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From the specific focus of “Legacies of Darwin” and the concentration on structures in “Modelling”, the third issue of Kaleidoscope presents a forum for the interdisciplinary discussion of subjectivity and identity. In short, in this issue we concentrate on what it means to be human. The movement between the articles is one that mirrors both a linear chronology and a mapping of expansion as it moves from the particular to the general. The analyses progress from the single figure in a specific historical period to a situating of the human being not in time but in space, a contemporary reading of universal themes. The articles address questions of femininity and of masculinity, of homosexuality when being human seems restricted by heteronormativity. The point at which our face-to-face human encounters begin is problematised and the bonds of justice and right that these relations invoke analysed. The use of technology in forming (representations of) the temporally and spatially situated self figures throughout, and the articles and reviews, across disciplines and approaches, explore what it is to be human.

Katherine Heavey looks at the difficulties of (re)presenting classical themes and characters experienced in the 17th and 18th Centuries. Focusing on the character of Medea, she traces the alterations deemed necessary by writers of that time to enable audiences to relate to Medea as human, as woman, and as a tragic or pathetic character. Rachel Hoyes investigates Hart Crane’s use of poetry to position himself in the world, as he sought to understand and explore his humanity and sexuality, his heritage and his country through a poetic inscription of his subjectivity.

David W. Hill takes up the question of Being Human through Levinasian ethics in relation to the mother-foetus conflict. He raises some fascinating questions in regard to the use of ultrasound in rendering the foetus a patient in its own right and the ethical and legal implications of the relationship between the mother and foetus. Jan-Hendrik Grotevent presents a human being spatially contextualising itself. He explores the ways in which being human is manifested in relation to landscape and the mutual effects that the human and his or her environment have.

The five reviews focus on works which reflect on the question of being human in the globalised structures and systems of our contemporary reality. Heather Yeung presents Michel Serres’ philosophical engagement with humanity’s evolution in sense and thought. Rachel Douglas-Jones critiques João Biehl’s work on the subject for whom humanity is no longer simply a given but is tied to medication and his or her position within the network of hospitals, governments, NGOs and pharmaceutical companies. David W. Hill analyses Adriana Cavarero’s addition to the body of works on terrorism, in which she offers the term “horrorism” as
a neologism that best describes or defines the acts of violence perpetrated through suicide bombing. Brook’s edited volume *The Global Justice Reader* is shown by Duncan Proctor to gather together essays on nationalism, cosmopolitanism, international justice, human rights and their abuses on a global scale. Naomi Klein’s *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* is reviewed by Paulina Aroch Fugelie, who reflects on the work’s aim – documenting the incommensurability between the free market and human freedom, and thereby undermining the supposed ‘natural’ unity of neo-liberalism and democracy.

The concentration on what it is to be human in this issue lays the foundation – insecure as it is – for issue 3.2 on “Beyond the Human”. The call for papers is available now at http://www.dur.ac.uk/kaleidoscope/newsandcfp/cfp_current/

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‘We Poor Helpless Women’

*Humanising Medea, 1648–1761*

KATHERINE HEAVEY

In his *Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, published in 1668, John Dryden criticises the ancient dramatists for their insistence on recycling the same themes and stories from classical mythology, thereby running the risk of boring their audiences. He notes:

> [...] one Oedipus, Hercules, or Medea, had been tolerable; poor people they scap’d not so good cheap: they had still the Chapon Bouillé set before them, till their appetites were cloy’d with the same dish, and the Novelty being gone, the pleasure vanish’d.¹

As Dryden’s complaint would suggest, and although Horace had suggested that dramatists could use and reuse classical themes,² Restoration authors struggled with the issue of how the classics could legitimately be rewritten. In his assessment of Nicholas Rowe’s 1705 tragedy *Ulysses*, Samuel Johnson followed Dryden in pointing out that often, classical stories were too well-known to grip an audience or a reader: moreover, he differs from Horace, in maintaining that the details of such famous stories should not be altered to create a new work. Johnson asserts:

> We have been too early acquainted with the poetical heroes, to expect any pleasure from their revival; to show them as they have already been shown, is to disgust by repetition; to give them new qualities, or new adventures, is to offend by violating received notions.³

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² In his *Ars Poetica*, Horace recommends using older texts, but cautions that a degree of sensitivity is necessary to create a meaningful work: *publica materies privati iuris erit, si / non circa vilem patulumque moraberis orbum, / nec verbo verbum curabis reddere fidus / interpres, nec desilies imitator in artum, unde pedem proferre pudor vetet aut operis lex* (131–35). ("In ground open to all you will win private rights, if you do not linger along the easy and open pathway, if you do not seek to render word for word as a slavish translator, and if in your copying you do not leap into the narrow well, out of which either shame or the laws of your task will keep you from stirring a step"). Horace, *‘Satires’, ‘Epistles’ and ‘Ars Poetica’*, trans. and ed. H Rushton Fairclough (London, Loeb Classical: Heinemann, 1929). All quotations from Horace are from this edition.

Nevertheless, despite Johnson’s and Dryden’s reservations, in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the classics remained a fertile source of inspiration for authors, whether they wished to compose an entire work dealing with mythological themes and characters, or preferred to use the characters and situations they had encountered in their readings of the Greek and Latin classics as allusive or illustrative examples. At the same time, though, the works of the period saw these classical stories subtly altered in accordance with the tastes of the age; Allardyce Nicoll notes of the period “the classics still played their part in an age when pseudo-classicism warred with romantic sentiment”,4 but also cautions that “we must always remember that romanticism was moving against the ancient veneration of the classics” (71).

In this paper, I will examine several early modern revisionings of the story of Jason and Medea, particularly by Charles Gildon and Richard Glover. Despite Johnson’s insistence that the details of classical narratives or characters could not be altered, both authors make significant changes to the story they would have inherited from Seneca, from Ovid and Euripides. Specifically, though they follow Euripides and Seneca in focusing on the end of Medea’s story, her fury at Jason’s betrayal of her and her killing of their children and Jason’s new wife, both playwrights rewrite Medea’s character in an attempt to bring her in line with an acceptable human and feminine model. Whether they do so by underscoring the role of the classical gods, by portraying Medea as temporarily mad, or by following an alternative version of her story in which Medea does not kill her children at all, both authors take liberties with their classical models, liberties that are all intended to make Medea less culpable, more human and easier for an early modern audience to relate to understand.

By 1698, when Gildon’s revisioning of the myth, *Phaeton, Or the Fatal Divorce*, was published, English authors were very familiar with Medea’s story. Ovid’s two extant versions of Medea, in the *Heroides* and *Metamorphoses*, had circulated in England since the Middle Ages. Both Latin texts were frequently used and alluded to by authors including Chaucer, Gower and Shakespeare, and both were translated into English for the first time in 1567; the *Metamorphoses* by Arthur Golding, and the *Heroides* by George Turberville. Euripidean and Senecan drama were not well-known in medieval England, but in 1544 the Scottish dramatist George Buchanan translated Euripides’ *Medea* from Greek into Latin, and in 1566, Arthur Studley produced an English rendering of Seneca’s Latin tragedy, which itself had taken its cue from Euripides. Though they are now seldom admired, all these translations into English were hugely popular – Frederick Boas points to the influence of Turberville’s and Golding’s Ovids, and E. M. Spearing notes the popularity of Studley’s *Medea*.5 However, it is important to note that while these English translations were significant, as they introduced the classical Medea to a wider audience, they were not entirely trustworthy as reflections of their Greek and Latin originals. In their renderings of Medea, Elizabethan translators happily altered what did not suit their purpose. For example, in his translation of *Heroides* 6, the epistle the abandoned Hypsipyle writes to Jason, in which she reproaches him and curses her rival Medea, George Turberville includes Hypsipyle’s wish for Medea’s suicide: the Lemnian queen hopes

When sea and land she hath
Consum'd, up to the sky;
Let her go range like a Rogue
And by selfe slaughter die. (p.80)

Ovid’s *Heroides* has no reference to suicide, and instead Hypsipyle wishes: *cum mare, cum terras consumperit, aera temptet; / erret inops, expes, caede cruenta sua!* (6.161–2) (“When she shall have no hope more of refuge by the sea or by the land, let her make trial of the air; let her wander, destitute, bereft of hope, stained red with the blood of her murders!”)

Here, Turberville may make the addition in an effort to pass a firmer judgement on Medea (perhaps due to Renaissance discomfort with her links to pagan gods and her terrible crimes), and to portray her as subject to some kind of higher power, even if it is only that of her own guilty conscience. Such a flagrant deviation from his source text, particularly in what has been termed a “pedestrian translation” of Ovid, becomes highly significant, indicative of the threat Renaissance authors saw in Medea, and their desire to contain this threat by somehow punishing her behaviour. Indeed, its significance is apparent in the fact that by the end of the seventeenth century, over a hundred years after Turberville’s translation, English translators of Hypsipyle’s epistle such as Elkenah Settle and Matthew Stevenson continued to include her wish for Medea’s suicide.

John Studley’s Senecan Medea is also altered by the time she appears: most famously, Studley alters the Senecan play’s final lines uttered by a despairing Jason as Medea flies off in triumph having slaughtered his sons: *testare nullos esse, qua veheris, deos* (5.1027) (“bear witness that wherever you go there are no gods”). In the Preface to his 1581 *Tenne Tragedies* of Seneca, which included Studley’s *Medea*, Thomas Newton defends Seneca against the complaints of “squeymish Areopagites” (A3v) who complain at his presentation of vice. Newton argues that while Seneca may represent wickedness, “I doubt whether there bee any amongethe all the Catalogue of Heathen writers, that with more gravity of Philosophicall sentences [...] beateth down sinne, loose lyfe, dissolute dealinge, and unbridled sensuality: or that more sensibly, pithily, and bytingly layeth downe the guerdon of filthy lust, cloaked dissimulation and odious treachery” (A3v–A4v).

Of course, Medea’s escape at the end of the Senecan tragedy, after she has murdered both of her children, King Creon and Jason’s new wife, casts serious doubt on this pronouncement, and accordingly Studley steps in to give his expectant Elizabethan readers some sense of the consequences Medea must face. Jason’s Latin declaration of the Senecan admission of Medea as above and beyond human experience, unable to receive the gods’ assistance but also not subject to their will, is replaced by Studley with the lines: “Bear wytnesse grace of God is none / In place of thy repayre” (2889–90).

Fiona Macintosh sees this change as in line with Studley’s “Christianised world-view”, and
like Turberville’s reference to suicide in his *Heroides*, Studley’s insistence that God’s power endures, but that Medea is simply excluded from it, demonstrates an Elizabethan author’s dissatisfaction with the classical Medea’s famous escape. Here, Jason appears to be exercising a moral judgement on Medea, making her seem, if not a weak character, certainly a less powerful one, who must seek a place of “repayre” rather than going wherever she pleases. As Robert S. Miola puts it, 

Seneca’s Medea continues on as living testimony to the disorder of the world, as an embodiment of an evil so potent as to nullify divine power and presence; Studley’s Medea is simply a spectacular sinner, one who infects her surroundings and lives without God’s grace.¹⁴

Studley’s *Medea* is obviously not a faithful representation of his Latin original (though importantly, he makes sure his reader is fully aware of this). Accordingly, his Medea is not quite Seneca’s, is not the ruthlessly angry woman whose entire focus is on what revenge she can achieve against Jason in the one day before she escapes in triumph to the heavens. Between Seneca and Studley, medieval versions of the story have intervened, versions that stress Medea’s love and suffering, her vulnerability and Jason’s betrayal. The Renaissance Medea has become far more humanised than her classical ancestor, and accordingly, Studley, like Turberville, strives to make her accountable, as humans are, to some higher power, or to her own feelings of guilt and regret. Moreover, H. W. Herrington notes that in 1562, a statute “had fixed the death-penalty for those who used conjurations of evil and wicked spirits”.¹⁵ This interest in the legal consequences of witchcraft may have informed both Studley’s and Turberville’s interest in suggesting a punishment for Medea: later drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth century certainly betrays a determination to subject the Medea-like woman (Shakespeare’s Tamora and Lady Macbeth, William Alabaster’s Atossa) to human, rather than divine, justice.

If Elizabethan translations of Medea betrayed a sense of authorial disquiet at her seemingly boundless and bloodthirsty wickedness, then more original sixteenth-century works which used the character demonstrated the same anxiety. Although she and her crimes could be represented with grisly relish by authors such as William Painter, others were keen to hold her up as an example of classical and feminine vice that had been justly punished. The didactic works of Richard Robinson and George Whetstone, for example, see Medea rewritten to bemoan her cruel punishment in the afterlife and regret her crimes, while urging other women not to follow her example. As the earlier quotations from Dryden and Johnson suggest, after the Restoration, English authors struggled with many of the same problems when they encountered Medea. She was still translated into English in the period: for example, Edward Sherburne translated Seneca’s *Medea* into English in 1648. Though the printer notes that the work “is not-by him stil’d a Translation, but a Paraphrase” (A2v),¹⁶ the only significant alterations are Sherburne’s extensive explanatory notes, and within the text itself the occasional elucidation of a confusing reference, or conversely a deviation from Seneca’s words to display his own classical knowledge. Occasionally, Sherburne’s editorial decisions seem intended to somehow account for Medea’s actions, for example making Jason’s abandoning of her a cause of madness. Seneca describes the Medea of Act Three as exhibiting the signs *furoris* [...] *lymphati* (“of frenzied rage”), while Sherburne translates this as “Lymphaticke Rage” (C3r), and goes on to describe sufferers of this condition as “disposset of their senses”, either due to

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the anger of “some Nymph or wat'ry Deietie”, or else because of a “superfluitie of the Brains Moisture” (G3v).

Speaking of Euripides’ tragedy, which was used by Seneca, Edith Hall notes “His Medea is [...] the first known child-killing mother in Greek myth to perform the deed in cold blood; the others (Ino, Agave, Procris) seem always to have been given the ‘excuse’ of temporary madness”.17 Despite their use of Euripides and Seneca (who both have Medea plan to kill her children), later writers would follow Sherburne, and would return to the idea of madness as a way of explaining Medea’s horrifying revenge on Jason. By and large, though, Sherburne’s Medea appears entirely Senecan: it is significant, for example, that he does not see Medea as weakened when she escapes, and does seem to question his own beliefs, as Seneca’s Jason does, exclaiming “Goe, mount the skies; and by thy flight declare, / (If thou unpunish’d go'st) no Gods there are” (E3v). David Gowen suggests that Sherburne’s English Medea may have been performed in London in 1648.18 Elsewhere, though, Alfred Harbage identifies both Studley’s and Sherburne’s Medeas as closet dramas, not written for public performance.19 In particular, Sherburne’s extensive introduction and annotations do seem to suggest his translation was intended to be read rather than performed, and if his drama was not intended to appear onstage, this may account for his willingness to represent faithfully the killings of Medea’s children and her triumphant escape. Sherburne’s Medea is not softened through his Englishing, and remains the terrifying revenger of Seneca’s tragedy, but this is perhaps because she was not intended to appear to a seventeenth-century audience, and thus can retain her disturbing classical power.

Elsewhere in the seventeenth century, Medea is used more originally: during and directly after the Civil Wars, the stories of her murder of her young brother Apsyrtus (torn apart by Medea as she and Jason attempted to escape Colchis with the Golden Fleece) and of her deception of the daughters of Pelias (who were fooled into killing their father by Medea) were appropriated by writers such as John Thornborough and Thomas Hobbes, who were keen to promote unity, and discourage discord and civil unrest. For Thornborough, Apsyrtus becomes representative of a state torn asunder, while to Hobbes the daughters of Pelias constitute a warning against attempting to reform the Commonwealth.20 Later, and despite his apparent discomfort over how best to translate the classics, Dryden commissioned a translation of certain of the Heroïdes: this appeared in 1680, and was mercilessly parodied by the burlesques of Matthew Stevenson and Alexander Radcliffe. These two collections, now sadly fallen into some obscurity, are important as they straddle the divide between translation and new literary creation, and in so doing create a Medea who speaks to her authors’ own peculiar concerns, as well as reflecting their knowledge of the classics. In the preface to his Fables Ancient and Modern, Dryden outlined his determination to reflect only the best of the classics in his English translations: he asserts

I have written nothing which savours of Immorality or Profaneness; at least, I am not conscious to my self of any such Intention. If there happen to be

Heavey – Humanising Medea, 1648–1761

found an irreverent Expression, or a Thought too wanton, they are crept into my
Verses through my Inadvertency: If the Searchers find any in the Cargo, let them
be stav'd or forfeited, like Counterbanded Goods; at least, let their Authors be
answerable for them, as being but imported Merchandise, and not of my own
Manufacture. On the other Side, I have endeavoured to chuse such Fables, both
Ancient and Modern, as contain in each of them, some instructive Moral.21

Stevenson and Radcliffe seem to have regarded Dryden’s attitude to Ovid as something of a
challenge, and certainly have included the “immorality and profaneness” that Dryden sought
to avoid at every opportunity. Their Medeas are very far from the dignified and powerfully
angry classical princess of Ovid. Specifically, they have reacted to Dryden’s pronouncement
on Ovid’s treatment of his heroines:

[...] of the general Character of Women which is Modesty, he has taken a most
becoming care; for his amorous Expressions go no further than virtue may allow,
and therefore may be read, as he intended them, by Matrons without a blush.22

Unlike Dryden, Radcliffe and Stevenson have sought to bring Ovid’s heroines down from
their pedestals, to make them speak in the earthy language of Restoration sex comedy. Thus
to Radcliffe’s Hypsipyle, Medea is not merely the barbara paelax (6.81) (“barbarian jade”) she was in Ovid: here she is become

A Witch, a Bitch, in whom the Devil dwells,
Whose Face is Made of Grease and Wall-nut-Shells.
[...] A plaguy Jade, who curses Night and Noon,
And houls, and heaves her Arse against the Moon. (H2v)23

Here, Radcliffe very obviously rewrites his classical model to poke fun at Ovid (and, of
course, at Dryden’s far more po-faced project). Moreover, like Golding in his Englishing of the
Metamorphoses, he elaborates on his classical material to speak to the early modern fear
of, and fascination with, witchcraft. His Medea rides a broom-stick, enjoys sexual congress
with dogs and wolves, and Hypsipyle hopes she will be burnt at the stake for her sins, or
else will suffer “Her Nose being slit, to make her look more grim” (H4v) (a punishment Laura
Gowing identifies as “traditionally conceived as the injured wife’s revenge on her husband’s
mistress).24 Similarly, Stevenson’s Hypsipyle speaks in determinedly immodest language:
she demands of Jason, “How can you doat on such a Witch, / And hug a Syren like a Bitch?”
(p.92),25 and like her counterpart in Radcliffe’s rendering, wishes to exert a similarly sexu-
alised punishment on Medea, exclaiming “I shou’d have riv’d the Witches Placket” (p.95).26

Conversely, writing in Dryden’s collection, Settle has his Hypsipyle demand “How can you

21  Dryden, Works, Vol. 7, ed. Hooker and Swedenberg (Berkeley and London: University of
California Press, 1956), 27.
22  No signature. John Dryden, comp., Ovid’s Epistles Translated by Several Hands (London: Jacob
Tonson, 1680).
23  Alexander Radcliffe, Ovid travestie, a burlesque upon Ovid’s Epistles (London: Jacob Tonson,
1681).
London”, in Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England, ed. Jennifer Kermode and
25  Matthew Stevenson, The Wits Paraphras’d, or, Paraphrase upon paraphrase in a burlesque on
the several late translations of Ovid’s Epistles (London: Will Cademan, 1680).
26  For the correspondence between the placket, a covering on early modern clothing, and the
female genitalia, see Carol Chillington Rutter, “Designs on Shakespeare: Sleeves, Gloves and
Helen’s Placket” in Shakespeare Performed: Essays in Honour of R. A. Foakes, ed. Grace
doat on such Infernal Charms, / And sleep securely in a Syrens arms?" (p.184), and follow her Ovidian counterpart in wishing to spill Medea’s blood, but not to exact the sexual revenge that Radcliffe and Stevenson seem to include with salacious delight.

Clearly, then, even when they make their reliance on earlier classical models apparent, early modern authors rewrite Medea so that she may serve a specific authorial agenda: for Studley, Robinson and Whetstone, her punishment (or at least the suggestion of a punishment) underscores the power of God to punish evildoers. For Dryden and Sherburne she is a vehicle by which an author can make clear his intimate knowledge of, and admiration for, the classics, while for Stevenson and Radcliffe her story is rendered bawdy and comical, made to speak to the Restoration interest in witchcraft and in feminine sexual transgression. What these diverse renderings of Medea have in common is their unsympathetic view: it is significant that Medea’s epistle to Jason, her impassioned avowal of her devotion to him and her despair at his betrayal, is not included in Stevenson’s or Radcliffe’s _Heroides_. Diane Purkiss suggests that “the standard Renaissance Medea was a treacherous and passionate young girl, a girl who helps a hero on his way in exchange for marrying him”, but in fact this vision of Medea as a naïve young princess who helps Jason and is rewarded with infidelity, but whose crimes are not detailed, seems for the most part to have been left in the Middle Ages (Chaucer’s _Legend of Good Women_ is the most famous example of an English piece that details only Medea’s suffering, and ignores her revenge). The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, far more familiar with Euripides and Seneca, and thus with the details of Medea’s worst excesses, very often found themselves unable to ignore her crimes, and accordingly, unable to render her sympathetic. The works of Gildon and Glover thus constitute two intriguing exceptions, as they dramatise the notorious end of her story, but rework their classical models in an attempt to create a tragic and somehow sympathetic Medea.

In _Phaeton; or, the Fatal Divorce_, Charles Gildon takes his cue from Euripides – Hall argues that, in the Greek tragedy, he finds “the prototype of a plot concentrated on the nuclear family, with a powerful female role, and emotive use of children”. In the preface to the play he defends his debt to the dramatist, but also the alterations he has made:

"That I owe a great many of its Beauties to the Immortal EURIPIDES, I look on as my Glory, not Crime; and I have so little to fear on that Account even from my Enemies, that I find their chief Objections is, that I have not follow’d him yet more close. But I hope, the Impartial-Reader that can, and will with Candor compare this Play with the Medea of Euripides, will own that I had Reasons sufficient to justify my deffering from him in some particulars (B')."

While he clearly acknowledges his debt to Euripides, at the same time he is keen to note, and explain, the changes he has made. He states:

"I saw a necessity on my first perusal of EURIPIDES of alt’ring the two chief Characters of the Play, in consideration of the different Temper and Sentiments

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29 Charles Gildon, _Phaeton, or, The fatal divorce a tragedy as it is acted at the Theatre Royal in imitation of the antients : with some reflections on a book call’d, A short view of the immorality and profaneness of the English stage_ (London: Abel Roper, 1698).
of our several Audience. First I was Apprehensive, that Medea, as Euripides represents her, wou'd shock us. When we hear of her rending her Brother to pieces, and then murdering her own Children, contrary to all the Dictates of Humanity and Mother-hood, we shou'd have been too impatient for her Punishment, to have expected the happy Event of her barbarous Revenge, nay, perhaps, not have allow’d the Character within the Compass of Nature; or at least decree’d it more unfit for the Stage, than the Cruelties of Nero. Monsters in Nature not affording those just Lessons a Poet ought to reach his Hearers. But we shou’d with the extreamest Indignation have seen her (as Mr Dryden observes) at last furnish’d with a Flying Chariot to escape her just Punishment (B*).

