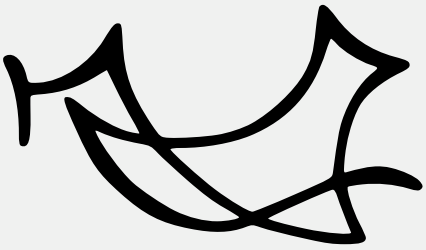

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Editorial

We are delighted to offer this double issue on the literature of peace. We are deeply grateful to our guest editor, **Antony Adolf**, author of *Peace: A World History* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009), who pulled these authors and their essays together and made this issue possible. The articles reflect the richness and breadth of contemporary scholarship in the areas of literature and peace.

Adolf's introductory essay argues that in some ways peace literature eludes traditional categories of literary genre. It is not defined by the writer's identity, nor does it exist independently of other, non-literary, fields of research. Rather than ask what peace literature is, Adolf suggests that we ask what peace literature does and can do. The genius of this genus is that it can create unity in diversity, which, in our complex, post-modern world, is essential to making peace.

Two essays focus on literature written during and in response to World War I. **Eckhart Kuhn-Osius** compares the Austro-Hungarian pacifist, Andreas Latzko, and his novel, *Friedensgericht,* with the German bellicist, Walter Flex, and his novel, *Der Wanderer zwischen beiden Welten*. Readers embraced *Der Wanderer* more than *Friedensgericht* because, although Latzko's critical pacifism is more realistic and insightful, Flex's bellicism offered consolation, gave the deaths meaning, and met the survivors' needs.

Marilène Haroux analyzes the personal diary and the novel *Clerambault* of the French WWI pacifist leader, Romain Rolland. Hoping to create "a space for dialogue between the Germans and the French," Rolland found himself in an "impossible situation"—the enemy of both. In this "crisis of hopelessness," he withdrew from public life and wrote *Clerambault,* in which new possibilities unfold of how individuals and nations might communicate and relate to each other.

Two essays find their setting in Africa, one in Nigeria and one in Senegal. **Thomas Lynn** analyzes Chinua Achebe's short story, "Civil Peace," set in and after the 1967-70 Nigerian Civil War. Depicting "a family's and community's response" to war's destruction, "Civil Peace" suggests that civil peace is much like war in that "people continue to bully, deceive, and overreach." Readers are called understand these patterns and learn their lessons. The "courage and social stability to conduct rational dialogue" and the pursuit of just resource distribution may help communities avoid renewed

war.

Kathleen Madigan compares short stories of two Senegalese writers, "Adélia" by Abdoulaye (Pape) Tall and "Commandos Insolites" by Anne Piette. Both stories portray women as strong, resourceful, and peaceable. And in both works, embedded stories reveal recognition of our kinship with the enemy and, indeed, of the enemy in ourselves. This awareness can engender motivation to curb violence and birth community by highlighting our common humanity.

Madigan's focus on women appears also in **Constanza López-Baquero**'s essay on Vera Grabe's *Razones de vida*. Grabe's text recounts her own experience as a woman who fought in Columbia's male-dominated guerrilla forces, and re-evaluates Columbian history from a woman's perspective. Alienated from both her daughter and her country, Grabe seeks "to recover a place in her country and in her daughter's heart." López-Baquero examines this reconciliation effort and Grabe's struggle to rediscover and redefine her identity. She also explores "the meaning of the body in relation to personal and national trauma." Trauma narrations, she concludes, "have a role in the reformation of identities, communities, and nations." By making public her private trauma, Grabe exposes Columbia's political and social violence, and demands that women survivors have a place in Columbia's history and future.

Moving in a more applied direction, two essays focus on teaching peace in university and college literature classes. **Ed Dauterich** describes how through the study of the novel, *Johnny Got His Gun*, students learn "both analysis and the rhetorical skills to voice their own educated opinions." They learn to distinguish between dialogic argument, which invites response and discussion, and combative argument, which discourages dialogue. While an anti-war agenda is not forced upon them, they do learn to question war, pro-war culture, and pacifism; to articulate their thoughts clearly; and to value cooperation and effective communication.

Patrick Henry and **Richard Middleton-Kaplan** share how they teach the literature of peace and nonviolence on different college campuses. Students study a variety of writers from Augustine to Gandhi, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Thich Hnat Hanh, and utilize other media such as interviews and films. Henry concludes with ten interfaith peace principles and Middleton-Kaplan with ten pedagogical principles. For both, pedagogy built on respectful dialogue, and interfaith and interracial

cooperation, helps equip students to live out these principles and become active peacemakers.

Reviewers who collaborated with us assessed and suggested improvements for the entire set of articles. We offer heartfelt thanks to Dr. Mike Heller of Roanoke College and Dr. Hildi Froese Tiessen of Conrad Grebel University College for taking time to undertake this enormous task. Dr. Heller has just published an edited volume entitled *Mohandas K. Gandhi: The Last Eighteen Years* (Roanoke, VA: Wilmington College Peace Resource Center, 2011). The book will serve well to follow Gandhi's *Autobiography*, and it has a good study guide for classroom use. Dr. Froese Tiessen will retire this year after decades of teaching literature that expresses a desire for peace. Her contribution lives on in a new MA program in Peace and Conflict Studies offered by the University of Waterloo at Conrad Grebel University College.

As always, we are grateful for the on-going support of our readers through your subscription renewals and contributions to *Peace Research*, and, as always, we invite readers to submit their best manuscripts for our consideration.

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What Does Peace Literature Do? An Introduction to the Genre and its Criticism

Antony Adolf

The concepts of the genre of peace literature and its criticism are not static. Rather than try to define peace literature, it is more productive to ask what peace literature does and can do, as this leads to opportunities for thought and action. Writers seldom set out deliberately to write peace literature; it is the critics who apply this label, albeit infrequently. Self-aware "peace writers," "peace literature scholars," or "peace literature critics" are rare. The critical strategies most effective for peace literature differ from those for other genres (such as short stories, tragedies, or sonnets) that are deliberately chosen by their writers, and whose critics can thus draw upon an established corpus and frame of reference. The critical strategies for peace literature consider readers to be active agents in the production of meaning, and so they fall within the tradition of reader response criticism in a broader and more holistic sense than is commonly understood; this includes not only semantics, cognition, and affect but, above all, behaviour.[1]

Peace literature is not defined by the writer's identity in the sense of women's, ethnic, or gay literature as is prevalent in literary studies today, even though the writers of peace literature inevitably fall into one or more of these identity categories. No single identity, whether hegemonic or subversive, can monopolise the genre or criticism of peace literature as it is proposed here, as this would negate an important aspect of what peace literature does and can do, namely, *create unity in diversity*. This is not to say that any text or group of texts can be reframed as "peace literature," as there are certain characteristics of this genus that preclude overinclusion. Peace literature texts differ from those that negate or suppress identity traits, such as "national" literatures suppressing "national languages." Imagine trying to name and understand a dynamically evolving genus through new techniques of observation, analysis, and interpretation; in the same way, it

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is more productive to ask what peace literature does and can do rather than what it is.

The difficulties and possibilities inherent in understanding peace, while considering its wide range of historical contexts and actors, are addressed in various places, including this author's *Peace: A World History*.[2] The criticism of peace literature, whether as a genre or an individual text, requires a heightened historical awareness. This excludes a purely formalist approach, as much of what peace literature does and can do is based in contextual and re-contextual play; ignoring history would render this invisible and thus impotent. For example, we cannot understand the biting satire of Aristophanes' play *Peace*, arguably the first known peace literature text in the Western canon, without understanding Ancient Athenian foreign policy. Likewise, the radical reinterpretation of Homer's epics as anti-war literature (akin but not identical to peace literature proper) requires new critical strategies that focus simultaneously on the text, the contexts of its production, and the contexts of its consumption, particularly given the millennia of critical traditions that emphasize features antithetical to this reinterpretation. This is not to say that a text's formal qualities are irrelevant; on the contrary, these are what often invoke, evoke, and revoke the contexts in question, and so they must also be (re)examined in the light of what peace literature does and can do.

This (re)examination of the traits of both canonical and marginal literary works as they constitute "peace literature" as a genre is a great challenge. However, we believe this collection of articles exploring peace literature shows that this work is worthwhile. Making more dedicated resources available to practitioners in the field is, literally, a way to save and institute peace in its diversity by integrating cultural studies and critical theory into already erudite, practical conflict resolution and peace studies.[3] The study of peace literature includes research from political and social sciences, biology, psychology, economics, law, cultural and peace studies, and literary studies, to name a few. This study and pedagogy of peace literature offer not only interdisciplinarity; they also offer advances in each discipline with which they engage. The problems with and possibilities for exploring peace literature are addressed here through points of connection in the genre and its criticism, using three dynamic paradigms through which encounters with peace literature can be made pragmatically didactic in an empowering sense.[4] These three paradigms are *individual peace* (how peace is made and

maintained within persons), *social peace* (how peace is made and maintained within groups), and *collective peace* (how peace is made and maintained between groups). Comparative literature approaches are thus integral to the criticism of peace literature. Each of these three paradigms serves as a lens through which texts can be examined; signs and the systems in which they signify (including living contexts) are the primary concern of the genre of peace literature and its criticism. In contrast, life outside these signs and their systems is the domain of the wider fields of peace research such as nonviolence, conflict resolution, and geopolitical and security studies. Behaviour based on the understanding of texts as peace literature can serve as a bridge between these disciplines, while also transforming them into areas of expertise inseparable from the advancement of peace in its diversity.

There is some overlap between these areas, and we need not make strict distinctions between them. Peace literature, even in its current infant state, cannot exist independently of other fields of research, from local and global environments to local and global policies. We must move away from critical attention to yet another constructed *genus* whose relationships and characteristics are externally defined. We are aspiring to a newly reconstructed *genius* whose goals are established through relationships and singularities aimed at in-forming the present and the future. There is much to gain and to learn, and this collection is a step in that direction. Effective critical strategies can take us from the *genus of* to the *genius in* peace literature, not in the exceptional sense, but in the etymological one: that which exemplifies a time and place in its particulars, to the point of converging with the universal.[5] Postmodern criticism tends to focus on the particulars at the expense of the universal. This is invaluable analytically but ineffective on the ground without synthesis. Universality—in actualities or aspirations—is the quality shared by what used to be called "great literature," "world literature," or "canonical literature," and is what peace literature, its study, and its pedagogy seek to reclaim, with the addition of diversity. Universality integrated with diversity engenders unity.

"THE" GENRE OF PEACE LITERATURE

Criticism of peace literature as a genre requires a clear understanding of the meaning of genre, as well as how this meaning can be applied to texts that *become* "peace literature" through the process of this genre criticism and beyond. Competing or complementary meanings of genre have been

constructed through centuries of inquiry, and are not always self-evident. A clear understanding of genre leads us to a question often asked by critics of their analyses (thus turning them into interpretations), but only rarely asked of critics' activities as a whole themselves: *So what*? That is, what relevance do these activities have for people outside "communities of interest" or "interpretive communities," regardless of their legitimacy? Three important genre theorists have advanced premises that can help us address this question: Aristotle in Ancient Greece, Mikhail Bahktin in Soviet Russia, and Carolyn Miller in the Cold War era United States. When considered together, their calls for reconceptualizations of genre *for* peace literature are more promising than when considered separately. This discussion of what constitutes a genre of peace literature underlies our following discussion of the criticism of peace literature.

Aristotle's understanding of genre includes two defining elements: identifiable, distinguishing formal traits (such as poetic meter) and structural traits (such as tragedic or comedic theatrical progressions).[6] In this sense, Aristotle would not recognise peace literature as a genre. The presence of several formal genre criticisms in this collection, like Constanza López-Baquero's article on South American women's nonfiction testimonial writing, "*Razones de vida* by Vera Grabe: Pro-Peace Narrative or the Search for Memory," demonstrates the impossibility of relying solely on formal and structural traits when identifying and discussing peace literature as a genre, as the genre's characteristics work both within and beyond these traits. In peace literature, content and process are paramount, and thus take precedence over formal and structural traits. The discussion of collocation below elaborates on this point. López-Baquero notes that "*Razones de vida*, together with other recent testimonial narratives that have emerged in the country, forms a new literature that dialogues, transforms, and searches for memory, but most importantly gives women a place in the reconfiguration of Colombia".[7] Only in conjunction with this collection's other articles, however, can Lopez's piece make this concerted point about peace literature being strictly non-formalist, placing function above form.

In another sense, however, peace literature is undoubtedly an Aristotelian genre because it makes full use of mimesis ("representation"), a ubiquitous and multifaceted literary device which, given established sets of cultural norms, elicits more or less predictable ethical and affective reader responses.[8] Tragedy, for Aristotle, represents humans as "better" than we are,

so that their trials and tribulations evoke pity and fear. Comedy, in contrast, represents humans as "worse" than we are, so that their adventures evoke ridicule and laughter. With this in mind, peace literature often takes on the complexities of tragicomedy à la Samuel Beckett, in which humans are represented "as" we are, so that our actualities evoke *empathy*. There are two ways in which this empathy is aroused. First, as an Aristotelian genre, peace literature elicits an *empathic identification* between readers, writers, contents, and contexts beyond identitarianism, because it can and does happen across identities (that is, in diversities). Second, peace literature can facilitate *empathic ascription*, by which writers and readers become able to examine their intellectual and affective preconceptions with regard to content, contexts, and correlates. In the words of Hans-Georg Gadamer in *Truth and Method*, describing what Aristotle means by the enigmatic term *catharsis*: "To see that 'this is how it is' is a kind of self-knowledge for the spectator, who emerges with new insight from the illusions in which he [or she], like everyone else, lives."[9] It is this cathartic effect that makes peace literature an Aristotelian genre.

For Bakhtin, representation is at the core of genre recognition and analysis, but he has in mind less the representation of humans themselves than of their speech patterns, which themselves represent social statuses and relations.[10] Peace literature is thus determined by speech patterns as genres, as they are extensions of wider sociological trends. The formal characteristics of a text, such as the use of slang or technical jargon, allow critics and audiences to recognize the speech patterns through which the meanings of messages can be understood. These speech patterns, in turn, reflect the wider social realities through we can interpret characters, scenes, objects, etc., and their treatment by authors. In Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination*, epics and novels represent antithetical social conditions. Epics represent the conditions of the hallowed past where authoritative, authentic, and aesthetic values are centrally and hierarchically determined, and disseminated downwards and outwards. In contrast, novels represent the conditions of the harrowed present where everything, even representation itself, is contestable, and where these contestations seep from periphery to centre and from the grassroots upwards, rejuvenatingly, reinforcing establishments, or subversively. In Bakhtinian terms, the genre of peace literature paradoxically belongs to what has elsewhere been called epic novels, which explore representational tensions between epics and novels to create syntheses and synergies that

would not be achievable otherwise.[11]

For Miller, a "rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or the form of discourse but *on the action it is used to accomplish*."[12] This notion opens up the genre of peace literature to a pragmatic approach, both philosophically and linguistically. Philosophically, Miller calls genres "a form of social knowledge—a mutual construing of objects, events, interests and purposes that not only links them but makes them what they are: an objectified social need." In our case, this social need is peace. Linguistically, genre as social action evokes the field of pragmatics, which focuses on how contextual conditions influence the interpretation of language. In this collection, Patrick Henry and Richard Middleton-Kaplan, in "Teaching Peace," are motivated by a firm and demonstrable belief in the value of teaching peace. They seek to reverse that decline in peace education by teaching these classes and showing students models of nonviolent activists for peace and social justice. They do this by focusing "almost exclusively on non-fiction writing, and . . . therefore employ an expanded definition of literature that includes essays, speeches, letters, and life writing."[13] Their compelling pedagogy of peace literature is based on understanding the context as much as the content of the works they examine with students. Henry and Middleton-Kaplan's conception of social action should not be confused with the kind of "committed" social action in existential or socialist senses that Jean Paul Sartre had in mind in *What is Literature?* (discussed below). Evoking feelings of disgust at violence and warfare, and creating more empathy with nonviolent victims than with hero aggressors, are both teacher and writer skills—but they should not be confused with the full potential of what peace literature does and can do.

The term "peace literature" is also used to refer to the general body of written work of peace research and propaganda. This does not detract from its use in reference to literary works specifically, but the ambiguity thus created does constructively call each into question. Peace literature as tragicomedic, doubly empathic and cathartic; as active in the limbic discursive spaces between epics and novels; as social acts that are pragmatic both philosophically and linguistically—these in no way disregard or discount the extensive and growing body of "peace literature" embodied more broadly in scholarly articles, journalistic articles, books, blog posts, Tweets, interviews, videocasts, and so on. Peace literature as a genre does not rest upon formal or structural traits; it does, however, rest upon the consistent agreement and

recognition of the *people* who produce, consume, discuss, and act upon that corpus.

So what? To affirm that a genre depends less on texts than on the people who engage with them is to begin to understand what it means to ask what peace literature does and can do. This formulation intends to take into account Jacques Derrida's proposition that individual works of literature do not belong to, but rather participate in, a given genre.[14] To ask what peace literature, as a genre, does and can do is to acknowledge that it is primarily determined not by its formal, structural, or discursive marks, but by substantive ones that can be explored and explained by criticism of the genre. We cannot thus speak definitively of "the" genre of peace literature, despite the fact that it is as old as literature itself, because peace literature as a genre is determined not by a formal structure but by the ways in which readers do and do not interact with it.

