex love and desire among women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Francesca Sautman and Pamela Sheingorn (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 214

24   Big and strong-limbed and well-built

25   Not as simple as the modern-day "buggery", closer to Burgwinkle's definition of sod-

Florent's incestuous desire for his child, but which also foreshadows the same-sex marriage to follow.[26] This marriage is simultaneously normalized and highlighted as deviant. Klosowska emphasizes that Yde and Olive's union fulfils 'the requirements of a legal marriage' with vows exchanged, informed consent and a consummation scene, and proposes the aesthetic symmetry as the only difference.[27] Still, there was clearly a preoccupation within this text with how the particulars of queer intimacy might operate differently, as demonstrated by the presence of a small miniature depicting the two newly-weds in bed together, which 'gives visibility to same-sex fantasies of the manuscript's makers and readers'.[28] Cazanave claims that the story may have been received as a 'chronique scandaleuse'[29]. Though this argument is undermined by the numerous pathos-inspiring elements, the text does encapsulate a general fascination with disobedient bodies and transgressive desires. The detailed portrayal of a "female" wedding and wedding night is a mix of imagination and recreation which simultaneously authorizes and distinguishes same-sex marriage from its straight equivalent, leaving the audience curious as to how queer desire might function, as frustrated voyeurs wishing to know more about these increasingly sympathetic characters.

This union is also unorthodox and intriguing since, as William Robins writes, this relationship is unique insofar as Yde finally reveals their new identity; at last it is no longer 'unutterable private selfhood' or 'public disguise', but a 'conspiratorial relationship between two persons'.[30] Yde strengthens their fluid identity by gaining another person's approval, creating a loving queer bond involving support and affection, and in so doing their identity is no longer unutterable since it is understood, indeed welcomed, by another, who can also share their truth as a result. Olive lovingly assures 'Mais or soiés toute rasseüree:…Ensamble o vour prendrai ma

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omy as 'what disrupts established law, systems of classification, religious, ethnic, and gender boundaries' (Burgwinkle, p. 1), non-normative sexual practices.

26   Diane Watt, 'Behaving Like a Man? Incest, Lesbian Desire, and Gender Play in Yde et Olive and its Adaptations', *Comparative Literature*, 50:4 (1998), p. 267

27   Anna Klosowska, *Queer Love in the Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 116

28   Ibid, p. 81.

29   Caroline Cazanave, *D'Esclarmonde à Croissant: Huon de Bordeaux, l'épique médiéval et l'esprit de suite* (Besançon: Presses Universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2007), p. 157

30   William Robins, 'Three Tales of Female Same-Sex Marriage: Ovid's "Iphis and Ianthe," the Old French Yde et Olive, and Antonio Pucci's Reina d'Oriente', *Exemplaria*, 21:1 (2009), p. 52

destinee'[31] (ll. 7221, 7223), instantly switching to using feminine pronouns and pledging a joint co-operative future. Foucault argues that 'homosexual consciousness certainly goes beyond one's individual experience and includes an awareness of being a member of a particular social group'[32]; Robins agrees that '[t]he rift between private and public spheres might not entail a problematic inauthenticity, but rather might set conditions for a clandestine community, a place where Yde can utter to another the truth of her identity'.[33] This 'clandestine community' has a different sort of language, a secretive and subtextual murmur slipping into the gaps of normal society's discourse. Here, labels are unnecessary to affirm this relationship; its complicit basis marks it out as special. Its participants do not need to know that they have like-minded siblings, as its reality for two people suffices to make it a unique shared feeling. Here, queer identity does not have a discourse as such, but is articulated through its very silence and lack, a sort of shadow which gestures to the object casting it, which does not efface the existence and legitimacy of the shadow itself.

Moreover, the mutual lust reveals the possibility of a distinctly queer desire even within the existing repressive framework. Sautman and Sheingorn raise the query '"Why does she pass so well?" Or does she?" Is it "the androgyny of their cross-dressed bodies" that attracts other women?'.[34] So, Yde is described as 'grant et membru et formé'[35] (l. 6844) but also constantly referred to as 'la bele Yde', having earlier been portrayed as the epitome of feminine beauty, with the description using highly conventional images of traditional "womanly" beauty such as

> Plus estoit blance que n'est nege en fevrier ;
>
> Desor le blanc ot colour qui bien siet—
>
> Vermelle estoit comme roze en rozier--,
>
> Les iex plus vairs que n'a faucons muiers…[36] (ll. 6505-08)

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31   Yet now be completely reassured…Together with you I will accept my destiny

32   As quoted in *Same sex love and desire among women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Francesca Sautman and Pamela Sheingorn (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 12

33   William Robins, 'Three Tales of Female Same-Sex Marriage: Ovid's "Iphis and Ianthe," the Old French Yde et Olive, and Antonio Pucci's Reina d'Oriente', *Exemplaria*, 21:1 (2009), p. 53

34   *Same sex love and desire among women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Francesca Sautman and Pamela Sheingorn (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 214

35   Big and strong-limbed and well-built

36   She was whiter than snow in February;

Olive is attracted by this very androgyny, and their reaction to Yde's female assignation is unsurprised and undeterred. In this way we are shown a desire which does not conform to conventional boundaries; instead the reader is teased by instability and the play with acceptability. In fact, this uncertainty about gender is expressed even before Yde cross-dresses and acts "like a man", in the description of their 'caviax blons, qui cercelent arrier'[37] (l. 6509), and the statement that 'N'ot mamelete, c'on aperchoive riens'[38] (l. 6521). They may possess the traditional ideals of feminine beauty, but they possess a certain androgyny even before they begin to cross-dress and present as masculine; this suggests a certain innate queerness, just as Olive's arousal by Yde's ambiguous presentation reveals non-normative desire in the face of patriarchal political structures. Valerie Traub declares that cross-dressing women do more than copy a man's role; they re-inscribe gender itself through the deconstruction of the very notion of 'man', so that the 'original' itself is shown to be an 'image'.[39] As well as belying another kind of attraction, this love turns the very objects of desire into palimpsests, where performativity becomes the thing itself and the source seems less real than the imitation. The narrator seems to approve of this usurping of masculinity while calling attention to it, reinforcing how 'bele'[40] Yde is during battle scenes and implying that gender can be supported by its opposition and destroy the very binary it purports to generate.