In his Essay of Dramaticke Poesie, the text to which Gildon refers here, Dryden complains of the classical dramatists:

[…] instead of punishing Vice and rewarding Virtue, they have often shown a Prosperous Wickedness, and an Unhappy Piety: They have set before us a bloody image of revenge in Medea, and given her Dragons to convey her safe from punishment; a Priam and Astyanax murder’d, and Cassandra ravish’d, and the lust and murder ending in the victory of him who acted them. (28)

Nicoll identifies Gildon as “One of the high-priests of pseudo-classicism”, but while he obviously takes the classical drama as his model, that he takes substantial liberties with Euripides’ story of Jason and Medea is obvious from the outset. Moreover, it is clear from Gildon’s preface that he concurs with Dryden’s view, objects firstly to Medea’s wickedness, and secondly to the idea that evil-doers could expect to escape punishment. Gildon aims to correct both these unsatisfying elements of Euripides, and particularly to amend Medea’s character.

Specifically, the powerfully angry Medea of Euripides is diffused and weakened, made less accountable for the tragic events of the play. In Euripides, the tragedy opens with Medea already aware that Jason has abandoned her for Glauce, and mourning for what she has lost: her Nurse notes “all she does is occasionally turn her white neck away to speak bitter words to herself: ‘O Father dear, my country, my home, I have betrayed you all in coming here with a man who now treats me with contempt!’” (pp.49–50). Conversely, Gildon’s Medea (here renamed Althea) is unaware that he loves another, and accordingly from the very outset she enjoys far less control over the situation that the audience sees unfolding. Unsure of the reason for the coldness of her husband (here Phaeton rather than Jason) she implores him “Be soft, be tender now, look kindly on me, / For my soul languishes, and I am sick with love” (p.5). When she does discover his betrayal, his desire for Lybia, she is given far less control over her own reactions: Act Three opens with Juno, Hymen and Nemesis discussing Phaeton’s treachery without Althea’s knowledge or consent, and indeed Juno voices one of the classical Medea’s most traditional complaints as she asks Hymen “Must Vows, and Oaths by man be swore, / And then be never thought on more?” (p.13). It is the gods who provide Althea with the poisoned robe and crown she will use to exact her revenge on her love-rival, and her servants Merope and Cassiopée who urge her on. Conversely, in the classical tradition, though she calls on the gods for general assistance, Medea acts alone (indeed, in Seneca’s tragedy she is shown onstage concocting the poisons she will use). Moreover, while here Althea is urged into action by her friends, in both the Greek and Roman tragedies Medea’s Nurse urges caution, and Medea’s refusal to listen to such warnings underscores her sense of ruthless autonomy.

In Gildon's revisioning, and despite Althea's new determination, her avowal that she feels her disgrace so keenly that "I cannot, will not bear it" (p.16), she is never given full control, or full responsibility for her actions. Thus, when she vows revenge on Phaeton, the ghost of her father Aeetes appears and validates her decision. In a strong echo of *Hamlet*, the ghost tells her "Bear it not" (p.16), and declares

Too strong, Althea, were the just Impressions  
Thy Virtue made upon a Fathers Soul  
For Death to raze [...]  
I blame not then thy Flight, compel[...]d by Love,  
That o're the young maintains a Tyranny,  
I blame thee not for Love, but for thy Tameness;  
For bearing Wrongs from this Aegyptian Race.  
The injur'd Genius of thy native Country  
Calls loudly on thee for Revenge, Revenge.  
[...] Revenge! Revenge! Revenge!" (p.16)

Here, Althea's father absolves her of the guilt that the Euripidean Medea feels for deserting her father and homeland, and concurrently urges her to revenge, making demands that she seems helpless to resist. Althea is a far more sympathetic character than she is in many versions of the Medea story, but accordingly she is a far less powerful one, deprived of any real influence over her own life or over the people who have hurt her.

In Euripides' tragedy, Medea distances herself from femininity, most famously through her murder of the children, but also earlier, in her well-known rejection of a woman's lot, her exclamation that "I would rather face the enemy three times over than bear a child once" (p.55). Indeed, Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz points to the alarming fact that Medea cannot be comfortably categorised:

The very device Euripides employed to gain our sympathy for her, her similarity to other women, makes her most terrifying, for she is not a victim and not vulnerable – that is, not feminine – yet she has been identified as and with other women. To the extent that she is nonetheless a woman like other women, she destabilises the category 'woman'.

Gildon is not so interested in destabilising perceptions of femininity in this way, in confusing the issue of what a "typical" woman is like. Instead, Althea's femininity appears stereotypical, far more in line with what late-seventeenth-century audiences would expect and approve of in a woman. Like her Euripidean counterpart, Althea plays on her femininity to win sympathy from Jason, but her rage is constantly tempered with doubt, with professions of love for her children, and with avowals of her own weakness. The chorus of servant girls underscore the pathos of Althea's despair at Jason's perfidy, singing

How happy wou’d poor Woman be,  
From the Cares of Love still Free,  
Did not false Mans deluding Arts  
Rob us of our Peace and Hearts.  
With Tears and Oaths the Cheat maintain  
Till we poor helpless women love again,  
And wound our selves, alas! To cure their pain (p.23).

Gildon expressed his distaste for Seneca's adaptation of Euripides' tragedy, but at points it is profitable to compare his play to the Latin tragedy. There, Medea is spurred to revenge on
Jason by the appearance of the Furies, and the shade of her murdered brother Apsyrtus. She resolves to atone for this first crime by killing her children, in a decision that the early modern dramatists found bizarre and repulsive: for, as Gildon points out in his preface, where their children are concerned “Nature imprints in every Woman an uncommon tenderness”. Thus, though he has her father appear to underscore Althea’s sense of duty, and undermine her own control over her situation, Gildon cannot have her kill her children, particularly since in their sympathy, the chorus of serving-women have seemed to suggest that she is representative of all women. She does kill Lybia, her love-rival, with the poisoned gifts the gods have given her; however, then the messenger enters and reports that

the Multitude,
Enrag’d at what the Royal House has suffer’d,
Forcing the Palace, with one common Voice.
Devote Althea to immediately Vengeance. […]
Althea’s Lodgings they’ve destroy’d already,
And tore her Children in ten thousand pieces.
Nor satisfy’d with this they rave for her (p.31).

Many critics have suggested that Medea’s murder of her children may be Euripides’ innovation, but here, Gildon rejects what he found distasteful in Euripides, and absolves Althea of the worst of Medea’s traditional crimes by following a less popular classical tradition. In his *Historical Miscellany*, the classical historian Aelian notes:

A tradition has it that the bad reputation of Medea is undeserved. It was not she who killed her children, but some Corinthians. The story about the woman from Colchis and the tragedy are said to be the invention of Euripides, at the request of the Corinthians, and falsehood ousted the truth because of the poet’s talent (5.21).

Likewise, the second-century historian Pausanias reports that Medea did not kill her children, observing:

[…] they are said to have been stoned to death by the Corinthians owing to the gifts which legend says they brought to Glauce (2.3, vol.1, p.263).

Gildon thus allows Althea some transgressive agency, as she is responsible for Lybia’s death, but he absolves her of the indefensible crime of killing her children (though of course they are killed as a response to her actions), and his handling of the deaths demonstrates his willingness to rework his revered source dramatically. Jean I. Marsden notes that in the Renaissance and beyond, “In their fondness for spectacle, especially lurid scenes of rape and murder, English playwrights participated in a dramatic tradition distinctly different from that of their French contemporaries”. Specifically, she notes that “French neo-classical theory dictated that scenes of violence occur offstage”, something that Horace had also insisted on in

33 From Gildon’s preface – signature illegible.
34 Although in his edition of Seneca’s *Medea*, Hine notes “it is disputed whether the innovation was his, or occurred earlier in a *Medea* by the tragedian Neophron” (13).
the *Ars Poetica*. Here then, Gildon is rewriting both his classical model and the common
dramatic practise of his contemporaries: not only does Althea not kill her children, but the
deaths occur offstage, and are merely reported, in a clear indication of the distaste with which
Medea’s most notorious crime was viewed.
Moreover, making Althea guiltless of this worst of crimes means that Gildon can portray
her grief at the children’s deaths in affecting detail. Althea is horrified, exclaiming

> Ha! Merope! What did the fatal Raven Croak?
> My Children! My dear Infants torn to pieces?
> Of dreadful News! O! cruel Rage! O! cursed Aegypt! [...] 
> And their sparkling Eyes
> Shut up, and clos’d for ever (p.32).

Her distress makes her once again a more sympathetic character than her ruthless Euripi-
dean predecessor, while her reflection that “the great Gods, that suffer’d all this Evil, / Might
have some mighty end, and Purpose in it” (p.32) emphasises once again that the gods enjoy
absolute control over the events the play depicts. In fact, Marsden notes that in the drama of
the later decades of the seventeenth century, female distress becomes a spectacle itself:

> The spectacle in these cases arises not from grisly scenes of blood, torture,
or human sacrifice, but from displays of emotional and sometimes physical
suffering inflicted upon blameless victims who are almost inevitably female. [...] 
> The pathetic play, with its scenes of female suffering, incorporated the titillation
of sex comedies popular in previous decades but avoided the aggressive sexuality
displayed by women in the earlier plays, thus bringing the stage characters closer
to popular ideals of feminine behaviour.

Of course, neither Medea nor Althea are blameless, but it is surely significant that Gildon
aims firstly to make his heroine innocent of infanticide, and secondly elects to replace a
gory scene of the citizens carrying out the murders with an affecting presentation of Althea’s
distress. By drawing on other classical stories and on continental models, he thus humanises
Althea, rendering her an innocent whose distress speaks powerfully to the Restoration taste
for scenes of exaggerated pathos, and to the period’s expectations of how women should be-
have (what Marsden terms the “cult of passivity”). More Lady Macduff than Lady Macbeth,
she exclaims in horror: “Dead! Are they dead! The pretty Orphans dead! / Their Tongues that
us’d to charm me with such Music, / For ever silenc’d?” (p.32)

As the play ends, Gildon has Althea relinquishing the last of her Medean agency and con-
trol as she submits to madness, exclaiming

> Stand off, and give me way, that I may fly
> Swifter than thought, to stop the murdering Hand
> Of Destiny.—Gods! Gods! I’m come too late!
> The Deed is done, their tender Threads are cut!
> Oh! For the pow’r of strong Thessalian Charms!
> To mock her Envy, and reverse their Doom! (p.32)

In Euripides’ tragedy, of course, Medea really does “fly”, summoning her dragon-drawn
chariot and escaping the consequences of her actions, and Jason’s rage and grief. Here, her
reference to flight underscores her hopeless desire to stop “the murdering Hand / Of Destiny”

38 Horace asserts *ne pueros coram populo Medea trucidet* (180) (“Medea is not to butcher her
boys before the people”).
(p.32): indeed, here she seems akin to the Euripidean Jason, who arrives on the scene too late to stop his murderous wife. Meanwhile, Althea’s wish for “strong Thessalian Charms” is the closest she comes to mentioning the magical power she traditionally enjoys in classical tragedy, and it is included here, paradoxically, to stress her helplessness. Althea tells the servants

Softly we’ll creep to the black horrid Scene  
Of Infants Blood, and steal the precious Pieces;  
Gather them all, and carry ‘em to the Gods  
To solder them together—the Gods can do it (pp.32–3).

These lines, with their mention of her children’s “precious Pieces”, are a macabre reference to Apsyrtus’ death, but while that episode was used by the Euripidean Medea to stress her violent past, and by the Senecan heroine to inspire herself to even greater heights of depravity, here the reference underscores her lack of control and agency, as she realises

Ha! Th’unequal Gods deny the Boon!  
Again disperse and scatter the dear Reliques,  
I with such Pain, and Hazard have collected (p.33).

Crawling on the ground in an effort to recover the remains of her beloved children, rather than triumphantly ascending to the heavens, Althea seems pathetic, utterly humanised and totally removed from her Euripidean ancestor: she enjoys no magical power, is remorseful rather than triumphant, and, like her Elizabethan forebears, cannot escape tragic justice or the will of a divine power that is greater than she is.

Christopher J. Wheatley notes that “In Restoration tragedy [...] the range of characters for possible protagonists include the perfectly virtuous, completely criminal, and classically flawed”.41 Gildon’s Althea is an example of a character who is neither entirely good, nor as wicked as her classical predecessors. However, despite Gildon’s efforts to humanise her (and specifically to make her more acceptably feminine), she must be punished for her killing of Lybia, despite Gildon’s repeated efforts to diffuse the worst of her guilt. She dies, and Epaephyus’ closing speech underscores her fundamental lack of power, ascribing ultimate agency to the gods. He tells the citizens:

[...] learn ye All from this too fatal Day  
That Jove o’re Kings maintains an awful Sway.  
All things are order’d by the Pow’rs above.  
Against whose Will our Counsels fruitless prove.  
In sad Events our wisest hopes we lose;  
And what we can’t expect the Gods produce (p.33).

In many ways, this ending epitomises the difficulty the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had with the figure of Medea – like Studley, Robinson and Richardson, Gildon must contain the force he has presented somehow, must represent his Medea as subject to death, and the people she leaves behind as subject to the gods and to some system of divine and/or human government. Similarly, Hall notes that Charles Johnson rejects the traditional ending in his The Tragedy of Medaea (1730) – she notes that in Johnson’s play, “Medaea sends [the children] to safety in Athens before stabbing herself out of despair at the grief she has caused her beloved Jason”.42 Hall notes that Johnson’s effort at rewriting the story was an “outstand-

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ing failure”, and yet it is significant that he follows Gildon in his refusal to countenance a Medea who kills her children, and, moreover, that he has his Medea exact a punishment on herself: she enjoys more agency than Gildon’s helpless Althea, but cannot escape the consequences of her wickedness, and succumbs to human feelings of guilt, grief and love, rather than escaping to sin another day.

In his revisioning of Medea, published for the first time in 1761, Richard Glover very obviously responds to these prior models, both classical and early modern. In his introduction to the 1797 edition of the play, John Bell terms previous English Medeas “bad translations of a bad original”, and commends Glover for negotiating the tricky business of early modern translation successfully: “for though he has kept Seneca constantly in his eye, and yet this poem bears very frequent marks of originality and skill”. Glover’s play certainly reflects the work of his classical ancestors more closely than does Gildon’s work, most notably in his willingness to present Medea’s power. Unlike Gildon, he does not shy away from depicting Medea’s magic, and in fact while the Senecan Medea calls on Hecate for assistance, Glover’s Medea actually summons her to the stage. At the same time, however, and like his sixteenth and seventeenth century predecessors, Glover attempts to render Medea more human than supernatural, and somehow to limit her abilities and threat.

In his 1566 rendering of Seneca, Studley had admitted to cutting Seneca’s first chorus “because in it I sawe nothing but an heape of prophane storyes, and names of prophane Idoles” (125–6). The original chorus congratulates Jason for having escaped the wild Medea, and emphasises her unpredictability and dangerous otherness. Studley’s new chorus rather pities Medea for her credulous love:

The shafte that flew from Cupids golden bowe,  
With fethers so hath dimd her daseld Eyes,  
can not see to shun the waye of woe (1.365–8).

Later in the sixteenth century, Robinson and Whetstone pick up on this theme of Medea inability to save herself from unhappiness, despite her abilities. Whetstone’s Medea sadly reflects

What vaileth now my skil, or sight in Magickes lore,  
May charmed hearbs, suffice to help, or cure my festred sore,  
A salve I shapt, for others smart,  
My selfe to ayde, I want the Arte (p.75).

Similarly, Glover’s prologue is at pains to stress that the power he is to describe cannot, ultimately, profit Medea, or protect her from human weakness and suffering:

Pow’r, wisdom, science, and her birth divine,  
In vain to shield her from distress combine:  
Nor wisdom, pow’r, nor science yield relief:  
Her potent wand can vanquish all, but grief:

43 Ibid., 53.
44 Richard Glover, Medea, in John Bell, comp., Bell’s British Theatre, Vol. 6, 34 vols (London: Printed for George Cawthorn, 1797). No page numbers. Hall identifies Glover’s Medea as Euripidean: however, as Bell’s observation suggests, the influence of the Senecan model was at least as significant. Although the two classical tragedies do differ, both the Greek and Roman Medeas kill their children and Jason’s new wife, and in both cases their crimes are clearly premeditated. Accordingly, the specific model the seventeenth and eighteenth century dramatists follow is not always relevant, since in either case they change the most alarming elements of the classical story.
Certain characters do stress Medea’s abilities, most notably the Colchians (who in the classical tradition had been abandoned by Medea after she stole the Golden Fleece), Jason’s father Aeson, and the priestess Theano, none of whom appear in Seneca’s tragedy. However, as he does in the classical tradition, King Creon dismisses Medea’s power, exclaiming scornfully “shall a female hand o’erturn the basis, / Which I am founding to enlarge my sway?” (1.1.144–45). Later, when Medea faints after first reminding him of her power, and then recalling her inability to hold Jason, Creon smugly tells Theano’s brother Lycander “Thou seest the haughty sorceress abash’d, / Before a monarch’s persevering frown” (3.1.163–4).

Medea faints frequently in the play, and here and elsewhere it seems to epitomise the delicate balance between defiant power and human (and specifically feminine) weakness. Similarly, she summons Hecate in an awesome display of power, appealing:

‘Terrific deity, whose name,
And altar stain’d with human blood
On Tauric cliffs the Scythian wild,
And fell Samartian tribes adore [...] 
In thy raven-tinctured stole,
Grasping thy tremendous brand,
With thy howling train abound,
Awful Hecaté, ascend’ (3.1.211–22).

The appearance of Hecate might seem to prove Medea’s supernatural abilities, but paradoxically it underscores her lack of control. Medea confesses that she is “vanquish’d by despair” (3.1.255), and in response to her request for revenge on Creon, Hecate warns her:

Ere night’s black wheels begin thy gloomy course
What thou dost love shall perish by thy rage;
Nor thou be conscious when the stroke is given:
Then, a despairing wand’rer, must thou trace
The paths of sorrow in remotest climes (3.1.275–9).

Of course, Gildon and Johnson had elected to absolve Medea of the infanticide, and Studley had her perform the act but then used Jason to suggest a firmer possibility of judgement rather than the triumphant escape that Seneca depicts. Here, Glover foreshadows his choice of resolution: Medea will kill her children, but like Gildon’s heroine she will suffer from temporary madness, will not be entirely accountable for her actions.

Horrified by Hecate’s prediction, Medea behaves in the opposite way to her classical ancestors – rather than embracing her magical power as a comfort and a means to satisfaction, she attempts to reject it, exclaiming “perish first my art” (3.1.293) and refusing to use her magic to reignite Jason’s love. In fact, Glover also rewrites Jason and Medea’s relationship to heighten the pathos of his piece – in Euripides and Seneca, Jason feels that Medea is being unreasonable in her continued desire for him, and should accept his choice of Creon’s daughter. Here, Jason has rediscovered his love for Medea, but when she confesses her feelings for him, he must confess that he has already married Creusa, despite his doubts, because of Creon’s pressure and Medea’s former coldness. Medea is driven into a frenzy by

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46 Prologue to Glover, Medea, in Bell’s British Theatre. No page number or signature.
47 The reference is to Heroides 12, in which Medea famously remarks that her magic could not ensure Jason’s continued devotion: serpentis igitur potui taurosque furentes; / unum non potui perdomuisse virum (12.163–4) (“Dragons and maddened bulls, it seems, I could subdue; a man alone I could not”).
his revelation, and in another revisioning of Seneca, Glover depicts her apparently seeing visions: she exclaims,

| Ha! What art thou, grim shape embrou’d with gore? [...] |
| Art thou Revenge from Tartarus enlarg’d |
| To aid Medea? (1.4.174–7) |

In Gildon’s rewriting of Euripides, the ghost of Medea’s father appeared to spur her to revenge, but paradoxically also served to reduce her own responsibility for the crimes she will perform. Here, as in Seneca, the appearance of terrifying visions motivates Medea herself to pursue her revenge. However, as in Gildon, Medea is humanised, and her culpability reduced, as a result of her obvious descent into madness before she commits her most terrible act. At the beginning of Act Five, Theano appears and reports the deaths of the children:48

| ‘We found her planted near their welt’ring limbs; |
| Her fiery eyeballs on their wounds were fix’d, |
| A ghastly triumph swell’d her wild revenge, |
| And madness mingled smiles with horror!’ (5.1.14–17) |

Though she initially exults in her crime, Medea’s loosening grasp on reality is quickly revealed as she first mistakes her servant for her father Aeetes, and then calls for her children to be brought to her: “Go, lead them from the temple – They will smile, / And lift my thoughts to momentary joy” (5.1.116–7). However, she then notices her bloody hands and realises what she has done – though the servant exclaims “it was the act of ignorance and madness” (5.1.146), Medea insists “Nor all the tears, which misery hath shed, / Can from the mother wash her children’s blood!” (5.1.151–2).

This is a very different Medea from the Euripidean or Senecan revenger, and Richard W. Bevis notes the fashion for this kind of pathos in Georgian tragedy, noting that so popular were these kinds of scenes, that “piteous touches are as likely to occur in a classical or heroic play as in a domestic one”.49 When Jason appears, reporting that he has left Creusa, Medea confesses, telling him “madness / Arm’d my blind rage against them, and the deed / Now weighs me down to everlasting night!” (5.1.211–13). Here, Jason’s desire to be reunited with Medea adds to the pathos of the scene, while the repeated references to madness, and Medea’s exclamation that she must be punished, serve to distance her from the terrifyingly unrepentant Euripidean and Senecan revenger. Though Glover has elected to have her kill her children, it is significant that he employs several strategies to make Medea more sympathetic and human: she committed her terrible crime while in the grip of madness, the murders were not portrayed onstage, she is horrified at her actions and, like her Elizabethan predecessors in the didactic works of Robinson and Whetstone, she accepts that she must be held accountable. Like Gildon, and like some of his other classical predecessors, most notably Apollonius Rhodius and Pindar, Glover also portrays Medea as not fully in control of her actions, and subject to the will of the gods. She addresses them, exclaiming “Impell’d by indignation, still my spirit / Would challenge your injustice, which requir’d / My children’s blood to mingle with my tears” (5.1.223–25). The Euripidean and Senecan Medeas had rejoiced in their links with the gods, which they exploited first to bring about their revenge on Jason and finally to escape

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48 The same device, of a messenger reporting particularly grisly murders, is employed by Gildon, and is used frequently in earlier revenge tragedy, for example in Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville’s Gorboduc.

punishment. Here though, as Hecate’s dire pronouncements have suggested, the presence of
the classical gods simply underlines Medea’s lack of control over what she has done.

Hall points to the “heated contemporary discussion” over the validity of madness as a
defence for infanticides, but notes that her condition meant that, in the courts of eighteenth-
century England, “Glover’s heroine would probably have been acquitted”. Nevertheless,
just as Gildon’s Althea has killed Lybia, and thus must die at the play’s conclusion, Glover’s
Medea must suffer some punishment. Here again, Glover takes his inspiration from earlier
models, and is guided by literary taste. Early modern discomfort with the classical Medea’s
escape is reflected in Studley’s, Whetstone’s and Robinson’s determination to hold Medea
somehow accountable for her actions (and often, anachronistically, accountable to a Christian
God). Elsewhere, anti-heroines who specifically invoke Medea in Elizabethan revenge tragedy,
and declare that they will outdo her in violence, are frequently punished: examples include
Thomas Achelley’s *The Tragicall History of Didaco and Violenta*, in which the murderous Vio-
lenta is executed, or William Alabaster’s *Roxana*, in which Atossa confesses her crimes and
welcomes her punishment as well-deserved, exclaiming:

I will onely bide those punishments
Which all my former villanies deserve
Aye justice will something my torments ease
But justice still denies all hope of ease (1745–8).51

Glover elects to follow his classical models more closely than these earlier dramatists, and
thus his Medea does escape on a dragon-drawn chariot sent by the gods. However, his em-
phasis is very different, and his Medea does not see her escape as a final victory, but rather
as an enduring punishment. She tells her husband she has returned

‘[…] but on thee to cast
A parting look, and some forgiving tears,
Shed on thy errors, Jason – Oh, farewell!
Constrain’d by Juno, and my parent gods,
Who have subdu’d my anger, not my grief,
O’er seas and earth to wander and explore
The devious steps of destiny I go’ (5.1.323–29).