CRITICIZING PEACE LITERATURE: THE POWERS OF COLLOCATION

"Committed literature," as proposed by Sartre, arose in France in the wake of World War Two.[15] Of relevance here is that Sartre saw literature as acting upon the world, not only in the strict sense of Miller's social act, but in a much wider sense as having actual consequences in the "real" (that is, non-representational) world. Sartre thus believed that authors must assume what we today would call social responsibility, not only for their words, but also for these extended repercussions. Noting that the war did almost nothing to alleviate oppression and poverty worldwide, Sartre asserted that because we live in "a society based on violence," authors (and, by implication, readers and critics) have two choices. One is to be complicit in that violence by remaining silent about it; the other, more problematic if properly understood, is to offer what he calls "counter-violence": verbal (pseudo?) violence opposing "real" violence to undo it by exposure, dissent, or other means. Counter-violent writing is not nonviolent but, paradoxically, a particular kind of violence directed at the violence of our society.

In a Sartrean frame, peace literature and especially its criticism become counter-counter-violence; that is, they are wholly nonviolent when considered through the paradigmatic prisms of individual, social, and collective peace. Fetishizing the "subvert for subversion's sake" has no place in peace literature. Genre criticism is only one approach to peace literature, and has

limited usefulness in isolation from other forms of criticism. Like Bakhtin, Sartre sees an elemental difference between the discourses of prose and poetry, if also a different difference. Prose, being essentially representational for Sartre, can be counter-violent in ways poetry, being nonrepresentational for him, cannot. In the kind of criticism we are proposing for peace literature, collocation (rather than representation) becomes the strongest linguistic force available to peace literati. As we earlier moved from genus to genius, we are now on a trajectory from mimesis to "memesis." In this collection, Marilène Haroux's "Attempting the Impossible: Romain Rolland's Pacifism and Crisis in his Personal Diary and the Novel *Clerambault*" makes this trajectory clear through discussing the tensions between self-representation in the novel and self-expression in the diary of this pacifist French leader in World War One: the mimesis of the former resonates only partially with the memesis (as defined below) of the latter.

Effective peace literature critics, as in any field, are able not only to provide new readings of textual contents, but also to provide new contexts in which even old readings can become new. For example, when Jesus—contextually not yet Christ—gives the Sermon on the Mount and proclaims "blessed are the peacemakers," he is speaking directly to the reader in that crowd, although that awareness may only come later. Reading the passage to one's self, reading it out loud in congregation, disassembling and reassembling it in a seminar, heatedly debating it in a bar or café, or explaining it to someone of a different religious tradition—each engagement provides, in Gadamer's terms, new insights. This can apply to key passages from all belief systems, including secular ones like sciences. There is, insists Gadamer, an often unacknowledged hallmark of the cathartic dimension of peace literature that its criticism seeks to draw out: new insights are not only about texts in different contexts, but about the persons and the texts in different contexts, then about the persons without the texts in different contexts in which the texts manifest themselves through the persons. These ripple effects are perhaps most obvious in religious, legal, and other prescriptive texts, but are also present to varying extents in declarations, manifestos, constitutions, laws, poems, novels, and theatre. A prime example of this, drawn from American literature, is Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Individual, social, and collective critical categories are used in an attempt to understand and inform as much experience as possible without sacrificing precision.

Religious texts offer a unique lens onto specific criticism of peace literature, starting with the fact that so many diverse texts are widely recognized as belonging to a particular corpus. Unlike the Sermon on the Mount, the five daily prayers of Islam are not a "performance," as is currently fashionable to claim, but an actual enactment of a text that becomes one's body and even one's soul if the reader or reciter believes it is so (Qur'an, after all, translates as "recitation"), and vice versa to the point of rational irrationality. In such situations, if one can speak of criticism, it may begin with how to breathe, how to position one's body, or what to wear, as much as it may begin with how to pronounce the letter "a" or de-emphasize a rhyme. Individual criticism, then, is about understanding *ourselves* in a holistic sense in relations to texts, specifically and generally. The cognitive criticism that is gaining ground is only one piece of a large puzzle in which reading is a behaviour, and individual criticism is a behavioural science.[16] The goal of the individual criticism of peace literature is thus to be at, stay in, and reinstate peace with ourselves when it is breached; this sounds likes textual psychology or cognitive science because it is.

It is the peace literature critic's function to provide new insights into peace literature and those parts of world literature that may constitute peace literature. These critics, however, are not limited to providing new insights about the texts alone, but can explore insights that readers experience about themselves during and after the process of reading; this, of course, starts with how to read texts critically but in no way needs to stop there. Ezra Pound, an astute student and practitioner of literature, proposed that readings could be prescribed, in the pharmaceutical sense, to cure the ills of societies. Of course, this is done on a regular basis—"Did you read the latest research on solving problem X?"—but what Pound had in mind was for *literary* critics to act as prescribers, a socially conscious Oprah's book club if you will. Our purpose here is to extend this proposition to include curing the ills of individuals, groups, and collectives, to keeping them healthy, and to the hosts of other effects that reading (and only reading?) can achieve; the effect we are concerned with here is peace and all its contributing parts as achievable *through and in* literature. As Edward Dauterich writes in "*Johnny Got His Gun* and Working Class Students: Using Rhetorical Analysis to Intellectualise Pacifism" in this collection,

> At the beginning of these classes, the greatest challenges are getting students to define violence, to see the motives for

> violence, to examine and begin to construct theories of violence, and to recognise the rhetoric of violence and war that surrounds them in contemporary popular culture. By the conclusion of the course, I hope that their knowledge of violence can lead them to a critically constructive way of addressing both violent acts and violent rhetoric.[17]

All the articles in this collection make pragmatically clear the importance of using close textual analysis inside and outside classroom settings not only to better understand peace-related subject matter, but also how it relates to our own subjectivities and their objective causes.

Sociality is a precondition of collectivity, just as individuality is a precondition for sociality; these categories do not exist independently of each other, even if one may be emphasised for a given analysis or proposition. Socially, the criticism of religious texts (for example) can be done within a group of people who believe in those texts, within a group of people who believe in a different body of texts, or within a group of non-believers. The fact that we approach them *as* religious texts in-forms how we read before we even read the first word, whether or not we believe in them. This example of examining religious texts can be replaced with debating a piece of legislation, negotiating a contract, or debating how to interpret data, if these occur between two or more people. Some kinds of texts are less demanding, such as the spam and junk mail that clutters our minds and robs us of precious time. Other texts call upon us to make, break, maintain, create, reconsider, and otherwise relate to peace socially. Thomas Lynn, in "Catastrophe, Aftermath, Amnesia: Chinua Achebe's 'Civil Peace'" in this collection, shows that "Achebe rejects a partisan vision in the stories in favour of understanding"[18] the transformative effects of war and the human traits that emerge, but that partisanship was in effect collectivity construed as a society, which Lynn, as the critic, discusses perceptively.

Imagine (not hard to do) that a country is in crisis because its linguistic, ethnic, or cultural mix is shifting significantly, or because power- or resource-hungry leaders have exploited such differences to rationalize violence. Manipulating differences such as nationalism, racism, religionism, and other "isms" works because it reduces collectives to societies. It is thus no surprise that writers of peace literature and their critics seek to correct such misconstruals. The purpose of collective criticism, as distinct from individual criticism through which we learn about ourselves and social

criticism through which we learn about our groups in relation to given texts, is to learn about how two or more groups interact in relation to a given text, such as a trade treaty, a conflict-ending agreement, or a prenuptial agreement. Concomitantly, the collective criticism of peace literature seeks to understand a triad: the text, the groups, and peace in relation to each other. Kathleen Madigan in "Keeping the Peace in Senegal: Abdoulaye (Pape) Tall's 'Adélia' and Anne Piette's 'Commandos Insolites'" in this collection seeks to place Senegal in historical and political context, and then compare two short stories devoted to the theme of peace. Here, lines of demarcation in ethnic conflict or between villages become blurred as greater consciousness of the interconnectedness of the human family comes into focus. Pride of power becomes replaced by lyric humility and the art of creating stories of peacemaking.

In the same vein, Eckhard Kuhn-Osius's "Two German Voices on World War I: Andreas Latzko and Walter Flex" in this collection opens with "Pacifism as a movement suffers from the deplorable fact that the eagerness for war-making hardly ever stops in spite of all good arguments against it,"[19] and it ends with "The difference between the two books is hope and consolation. Flex offers plenty of both to the survivors while assimilating the war to traditional patterns of thinking. Latzko demands thinking, Flex offers consolation."[20]

So why is collocation so important to individual, social, collective, and other forms of peace literature criticism? Collocation is a sequence of words which co-occur more often than would be expected by chance; in other words, they are strongly associated with one another. For example, when we think of the word "kitchen," it is collocative to think of the words sink, cooking, and stove, but not meteor shower or automobile; if we add the word "women" to this collocation, we can begin to appreciate why collocation is a powerful critical tool in interpreting peace literature. Linguistically, the technical term for this is that one word "governs" the use of another; for example, the word "tea" governs the use of the adjective "strong" but not "powerful" for reasons that neither grammar nor grammatology can explain. When we think of peace, the most common collocations (determinable statistically in computational linguistics) include its opposites (such as war, conflict, and violence), its composites (such as security, plenty, prosperity, and wealth), and its processes (such as diplomacy, conflict resolution, and social development). A strong footing in collocation provides the widest

pivot point to both writers and critics of peace literature. Memetics, an evolutionary approach to collocative meaning based on the unit of the "meme" as a replicable set of propositions or assumptions, may turn out to be the new saving-grace frontier for literary studies as a whole and is a fruitful starting point for the criticism of peace literature, as this collection makes clear.[21]

While postmodern critics often fetishize the pseudo-discovery of the unending "openness" of textual interpretation, they forget that openness is not in itself a quality with any pragmatic value. In fact, in many life-or-death situations, such as post-war treaty negotiations, it is precisely the ambiguity and openness postmodernists idealize that is most dangerous, as Immanuel Kant pointed out in his first articles of *Perpetual Peace*. It is in the specificity of interpretation, enabled but not limited by this openness, that the possibilities and pragmatisms of interpretive openness come one step closer to being actualities in their own right. The great postmodern insight into interpretation is to ask who is interpreting for whom; our insight here is, who is interpreting for whom *for what purpose*: peace.

ENDNOTES

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Germany's Lessons From the Lost "Great War": Pacifist Andreas Latzko and Bellicist Walter Flex

K. Eckhard Kuhn-Osius

THE STATUS OF GERMAN LITERATURE ON WORLD WAR I IN LITERARY HISTORY

Pacifism as a movement suffers from the deplorable fact that the eagerness for war-making hardly ever stops in spite of all good arguments against it. To understand this failure better, it is important to gain a better understanding of how war enters public consciousness, how war is being "sold" so that the public supports it. It is equally important to see how the anti-war stance is being "sold" in a way that does not garner the same level of public support. Many pacifist writers have written against war, but the public has acquiesced to the presence of war in spite of its ever-increasing levels of brutality and dehumanization that would otherwise be considered intolerable. This lack of pacifist success must have to do with the way the war experience has been framed by the pro-war and anti-war sides. To study the conceptual framing of the war experience, we shall consider the literary treatment of World War I by two German authors who wrote about their war experiences while the war was still being fought. In the end, we will have to acknowledge the strong persuasive position of war-affirmative literature because it serves needs of survivors and conforms with traditional religious tenets of sacrifice.

There are several reasons why the German literature on World War I is especially useful for studying how the war experience is represented. For one thing, German literature on World War I is copious.[1] This war may be the most written-about war in history, with reams of literary works written in its course and its aftermath.[2] These literary works on the war are of high historical interest even if there is limited value in discussing them with "normal" standards of literary quality.[3] Their function was a social more than an aesthetic one. German society used such texts to ascertain what it collectively would decide had happened. These texts suggested what

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significance events held and thus prefigured the conclusions German society would draw from events. After the war, many people struggled to create a meaningful universe out of the disparate facets of their personal experience and this literature seemed to help. People's attempts to put meaning into their lives after their traumatic war experiences were in no way limited to Germany, but they were of special importance in light of how the war had ended.

The copious German war literature gains added interest since the Germans and Austro-Hungarians lost the war. The German educated bourgeoisie had been trained to view history as a teleological movement towards German unification and greatness. Now Germans had to face the end of this teleology. For Germans, this war could not be interpreted as a "continuation of politics by other means" (using Clausewitz's famous phrase). Members of victorious nations could put a retrospective glow on the war experience because the war had served political ends and an enemy had been vanquished. Germans could not.[4] In his seminal study, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell identifies a keen sense of irony as one of the chief experiences of (especially British) soldiers.[5] Ulrich Linse suggests a broader feeling of absurdity as the true psychohistorical legacy of World War I.[6] Soldiers who were suddenly immersed in the forces of modern warfare would all experience absurdity. For the victorious British, the absurdity would appear ironic; for the "losing" Germans it turned into a nagging sense of futility. German writers generally do not achieve ironic detachment from events. And how could they with none of the benefits of victory that could turn the absurdity into irony? Absent any mitigating outcomes, there was no irony. Instead, German authors engaged in an attempt to create meaning from the war experience itself. A sense of heroism prevailed in the right-wing books that celebrated the feats and sacrifice of German soldiers. Books critical of the war would foster a sense of meaningless victimhood (but mitigated by the helpless brotherliness among the oppressed). No matter whether a book was for or against the war, the lessons of the war were to be found in its experience, not in its outcomes.[7] Because Germany lost, the experience itself perforce became the war's purpose. Had Germany won, strategic outcomes and victorious generals would have enjoyed greater visibility. Literature's narrow focus on the war experience permits a much clearer view of the framing mechanisms that lead to pro-war or anti-war sentiments in the minds of society.

Once one considers the experience of the war as more salient than its outcome, war books occupy a special place since they promise to make this experience accessible. Since World War I turned out to be so unlike the combat experiences that had been known from Homer's times to 1871, people needed vicarious access to the novel war experience, and literature provided this. Literature covered a terrain not occupied by scholarship or propaganda. Anticipating modern-day testimonial literature, the writer of the war novel in his ever-claimed role as participant provides reports of experience. And experience, in the peculiar historical circumstances, is what is of ultimate importance. It is not the battle and its results that are significant, but the soldiers' performance and suffering. And it is the narration of the experience that establishes it as significant. In contrast to the hero of the historical novel, the narrator does not move in the margins of objectively significant events, but his participating and narrating constitutes their significance and higher truth. The significance of war novels has little to do with narrating the historical truth. Germany had many different "fronts": western, eastern, aerial, colonial, and the "home front." Consequently, the truth of subjective experience had many faces. Although in the present time we are more likely to give credence to authors who show the hardships of war and who are critical of it, the question is not how things "really" were.[8] We will rather study the issues that this literature raises, the needs it represents, and the needs it fulfills without asking if it fulfills them correctly.

The outbreak of the war temporarily shattered the sizeable pacifist and internationalist traditions that had existed in German (and European) politics until then. The war seemed to have spawned a new breed of people everywhere, eager to serve and sacrifice for the national good.[9] Pacifist voices were drowned out by the universal enthusiasm or suppressed outright. Imperial propaganda was firmly establishing the Great War as a *große Zeit* ("Time of Greatness" in Natter's translation) in public consciousness. The altruistic "spirit of 1914" served as a reference point for many fond memories in later, unhappier years; and in the early months of the war there could be little doubt about the military prowess of the empire or the stamina of the common soldier in the face of overwhelming adversity. Thus, mostly positive values were associated with the war experience initially. It took a while for the nature of the carnage to become obvious to those who had not experienced it. And it took even longer for Germans to realize that the traditional leadership had been discredited beyond repair through its

handling of the war.

Apart from propaganda and poems, the earliest grouping of war literature consists of the memoirs of officers, some of which began to appear before the war was over.[10] These memoirs disproportionally often concern daring navy captains and aviators, that is, soldiers who had considerable freedom to make their own decisions and thus fulfilled traditional expectations of heroism.[11] They did not experience the fight as something substantially new (apart from the technology), but describe in traditional, gentlemanly terms—and with considerable economic success—their mostly tactical feats of evading the British blockade in some colonial backwater or engaging in one-on-one aerial combat above the trenches.[12] The number of such titles during the early 1920s was considerable, even if occasionally short-lived, and they enjoyed respectability, if for no other reason than having been written by decorated heroes.[13] When censorship ended after the war, pacifist texts became available to a broad war-weary public. Especially Leonhard Frank's *Der Mensch ist gut (Humans are Good)* seemed to express the spirit of the times with its advocacy of a revolution of love born out of the unbearable suffering and sacrifice of soldiers victimized during the war.[14] The sudden prominence of literary pacifist voices and the questionable literary quality of the officers' memoirs created the notion that pacifist literature and sentiment dominated Germany in the 1920s until a wave of war-affirmative books appeared in response to the publication in 1928-29 of Erich Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*.[15] But the sheer number of best-selling pro-war memoirs shows that the 1920s were no pacifist decade. The revolution of 1918-19 had not been Frank's hoped-for revolution of love, and the new republic seemed to be no more competent in governing than imperial Germany. Instead, the peace-seekers and democrats were saddled with the blame for the disintegration of 1918 and the Versailles treaty, which most Germans considered grossly unfair.