Despite the narrator's apparent sympathy for the couple, other characters are not so understanding, and in a parallel with Florent's earlier insistence on Yde taking a bath, the protagonist is once more required to strip, this time in a sort of "big reveal" to prove their masculinity. As in its mythical analogue, Yde's identity is legitimated by a *deus ex machina*, in which Yde receives a penis and is accepted as a worthy king. Sara Jane Dietzman states that 'the real importance of gender is not located in social roles or outward appearance, but in the physical body it produces, and its

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    On the white was a colour which went very well with it—
    It was crimson like a rose on a rose-bush—,
    Eyes greyer than a moulted falcon
37   Blond hair, which curled back
38   She had no breast that one might notice in any way
39   Valerie Traub, "The (In) significance of 'Lesbian' Desire in Early Modern England." *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage*, ed. Zimmerman (London: Routledge, 1992) p. 155
40   Beautiful

ability to fulfil the destiny of the family line'.[41] So, the narrator tells us that 'Dix li envoie et donne par bonté/Tout chou c'uns hom a de s'umanité'[42] (ll. 7268-69). They are given the "manhood" they require to be fully accepted as male within society, as well as being called 'le garchon'[43] and 'uns hom carnés'[44] (l. 7270) by an angel, emblazoning their physical change with the divine seal of approval. This miracle ultimately reinforces the essential-izing and phallocentric approach to the textual society's view of gender, since despite Yde's incredibly convincing performance as a man, they are only truly accepted when they are given a phallus, in all its monosemous and understood significance. It is as though, in spite of Yde's success as a man, they were merely acting, and needed the true symbol of masculinity in the eyes of society (and, apparently, God), not only to pass as but to *be* a real man. More importantly, Yde and Olive bear a son, Croissant, allowing them to function within social norms and fulfilling the principal aim of medieval marriage with ease, as well as establishing a dynasty to ensure their longevity.

Although it is possible to see this as two women safely re-encoded with-in the heterosexual matrix, with their threat to the patriarchal model of primogeniture neutralized by re-inscribing their bodies as normal and woman as man's possession, this does not erase the subversive queering which came before it. Watt sees it as revealing that 'inheritance laws and class structures play a crucial role both in the construction and contain-ment of transgressive sexualities and gender play'.[45] Without normative structures, their transgressive echoes would not be read as such, and queer challenges are constructed in opposition to the norms they defy, although often even this 'play' refuses to yield concrete alternatives. In-stead of showing problematic characters' uncertainties resolved, the poem reveals the problems in the system and crafts an alternative path in which people can explore their own identities. Despite Gaunt's insistence on the

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41 Sara Jane Dietzman, 'En guize d'omme: Female Cross Dressing and Gender Reversal in Four Medieval French Texts', Doctoral Thesis Dissertation, University of Virginia (2005), p. 193

42 Through His Goodness, God sends and gives to her everything of His humanity that a man has/all which a man has of manhood. (In the former interpretation, the poet refers to Jesus' phallus showing a complete incarnation, in the latter the essentialism of the phallus defining gender).

43 The boy

44 An embodied man/man in the flesh

45 Diane Watt, 'Behaving Like a Man? Incest, Lesbian Desire, and Gender Play in Yde et Olive and its Adaptations', *Comparative Literature*, 50:4 (1998), p.265

'monologic masculinity' of *chansons de geste* and the construction of male identity in relation to other men, not in opposition to femininity,[46] this tale clearly flouts the model by contrasting "normal" and "abnormal" ways of being, uncovering a more genderless or gender-fluid model for society. True, the medieval cistem of patriarchal ownership and transmission, in which there was a cycle of men exchanging women and land, and producing heirs through the female body, was inherently threatened by sodomy. Still, this text allows for two non-conforming characters to participate in the structure of primogeniture and male proprietary rights, undermining the natural basis of this premise and allowing, through the gaps in the writing, a glimpse of a different way, a queerer life, and an alternative to the compulsory heterosexuality identified by Wittig and Rich.[47]

Overall, this *chanson de geste* reveals a whole new undercurrent to medieval courtly life, a secret society in which desire is titillated precisely by unusual and epicene qualities, a desire which can flout the rule of patriarchy through loving support. Yde's innate queerness, their exceptional performance (as a man, a knight and a sexual partner) and their reabsorption into the fold as a king after God's miracle shows that they are a special and skilful member of multiple circles. They do not follow the standard linear direction of straight lives, occupying the public and the private with a single identity, but can pass as normal whilst uncovering their particularities in a safe environment. They navigate spaces with ease, eliciting unease about "true" nature and the underlying potential for queer ways of being.

Blanchandin.e and Aye/Gaudïon: Liberating and Transcending gender

Donovan notes in her book on Female Saints' Lives that femininity was something to be transcended by these hagiographic heroines, who achieved their saintly status only by rising above their sexuality and assigned gender to become almost genderless in God.[48] The early fourteenth-century *Tristan de Nanteuil* presents a similar concern in its episodes concerning two very different gender non-conforming characters, the timid and genuine Blanchandin.e and the performative and feminist Aye/Gaudïon.

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46 Simon Gaunt, *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 22

47 See Adrienne Rich's 'Compulsory Heterosexuality' (1980) and Monique Wittig's 'The Straight Mind' (1980)

48 Leslie Donovan, *Women's Saints Lives in Old English Prose* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1999), p.15

Through their contrasting approaches to gender presentation and identity building, they reveal different attitudes to gender and its subversion, one using performance as a liberating process of self-exploration to attain freedom and independence, the other to undermine social norms and call for greater equality.

The more explicitly feminist of the two, Aye is a character who fully appropriates the masculine knightly role within society, adopting a name used exclusively for men, Gaudïon, and fully committing to extreme performative masculinity. Indeed, Gaudïon is such a good knight that 'he' is offered Aiglentine as a wife. Again, there is a co-operative exchange between two assigned-female characters, with Aiglentine exclaiming that 'Voulentiers baiseroye vo bouche et vo menton'[49] (l. 3378) in sympathy for Aye/ Gaudïon's past tribulations, and expressing admiration that 'Oncques mes n'oÿ dame dire telle raison/Në ainsy maintenir n'en tel regnacïon'[50] (ll. 3410-11). This physical, emotional and mental connection reveals another instance of united non-masculine communities in the face of the patriarchy, in which actions which might ordinarily be considered shocking and unacceptable are welcomed and celebrated in their diversity and freedom.