In Seneca, Medea’s final words are *Perfruere lento scelere, ne propera, dolor: / meus dies
est; tempore accepto utimur* (1016–7) (“Relish a leisurely crime, anguish, do not hurry: / the
day is mine, I am enjoying the time I have been granted”). Far from pitying Jason’s errors she
sees him as entirely responsible for his own unhappiness, and far from feeling guilty horror at
her own actions, she threatens to eviscerate herself, not in order to commit suicide but rather
so she might find more children to kill. Likewise, Glover alters Jason’s final words to Medea:
while in the Seneca his exclamation : *testare nullos esse, qua veheris, deos* (5.1027) may
be read as an angry pronouncement on Medea’s distance from divine mercy, or else as an
acknowledgment that he himself no longer finds comfort in the gods, in Glover he invokes the
divine very differently, exclaiming “Heav’n guide her fortunes” (5.1.330). The murders she
has committed mean that Medea obviously cannot end Glover’s tragedy reunited with Jason,
and must suffer the consequences of her actions, but throughout the piece, and despite
his obvious familiarity with his classical models, Glover has attempted to suggest distance

50 Hall, “Medea on the Eighteenth-Century Stage”, 54.
between his weakened, grieving and humanised Medea, and the unrepentant murderess of classical tradition.

Medea’s power, her seemingly unstoppable will and horrifying agency, posed thorny problems for early modern male writers. They are problems, though, that do not seem to have prevented English authors from engaging enthusiastically with her story in the Renaissance and the early modern period. For the most part, these male authors sought to resolve the threat that Medea posed to the patriarchal institutions of family, kingdom and Christianity by somehow undermining her power. Sometimes this is done very straightforwardly. In the extensive notes that accompanied his complete translation of the Metamorphoses in 1632, George Sandys refuses to give credence to Medea’s magical powers, explaining away the supernatural adversaries she helped Jason to overcome as “a garrison of mercenary soldiers of Taurica” (Ff2v), and “Draco the priest of Mars, and keeper of the treasure” (Ff3r). Elsewhere, Medea’s power is emphasised only so that it may serve male ends, for example as when Hobbes and Thornborough use it as a metaphorical example to promote unity. Arguably most interesting, however, are the sustained attempts of authors in the early modern period to render Medea less threatening, because more human. In English literature, this impulse has its roots in the Middle Ages: authors such as Chaucer and John Lydgate skim over Medea’s magical powers, and prefer to portray her as an infatuated girl, willing to serve Jason however she can and unaware that he will later abandon her. Importantly, and predictably, such efforts almost always elide the murders of her children and the end of Medea’s story (though in the Book of the Duchess and The Man of Law’s Prologue, Chaucer makes clear that he knows of the infanticide).

Early modern texts, by contrast, set themselves a particularly difficult challenge, of portraying the end of Medea’s story while still reducing her threat. The Heroides contain frequent references to the revenge Medea is to wreak on Jason, and in their burlesques Radcliffe and Stevenson attempt to diffuse this threat by ignoring Medea’s letter to Jason, and by making all parties concerned appear ridiculous, specifically by playing up Hypsipyle’s fury at her love-rival. Conversely, Gildon and Glover seek to emphasise the pathos of the story, particularly with regards to Medea as a mother suddenly bereft of her children. Though they react to two different classical texts (the Medeas of Euripides and Seneca) and in often strikingly different ways, both seek to emphasise Medea’s helplessness, the greater power of the classical gods and the men who surround her. Finally, in their accounts of her most famous crime, both authors seek to diffuse Medea’s guilt; Gildon by drawing on ancient, pre-Euripidean mythological tradition that stated she did not kill her children, and Glover by having her commit the crime while in the grip of a tragic madness. Finally, both see their Medea-figure as being held to account, as their early modern audiences would expect. Though in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries both Dryden and Johnson had expressed doubt that the classics could be effectively and edifyingly rendered into English, these early modern Medeas stand as striking responses to their arguments. The texts of Radcliffe, Stevenson, Gildon and Glover all respond and react to their classical sources, and yet all reinvent Medea, and cater to early modern literary taste. Most notably, they do this in their insistence on making their Medeas somehow more human (whether ridiculous or pathetic) and thus more attractive to their Restoration audiences.

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‘Shred ends from remembered stars’
Hart Crane’s Search for Self and Being as a Romantic Modernist

RACHEL HOYES

Hart Crane lived in a society that rejected his sense of self and being. Discriminated against as a homosexual, living with little money in a city with which he often felt at odds while struggling to get published and understood as a poet, being human for Crane was fraught with anxiety. Crane was immersed in a world in which ‘being human’ was an automatic state of existence, but a status that needed to be consciously created, re-conceived and discovered. Crane used poetry as the mode through which he discovered himself in relation to his world, forming his sense of being human through understanding his self-as-poet.

Born in 1899, Crane was writing when ‘being human’ was being questioned and challenged by Modernism. In the nineteenth century, luminaries such as Freud, Marx and Nietzsche had begun to alter radically ideas of the consciousness and the mind, and of the power of humanity to influence and change the world. In the twentieth century, literary practitioners of Modernism such as T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound were upturning established understanding of what it meant to be a poet and what it was to be human. Crane, however, was not comfortable with this new system of values celebrating fragmented consciousness and culture and the fast-changing world of industry. Instead, he drew upon his Romantic literary predecessors to maintain a sense of continuity and establish values of longevity in an age of displacement, heterodoxy and rapid change. He challenged some precepts of Modernist thought, particularly T. E. Hulme’s Bergsonian view that literary tradition was futile to Modern poets living in an age of impermanence. Crane wrote: “The deliberate program, then, of a ‘break’ with the past or tradition seems to me to be a sentimental fallacy.” The Moderns wanted to break with the past to express a new sense of being through a new form of poetry. Crane refuses this fracture; he uses Romanticism to find links between the past, present and future of modern America. America, for Crane, was a country that lacked history and literary heritage compared with Europe, but by constructing a literary legacy he could seek to conceptualize “being human.”

1 Hulme, however, later changed his view of past literature, placing emphasis on Classical literature to find a religious attitude that would give way to organisation and order to the Modern poet’s thought and work: “It is only by tradition and organisation that anything decent can be got out of him.” Geoffrey Bullough, The Trend of Modern Poetry (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1949), 80.

He wrote: “The main faults are not of our city, alone. They are of our age. A period that is loose at all ends, without apparent direction of any sort.”

Crane did not view America’s loose and open-endedness as simply a “fault” of his age, but meant it had potential with no limits to what humanity could achieve. He believed he was a “potential factor” in writing America a new mythology, using European Romanticism and American Transcendentalism to discover the "as yet undefined spiritual quantities" of America, and find a “new hierarchy of faith.”

As Crane rediscovers Modern America, he rediscovers himself. His poetry pioneers his understanding of being human and being a poet in a changing world. The poet as the herald of a new faith is quintessentially Romantic. In “A Defence of Poetry” Shelley celebrates the poet’s voice as a trumpet and prophet of his age:

> Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration, the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present [...] Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World. (DP 701)

Crane shares Shelley’s belief that poets can perform as the omniscient singers of humanity and the prophetic hierarchs of the future. The significance of the self became the central tenet for much Romantic literature, and Crane drew heavily on this influence to perform his own version of self-fashioning. Unlike Eliot’s claims that poetry should be “an escape from personality,” Crane sought the place and significance of his self and individual voice in the modern world, understanding his poetic role as a bridge-builder and path-maker to the ideal future towards which America was striving. Like Whitman discovering “I am the acme of things accomplish’d, and I am encloser of things to be,” Crane does not only sing America into being through his poetry, but sings himself into being through the text.

Yet Crane’s aspirations were undercut by doubts and anxieties as he questioned his sense of being and self-as-poet in a time that seemed to reject Romantic values and his own literary talents. Struggling to get published and aware he did not fit in with the style of his contemporary literary milieu, Crane was troubled by his poetic identity, role and the social significance of his voice. Yet in setting himself in “contrast and comparison” with past writers, to use Eliot’s phrase, Crane experienced what Harold Bloom calls “anxiety of influence.” He reveals an anxiety that his poetry and his self become merely “shred ends” (V. 7) from

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4 The American Transcendentalism is a legacy of Romanticism. (The term was derived from Immanuel Kant, a major influence in European Romanticism.) As Emerson explains: “there was a very important class of ideas, or imperative forms, which did not come by experience, but through which experience was acquired; that these were intuitions of the mind itself; and he denominated them Transcendental forms.” Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The Transcendentalist,” The Complete Prose Works (London: Ward-Lock, n.d.), 391. All quotations from Emerson’s works will be taken from this volume.

5 Crane, “General Aims and Theories,” 162.


7 T. S. Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” Modern Poets on Modern Poetry, 68. All quotations from Eliot’s essay will be taken from this volume.

8 Walt Whitman, A Choice of Whitman's Verse, ed. and introd. Donald Hall (London: Faber, 1968), 73. All quotations from Whitman’s poetry will be taken from this volume.

9 Eliot, 61. The sentence in full reads: “You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead.”

remembered literary stars that outshine him in significance and vision.11 In a letter to Waldo Frank about his epic masterpiece *The Bridge*, Crane questions his adequacy as a poet in the modern day writing in the shadow of the past:

The form of my poem rises out of a past that so overwhelms the present with its worth and vision that I’m at a loss to explain my delusion that there exist any real links between that past and a future destiny worthy of it.12

Yet Crane was not simply overwhelmed by the past but emulates Pound’s Modernist maxim “make it new” by transforming Romantic vision and themes into his poetic mythology of modern America,13 finding an original voice while continuing tradition. Waldo Frank recognised that Crane was not merely an “epigone” but a “creative continuator,” writing: “Great traditions are extended not by imitators but by original transformers.”14 Crane forges his being through the role of original transformer, transmuting Romantic poetry into the modern day to understand his own role as poet and as a human being.

In transforming and drawing upon Romanticism to understand being human and his poetic self, to find an original voice and the future of his modern age, Crane enacts Walt Whitman’s theory of the poet’s role: “The poet drags the dead out of their coffins and stands them again on their feet ... he says to the past, Rise and walk before me that I may realize you.”15 Thus, Crane becomes a Romantic Modernist, performing a dialogue with Romantic poetry to sing into reality his own spirit of the age.

Metallic Paradises and the Groans of Death: “For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen”

“For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen”16 traces Crane’s evolving understanding of his own being as he searches for his poetic vision, voice and self by drawing upon literary heritage to formulate mythology and order out of the “confused cosmos of today.”17 By turning to the past to make sense of the confusion of his culture and age, Crane seeks to comprehend his own perplexity on how to be human. In a letter he explained: “The whole poem is a kind of fusion of our own time with the past.”18 Crane draws together past and present, fusing Romanticism and Modernism to gain fresh insight into the problem of being in the world.

Crane searches for the Greek “emotional attitude toward beauty”19 and Romantic idealisation of love, imagination and poetic originality in an age rendered sterile and routine by quotidian “memoranda, baseball scores,” “stenographic smiles and stock quotations” (FH I. 5-6). The opening of the poem is set in an uninspirational office and the poet’s relationship

16 Hereafter referred to as “Faustus and Helen”.
17 Crane, “General Aims and Theories,” 161.
with those around him is devoid of meaning: smiles and conversation are unemotional and reduced to shorthand and insignificance. Eliot’s portrayal of relationships is similarly sterile, caused by the lack of moral stricture and collapse of post-war London. The sexual reunion of the typist and clerk in *The Waste Land* is unloving and dull; she is “bored and tired” and he “makes a welcome of indifference”\(^{20}\) (*WL* III. 236-42). Crane echoes this empty portrayal of relationships to highlight modernity’s vacuity as the antithesis of Romantic treatment of love as sublime, quasi-religious, and the route to complete realisation of the self through another. Without love and engaging significantly with others, Crane questions what the self is and how meaningful is it to be human. Crane begins to uncover this as he recovers the significance of love in the modern day through his Romantic search for the ideal, transcending the quotidian into the abstract and universal via the poetic imagination.

Edelman reads the “memoranda” and “stock quotations” as metaphors for the plethora of texts of Crane’s literary forefathers. He writes: “They evoke a world crowded by earlier texts, a world overwhelmed by written material.”\(^{21}\) Yet Crane did not perceive the texts of his literary predecessors as quotidian “memoranda”; to him the “memoranda” evoke Modern poetry that he sees as commonplace and unimaginative compared with the poetry of the past. In this poem, Modern consciousness does not undergo a sublime flight of imagination to reach a euphonic sense of being and communion with the self like the Romantic Keats on his “viewless wings of Poesy” (*ON* 33).\(^{22}\) Instead, it is simply “brushed by sparrow wings,” (*FH* I. 8) the modern day’s mundane equivalent of the self’s unification with the spirit of poetry, represented by the nightingale in Keats’s ode. In “Faustus and Helen” Crane reveals his anxiety over his identity as a poet, finding originality in Modern poetry impossible to achieve. He describes contemporary literature as “stock quotations,” and in a letter he writes:

> Unless one has some new, intensely personal viewpoint to record [...] I say, why write about it? Nine chances out of ten, if you know where in the past to look, you will find words already written in the more-or-less exact tongue of your soul. And the complaint to be made against nine out of ten poets is just this, - that you are apt to find their sentiments much better expressed perhaps four hundred years [having] passed.\(^{23}\)

Finding an original voice was crucial to Crane’s sense of self-as-poet and his understanding of being human. This quest made his poetry fraught with anxiety and ambivalence: he draws upon Romanticism to find a voice to make sense of the present, yet finds that poetry of the past renders his voice weak in comparison, worrying his is a poetry of imitation as opposed to innovation.\(^{24}\) This anxiety of identity suffered by poets suffused by their literary legacies is traced by John Beer: “Once poets are troubled by a presentiment that all the possible great works have been achieved” they are left with “a sense of inadequacy as a new premium is set on originality.”\(^{25}\)


\(^{21}\) Lee Edelman, “‘For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen,’” *Transmemberment of Song: Hart Crane’s Anatomies of Rhetoric and Desire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987), 81.


\(^{24}\) See footnote 15.

“Faustus and Helen” shares similarities with Keats’s *Hyperion* poems in their mutual fear of being too late in the literary tradition to create anything anew. *Hyperion: A Fragment* reveals Keats’s anxiety that his poetry will never equal that of his predecessors like John Milton. Saturn, symbol of the old order of poetry, is overthrown by the new poetic voice, Jupiter. When Thea comforts Saturn Keats worries that his “feeble tongue” cannot reproduce her words and his poetry is inferior to his predecessors, complaining: “O how frail / To that large utterance of the early Gods!” (H I. 49-50) He feels that his poem, cast in the convention of a Miltonic epic, “Scorches and burns our once serene domain” because Saturn’s lightning, representing Milton’s style, is in his “unpractised hands” (H I. 62-3). Keats was so tortured by this sense of inadequacy that he abandoned the poem. Similarly, Crane believes his poetry and his location of the modern city cannot create poetry sufficient to discover ideals of beauty and love: “Numbers, rebuffed by asphalt, crowd / The margins of the day, accent the curbs” (*FH* I. 9-10). The quotidian world of urban America does not nurture poetry-making: “numbers,” a common Romantic synonym for poetry, are “rebuffed” or rejected by asphalt of the dull city, symbol of the hard and rough reception of Crane’s poetry by his contemporaries and publishers. Poetic creativity is shunned to the “margins of the day” in a world where work and money-making take precedence, emphasising, or accenting, the restrictions and curbs his age places on his poetry. The world’s rejection of his voice marginalises Crane, sparking his identity as a poet as a mode through which he learns to re-conceive of being human in fractured modern society.

Yet Crane suggests that his poetry is not simply restricted by the modern city, but can in fact make it beautiful and transcendent. “Rebuffed” does not only mean rejected but re-polished or shined. In this light, his poetic numbers are re-made and beautified by quotidian asphalt, the day becomes a page whose margins are crowded with poetry, and the homophone “curbs” comes to mean the edge of the pavement that is accented and made significant by poetry. Crane was inspired by the modern city and uses his imagination to invigorate it and make it sublime. This endeavour reveals a faith that humans, through poetry, have the power to make the mundane beautiful, and endow the world with significance. Crane’s belief is shared by the Romantic poets whose understanding of the individual’s mind creating the world we perceive put into motion the exultant belief in the human self and its power not only to find meaning in a confusing cosmos, but to create it.

Crane’s renewed belief in the power of the human is similar to Keats’s epiphany as he composed the *Hyperion* poems. Following his abandonment of the first *Hyperion*, Keats started a second, casting aside his Miltonic objectivity and making his self the focus. *The Fall of Hyperion: A Dream* narrates Keats’s realisation that he can ascend the steps to the temple of the deposed Titans; inspired by Moneta, his muse and figure of imagination, his poetry becomes adequate to enter him into the pantheon of poetic gods of the past. Crane’s realisation that his voice is capable of trumpeting his vision of the present gives way to a change of movement in the third stanza of “Faustus and Helen.” Instead of worrying that his words cannot live up to poetry of the past, he releases his imagination and allows experience of the present moment to absorb and engage his mind in his search for ideal beauty:

> And yet, suppose some evening I forgot  
> The fare and transfer, yet got by that way  
> Without recall, - lost yet poised in traffic. (FH I. 19-21)

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26 Hereafter referred to as *Hyperion*.  
27 Hereafter referred to as *The Fall of Hyperion*.  
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Crane’s subway ride represents the journey of his imagination. He forgets the “fare” or economic concerns of modernity and the “transfer” or route of his contemporaries whose realism Crane found shattered the beauty, transcendence and potential ideals of the world, and allows his imagination to become his poetic vehicle or subway taking him into the sublime abstract in his search for beauty. He becomes “lost yet poised in traffic,” poised between his invigorating direct experience of the modern world and the Romantic technique of using the imagination to transmute felt experience and sensations into deeper visionary insight. Crane saw “reacting honestly” to the immediate world essential in giving the poet a “picture of his ‘period’” that would then become “a by-product of his curiosity and the relation of his experience to a postulated ‘eternity.’”29 This idea of understanding the human in relation to ideals such as eternity by charting the self’s reacting to current sensations echoes Keats’s belief that truth is found in direct sense experience and feelings: “for axioms in philosophy are not axioms till they are proved upon our pulses.”30

Keats questions his own assertion on the importance of direct experience in the context of the place of art in relation to being human. In “Ode on a Grecian Urn” he celebrates the immortality of art; the lovers on the urn “cannot fade,” but their human existence is limited because they cannot experience real passion: “never canst thou kiss” (GU II.17-9). Crane undergoes a similar “struggle to free the transcendent without losing the immediate world,” yet he overcomes this Romantic dichotomy of human experience versus art by coalescing experience with imagination:

There is some way, I think, to touch
Those hands of yours that count the nights
Stippled with pink and green advertisements (FH I. 26-8).

Through this poised mode of poetics Crane finds Helen, symbol of ideal love and beauty, on the modern subway. Through his imagination he not only finds, but touches beauty in the quotidian world of the city. Helen also comes to represent imagination and poetry that adorn the present age as her counting hands make beautiful the commercialism, the “stippled pink and green advertisements,” of modern America that Crane previously wanted to escape and forget. Through this image of Helen’s hands and the second implication of clock hands that count the night, Crane coalesces intimacy with abstraction; he combines the human sensation of touch as he reaches to grasp and understand ideals of beauty and love, time and eternity.

Crane’s discovery of ideal love is met with Byronic fatalism. Crane finds human experience and ideal abstractions are a dangerous combination as his poetry expresses the dark realisation that love will not remain joyous and pure, but will turn violent and cease:32 “And

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28 For example, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound.
29 Crane, “General Aims and Theories,” 162.
32 Byron often coalesces two opposing sentiments in one breath. For example fun and death are shown to co-exist in his rhyming couplets in Beppo: “For sometimes they contain a deal of fun, / Like mourning coaches when the funeral’s done.” (20. 159-60). Lord Byron, “Beppo,” The Major Works, ed. and introd. Jerome McGann, Oxford World’s Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) 321. All quotations from Byron’s poetry will be taken from this volume. Despite finding love the ideal emotional experience, Romantic poets were continually aware of its darker side and ephemeral nature. Byron’s celebration of love is often tainted by an image of death or infidelity, Shelley’s Maniac in Julian and Maddalo devoted himself to “justice and
now, before its arteries turn dark / I would have you meet this bartered blood” (FH I. 29-30).
The image of “bartered blood” emphasises Crane’s likening of the poet figure to Faustus who
bartered his soul to the devil for sexual pleasure with Helen. As Faustus reaches the nadir of
his deception in his apparent intercourse with the devil spirit disguised as Helen, it creates
the finest poetry of the play. Marlowe engineers this irony to reveal the deceptions of apparent
beauty and poetry itself. Yet Faustus can see the beauty in Helen and worship and adore this
despite the cold realities, like Lycius in Keats’s Lamia deceived by a beautiful snake lover.
Crane, like Faustus, pursues Helen only to find it a deceptive and impossible aspiration; be-
ing human and only able to experience material reality appears to render ideals unreachable.
Helen’s love is difficult to maintain because his poetry, poised between the steel metropolis
of Manhattan and the virgin Indian soil from which it emerges, is: “too alternate / With steel
and soil to hold you endlessly” (FH I. 44-5). Crane finds himself in a “tragic quandary”
between steel and soil, modernity and the past, resulting from “the paradoxes that an inad-
quate system of rationality forces on the living consciousness.”

To Crane, this was the flawed system of modernity that separated the human from the
ideal, and divided the experience of reality from imaginative transcendence. To bridge this la-
cuna and forge a greater understanding of being, Crane replaced this inadequate system with
the “logic” of imagination. In his theory of the “logic of metaphor,” he places significance
on the imagination to create images of “associated meanings” rather than rational “literal
significance.” In this way “the truth of the imagination” speaks with greater insight of his
age and direct human experience and feelings than Crane previously thought possible.
This theory sounds very much like Keats’s credo: “What the imagination seizes as Beauty must
be Truth.” Imagination is Crane’s route to the truth of beauty, and through this he can,
Faustus-like, suspend his rationality and appreciate beauty even in a moment of deception.
Pease argues that Crane attempted to “write his way out of the modernist dilemma,” yet, as
the rest of the poem confirms, Crane embraces the paradoxes of modernism and seeks to find
a new system of consciousness and being that lies not in rationality but in the imagination.