As the new system of government established itself, its attitude towards the Great War was not preordained. The democratic forces could have embraced or disdained the war that had brought about the republic, but ultimately they did neither. The Weimar Republic established neither a positive revolutionary anti-war identity nor a positive connection to the "heroic struggle." Prince Hubertus Loewenstein, active in a democratic paramilitary organization during the Weimar years, claimed as early as 1934 that the Republic had failed to integrate the war experience into its ideological

arsenal, enabling the right wing "to interpret the sacrifices of the Great War as though it had been fought for a special group or party, and as if only by a second war could the first have found its fulfillment."[16] And while democratic forces failed to lay claim to the war experience, the right wing ran with it. The National Socialists in particular made the Great War a central piece in their ideology.[17] Within a little over ten years, anti-pacifism was powerful enough to move many Germans to opt against the Weimar republic, which had proved itself unable to frame the war experience in a way that would have made the democratic forces legitimate heirs of the struggle.

Two literary works laid the groundwork for the perception of World War I in the meaning-making processes of the Weimar Republic. One of these is *Friedensgericht (Court of Peace)* by Andreas Latzko, among the first anti-war books to appear during the war. The second book is *Der Wanderer zwischen beiden Welten (The Wanderer between Two Worlds)* by Walter Flex, a seminal pro-war book on World War I. Both books were written and published during the war itself and both prefigured and shaped the meaning-making processes that were to follow. In their strengths and weaknesses they prefigure the ultimate failure of the pacifist enterprise in the Weimar Republic.

ANDREAS LATZKO, *FRIEDENSGERICHT*

The author and journalist Andreas Latzko is largely forgotten today. He was born in Budapest in 1876 and educated there; after serving one year in the Austro-Hungarian army, he went to Germany to study and write (he stopped writing in Hungarian and switched to German after 1901). He travelled widely, but was recalled to the Austro-Hungarian army as a reserve officer in 1914. Latzko was wounded on the Italian front and sent to Switzerland for recuperation. Here he published several literary works and refused to return to Austria for further military service. After the war, he mostly lived in Germany but left upon the Nazis' rise to power. He died in 1943.[18] His first pacifist story collection, *Menschen im Krieg (Humans at War,* 1917), was printed anonymously in the same series that had published Henri Barbusse's *Le Feu (Under Fire)* in German and Frank's *Der Mensch ist gut.* These stories caused their author to be famous in pacifist Europe and, once he broke his incognito, to be demoted by the Austrian army.

Latzko's second war book, *Friedensgericht* (1918), appeared in the same series but was outlawed in non-neutral countries before publication.[19] Later

it was translated into eleven languages.[20] *Friedensgericht* is an episodic novel or a collection of stories about a small set of characters, mostly friends and acquaintances of a fictional famous pianist named Gadsky. Most of the characters are types, introduced to represent a wide spectrum of attitudes towards war and militarism and to show how people suffer from the culture of war. Large parts of the novel are given to Gadsky's (and others') thoughts and extended discussions among various protagonists and minor characters. Latzko evidently wants to develop a variety of points of view without speaking with his authorial voice. Thus, most evaluations of events are carried out in conversations or streams of consciousness while the narrator (with variously restricted points of view) refrains from evaluative political comment. The following will briefly describe the main figures to illustrate how Latzko presents the interlocking ideas, characters, and fates of his protagonists to transport his highly complex pacifist message.

The pianist Georg Gadsky, now in his early thirties, hails from the petty bourgeoisie, his father having been a station master in some South German mining town. Gadsky prevailed in his ambitions as a musician in spite of his family and is now looking back on a few years of international success with performances in France, Russia, and the USA. His lover is an opera singer with a Prussian aristocratic background. When the war broke out, Gadsky volunteered for service. His reasons were idealism, but also boredom with his life and a desire to impress his lover, who was briefly fascinated with military events although she now abhors the slaughter. Although Gadsky toys with the idea of having been seduced into the war by his girlfriend, he is fully conscious that he was seduced by no one other than himself.[21]

> At age 33 he had been sitting there as a regurgitator, condemned to spend the remainder of his life collecting further recital fees!
>
> And then came the war!
>
> Suddenly, he saw before himself an entirely new path; the unexpected possibility of a fresh start . . . ; how could he have resisted the temptation of proving himself thus again and conquering everything anew? . . .
>
> Returning to Mathilde as a hero, as a medal-adorned officer, as a true man who had mastered his fate twice, that fantasy had been his downfall![22]

Gadsky is thus not without blame. It seems realistic to describe a protagonist

volunteering with mixed motives. But such realism does open the description to conservative suggestions that someone with such impure motivation could not partake of the elevating spirit of the war and thus missed out on constitutive elements of *Kriegserlebnis* (war experience).[23] Such suggestions were a recurring motif in subsequent debates about the war experience, which easily relegated the first-hand experience of critical authors to a second-class status of incomplete authenticity.

Once Gadsky is in the army, the members of the military machine mistreat him with all the sadistic joy of those who can finally lay their hands on their social superiors. Gadsky's fate is worsened by his inability to perform on his sergeant's out-of-tune piano the pop song "Püppchen, du bist mein Augenstern" (Dolly, you are the light of my eyes), thereby embarrassing both the sergeant and his wife during a party they are hosting. Gadsky and his friends are eventually sent to the front and see action twice, the second time in a battle of retreat in which the German soldiers have minuscule chances of survival. One should mention parenthetically that Latzko is among the very few war authors who show a Jewish soldier dying for a presumably thankless fatherland.[24] After a gory battle, in which Gadsky participates in a sort of blind rage, he is wounded and taken prisoner. After some mistreatment, Gadsky eventually encounters a French camp commander who has admired his musicianship for years and treats him accordingly. We thus see more civilized behaviour in the enemy than among the Germans, who have totally subordinated themselves to an inhumane system. Gadsky is brought to Switzerland for convalescence and a subsequent prisoner exchange. He fraternizes with an idealistic young Frenchman, who expects that people will learn a pacifist lesson from the war. Gadsky takes a much more pessimistic view, which is especially critical of Germany. When Gadsky is on the ship that is to take him to Germany, he overhears a German who looks forward to now mistreating French prisoners. Gadsky thinks back to the optimism of the young Frenchman:

> So these were the people whom he wanted to awaken to goodness. These were the bearers of the future! Because they had experienced with their own bodies how harsh it was to be helplessly subjugated they now wanted to make things hard for the others! Not even their own suffering could make them compassionate! Not even memory had power over their hearts—how were words to win them over? How should others'

> suffering enthuse them into action, how should the example of a courageous person elevate them, how should concepts that no one could place in front of them be their leaders? . . .
>
> "Right?"—"Human dignity?"—Gadsky laughed mockingly, and full of suspicion turned around for the people who were leading a loud conversation right behind his back. . . .[25]

The prospect of again becoming a prisoner of the war machine fills Gadsky with such horror that he leans over the ship's railing, thinking of letting himself drop into Lake Constance. Just as he reconsiders, thinking of his girlfriend, the weight of his backpack shifts and pulls him overboard. Calls to summon help go unnoticed in the thundering noise of patriotic song sung by the others.

There is a large cast of supporting characters who represent various social traditions and types and advance various arguments. It seems that the narrator can say many things only through the authoritative mouthpiece of a war participant. Latzko takes great pains to portray his characters as insiders rather than civilian critics of the war. The three most important minor characters are Ensign von Krülow, who serves in the same battalion, and the poet Weiler and under-sergeant Fröbel, who serve in the same platoon as Gadsky. Fröbel is mostly used as an example of how servile creatures rise in the hierarchy. He is a cowardly school teacher who mostly worries about his wife and child and about his one-bedroom apartment with its furnishings. Even after obsequiousness has earned him a promotion over Weiler and Gadsky, he retains a certain comradeship and loyalty to them. Shaking with fear before the big battle, he asks Gadsky to wound him so that he can avoid the fight, and he voices one of the most fundamental questions about military life and individual death: How far should obsequiousness go? Why should he value his life less than the respect of his commanding officer? Gadsky for various reasons refuses to wound Fröbel and the latter is killed during the battle.

Weiler is a tender, shy, sensitive soul, but we know very little about him otherwise. He represents one overarching theme of *Friedensgericht*, and "his" episode gives the book its name. The theme is the one-dimensional revaluation of all values in times of war. Personal worth, genius, character, family obligations, culture and civilization—everything is subjugated to the military hierarchy. Life or death are assigned on the basis of military criteria, which will bring long-term cultural losses as those capable of advancing

civilization are thoughtlessly sacrificed for minor tactical goals. Weiler is Gadsky's main companion and discussion partner, from basic training until the transfer to the front. Weiler is soon committed to a mental hospital when he goes berserk after he had to participate in a frontal attack and (accidentally) killed a French soldier. In the book's last episode he and others, thinking that peace has come, rebelliously congregate in the mental hospital for the opposite of a court martial, a "*Friedensgericht*" (court of peace). They fantasize about forcing officers, under pain of death, to perform tasks of peace, such as writing a poem. The group is forcibly subdued and left to keep waiting until their time, the time of peace, will come.

Von Krülow is the progeny of old military aristocracy and represents those who suffer for being born into the militaristic class. He was sent to (and hazed in) a cadet school and is eternally grateful to Gadsky for familiarizing him for the first time with pursuits and values that were considered useless and signs of weakness by members of his own class. Von Krülow understands how the aristocratic warrior class thinks. He can occasionally help Gadsky, but as an officer he is allowed limited contact with "mere" enlisted men. While stationed at the front, von Krülow eventually decides that he has no right to kill anyone and will therefore not do so. He is seriously wounded in the big battle of retreat and ends up in an under-supplied French field hospital. While he is in the throes of death, an elderly French nun shows him a little of the tenderness that his upbringing had kept from him for most of his life. He weeps like a child, but is immediately reprimanded by a fellow officer: "Man, keep a stiff upper lip, will you! Are you trying to embarrass us all with your damned whining?"[26] These words move von Krülow finally to stand up against all that has tormented him—but, unable to utter any words, he just spits a stream of blood and dies. He is buried by two unwilling French soldiers.

Friedensgericht contains not only the sad stories of its protagonists, but addresses a wide range of theoretical issues concerning criticism of the war. Finding ways to do so seems to be the main purpose of many turns in the plot. The book discusses what causes people to join the military service and argues at length about the rabid belligerence of the general population. This discussion leads to the question of whether people are stupid or misled and miseducated, and whether they should be loathed or pitied. The various positions that are taken reveal elements of generational and class conflict. While Gadsky ultimately considers himself to blame for enlisting, the

protagonists discuss the pressure exerted by families on young people to enlist and earn war decorations or die a hero's death, so that the family can "keep up" with the neighbours. The discussions exhort young soldiers to abandon politeness and openly contradict (older) war-defending civilians, who send the soldiers to their death without risking anything themselves. The discussion broadens from generational to societal issues when it addresses how the government guarantees (often older) people's war bonds and possessions while squandering the infinitely more precious lives of young soldiers. Extensive talk about social stratification and social values raises the question of how much the war-mongering philistines have in common with the working class that bears the brunt of the fighting. The ultimate class irony is that if the German soldiers win, they will contribute to their own deeper and longer-lasting oppression. The war-like tendencies are partly identified with Prussianism, which is seen as subverting the more humane southern German outlook.

A large part of the discussion deals with the functioning of the internalized mutual coercion in society and among the soldiers and can be seen as a kind of rudimentary military sociology. Social values are described as having changed before the war toward hardness and lack of compassion, which has led to competition in daily civilian life almost as fierce as war. This internal "warfare" can be seen among soldiers who often direct their aggression against each other rather than against their superiors. Officers' class privileges, for example, have lost their justification in modern wars, since enlisted men die just as much as officers do, but privileges are not questioned. All soldiers playing in the war game constitute a social system in which they mutually force each other to play along. Members of the educated classes occupy a special role in this, since they are more likely to extol the fight and act as if it is enjoyable, thus making the system of mutual coercion even less forgiving. Shortly before the major battle scene, the Jewish soldier points to the special complication for him that a cowardly German gentile will be judged as an individual while a cowardly Jew will be seen as a representative of his group. Ultimately, the discussions circle again and again around the topic that all the people at the front are willy-nilly collaborators in an elaborate role play that keeps the system going. The discussions in *Friedensgericht* come to a harsh conclusion: if people obey despite their disagreement with the system, they deserve to be oppressed. The larger society is unwilling to stop the slaughter because people who can empathize with one sad fate are

overwhelmed with the sheer dimensions of this war, in which thousands are sent to unfathomable suffering and death.

The preceding summary does not exhaust the topics that are addressed in the various discussions in *Friedensgericht* and also does not do justice to their elaborate interconnectedness so that issues are aired from all sides. It is clear that Latzko is trying to provide stories of individual fates with which people can identify so that they will stop the madness. It is also clear from the extent and complexity of the arguments offered that the protracted discussions in *Friedensgericht* often submerge the narrative, unless one should see the discussions themselves as the narrative, namely the story of an intellectual development from self-pity to acceptance of fate in one way or another. The most consistent character in this respect is von Krülow, who dies for his refusal to kill others and whose character in the end has some remarkable parallels to Jesus. On the other hand, the only other person who fully rests in himself is the captain of the company, who, after generations of tradition and a lifetime of conditioning, sees his death in battle as a fulfilment of his life. All other protagonists are more or less broken, contradictory characters who cannot reconcile their lives and their beliefs.

Friedensgericht is a scathing and rather hopeless indictment of war as a destroyer of all traditional cultural values. The book is also a call for help for the physically and emotionally tormented artistic souls who must succumb to and participate in the horrors of the war machine. But it is unclear who can help if the vast majority are brutes by nature or manipulation. Latzko/Gadsky sees a rabid mass which, under the influence of war-mongering manipulators, can no longer be placated by reason or art or anything else. The members of all classes are firmly in the grip of and cowed by the system, while the few individuals who consider resistance are forced into compliance and/or destroyed. It is clear why a book like this was banned by the authorities of all war-waging nations. But in spite of its deep insights into many social and psychological mechanisms that promote warfare, the book's impact after the war was limited. To understand why this might be so, it may be best to look at *Friedensgericht's* right-wing counterpart to see which issues are addressed and how they are framed by the most successful conservative, war-affirming writer on World War I, Walter Flex.

WALTER FLEX, *DER WANDERER ZWISCHEN BEIDEN WELTEN*

Walter Flex is one of the truly seminal authors in the conservative reception of World War I in Germany. His most famous work is *Der Wanderer zwischen beiden Welten: Ein Kriegserlebnis (The Wanderer Between Both Worlds: A War Experience)*.[27] This book was—at least in parts—literally written at the front and, like the works by Latzko, appeared while the war was still going on. The book was enormously successful and became even more so after Flex died in action a few months after the book's publication. The book became a German best-seller in the first half of the twentieth century, eventually surpassing a million copies in print, although that figure was not reached until well after World War II.[28] Until the heavily promoted publication of Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* in 1929, Flex's *Wanderer* was the most-sold literary work about World War I.

Flex was born into a very tightly-knit, highly nationalistic family, which saw its demise in World War I when Walter and two of his three brothers died in action. While a student at Erlangen university, Flex was active in a duelling fraternity, but he obtained a (economically motivated) medical exemption from the draft because of "weak tendons" in his right hand. Later he worked as a private tutor for the Bismarck family, educating the Iron Chancellor's grandsons. He left for another position with a different aristocratic family after some altercation when he strongly reacted to some insufficiently nationalist statements by a Bismarck relative. All the while, Flex tried his hand at writing plays and stories with moderate success. His breakthrough came with the Great War. Flex volunteered as soon as the war broke out. After some months as a common soldier, he was trained for and promoted to the rank of lieutenant. The war poems he had written enjoyed considerable success and earned him a fairly high decoration by the Prussian king. Flex refused opportunities for permanent posts in the rear because he wanted to be with "his" soldiers and did not want to ask for higher sacrifices from others than he himself was willing to make. When the *Wanderer* appeared, its success was spectacular. Flex, who spent most of the war on the eastern front, was killed in action in 1917.[29] Flex's death in real life was the ultimate proof of the honesty of his position and set the pattern for many German war novels whose fictional narrator is led to a fictional death.

Der Wanderer zwischen beiden Welten tells about Flex's friendship with Ernst Wurche, a student of theology and *Wandervogel*.[30] The two meet during the war, and Flex describes Wurche with a loving attention evidently

bordering on the homoerotic. Wurche is one of the quintessential young German academics who went to war with the Bible, Goethe's poems, and Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* in his knapsack. The deep contradictions of this triad are overcome and united in the radiant personality of their owner.

True to the spirit of 1914, he sees the war as an ethical challenge and as an opportunity to give back to society. Wurche, as is clear through his book list and his student status, is firmly situated in the educated bourgeoisie. Indeed, *Bildung* (education, formation, well-roundedness) defines Wurche. It determines not only his background, but also the way he masters life. The narrator/author briefly refers to the "annoyances and pettiness of peace-time drill" in the training camp, but these cannot upset Wurche.

> Once I, too, uttered an upset word; I no longer remember about whom and what. Right away, he hooked his arm into mine, looked at me with his heart-felt compelling serenity and quoted from his Goethe:
>
> "Wanderer, against such grief
> Would a struggle matter?
> Whirling wind and dust manure
> Let it twist and scatter!"
>
> That took care of everything. We hiked out into the Sunday morning to the banks of the river Warthe and talked about rivers, mountains, forests, and clouds.[31]

Wurche's reading is so much part of him that he has the Goethe poems memorized to recall and ponder them in the trenches. But *Bildung* is not only a means for overcoming adversity. It also entails a striving for individual self-perfection, which is furthered by the war. "If it is the meaning and purpose of human life to get to the bottom of all human phenomena, then, through the war, we have our share of life more than others in this respect."[32] This attitude, voiced long before Germany's defeat became noticeable, provides the perfect validation of the war as experience. War as a pedagogical event will be forever justified. No matter how it ends, it will have been meaningful by advancing the individual's *Bildung*. Later right-wing authors only had to "nationalize" this argument—and they did.