Nonetheless, it is important to note the different portrayals of queering experience within these texts and not simply to amalgamate them all into one 'cross-dressing' or 'lesbian' trope. So, Aye's exploration and stylization of gender is very different from Blanchandin.e's within the same *chanson de geste*. Aye insists on reaffirming their femininity in episodes when they expose their breasts to emphasize the 'feminine' nature of their body, and their triumph in manipulating gender 'in spite of' being assigned female, a sort of victory over imposed gender. Dietzman believes that 'Because of her changed gender and unchanged body/sex, Aye becomes a Trans or hybrid identity formed of a female body, a past identity as mother and wife, neutral sexuality, and a new preference for masculine behavior'.[51] Again, this returns to the notion that gender is not an essential biological truth connected to the body but a performance which becomes a reality within political and social circles. As a performance, it can come to represent an internal truth through that truth's very exploration . It also highlights the hybridity which can come from gender, and the many layers of identity

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49   Willingly will I kiss your mouth and chin

50   Never yet have I heard a woman tell such a tale/Nor live in such a way

51   Sara Jane Dietzman, 'En guize d'omme: Female Cross Dressing and Gender Reversal in Four Medieval French Texts', Doctoral Thesis Dissertation, University of Virginia (2005), p. 233

(past, present and even future) which are all superimposed in the moment, creating echoes and a palimpsest of gender whose fundamental truth is ultimately indecipherable. Problematically, the narrator always refers to 'dame Aye', using feminine-inflected adjectives, nouns and pronouns, such as 'la royne senee'[52] (l. 2041) and 'la belle'[53] (l. 3444). Dietzman claims that:

> The adoption of masculine physical characteristics and talents by a character who the narrator consistently reminds us is female (calling her a woman and comparing her to other women) does not restore her as a woman so much as draw light to the fact that she has adopted a transgender identity.[54]

However, this can also be read as an illustration of the difficulty in accepting trans identity in a fundamentally binary and cisnormative society. It is impossible to pin down how someone identifies without asking them, and sometimes even they are still questioning or do not have the words to express it. Of course, Aye/Gaudïon is a fictional character and as such the narrator can claim to have some omniscient knowledge of their motivations and inner life, but the narrator's refusal to acknowledge the fluidity of Aye/Gaudïon's gender identity is indicative of a certain societal unease with queerness, portraying through the narrative voice the perplexity of society in the face of genderbending, one which both highlights and celebrates this unusual success, but also struggles to process it as it is so alien to habitual norms.

Similarly, Blanchandin.e's experience is problematised, although in very different ways. Instead of choosing to dress in clothes traditionally associated with the masculine gender like Yde and Aye/Gaudïon do, Blanchandin.e has this form of self-presentation imposed upon them by their partner, the abusive and manipulative Tristan. When they first meet, Tristan kidnaps Blanchandin.e and brutally rapes them, despite their explicit withholding of consent, after which Blanchandin.e seems to develop Stockholm syndrome and falls in love with him. When they are no longer allowed to be together, it is Tristan who tells Blanchandin.e to dress 'as a man', and they are ridiculed and laughed at by Tristan and his friends; their privilege as cisgender heterosexual men means they cannot imagine

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52   The wise queen
53   The beautiful
54   Ibid, p. 233.

the danger Blanchandin.e faces through their queer presentation. Indeed, the cross-dressing Blanchandin.e's performance of masculinity could cost them their life if their disguise is seen through and their "real identity" (as perceived by society) is discovered. Clarinde, frustrated by her new husband's refusal to sleep with her, is clearly not in the slightest sympathetic to the idea of unwittingly having a wife rather than a husband. So, she says to herself:

> Je saveray commant vous estes figuree,
>
> Ne se vous estes homs ne danzelle loee.
>
> Mais se vous estes femme que vous aie trouvee,
>
> Vous serés, par Mahon, dedens ung feu gettee.[55] (ll. 15695-98)

Clarinde is in no way inclined to create a co-operative community with her spouse or to seek to discover why they might be cross-dressing and if they might have a legitimate reason. Instead, she has internalised the queerphobia inherent in the heteronormative cistem around her and she is so repulsed by the idea of sexual and gender deviance that she would rather put to death the man she loved if it turns out that they are not in fact a man by her standards, namely that they do not have a penis.

It does indeed appear that, following their acquisition of a penis, Blanchandin.e is so overjoyed to have been confirmed in their masculinity that they cannot help but flaunt their new genitalia to whomever wishes to see. The narrator also makes approving comments which present the idea that gender is ultimately rooted in biology. So, the poetic voice asserts that

> Nouvelle char lui vint, en aultre se mua
>
> Et devvint *ung vrais home*, car Dieu lui envoya
>
> Toute nature de home tant que besoing en a
>
> En manière d'un home et tout lui ottroya [my emphasis][56] (ll. 16196-99)

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55   I will know what you are like/And if you are to be called a man or a maiden./But if I find you to be a woman/You will be, by Mohammed, thrown in a fire.

56   New flesh came to him, he became another,/And became a real man, for God sent him/ All the nature of man as far as is needed/ To be like a man and gave him everything

The enjambement in this section and the teasingly suggestive innuendo of 'tout' (clearly referring to a penis) retains a sense of playfulness with the novel and fetishised conception of the transgender body as transgressive and unusual in its morphing and physical transition. It is also portrayed as a God-given miracle rather than an unnatural and sinful phase, and the legitimacy of being 'ung vrais home' rests, in the eyes of the narrator, not upon the performance of masculinity and living 'as a man' in society, but upon the genitalia which one has. This is a reductively essentializing return to the idea of gender as rooted in biology rather than performance and identity. It suggests that the validity of an identity rests on physical characteristics, whether present at birth or acquired during life. Much like in 'Yde et Olive', the performance can be completely convincing, but without the conventional proof under the costume, they are still not quite accepted as authentic men, as though the phallus itself somehow defines masculinity, and all other characteristics only add to its signifying power.