Part Two is the “dance and sensual culmination” of Crane’s search for love and beauty
through poetry. He takes us from the subway to a dance, opera and roof garden, celebrating
the freedom and energy of the modern world through jazz rhythms and frenetic pace as the
movement of the “breathless” dancers’ feet intermingle with the metrical feet of the poem
itself: “Glee shifts from foot to foot,” (FH II. 2) the heavy spondee followed by two rising
iambs recreates the movement of dance steps. The dance captures Crane’s “tragic quandary”
and modernist dilemma: it at once provides “New soothings, new amazements,” sexual ex-
perience, and the sensations that make us human, but is tempered “Through snarling hails
of melody” (FH II. 16, 10) an image that recalls the “silver, snarling trumpets” of Keats’s The Eve of St Agnes which act as a prophetic warning that chivalric and romantic love
cannot exist in its ideal form in the real world. Crane’s “opéra bouffe” turns tragic as sex is
coalesced with death as Crane becomes aware that love and sex do not remain ideal: “titters
hailed the groans of death / Beneath gyrating awnings” (FH II. 27-8). Crane, like Keats, ac-

33 Crane, Letters and Prose, 226.
34 Crane, “General Aims and Theories,” 164-5.
36 Donald Pease, “Blake, Crane, Whitman, and Modernism: A Poetics of Pure Possibility,” PMLA
37 Crane, Letters, 120-1.
38 Hereafter referred to as St Agnes.
cepts the dissolution of ideals, learning it is the “soothings” and “amazements” of real life feelings that make us human and alive to the experiences of the world by their very virtue of being divorced from ideal abstractions. Crane, however, is continuously reminded that human feelings are also full of suffering. “The groans of death” recall the intrusion of death and pain into Keats’s “Ode to a Nightingale”: “where men sit and hear each other groan” (ON 24). The dance whirls Crane into a vision of death-in-life. He sees sex and death, tragedy and “titters” of laughter grotesquely compounding with sexual and deathly groans. Being human, he learns, is a complex and inseparable mix of pleasure and pain. Helen returns at the end of this section, but she has been turned from a figure of ideal love into a luring siren “of guilty song” (FH II. 31). Ideal love has been transmuted into guilty and sinful sex and Helen, also the figure of poetry, has deceived and ensnared Crane as he finds his poetic perceptions of ideal love and beauty fail in reality. This is similar to Keats’s poet figure Endymion who falls in love with poetry, represented by the moon goddess, Cynthia, only to be disillusioned: “Where all that beauty snared me” [...] “With siren words” (En II. 952-5). Crane’s fancy, like the Keats’s nightingale “cannot cheat so well”, (ON 73) and his claim that imaginative flights bring ideals into reality is rendered a fallacy and destroyed. The human and imaginative realms remain separate.

Part Three sees Crane attempt to bridge this gap by using poetry and the imagination to make both ideals and realities come together to explore the richness of being human. This section is described by Crane as “the acceptance of tragedy through destruction” and he purges his tragic vision of love turned sour through imagery of the First World War and the fall of Troy to achieve creation-out-of-destruction. Before Crane can create a deeper understanding and gain greater insight into America, his age and being human, he purges history and his imagination of its failings. Crane uses a war pilot to represent modernity’s violent destruction of ideals: “We drove speediest destruction / in Corymbulous formations of mechanics” (FH III. 12-3). Crane integrates warfare of the past and present to depict history as cyclical and dependent upon destruction and chaos to enable the birth of new visions, human potential and progression. Rebirth out of death is the crux of Keats’s Hyperion: Oceanus declares his faith in the natural process of the death of the old reign and ascension of new:

For 'tis the eternal law
That first in beauty should be first in might.
Yea, by that law, another race may drive
Our conquerors to mourn as we do now (H II. 224-31).

Crane’s “speediest destruction” is a cathartic release of his despair at the destroyed ideals of modernity, represented by war. This gives way to the realisation that imagination is the means through which the poet “conquerors” are the new race that bring beauty and can make “metallic paradises” (FH II. 24) out of modernity. Through the “lavish heart” of love the new generation of America can “leaven” the age and humanity with a refreshed spirituality, spread by the “bells and voices” of poetry and the imagination (recalling Keats’s means of worshipping beauty and the soul “With buds, and bells” of poetry and imagination in “Ode to Psyche” [OP 61]), and atone for the “shadows” of the war (FH III. 33-5). The final “re-statement of the imagination” comes as Crane is able to “praise the years” (FH III. 45) of America’s violent past, understanding war as necessary for the evolution of the nation and

39 Crane Letters, 120-1.
40 Like Shelley’s description of the wind, symbol of poetic inspiration and its power, “Destroyer and Preserver” in “Ode to the West Wind” (WW 14).
41 See Keats’s Hyperion quotation above.
42 Crane, Letters, 120-1.
its people. Crane’s faith in poetry and his imagination is no longer centred on his individual understanding of being human, but reveals an insight into humanity at large.

The image of threshing in this section depicts the violent poetic process of creation-out-of-destruction in the same way as threshing in Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan” shows violence to be invigorating rather than destructive. It represents the power of imaginative creativity: the “mighty fountain” of the imagination is “forced” and “Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail, / Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher’s flail” (KK 19-22). Through the imagination Crane can envision his age to outpace the “bargain” and materiality of his culture and modern man, and find greater significance through poetry that becomes like a “prayer” or religion that is “vocable” or capable of speaking to his age (FH III. 48). Imagination is the faculty that marries the poet and intellect, Faustus, with ideal beauty and love, Helen, to find “A thing of beauty is a joy forever” (En I. 1), in Keats’s words. It is key to being human and a poet: it has the power not only to provide a vision of the present, it “spans beyond” (FH III. 47) and allows Crane to transcend his despair of modernity and envisage the future with a renewed and optimistic faith in the potential of America, its people, and the self as it is born out of the past.

Syllables of Faith Lend a Myth to God: “The Bridge”

*The Bridge* is the apotheosis of Crane’s poetics of Romantic Modernism as he continues his journey to discover the self and being. His final volume is an epic of the Romantic and Modern consciousness as he forms his identity as poet: his search for meaning in the world through his poetic voice and the imagination renders the volume Romantic, yet his accumulation of literary echoes from the past, celebration of machinery and the city, and drive to find a new poetic voice to fit the age reinforces its place in the genre of Modernism.

Crane converges past and present not only to form his own sense of being but to create an epic history of American consciousness. He scrambles chronology to produce an assimilated and realistic vision of human experience and America’s history showing, as he wrote to Otto Kahn, “the continuous and living evidence of the past in the in-most vital substance of the present.”43 Revealing the living past in the “vital substance” of the present was the way Crane believed he could build a bridge to envision the future. Vogler defines the epic form as the search “for a vision of change, a prophecy of a better future state. The theme, goal, and motive of the poet merge in a vision of spiritual regeneration that will lead to a state of permanent enlightenment.”44 Crane sees his role as a Shelleyan “hierophant,” portending an ideal future, or Atlantis, to discover the “as yet undefined spiritual quantities” of America and being human.45

Crane reveals a faith in the human voice and mind, believing “poetic prophecy” to be “a peculiar type of perception, capable of apprehending some absolute and timeless concept of the imagination with astounding clarity and conviction.”46 Brooklyn Bridge is the means through which Crane’s vision is framed: “Terrific threshold of the prophet’s pledge” (TBB 31). The bridge to enlightenment is built through imaginative evocation of the past in the present that can also “span beyond” into a timeless and absolute perception and vision of the future.

45 See footnote 5.
The “ideal Word” which overcomes the temporality of love at the end of *Voyages* does not satisfy Crane’s search for his vision, voice and self. He seeks the universal ideal of Atlantis to provide a poetic vision and voice that does sing of his personal experience of being human, and can also encompass America’s being, its people, present, past and future.

Like Shelley’s *Alastor*, *The Bridge* is the epic of the poet in search for his self-as-poet, spiritual understanding, and impact his human voice can have on his world. As Bloom notes “the transformation of lyric into epic was a Romantic *praxis* long before it was Modernist.”47 When the Poet dies on his quest in *Alastor* the Narrator yearns that poetry, “the dream / Of dark magician in his visioned cave” had power over death and “were the true law / Of this so lovely world!” (A 681-686). Crane, however, seeks to overcome this tragic vision, refusing Vogler’s account of the epic poet to “accept defeat;”48 he seeks to overcome Shelley’s despair in divine vacancy,49 invoking his bridge of poetry and imagination: “And of the curveship lend a myth to God” (*TBB* 44). This yearning brings to light Bloom’s observation of American writers: “we (or at least most of our post-Emersonian poets) tend to see our fathers as not having dared enough.”50 Shelley and Crane were both daring poets, producing visions that vaulted and spanned beyond their ages, and Crane draws upon his Romantic legacy to dare even further into the future. Crane has faith in the potential of his poetry and creative powers; the bridge’s “teeming span!”51 (B I. AM 72) echoes Keats’s “teeming brain” (*WHF* 2). In “Ave Maria,” Crane uses Columbus as a figural representation of the poet who discovers the new world of modern America and brings his new-found vision to Europe. He announces: “I bring you back Cathay!” (B I. AM 8) representing “consciousness, knowledge, spiritual unity” found by the poet.52 Crane likens being a poet to being a voyager. He is exiled because of his radical and daring visions, like Columbus who was disbelieved by those who thought the earth was flat: “I thought of Genoa; and this truth, now proved, / That made me exile in her streets” (B I. AM 17-8). The aim of Crane’s epic is to find some truths of life, being and America which are proven worthy through his poetry and imagination and understand its significance. Crane shares Blake’s view of the prophetic visionary truth of the imagination, recalling the axiom: “What is now proved was once only imagined.”53

Crane re-visions and enlivens the past to mythologise modern America in the same way that Perkins envisions the purpose of mythology, to award “a significance lacking in a world deprived of myth”.54 Crane uses the Eliotic “mythical method” to manipulate “a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity” as he converges America’s Indian past with the present.55 Crane uses the sea to re-pioneer and voyage the Indian world and its human mythology to transmute its significance into modern consciousness. He is “between

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48 Vogler, 6.
49 Of course, Shelley’s poem is not entirely pessimistic and tragic; although the Narrator laments the seemingly insignificant effect the Poet had on the world, he has “adorned” the world and left things “not as they were.” (A 715-20).
51 B represents the volume *The Bridge*, the number the part, and individual poems will be placed in initials next to this (see list of abbreviations of poetry titles).
55 Perkins, 64-5. Eliot used the phrase “mythical method” in his review of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*. 

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“two worlds,” poised between two states of being: the humans of the past that made America, and the humans of the present that have the power to build its future. This suspension of consciousness is also a metaphor for poetic navigation, the creative and mental space that spans past and present, it “tests the word” and “Merges wind in measure to the waves” (B I. AM 32-40) punning measure with poetic measure. Shelley’s self-as-poet is reflected in nature and the wider universal scheme, like the Alastor Poet who sees himself and his quest in the stream: “Thy searchless fountain, and invisible course / Have each their type in me” (A 507-8). Crane’s poetry and self is merged with nature as his vision becomes part of the waves and prairie sod of which he sings. Human thought becomes identified with the body of America in the same way that Emerson claimed: “The Universe is the externisation of the soul.”

This state of balance “between two worlds” recalls Crane being “lost yet poised in traffic” in “Faustus and Helen,” a state that enables him to become suspended between the Romantic and Modern modes of seeking experience and imagination. This state of balance is found in The Waste Land and Crane becomes like Eliot, a Tiresias figure, “between two lives” (WL 218). He is poised between Greek myth and the modern city, blind yet able to become a voice of the future as he prefigures and envisions the collapsed modern city. In his search for America’s Atlantis, Crane is a figure between two worlds, using the past to understand and create a vision of the future, revealing the impact an individual human voice can have on the world.

In “Van Winkle” he journeys to his childhood – the origins of his being, representing the gradual recession of the poem into America’s history. Crane uses the figure of Rip Van Winkle not only to evoke childhood, but to write American folklore into the European literary tradition so Van Winkle becomes another character synonymous with the identity of the poet. Crane uses Van Winkle who “was not here / nor there” (B II. VW 31-2) to understand the importance of balancing tradition and heritage with change and modernity, and also to use literature from the past and America’s history to establish tradition while incorporating and appreciating the changing modern world. Crane comes to understand that this is also the key to evolving as a human and poet. He undergoes a poetic Bildungsroman58 and realises that he must leave his childhood as “memory, that strikes a rhyme out of a box” and accept the future: “hurry along, Van Winkle – it’s getting late!” in the same way the bridge “Leaps from Far Rockaway to Golden Gate” (B II. VW 33-45), spanning the past, present and future in one vast sweep.

Crane does not allow the “loose and open-endedness” of America and his quest for self to lead to despair. He evokes the roaring and rushing river that becomes an express train to embrace modernity and aid his search for a significant poetic vision that fits his age. The jazz and fragmented rhythms of the opening stanza recall The Waste Land in its depiction of urban chaos:

SCIENCE – COMMERCE and the HOLYGHOST
RADIO ROARS IN EVERY HOME WE HAVE THE NORTHPOLE
WALLSREET AND THE VIRGINBIRTH WITHOUT STONES OR
WIRES OR EVEN RUNning Brooks connecting ears59 (B II. TR 13-6)

56 Emerson, “The Poet,” 95.
57 Italics are Crane’s.
58 Although this means ‘formation novel’ [J. A. Cuddon, The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory, 4th ed. (London: Penguin, 1999) 81], the term seems apt to apply to Crane’s development through youth.
59 Capitalisation is Crane’s.
The metamorphosis of river into express train represents Crane’s process of using the modern day in conjunction with the past to transport us back to the Mid West to the time of the Indians. Crane intended this section to be a “burlesque on the cultural confusion of the present,” sharing the same intentions as Eliot to reveal the barrenness and sterility of being human in the modern world, corrupted by war and lacking in a spiritual vision. The spiritual plane of America, “holyghost” and “virginbirth,” becomes interchanged with commerce and radio to reveal that modern society lacks a spiritual identity and direction. Yet Crane has faith in the modern city to provide a spiritual plateau for its people, and the telephone wires that span the mountain become like the bridge and “Bind town to town and dream to ticking dream” (B II. TR 27). The movement of the verse and river energises his search: “Poised wholly on its dream, a mustard glow / Tortured with history, its one will – flow!” (B II. TR 141-2). Despite his anxiety that his “dreams” may not survive reality, he retains a driving belief that he will find Atlantis and a spiritual vision as the river “hosannas silently below” (B II. TR 144).

“The Dance” continues his search for the lost Indians of America’s past, the country’s originators of being. He travels along the river to the spring in a similar way to the Poet in Alastor who seeks the spring in his search for knowledge, and the origins of the self and poetry. Pocahontas becomes a spirit of poetry like the “veiléd maid” in Shelley’s poem. She is a synecdoche for the body and soul of America, and is absorbed into the alliteration and words of the poem: “Her hair’s warm sibilance” (B II. D 95). The dance merges with the storm in a movement of Sturm und Drang, which represents the conflict between colonisers and Indians. Through the battle Crane becomes “identified with the Indian and his world” which he felt was “the only method possible of ever really possessing the Indian and his world as a cultural factor.” Crane begins to find his poetic self among the Indians of the past, the creators of America’s human consciousness and spirituality. He uses the first person narrative and in “Indiana” he becomes a part of the Indian family as he inhabits their consciousness and sense of being to understand his own: “I huddled in the shade / Of wagon-tenting” (B II. I 29-30). Crane uses the river Maquokeeta with the force and energy of the storm to “dance us back the tribal morn!” taking us to the Indian past in order to experience and discover the origins of the future. The river is like a snake that “casts his pelt, and lives beyond!” (B II. TD 58-60). At the end of this poem, however, the colonisers become associated with the symbol of the snake. They have ensnared Pocahontas, and the sacrifice of her cultural heritage and identity in marrying John Rolfe, which symbolises the founding of modern America, represented by the eagle: “The serpent with the eagle in the boughs” (B II. TD 104). Crane uses these symbols in a Blakean antithetical way; the image of the snake does not only represent the sin and temptation of the colonisers, but connotes the possibility of the renewal they bring to America because, like the river, it sheds its skin to grow bigger and live on. Similarly, the eagle is at once a bird of beauty and a bird of prey; modern America has destroyed its Indian past but portends its potential to regenerate and become stronger.

60 Crane, Letters and Prose, 251.
61 “Storm and stress,” The term is used to describe a German Romantic movement of thought.
62 In a similar way to the tumult of poetic creativity in “Kubla Khan” that takes him back to primeval origins of destruction: “And ’mid this tumult Kubla heard from far / Ancestral voices prophesying war!” (KK 29-30).
63 Crane, Letters and Prose, 251.
64 Blake used antithetical symbols to carry out his belief: “Without contraries is no progression. Attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence” (MHH 74).
If Pocahontas is the body of America, or the land, Whitman is the “spiritual body of America”.

Crane believed that poets of the past have a spiritual and religious role to play in the mythologising of America, like Shelley’s belief that poets are the “hierophants” of “unapprehended inspiration.” Whitman provides “syllables of faith” (B IV. CH 47) to a modern world that seems to lack an adequate mode of religion. He becomes another manifestation of the symbol of the bridge, bringing Crane back “To that deep wonderment, our native clay” (B IV. CH 18) and acting as a spiritual link between the present and the origins of being. Whitman stands immortal and immutable like the bridge: “But that star-glistered salver of infinity, / The circle, blind crucible of endless space” (B IV. CH 32-3) unlike the modern day which makes space “instantaneous” and sees man as “an atom in a shroud” amid the age of engines and “shifting gears,” where “Dream cancels dream in this new realm of fact” (B IV. CH 43-6). This recalls Keats’s mourning of a lost mysticism of the past in his contemporary day where philosophy, or science, became a dominant mode of thinking and means of attributing meaning to the world, asking: “Do not all charms fly/ At the mere touch of cold philosophy?” Factual and reasoned thinking shatters the once “awful rainbow” (L II. 229-31) by providing answers to the unexplained wonders of being human and the world, and thus limits meaning.

In some ways Crane views his modern day and self-as-poet as failing the Romantic vision of Whitman, a “Saunterer on free ways still ahead!” (B IV. CH 54) who sang of an America with freedom and potential with teeming confidence in his self as a spiritual pioneer: “I am the Body and I am the poet of the Soul” (SM XXI). Crane wrote to Frank expressing anxiety that the reality of present America has not lived up to Whitman’s intimations:

If only America were half as worthy today to be spoken of as Whitman spoke of it fifty years ago there might be something for me to say – not that Whitman received or required any tangible proof of his intimations, but that time has shown how increasingly lonely and ineffectual his confidence stands.

Yet Crane wanted to sing of his America and the experience of being human with optimism, unlike the pessimism he found in The Waste Land. Although the modern age is in the throes of engines and machinery that demystify and automate spirituality and transcendence, Crane celebrates the power and energy of the machine-age with excitement that emulates Whitman’s voice. The new American frontier that Crane pioneers through his poetry and imagination is not the “statured” cliffs and “abandoned pastures” of Whitman’s journeys, but the “world of stocks” and “canyoned traffic” (B IV. CH 58-61). His language and rhythm is full of the movement and energy of this fast-moving society: “The nasal whine of power whips a new universe,” “fast in whirling armatures,” (B IV. CH 63, 73) and he sees his age and poetic potential as “bobbin-bound,” ready to unwind.

The soldiers in the biplane represent the poet’s desire to continue Whitman’s vision and quest to voyage America in conjunction with his own being, seeking their potential and meaning: Whitman and the poets of the past are represented as “Stars” like the “remembered stars” of Voyages who “scribble on our eyes the frosty sagas” of poetry gone before, “The gleaming cantos of unvanquished space” (B IV. CH 79-80). Crane wants his new poetry to be like the “blading” and “veering” biplane to find “new latitudes” and achieve “marathons

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65 Crane, Letters and Prose, 241.
66 See footnote 6.
67 In a review of The Ghetto and Other Poems by Lola Ridge, Crane wrote: “science has brought light – but it threatens to destroy the idea of reverence, the source of all light.” Crane, Letters and Prose, 201.
68 Crane, Letters and Prose, 232.
new-set between the stars!” (B IV. CH 87) He does not want it to become “shred ends,” but part of the pantheon of the “stars” or writers of the past, as Keats achieves in ascending the steps in The Fall of Hyperion. In his desire to bridge and further his American and Romantic legacy through his conception of the self-as-poet, Crane seeks to dare beyond Whitman’s vision, the metaphoric pioneer of new and fertile spiritual lands. He seeks to elevate America’s spirituality, using the plane as a symbol for the new soul of the modern age: “The soul, by naphtha fledged into new reaches / Already knows the closer clasp of Mars” (B IV. CH 88-9). The coalescence of petrol and dynamos with Romantic imagery of the soul transcending to new heights allows Crane to give a sublime basis to his age of stocks, machines and urbanity. The notion of the soul taking flight in a moment of epiphanic ecstasy is at the heart of Keats’s Ode to a Nightingale and Shelley’s To a Skylark.

Crane’s plane becomes a modern manifestation of the human soul, but also becomes the soul of poetry – the imagination – like Keats’s nightingale whose immortal song represents the eternal and transcendental powers of poetry amid a world of “weariness,” “fever” and “fret”: “Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!” (ON 23, 61) Similarly, Shelley’s rising skylark represents the soul in ecstasy, it is “Like an unbodied joy” (TS 15) and the long lines at the end of each stanza enact the rising up and up of the skylark. The bird is also the symbol of poetic composition, like the nightingale:

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden (TS 36-8).

The flight of Crane’s plane, however, comes to an abrupt end as it is bombed. The modern day can only bring a limited amount of transcendence to human spirituality, and the First World War becomes an example of the failed promise of Whitman’s vision of a land that gives freedom to humanity with greater potential to come. The soldiers whose “Wings clip the last peripheries of light” suddenly become a “bunched heap of high bravery!” (B IV. CH 106, 155) The form of Crane’s poem becomes the opposite of the rising movement of Shelley’s ode; Crane’s fragmented and dropped lines disperse and break up the form to mirror the action of the crashing plane. Where Keats and Shelley looked to nature to find spiritual elevation for the self and to represent their powers of imagination and poetry, Crane looks to the man-powered machinery of the modern day to promote the potential of being human and celebrate the transformative self.

Whitman has built a bridge from his age to “Years of the Modern!” and becomes the dynamic energy propelling the machines of the age forward. Crane’s anxiety that modern man cannot live up to the vision and consciousness of the poets who have gone before culminates in the crash of the plane. But this transmutes into a moment of anagnorisis when walking along Brooklyn Bridge and he realises:

To course that span of consciousness thou’st named
The Open Road – thy vision is reclaimed!
What heritage thou’st signalled to our hands! (B IV. CH 220-2)

Crane believes he can continue the legacy of Whitman, and the actual bridge provides the pathway through which Crane realises Whitman’s bridge of human consciousness, poetry and vision that spans the “hiatus” and void of the modern day.69 Crane suddenly sees the “rainbow’s arch” shimmering; through Whitman, Crane can re-weave Keats’s “awful rainbow”. He

69 Like Whitman’s poetic mind spans the “vast Rondure” of the earth in “Passage to India”: “Now first it seems my thought begins to span thee.” (PI 7)
ends the poem with the belief that he can continue Whitman’s legacy, as they walk hand in hand, an image that recalls Keats’s hand extending to the reader to demonstrate the immortality of poetry: “- see here it is - / I hold it towards you” (*TLH* 7-8).