But *Bildung* also concerns the education that Wurche tries to provide for the bodies and minds of his soldiers. In a well-known quotation, Wurche responds to a fellow-trainee's statement that a lieutenant's job is just to be

a model for his men how to die. Wurche replies, "Serving as a lieutenant means being a model for your men how to live . . . , being a model how to die will at some time be part of it. Many can model dying . . . , but showing how to live remains the more beautiful thing. It is also harder."[33] Wurche had already influenced his comrades for the better when he was a simple soldier, and now as an officer he lives up to his demands. In this incarnation of Zarathustra, the young Goethe, a Christ figure, and/or the idealized image of a German knight, there is no discrepancy between rank and ability, otherwise a common deficiency remarked on in almost every war novel.

> Clean in soul and body, he educated his people to take joy in cleanliness and smart order. . . . In his letters to his parents and sister he would keep asking for books for the leisure time of his people, and he picked the books himself, based on the experience he had had in France as a comrade among comrades.[34]

Wurche's attitude towards his less educated fellow soldiers is striking, especially compared to Gadsky's disdain in *Friedensgericht*. Wurche exemplifies what a member of the educated bourgeoisie can accomplish, and readers could read this book as an assertion of the personal and social value of *Bildung*. Extolling education as he does, Flex became a favourite author of the educated, since his work stood for the values taught in school and for the importance of a pedagogical calling. Günter Grass in his novella *Katz und Maus (Cat and Mouse)* characterizes Flex as a stock element in a school war commemoration with the words, "and on the Island of Saaremaa fell Walter Flex, quote: become-mature-and-remain-pure: male virtue."[35] It is said that the announcement of Hitler's death on the radio was followed by music by Beethoven and readings from *The Wanderer*.[36] What made Flex so suitable for celebrations is the wide variety of episodes, thoughts, dialogues, poems, ruminations, and often hyper-poetic descriptions in the *Wanderer*. Flex and his protagonist are firmly rooted in the individualistic imagery and language of the past, down to Wurche's love for the sword (bayonet) and the frontal battle assault.[37] While there is general agreement that framing the war thus does not capture the industrial brutality of World War I, Flex as a fallen participant of the war cannot really be refuted.[38] Had he lived and had he fought on the Western front, he might have had to reconsider, but he did not.

The book is a memento to Wurche and for this reason is strangely private. The war often serves merely as an enabling backdrop for the educational and

friendship experience between the protagonist and his evangelist-like narrator, the seriousness of the war providing depth for events that otherwise might not be memorable. In one instance the narrator/author describes a scene of soldiers bathing in a river on a bright summer day. Seeing a bird of prey, Wurche stands up in the bright sun, and with spread arms extensively quotes from the Psalms. The narrator is taken by the confluence of scenic and physical beauty, the words of the Bible and the timbre of his friend's voice, and as the backdrop of the riverbanks and bathing soldiers. He ends the description thus:

> The water and the green banks were teeming with the light-coloured bodies of bathing soldiers, the bright widths of the river Netta were foaming with water, sun and exuberant laughter. The eternal beauty of God radiated over the wide garden of God and shone as sun and shield over the bright image of the youth . . . .
>
> Beyond the noise and sparkle of all fights and victories, the image of this hour radiates in me as the strongest impression I have ever received with soul and senses in my life.[39]

It is this impression drenched in sensual perception and religion that the author/narrator takes with him. The image of "sun and shield" refers to Psalm 84:12 and is also the title of a volume of Flex's war poems. The events in the war are "noise and sparkle"; what counts is the utterly private experience of a summer's day.

The withdrawal into the private sphere becomes more pronounced after Wurche's death in action. The narrator/author, who was absent when his friend died, has to overcome deep feelings of bereavement and loss that almost make him doubt the meaningfulness of his war experience. He learns to cope in two steps. He first comes to terms with leaving his friend alone in his hour of death. Wurche himself had claimed that the ugly death in battle should be disregarded as not belonging to the beauty of life proper,[40] so in a way the narrator's absence actually fit Wurche's wishes. Nonetheless, his grief persists until he comes to the conclusion that Wurche was not alone in his hour of death.

> Then my heart beat in a surge of feeling ashamed. He who was so fond of being close to his God had died *alone*? I remembered a word of the Bible, from Jeremiah: "I am with you, speaks the Lord, so that I help you." The last big dialogue on earth had not

> been interrupted by someone unworthy. . . . And I was lamenting a friendless death. . . .[41]

The circumstances of Wurche's death give Flex a peculiar double role as soldier and survivor of the friend. He offers consolation to readers who have experienced the loss of a beloved soldier. Even the mourner's absence is a blessing to the deceased, whose mystical moment of death is not disturbed by an outsider. Thus, Flex closes the gap between the front and the people back home, between the worlds of deadly war and of peaceful life. And later he goes further. As he communes with his dead friend, he feels his message: "Give the dead a right to live with you, you who are alive, so that we may reside and stay with you in dark hours and in bright ones."[42] To make the sacrifice of the dead meaningful, the living have to live right. Instead of being excluded from the life and death at the front, they are given an essential role. This role of Flex as a mediator between the "Two Worlds" can hardly be overestimated in its importance. The legacy of the war dead needs to be fulfilled by the living, although in unspecified ways. The reader becomes an element of supreme importance in the process of creating meaning.

CONCLUSION

War literature is read by those who were not killed in the war and it must somehow meet the survivors' needs. This includes the vast number of non-combatants as well as war survivors and those not yet born. Readers may have friends and relatives who died in the war. They often have feelings of guilt and responsibility towards the dead ("survivor's guilt"), which demand that the soldiers' deaths be significant and worthwhile. Whether the significance for the readers is pro- or anti-war is at least partly a function of how the war is framed in each of the books. The two books differ radically, but one must concede that Flex's book met the needs of survivors much better than Latzko's.

It is a commonplace observation by war authors that the experience of war transcends traditional criteria. Whatever one has used before to understand the world suddenly has become insufficient, and consequently there is a widespread attitude among war participants from across the political spectrum that traditional cultural forms and models have become useless. Neither Latzko nor Flex would subscribe to this. Latzko and Flex are in agreement about the importance of culture and civilization. But they are in total disagreement concerning its relation to the war effort. Latzko sees

mutual exclusiveness, which means that the war can be dealt with only in a condemnatory, antithetical fashion. Culture and war really have nothing to say to each other. Latzko tries to assert the value of culture against the onslaught of the military system which will replace all traditional values with its short-sighted needs, no matter the demands of the longer-term future. The very *Friedensgericht* (court of peace) that forms the end of the book is a celebration of traditional culture in defence against military encroachment. Flex, in contrast, sees war as the culminating point of the cultural endeavour. The young bourgeois can use it to fulfill his duties and it helps him overcome adversity. Readers can thus seamlessly integrate their traditional educational knowledge with the events of the war, which do not escape sense-making. The information can be assimilated without endangering the schemata used for its creation in the mind.

An even deeper difference between the two books concerns the role of society. Both books describe the war as a social phenomenon, but their perspectives and the way they frame the relationship between the individual, society, and the war could hardly be more different. Latzko, in advancing his numerous arguments and observations against the war and militaristic thought and practice, does not stop with a simple-minded assignment of guilt. He shows how all participants in the endeavour play their role in a self-destructive game that is systemically ingrained in society. But the social question remains intractable. The characters are not rounded enough to permit the reader to connect them with each other beyond their ordained roles as spokesmen for certain ideas. The big questions discussed in *Friedensgericht* cannot be resolved because the book never transcends the view of the common people as a rabid mass, easily manipulated and incapable of improvement. Society is divided by unbridgeable chasms. Just about every war book expresses the deep alienation between those who had experienced the front and those who stayed home. *Friedensgericht* goes far beyond this by describing alienation among all sorts of social groups. None of this is to be found in Flex's *Wanderer*. There is no social chasm that cannot be bridged, and in fact it is the war experience that gives the young leader an opportunity to reach those of the lower classes and to educate them. The educated should take charge and see the common man as raw material that needs to be formed through the young officers' education. This is something an enterprising young person can emulate.

It is clear from the general style in each book that both Latzko and Flex

speak to an educated readership. But what they have to offer educated readers is very different. Many readers might feel alienated by Gadsky's description of the rabid petty bourgeoisie or masses that might include them. But even when they identify with Gadsky and his group, the book expresses mostly despair. There are good people to be found anywhere, but they cannot prevail against the whipped-up masses. The people supporting the war are evil, stupid, or manipulated. There is no hope in the book of "converting" them. In contrast, Flex affirms the value of the war because it enables educated youth to find their role in society. He thus addresses a state of intellectual and financial crisis in which the educated German bourgeoisie found itself from the end of the nineteenth century to the triumph of Nazism.[43] Flex suggests to German educated youth that their co-operation will give them a role in the future of the nation. In the face of the social catastrophes of inflation and unemployment during the Weimar Republic, any promise of meaning and a role for the educated was bound to be appealing.[44]

The most important offer that Flex makes to the reader concerns the meaningfulness of death. Anyone who suffers from survivor's guilt will find little solace in *Friedensgericht*. The senseless deaths of the protagonists offer little comfort as the soldiers die defending a stretch of trench that is slated to be given up anyway. In contrast, Flex's friend dies on a reconnaissance mission finding a path for the German advance. The distraught author/narrator ultimately consoles himself that "for great souls, death is the greatest experience"[45] and construes a peaceful end to his friend's life. *Der Wanderer zwischen beiden Welten* is unique in World War I literature in the room it gives to mourning, thus acknowledging the emotional experience of many readers. They mourn individually remembered private individuals, not victims of mindless mass slaughter. Instead of asking for sympathy for Wurche's suffering, Flex describes himself and invites consolation as a mourner, which moves readers to try to help him by mitigating his sadness. Flex is barely less elitist than Latzko, but he introduces an inclusionary principle by inviting his readers, by helping him and sharing in the tasks of mourning, to join the elite. Flex holds out the promise that meaning can be found—and later follows his friend in death, as is vividly described in a postscript written by his brother Martin who was killed later as well.

Friedensgericht is a cry for help calling upon the reader to feel with the protagonists. But this call for altruism is greatly weakened by the book's exclusionary and elitist aspects. Both anti-militarists and militarists seem

to obey their nature, which makes mediation between the two positions impossible. The protagonists exchange good arguments, but mostly among each other, which leaves the impression of some sort of group therapy among people trapped in the war. In contrast, Flex's selfless servants of the nation are models of altruism asking us to join them in helping the fatherland. While Latzko's heroes need altruism from the reader for themselves, Flex can tap into age-old cultural-religious patterns that it is better to give than to receive and perform (soldierly) service to others.[46] It remains a weakness of any book that builds on the description of victims that no description of suffering can as such offer solutions. In general, a purely oppositional position is weaker than a positive one. The assertion of individual fulfillment and meaning in the protagonist's willing sacrifice is vastly more reassuring to survivors than a notion that their loved ones had to suffer before they were torn to shreds, with their remains scraped off a trench wall, or that they slowly and painfully perished between the lines.

Today's readers will not read either of the books easily. There is significant historical distance to both. Nonetheless, it is clear that we would accept Latzko's description as more realistic and insightful. Flex does not do justice to the realities of modern warfare remotely as well as Latzko does. But Flex met the needs of the war's survivors who wanted an exculpatory and comforting view towards sending so many young men to their deaths and who wanted a way out of their grief. The difference between the two books is hope and consolation. Flex offers plenty of both to the survivors while assimilating the war to traditional patterns of thinking. Latzko demands thinking, Flex offers consolation. The weakness of Latzko's book is that he is against war. His book might have been more successful if he could have written a book for peace. But such a book would have been infinitely harder to write.

The tension between a critical pacifism and a consoling bellicism can be seen in much war literature until today, especially when the wars' endings were ambiguous. World War II was the last major war whose positive "lessons" one may try to seek in its results (the unsuccessful propagandistic justification of the Iraq War underscores this observation). Anti-war writers are forever setting pity-inducing individual suffering against the heroic sacrifice of those who died in battle after improving as humans through the experience. As long as this argument is fought within the solipsistic tradition of mostly talking about one's own comrades, the pacifists cannot win,

since anyone who dies unwillingly and demands our pity can be accused simply of having the wrong attitude. A more potent weapon is to replace self-pity with remorse. First stirrings of such pacifist writing can be found in *Friedensgericht*, when the poet Weiler goes crazy after killing a Frenchman. A most moving scene in *All Quiet on the Western Front* shows the protagonist's remorse after killing an "enemy" in a mine crater. Remorse was forced upon Germans after World War II with some success. Elements of remorse and an understanding of the suffering of others can be found in a book such as Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse–Five*.[47] Breaking through the solipsistic bubble of seeing only "our own" people as suffering individuals might provide a way out of the dichotomy between pacifist cries for pity and bellicist assertions of ethos.

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ENDNOTES

1 Please note that "German literature" is used here to refer to literature written in the German language irrespective of the authors' nationality. As will be explained in more detail below, one of the books described in this paper was published in Switzerland by a Hungarian who wrote in German and had lived in all major German speaking countries. The other book was published in Germany by a German. Both books show some regional awareness, but it would make no sense to describe them as anything other than German in the context of this study.

2 The bibliography of William K. Pfeiler's *War and the German Mind: The Testimony of Men of Fiction Who Fought at the Front* (1941, repr. New

York: AMS Press, 1966), the first major American study of German literature on World War I, lists over 110 war novels, the authors ranging from Alverdes to Zweig. However, Pfeiler does not take into account the wildly proliferating diaries, memoirs, historical works, etc. that began to be published before the war was over and continued to appear for years afterwards. Pfeiler's listing also excludes the myriad war poems and official works of propaganda, which were criticized by most war literature, both from the left wing and the right. An instructive listing of the fifty most popular war books was collated by Helmut Müssener, ed., in the volume *Deutschsprachige Kriegs- und Antikriegsliteratur in Deutschland und Schweden 1914-1939* (1987), here quoted from Thomas Schneider and Hans Wagener, eds., *Von Richthofen bis Remarque: Deutschsprachige Prosa zum 1. Weltkrieg* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003), 12-13. For details on the publication history of Flex's *Wanderer* see K. Eckhard Kuhn-Osius, "Ein konservatives Bild des Ersten Weltkriegs: Walter Flex, *Der Wanderer zwischen beiden Welten," Heinrich Mann-Jahrbuch* 5 (1987), 189-215. For general overviews, consult the books by Hans-Harald Müller, *Der Krieg und die Schriftsteller: Der Kriegsroman der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1986), Michael Gollbach, *Die Wiederkehr des Weltkrieges in der Literatur: Zu den Frontromanen der späten zwanziger Jahre* (Kronberg, Germany: Scriptor, 1978); Margrit Stickelberger-Eder, *Aufbruch 1914: Kriegsromane der späten Weimarer Republik* (Zürich: Artemis, 1983); Ann P. Linder, P*rinces of the Trenches: Narrating the German Experience of the First World War* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1996). The war as propaganda event finds most thorough treatment in Wolfgang G. Natter, *Literature at War, 1914-40: Representing the Time of Greatness in Germany* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).

3 This is quite clear from Bridgwater's study on mostly non-satisfying German war poems. Patrick Bridgwater, *The German Poets of the First World War* (New York: St. Martin's, 1985).

4 I am not suggesting that significant war literature of the victorious countries was in any way triumphant, but the public (political, journalistic) discourse in a victorious country is very different from the discourse among the losers. The role of literature in the overall public discourse also ends up being different in victorious or defeated countries.

5 Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

6 Ulrich Linse, "Das wahre Zeugnis: Eine psychohistorische Deutung des Ersten Weltkriegs," in *Kriegserlebnis: Der Erste Weltkrieg in der literarischen Gestaltung und symbolischen Deutung der Nationen*, ed. Klaus Vondung (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck, 1980), 90-114.

7 A similar phenomenon can now be observed in books and films about the American wars after the Korean War, which were not clearly won by the US. In representations of, e.g., the Vietnam war, the experience is what counts, given the total absence of strategic gain. This issue cannot be discussed in detail here, but it should be noted that the German defeat in World War I was immeasurably larger than anything that happened in Vietnam.

8 Vondung develops a very complex truth criterion in his introduction to *Kriegserlebnis* (31-32), in which he posits the experience of the war's senselessness as the starting point of numerous ways of dealing with it (ranging from satire to insanity to conscious humanism to dadaism), but he admonishes with a rather Kantian argument that "the 'true' interpretation must preserve the scream of the killed. This is one precondition of truth—that a concrete human being is not sacrificed to abstract principles and a future meaning (die 'wahre' Auslegung muss den Schrei des Umgebrachten bewahren. Dies ist die eine Voraussetzung der Wahrheit: daß der konkrete Mensch nicht abstrakten Prinzipien und einem zukünftigen Sinn aufgeopfert wird)."

9 For accounts of the national euphoria in Germany, see, e.g., the memoirs of two well-known anti-Nazis and/or pacifists: Ernst Toller, *Eine Jugend in Deutschland*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Hanser, 1996), 46-51; Carl Zuckmayer, *Als wärs ein Stück von mir: Horen der Freundschaft* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1966), quoted from the following edition: Fischer Taschenbuch 1049 (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1969), 164-75. Similar accounts can be found in other countries.

10 I will leave the term "war literature" without a stringent definition for the time being. See the prolegomena to a systematic approach in Stickelberger-Eder, 16-20.