Nonetheless, Blanchandin.e's physical transition can still be interpreted as undermining the cisnormative framework of society. So, the narrator stresses when Blanchandin.e exhibits their newly-acquired phallus that it is not just an acceptable phallus, but a particularly large and thick one, for 'le membre qu'estoit gros et quarrés'[57] (ll. 16357). Whilst this does play to the traditional idea that bigger is better and that a large penis is a symbol of virility, the very fact that Blanchandin.e was assigned female at birth and is now such a striking example of masculinity undermines the very idea of masculinity itself, particularly if it rests on nothing more than a member that can be acquired by people who did not have one to start with. Moreover, Sautman notes Blanchandin.e's description of their genitals as an 'escourgie' [whip] (l. 16349), which she claims 'transmits the image of flexibility and sharpness, of slightly unorthodox erotic stimulation, rather than of bluntness and of strength'.[58] So, even following their physical change, Blanchandin.e is still conscious of their ambiguous sexuality and gender identity, and has a relationship with their new organ which might be seen as acknowledging the flexibility and fluidity of biological sex as well as of gender presentation. As Butler articulates, sex is not 'a bodily given on which the construct of gender is artificially imposed, but... a *cultural* norm which governs the materialization of bodies'.[59] The cul-

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57   The member was big and thick

58   *Same sex love and desire among women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Francesca Sautman and Pamela Sheingorn (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 218

59   Judith Butler, *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of "sex"* (Routledge: 2011), p.

tural norms are so ingrained that the body itself cannot be read without them, and there is no solid foundation; our very interpretation defines and shapes bodies themselves. However, these norms are also so present that they can alter our perception of people despite other gendered behaviour. So, Kimberlee Campbell comments that:

> As the narrative demonstrates, performance aligned with socially constructed conceptualizations of gender is powerful; only the re-velation of the female body, through sight or touch, can destabilize Blanchandine's incarnation of the male knight.[60]

These fundamental edicts of gender mean that, even with all the trappings of gender and its believable performance, physical characteristics form the core of these constructed concepts, and can 'destabilize' a seemingly safe received identity.

However, even with a new masculine body which should legitimise their place in society, the queer characters are still not entirely accepted as valid men, and are still somehow viewed as challenging the *status quo*. So, Blanchandin.e is recognised by someone who knew them when they per-formed a feminine role; this character becomes so confused upon seeing a penis on what he thinks is someone female-assigned, that he is no longer able to make sense of Blanchandin.e or to connect their new masculine body with the feminine perception he had of them in the past. He be-comes intensely confused and unable to process what is going on, since his fixed notion of gender has let him down and he cannot comprehend how a social truth might be disregarded in favour of personal authenticity and its physical confirmation. Moreover, whilst Blanchandin.e does accede to the throne with their wife and reign for a short while, soon they are over-turned, and indeed it is possible to see the chopping off of their right arm as a symbol of castration.[61] This fall from grace suggests that, despite the sustained exploration, questioning and queering of gender, and the mirac-ulous physical change to confirm the legitimacy of this experience in the

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60   *Cultural Performances in Medieval France: Essays in Honor of Nancy Freeman Regala-do*, ed. Eglal Doss-Quinby, Roberta L. Krueger, E. Jane Burns (D. S. Brewer: 2007), p. 87.
61   See Karen Adams, 'Kissing Cousins: Incest and Sex Change in Tristan de Nanteuil', *Newberry Essays in Medieval and Early Modern Studies*: Volume 7, (2013), p. 52

eyes of God, such unconventional characters cannot be allowed to flourish until the end of the texts and remain happy. They are too subversive and have undermined existing political and social frameworks, requiring them to be "put back in their place" by a return to convention and a neat rounding off of the story within safe social and sexual norms.

Still, Sautman writes that the idea of sex as automatically heterosexual and requiring penetration of a vagina with a penis is 'a predicate that self-destructs, however, because the narrative inscription of androgynous bodies as locus of desire and the carefully constructed passage from female to male are complicated by symbolic patterns of female sexual ambiguity'.[62] Similarly to in 'Yde et Olive', in *Tristan de Nanteuil,* an allegedly heterosexual women is attracted precisely by the genderbending character's androgyny. So, Sautman explores the idea that

> From the heavily belaboured question "How will they-could they-do it?" one thus glides imperceptibly over the crucial question, "Why does she pass so well?" Or does she?" Is it "the androgyny of their cross-dressed bodies" that attracts other women?[63]

The attraction of the two wives-to-be in the text to the genderqueering characters is certainly described as resting heavily on the epicene qualities of their respective love-interests. So, Clarinde is attracted by what she calls Blanchandin.e's 'beaulté fine'[64] (l. 15898), and the description of their appearance explains that 'sy doulz chevalier…/…estoit moult jeunes, point de barbe n'avoit'[65] (ll. 12971-72). Here too, characters' attraction to Blanchandin.e rests in the youth's very sexual ambiguity and their subtle defiance of gendered expectations through androgynous qualities. Combined with their transgressive presentation as a gender they were not assigned, it is the rebellious and non-conforming aspect of these characters which makes them so appealing and fascinating, not only to other characters, but to the audience too.

This fascination can manifest itself both positively and negatively. So, when Tristan discovers that Blanchandin.e's body has changed, he is deeply

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62   *Same sex love and desire among women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Francesca Sautman and Pamela Sheingorn (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 219
63   Ibid, 214
64   Fine/delicate beauty
65   This gentle knight…was very young, he had no beard

distressed and exclaims 'Aÿ…con dure departie'[66] (l.19327), partly lamenting their maiming, but also struggling to make peace with the alterations to a character who used to be under his influence and submissive to his will. Nonetheless, when Tristan is able to make his peace with this change, there is an unequivocally homoerotic scene in which Tristan

> Dessus le corps au roy [Blanchandin.e] sy alla tresbucher.
>
> Eulx deux cheent pasmés, et se vont embrasser.
>
> Ly ung commence l'autre humblement a baiser.
>
> Chascun des deux souspire et prent a lermoier.[67] (ll. 20708-11)

However, the surrounding knights are clearly made uncomfortable by such a physical display of homoeroticism and one is so put out that he awkwardly encourages Tristan 'S'en alons a la court, il est temps de menger'[68] (l. 20733). Still, now that they have acquired a masculine body and the accompanying privilege and status in society, Tristan is now willing to treat King Blanchandin far better than he ever treated Blanchandin.e. They are safely reabsorbed back into the homoerotic (but not homosexual) fold of male bonding within chivalric knightly communities, with Blanchandin.e's unconventional gender history being assimilated into the cistem so as to be made invisible, or to drop away as they are maimed and eventually lose their power and die. On the one hand, Blanchandin.e's change is minimised and forgotten at the end with their reabsorption into the fold, but on the other, it is all the more remarkable that they can take a "normal" place in society given all the conventions they have flouted.

Overall, Blanchandin.e and Aye/Gaudïon relate to their problematic gender in very different ways, the former using their transition as a way of gaining social independence and status in spite of their transgression, the latter employing this subversion as a symbol of personal power and a deconstruction of gender's reality as anything other than a social construct. Although achieved in a distinct fashion, both characters' genderbending shows the audience a new form of being, in which authenticity, commit-

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66   Alas…what a harsh separation
67   He fell onto the body of the king/They both fall swooning, and kiss each other./One begins to kiss the other humbly./Each of them sighs and begins to weep
68   Let us go to the court, it is time to eat

ment and flamboyant performance can allow an apparent underdog to go from strength to strength in the exploration of their own transgressive but genuine identity.