Crane travels on the subway whose tunnel becomes a form of purgatory before reaching “Atlantis,” which represents the triumph of the human imagination and his poetry in seeking and singing modern America. His own poem becomes identified with the structure and framework of the bridge: “New octaves trestle the twin monoliths” representing the “loft of vision”, no longer the “shred ends of stars” but the “palladium helm of stars” (*BVIII. At* 18-24). Atlantis is the ideal that Crane has now reached, the “Vision-of-the-Voyage,” (*BVIII. At* 42) and reflects upon the very journey and process of *The Bridge* volume itself, understanding that by drawing on Romanticism he has synthesised the past of America with the present to produce poetry which has the power to build a bridge to the future:

translating time  
Into what multitudinous Verb the suns  
And synergy of waters ever fuse, recast  
In myriadsyllables, - Psalm of Cathay! (*BVIII. At* 44-7)

Crane has reached his Cathay – he has gained knowledge of the past, understood the consciousness of modernity, and found spiritual unity through the imaginative process of writing his poem. The “synergy” of his poetry comes from the recasting of Romanticism and interconnection with modernism to build a bridge between the past and the present that has the ability to span to the future, a spiritual and meaningful pathway for the people of America. Lewis recognises *The Bridge* as “unique in being the only large-scale work of literature in its generation which, in the light of that event, is finally concerned not with the death of God but with the birth of God.” Although Crane does not appear to believe in the Christian God, like Shelley, he reveals an agnostic openness to a divine transcendental alternative to orthodox religion that enriches our being, here realised in Cathay.

Crane’s ending is not entirely positive and as soon as he asserts he has reached Cathay, his Atlantis, with “One Song, one Bridge of Fire!” recalling the climactic oneness of *Epipsychidion*, he asks “Is it Cathay?” He returns to the image of the “serpent with the eagle in the leaves” (*BVIII. At* 93-95) to indicate that his being and America are in the process of reaching a sublime and transcendental ideal but have not yet arrived. Crane’s poem does not descend into the annihilation of Shelley’s poem but does not sustain his affirmation in the power of being human or of finding Cathay. Instead, his poetry, self, and modern America are in the process of this transcendence; his vision, like the bridge, remains poised between the two antiphonal strains of past and present, remaining “between two worlds”. Unlike the end of *Voyages*, his poem becomes not so much an affirmation of Cathay, nor does it offer a positive vision of the future, but “Whispers antiphonal in azure swing” (*BVIII. At* 96). Crane remains poised in a state of Keatsian negative capability: he is open to “uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.” It is this poise and process, however, which Crane finds inspiring and although he has not firmly reached his Cathay or Atlantis and a satisfactory self-discovery, he has glimpsed it and affirmed the power of poetry and the human mind that he believes is the mode through which he and America will arrive at Atlantis.

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What I Hold Healed, Original Now, and Pure: ‘The Broken Tower’

“The Broken Tower” traces Crane’s disillusionment in being human and in his self-as-poet from which he suffered towards the end of his career and life. Originality for Crane was central to his poetic being, and his anxiety that he could not live up to the poets of the past or write with an original voice (fears that he sought to dispel in Voyages and The Bridge) returns. He sees his literary predecessors as a corps of bell-ringers to whom he is “their sexton slave” (BT 12); troubled he is an epigone and not a creative continuator, finding his word “cognate.” Crane finds his poetry has not the transcendental voice and vision of ideals he once believed, leaving him “cleft to despair” (BT 24). Tate’s criticism of Crane’s first volume, White Buildings, has potency in the light of this poem: “The vision often strains and overreaches the theme” because “the existing poetic order no longer supports the imagination.” Crane’s reverence of the human imagination to support his vision was due to his critique of the “inadequate system of rationality;” yet here, imagination seems to have failed him. His search for an original voice and place among a great literary canon overreaches the ability of his imagination and poetry. This overreaching leads to a breaking down of his personal vision altogether and so he enters the “broken world” of ringing poets “To trace the visionary company of love” (BT 17-8) of his fellow poets to “track, copy, or emulate” the vision of his predecessors. As O’Neill observes:

In “the broken world,” Crane is outside any Romantic “world to which the familiar world is as a chaos,” in Shelley’s words from A Defence of Poetry, and in search of a lost wholeness, a search made possible by the experience of fragmentation.

For Crane, having an original voice was essential to being human and this becomes the focus of his quest to realise his potential as a poet. In search of an original or “whole” voice, Crane undergoes a process of fragmentation and destruction. His being and self becomes a Shelleyan “portion” before he can become a whole, enabling him to create to meet his vision.

Bloom argues Crane’s broken tower is an act of tessera in the quest “to become one’s own Great Original.” He writes: “We journey to abstract ourselves by fabrication. But where the fabric already has been woven, we journey to unravel.” As Crane fragments the self, he unravels and breaks down the tower of his literary forefathers in despair and disillusionment that he cannot become a “Great Original.” Yet he breaks it down to build it up again with a renewed vision of his own being, poetry and love. Through the ringing and pulsing of the bells

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72 Crane is believed to have committed suicide at the age of 32.
73 See footnote 15.
75 See footnote 34.
77 O’Neill, 143.
78 Bloom defines this succinctly as “completion and antithesis.”
79 Bloom, “Tessera or Completion and Antithesis,” 64-5.
and the “she” figure of love, Crane begins to revive “What I hold healed, original now, and pure” and “builds, within, a tower that is not stone” but pebbles (BT 32-3). Through “fragmentation” Crane rebuilds his understanding of the significance of life and being human. He rediscovers the elevating and transcendental powers of love, the “matrix of the heart” which is central to being, and the power of his poetry “Unseals her earth, and lifts love in its shower” (BT 37, 40). This fragmentation and destructive-creative process is seen in Byron’s image of the broken mirror in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*. Out of destruction and the sorrows of his broken heart is born greater meaning in the human heart:

> Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
> In every fragment multiplies; and makes
> A thousand images of one that was,
> The same, and still the more, the more it breaks (CHP III. 33. 289-92).

Human experiences, even ones of broken love, multiply the meaning and significance of being. O’Neill explains this Romantic trope:

> At their most imaginatively daring and heterodox, the Romantics glimpse epiphany and loss in the same moment of vision [...] The shared experience of a dispossession that empowers a sense of possible sublimity links Romantic poems with many poems of a later climate.81

Crane glimpses possible sublimity out of destruction and despair, like Demogorgon’s *encomium* at the end of *Prometheus Unbound*: “To love, and bear; to hope, till Hope creates / From its own wreck the thing it contemplates” (PU 4.573-4). From his wrecked vision of an original voice and his failure to reach ideals of love, beauty, and a paradisal future through his poetry, Crane finds hope in human love to rebuild and re-vision life and being. As Lewis states: “[the poem] moves through pain and doubt to a peacefully confident sense of renewed life and love and poetic power.”82

Crane’s final vision does not seem as assured as his affirmation of the poetic word and human imagination at the end of *Voyages*. It ends not so much in triumph, but in quiet hope for the “human mind’s imaginings” providing his poetry with a place in his “visionary company” of predecessors.83 He becomes “revived and sure” (BT 30), coming to a renewed acceptance of his place amid his literary past in a vision of “epiphany and loss,”84 understanding that literary influence is a re-making of vision, voice and self, a process of gaining and giving, destruction and re-creation, to arrive at something new; an enriched and understood sense of being.85 As Goethe avows, “Only by making the riches of the others our own do we bring anything great into being.”86

Bibliography


80 See O’Neill quotation above.
81 O’Neill, 147.
82 Lewis, “Thresholds Old and New,” 394-5.
83 See footnote 51.
84 See O’Neill quotation above.
85 Oscar Wilde remarks in *The Portrait of Mr. W. H.* that: “Influence is simply a transference of personality, a mode of giving away what is most precious to one’s self, and its exercise produces a sense, and, it may be, a reality of loss. Every disciple takes away something from his master.” Bloom, “Introduction: A Meditation upon Priority, and a Synopsis,” 6.
86 Bloom, “Tessera or Completion and Antithesis,” 52.
Hoyes – Hart Crane’s Search for Self and Being


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**ABBREVIATIONS**

A – Alastor [Shelley]

At – Atlantis [Crane]

AM – Ave Maria [Crane]

B – The Bridge [Crane]

BT – The Broken Tower [Crane]

CH – Cape Hatteras [Crane]

CHP – Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage [Byron]

D – The Dance [Crane]

DP – A Defence of Poetry [Shelley]

En – Endymion [Keats]

ESA – The Eve of St. Agnes [Keats]

FH – For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen [Crane]

GU – Ode on a Grecian Urn [Keats]

H – Hyperion. A Fragment [Keats]

I – Indiana [Crane]

KK – Kubla Khan [Coleridge]

ON – Ode to a Nightingale [Keats]

OP – Ode to Psyche [Keats]

PU – Prometheus Unbound [Shelley]

SM – Song of Myself [Whitman]

TBB – To Brooklyn Bridge [Crane]

TR – The River [Crane]

TS – To a Skylark [Shelley]

V – Voyages [Crane]

VW – Van Winkle

WL – The Wasteland [Eliot]

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Ultrasound and the Face of the Other  
*A Levinasian Account of the Mother–Foetus Conflict*

DAVID W. HILL

Introduction

When writing about new reproductive technologies, many feminist theorists express concern about the impact such technologies have on women. To focus on just one, the ultrasound has been seen to subordinate the mother’s interests to those of the foetus by dehumanising the former and allowing for the emergence of the latter as a subject – or even a person. In this paper I will first outline this position before rereading it through a Levinasian account of intersubjectivity. I am not concerned with comparing the first position with the Levinasian account, but with diffracting the one through the other to create a new way of looking at mother–foetus conflict.¹ My aim is to show both the fruitfulness of a phenomenological approach in such a context and to argue that whilst the mother has an almost unbearable responsibility to the foetus she must also be protected in instances of conflict. It is important to note that this paper draws on studies of the experiences of women in North America and the United Kingdom; experiences of reproductive technologies will be different in other cultural climates.

1. Creating Subjects Inside Objects?

Ultrasound works by bouncing sound waves off the foetus in utero. This can be done either abdominally or vaginally (with the sound waves bounced through the cervix into the uterus). The echoes are then translated into an image of the foetus presented on a monitor, the formerly opaque womb having been rendered transparent for the medical gaze. It is now a routine procedure, used to diagnose foetal abnormalities as well as to determine gender and gestational age. I first wish to argue that the use of ultrasound can result in a conflict of interests between mother and foetus.

The transparency of the womb is a crucial factor in the foetus being seen as separate and autonomous. It is pictured as if solitary. This solitariness, this lack of reference to the

¹ The results of this new approach are my concern here rather than arguing for/against the Levinasian account of intersubjectivity.
mother suggests independence, as if the foetus was possessed of the ability to sustain its own life – which it is not. This image of an “independent” foetus then seeps into the public consciousness as the foetus becomes an “active agent” in debates on abortion, medical research, and a host of other social issues. It is not only that the image is manipulated for the purposes of “pro-lifers” but that it proliferates in society to such an extent that the foetus emerges as a social actor with certain interests. For example, it begins to influence health and safety legislation in the workplace; it helps to sell the safety features of family cars; and, as we shall see below, it even begins to have its say on the suitability of the mother.

Many feminist theorists see the ultrasound as an instrumental factor in the ascription of subjectivity to the foetus. At the same time, these “foetal subjects” become patients in their own right. The image of the solitary foetus becomes the doctor’s main reference point for diagnosis. Decisions are often made by examining the image rather than by examining the mother – indeed, the doctor turns away from the mother to examine the image of the foetus on a monitor. The doctor can have a direct relationship with the foetus whilst the mother, not included in the image, becomes invisible. The foetus is treated as if it were outside of the womb because it can be visualised as such. In this respect, the ultrasound has been described as “virtual forceps” removing the foetus from the woman; the foetus is externalised, seen as distinct from the woman carrying it: “everywhere you look there are fetuses but no women.” As a result, the foetus becomes a patient distinct from the symbiotic partnership of mother and foetus. Bal-samo notes that the visualisation of this “new body” by ultrasound has led “some obstetricians to claim that the foetus is actually the primary obstetrics patient.” Whether primary or equal to the mother’s, the foetus’s patienthood inevitably leads to conflicting interests.

One example of such a conflict would be when the ultrasound scan reveals a need for foetal surgery. The problem here is that the foetus is not only the intended patient but is inside the mother. The object of the surgery is to heal the foetus; the mother is only a patient because access is needed to the patient inside her. “Access” is rather an inadequate word here; reaching the foetus involves cutting through the mother at the risk of uterine rupture, whilst tocolytic drugs are administered to her in order to prevent premature labour. There is, of course, risk involved to both foetus and mother. Yet for the foetus the risk is the result of a therapeutic procedure; the mother is put at risk when she herself is perfectly physiologically healthy. Medical intervention is justified in terms of the foetus as separate patient. It should be noted that the mother is then put through further medical intervention throughout her remaining pregnancy. Tocolytics are required until birth, at which point the baby must be delivered by caesarean section. Further, Casper notes that the mother is turned into the most useful piece of equipment involved in keeping the foetus alive. She becomes no more than

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3 Ibid.
4 Ibid., 261–62.
6 Ibid.
a foetal intensive care unit, maintaining the life of the foetus throughout the surgery. She is objectified, dehumanised at the same time as the foetus becomes the patient-subject.

One might argue that no one has forced the mother to undergo the surgery; doctors are forbidden from coercing patients and the principle of informed consent holds sway. Nevertheless, I wish to make two points that prove problematic and highlight potential conflicts of interest. The first is applicable to all medical technologies. Rapp, in her anthropological study of women refusing prenatal diagnosis, has highlighted the difficulty of “going against the grain.”9 Many women in Western society – with their better access to medical care and knowledge – find it harder to “stop the technological conveyor belt,”10 to step back and make decisions that go against the grain and do not involve the use of biomedical technology. That is, once a diagnosis has been made, many women will find it difficult to avoid subsequent technological interventions because they are so immersed in the techno-scientific discourse of high modernity. This speaks of a snowball effect, whereby the use of a diagnostic technology, such as ultrasound, leads to successive technological interventions, such as foetal surgery and caesarean section. Amid this escalation of intervention there is the risk of the mother’s interests becoming engulfed.

The second point is that visualisation technologies double up as surveillance technologies, helping to discipline the mother. Balsamo argues that these technologies, by bringing new social agents into existence, have opened up the mother’s womb as a space that can be scrutinised and controlled in the name of foetal health.11 Echoing Casper’s comments about objectification, she remarks that the maternal body becomes little more than a suitable container for the foetus. “Suitable” is the key word here; like any container, it must be fit for purpose. As such, Balsamo observes that the pregnant woman’s body is controlled to ensure that the foetus is contained in suitable conditions. Diet, alcohol consumption, drug use, and many more of the mother’s behaviours are scrutinised. Ultrasound can itself be a useful tool for observing the impact of the mother’s behaviour on the foetus. However, “the gaze” does not remain only in the clinic; it extends into the community and into the mother’s private life – a phenomenon that Balsamo labels “the public pregnancy.”12 Those behaviours deemed “anti-foetal”, including refusal of consent for foetal surgery, become anti-social. Thus the visualisation of the foetus changes the perception of the maternal body; the foetus is seen to have its own interests and rights such that the mother loses control over her own body.

The concern is that foetal rights might gain, or have gained, ascendancy over maternal rights, such that a mother can be disciplined, her autonomy as a patient threatened (or at least qualified) in the interests of the “subject” she is carrying. The newfound patient-subject status of the foetus raises questions about whether a woman should be held accountable if she refuses medical advice and in so doing damages the health of the foetus, and whether she should be legally obligated to heed such advice. Morgan notes that the emergence of a foetal subject has led some to ascribe attributes of personhood to the foetus.13 How far is medical intervention justified if it is done to protect a so-called unborn person?

As a crude distinction we find two responses amongst feminist theorists to the use and impact of reproductive technology. The first is most commonly associated with Corea14 and

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10 Ibid., 163.
12 See Balsamo, Technologies of the Gendered Body, 89–93.
13 See Morgan, “Embryo Tales,” 261.
her FINRRAGE\textsuperscript{15} group, and can be summed up as resistance to the use of reproductive technologies for the reason that such use allows men to control childbirth and so cements male dominance over women. This reaction has largely given way to the second, opposing response. This can be characterised as the idea that such technologies are not “ultimately patriarchal”; they are not “monolithic structures” with universal consequences.\textsuperscript{16} Rather, the structures within which such technologies are applied will affect the experience of women. This response favours change to a more woman-centred approach.\textsuperscript{17} I now wish to reread in Levinasian terms the situation described in this section before returning to this question of what ought to be done in response in the Concluding Remarks.

2. The Face of the Foetal Other

The ultrasound allows for the visualisation of the face of the foetus. For Levinas, the face reveals as an “epiphany”\textsuperscript{18} the ethical responsibility for the Other. The encounter with the face embodies the realisation that the world is shared with others: the face is the expression of meanings that are not given by the “I”\textsuperscript{19}. This encounter with the face leads to the choice between obligation and responsibility towards the Other, or violence. Thus the realisation that I am not solipsistically alone – that there is the Other – is the foundation of freedom. The face signifies “Do not kill me”, and so is also passive resistance to the freedom of the “I”. The effect is fundamentally ethical: “the face imposes on me and I cannot stay deaf to its appeal, or forget it, [...] I cannot stop being responsible for its desolation.”\textsuperscript{20} The vision of the face is “the taking upon oneself of the fate of the other.”\textsuperscript{21} Here we see what some anti-abortionist doctors in the USA have used to their advantage: the visualisation of the foetus is a powerful tool in initiating maternal responsibility and obligation. The ultrasound opens up the previously concealed space of the womb, allowing for a face-to-face encounter with the Other inside, and for the emergence of the foetus as an ethical subject.

Levinas makes explicit that the ethical relationship cannot be with a representation of the face; or rather, the face cannot be represented as to do so would be to make it intelligible and so to reduce the Other to the Same.\textsuperscript{22} That is to say that to be made intelligible is to be taken possession of, to become interior to thought and so no longer the expression of meanings exterior to the “I”. Levinas writes: “The face resists possession, resists my powers”;

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} Feminist International Network of Resistance to Reproductive And Genetic Engineering.
\item \textsuperscript{16} See Balsamo, \textit{Technologies of the Gendered Body}, 96.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Emmanuel Levinas, \textit{Totality and Infinity}, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 197.
\item \textsuperscript{19} The use of quotation marks in the case of “I” distinguishes the phenomenological self from the purely linguistic subject; that is to say, it distinguishes the agency of subjectivity from the purely grammatico-structural function.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Emmanuel Levinas, \textit{Humanism of the Other}, trans. Nidra Poller (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 32.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Emmanuel Levinas, \textit{Entre Nous: Thinking-of-the-Other}, trans. Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav (London: Continuum, 2006), 88–89.
\item \textsuperscript{22} See Levinas, \textit{Totality and Infinity}, 122–127.
\end{itemize}
it is “total resistance to the grasp.” 23 But we can question here whether the ultrasound is merely a representation of the face. A representation is of something past whilst the ultrasound is a presentation of something here-and-now. Produced by the process of bouncing ultrasound waves off the foetus we can interpret that what is seen on the monitor is the foetus itself experienced through a different medium, a reflection signature in real time. 24 It is as if the foetus reaches out from the womb and becomes encounterable, “presents itself” 25 as Levinas would have it. As such, the ultrasound should be seen as an invitation to enter into “social commerce” 26 with the foetus. It initiates awareness of the foetus whilst the subsequent relationship with the foetus initiates awareness of ethical responsibility. It is not so much the face on the screen that is important as the awareness that there is a face. Since ultrasound is often used long before quickening – traditionally the first moment at which the mother is aware of the foetus – it has a very important role here. However, it must be stressed that by “awareness” is not meant “understanding” or even “knowledge of” since these are both acts of possession and negation; perhaps a better term would be “awakening”: “an awakening that signifies a responsibility for the other who must be fed and clothed, my substitution for the other, my expiation for the suffering, and no doubt, for the wrongdoing of the other person.” 27

For Levinas, the responsibility for and obligation to the Other is absolute; it always demands more than “I” can give, “I” am always found wanting. Ethical responsibility is infinite. And yet this relation to the Other is asymmetrical. The responsibility of the “I” for the Other cannot be reciprocated. Now, it is obviously the case that the foetus cannot reciprocate the mother’s responsibility. But more than this, the asymmetry suggests that ethical responsibility falls to the “I” alone. It suggests that it is simply not ethical if something is expected in return. An ethical action would be one where the intended benefit lies only with the Other. So for Levinas, the ethical relationship is one-sided. “I would die for the foetus inside me” would be an ethical statement from the mother; “the foetus should die for me” is clearly not. What you should demand of yourself you cannot demand of others. Asymmetry further extends to the condition of suffering. One’s own suffering is a passive experience, an experience one submits to, whilst the suffering in the Other is an intersubjective call for help – a demand for action, alleviation. One’s own suffering is useless unless it is for the Other. 28 This asymmetrical relationship can even extend to acceptance of the violence that the Other might inflict; so any harm that the foetus does to the mother, or any risk, such as foetal surgery, that she is subjected to, must be accepted by her.

Key to understanding this relationship is the idea of substitution. “I” am responsible for substituting myself for the Other, without this being balanced by a Golden Rule; that is to say, there can be no expectation that the Other will substitute themselves for me. 29 Substitution here is not the same as interchangeability, which would suggest reciprocity; rather,
it is to put oneself in the place of the Other, to suffer for them, to “consume oneself” by them.30

So what is the nature of this one-sided obligation in the face of the Other? Levinas’s position here is that the “I” itself is constituted by the encounter with the Other, for without the Other there would be no individuated subject. Thus the relationship to the Other precedes the relationship of the “I” with itself. The “I” is responsible for the Other because the “I” owes its existence as a subject to the Other. And the “I” is to put the Other before itself because this responsibility for the Other is prior to the responsibility for the self. Werhane sums up the position astutely:

Justice becomes inescapably part of being. To be unjust, to refuse responsibility for the Other is to bring into question one’s self, because just as the Other is exposed through confrontation, that self cannot be as interiority, it has meaning only through confrontation with the Other.31

From this position, the mother’s failure to obligate herself to the foetus, to put the foetus before herself, would not only be an act of egocentric injustice, but a self-defeating one at that, since the mother “could not be or have meaning without [...] the Other.”32 Levinas writes: “Justice well ordered begins with the other.”33

In summary, a reading of Levinas provides a phenomenological explanation of the situation described in the first section. That is, the encounter with the face of the foetus is an awakening; it marks the emergence of the foetus as an ethical subject, with all the potential for conflict this entails. More than this though, an applied reading of Levinas suggests that the mother has a responsibility to put the foetus’s interests before her own and accept any harm or risk that befalls her as a consequence. It follows that in situations where the foetus is in need, the mother has a responsibility to submit to procedures such as foetal surgery regardless of the risk to her health and regardless of the fact that there is no therapeutic benefit to her. We are far from a woman-centred approach to reproductive technology.

3. Social Justice

I now wish to make three important points that expand on the concept of justice found in Levinas in order to balance the situation for the pregnant woman. First, the face-to-face is a one-to-one relationship. Responsibility for and obligation to the foetus can only be enacted in this one-to-one relationship; it is a closed society, such that the mother’s sacrifice can only ever be initiated by the mother. Levinas draws on the work of Vassily Grossman to argue that “the ‘small goodness’ from one person to his fellowman is lost and deformed as soon as it seeks organization and universality and system.”34 That is, there can be no universal structure: the experience of the face remains personal and unique within this closed society:

30 Levinas, Humanism of the Other, 64.
34 Levinas, Entre Nous, 199.
It is perhaps thus that the for-the-other – the most upright relation to the other – is the most profound adventure of subjectivity, its ultimate intimacy. But this intimacy can only be discreetly. It cannot give itself out as an example, or be narrated in an edifying discourse. It cannot, without becoming perverted, be made into a preachment.35

The encounter with the Other is different for everyone and cannot be abstracted from the face-to-face. The very existence of fears about mother–foetus conflict illustrates the fact that the experience of the Other is not universal. Whilst talking of obligation and responsibility, Levinas maintains that we are free to act with violence or non-violence. The face signifies “Do not kill me” without compelling authority. Responsibility is experienced in the face but not enforced. Thus, Levinas’s conception of responsibility is antifoundational; the face is ethical without prescribing an ethics.