11 Donald Ray Richards, *The German Bestseller in the Twentieth Century:*

A Complete Bibliography and Analysis, 1915-1940 (Bern: Lang, 1968), provides extensive figures for thousands of books. Here are a few publication figures and very brief synopses of fictionalized adventure biographies of the type that were popular during and right after World War I. The content notes are from my memory, augmented by "Wikipedia" articles.

Günther Plüschow, *Die Abenteuer des Fliegers von Tsingtau* (published 1916, 610,000 copies in 1927), tells the adventures of the only war plane pilot in German China, his escape via central China to the USA, from where he reaches Gibraltar, is arrested by the British, but escapes in London and as a stowaway makes it to the neutral Netherlands and back to Germany (Richards, 55). See http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunther_Plüschow (accessed March 2010).

Nikolaus Graf zu Dohna-Schlodien, *Die Fahrt der Möwe; Die zweite Fahrt der Möwe*, served as captain of an auxiliary war ship named Möwe (seagull) that engaged in a type of piracy to intercept ships on the Atlantic. He wrote two books in 1916 and 1917. While Richards does not seem to have figures for the first volume, the second had an initial print run of 150,000 (Richards, 63). See http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikolaus_Graf-zu-Dohna-Schlodien (accessed March 2010).

Hellmuth von Mücke, *Ayesha* (published 1915, 332,000 copies by 1927), also served as a "pirate" in the Indian ocean to divert British attention while German troops tried to escape from China to South America. He and his group of about fifty Germans later had to switch ships, sailing the decommissioned schooner Ayesha via Indonesia to Yemen, from where he proceeded to Germany over land (Richards, 57). See http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellmuth_von_Mücke (accessed March 2010).

Felix Graf von Luckner, *Seeteufel* (published 1921; 392,000 copies by 1938), also worked as a freebooter, who captured around eighteen ships with the loss of only one life among his men and the enemy. After being interned in the Pacific, he sailed several thousand miles in an open boat across the Pacific before he was caught again. He was quite popular also in the USA (Richards, 56).

12 A good approximation of the gentlemanly mood expressed in such books can be found in the interactions between German and French

aviators towards the beginning of Jean Renoir's famous film *The Grand Illusion* (1937).

13 For press runs, see Richards, *German Bestseller*, 56, 63, 92; Schneider and Wagener, *Richthofen bis Remarque*, 12-13.

14 Leonhard Frank, *Der Mensch ist gut* (Zürich: Rascher, 1917).

15 See, e.g., Kurt Sontheimer, *Antidemokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik: Die politischen Ideen des deutschen Nationalismus zwischen 1918 und 1933* (1962, quoted from the following edition: Dtv 4312. Munich: Dtv, 1978), 94; cf. Karl Prümm, "Tendenzen des deutschen Kriegsromans nach 1918," in *Kriegserlebnis: Der Erste Weltkrieg in der literarischen Gestaltung und symbolischen Deutung der Nationen*, ed. Klaus Vondung (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck, 1980), 215-17.

16 Prince Hubertus Loewenstein, *The Tragedy of a Nation: Germany 1918-1934*, introd. Wickham Steed (New York: Macmillan, 1934), 20.

17 See, e.g., Karl Prümm, "Das Erbe der Front. Der antidemokratische Kriegsroman der Weimarer Republik und seine nationalsozialistische Fortsetzung," in *Die deutsche Literatur im Dritten Reich*, ed. Horst Denkler and Karl Prümm (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1976), 138-64; Sontheimer, *Antidemokatisches Denken*, 93-111; Armin Mohler, *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918-1932: Ein Handbuch*, 3rd enlarged ed. (Darmstadt, Germany: Wissenschaftliches Buchges, 1989), 32-38; Ernst Loewy, *Literatur unterm Hakenkreuz* (1966; quoted from the following edition: Fischer Taschenbuch 4303, Frankfurt: Fischer, 1984), 189-96.

18 Biographical information from Andrew Barker, "'Ein Schrei, vor dem kunstrichterliche Einwendungen gern verstummen:' Andreas Latzko: *Menschen im Krieg* (1917)," in Schneider and Wagener, *Von Richthofen bis Remarque*, 85-96; János Szabó, "Der vergessene Andreas Latzko," *Acta Litteraria Academiae Scientiarium Hungarica* 29, nos. 3-4 (1987): 305-14; and János Szabó, "Ein Österreicher aus Ungarn oder ein Ungar aus Österreich? Zum Lebenswerk von Andreas Latzko," in *"Kakanien": Aufsätze zur österreichischen und ungarischen Literatur, Kunst und Kultur der Jahrhundertwende*, ed. Eugen Thurnher et al. (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Science; Budapest, 1991), 357-66; Horst Haase, "Zu zwei Erzählungen von Andreas Latzko," *Német filológiai*

tanulmányok/ Arbeiten zur deutschen Philologie 16 (1985): 65-70. While Szabó claims that Latzko died in Amsterdam ("Österreicher," 359; "Vergessene," 308), Haase, 65, has him die in London. The Wikipedia entry (December 2009) locates Latzko's death in New York. http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andreas_Latzko.

19 Andreas Latzko, *Friedensgericht* (Zürich: Rascher, 1918).

20 Cf. Szabó, "Österreicher," 359; "Vergessene," 307.

21 Latzko, *Friedensgericht*, 6-7. This is in remarkable contrast to the story "Der Abmarsch" in Latzko's *Menschen im Krieg* where the soldiers are more or less driven into the military by women. Cf. Barker, 90-91. It seems that Latzko's position on this question has evolved.

22 Mit dreiunddreißig Jahren saß er als Wiederkäuer da, verurteilt, den Rest seines Lebens mit dem Einkassieren weiterer Konzerteinnahmen zu verbringen!

Und dann kam der Krieg!

Vor ihm lag plötzlich ein ganz neuer Weg; die unverhoffte Möglichkeit, noch einmal von vorne anzufangen . . .; wie hätte er der Versuchung widerstehen können, sich so von neuem zu bewähren, alles neu zu erringen? . . .

Die Wiederkehr zu Mathilde, als Held, als ordensbesäter Offizier, als ein ganzer Mann, der das Schicksal zweimal gemeistert hatte, diese Vorstellung war sein Verhängnis gewesen! (9).

23 Sontheimer, *Antidemokratisches Denken*, 99.

24 Latzko, *Friedensgericht*, 163-66, 188-89.

25 Das waren nun die Menschen, die er zur Güte erwecken wollte. Das waren die Träger der Zukunft! Weil sie es am eigenen Leib ausgekostet hatten, wie hart es war, wehrlos ausgeliefert zu sein, darum wollten sie es auch den Anderen schwer machen! Nicht einmal das eigene Leid konnte sie mitleidig stimmen! Nicht einmal die Erinnerung hatte Macht über ihre Herzen—wie sollten Worte sie gewinnen? Wie sollte fremdes Erdulden sie zur Tat begeistern, das Beispiel eines Mutigen sie emporreißen, Begriffe, die niemand vor sie hinstellen konnte, ihre Führer werden? . . .

"Recht?"—"Menschenwürde?"—Gadsky lachte höhnisch und sah sich mißtrauisch nach den Leuten um, die, unmittelbar hinter seinem Rücken, eine laute Unterhaltung führten . . . (258).

26 "Mensch, beißen Sie doch die Zähne zusammen! Wollen Sie uns alle blamieren mit Ihrem verfluchten Jammern?" (210).

27 Walter Flex, *Der Wanderer zwischen beiden Welten: Ein Kriegserlebnis* (1917; Heusenstamm: Orion-Heimreiter, 1979). The *Wanderer* is also printed in Walter Flex, *Gesammelte Werke*, 4th, enlarged ed., vol. 1 (Munich: Beck, 1936), 185-265. Parts of the book are translated in Tim Cross, *The Lost Voices of World War I: An International Anthology of Writers, Poets and Playwrights* (Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1989). However, I provide my own translations in this paper.

28 Richards, *German Bestseller*, 129-30; Flex, *Wanderer*, 4.

29 For more on Flex and secondary sources, see Johannes Klein, *Walter Flex: Ein Deuter des Weltkrieges: Ein Beitrag zur literaturgeschichtlichen Wertung deutscher Kriegsdichtung* (Marburg, Germany: Elwert, 1929); Lars Koch, *Der Erste Weltkrieg als Medium der Gegenmoderne: Zu den Werken von Walter Flex und Ernst Jünger* (Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006); Kuhn-Osius. "Ein konservatives Bild," 189-215; Raimund Neuß, *Anmerkungen zu Walter Flex: Die "Ideen von 1914" in der deutschen Literatur: Ein Fallbeispiel* (Schernfeld, Germany: SH-Verlag, 1992); Justus H. Ulbricht, "Der Mythos vom Heldentod: Entstehung und Wirkungen von Walter Flex, *Der Wanderer zwischen beiden Welten," Jahrbuch des Archivs der deutschen Jugendbewegung* 16 (1986-87): 111-56.

30 *Wandervogel* (migrating birds) is the name of a bourgeois back-to-nature youth movement in a romantic vein, resulting in youth groups somewhat similar to boy scout groups, except that they initially were far less militaristic in outlook and leadership structure. The early *Wandervogel* groups often included males and females.

31 Einmal entschlüpfte auch mir, ich weiß nicht mehr über wen und worüber, ein verdrossenes Wort. Da schob er seinen Arm in meinen, sah mich mit seiner herzlich zwingenden Heiterkeit an und zitierte aus seinem Goethe:

"Wandrer, gegen solche Not

Wolltest du dich sträuben?
Wirbelwind und trocknen Kot,
Laß ihn drehn und stäuben!"

Damit war die Sache abgetan. Wir wanderten in den Sonntagmorgen hinaus zum Warthe-Ufer und sprachen von Flüssen, Bergen, Wäldern und Wolken (19).

32 Wenn es Sinn und Aufgabe des Menschenlebens ist, hinter die Erscheinungen des Menschlichen zu kommen, dann haben wir durch den Krieg unser Teil am Leen mehr als andere dahin (40).

33 Leutnantsdienst tun heißt: seinen Leuten vor*leben*, . . . das Vor-sterben ist dann wohl einmal ein Teil davon. Vorzusterben verstehen viele . . . , aber das Schönere bleibt das Vorleben. Es ist auch schwerer (16).

34 Selbst sauber an Seele und Leib, erzog er seinen Leuten die Freude an schmucker Ordnung an. . . . In seinen Briefen an Eltern und Schwester erbat er immer wieder Bücher für den Feierabend seiner Leute und wählte die Bücher selbst nach den Erfahrungen, die er in Frankreich als Kamerad unter Kameraden gemacht hatte (38).

35 Und auf der Insel Ösel fiel Walter Flex, Zitat: Reifwerdenreinbleiben: Mannestugend. Günther Grass, *Katz und Maus: Eine Novelle* (1961) (Neuwied, Germany: Luchterhand, 1974), 52. Grass is here referring to one of the most famous quotations in the *Wanderer*: "Remaining pure while becoming mature, that is the highest and hardest art of living" (Rein bleiben und reif werden, das ist höchste und schwerste Lebenskunst) (44).

36 See Jochen Gamm, *Der braune Kult: Das Dritte Reich und seine Ersatzreligion: Ein Beitrag zur politischen Bildung* (Hamburg: Rütten & Loening, 1962), 155.

37 The frontal assault was especially celebrated in the so-called Battle of Langemarck. Wurche has been said to embody the idealistic frame of mind of the youths who died there. In recent years, some doubts have been raised if even this frontal assault worked in the way that the myth would have it. See Uwe-K. Ketelsen,"'Die Jugend von Langemarck': Ein poetisch-politisches Motiv der Zwischenkriegszeit," in "*Mit uns zieht die neue Zeit": Der Mythos Jugend,* ed. Thomas Koebner, Rolf-Peter Janz, and Frank Trommler (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1985):

68-96; Karl Unruh, *Langemarck: Legende und Wirklichkeit* (Koblenz, Germany: Bernard & Graefe, 1986).

38 A good example of critically dealing with Flex's anachronism is Werner Klose, "Soldatentod: Interpretation dreier Texte von Flex, Jünger und Polgar," *Wirkendes Wort* 8 (1957/58): 33-40.

39 Im Wasser und an den grünen Ufern des Flusses wimmelte es von den hellen Leibern badender Soldaten, die lichten Breiten der Netta schäumten von Wasser, Sonne und ausgelassenem Lachen. Die ewige Schönheit Gottes prangte über dem weiten Gottesgarten und leuchtete als Sonne und Schild über dem hellen Bilde des Jünglings. . . .

Über den Lärm und Glanz aller Kämpfe und Siege hin glänzt das Bild dieser Stunde in mir nach als der stärkste Eindruck, den ich mit Seele und Sinnen im Leben erfahren habe (53).

40 Flex, *Der Wanderer*, 42.

41 Dann schlug mir das Herz in aufwallender Scham. Er, der seinem Gott so gern nahe war, wäre *allein* gestorben? Ein Bibelwort fiel mir ein aus Jeremias: "*Ich* bin bei dir, spricht der Herr, daß ich dir helfe." Das letzte große Zwiegespräch auf Erden hatte kein Unberufener gestört. . . . Und ich klagte um ein freundloses Sterben . . . (83).

42 Gebt den Toten Heimrecht, ihr Lebendigen, daß wir unter euch wohnen und weilen dürfen in dunklen und hellen Stunden (101).

43 Klaus Vondung, "Zur Lage der Gebildeten in der wilhelminischen Zeit," in *Das wilhelminische Bildungsbürgertum: Zur Sozialgeschichte seiner Ideen*, ed. Klaus Vondung (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck, 1976), 20-33.

44 See, e.g., Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik*, repr. of 5th ed., 1971, Taschenbücher Geschichte (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1984), 145-46.

45 Großen Seelen ist der Tod das größte Erleben (84).

46 A recent treatment of this topic can be found in Allen J. Frantzen, *Bloody Good: Chivalry, Sacrifice, and the Great War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). This is a very instructive book on Christianity and war, although Frantzen's concentration on the chivalric elements appears somewhat reductive at times since he never seems to question

the notion itself.

47 Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five, or the Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death* (Garden City, NY: International Collectors Library, 1969).

Peace and Justice Studies Association:
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Attempting the Impossible: Romain Rolland's Pacifism and Crisis in His Personal Diary and the Novel *Clerambault*

Marilène Haroux

"I attempted the impossible," writes Romain Rolland[1] (1866-1944) in July 1915 in a letter that he would later copy into his diary[2] during World War I. In the spring and summer of 1915, the French novelist, dramatist, essayist, art historian, and leader of pacifism showed clear signs of fatigue and discouragement. Rolland's work, either forgotten or ignored for too long in France, is finally in the midst of a rediscovery.[3] It is a body of work that is both rich and complex.[4] There remains a great deal of textual analysis and commentary to be done on his work, especially in regard to putting in perspective the relationship between his fictional and biographical writings, as well as his essays and articles. Rolland's idea of "attempting the impossible"—as he formulates it in his fictional and nonfictional texts from this period—leads to critical questions about his belief and his work. It is also necessary to analyze his distinction between the possible and the impossible. In the twenty-first century, it is crucial to rethink Rolland's great contribution to peace and justice, and researchers need to acknowledge the powerful influence he had on his contemporaries. With special attention to the year 1915, I will focus primarily on the diary he kept during the war, the articles he published during that year, and the novel *Clerambault*. Interestingly, though Rolland would write in an article dated April 1915, "who of us would have the heart to write a play or a novel whilst his country is in danger and his brothers dying?"[5] he nevertheless began work on a new novel, *Clerambault*, whose subtitle reads: *The Story of an Independent Spirit during the War*.[6] As he would later explain in a striking letter, the crisis of morale he sustained during the summer of 1915 effectively led him to retire temporarily from public life, and that was when he returned to art.

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THE HOPE FOR DIALOGUE

What Rolland attempted in attempting the impossible refers to his effort to create a space for a dialogue among the various nations at war. What he is exactly referring to in his diary helps to understand the value of his devoted engagement for peace. Already before the war, he had written a *roman-fleuve, Jean-Christophe*,[7] where he praised the idea of fraternity but, at the same time, warned that the conditions for a new war with Germany were already in place. Thanks to this novel, Rolland figured among the French writers most read in France. From Switzerland, where he lived during the war, his attempts at the impossible consisted in writing pro-peace articles, manifestos, and letters: among them the most famous was his *Above the Battle*.[8] In France, however, Rolland had his critics. French nationalists considered him a traitor. Rolland's calls for peace and justice and his efforts to unite intellectuals of all nationalities were considered, by the French nationalists, an act of treason. His texts, which attempted to correct "the unnecessary but deadly duel between misguided brothers,"[9] were either censored or deliberately distorted.

According to Rolland, what was necessary at such a crucial time was not yet another warmongering demagogue inciting the nations to murder each other, but a reasonable voice that might guide the warring nations to peace. Rolland's attempt consisted in trying to create a space where a dialogue might take place between the intellectuals of the belligerent nations. And in the course of this dialogue, he hoped that a realization would take place in the minds of the intellects, and that the intellectuals would use their influence to encourage the governments of the warring nations to stop a war whose utter absurdity he never stopped pointing out. By July of 1915, Rolland had already written no fewer than fifteen articles in the attempt to unite intellectuals of all nationalities to put an end to the war. In these articles, Rolland insists that it is the "duty [of intellectuals] to seek truth in the midst of error, and to know the value of interested witnesses and passionate hallucinations."[10] Yet, it was only in neutral countries and countries that had not yet entered the war that thinkers read and took seriously Rolland's pacifist articles. And even among these nations, his "call for the restoration of sanity on all sides of the trenches"[11] was received with a certain caution.