Conclusion

Despite the set and hierarchical structure of medieval conceptions of gender and societal roles, authors and their characters still find valid and productive outlets on the margins of normative society. By engaging in transgressive and queer play in a fictional literary space, it was possible to envision a new kind of identity-building, in which the restrictive rules and regulations of the real world no longer applied, and lives conducted secretly could be explored in all their exciting experimentation. This is not to say that they presented a utopia where no difficulties occurred, but rather a fable on characters who dared to deviate from norms and lead their divergent existences successfully.

'Yde et Olive' and the Aye/Gaudïon and Blanchandin.e episodes of *Tristan de Nanteuil* construct characters who challenge authority with great personal and social benefit, permitting a glimpse of what authenticity to one's socially unacceptable identity might mean. The former *chanson de geste* focuses more on the building of a loving relationship and queer support, and Yde's great success in appropriating and performing a masculine role, whilst the latter probes different interpretations of deviant behaviour, whether as a defiant feminist statement or as partial progress towards liberation from social shackles and constraints. Both evince a hopeful message of personal truth and the diverse potential of non-normative ways of life. By bending gender and questioning the presumed stability of identity and the body, these texts ask the reader to engage with plural interpretations and to allow their own words and identities to be shifted in a bold move to make everyday life that little bit more unusual, that little bit queerer.

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Reviews

Emma Smith, *This Is Shakespeare* (London: Pelican, 2019); ISBN: 978-0-241-39215-7, 349 pages; £20.

Shakespeare offers a most compelling gap-fill exercise. For each question in this exercise, the definitive punctuation mark, word, or phrase is missing, as the author teasingly leaves a proliferation of possible interpretations. As dramatic art, gaps open up surrounding the physical appearance of characters, the absence of narratorial voice, and the relative sparsity of stage directions. Questions, then, rather than answers immediately suggest themselves. How useful is it to attempt to fill in these gaps based on an attempt to restore the author's original meaning? Should we even attempt the exercise at all, or is it better to celebrate the proliferation of meaning in plays emancipated from the burden of a ghostly presence?

Emma Smith's refreshing answer, in her illuminating new book, *This Is Shakespeare*, is that these very gaps in Shakespeare are 'his dominant and defining characteristic'.[1] Shakespeare leaves gaps for his audience to fill in and this is what makes him so vital. In this approach, the quality of 'gappiness' or ambiguity thus becomes the essential life-supporting 'oxygen' of the plays. 'Shakespeare' rather than an 'inert noun' is mobilised into an 'active verb' that requires the participation of an audience to complete the picture: 'to Shakespeare' is the activity of 'posing questions, unsettling certainties, challenging orthodoxies, opening out endings'.[2]

The central argument of the book is that Shakespeare generates questions rather than providing answers. This claim has its roots in Smith's lecture and podcast series *Approaching Shakespeare*. Each episode in this series focuses on a single play to explore a wide range of possible critical frameworks and interpretations in which to approach the Shakespearean text. While being both richly illuminating and highly accessible, perhaps most importantly these lectures provide numerous critical gateways into the text which make them an indispensable resource for students and teachers. Many of the ideas explored in each episode have the potential to be usefully broken down into distinct segments which offer to enrich particular lines of enquiry. *This Is Shakespeare* develops out of this back-

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1   Emma Smith, *This Is Shakespeare* (London: Pelican, 2019), p. 3.

2   Ibid., pp. 3-4.

ground by narrowing the scope to present twenty essays focusing on in-dividual plays which themselves reflect the value of the lectures on which they build: highly accessible, deeply enjoyable, and, in consummate Shake-speare style, they inspire questions.

For Smith, one of the main reasons why Shakespeare's plays are so uniquely positioned to inspire questions is due to their 'gappy' quality. By focusing on the quality of 'gappiness', *This Is Shakespeare* signals its dis-tance from well-worn notions of Shakespeare as a literary genius who ex-pressed fundamental truths about human nature. Where the essays are perhaps most scintillating is in their attribution of a life force and vitality to the plays themselves, rather than as an attribute of their long dead au-thor—the book makes this point regularly.

Plot and narrative in Smith's readings often take on a self-conscious quality, in which characters recognise that they are part of a play. Plot is often the controlling device of individual agency. The most striking visual image of this idea is in Smith's chapter on *The Comedy of Errors*. The rap-idly accelerating assembly line on which Charlie Chaplain works in the film *Modern Times* (1936), echoes how in *The Comedy of Errors* 'people are things…defined by exterior appearance and by the transfer of props, and as the plot accelerates they become increasingly, frenetically mechanical'.[3] A rebellion against such a controlling plot is evident in *Richard III*, where Richard 'seiz[es] his own play by the scruff of the neck right from the start and he doesn't let go'.[4] This attempt to control his own narrative is crystal-lised in the line from his opening soliloquy: 'I am determinéd to prove a villain' (1.1.30). As Smith shows, 'determinéd' here 'has the dual meaning both of human agency, and of some sort of cosmic direction'.[5] Whether Richard determines his own destiny or has it imposed by forces outside himself thus becomes a central and recurring question of the play.

The question of personal agency is also a theme explored in the essays on *Macbeth* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Throughout *Macbeth*, Smith observes, questions of agency are increasingly problematized as they are 'pulled between the incompatible but simultaneous realms of the human and the supernatural'.[6] Already in the play's opening scenes there are ques-tions to be asked surrounding whether Macbeth is in control of his own actions or whether he is under the spell of supernatural forces. Here Smith

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3   Ibid., p. 51.
4   Ibid., p. 26.
5   Ibid., p. 37.
6   Ibid., p. 249.

turns to Richard Burton's influential book *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), which offers a three-part structure on the causes of melancholy. These three headings can be reduced to the following: melancholia that proceeds from the individual him/herself; melancholia that results from the negative actions of other people; and melancholia that has its origin in supernatural or metaphysical causes.[7] These possible explanations which coexist in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* usefully map onto the nature of causal explanations in *Macbeth*, 'a play that is more interested in exploring its own competing aetiologies than explaining them'.[8] Even the most tempting explanation for the causes of the play's spiral of tragical events, Lady Macbeth, resists any totalising interpretation as the play keeps its competing claimants over the question of causality in the foreground as an essential part of its continuing power to unsettle its audience.