To be clear, there is no contradiction here in saying that ethical responsibility is both infinite and enacted in a personal, one-to-one relationship – the closed society of the face-to-face. “I” am responsible for all suffering, infinitely responsible, yet “I” am always responsible to an individual. The individual – the face – must never be lost in the masses. And so “I” am responsible infinitely yet intimately for the suffering expressed by one face, and another, and another, and so on. “I” am involved in a plurality of intimate face-to-face relationships.

Second, we must not forget that there is the Third, the other Other, and this opens up the possibility of social justice. The Third embodies the realisation that there is a community of Others rather than just the closed community of the face-to-face. In the context of mother–foetus conflict, the mother is not involved in a face-to-face relationship with only the foetus; she may have children, a partner, or other family members that she is also responsible for, not to mention an inconceivable number of strangers. This complicates matters, as Levinas observes: “If there were just two of us in the world, there wouldn’t be any problem: it is the other who goes before me.”36 If there were just the mother and the foetus in existence, the mother’s situation would be simple: the foetus comes first. That this is not the case opens up the idea of an order of justice, whereby which Other it is that takes precedence is determined. This means that the mother could abstain from risky foetal surgery if the harm that could potentially befall her would adversely affect, for example, her children.37 This could be simply that she cannot adequately provide for them whilst convalescing or that the risk of her death or injury during surgery represents a potential harm to them. So the mother’s responsibility is not without limit, and violence to the foetus can be tolerated – though it should be avoided if possible. Levinas writes:

If there were no order of Justice, there would be no limit to my responsibility. There is a certain measure of violence necessary in terms of justice; but if one speaks of justice it is necessary to allow judges, it is necessary to allow institutions and the state; to live in a world of citizens, and not only in the order of the Face to Face.38

35 Ibid., 85.
36 Levinas, Entre Nous, 91.
37 I do not subscribe to the view that the foetus is a pre-born child and so I do not include it amongst the mother’s children. This position will be clarified with the discussion of personhood in the fourth section.
38 Levinas, Entre Nous, 90.
This passage brings us to the final point: to live in a just society it is necessary not only to be involved in the face-to-face relation but also in relations with citizens as a citizen. Citizens have rights that in a just society are protected by the state. The relationship between citizens is reciprocal, symmetrical – unlike the face-to-face relation. As Bergo notes, liberal society is compatible with Levinas’s theory because it minimises control over the individual, freeing them to be involved in the numerous social relationships that require their responsibility – the plurality of face-to-faces. It is the role of the state to make the interhuman, face-to-face relationship possible – possible that is, but not enforced. Levinas writes that any state in which the face-to-face relation is not possible is totalitarian. I would add that any state that enforces the responsibility for the Other experienced in the face-to-face relation is also totalitarian. So, the asymmetry of the relationship between the mother and the foetus should not be encoded in law: it must remain intimate. The idea of social justice found in Levinas restores reciprocity outside of the face-to-face by recognising the importance of rights whilst keeping the obligation of the face-to-face separate from the legal sphere or state intervention. The face-to-face is ethical whilst the order of justice is political.

In summary, we have seen that only the mother can put the interests of the foetus before her own; that there are situations in which she can put the interests of others before those of the foetus; and that her rights will be protected in the name of justice whilst her ethical obligation remains a private affair. It only remains to be argued that the mother possesses the full status and rights of a person whilst the foetus does not.

4. Personhood and the Duty of Care

Although the position of the mother has been improved, it is still necessary to demonstrate that the mother ought to be treated as the primary patient. Otherwise it would be the case that the doctor is obligated to attend to the patient that is suffering most – which, in the case of foetal surgery, would be the foetus. The question is: whose interests are to be put first when conflict between mother and foetus arises?

We have seen that in the face-to-face encounter the mother is to subordinate her interests to those of the foetus. Now, consider the doctor: they are involved in a three-way relationship with two ethical subjects, the mother and the foetus given its face. Whose interests are they to give primacy to? We must first consider what it means to have an interest. Steinbock observes that having an interest involves having a stake in something – in health, a career, a family, a society, etc. We have a stake in something that concerns us, that matters to us. As suggested by the term “concerns”, there is an obvious connection between interests and the capacity for conscious awareness; without this, there could be no concern for anything. Biologists debate about when the foetus gains that most basic kind of conscious awareness, the ability to experience pleasure and pain – sentience. Varying positions put the time of sentience as early as the eighth week of gestation, when brain waves begin, or later in gestation, when the neural pathways develop around the end of the second trimester. Clearly, at

40 See Levinas, Entre Nous, 90.
42 Ibid., 83–84.
some stage, the foetus becomes sentient, so we cannot suggest that (after this point) it does not have interests, however basic.

However, many animals possess sentience and yet do not vex the medical profession when their interests clash with those of a human. The obvious answer as to why conflict arises in this specific context is that the mother and foetus are both members of the species *Homo sapiens* – that is to say, they are both biologically human. But is there not something more to being human than mere species membership? Something over and above this that leads us to privilege the human over other forms of life? This something else is *personhood* and we have already hit upon the stuff it is made of. To be a person is to have a developed conscious awareness (thoughts, emotions, moods), a mental life that allows for interests over and above the basic interests shared by other animals. These interests are then protected by rights. To be biologically human and alive is not sufficient to be a human being in the specific sense of a person with interests and rights. Following Kimber I do not believe there is a definable point at which we can say the foetus has the full status of a person. Rather, there is a gradual progression, supported by our knowledge of developmental biology. This gradualist position would give the embryo/foetus progressively more rights as its conscious awareness develops such that it possesses progressively more interests. It should be clear from the example of determining foetal sentience that far better knowledge of the development of the embryo/foetus is needed for this position to be fully realised. But as Tooley observes, it is unlikely that the capacity for thought develops prior to birth, given our current knowledge of neurophysiological development. So at the moment I believe it is sufficient to say that the foetus does not possess the full status of a person. Rather, as a society, we should treat the foetus with respect, since the foetus has the potential to become a person, but without elevating it to the legal status of the mother. Respect here would be protecting the foetus from harm if and only if this is possible without doing harm to the mother. The implication, then, is that the doctor’s primary duty of care lies with the mother.

We might ask here whether potential should confer more than just respect. That is, should the foetus’s potential to become a person, with all the rights that entails, mean that we should treat it as a person in its current state? I believe not. Buckle states that it would be confused to say that the potential to be something is itself that thing. The argument from potential “apparently regards a potential person as a particular kind of person. But whatever a potential person is, it is not a person.” Also, it is wrong to say that because something is potentially $x$ it has the rights of actual $x$. For example, the president of the United States has the right to command the armed forces. Now, before he or she becomes the President the candidate is a potential President, but he or she does not and should not have the right to command the armed forces, as the actual President does. Likewise, the foetus’s potential does not confer upon it all the rights of a person even though it has the potential to achieve such rights. This is why I believe it is appropriate to treat the foetus with the respect this potentiality is due, but not with the rights that the foetus has the potential to achieve. There is a significant difference between saying that we should not harm the foetus

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46 Ibid.
47 This example is found in Steinbock, “The Moral Status of Extracorporeal Embryos,” 84.
where possible and giving equal rights to the foetus. And it is this difference that suggests that doctors and the law should be on the side of the mother when conflict arises. That is to say, in Levinasian terms, that the mother comes first in the order of justice.

I now wish to make two final points regarding personhood and the ultrasound image. First, the personification of the foetus is not an inevitable consequence of its being visualised. Rather, the meanings we ascribe to the image of the foetus are dependent on social context. For example, in the 1910s and 1920s visualisation of the embryo was made possible by the microtome. This instrument allowed scientists to create models of the embryo in its early stages of development, something not hitherto possible. The embryo, which could only previously have been imagined, emerged at this time as a sensible entity. Yet it did not emerge as a personified entity, with ramifications for debates about abortion or women’s reproductive rights; it was instead something to be systematically studied, an object of science rather than a subject of divisive socio-political rancour. Morgan suggests that when the embryo was eventually given its social voice it spoke only of the embryologists’ concerns – of the uniqueness of the human species, race, evolution – whilst remaining merely a piece of biological matter.48 This suggests that there is no intrinsic social meaning to be taken from the embryo/foetus; rather, such meaning is projected onto it. The personification of the foetus is one such projection. The personhood of the foetus does not create social issues; social issues create persons of foetuses.

Second, it is crucial to note that ultrasound requires translation – not just of echoes into image but of the image into something with clinical and social meaning. Mitchell and Georges’s case study of the ultrasound technician’s technique highlights how a person is constructed through active interpretation.49 Parents often find interpreting the blurred image on the monitor difficult. The ultrasound technician steps in, picking out the most reassuring physical parts of the foetus to describe to the parents – the beating heart, the skull and brain, and hands and feet (with particular focus on fingers and toes). In short, the ultrasound technician focuses on the markers of normal humanness. They tend not to describe or focus on the inhuman-looking foetal face at 16–18 weeks, yet later in pregnancy the face – now more human-looking – receives special mention, and care is made to ensure that the image of the face is included in the parents’ take-home copy of the ultrasound. Also, the movement of the foetus is described in human terms; the “baby” (the word foetus is not often used in front of the parents) is said to be dancing or waving or swimming. And the description of the image often involves an explanation of mood, emotion, intention, or awareness; for example, any foetal movement that hinders the ultrasound technician’s attempt at securing an image is explained as shyness; or, if an image is easily attained, the foetus is said to be cooperative, a good boy/girl. Here we see that the uncertainty of foetal personhood is overcome by the ultrasound technician’s method of translating the ultrasound image; that is, they help to give the foetus its personhood.50

In Levinasian terms, such projection or translation is to reduce the Other to the Same – an act of egology. The foetus should neither be personified nor should it be treated as an object; we should not assimilate the foetus but nor should we expel it from our concerns. Rather, the “third way” is to treat it with respect for its significant otherness. In such a way, the mother’s interests are protected in instances of conflict without an “anything goes” outcome for the foetus. This is not to say that the category “person” comes before the ethical; identifying personhood is a way of ascribing patient primacy to the mother even though it may involve

50 The narration of anti-abortionist propaganda films such as The Silent Scream plays a similar role; see Petchesky, “Foetal Images,” 172–76.
an unethical violence towards the foetus. The encounter with the face of the foetus initiates ethical responsibility and to contest the personhood of the foetus does not change this. The encounter comes before the category. The personhood debate exists not in the ethical sphere but in that of the political. And, as we have seen in the previous section, violence is inevitable in the pursuit of justice: “That does not mean violence must not be avoided as much as possible; […] but one cannot say that there is no legitimate violence.”

Concluding Remarks

I have argued that the emergence of the foetal subject can be explained, in part, by the phenomenological experience of the face. The ultrasound plays an important role in initiating moral responsibility and obligation of the mother for the foetus. This involves the mother putting the foetus’s interests before her own. However, only the mother can do this and there are circumstances in which she can put the interests of others before those of the foetus. Indeed, even though the face registers as a demand, it is not one backed up by any prescriptive authority. Crucially, although an ethical subject emerges, this should not lead to primary patient status. The doctor’s primary duty of care is to the mother, since she has the full status and rights of a person. Violence to the foetus as a consequence of placing the mother’s interests first, though it should be avoided, can be justified. I am in favour of the routine use of ultrasound by doctors to initiate the face-to-face relationship. Nevertheless, being aware of an ethical responsibility and being forced to act on it are two entirely different things. Ethical responsibility, in this instance, should not become legal obligation. We have, then, a two-tiered system in which the state protects the mother’s rights whilst the face-to-face remains intimate. Such a position is compatible with the concept of justice found in Levinas, since the political or legal belongs to a separate sphere to that of the closed society of the face-to-face.

I believe such an account emphasises the importance of maternal responsibility and obligation whilst protecting the mother from coercion or excessive intervention. Nevertheless, there is still room to improve women’s experience of reproductive technologies and so I will close by suggesting a few ways in which we can move closer to a woman-centred approach. First, we should recontextualise the foetus. Ultrasound allows us to “remove” the foetus from the womb but we must remember that it is not separate from the mother, nor can it be treated as if it was. In this way women may feel less objectified. Second, we should not universalise women’s experience of pregnancy. A woman is pregnant within a social context and her experience of it is subjective. We should not abstract the woman away from her social networks, losing sight of her other obligations and responsibilities. Finally, women need to be empowered such that they are in control of the technology and its use on their body. This should involve the greater dissemination of information about medical technology, its use on the female body, and its development. In this way women are empowered and truly informed consent can be given for procedures such as foetal surgery.

51 Levinas, *Entre Nous*, 90.
Bibliography


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Human Geography
Interrelations of the Human Being with the Three-Dimensional Environment

JAN-HENDRIK GROTEVENT

Introduction

Geography is, refining the majority of scientific definitions, the study of the Earth.\(^1\) This definition implies various subtopics and approaches. Besides scientific debates about directives and methods, the general aim of geography is to explore and explain situations, distributions and ways of use in spatial context. Human geography measures and describes the spatial connections of human phenomena in terms of society, technology, economy or policy\(^2\). Thus, there are various subthemes, such as cultural geography, economic geography, urban geography, and health-related geography. Practical research in human geography therefore includes the use of various research backgrounds. It applies the examination methods of subject-related areas in relation to spatial phenomena.

The subject of this essay is ‘Being Human spatially’ with regards to geographic research. This essay describes the ways in which human nature and space interact, and how being human manifests itself in relation to landscapes. The first part discusses the human way of perceiving and judging his environment, how and why his locations and motions are motivated. The second part demonstrates general human features that have an effect on space.

Human Spatial Behaviour

Even by standing passively on the spot without moving, human beings can be located spatially. This is where human geography begins. The human being is standing in particular location – here – not elsewhere – for some reason. Human beings commit spatial deeds with their first step in any direction. So their allocation in space is decisive and motivated. Decision and motivation are based upon the inter-exchange of the actual environmental structure and the cognitive structure of environment that the human being has in mind.

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\(^1\) Leser, Diercke Wörterbuch Allgemeine Geographie, 252.
\(^2\) Ibid. 330.
Spatial Perception and Cognition

An element of human perception is the psychologically complex process of gathering and converting sensory stimuli. This provides a basis for orientation, which becomes increasingly sophisticated with age. Infants have only a vague awareness of space. Once they have started discovering their environment by crawling, they start creating an idea of spatial objects and where they are located, combined with the first basic information: the child’s room with bed and toys; the living room with the sofa; the kitchen where a parent is. The child also recognises the relationship between objects. He learns about what is proximate and distant. Visiting the grandparents may take twenty minutes by car; a vacation at the seaside a four-hour flight. Later in life further knowledge of distance will be added by going to school, going to work or leaving home.3

The sensual perception of the human being is commonly divided into vision, touch, sound, smell and taste. Mostly, a sense of ‘spirit’ is furthermore added. The human being is able to convert information about the places it senses and to articulate expectation according to places. The sense of sight (“This place looks good, reminds me of home!”) might be most important, but other senses also have an influence, for example: “Me living in a flat next to the airport? That noise?! No way!” (sense of sound); “The fairground is still about a mile away, but I already smell the Bratwurst!” (sense of smell); “I enjoyed my stay in Paris – they really have savoir vivre!” (sense of spirit). This sense of spirit is an interesting aspect: it comprehends the general atmosphere of a place and so amends the other senses as an emotional sense. As a consequence, the human mind is able to create abstract visions of places. Thus, a completely strange place can remind a person of home. The one who rejects the idea of living in a flat close to an airport may never have lived next to one. The decision not to live there depends on an obvious assumption that planes constantly taking off are not conducive to a good night’s sleep. Furthermore, a human being is biologically not able to smell a Bratwurst from the distance of a mile. He knows the smell of Bratwurst and he knows that Bratwurst probably will be found on a fairground. And savoir vivre is neither measurable nor sensually graspable. It is the atmosphere of Paris, a gamut of sensual experiences. Conclusively, the human being develops a spatial consciousness by gathering and retaining information. The information can be supplemented and consolidated by further sensory experience. Finally, information is abstracted and generalised. Consciousness also converts information received by communication. It judges information given by others or draws a conclusion from this general knowledge, adding both to imagination.

Consequently, the human being possesses a spatial cognition which includes knowledge, thoughts, opinions, attitudes and intentions about the spatial environment. First of all, it is the recognition of original landscapes: soil and water, fields and plateaux, elevations, settlements, paths and routes, edges and landmarks. The appearance of landscapes reacts with the spatial expectations of the human being and the roles that the landscapes’ objects would play in his mind. This recognition is also applied in the way human beings search and assess new places. They either search space-covering (“Is everything here that I expect to be here? Where’s my comfortable home? Where’s the exhausting place of work? Where’s the cruel dentist?”) or space-organising (“Nice homes here; boring workplace there; brutal dentist is right over there.”) The human being names and judges directions and distances in the same way. For example, three weeks of vacation might be felt to be over much sooner than three

3 Jakle, Brunn and Roseman, Human Spatial Behavior, 208; Golledge and Stimson, Analytical Behavioural Geography, 22.
weeks of work; the way to the dentist is very short, whereas the way back home appears to be never ending.\textsuperscript{4}

Human beings perceive themselves as the centre point of space in general. This gives them dimensions of orientation, distance and spatial structure concerning the environment.\textsuperscript{5} Once, there was a sketch on \textit{Sesame Street}. There is a little boy who desperately wants to be \textit{there}. He is asking passersby “Am I \textit{there} now?” The answer is always, “I don’t know, right now you are \textit{here}”, as the boy is standing right next to the asked person. The boy becomes increasingly sad. He does not want to be \textit{here}, he wants to be \textit{there}. Finally, one person finds a solution. He tells the boy to stand still. He walks some steps away. From that distance, he says to the boy “Now you’re \textit{there}. Hello, \textit{there}...” The boy is happy, but not for long. His mother appears, obviously annoyed. Standing face-to-face with the boy, she tells him off: “Hey, I was looking for you. What are you doing \textit{here}?" This sketch demonstrates that actually the human being is permanently \textit{here}, but has an imagination of \textit{there}, and moreover a motivation to get \textit{there}. An imagination about \textit{there} is more detailed if \textit{there} is part of the everyday world. Spatial cognition, including locations, connections and routes, becomes more diverse depending on the human being’s routines.\textsuperscript{6} “Working on Main Street” is a more precise spatial description than “holiday at the seaside”.

\section*{Spatial Functions and Necessities}

The human being, his necessities in space and their relationship have been a major subject of geographical research in Germany. Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) was first to introduce the human being into geographical research. Ratzel was influenced by the geo–deterministic approach that was common in the late 19th century, declaring that spatial processes depend on natural principles. He focused on the spatial distribution and spatial development of the human being independently from nature. Alfred Hettner (1859–1941) emphasised the approach by stating that human standards of living are primarily declarable by the conditions of their natural environment. During the 1920s and 1930s, geographical research started focussing on space–relevant human activities. In 1927, Austrian geographer Hans Bobek (1903–1990) established the functional approach in urban geography for the very first time. “Functions” here are fundamental tasks, activities and appearances of existence that the human being carries out on space: reproduction (biosocial function), fulfilment of demand and accumulating prosperity (ecosocial function), implementing and defending an individual stand (political function), arrangement of settling (toposocial function), migration and location change (migrosocial function) and transformation of landscape (cultural function). These functions contain specific demands of territory and facilities.\textsuperscript{7}

In the late 1960s, the Munich School of Social Geography emerged, primarily led by Karl Ruppert, Franz Schaffer and their scholars. They aimed for a systematically constructed conception of “social geography” to give a consistent foundation to empirical research. They finally shifted human geography from determinism to an activity-based approach (\textit{handlungszentriertes Paradigma}).\textsuperscript{8} The conception of the Munich School of Social Geography is closely

\textsuperscript{4} Jakle, Brunn and Roseman, \textit{Human Spatial Behavior}, 50.
\textsuperscript{5} Werlen, \textit{Gesellschaft, Handlung und Raum}, 264.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid, 266.
\textsuperscript{7} Werlen, \textit{Gesellschaft, Handlung und Raum}, 224 – 226, Werlen, \textit{Sozialgeographie}, 34.
\textsuperscript{8} Werlen, \textit{Sozialgeographie}, 39.
connected to the division of space–relevant human functions, so-called basic functions of existence (in German, *Grunddaseinsfunktionen*). They are generally understood as immanent to all social strata, empirically ascertainable, measurable in time and space and have an effect on space.\(^9\)

Seven basic functions of existence are differentiated:

1. Habitation
2. Working
3. Supply (food, clothes, etc.)
4. Education
5. Recreation
6. Taking part in community
7. Taking part in traffic

Recent and current discussions are removing the very last item, taking part in traffic, from the list because it is seen to be just an aim to the means of exercising the other functions. But the “classical seven” are nevertheless a demonstrative description of what it is to be Human in Space.

Spatial Activity of the Individual and Social Groups

As the saying goes: “If the mountain will not come to the prophet, then the prophet must go to the mountain”. Let’s see the prophet as the human being and the mountain in question the location for a basic function. So a human being has to span distances to fulfill functions. Such purposive movements – getting there, as in *Sesame Street* – are common and well-rehearsed.

The discipline of behavioural geography emerged from Anglo-American geography. Behavioural geography assumes cognitive imaginations (*images*) and cognitive processes as a base for spatial activity. It is a disaggregated approach, referring to sociology, anthropology and psychology as well as to geography. The discipline considers spatial reasoning, decision making and the following behaviour.\(^10\) Behavioural geography distinguishes between *behaviour in space*, observable activities, and *spatial behaviour*, which are, as Reginald Golledge and Kevin Cox pointed out, rules of choice, movement and interaction that are independent of the spatial system in which they are to operate.\(^11\)

Both behavioural geography and the Munich School of Social Geography name an *action space* (in German, *Aktionsraum*). Within action spaces, human beings exercise functions and follow routines, recurring, nearly time-invariant patterns of spatial behaviour.\(^12\) Action space is not precisely a definable area, although the individual human being might have a precise mental map or image of his action space in mind. Action spaces vary with changes in the individual’s life. With regards to movements within action spaces, Golledge and Stimson explain ‘trips’. They differentiate, for example, work trips, social trips and multi-purpose trips.\(^13\)

In general, there are two parameters that describe mobility: direction and distance. Regular

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\(^12\) Jakle, Brunn and Roseman, *Human Spatial Behavior*, 51.
movements, with regards to the basic functions of existence, are circular – to work and back home again. The second parameter, distance, influences the shape of action spaces. Today’s standards of transportation allow humans to cover longer distances and so activity spaces get larger. For example, in 2003, German people spanned an average distance of 17 km from home to work or business and back. For supply, they went 19.5 km. The way to education and back was 7 km, and for recreation, 13 km.14

Individuals are protagonists of spatial activity. However, individuals have types of spatial activity in common and there is no exclusively individual spatial activity. Individuals that have a uniform spatial behaviour significantly separable from others can be aggregated to ‘action-spatial groups’ (in German, aktionsräumliche Gruppen). Action-spatial groups have spatial functions and activities of similar type and group–specific matters of spatial behaviour.15 Within an action-spatial group, conditions of life and comparable spatial facilities of function are shared.16 University students, for example, are an action-spatial group. They tend to live in small flats or residence halls. They have their supply in the supermarket nearby or have their lunch in the refectory. They attend lectures and study at home or in a library. Maybe they work part-time as well. They take part in the community by meeting others and/or going to bars at night. Usually they use public transportation, cycle or walk. Consequently, processes of identification, profiling and allocation of meaning are found within an action-spatial group. Action-spatial groups are not fitted to a defined territory. Subsequently, many groups can be found within a single town district. Nevertheless, there are place stereotypes explained by meaning (“Who occupies these places and why?”). And places can be named and referenced with obvious social meaning like ‘suburbia’, ‘neighbourhood’, ‘inner city’, or even derogatively, ‘ghetto’.