What is at stake in Rolland's attempt at the impossible is the *possible*. Rolland interrogates the possibilities that a writer has in the time of war. In Rolland's specific case, it is crucial to understand what he thought he could

possibly achieve by writing these pacifist articles. And conversely, one must question what Rolland already considered to be impossible. His attempt, first and foremost, and at the most personal level, consisted in never ceasing to assert his innermost conviction, succinctly formulated in the dictum "*la non-acceptation perpétuelle*" (the perpetual refusal),[12] that is, the refusal to ever accept anything that runs contrary to what is humane. What Rolland attempted was, simply put, communication. He attempted to communicate where so many other attempts to communicate had failed so miserably in the months leading up to the war. As Rolland saw it, this failure to communicate resulted in an accumulation of errors in the diplomatic exchanges among the various nations of Europe.

Rolland refers to his mission as including the task of unplugging the ears of those who could no longer hear, of restoring sight to those who could no longer see. It seemed to him that it might at least be possible to create the conditions for a dialogue among the intellectuals of the warring nations, first among the German, Austrian, and French intellectuals, then with the English intellectuals. And even though, in his articles, he declared candidly his reservations about the actual realization of such a project—"I know such thoughts have little chance of being heard today"[13]—he nevertheless maintained the conviction that it was his responsibility as a writer, as an intellectual, to attempt to create the conditions for such a dialogue to take place. He was, first and foremost, persuaded that it would be possible to touch those intellectuals in particular who had felt themselves isolated from the general consensus. He thought, furthermore, that he might be able to inspire a measure of hope in those of his readers who had been reduced to a state of hopelessness on account of seeing their country at war. All these aspirations are clearly indicated in his diary dating from the winter of 1914-1915. However, by the spring of 1915, these specific hopes had already begun to fade. Despite the fact that Rolland clearly understood that it was impossible for him to put an end to the senseless destruction and death of war, the impossible quickly became yet "even more impossible."[14] Rolland's vision of the possible is manifested in his statement that the writer, the intellectual, should become a doctor "for the soul."[15] Following the medical metaphor, the writer must attempt to *treat* the reader. The writer must try to ameliorate the condition of the soul. It should be noted that Rolland worked for the International Red Cross in Geneva. He worked specifically in the department dedicated to the treatment of war prisoners, the International

Agency for Prisoners of War.[16]

THE IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION

The reason why Rolland suffered a crisis of hopelessness in 1915 was mainly due to his feeling of worthlessness. Part of the reason, of course, had to do with the evolution of the conflict itself, which had a negative effect on Rolland's morale. But it was also on an intellectual level that the author of *Above the Battle* agonized, especially from February onward.[17] In French, the word *impasse* (dead end, deadlock) sounds much like the word *impossible*. By the spring of 1915, Rolland had realized that he was in an *impossible* situation, that is, an *impasse*. He wrote in his journal, "It is my fate to make all parties unhappy."[18] French historian Jean-Jacques Becker and German historian Gerd Krumeich rightly note that Rolland's originality consisted in "wanting peace, while at the same time rejecting the notion of defeat either for France or for Germany."[19]

In fact, Rolland found himself again in an impossible situation because, against his wishes, he found himself an object of hatred for both the French and German camps. His hope had been to be a mediator creating a space for dialogue between the Germans and the French. Instead, he discovered that he had inadvertently become the enemy of both. From that moment onward, Rolland became convinced that his writings would have no impact whatsoever, neither in terms of actions intended to end the destruction of war, nor in terms of others' intellectual convictions. Rolland resigned from his post at the Red Cross, decided to stop writing articles (he would make an exception for the emblematic Jean Jaurès),[20] and left Geneva to withdraw to a Swiss resort town. His words on the impossible, "*I attempted the impossible,*" which I have borrowed to title this essay, were written in response to one of the numerous articles that violently attacked him, even to the point of accusing him of being "an accomplice to the prolongation of the war."[21] How could he possibly bear to have become, according to the words of historian Michel Winock, "the scapegoat of the nationalists, the despised champion of pacifism"?[22] In a preamble to the letter that he would copy into his diary before sending, Rolland wrote, in a moment of angered exasperation: "I have had just about enough of all these insane idiots; for all I care, they can all go to hell."[23] The following excerpts are a few of the more remarkable passages from the letter, in which Rolland clearly shows that he had, at least temporarily, given up on the idea of what he had previously

considered the intellectual's duty:

> For a year now, I have sacrificed my tranquility, my success, and my relationships with my friends to the task of fighting against insanity and hatred. . . . Each of my articles has gotten me nothing but the insults and hatred of the people in the countries where they were published. On each side, I ran up against the same utter incomprehension. . . . Exhausted, I retire from a blind melee, where each combatant listens to nothing but his own rage and shrieks endlessly his own justifications over and over again, without ever attempting to make it more comprehensible to anyone else. I wanted to make it comprehensible: *I attempted the impossible*.[24] I do not regret having tried. It was my duty to do so. But I sense that it is useless to continue to try.[25]

Rolland addressed at length the question of his withdrawal from public life, which to many seemed like an abandonment,[26] to the *Internationale Rundschau* (in French, *La Revue des Nations*), a Swiss journal based in Berne, for which Rolland had previously summarized the mission statement in his diary.[27] The journal—which published three different editions (English, French, and German)—consecrated itself to the mission of being an "organ of mediation among different peoples."[28] Here, it is important to remember that, because of his desire to reestablish communication between the warring countries, Rolland could not realistically consider the possibility of returning to, or even visiting, France. There was no way to guarantee his security. As he noted in his diary, he, as well as his friends, were gravely concerned about the possibility of retaliations against him should he return to France. Although there was not a specific threat against Rolland, the general climate of hatred against him in France, aroused by certain writers and journalists,[29] required that he not take any unnecessary risks.

Thus, Switzerland served Rolland as a country of refuge. There is no doubt, of course, that Rolland had been attracted to Switzerland as a land of possibility, where the possible could still be discussed and constructed.[30] But, following his meetings with certain intellectuals and officials who had been sojourning in Swiss hotels, following his readings of certain Swiss newspapers and journals, and following his work with the Red Cross in Geneva,[31] Rolland became disillusioned with Switzerland as a land of possibility. His crisis of morale became intense and affected every aspect of his being. In his diary, Rolland acknowledged his powerlessness to create a

space of reasonable communication since "this world is too insane," adding that it is better to just "let it continue its slide into insanity."[32] Leaving the world to its "collective malady"[33] is tantamount to recognizing that, in these exceptional circumstances, humans prefer absurdity and insanity to reason.

THE RENOUNCEMENT OF ROLLAND

Rolland's crisis of hopelessness is the product of a situation where the free-thinking intellectual runs up against a wall, the "blindness of the elite,"[34] and Rolland finds himself constrained to silence on account of a feeling of "uselessness."[35] Similarly, in the spring of 1915, the French philosopher Alain,[36] who from the very beginning had decided to remain silent during the time of war,[37] appeared to be disillusioned, and was, at the very least, as discouraged as Rolland when he read what was written in the daily newspapers: "In this war, there must be some enormous illusion in effect, since both sides make exactly the same discourse, and both—in good faith."[38] And the final article written by Rolland before his crisis of hopelessness is entitled "The Murder of the Elites."[39] The article gives the full measure of the complete and utter failure of reasonable dialogue, worse yet, its tragic impossibility. Influenced by "The Murder of the Elites," Alain wrote to a friend that "it is necessary to publish small, easy-to-read fliers and spread them everywhere."[40] The singular advantage of an article, in particular a brief article, is its possibility for widespread distribution. This is not an insignificant advantage in times of war (and censorship). Rolland's article was about ten pages, a length which is a bit long to print as a flier or poster. Nevertheless, the article, as a format, would be much more amenable to distribution than Rolland's next work, *Clerambault*,[41] would prove to be.

It seems that Rolland's withdrawal from public life sent a shock wave through the world of intellectuals,[42] whether they were favourable to him or not. It was as if it were impossible for Rolland, of all people, to abdicate the fight. He would end up receiving a vast number of letters protesting his decision, as well as letters of encouragement, from his friends and readers. Rolland claimed to have been quite surprised by the public's reaction to his withdrawal. But was his surprise feigned or real? Might Rolland have calculated such a reaction as a last hope, perhaps, to finally provoke a dialogue? Rolland's diary attests to the fact that he was mentally and spiritually exhausted, hit hard by what he had read in the newspapers and by certain insulting letters he received from those who wanted to prove that "it is

impossible, being *in* a culture of war, to make an appeal to another kind of culture."[43] Nevertheless, the French pacifist may have thought strategically about the possible effect his withdrawal from public life would have on the public. However, during that summer, unquestionably to Rolland's surprise, rumors began to circulate that he would soon be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

In some ways, Rolland's renouncement reveals not only the failures of different journals that had attempted to bring about a dialogue among the intellectuals of all countries, but simply the impossibility of any dialogue whatsoever at that moment. Faced with similar doubts, the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce, during the war, continuously revised his philosophical positions from before the war, modifying his thoughts according to the new circumstances following the war's evolution, and reflecting particularly on the "problem of communication"[44] among men, a problem that the war had severely exacerbated. In passing, it might be an appropriate moment to recall that the word *communication* comes from the Latin word *communicatio*, which signifies "to make in common, together; an exchange of subjects." In French, during the Middle Ages, the primary sense of the word evolved to become "a way of being together."[45] Thus, seen from this point of view, the war appears to be precisely the impossibility of communication since, in war, it is always a question of being *against* the other, never being *with* or being *together*. In the face of a problem that manifests itself not only as a linguistic problem but also a philosophical and social one, Croce writes, "we never [simply and straightforwardly] communicate the true, and when we address ourselves to others, we form and employ a series or a complex coordination of stimulations in order to put others in the condition to adapt to our state of mind, to rethink the true that we think."[46] In a commentary on Croce, Ferraro elaborates further on this notion. He writes that the expression must "extend itself within a framework of responsibility to communicate and turn itself into 'pages of prose' that can be read and inscribe itself within the interiority of the reader."[47]

After the impossibility of communication had been clearly demonstrated by the violent reactions to the articles Rolland had previously written, he surely wondered how as a writer he might reach the interiority of the reader. Here, once again, a meaningful confrontation would arise between the engagement for peace and the *impossible*. As Rolland confided in his diary, he would, "for a few months, withdraw into eternal art."[48] Thus, at the

very moment he believed that nothing was possible, that only the impossible reigned during the time of war, he turned towards art. Was this in order to create a space of possibility through the work of fiction? Did he wish to employ the genre of fiction to create a new possibility in the hopes of having an impact on his readers? The problem here is that his novel, *Clerambault*, begun in the summer of 1915, did not appear until after the war. Was writing merely an outlet for someone who had already lost a year "suppressing all attempts to write for himself,"[49] an outlet for the frustrations of hopelessness, a release in order to endure, rather than attempt, the impossible? Or was there finally a hope to attain the possible?

THE USE OF FICTION

During this period of "introspective meditation,"[50] Rolland read, with a great deal of interest, Guillaume du Vair, and even composed certain chapters of *Clerambault* according to the model of dialogues between friends that Vair had written during the sixteenth century.[51] Since dialogue could not be produced under the conditions of the war, it would exist, alongside the war, in another cotemporaneous dimension, within the space of fiction. By placing himself within the world of fiction, Rolland resituated himself within a world still possible. He would then even be capable of producing a plurality, a multiplication of possibilities, according to his wishes.[52]

After the desperation that had resulted from the crisis he had suffered in July, he found fuel for a new resurgence of energy thanks to the outlet of writing (but also, thanks to the gestures of encouragement and support of friendship that he continuously received). With *Clerambault*, Rolland took up certain elements that had actually occurred (the context of the declaration of war; the departure of young men to the front lines, where they would fight and be killed; and the hate-filled, warmongering press). It would also seem that he transposed a good deal of his personal experiences into his work, although he claimed exactly the contrary.[53] It is true that, unlike Rolland, the hero, Agénor Clerambault, is the father of a family (and a minor poet), whose son, Maxime, departs for war—which resembles neither the personal nor professional situation of Rolland. There is, however, a scene of upheaval that suggests a certain identification with Rolland. It starts from the moment the son dies on the war front. Clerambault suddenly has a moment of realization, his consciousness awakens, and he begins immediately writing articles appealing to reason. Unlike Rolland, Clerambault

has few friends among the intellectual elite; he lives in France where he will be put on trial for pacifist propaganda; and then he will be assassinated by a nationalist,[54] whose hatred is compared to that of the French writer Maurice Barrès (1862-1923).[55]

Thanks to novelistic writing, Rolland constructs possibilities: actions and events that might have happened, or that could happen, principally in the form of conversations or dialogues that might have taken place between opposing parties within France. Rolland thereby proposes a different form of communication, perhaps destined more to touch his readers, to have an impact on them. In this form, his writing is much freer, much more sensitive, and gets straight to the point without detours. His writing is no longer diplomatic, as it had been in the articles collected in *Above the Battle*. In particular, Rolland could say exactly how despicable and pathetic he found "the Press, the Arch-liar."[56] As Aristotle rightly observed, the role of the writer, unlike the historian, "is not to tell what actually happened but what could and would either probably or inevitably [happen]."[57] If history is compelled to report that which has already, rightly or wrongly, occurred, fiction permits a space possible for persuasion, for "what is possible carries conviction."[58] The philosopher Paul Ricœur took a great interest in the imaginary possible, writing that "the world of fiction is a laboratory of forms where we try out possible configurations of action in order to test their consistency and plausibility. That type of experimentation with paradigms comes from what we would call productive imagination."[59] *Clerambault* functions as an imaginative laboratory for Rolland: the novel is the manifestation of a personal and creative experimentation, "an intimate meditation, but in a way which suffocates life too much."[60] Recognizing this aspect did not, however, prevent Rolland from unfolding possibilities according to his aspirations, enabling him, thanks to the imagination, to access "a game open and free to possibilities," in what Ricœur defines as "a state of non-engagement in regard to the world of perception or action. It is within that state of non-engagement that we try out new ideas, new values, and new ways of being in the world."[61] Rolland, taking leave of Geneva and reestablishing himself within the domain of art, attempted by other means to emit the pacifist message, one favouring dialogue: with *Clerambault* he again attempts the possible.

Just as "[w]ar and peace are not, in fact, polarized, but cohabit, or inhere in, one another,"[62] Rolland, by writing his novel at the very moment

of war, configures a second cohabitation, existing alongside the world that already exists, as if there are two wars, and thus two different but simultaneous possibilities for peace. In this manner, the cohabitation of a second war, and a second peace, adjacent to the First World War, becomes the space in which Rolland makes his spiritual resistance to the outrage of the war. In the context of the novel, Rolland retraces the obstacles that he, himself, had to overcome in order to publish his articles (recalling again that his articles were often subject to censorship and distortion). In his articles, Rolland had to strike a difficult balance, because, in denouncing all justification for the conflict, it would seem that he was denying the value of the suffering and death of those who had died or had been injured on the field of battle (or, in the case of civilians, of the pain of those who had suffered from the atrocities of the invasion). At a certain level, it seemed that he was denying soldiers the status of being national heroes. For the families of those who had suffered, it seemed that he was destroying the "consolation" that their sacrifice might have been justified by a higher cause, that their sacrifice served a good reason. He transposed this ambiguity into his novel, where his hero becomes "the destroyer of life-giving illusions."[63] Within the novel Rolland achieves a synthesis of his experiences during the war. He confronts "the same unsolvable dilemma; either a fatal illusion, or death without it."[64] Quite probably, Rolland felt himself trapped by the consequences of his engagement, and Clerambault would find himself, like the author, in a situation he describes as a "tragic impasse."[65]

The novel describes a double breakdown in communication. The first is not mentioned in the previously published newspaper articles, but it is described in Rolland's diary: the communication breakdown between the men on the front lines and the civilians behind them. The second breakdown, mentioned repeatedly and specifically in his articles, is that between the belligerent countries. The character of the son, Maxime, illustrates "the gulf"[66]—the impossible communication between the men of the front and the civilians behind them.[67] In his diary, Rolland reports testimonies of the impossibility of communication between the front and those behind.[68] And it is evident that he relied heavily on the notes that he had been taking since August 1914 to provide source material for his novel, particularly since he could not confront all aspects of the war in his articles.

One of the most difficult revelations for Rolland to accept might be summarized in the following observation, especially after all the wars that

have followed the first World War: "The more cultured, eloquent and sophisticated we become, the greater, it seems, our capacity for allowing our societal and animal aggressions to gravitate towards brutality."[69] In the course of the novel, Clerambault suffers a "crisis of acute pessimism,"[70] when the possible seems definitively out of reach, and the hope for progress through dialogue among intellectuals in view of peace seems lost on men "devoted to a murderous destiny."[71] However, as the novel progresses and Clerambault has more and more encounters with others, his dialogues (sometimes epistolary, as in the case of Rolland) lead to the constitution of a group of disciples attracted by his pacifist fervor. These dialogues enrich the reflection on what is possible for the intellectual as well as for the fiction writer. Although the work of Pierre Sipriot consecrated to Rolland and the war remains debatable and sometimes insufficient, the author rightly summarizes Rolland's project during the time of his withdrawal from public life: "Why terrorize States that, themselves, live in a period of utter and total terror? Offer them instead the pacifist's imagination. Even if it does not yet have a political existence, the only thing that remains is that it be given its embodiment."[72] In one of the final dialogues of the novel, one of Clerambault's interlocutors declares that "even to strive after the impossible has a concrete value. But that does not mean that we shall succeed in what we undertake."[73] Clerambault then responds that "it is possible that we may not succeed for ourselves and our children; it is, even more, probable."[74] Thus, up to the very end, Rolland reflects on the problem of the possible, leaving several possibilities open to the reader, who might either believe that it is necessary to attempt the impossible or hold firm to the extraordinary possibilities that exist within the domain of literature.