In Smith's essay on *Much Ado About Nothing*, the enquiry into Don John's status as one of Shakespeare's most unremarkable villains shifts the emphasis from his individual significance onto the metatheatrical value of his role as a blocking figure controlling the play's movement towards its conclusion. Why is everyone taken in by a man so openly malevolent? Although he speaks only four per cent of the play's lines, Don John 'symbolises something larger than himself'.[9] The answer to why the characters and even the plot are taken in by Don John lies in the competing dual narratives that are held together throughout the play. One 'reinstates male bonds and is therefore, implicitly, anti-comic; the other educates men into accepting primary allegiances with women, and thus conforms to comic necessity'.[10] Don John is convincing to others because he allows the men for a moment to believe in their own misogynistic views and avoid the feared commitment of marriage. His ultimate value is thus in acting as 'a kind of generic speed bump to slow down [the play's] progress, delaying and deferring its movement towards marriage'.[11]

Shakespeare's 'gappiness' is further magnified by the way his plays argue both sides of a viewpoint and withhold any final judgement. Thus in *Richard II*, Smith's central question, was it right for Bolingbroke to take the throne from his cousin Richard, explores the case for both sides while ultimately claiming the impossibility of gaining any 'stable sense...

7   Ibid., see p. 241.
8   Ibid., p. 241.
9   Ibid., p. 138.
10   Ibid., p. 143.
11   Ibid., p. 134.

of Shakespeare's own view on the conflict'.[12] One of the reasons for this quality of elusiveness Smith suggests lies in the humanist education that Shakespeare is likely to have received. Part of this education involved an emphasis on speaking *in utramque partem*, (on both sides), in defence of opposing viewpoints. By adapting this rhetorical device to create the multivalent scenarios of his dramas, any temptation to derive a particular message from the plays thus has to negotiate between competing voices from both sides. Here Smith reminds her readers 'of the old Hollywood saying, "if you want to send a message, use Western Union" [which] is a good one for the early modern theatre'.[13]

The significance of an early modern education which valued a balance gained between oppositional arguments is clearly apparent in *Julius Caesar*. Indeed one of the set topics for Elizabethan schoolboys arguing *in utramque partem* was the question of whether Brutus was right to kill Caesar. The play itself is deeply self-conscious about the interpretive possibilities of the events it unfolds, possessing what Smith refers to as a 'hermeneutic consciousness'[14] most clearly discernible in Mark Anthony's 'Friends, Romans, Countrymen' speech in Act 3. This speech challenges Brutus' claims about Caesar's ruthless ambition through Mark Anthony's defence of Caesar's generosity. At the same time, Mark Anthony's repeated refrain 'Brutus is an honourable man' (3.2.83), is continually destabilized to ultimately mean its opposite. In the most compelling argument for the play's possession of a 'hermeneutic consciousness', Smith recalls Jean Baudrillard's famous contention that the Gulf War did not in fact take place. What we witnessed as observers of the media reports was only a distanced simulation of the truth hiding behind those narrative accounts and visual images of the event. In the same way, Shakespeare holds his audience at a distance from those events, 'stag[ing] that very nothingness behind our interpretations, refusing to give us any access to the event itself, only its subsequent and contested readings'.[15] The play's hermeneutic consciousness thus marks the gaps to be filled in by the audience.

So Shakespeare is a playwright who raises questions and always refuses an answer. But this argument is not exactly new. The nineteenth century

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12 Ibid., pp. 53-54.
13 Ibid., p. 154.
14 Ibid., p. 151.
15 Ibid.

Anglo-Irish critic Edward Dowden had already pointed out this Shake-spearean quality in 1875:

> Many of us seem to think it the all-essential thing to be provided with answers to the difficult questions which the world propounds, no matter how little the answers be to these great questions. Shakspere seems to have considered it more important to put the questions greatly, to feel the supreme problems.[16]

 'Whereas for Dowden the 'supreme problems' involved Shakespeare's pointing at the great mysteries, the critical tradition has since been brought down from such lofty heights to the contingency of our own social and cultural world. As Smith remarks: 'It is for us, as readers, critics, theatre-goers and theatre-makers, to take up their challenge, leverage their restless interrogation and reimagine them for our own world'.[17]

Our own world is a solipsistic and narcissistic one. Some of Smith's most engaging essays speak clearly to our contemporary concerns with celebrity culture and self-obsession. Hamlet for instance is commonly viewed as a character who anticipates our own modern condition. But to read the play in this way is arguably to betray a narcissism which holds up a mirror to our own age. The forward-facing direction of the play, as it moves closer towards a proximity with modernity, is refreshingly reversed in Smith's essay on *Hamlet*. This reversal opens up a view of the play's 'thoroughgoing nostalgia',[18] directing attention away from our own solipsistic interpretations and towards an appreciation of *Hamlet* as a product of its own historical moment. To do so is to see the play as burdened by an anxious concern with the past. Hamlet's own name, for example, is an echo of his dead father that signals the play's retrospective tone. The iconic visual image of Hamlet holding the skull of Yorick as he delivers his soliloquy crystallizes the play's pull to the past. In contrast with Claudius's forward-looking pragmatism, Hamlet's progress is often held back: 'he breaks off his relationship with Ophelia; he does not return to university; he wants the players to perform an old-fashioned trick...his primary at-

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16 Edward Dowden, Shakspere: A Critical Study of his Mind and Art (London: Henry S. King, 1875), p. 34.
17 Smith, p. 319.
18 Ibid., p. 170.

tachments are to the dead not the living'.[19] Such attachments suggest not so much that Hamlet is an anticipation of modernity but that he believes the past to be a better place.

The essay on *Anthony & Cleopatra* reimagines the play in a world of celebrity culture as the perfect *Hello!* magazine cover article. This format emphasizes the play's preoccupations with 'money, sex, scandal, glamorous international locations and exotic interiors, and, above all, publicity itself'.[20] The play, however, never offers a vista behind the glamour of public show. On display is a story of love and tragic departure, but to read the play this way is to assent to a belief in the glamourized content of the *Hello!* article. Anthony and Cleopatra are both ancient celebrities, and their own self-titled play allows them to parade their celebrity on the public stage. This perspective from the outside threatens to rupture the genre of tragedy itself, as the interior lives of the characters are obscured by the illusory effects of the cameras. In the end, what Anthony and Cleopatra both fear is not so much being apart from each other, but public humiliation: the fear of 'public show, or at least, public show that is not on their own terms'.[21]

One further noteworthy theme that runs through many of the essays in *This Is Shakespeare* is the considerable pushback against readings that rely on authorial biography. As Smith notes in the essay on *Hamlet*, the fashion for mapping a sense of Shakespeare's emotional life against his plays was an invention of the nineteenth century, which also produced the authorship controversy – a belief that anything in the plays which contradicted this perceived emotional maturity could not have been written by Shakespeare.[22] Arranging the plays to align with an imagined biography was perhaps a reflection of the Victorians' own concern with progress, although in the last decades of the nineteenth century critical attention was shifting from the author to the dramatic texts themselves.[23] What has perhaps provided the greatest temptation on this model is to view Prospero as bearing close affinities with Shakespeare the man, and the play's closing scenes as a sublimation into art of Shakespeare's farewell to the theatre.