Perceiving a three-dimensional environment is not exclusively a human ability; neither is the conversion of sensory information. Notably, the human being is able to convert (and send) abstract information by communication, so experiences are not the only way to receive cognition. In human spatial perception and cognition, the human skill to abstract is demonstrable. Finally, a complex construction of space emerges. It aids the human being in orienting in his environment. The human being’s spatial cognition is comparable with a map in his mind. Such mental maps are not scaled and captioned like an ordinary map, but with an abstract frame of reference displaying the “own world” of the human being including his individual spatial means. Conclusively, the human being follows routines and patterns in an environment which depends on his life matters. His action space is defined by his fulfilment of functions. Action spaces appear as a human scale of space.

Human Spatial Activities

Benno Werlen (born 1950), professor of social geography in Jena, Germany, focuses his work on action–based geography. He considers the spatial effects of communication and sociocultural representation. He draws a basic distinction of three methods of ‘making geography’. The first method is ‘production and consumption’, including rational decisions of locating facilities of production and commodity flow. The second method is ‘meaning and information’, including regional consciousness and types of communication and interaction.

14 ibid, 543.
15 Werlen, Sozialgeographie, 208.
16 Schenk and Schliephake, Allgemeine Anthropogeographie, 149–151.
The third method is ‘legal norm and policy’, with the political principle of territoriality.\textsuperscript{17} Due to the fact that the human being is actually exercising more than just biological functions, these types appear in various ways. There is the general distribution of the human population on the Earth’s surface. Moreover, there are ways and means that mankind – over six billion individuals – interact with different motivations, attractions and progress of knowledge. All of them have different effects on the spatial environment. Besides the population in general, human settlement, politics, economy and travel represent the variables of human spatial distribution, patterns and movements. Moreover, there is spatial planning, a concept to control these variables.

Demography

The age structure of a certain human population at a certain time represents demographic processes like fertility and mortality; that is, tendencies for growth. Moreover, they indicate the standards of living. Development of medical care, availability and use of contraception, demographic policies of birth control have had, and are still having, influence on fertility. Mortality can be decreased by progress in medical care or the improvement of standards of living. For example, in Germany, the birth rate decreased because many women are now employed and may prefer a career to motherhood, or delay maternity. Proportions of young and middle-aged people are balanced, due to an increase in immigration over the last 40 years. Due to good health and geriatric care, Germany has a low death rate and a high number of senior citizens. However, there is a lack of male citizens aged over eighty, as this group was particularly reduced by World War II.\textsuperscript{18} Influences of social, political and economical phenomena on a certain population in a certain territory are thus interpretable.

In the context of the spatial activities of the individual, mobility, regular travelling to a destination and back, has already been discussed. Moreover, there is migration, a single-directional movement. Migration of the human being depends on four influencing factors: a reason to leave, the attraction of the destination, any possible barriers and finally, private factors. In human history, several examples are found of migration for appropriate reasons. Several examples demonstrate violent reasons for migration, including political escape (refugees seeking asylum, perhaps) or displacement because of slavery. However, migration is typically voluntary, such as when Europeans sailed to the New World. Another reason for migration is social impulse.\textsuperscript{19} For example, a better occupation makes someone move to another town. Motives for migration can be intrinsic – change of private, social or economic situation – or extrinsic, like economical, social or administrative changes in a region. Concerning the spatial distribution of a population in general, there are disperse and centric patterns. These patterns depend on environmental matters such as altitude, climate and soil, but also on culture, politics and economy\textsuperscript{20}.

The human being appears to be adaptive to space. The permanent ecumenism is limited by borders of sea, height above sea level, aridity and cold, but despite that there are villages in mountains or nomads in the desert.\textsuperscript{21} It is noticeable that population developments seem

\textsuperscript{17} Werlen, \textit{Sozialgeographie}, 330.
\textsuperscript{18} de Lange, \textit{Bevölkerungsgeographie}, 41–52.
\textsuperscript{19} de Lange, \textit{Bevölkerungsgeographie}, 60–64.
\textsuperscript{20} Schenk and Schliephake, \textit{Allgemeine Anthropogeographie}, 118.
\textsuperscript{21} ibid, 112.
to depend more on human nature than on nature per se. Rather, it is his own nature by extrinsic pressure or intrinsic motivation that makes him migrate.

**Settlement**

The definition of human settlement is highly variable. Even if classifying settlement the easiest way – urban and rural – there will be numerous ways to differentiate even these categories. A short view on mankind’s history of development shows that with ongoing progress mankind became more and more independent from their environment and changed from users into exploiters:

Early in human history, men were nomads. They lived in company with nature as hunter–gatherers. Later, the first stages of farming left lasting effects on the landscape. So, with this early step in autonomy from nature, influences on the environment appeared. Later on, progress and autonomy were emphasised. Forests were placed under stress by heavy exploitation for construction material and firewood. During the phase of industrial revolution, the effect on landscape increased, mainly due to the growth of towns with residential and industrial areas and traffic lines. Further strong effects came with the intensity of mining. Generally, natural resources were consumed heavily and pollution increased. Landscapes were dominated by colonies and dissected by communication lines and traffic routes. The current phase of science and technology faces heavy damages to the environment.\(^{22}\)

Human colonies vary in size and population. Moreover, they differ in genesis and regional interchange, depending on the natural environment, cultural, economical and political influences and change over time. For example, there is a town in North East England, founded by monks who built a cathedral upon the tomb of a saint. Some hundred years later, a castle was built near the cathedral because of its strategic position. Later the town became a heavy industry site and a university town.\(^{23}\) There is the North American town with a checkerboard pattern of streets and avenues. There is the sprawling metropolis, the Israeli *kibbutz* and many more. All of them have different layouts in terms of arrangement of buildings and infrastructure. Moreover, there are different kinds of buildings: shacks, courtyard houses, crofts, cottages, semi-detached houses, factories, tower blocks. And they vary again by construction material and design. In the modality of human settlement, the expression of human nature and its effect and interrelation with space has been considered in a condensed form.

**Politics**

As follows from habits, culture and social interaction within a human population, there is an attachment to land. To pick up Werlen’s ways of ‘making geography’ again, production and consumption means that human beings need land to keep up production and commodity flow. Maybe commodities are not found in the homeland and have to be provided from somewhere else. According to ‘significance and information’, human beings’ consciousness corresponds to their regional singularities such as culture, religion, language and land. The feeling of “here I am, there they are” leads to consciousness of territoriality, expressed in property, regional-

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ism or patriotism. It might be that political geography starts off with a “Private property – No Trespassing!” sign.

Legal authority is given to government over defined people in a defined territory, forming a ‘state’. Concerning the ‘state’, there is an interrelationship between administration, people and territory. Generally, relationships between states are organised. Commercial relationships are bilateral or multilateral trade relations. Furthermore, there are trade blocks such as the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) or commodity cartels like OPEC. International relations also appear in military alliances due to collective defence – for instance, during the Cold War, when two opposite ideologies combined with two collectives were represented by two military alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Moreover, international relations are characterised by conflict. Conflict does not mean war in particular in this context. There are also conflicts in trade, when a state is demanding commodities or goods from another. Moreover, there would be a conflict if political debates fail because of opposite positions of the parties.

Governmental policies have influence on spatial structures, as in large mono-structured agricultural areas in socialist production cooperatives. The attachment to a territory can be combined with the implementation of political and social ideologies. This includes a habit of identification with a specific territory, followed by the cognition of an own territory. The need to defend it and the feeling of a need for territorial expansion could also occur.

The studying and practising of ‘geopolitics’ in Germany are a sad but demonstrative example. In the late 19th century, Friedrich Ratzel compared a state to a living organism that grows with the cultural progress of its population. Like the biological organism becoming bigger and bigger, the state expands into space. Thus, political borders could just be temporary. The first to bring up the term Lebensraum (‘space for living’), Ratzel defined ‘space for living’ as the territory at the disposal of a population for use and development. The idea of space for living was picked up by the national socialists. Adolf Hitler explained a permanent struggle of the people. From his point of view, ‘stronger’ people would extinguish ‘weaker’ people and demand an adequate territory. Concerning the German people, propaganda attempted to institutionalise the idea of a national community (Volksgemeinschaft). It was based on racist terms and also concerned spatial images. This is shown by slogans such as “One people, one Reich, one leader” (“Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer”) or “blood and soil” (Blut und Boden). These ideas were enforced by “gaining space for living” (Lebensraumgewinnung) in Eastern Europe and ‘germanisation’ of the occupied territory. It was the idea of a major Germanic empire giving the ‘strong’ people a large territory. These ideas finally lead into World War II and genocide.

Politics are represented in functions and demarcations that are manifested in spatial structures and borders. Thus, political power is connected to space, and so are political ideologies and political relations. There are – sometimes remarkably strong – quotations according to space and policy: ‘rough states’, respectively ‘countries of concern’, for example. What stands out is that currently this connection of space with politics is lightly dissociating. The former ‘War against Nazi Germany’ refers more to a territory than the current ‘War against Terror’. Another demonstrative example for the dissociation of space and politics is the engagement of the German army in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The German constitution says that the only task of the German army – the Bun-

24 Werlen, Sozialgeographie, 52–54.
26 Graml, 443, Recker 317.
deswehr – is to defend the German territory in case of any external attack. Germany is also engaged in NATO. Concerning the invasion of Afghanistan, NATO were in state of exception because of the 9/11 attacks. Therefore, German parliament had to make exceptions for its mission in Afghanistan that much differed from the Bundeswehr's task definition. On March 11, 2004, Secretary of Defence Peter Struck gave a geographically odd–sounding statement: “From now on, Germany has to be defended at the Hindukush.”

“My home is my castle.” This saying invokes a precise image of a person’s “castle“, its offers and meanings. With regards to the saying of the prophet and the mountain, the human being will not find everything he needs right in his ‘castle’. So he has to get mobile and he may find that the desired territory is occupied by others. And maybe he has facilities in his own territory that may be of interest to others. Henry A. Kissinger, former foreign secretary of the U.S., once said: “Oil is much too important a commodity to be left in the hands of the Arabs”. Obviously human beings are not only defending goods they already possess but also goods that they would like to possess.

Economy

With regards to spatial appearance, economy is closely related to human settlement – the suburban industrial zone, the central business district – and moreover effects the environment as a factor of settlement change or by pollution. A catchword that often appears concerning the human being in economy is the “Homo economicus”, who is:

Someone who, when facing a decision, thinks about every available option, and always makes a great choice. Homo economicus has the brainpower of Albert Einstein, the storage memory of IBM's Big Blue, and the self-control of Mahatma Gandhi.

Space and Homo economicus have a reciprocal relationship. Companies and factories effect the economical growth, prosperity, labour market and subsequently the standard of living of a region’s population. The ‘economic humans’ ‘available spatial options’ mostly concern the choice of a production site. The general base of economy, the relationship of supply and demand, also applies for economy’s interrelationship with space. Low cost of transport, taxes and net costs – preferably a minimum point, a market of demand, a market of employment and a market of resources determine the options. If a requested place fulfils such qualifications, Homo economicus will settle. If the criteria are not fulfilled and there is no way to improve, Homo economicus will search for another, more qualified place. This also applies if the conditions of the place or the goals of Homo economicus change. In 2008, for example, the Finnish communication company NOKIA closed its factory in Bochum, Germany, to relocate in Romania because of less expensive employees.

As regards the markets of retail and service, there is an interrelationship between space and human necessities. Offices, stores and shops are on site, though the ‘site’ would depend on the product they offer and the inhabitants’ demand. Supermarkets, food stores, surgeries and pharmacies, for example, covering general supply and short–term demand, are found

28 www.netzeitung.de.
29 http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/nov/29/iraq.comment.
30 www.nudges.org/glossary.cfm.
32 Arnold, Klaus, Wirtschaftsgeographie in Stichworten, 118–130.
33 www.spiegel.de.
inside the neighbourhood. The town district, outlining several neighbourhoods, has a small department store, a branch bank, an insurance office and consultant surgeries which cover short- and medium-term demand. In the city centre, there are shopping malls, specialised trades, law offices, banks and grand insurance departments for long-term demand.\(^{34}\)

During the last few years, globalisation has become more and more significant in the world economy. ‘Global’ implicates a spatial meaning. In the context of ‘global’, much is heard about global players, global networking and global markets. For example, ‘global players’ are companies that act in a global dimension, searching for optimal places. ‘Global markets’ are connected with new concepts of production, like just-in-time– production and with regards to the minimisation of costs. Parts of a product are produced in different countries, then are assembled and finally sold. On closer examination, it becomes obvious that globalisation is the same interaction between site qualifications and \textit{Homo economicus}.\(^{35}\)

\textit{Homo economicus} is a role model, evidently. But there is an impression that in fact economy attempts to make the “great choice” for aiming gain from human standards of living, human demands and human progress. And so the spatial \textit{Homo economicus} considers available options for production site. This is followed by “just-in-time” concepts and “globalising” both markets and production. Nevertheless, the reasons for a site decision are still determined by local and regional situations. Moreover, the great choice of \textit{Homo economicus} might be a rational decision for him and his aims, but at the expense of others. With NOKIA leaving Bochum, the second biggest industrial employer of the town left and 2300 people became unemployed. The secretary of commerce in the federal state of North Rhine –Westphalia named it ‘a black day for the region’.\(^{36}\)

Traffic and Transportation

Traffic and transportation – spanning a distance – is closely related to human spatial behaviour. As explained, the human being is mobile to fulfil necessities and migrates for settlement. Traffic and transportation have their own matters of demand and supply. With regards to the demand, there is passenger traffic and commercial transport. On the side of supply, there are the ways used – by land, sea and in the air.

So there are various causes for human mobility and various ways to exercise it. The human being pursues a ‘\textit{there}’, and for that he tries to achieve a time-space-convergence, spending less time to span more distance. The aim to get \textit{there} quickly is shown by the fact that spanned distance of transportation by various means have expanded. From 1996 to 2006, the passenger transport in the United Kingdom by car increased from 622 to 686 billion kilometres (10.29 %), transport by rail from 39 to 59 billion kilometres (51.28 %) and domestic flights from 6.3 to 9.9 billion kilometres (57.14 %).\(^{37}\) Although there are several options of transportation means, both private and public, it is remarkable that the human being wants to be \textit{there} quickly \textit{and} in the most comfortable way. Thus the most comfortable and supposedly the most rapid transportation mean – the car – is dominant. For example, 430 of 1037 trips per person in the United Kingdom in 2006 were done by car (41.47 %), whereas 103 trips were done by public traffic including local bus, rail and underground (9.93 %).\(^{38}\)

\(^{34}\) Schenk and Schliephake, \textit{Allgemeine Anthropogeographie}, 511–527.
\(^{35}\) ibid. 456–463.
\(^{36}\) www.spiegel.de.
The task of commercial transport is carrying supply and distributing products to consumers and so is closely related to economy, including the transportation of goods (bulks, piece goods, animals, liquids) and energy. According to “just in time” concepts – fulfilling a demand where and when it is needed – the significance of commercial transport as ‘rolling inventories’ also raised. So, for example, it is stated that Canadian manufacturers reduced their inventories by 15% from 1992 to 2005 by more frequent deliveries. The *Homo economicus* appears to make “great choices” in transportation also by attempting “just in time” delivery and to overcome geographical boundaries.

Spatial Planning

The plurality of space needs to be guaranteed by spatial facilities. There is a spatial supply in land and buildings. And there is a spatial demand of individuals, organisations, institutions, businesses and ecology. It is easy to guess that this all has to be organised. And this is the task of spatial planning, a discipline of applied geography. Spatial planning gives and assures the human being with space, where he can fulfil his necessities and, in turn, which he senses is useful and harmonic.

As already explained, the human being possesses spatial perception and cognition. The human being perceives subjectively what is objectively there: objects that are spatially arranged in different sizes, forms, boundaries or patterns. The human being rates them as ‘beautiful, attractive’ or ‘displeasing, repulsive’. As Plato said: “The good is the beautiful”. According to the spatial perception of human beings, “good” – and with regards to Plato “beautiful” – is when objects in space relate to each other in a harmonic and reasonable order for the observing eye. There is a basic consciousness about features that are distinctive for locations: there are skyscrapers in a business district and there are high–window factory halls and chimneys in an industrial area. There are several geometrically–based formulas, like the ‘golden ratio’ or the logarithmic nautilus. Also the ‘geometry’ of human physiology has been considered as a ‘scale’ for harmonic proportions; for example da Vinci’s famous drawing of the ‘Truvian Man’. More important is the scale of visualisation. For example, a saddle roof on a one-storey house is much more comprehensible for the human eye than the platform roof of a tower block. Vice versa, the gable on the tower block and the platform on the one-storey house would appear as absurd.

Conclusively, spatial planning firstly means arranging a composition of environment and spatial objects that appears in a “natural” order and pleasing aesthetic for the human being.

Moreover, spatial planning is an administrative task controlling and distributing site and place qualities. Administration weighs up demands and supplies including procedures of participation, before giving land use permission. The administrative planning has a wide-ranging legal framework. In Germany, for example, the Land Use Planning Act (*Raumordnungsgesetz*) holds 15 essential principles containing every topic this paper has dealt with to this point. Administrative measures deal with tasks and problems resulting from the human spatial activities: the current German land use report (*Raumordnungsbericht*), published by the federal government, points out the ongoing land consumption concerning settlement and recommends focussing on inner-city development. Moreover, it postulates an even economical spa-
tial development to avoid or emphasise shrinking regions.\textsuperscript{41} To conclude, spatial planning as an administrative task gives balance to the demand of human spatial activities.

Conclusions

The human being perceives spatial environment. Thereby, his consciousness constructs an image of space that is confronted and amended by ongoing perception. Notable concerning being human spatially is that in mind, the human being is creating his ‘own world’, mapped only by his individual scales. This scale is based upon the question: “Where will I exercise my existence?” This question applies to the individual as well as for the global-acting \textit{Homo economicus}. Thus mobility is motivated by a desire to reach a “\textit{there}”, a destination where his necessities can be fulfilled. And he wants to reach it quickly and in comfort. Though the human being develops regularities in his spatial behaviour, he is bound to functions, not primarily to special locations. Changing the place of study, a student would go on having lunch in the (new university’s) refectory.

Mankind has spread itself nearly everywhere on the planet. Nevertheless, distances, facilities and boundaries of environment remain. Conclusively, the human being is found arranging his three-dimensional surroundings. That he is acting spatially proves that there must be an influence that environment has on the human being. He has to accommodate himself in space. The human being desires to make the environment equal with the mental map in his mind. He is exercising this in various ways, as a look at the variety of his settlements shows. Moreover, societies are bound to a territory. Their individual progress in standards of living are perceptible in their population’s structure. Mankind spatially expresses its variety and complexity in culture and economy. So do human interrelations. Individuals, societies and states are bound to land. Their interrelationships manifest spatially in migration, trading or in conflicts.

Contrary to Ratzel’s statement, the human being is not primarily influenced by natural conditions. All in all, effects of the human being on landscapes are stronger than the landscape’s effect on human beings. The task of spatial planning is making environment equal to the mentioned human scale. Simultaneously, it is organising the human exposure to space. All in all, human beings take what nature offers. The hunter-gatherer took what he found. With the change in settlement patterns, humans needed more commodities and more land. Progress of technology made them able to take them. Several geographic sources point out a transformation from ‘natural landscape’ to ‘cultural landscape’. Just nature, an unaffected landscape, does not seem to be a benefit for a human being. So it leaves its marks on landscapes to exploit them. ‘Cultural landscape’ is the manifestation of mankind on earth. Many tourists may have visited the Italian island of Sardinia looking for a ‘Mediterranean nature’. What could be seen were the results of a large-scale forest clearing from when Ancient Rome was in need for battleships.

As is generally known, the human being makes history every day, but he also makes geography every day.

\textsuperscript{41} Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung, \textit{Raumordnungsbericht}, 107–149.
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HEATHER YEUNG


It is indeed strange to review a work that was first published over twenty years ago. Although the translator’s introduction argues that Serres gained prominence only a decade after *Les cinq sens* was initially published, the book did top the bestseller chart in France during the spring of 1985, and that October won the *Prix Médicis de l’essaye*. This context ought to be remembered on reading, since the occupations of the book resonate with what was happening within the Academy at this time. Although groundbreaking when it was first published, it may seem somewhat quotidian to the contemporary reader, in spite of the still-hypnotic virtuosity of Serres’ prose.

*The Five Senses* provides the most comprehensive and convincing introduction to much of Serres’ thought available in English. It meditates, in passing, on the philosopher’s ideas of discourse and fabrication as the two methods of aesthetic articulation. In Serres’ elliptical manner, he elaborates his theory of the quasi-object, of the passage between the global and the local, of transport and communication systems, and of mankind’s evolution in sense and thought, all of which are expanded later, most extensively in *Atlas* (1992) and *Hominiscience* (2001). The author himself has said that *The Five Senses* reflects and refracts all his work previous to that book, that it is at once many things, and became not just about the senses but about drugs, education, and “a certain morality of the body” – “almost everything that Plato would have disliked”. It is not just Plato that *The Five Senses* writes against. Also up for contestation is the hyper verbosity of Sophocles, the stringencies of Cartesian thought, of Hegelian Time, and of both Heideggerian and Merleau-Pontian phenomenology. These empirical philosophical systems are not explicitly contested, however. Ever since the 1980s Serres has made it a personal (and philosophical) project to quietly write against the stringent and specific discursive styles of the Academy, his opposition lies not in direct confrontation but in his vow to eliminate scholarly apparatus (such as references, footnotes, bibliographies), to write books free of jargon and as “true and close to the thing that they describe as possible”.¹

The translators’ introduction provides a useful (although not comprehensive) guide to their chosen translations of specifically idiomatic French phrases, puns, or jokes which resonate through the text, but seem out of touch, at times, with the context of the book’s original publication. Following this, Steven Connor supplies an enlightening and interesting introduction

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to the book, contextualising the book well with regard to Serres’ previous works. Perhaps because so little of Serres’ work post-*The Five Senses* has been translated into English, Connor does not expand his introduction to involve Serres’ work of the last twenty years. Nevertheless, his introduction provides a useful guide to the book to come, pulling out important images, tropes, echoes, and recurrent articulations of ideas which may help guide the reader not familiar with Serres’ work.

Throughout, Serres argues that our conception of our selves is grounded in and consubstantial with our physical bodies as the seats and receptors of our five senses. Serres states that nothing dwells in the intellect that has not previously dwelt in sense. He goes on to argue that the intellect can only be presented through language, but that we have listened to language for so long that we have forgotten (how) to listen to the senses and the manner in which they make our contact with and help us to map our ever-changing physical world. *The Five Senses* has five chapters, mirroring the title of the book. But, typically of Serres, nothing is obvious or concrete. This exploration of the senses is not as systematic or empirical as Condillac’s experiment (although that is mentioned, and expanded, in the third chapter). The chapters, rather than being named after each individuated sense, take their name from a salient sensual encounter. They are as follows: Veils (touch), Boxes (hearing), Tables (taste, smell, scent), Visit (sight and vision), Joy (summation and anticipation of the future). ‘Veils’ opens with a movement of birth (or escape), and, neatly, ‘Joy’ with a moment of rebirth. An easy symmetry is created, the central chapter also containing a moment of birth and dealing with the majority of Serres’ philosophical engagements and rewritings. It is etymology that guides us through and forms bridges between ideas. By moving fluidly in this way, the book seeks to enact its thesis.