AVOIDING THE REPETITION

During the Second World War, French writer Paul Valéry sought to work with different writers and to bring them together for a publication. In a letter to André Gide, he spoke of a list of people he was searching for, a group of people he called "the possible."[75] Was it not precisely this group that Rolland and some of his friends were seeking to find or create in order to initiate a dialogue? More than sixty years later, Becker and Krumeich confirmed Rolland's appraisal of the war: "In sum, everything combined in both belligerent camps, whether it was on the military front, the diplomatic or mental front, to make it an interminable war."[76] Nevertheless, Rolland

never completely lost faith in his hope to succeed in "interesting public opinion of everyone around the world towards a just peace in order to avoid a war of revenge,"[77] in an attempt to avoid yet another impossible situation where humans might become enraged with the hateful insanity of revenge, a situation, however, that he could see coming in the distance.

In 1916, Rolland did receive The Nobel Prize in Literature "as a tribute to the lofty idealism of his literary production."[78] The Prize was interpreted as a form of recognition for Rolland's work for peace. It might appear that the prize served as a pretext to award Rolland for something else, his outspoken pacifism. However, literature was not simply a pretext. His literary talent had paved the way for his name to have become known worldwide even before the war. He then later lent his name to the cause of peace. He used his fame for the purpose of calling on others to come together in the name of dialogue and exchange. His literary talents may have worked as well to guarantee himself a certain readership for his anti-war articles. Later, in *L'Ame enchantée,* his second *roman-fleuve* after *Jean-Christophe,* Rolland revisited the subject of the war of 1914-1918 to defend the idea of *Never Again (plus jamais ça)*.[79] Experience had demonstrated to him that it would be most efficacious to work on two levels simultaneously in order to create the conditions where possibility might be actualized—in a multiple space where the writing of articles and the constructions of literary spaces might complement each other.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to thank Curtis Cordell for his translation of my article from French to English.

ENDNOTES

1 Romain Rolland was born in Clamecy, France, in 1866. His family moved to Paris in 1880. Rolland was a student in the prestigious university École Normale Supérieure (he studied Literature, Philosophy, and History) in Paris and in the École de Rome (he studied Music History and the History of Painting) in Roma. He wrote two doctoral dissertations, one in French on modern lyric theatre and the other one in Latin on the decline of Italian Painting in the sixteenth century. Before World War I, Rolland was a professor of Literature and of Art History but he is remembered as a professor of Musicology

in the École Normale Supérieure. At the time of war, he had already written and published dramas (some of them were played in diverse theatres), biographies (of French painter Jean-François Millet, of Mohandas Gandhi, of Beethoven, of Michelangelo, of Haendel, and of Tolstoy) and articles in history or literary journals. He started to write his most famous novel, *Jean-Christophe*, in 1896. The chapters of the very long novel were published from 1904 to 1912. Thanks to the success of the book, Rolland quit teaching. On Rolland's education and on the years before war, see: Marilène Haroux, "Romain Rolland et les itinéraires de formation dans Jean-Christophe" (PhD diss., Lille 3 University, 2005), Chapters 1 and 2, http://documents.univlille3.fr/files/pub/www/recherche/theses/HAROUX_MARILENE/html/these.html. Rolland discovered Gandhi's books in 1922 and then became interested by Gandhi's pacifist ideas. On Rolland and Gandhi, who met in 1931 when Gandhi visited Rolland in Switzerland, and on their correspondence, see Gandhi et Romain Rolland, *Correspondance, extraits du Journal et textes divers* (Paris: Cahiers Romain Rolland 19, Albin Michel, 1969). See also David James Fischer, *Romain Rolland and The Politics of Intellectual Engagement* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2004), 112-44.

2 Romain Rolland, *Journal des années de guerre (JAG)*, Marie Romain Rolland, ed. (Paris: Albin Michel, 1952).

3 In France, thanks to the recent re-edition of several works, including *Jean-Christophe* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2007), *Haendel* (Arles, France: Actes Sud, 2005), and *Le Théâtre du Peuple* (Paris: Complexe, 2003), and the publications of several volumes of his previously unedited correspondence.

4 His work includes novels, plays, essays on music, pacifist articles, biographies, memoirs, and a voluminous correspondence with some of the greatest writers and historical figures of the period, including among others Freud, André Gide, Alain, Gandhi, Herman Hesse, and Paul Claudel.

5 Romain Rolland, XIV. "War Literature," *Journal de Genève*, 19 April 1915, in *Above the Battle*, trans. C. K. Ogden (Chicago: The Open Court, 1916), 166. French Version: "Littérature de guerre," *L'Esprit libre—Au-dessus de la mêlée—Les Précurseurs* (Paris: Albin Michel,

1953), 158.

6 Romain Rolland, *Clerambault: The Story of an Independent Spirit during the War*, trans. Katherine Miller (New York: Henry Holt, 1921); The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Clerambault* by Romain Rolland, 30 January 2004 (EBook #10868). French: *Clerambault, Histoire d'une Conscience libre pendant la Guerre* (Paris, Ollendorff, 1920).

7 The first of its kind in France, this *roman-fleuve* has for a hero a young German musician, Jean-Christophe Krafft, who, just after adolescence, goes to live in Paris. This coming-of-age novel is different from its predecessors in that its purpose is not to illustrate the hero's success in integrating into a new society but, through each of his meetings and experiences, to show Jean-Christophe as a reflection on the intellectual and spiritual construction of every man.

8 Romain Rolland, III. "Above the Battle," *Journal de Genève,* 15 September 1914 in *Above the Battle*, 37-55. French Version: "Au-dessus de la mêlée" in *Au-dessus de la mêlée*, 76-89.

9 Fischer, *Romain Rolland*, 40.

10 Romain Rolland, II. "Pro Aris," *Journal de Genève*, October 1914, in *Above the Battle*, 26. French Version, 69.

11 Fischer, *Romain Rolland*, 40.

12 Romain Rolland, Appendices, 16 January 1926, *Le voyage intérieur (Songe d'une vie)* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1959), 334.

13 III. "Above the Battle", 55. French: "Au-dessus de la mêlée", 88.

14 "I am not attempting to fight the war, because I know that that is impossible—more impossible now than ever. I am attempting to fight hatred," in a letter from Rolland to Stefan Zweig, 15 March 1915, quoted by Bernard Duchatelet, *Romain Rolland tel qu'en lui-même* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2002), 182. Trans. Curtis Cordell for this article.

15 "There are doctors for the body. We need doctors for the soul, to dress the wounds of hatred and vengeance by which the world is being poisoned." Romain Rolland, V. "Inter Arma Caritas," *Journal de Genève*, 30 October 1914, *Above the Battle*, 91. French Version, 106.

16 Rolland details the work he did for the International Red Cross in

"Inter Arma Caritas," 83-84. French Version, 100-101.

17 Romain Rolland, entries of 24 February 1915 and 13 March 1915, *JAG*, 271-72.

18 Rolland, 3 July 1915, *JAG*, 426. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

19 Jean-Jacques Becker and Gerd Krumeich, *La Grande Guerre—Une histoire franco-allemande* (Paris: Tallandier, 2008), 121. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

20 Rolland consecrated an article to the politician and pacifist Jean Jaurès in commemoration of the first anniversary of the death of Jaurès who was murdered by a French nationalist. See Romain Rolland, XVI "Jaurès," 2 August 1915, in *Above the Battle*, 181-92. French Version, 171-78.

21 Romain Rolland, "Letter to Dr. S. Feilbgen," 17 July 1915, *JAG*, 442.

22 Rolland, poorly read or deliberately poorly received, became the scapegoat of the nationalist, the despicable champion of pacifism," Michel Winock, *Le Siècle des intellectuels* (Paris: Points Seuil, 1999), 170.

23 Romain Rolland, 17 July 1915, *JAG*, 442. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

24 My emphasis.

25 Rolland, "Letter to Dr. S. Feilbgen," 17 July 1915, *JAG*, 442-43. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

26 He would defend himself against this accusation in the responses to the letters he would receive after the announcement of his withdrawal from public life.

27 "The present war is not only being fought on battlefields. There is another war, being fought pen in hand, which appears to be yet more sinister at present as in the future. . . . We wish to try to reestablish, on these neutral grounds, the broken contact that now divides the spiritual representatives of the belligerent nations," writes Rolland, January 1915, *JAG*, 232. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

28 Jean-Pierre Meylan, *La revue de Genève, miroir des lettres européennes 1920-1930* (Genève: Droz, 1969), 22.

29 Among them, Henri Massis, a nationalist writer who violently attacked

Rolland in a pamphlet. He would nevertheless eventually be elected to the French Academy in 1960.

30 "If I have decided to live in Switzerland, it is because it is the only country where I might be able to maintain relations with the minds of people from all nations." Romain Rolland in "Letter to Gabriel Séailles," 15 January 1915, *JAG*, 213.

31 "Europe resembles an insane asylum. The neutral countries, which have no real reason to become inflamed, do so anyway, just like all the others." March 1915, *JAG*, 290.

32 Romain Rolland, 13 July 1915, *JAG*, 440. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

33 Romain Rolland, 7 July 1915, *JAG*, 431. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

34 Romain Rolland, 7 July 1915, *JAG*, 431.

35 Romain Rolland, 7 July 1915, *JAG*, 431.

36 Alain was a pseudonym for Émile Chartier (1868-1951).

37 Alain wrote a book on the topic of war, *Mars ou la guerre jugée* (Paris: 1921, Nrf Gallimond, 1969).

38 Alain to Marie Salomon, 12 April 1915, *Salut et fraternité—Alain et Romain Rolland—Correspondance et textes* Henri Petit, edition (Paris: Albin Michel, Cahiers Romain Rolland 18, 1969), 73. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

39 Published in the *Journal de Genève*.

40 Alain to Marie Salomon, 20 June 1915, *Salut et fraternité*, 74.

41 The novel as it originally appeared was 377 pages long, published by Ollendorff.

42 Rolland made note in his diary of the reactions he received personally and the rumours he heard from others. But it is possible that he did not have a full appreciation of how quickly the news circulated in the intellectual world. Alain notes that "people are writing that Romain Rolland may have given up." Alain to Marie Salomon, 13 July 1915, *Salut et fraternité*, 77. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

43 Pierre Sipriot, *Guerre et paix autour de Romain Rolland—Le désastre de l'Europe 1914-1918* (Paris: Bartillat, 1997), 152. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

44 Giuseppe Ferraro, "Esthétique et récit d'une guerre pensée," *Les Philosophes et la guerre de 14*, Philippe Soulez, ed. (Saint-Denis, France: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 1998), 92.

45 *TLFI: Trésor de la Langue Française informatisé*. ATILF—Université de Nancy & CNRS, 15 December 2009, http://www.atilf.fr/

46 Quoted in Ferraro, "Esthétique et récit," 92. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

47 "The sign is not sufficient for communication. The sign must make itself an expression, but this must extend itself within the framework of responsibility to communicate and turn itself into 'pages of prose' that can be read and inscribe itself within the interiority of the reader." Ferraro, "Esthétique et récit," 92. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

48 Romain Rolland, 7 July 1915, *JAG*, 431. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

49 Duchatelet, 183. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

50 Fischer, *Romain Rolland*, 44.

51 Guillaume du Vair, *De la constance et consolation és calamitez publiques* (Paris: Robert Etienne, 1954).

52 Among other things, *Clerambault* also clearly served as an outlet for Rolland, since in its pages he could pour out all the anger, frustration, and disappointment that he felt during the years of 1914-1918.

53 In his preface to the reader, Rolland completely rejects all claims that his novel is autobiographical ("Do not even bother looking for anything autobiographical!"), but three lines later he states that he "transposed to his hero some of his own thoughts," *Clerambault*, 2-3, French Version, 5. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

54 This occurs in the last couple of pages of *Clerambault*, 147-48, French Version, 373-75.

55 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 135-36. French Version, 344-47.

56 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 11. French Version, 35.

57 Aristotle. Vol. 23, Trans. W. H. Fyfe (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1932), 1451a.

58 Aristotle, 1451b.

59 Paul Ricœur, *Du texte à l'action* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1969-1986), 17.

Trans. Curtis Cordell.

60 "*Clerambault*, whose primary value is that it is an intimate meditation, but in a way which suffocates life too much (yet I could not have done otherwise, I was suffocating myself: I had to have a release)." Letter from Rolland to Curtius, 25 July 1921, cited by Jean-Bertrand Barrère, *Romain Rolland—L'Ame et l'Art* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1966), 239-40. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

61 Ricœur, *Du texte à l'action*, 220. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

62 Richard Pine, *Preface to Literatures of War, ed. Richard Pine and Eve Patten* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), ix.

63 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 92. French Version, 235.

64 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 92. French Version, 236.

65 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 92. French Version, 236.

66 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 26. French Version, 72.

67 "Maxime saw that he had no longer any way of communicating with them, with anyone in the rear. They lived in different worlds . . . " Rolland, *Clerambault*, 25. French Version, 70.

68 On this subject see Antoine Prost and Jay Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre—Un essai d'historiographie* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2004), 140-41.

69 Pine, Preface to *Literatures of War*, ix.

70 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 89. French Version, 228.

71 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 89. French Version, 228.

72 Sipriot, *Guerre et paix*, 194. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

73 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 146. French Version, 370.

74 Rolland, *Clerambault*, 146. French Version, 371.

75 "Enfin, des gens possibles," *André Gide, 1942, André Gide—Paul Valéry—Correspondance 1890-1942*, ed. Robert Mallet (Paris: Gallimard, 1955), 527.

76 Becker and Krumeich, *La Grande Guerre,* 248. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

77 Claire Basquin-Benslimane, "Romain Rolland, intellectuel engagé?," *Europe* 942 (October 2007), 70. Trans. Curtis Cordell.

78 The Nobel Foundation Website, accessed 15 December 2009, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1915/.

79 See Marilène Haroux, "L'inscription du « plus jamais ça » dans le roman: *L'Ame enchantée* de Romain Rolland," in *Romain Rolland, une œuvre de paix*, ed. Bernard Duchatelet (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris-Sorbonne, *forthcoming March 2010*).

Catastrophe, Aftermath, Amnesia: Chinua Achebe's "Civil Peace"

Thomas J. Lynn

Chinua Achebe's short story "Civil Peace" depicts a family and community's response to the devastation wrought by war. Although the tale by no means abandons hope for either the family or the community, it wryly suggests that civil peace is the mirror image of civil war insofar as the human tendencies that push people to war are not completely resolved in its wake, regardless of political settlements. In a post-war civil society, civility is in short supply: people continue to bully, deceive, and overreach in the struggle for a foothold in the peace. The author challenges us to understand this peace, to locate certain enduring lessons of war, perhaps even to circumvent its repetition, by having us look at humanity in war's aftermath, and by having us contemplate our responses to conflict and aggression when the military is silent.

Along with "Civil Peace," the tales "Sugar Baby" and "Girls at War" form Achebe's masterful trilogy of short stories that is set during and immediately after the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70), and brings to a close the Nigerian author's 1972 volume of short fiction, *Girls at War and Other Stories*.[1] While "Civil Peace" is the focus of the present study, it is considered partly in relation to Achebe's two other war-related tales. All three probe the experience, roots, and legacy of war, rather than the question of who was at fault. Achebe, who is of Igbo descent, might well have done the latter, given the catastrophic impact of the war on his own life and on the Biafran cause, for which he was a spokesman. Yet, as he does in each of his novels, including his first and most famous, *Things Fall Apart* (1958),[2] which dramatizes the advent of British colonialism in West Africa, Achebe rejects a partisan vision in the stories in favour of understanding the psychic and social effects of war and the varied human traits that play a role during and after the fighting.

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Achebe does give noble action a place in the trilogy, but he also accords due recognition to the greed, selfishness, and dishonesty that continue giving rise to war. Although the author makes clear in the war-related tales that the enemy has reduced the proud people with whom he sided to utter ruin and desperation, he balances insights about war, tracing its roots to common human impulses and choices, irrespective of sides. Such balancing exemplifies the author's "middle ground" utterances—which characterize his literary voice but have not always won him friends. At times he has been admonished for the mildness of his strictures against the West (notwithstanding his stern reproaches of the West) and for writing primarily in English rather than an African language.

Kaiama L. Glover's review of Achebe's most recent volume of essays, *The Education of a British-Protected Child*, notes Achebe's penchant for travelling along the middle terrain and the humane quality of his perspective:

> Achebe is . . . clear in his intention . . . to concern himself with individuals rather than ideologies. This personal and political position, which he calls the "middle ground," . . . is the place from which he strives to act and to write with empathy and nuance rather than with fanaticism. . . . Of course, for a postcolonial intellectual, even one heralded as the father of modern African literature, the middle can be a rather tricky space to navigate.[3]

Along the middle path of his three war-related stories, Achebe perceives that both enemy and victim may act immorally but also underscores the dreadful repercussions of war for a vanquished society. He depicts the sacrifices made by those working for the losing Biafran cause and the military force that overwhelmed it. Devastating as that force was, it generally remains abstract and impersonal in these tales while Biafran foibles are on full display. In presenting the war this way, however, Achebe does not seek to indict his comrades but rather to trace the vagaries of human nature that precipitate organized violence.