Smith's essay on *The Tempest* muddies the waters of this biographical view, reminding us that there is no overall consensus on its place among

19   Ibid., p. 167.
20   Ibid., p. 255.
21   Ibid., p. 261.
22   Ibid., see p. 173.
23   See Stuart Sillars, *Shakespeare & The Victorians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 18.

the other late romances such as *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*. There is often no other reason for locating the play at the end of his career than that we want it to be his final play, which allows us to believe in the farewell narrative of its closing scenes. What further complicates the biographical approach is the fact that *The Tempest* is the first play in the First Folio of 1623. This offers an example of how placing the play at the beginning of Shakespeare's career rather than its end has led critics to find convincing arguments in support of the play being a product of both periods of his career as a playwright. One way out of this biographical model was suggested by Lytton Strachey in his 1904 essay, 'Shakespeare's Final Period'.[24] In this essay, Strachey suggests that Shakespeare's boredom with his own art is clearly evident in *The Tempest*, a view echoed by Gary Taylor in an article published in the Guardian in 2004.[25] The fact that these varying interpretations remain open is further confirmation of Smith's point that 'Shakespeare's plays generate questions rather than answers',[26] questions, it is worth emphasising, that have crucial relevance to our own cultural situation.

The ways in which the critical reappraisals of Shakespeare in every period of British culture provide illuminating reflections of a cultural moment in space and time is masterfully demonstrated in Smith's essay on *King Lear*. This 'whistle-stop tour of responses to *King Lear*'[27] is set in motion by positioning the play as central to the British cultural imagination of the twentieth century as a witness of two world wars. A. D. Nuttall's argument that art as moral has shifted to an art as provocation projects an even darker tone onto *King Lear*, as (in Smith's words) 'the newly cruel *King Lear* whispers its siren song of nihilism into our willing postmodern ears'.[28] Closer to Shakespeare's time, the Irish poet dramatist Nahum Tate notably adapted the play in 1681 to restore King Lear to his throne, reflecting a society that had recently experienced the restoration of Charles II. The later eighteenth century's preoccupation with moral duty and justice is clear in Samuel Johnson's well-known horror over the death of Cordelia. But the neoclassical concerns of Johnson's age are forcibly replaced by the Romantic celebration of emotional extremity and the sublime. For the Romantics, Smith observes, 'the idea of the sublime is an absolute value,

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24 Lytton Strachey, *Books and Characters, French and English* (Chatto and Windus, 1922).
25 Gary Taylor, 'Shakespeare's Midlife Crisis', *The Guardian*, 3 May, 2004.
26 Smith, p. 319.
27 Ibid., p. 229.
28 Ibid., p. 224. See A. D. Nuttall, *Why Does Tragedy Give Pleasure?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

in the monumental and awesome scale of nature unconstrained by petty social notions of morality and justice'.[29] Nature in Shakespeare, then, becomes to the Romantic age the ultimate arbiter of the world's justice, so that the human forms of organised justice are placed under its thrall.

By drawing together the variety of critical responses to *King Lear*, this allows Smith to telescope so much of what makes her book important:

> Spending some time on the critical reception of King Lear shows how critics engage with the question of how bleak the play is on their own historical, cultural and aesthetic terms. They get the Lear they need, rewriting as necessary through adaptation, criticism and also through performance. But they – and we – are not the only ones doing the rewriting. Shakespeare not only takes his source materials by the scruff of the neck in order to produce this play, he also seems to have returned later to King Lear to tweak, rework and to revisit his concluding lines in particular.[30]

Shakespeare's timelessness thus grows out of the gaps. Rewriting and revision is an activity whereby, consciously or unconsciously, each period inscribes their own cultural moment into the text. This 'gappy dramaturgy'[31] of Shakespeare's art offers a fecund space for such cultural etchings to be done and undone. It is this quality that allows Smith herself to demonstrate his relevance to us in our solipsistic and narcissistic age.

<div align="right">

Christopher Fell

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29 Ibid., p. 228.
30 Ibid., p. 233.
31 Ibid., p. 210.

George Southcombe, The Culture of Dissent in Restoration England: 'the wonders of the Lord' (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2019); ISBN: 978-0-86-193353-2, 209 pages; £50.

The restoration of Charles II to the British throne in 1660 drastically switched the nation's power dynamic. Nonconformists, the leaders of spiritual and political change during the Civil War and Interregnum, were condemned as rebels against the monarchy and the national church. A new penal code restrained their church meetings, their political activism, and their publications. This has led scholars, including Christopher Hill and N.H. Keeble, to interpret Restoration dissent as an 'experience of defeat'—an inward turn necessitated by the crushing of dissent's Civil War and Interregnum aspirations.[1] George Southcombe's *The Culture of Dissent in Restoration England: 'the wonders of the Lord'* challenges this view of Restoration dissent as passive and aligns itself with scholars such as Sharon Achinstein and Mark Goldie to examine some 'more outward-looking and specifically political currents in Nonconformist work.'[2]

Southcombe presents involvement in print culture as the central means by which nonconformists remained active and 'outward-looking' during the Restoration. His introduction demonstrates the disproportionate dominance which dissenters had in national print and reading cultures, considering that they made up only about ten percent of the nation. Nonconformist texts emerge as impactful and powerful. These texts were not confined to particular religious confessions, but were aimed purposefully at wider audiences, whether explicitly, by directly naming those audiences in the title or preface, or implicitly, by appropriating popular literary cultures. Many dissenting texts went through multiple editions. From this, Southcombe infers that these texts did indeed reach audiences far beyond the author's community or religious sect, and offers evidence of how contemporary conformists read and valued the various texts.