Recurrent images, the hallmark of Serres’s writing, abound. Whilst, since the advent of Greek myth, Hera has draped the many-eyed Argus’s skin over the tail of the peacock, in *The Five Senses* this all-seeing tail becomes all-sensing; unfurling itself as a skin, clothing Pierre Bonnard’s nudes, shrouding the bodies of Lazarus and Jesus, becoming a map and landscape of the garden and of the Lower Garonne, from whence comes the bottle of Chateau Y’quem, where the peacock’s tail unfurls from the mouth of the bottle, signifying intermingling taste, smell, and scent – the senses around which the third and longest chapter is built. In this way, the peacock’s tail, Argus’s skin, is born and reborn throughout *The Five Senses*, enacting in the ebb and flow of image one of Serres’s main preoccupations in the book, the idea of birth and rebirth. For Serres, it is through birth and rebirth that we ground, break out, and thus radically redefine the modes of perception and articulation. With this ebb and flow of images Serres weaves a net over the world, geographically, culturally, and historically, the occurrence of each new or revisited image marking the point at which a cluster of threads is knotted, keeping the weft tight in the otherwise fluid model. Serres leaves us with a plea for the reinstitution of the world that he has so carefully woven in *The Five Senses* – a plea that the world of knowledge be wrested from the derealizing hands of scientific discourse; a plea for rebirth.

This English translation of *The Five Senses* mirrors, as well as a translation may, the prose of the original work. More importantly, perhaps, it both adds to the ever-increasing volume of Serres’s work available in English, and provides a good introduction to anyone unversed in Serrasian thought and its idiosyncratic, virtuosic articulation. It is also one of the more important books in Serres’ *oeuvre*, bridging the author’s early ideas and styles with his more mature works. There are many other, more recent, of Serres’ books yet to be translated, many more of the ideas given little room in the body of this text that are elsewhere articulated. His primary preoccupations, too, have changed, over time, to keep current with those that he
recognizes in the world. And as the author himself has said, "we are always heading towards multiple possible worlds, and must always seek to describe them".²

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BOOK REVIEW

RACHEL DOUGLAS-JONES


You can learn that the human being is always the best measure, and that the measure of the human is not death but life. (João Cabral de Melo Neto, Education by Stone)

With these words, Biehl opens his tour-de-force of the Brazilian “national” response to AIDS, Will to Live. Through them, he lays out the scope of his study – from the stories of those living with AIDS, to the institutions mobilized as a consequence of this deadly disease. Here, being human is not a given, life is not the result of natural vitality. It is, rather, tied to medication, access to which falls into a dazzling complex of rights, assertions and negotiations with non-governmental organizations, churches, activists, government, medics, and pharmaceutical markets. The book patiently, critically and thoroughly unravels these interactions, offering what Biehl calls ‘alternative epidemiological evidence’ (14), in his quest to ‘generate some form of visibility and accountability’ (14) for those he sees as abandoned subjects.

Written in eight chapters, comprising some 400 pages, the book is crafted with an inspiring care and shows clearly the many gains of real experience. By offering an overview of the topics of access, rights, inequalities, and introducing us to eight life stories, Biehl makes clear that his analysis will move between perspectives and consider the international, globalized world of pharmaceuticals alongside the people who need those drugs. His first chapter involves a swift and broad discussion of pharmaceutical governance and the public health scene in in Brazil. The chapters that follow draw on Biehl’s focus clinic, Caasah – a ‘grassroots care facility’ (130) in Bahia which, over the course of his ethnography and visits, he saw develop into the key ‘institution of care for the poorest facing AIDS’ (132).

Multiple perspectives and alternative visions are central to Biehl’s work. He offers an intense examination of the ‘micro-politics of patienthood’ (120) emergent in the world and its relations – the “Circuits of Care” resulting from HIV, antibody tests, and AIDS – introducing the ‘patient citizen’ (121). The surveillance system – its possibilities and shortcomings – are developed in the third chapter, “A Hidden Epidemic”, which explores a form ‘invisible’ death, in ‘paradoxical’ (180) contradiction to national policy and reform. Biehl works with epidemiologists, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, allowing “‘minor voices’” to reveal the limits of governmental and nongovernmental interventions and make relative the “truths” that the institutions of AIDS disseminate’ (132).

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Chapter Four, “Experimental Subjects” details his works among members of a different section of the population – the worried well, whose technoneuroses Biehl analyses as a response to the scientific and technical manipulation of psychological processes, in which a biologically based identity becomes articulated in a form of self knowledge. Following this discussion, “Patient-Citizenship”, considers the success stories of patients who have responded positively to antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, in the light of the problem that while the drugs are now available, the institutions which distribute them are struggling to survive. Using Caasah, Biehl shows the intertwining of religion in the economy of survival, the impact of a ‘non-stigmatizing environment’ (284) on drug adherence and the ongoing struggles of the staff to manage complex politics on a daily basis. The climax of the study arrives in the final and title chapter, ‘Will to Live’, where sickness is located not just in the body, but the body politic – drawing out lines developed in previous chapters.

Subchapters focus on actual experience: Medical Disparities; Physically Well, Economically Dead, “Medication is Me” all point to the narratives of real patients. Biehl shows how their fragile hopes for life are caught up with the struggle of adhering to treatment and the redemptive role of Caasah in these processes. His conclusions return us to the idea of “Global Public Health”, and the role of anthropological openness as a necessary method for exploring the “Unexpected and the Possible”.

The value of this kind of study is brought to light only in the elegant synthesis Biehl achieves. In a time when academics are under pressure to publish frequently, we increasingly see work of an anthropological nature squeezed into smaller timeframes of field research, or the rapid ‘compulsive and mindless theorizing’ (Hirschman 1970; 329) that Biehl explicitly writes against. Without work of this depth, dedication and patience, we would have only snapshots of elements of the process, valuable in one sense, but always lacking one set of contextualizing details or another. The kinds of topics facing contemporary academics require richly textured accounts in order to do them justice. Biehl takes such a integrated approach, and evidences the personal and academic costs and benefits of publishing in this manner, after at least ten years of research. It is through returning to the field he says, that ‘entanglements and intricacies are revealed….we witness the very temporality of politics, technology, money and survival’. (47)

Biehl takes a distinctive approach in reporting his study and findings, which is at once academically rigorous and deeply affecting. Combining work with people in the ‘state, corporate, scientific and nongovernmental institutions’ (4) with ethnographic fieldwork, he keeps the politics central, and does not permit the economic to become a faceless force. Indeed, he literally weaves the faces of aids sufferers into the narrative, to ‘highlight the plight and singularity of the abandoned AIDS patients’ (5) he worked with, using images collected by his companion Torben Eskerod on visits from 1997 to 2001. The powerful portraits form an integral part of the text, the gaze of the subject often connecting through the camera’s lens to the reader.

But the account Biehl provides is far more than humanizing a policy document, giving names to the nameless, faces to the masses. Byconfronting the sheer complexity of AIDS in Brazil, the reader is shown how the epidemic can be presented as multiple, reworked: truth claims are made and discarded, employed and challenged; people work with the means available to them, but are simultaneously parts of systems far beyond their control, through which they can be made invisible. The social lives of AIDS – as disease and in terms of patients – are carefully brought into dialogue with one another; the social representation of dying alongside the social worlds of the dying. The book is a powerful demonstration of how ‘bureaucratic procedures, sheer medical neglect, moral contempt, unresolved disputes over
diagnostic criteria and unreflexive epidemiological knowledge mediate the process by which poor and marginalised patients are made invisible’ (203-4).

Biehl manages to make his writing accessible, informative, fluid and engaging, resulting in a text which requires no prior knowledge of the subject matter, or the methods of anthropological research. As such, while deeply anthropological in approach and commitment to ethnographic forms of narrative, the book will enlighten, challenge and fascinate readers from a wide range of disciplines, from medicine to health policy, sociology to government, STS and law.

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DAVID W. HILL


Naming Contemporary Violence, the subtitle to Adriana Cavarero’s most recent book, is by no means an easy task. We live in a world where violence takes many disparate forms, where humanity is engulfed by a so-called “war on terror,” at a time when terms such as “war” and “terror” seem to refer to outdated concepts. The very difficulty of describing this situation also motivates the search for new definitions in this regard. For this reason Cavarero offers the reader a new addition to the lexicon of violence: horrorism. She then sets about arguing that it is “horrorism” that best describes the acts of gross violence against the helpless that we witness with an ever greater frequency.

After an interesting discussion of the etymologies of “terror” and “horror”, Cavarero proceeds to a fascinating account of why certain forms of violence provoke horror in the witness. She describes a suicide bombing in a crowded space and reflects that what is truly horrifying about this scene is not the killing but the dehumanising effect of bodies ripped apart in the blast, “an offense to the ontological dignity of the victim” (9). In a scene such as this, the severed head is the most repugnant sight because it bears the singular face with its unique features; it is a marker of singularity undone. Terror is the fear of death and this is present too; but what stands out is the horror of dehumanisation, of individuals become individuais.

She argues that a suicide bombing is a repugnant horror because it is an act of aggression against the helpless – and this seems correct, since such violence can only ever be unilateral, and so always gratuitous. She then states that further to this, it rips apart the body of the suicide bomber and of the victims – and this again seems to add horror, since we have already seen the ontological violence this achieves, the dehumanisation of a singular human being. Here the argument takes an unexpected turn, Cavarero claiming that what is still more repugnant is that the bomb explodes, that women are tearing themselves apart in acts of violence against others - and no further explanation follows. Perhaps we can link this to her use of the image of Medusa, the decollated Gorgon utilised as a powerful expression of horror in the history of art, from Caravaggio to Dalí. Here we are told that the decapitation of a woman is so repugnant because it involves the separation of the head, with its singular face, from the womb. If her point - and it is up to the reader to put this together - is that the ontological wholeness of “woman” is ripped asunder when the bomb explodes, then it is unclear why this adds disgust on top of that already noted in the discussion of ontological violence. Cavarero makes an interesting discovery here; it is shock-
ing when we discover that the suicide bomber is a woman but the reasons are more likely to be socio-political than ontological.

Later in the book there is some discussion of the socio-political context in which female suicide bombers are situated, but rather than clarify the last point this only serves to create a new problem. She writes of recent attempts (part of the turn in feminism towards narrating the self and ethics of storytelling that finds notable exponents in Judith Butler and Denise Riley) to give biographies to these women with the frequent consequence that they are made into victims by their biographers. According to such argumentation, when we acknowledge that they are recruited and manipulated by men, that they are subaltern in their society to begin with, then we come to see that they are victims every bit as much as those killed in the(‘) blast. She is quite obviously uncomfortable with this idea and sets up the arguments of these narrators as if to knock them down, but never does. She remarks instead that it is easy to see why feminist thinkers might be sympathetic to the idea of female suicide bombers as victims. The conflation of the guilty with victim is described as a “cost” when it comes to giving a voice to such women. It seems to her to be an acceptable cost. Whilst sympathetic to the idea of narrating difference, if we are considering the ethics of storytelling, then it seems to me that we are compelled to take into account the voices of the victims and their families, and the violence done to them by this conflation.

Cavarero goes on to discuss the female torturers at Abu Ghraib, recognising straight away that it would be difficult to suggest that these women are victims. She contends that we should not see female torturers as a novelty, that no value is added to the act of torture when the perpetrator is a woman. This strikes me as true, but then it is unsurprising that she would make this move after admitting that these women cannot be redeemed. On the other hand, the centrality of female suicide bombers is insisted upon, again unsurprisingly since they can (at a cost, remember) be seen as victims.

That said, it must be stressed that this book is a well researched and (in most places) convincingly argued thesis on modern violence. Cavarero seamlessly moves between discussions of Greek mythology, art and photography, and the Holocaust to cast light on the nature of today’s acts of horror. As such, it will be of particular interest to political, social and cultural theorists, as well as of a more general interest to continental philosophers and classicists. My purpose in this review has simply been to highlight the tension that runs through Cavarero’s work; that is, the tension between, on the one hand, categorising an act of horror as ontological violence against the human and, on the other, insisting on the sui generis horror of violence against women. Nevertheless, this tension does nothing to detract from her illuminating discussion of the ontological assault that we find ourselves witness to, one that lays siege to body and soul.

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Traditionally in political philosophy, questions of justice have emerged either in terms of the relation between the state and its subjects, or in problems regarding the justification of war between states. More recently, however, distributive justice has come to be considered a global issue with, for example, obligations to the global poor becoming a major concern. The globalisation of justice extends beyond distributive justice however, to encompass questions of corrective justice and the protection of human rights. Likewise, issues that had previously been considered to be primarily of local concern – such as terrorism or environmental sustainability – are now widely considered to be problems that must be tackled internationally.

_The Global Justice Reader_ broaches all of these issues through a series of thirty-eight papers arranged in eleven sections, each addressing a different aspect of global justice. All of the articles in the collection have been previously published, often in high profile journals such as _Philosophy and Public Affairs_. The appeal of _The Global Justice Reader_ lies in the convenience of having these many articles brought together in a single volume, and the contributions have evidently been carefully selected. The book also contains a useful general introduction as well as an introduction to each section. In these opening remarks, Brooks contextualises the articles and outlines their main claims. For the most part his discussions are clear, informative and free from technical terms.

The first two sections concern sovereignty and rights to self-determination, covering the nature of legitimate authority and theories of secession. The third section discusses the nature of human rights and human rights abuses. The influence of the work of John Rawls on contemporary political philosophy is difficult to overestimate, and hence it is appropriate that the fourth section is dedicated to “The Law of Peoples,” Rawls’ work on international justice. This short section in fact contains only an extract from “The Law of Peoples” followed by a critique by Thomas Pogge. As elsewhere, Rawls’ argument is a striking development of a broadly Kantian position fused with aspects of social contract theory. Rawls’ work is sophisticated, and the discussion in these two articles covers difficult territory, quickly becoming complex.

The two sections that follow cover nationalism and its antithesis, cosmopolitanism. Much turns on the question of whether we should favour nationalism, holding that “we have special obligations to compatriots” (317) or cosmopolitanism, seeing “our obligations to all persons as sharing in equality in the light of our common humanity” (317). As Brooks points
out, “[w]hat is curious about this debate is how close the two positions appear” (xvii): cosmopolitans do not necessarily demand impartiality, whilst nationalists do not necessarily claim that we lack duties to persons beyond our borders.

The seventh section, on global poverty and international distributive justice, deals both with the nature of our duties towards distant strangers who are in need, and the relative merits of different strategies for meeting those needs. The eighth section, on just war, contains more articles than any other: the possibility of a criteria for just war has been a long-standing concern for political philosophers. The possibility of justifying war as self-defence, aggression, or pre-emptive action is considered. None of the authors defend pacifism, but they differ markedly in the kinds of action they take to be justifiable and how the justifiability of actions is to be assessed. A section on terrorism is a welcome inclusion, with contributions examining the nature of terrorism and the success of attempts to justify its use. Smilansky (chapter 32) argues that although it may be defensible in some circumstances, “the major instances of terrorism are not justified, whilst in cases where terrorism might be justified, there is no or relatively little terrorism” (570). His conclusions are plausible, although his discussions of the IRA, Palestinian terrorism and Al-Qaida seem overly hasty and might strike some readers as rather one-sided. The section on women and global justice considers whether multiculturalism is beneficial to women, the nature of group and individual rights, the duty of governments to facilitate the capabilities of their citizens, and importance of the idea of “care”. The final section focuses on environmental justice, questioning not only how environmental damage and climate change can be minimised, but also the rights and responsibilities that people have with respect to the environment. There is a particular focus on the extent to which different states should be allowed to pollute and the extent to which polluters should be made to compensate for damaging the environment.

Doubtless more could have been included if not for limitations of space. Feminists will no doubt feel that the four articles relating global justice to women are not nearly enough. Topics such as value pluralism and its relation to liberalism, capitalism, and democracy are also topics that relate closely to global justice and cosmopolitanism, but receive only a partial treatment here - there is some discussion of value pluralism by Rawls (chapter 11), for example. Likewise, multiculturalism is discussed from the point of view of its impact on women, but not considered as a topic in its own right. As such, it might be argued that the collection is biased in favouring views associated with liberal democracy, remaining largely uncritical of the Western tradition in which it is located. This concern aside, the selection is well-balanced, and as comprehensive as can reasonably be expected.

The collection is highly suitable for use on undergraduate courses, either as a core text for a module on global justice, as general reading for a course on political philosophy, or as a resource on other related modules, such as applied ethics. Although, as a general reader, it is primarily for undergraduate use, it will also be a useful resource for postgraduate students or academics, especially those just beginning research on global justice or conducting research in a related field.

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PAULINA AROCH FUGELLIE

Naomi Klein’s *The Shock Doctrine* was published in seven languages simultaneously and quickly became an international bestseller. This popularity is doubtless related to the accessibility of the author’s style which is characteristic of proficient investigative journalism. Yet the easy flow of Klein’s writing is the outcome of years of rigorous historical research grounded in extensive documentation and supported by a wide team of researchers, specialists and fact-checkers across the globe, from Argentina to Iraq. By concentrating the bulk of her archival data in a separate section – endnotes in fact constitute a sixth of her book – Klein manages to grip her reader without sacrificing the historiographical basis of her argument. This very strategy, however, has played a role in mitigating the impact of her book within the academy. Judging *The Shock Doctrine* to be a necessary dialogical counterpoint for anyone working in the humanities today, I unravel here some of the crucial and critical questions that the author poses for the academic reader. In particular, I address those questions related to the problematic addressed by this issue of *Kaleidoscope*, “Being Human”. As the Call for Papers points out, scholarship is missing “a historical perspective, allowing the significance of contemporary developments to be measured against past interpretations of what it is to be human”.

*The Shock Doctrine* is a comprehensive historiography of the rise and consolidation of global capitalism, beginning in the 1950s, but focusing on the years from 1973 to 2007. The period that it covers thus coincides not only with the virtualization of human experience through the proliferation of communication technology in every-day life, but also with the advent of the so-called linguistic turn in contemporary academic practice, and the subsequent decentring of the human subject as determined by her inscription in language. Likewise, the period coincides with the formal end of colonialism and the emergence of Postcolonial Studies, a field characterized by an exploration of subjectivity and power that, while addressing the state as a site of power, tends to leave aside its entanglement in the global market as well as the role of economics in subject constitution. By tracing economic history from the Cold War era to the new world order, Klein succeeds in articulating not only two historical periods, but also the two intellectual paradigms associated with those.

The central aim of *The Shock Doctrine* is to document the complicity between the imposition of authoritarian states and the free market, thus discrediting the hegemonic belief that...
neo-liberalism and democracy go hand in hand. In an epigraph, Klein quotes Uruguayan journalist Eduardo Galeano: “People were in prison so that prices could be free” (144). But it is in the actual case studies that Klein exposes the incommensurability of human freedom and the freedom of capital, which are conflated by free-market ideology. She documents the direct participation of the so-called “Chicago Boys” - a group of neo-liberal economists formed at the University of Chicago - in coups and other forms of suppression of democracy across the globe. At the juncture of economic interest and institutional politics, the author examines the contemporary phenomenon of the “corporatist state” as an increasingly hollow structure at the service of trans-national economic interests.

The Shock Doctrine historicizes the consolidation of the hegemonic understanding not only of “democracy”, but also of other key concepts in contemporary academic debates, such as “human rights”, “race” and “cultural difference”. Tracing the interests that have historically intervened in the shaping of these concepts, Klein’s exploration takes us from the military coup orchestrated by the CIA in Chile in 1973, to the USA’s more recent intervention in the Middle East; passing through the establishment of corporatist states at the service of trans-national capital in the former Second World - Poland under Lech Walesa, Russia under Boris Yeltsin, China under Deng Xiaoping passing on to the granting of political independence at the cost of economic surrender in Mandela’s South Africa; the vertiginous rise and collapse of the so-called Asian Tigers; and the exploitation of catastrophes by neo-liberalism, from the tsunami, to “9/11”, to hurricane Katrina.

Klein argues that all these crises – whether political or economic, natural or manufactured – were exploited not only to maximize profits at the cost of the victims, but to clean the slate and seize the opportunity of shocked societies to “return them to a state of pure capitalism, cleansed of all interruptions – government regulations, trade barriers” (60). This method, devised by Milton Friedman, whose thought constitutes the foundation of Chicago School economics, is also known as the shock doctrine.

As Klein argues, the imposition of a tabula rasa on invaded societies, or the exploitation of such a condition in those societies already shocked by natural disasters, is the basis of the Chicago School doctrine and finds a parallel in the CIA-funded experiments with torture in psychiatric hospitals during the 1950s. These new methods of alleged psychiatric treatment included sensory depravation and overexposure, stripping, electro-shock therapy, and drug inducement. The central aim was to erase the subject’s memory as well as her historical, sensorial and affective articulations, to deprive her of that which constituted her sense of being and was therefore her source of resistance. As Klein documents, these traumatic experiments were entirely counterproductive as a form of psychiatric cure. Nonetheless, they were a successful investment for the CIA, which would institute such methods in the Kubark torture manual, and continue to practice them in economic interest zones across the globe.

Klein traces not only the teleological, but also the analogical relationship between experiments with psychiatric torture and the imposition of the free-market model. She contends that the underlying logic of these groundbreaking torture techniques and that of the economic shock doctrine is one and the same: once shocked into disconcertion, the individual or society will be unable to oppose the aggression to which it is subjected. Not unlike the psychiatric endeavour to reprogram the subject, Friedman’s doctrine unleashed “a perpetual quest for clean sheets and blank slates on which to build model states” of unrestricted capitalism (589). Towards such an end, a crucial element was the breaking up of pre-existing narratives by the eradication of collective memory - the dissolution of the cultural and historical articulations of a society through economic, political and military violence.
Ideological indoctrination also played a part. Klein's account of the project that took place at the department of economics at the University of Chicago and its infiltration into economic and military practices across the world puts into question the generalized conception of the academy as an institution abstracted from everyday concerns, an ivory tower. Such questioning comes from outside the academy, in the shape of a bestseller. *The Shock Doctrine*'s title, narrative style and introduction correspond to the demands of a marketable product. Yet the rest of the chapters and the meticulous historiography in which they engage remind us of those other conventions and associated economic and political demands to which our own production as scholars is subject.

In her dismantling of the myth of the academy as an ivory tower, Naomi Klein does not deal with humanities departments, nor do I consider these spaces to be as clearly connected with the external world. Yet, as sites of ideological production and legitimation, they are not exempt from Klein’s implicit critique. Let me illustrate this with the force of an example. Few statements have marked contemporary reflection in the humanities as has Francis Fukuyama’s declaration that we have reached the end of history. As *The Shock Doctrine* notes, Fukuyama’s statement was first pronounced during a lecture that took place at the University of Chicago in 1989, funded by Milton Friedman’s associate John Olin. Fukuyama’s statement has provoked and may continue to provoke meaningful reflection. Yet, to forget its site of enunciation is also to forget the role of our own forgetfulness in our present understandings of what it is to be human.

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