This focus on print culture sets the stage for an exploration of the possibilities for dialogue between dissent and conformity in Restoration Britain. Proof that the opposing sides dialogued, rather than segregated themselves, could indeed be considered the central thrust of Southcombe's research. Such dialogue between nonconformists and conformists is ex-

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1   Christopher Hill, *The Experience of Defeat: Milton and some contemporaries* (London: Faber, 1984), p. 1.
2   Southcombe, p. 22.

amined in case studies of five authors—all ministers of various dissenting sects. Although these men crafted their messages uniquely, appropriating popular literary genres as well as manuscript and print circulation techniques which would have appealed to their enemies, Southcombe suggests that their messages were representative of the feelings of the wider dissenting community. The first chapter examines the Presbyterian minister Robert Wild, whose satires ranked with Rochester's in popularity among contemporaries. Southcombe argues that Wild uses poetry as a means of political dialoguing to free Presbyterianism from the stain of the regicide and champion its comprehension within the national church. The General Baptist minister Thomas Grantham likewise desired comprehension, and approached this goal through textual exchanges with various, sympathetic Anglican ministers. Southcombe's third chapter on John Whitehead, a Quaker minister, 'calls into question the characterisation of dissent as increasingly introspective,' and demonstrates how the Quaker theology of inner light 'legitimated, indeed necessitated, sometimes critical engagement with political and religious authority.'[3] The final chapter examines the apocalyptic warnings in the writings of the Welsh Fifth Monarchist Vavasor Powell and the Particular Baptist Benjamin Keach. The political implications of millenarianism, which sought to replace the earthly king with King Jesus, were deeply radical and dangerous. However, Powell balanced his political convictions with tender, pastoral care, and Keach's apocalyptic warnings came in the form of popular poetry. Southcombe's approach to all the texts is historical and social, rather than aesthetic, leaving much richness to be discovered in the texts' literary nuances by future scholars.

A unique and vibrant nonconformist activism emerges through Southcombe's studies of these five nonconformist ministers. Avoiding the attractive extremes of either an internal, spiritual focus or an external, political focus, Southcombe frames nonconformity as a dualism, which is at once pastoral and political. Even when these ministers lost their congregations through persecutory laws such as the Act of Uniformity or the Conventicles Act, they continued their pastoral ministries in print, carefully expounding gospel truths. Yet alongside pastoral publications for lost flocks, these ministers also published politically-charged texts, which sought to prompt change more broadly within the nation. Rather than emphasizing the importance or impact of one printed outlet above another, Southcombe argues that these ministers desired to be recognized in both their

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3   Southcombe, p. 128.

pastoral and political capacities—capacities which they viewed not as antithetical but as interdependent.

Although Southcombe's research champions the active nature of nonconformity in the Restoration, it still reveals, in some ways, an overarching 'experience of defeat.'[4] Persecution did not silence dissenters, take away their pastoral ministries, or crush their political and ecclesial aspirations for the nation. Yet the fact that they remained actively involved in national debates regarding religious or political practices did not necessitate their success in these debates. While Southcombe proves that their voices were indeed heard by their enemies, thanks to a masterful appropriation of the genres and readership of the popular literary culture, he admits their inability to impact their enemies. Robert Wild, whose satires were read seriously by some conformists as part of the contemporary political debates, failed to evoke the Presbyterian settlement. Thomas Grantham, whose dialoguing with various Anglican ministers stimulated friendship and charity, could not ultimately achieve unity and concord between nonconformity and the Church of England. Quakerism remained mistrusted even after John Whitehead's careful reframing of the theology of inner light as positive for the nation. Benjamin Keach's apocalyptic warnings in fashionable genres may have entertained the nation, but they did not change the nation. In these readings, Southcombe questions Mark Goldie's argument for religious mutability, or 'porosity,' during the Restoration, suggesting that these dissenters' strong adherence to certain convictions only allowed them to dialogue so far with their enemies.[5] Thus, the book frames nonconformity as dynamic, vocal, and masterfully interactive with the Restoration cultural context, and ultimately, as a defeated cause. The Act of Toleration in 1689, which freed dissenters from decades of persecution, is framed not as a moment of triumph so much as an acceptance of the fact that nonconformity and conformity would only ever co-exist; they would never be reconciled.

The book's subtitle captures this poignant reality. 'The wonders of the Lord' refers to the Exodus narrative of God working visible wonders through the enslaved, persecuted Israel, and yet these wonders being rejected by Egypt, leading to great destruction within the nation. John Whitehead used this image to warn conformists that their rejection of the signs

4   Christopher Hill, *The Experience of Defeat: Milton and some contemporaries* (London: Faber, 1984), p. 1.
5   Cf. Mark Goldie, *Roger Morrice and the Puritan whigs: the Entring book*, 1677–1691 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2016), p. xii.

of God, which had been manifested in dissent, would end in the nation's destruction.[6] Thus, rather than keeping to themselves what they believed to be God's answers to contemporary religious or political contentions, nonconformists sought to share spiritual insights with their enemies, in the hopes that their enemies' hearts would not be hardened like Pharaoh's, in hope that the nation would be saved. Thus, the religion of transgression, of nonconformity to national policies, practices, and culture, shows itself to be a religion deeply concerned with the fate of the nation.

OLIVIA ANDERSON

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6   Southcombe, p. 126

Notes on Contributors

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Serin Gioan is a young researcher with an interest in gender studies, queer theory and feminism as applied to a range of texts. They have mainly studied medieval literature, and hope to continue reading old texts with new eyes, and revisiting stories in novel ways. In their free time, Serin enjoys hiking, looking after animals and playing the guitar.

Sigrid Koerner is a sculptor and graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge. She recently finished her masters in English Literature at Oxford. Her research focuses on the intersection between visual art and poetics in the late Middle Ages. She is currently planning a PhD on the choreography and impact of moveable effigies of Christ in late medieval church drama.

Diana Little received her MSt in English (1700-1830) from Jesus College, Oxford in July 2019. She is now in the first year of her PhD in English at Princeton University. Her research in the past has primarily focused on the poetry of William Wordsworth and Charlotte Smith, and how these poets engaged with eighteenth and nineteenth-century geological science. Though it is early days, Diana hopes that her PhD dissertation will simi-

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George Manning is a DPhil (PhD) student at St Edmund Hall, University of Oxford. Specialising in Old Norse-Icelandic literature and culture, his research interests include the *Íslendingasögur* (sagas of Icelanders), emotion theory, sexuality and gender studies, and the Old Norse mythic tradition. His thesis, supervised by Professor Heather O'Donoghue, is entitled 'Anger in the *Íslendingasögur*'.

Hannah Marmaro received her Masters of Studies in English Literature, 1830-1914 from St. Catherine's College, University of Oxford. Her research interests focus mainly on popular and genre fiction, with an emphasis on historical interdisciplinary approaches. Areas of particular interest include representations of violence, masculinity and animal studies.

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