In both "Sugar Baby" and "Girls at War," Achebe evokes the everyday concerns and needs that dominate personal consciousness despite the traumatic chaos at hand. While Cletus, the title character of "Sugar Baby," is a strong, well-meaning man, he simply cannot suppress his craving for sugar. Similarly, in "Girls at War," Reginald Nwankwo feels and expresses concern for the suffering of others, but he is too intent on gratifying sexual and other urges to act unselfishly and takes advantage of his privileged governmental

position. His egotism and hypocrisy contrast in a dramatic moment with the innate altruism of Gladys, a former checkpoint guard, whose idealism has only partly succumbed to the fears and rigors of war. Although she enters a liaison with Nwankwo, she also exposes through words and action the flimsy quality of his principled rhetoric, and as grimly ironic his privileged position in the Ministry of Justice. War inevitability stands society on its head, and "Civil Peace," the main focus of the present examination of Achebe's war-related tales, provides a carnivalesque glimpse of the social upheaval that occurred in the aftermath of Biafra's defeat. It reveals both the stunning risks that people take when motivated, paradoxically, by fear of material loss and the moral shifts that occur when the chain of violence reaches a breaking point.

The chain of violence that resulted in the Nigerian Civil War began with the breakdown of civil democratic society in Nigeria and a military coup, one that Achebe famously anticipated in his 1966 novel, *A Man of the People*.[4] The civil war that unfolded from these events stretched from July 1967 to January 1970 (the latter date marking the reinstatement of Nigeria's pre-war boundaries) and remains deeply etched in world consciousness as a post-Second World War political, military, and humanitarian catastrophe. The war was precipitated by the persecution of members of the Igbo ethnic minority in certain parts of Nigeria (including the 1966 massacre of Igbos living outside the Eastern Region) and the subsequent May 1967 secession of Nigeria's eastern region, as the Igbo-dominated Republic of Biafra, under the leadership of Colonel Chukwuemeka Ojukwu. Efforts to achieve reconciliation between the contending groups broke down, and Nigeria's military government, led by General Yakubu Gowon, was determined to prevent the dissolution of the Nigerian federation portended by the secession.[5] A range of other nations took sides in the conflict, and the civil war brought immense levels of slaughter, destruction, and starvation.[6]

Biafra endured appalling losses at the hands of the federal forces, which had access to greater resources, and more than a million Biafrans perished as a consequence of famine, malnutrition, and disease. The adverse economic effects of the devastation to the Biafran area lasted long after the war ended, the psychological damage to Nigerians was profound, and writers continued to contemplate the war many years into the future.[7] Achebe supported the doomed Biafran cause, and as a spokesman for it traveled within Africa and abroad during the war.[8] While he and his immediate family survived the

war, managing to elude physical harm, they suffered the loss of relatives and friends, including Christopher Okigbo, an important Nigerian poet of Igbo ancestry and Achebe's longtime friend and associate, who was killed while serving in the Biafran army.[9]

Although Achebe's fictional trilogy makes no pretense of fully encompassing the cruelty, loss, and suffering occasioned by the war, elements of these lend tension and gravity to the tales. The first and shortest of the three, "Civil Peace," is set mainly in the war's aftermath, when the threat of violence continues to bear down on the life of the decimated town of Enugu. This Igbo community, a part of the former Biafra, embarks on peacetime activities that are refracted through the Iwegbu family, which endeavors above all to regain some measure of financial security. Members of the family add to their meagre income by using a bicycle as a taxi, picking mangoes, cooking a breakfast item in quantity, mixing palm-wine, and selling these last three items to neighbors, soldiers, and soldiers' wives. Of course, what partly motivates the Iwegbus' industriousness is the material devastation left by the war.

Such devastation during the time of the civil war itself is poignantly evoked in this and Achebe's other two war-related tales, while the post-war destitution that permeates the Iwegbu's community in "Civil Peace" contributes to the recurring association of the war's aftermath with a living death: "thousands more came out of their forest holes looking for the same things"; "neighbours in a hurry to start life again"; "ex-miners who had nowhere to return at the end of the day's waiting just slept outside the doors of the offices."[10] When post-war violence, which would seem to arise almost inevitably from the convergence of human impulse and dire need in a ravaged community, directly confronts the Iwegbu family, the expressions of living death resurface dramatically: The family "raise[d] the alarm. . . . 'We are lost, we are dead!' . . . Maria [Iwegbu] and the children sobbed inaudibly like lost souls."[11]

But death has struck the Iwegbus in more than a figurative sense, for, of their four children, only three remain at war's end, the death of the fourth going unexplained. As the previous two quotations indicate, moreover, they feel the encroachment of death again when violence returns to their lives. The post-war violence appears rather unobtrusively at first. "Endless scuffles" occur in the lines that people form to receive cash in exchange for Biafran money; then a man is robbed of this cash by a "heartless ruffian."[12]

Yet, these eruptions not only foreshadow the more organized violence that confronts the Iwegbu family in the story's penultimate scene. They also are symptomatic of the social deterioration at war's end, which Achebe pointedly describes in "Sugar Baby," the story that follows "Civil Peace" and is likewise set during the period immediately after the war.[13] The narrator, Mike, wishing to avoid provoking a hostile exchange between his friend Cletus and himself, recalls a story about the Yoruba trickster-god, Esun (sometimes called "Eshu"):

> Then I realized how foolish it was and how easy, even now, to slip back into those sudden irrational acrimonies of our recent desperate days when an angry word dropping in unannounced would start a fierce war like the passage of Esun between two peace-loving friends. So I steered myself to a retrieving joke. . . .[14]

Nigeria is one of the homelands of the Yoruba people, who fought with federal forces during the civil war, and the reference to a Yoruba god and tale at the end of the Igbo master's war-time story may reinforce his wish for peace. On the other hand, the story about Esun to which Mike alludes does embody the volatility that prevails within the overwhelmed Biafran community in "Civil Peace."

The fractious social elements portrayed in "Civil Peace" contrast with the stable patterns of life in the pre-colonial Igbo community that Achebe evokes in his first novel, *Things Fall Apart*, a community that appears adaptable (at least prior to the European arrival) to the capricious qualities of existence that Esun signifies. In this "well-ordered society of *Things Fall Apart*,"[15] a wide array of mechanisms safeguard the peaceful conduct of social relations despite occasional outbursts of violence. Thus, the novel's protagonist, Okonkwo, is chastised by a priest for beating his wife and thereby defying the cyclically observed Week of Peace:

> We live in peace with our fellows to honor our great goddess of the earth without whose blessing our crops will not grow. You have committed a great evil. . . . Your wife was at fault, but even if you came into your *obi* and found her lover on top of her, you would still have committed a great evil to beat her.[16]

Clearly the community's traditions hold the earth goddess, Ani, as a guarantor of peace and peace itself as a singular virtue.

Vestiges of the traditional society and its cohesive patterns remain in Achebe's third novel, *Arrow of God* (published in 1964 and set in the 1920s),[17]

despite the now fully established British colonial rule that it represents. The source of these patterns is specified by Gareth Cornwell: "If these novels [*Things* and *Arrow*] depict communities in the process of disintegration, then what had hitherto held them together was a strong social consensus, a shared and largely unquestioning knowledge of and belief in their values, customs, and institutions."[18] In the three novels that Achebe sets mostly in a modern period (*No Longer at Ease* [1960], *A Man of the People* [1966], and *Anthills of the Savannah* [1987]), a note of social instability is prevalent;[19] yet even in this "chaotic present," with its "alienated people,"[20] traditional patterns are recalled and occasionally practiced. In *No Longer at Ease,* communal gatherings are organized in the protagonist's rural homeland; in *A Man of the People,* the bride-price is returned when a woman withdraws from a marriage agreement; a traditional baby-naming ceremony in *Anthills of the Savannah* expresses the communal aspiration for a better future. In each case the traditional practices are oriented to peace.

In this context, "Civil Peace" suggests that the war's destructive impact has been qualitatively different from that of colonialism and modernity, for the Igbo society portrayed in the story seems to have lost its way. The hostile outbursts in its midst suggest that the organized violence so recently directed against a formidable enemy has now, in the post-war devastation, been re-directed against itself. The Enugu community may be seen to suffer a form of collective amnesia concerning communal solidarity, and the disastrous wages of violence. Still, a group that does exhibit social cohesion is the Iwegbu family, whose spirit of cooperative and productive labour appears to be one of Enugu's few vital signs. Perhaps the family's cooperative spirit accents the bitterness of its loss of a child during the war, but in any case, a notion that repeatedly occurs to the father and husband, Jonathan, does seem to make clear the heavy blow to the family of that death: having lost one child, he thinks, how abundantly should the lives that were spared be valued and how paltry by comparison are the material possessions that have been secured. The story's opening paragraph provides the initial iteration of this concept, with the narrator conveying Jonathan's thoughts: "He had come out of the war with five inestimable blessings—his head, his wife Maria's head and the heads of three out of their four children. As a bonus he also had his old bicycle—a miracle too but naturally not to be compared to the safety of five human heads."[21]

A version of this thought arises in Jonathan's mind two more times

prior to the climactic scene. He discovers that his family's small house is still standing despite the destruction everywhere around it, but still, "needless to say, even that monumental blessing must be accounted also totally inferior to the five heads in the family."[22] Then, when necessary repairs to the house are completed by a "destitute carpenter" whom Jonathan engages, the "overjoyed family" moves in "carrying five heads on their shoulders."[23] A reader may well sympathize with the Iwegbus' pleasure in these modest material triumphs, especially in light of what they have lost and their strenuous efforts to put their lives back in order.

Yet "Civil Peace" reminds us that a community's war-related wreckage cannot be offset merely by industriousness or financial improvement. Some weeks after they move back into their house, the Iwegbus stand to lose their hard-won assets when thieves knock on their door at night and "violently awaken" them, demanding first to be let in and then to be given one hundred pounds. A threatened consequence of doing otherwise is an encounter with "guitar boy," which the thieves demonstrate: "a volley of automatic fire rang through the sky."[24] The entire scene dramatizes the general disorder that has befallen Enugu in the aftermath of war, for what makes the greatest impression is not so much the desperation that motivates the thieves, but rather the collapse of community support for the Iwegbus and the brazen advantage the thieves take of that collapse.

This scene is a remarkable literary evocation of a world turned upside down and may be helpfully viewed through the lens of Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin's exploration of concepts associated with carnival. Bakhtin indicates that carnival's unruly and irreverent humour partly reflects social affliction, and that an "essential element" of carnival is "a reversal of hierarchic levels."[25] Some of the drama and macabre humour of the robbery of the Iwegbus arises from multiple reversals of this nature. Although the thieves are, by their unnamed leader's testimony, poor in comparison to Jonathan and Maria's family ("But we sef no get even anini"[26]), they are the ones directing the course of the transaction. More pointedly the thieves, who speak Nigerian Pidgin, take over from the family the responsibility of calling on neighbours and police for assistance, highlighting in their effrontery the breakdown of social support in the war-shattered town:

> Maria was the first to raise the alarm, then [Jonathan] followed and all their children.
>
> *"Police-o! Thieves-o! Neighbours-o! Police-o! We are lost! We are*

dead! Neighbours, are you asleep?". . .

"You done finish?" asked the voice [of the leader] outside. "Make we help you small. Oya, everybody!"

"Police-o! Tief-man-o! Neighbours-o! we done loss-o! Police-o! . . ."

There were at least five other voices besides the leader's. . . .

"My frien," said [the leader] at long last, "we don try our best for call dem but I tink say dem all done sleep-o . . . So wetin we go do now? Sometaim you wan call soja? Or you wan make we call dem for you? Soja better pass police, No be so?"

"Na so!" replied his men. Jonathan thought he heard even more voices now than before and groaned heavily. His legs were sagging under him and his throat felt like sandpaper.[27]

Achebe extends the carnivalesque humour moments later when the leader reassures the Iwegbus through another striking conceptual reversal: "'We no be bad tief. We no like for make trouble.'" He continues: "'Trouble done finish. War done finish and all the katakata wey de for inside. No Civil War again. This time na Civil Peace. No be so?' 'Na so!' answered the horrible chorus."[28] In Bakhtin's view, "carnival . . . marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions, "[29] and the thieves in "Civil Peace" gain their practical and literary purchase from just this suspension in the post-war environment.

The term (and story title) "Civil Peace," like the scene itself, ironically acknowledges the war that continues within a ravaged community once the external threat has passed. Insofar as the term "peace" in this context actually signifies violence, it reinforces the concept of a world turned on its head. It attests to the resilience of aggressive urges and the fertile soil that nurtures them in economically, psychologically, and socially compromised environments. At the same time Achebe's carnivalesque treatment of the robbery may caution against dismissing entirely the leader's more hopeful-sounding remarks: the war is indeed finished along with certain of its troubles. Carnival, as Bakhtin observes, expresses "hopes of a happier future, of a more just social and economic order, of a new truth"; it represents "death and rebirth."[30] And while the robbery itself brings more trouble for the Iwegbus and a reminder of death, it also occurs partly because of their budding affluence, which, like the "water which had recently started running again in the

public tap down the road,"[31] is evidence of the town's renewal and which has provided some reason to believe that better days lie ahead.

Heightening the robbery scene's carnivalesque mood, which sharpens the war-related societal upheaval, is the thieves' Nigerian Pidgin, a form of discourse that contrasts with the Standard English spoken by Jonathan (and which may represent Igbo speech). Robert Wren observes that "in print when introduced amidst any non-pidgin environment, pidgin tends to have comic effect. Achebe used pidgin both for verisimilitude and for comedy."[32] Both of these traits emerge with the Pidgin spoken by the thieves in "Civil Peace." But Achebe pursues additional aims through his fictional uses of Pidgin, such as marking class distinctions and dramatizing the manoeuvres for power associated with these distinctions; these effects, too, are achieved by the differing linguistic registers in the robbery scene. Emmanuel Obiechina remarks that "in bureaucratic and domestic settings" involving West African literary characters, "low-income characters demonstrate their status of inferiority by speaking pidgin, while the middle-class characters generally emphasize their superior social position by speaking in standard English."[33] In the robbery scene, however, and elsewhere in Achebe's fiction, a "low-income" character's use of Pidgin may express insubordination or irreverence at the same time as it reveals a lower social status. Thus, Pidgin dialogue heightens the atmosphere of post-war social disorder on which the plot of "Civil Peace" partly hinges.

The fragile quality of social cohesion and trust is further accentuated by the unstable role of money. Although the Iwegbus can scarcely be called rich, the gauge of a family's socio-economic status is its community, and by that standard the Iwegbus are well off. Not only do they possess a house and a bicycle, they also have gained a certain solvency from their recent income-generating activities. Jonathan has made "a small fortune of one hundred and fifteen [Biafran] pounds" from his use of the bicycle as a taxi; the children have earned a few "real pennies" from the sale of mangoes to the soldiers' wives; Maria's preparation of "breakfast akra balls" has contributed to the "family earnings"; and "soldiers and other lucky people with good money" (that is, evidently, Nigerian money—the kind the soldiers' wives give the children) pay Jonathan for the palm-wine he mixes with water. Later Jonathan receives twenty Nigerian pounds in exchange for the Biafran money he turns in.[34]

Subsequently the thieves demand one hundred pounds of the Iwegbus,

and that is probably more than they actually possess, but they do appear to have more than the twenty pounds Jonathan received for the Biafran money. In order to rid the family of the thieves, Jonathan takes a shocking gamble: "'To God who made me; if you come inside and find one hundred pounds, take it and shoot me and shoot my wife and children. I swear to God. The only money I have in this life is this twenty pounds *egg-rasher* they gave me today.'"[35] While the leader agrees to take only the twenty pounds, his fellows think that Jonathan is bluffing: "There were now loud murmurs of dissent among the chorus: 'Na lie de man de lie; e get plenty money. . . . Make we go inside and search properly well. . . . Wetin be twenty pound?'"[36]

If, as it appears, Jonathan is indeed bluffing, then he has turned his own moral compass upside down, risking his life and that of his family to protect some material assets—having previously set the opposite valuation on these after the death of one of his children during the war. Perhaps, in that respect, he may be said to be suffering his own kind of amnesia concerning what he previously maintained was most important, in fact, sacred: "five inestimable blessings."[37] In all events the mere gesture of staking the lives of his family members as collateral in an encounter with a group of men bent on crime and possessing at least one automatic weapon seems foolish at the very least. Yet, after all, the operation of folly in a mad post-war world may be efficacious: the thieves do leave with the twenty pounds, and the next morning the Iwegbus resume their lives and income-generating endeavours.

Their tenacity in these endeavours helps us partially comprehend, if not condone, Jonathan's gamble in his encounter with the thieves. Having emerged from the sustained traumas and privations of war, the family succeeds in piecing together briefly a modest level of comfort and security, which not only is compelling in its own right but also represents the psychic reconstruction of their world. Returning to a state of destitution might well seem unendurable to Jonathan. Achebe actually reflects on just this kind of psychological dynamic in *A Man of the People*. Enjoying the luxurious accommodations of his politically corrupt host, the novel's narrator Odili, despite his hostility to the corruption in his newly independent African country, fully grasps its appeal. His meditation is rather allegorical in his circumstance but applies almost literally to Jonathan:

> A man who has just come in from the rain and dried his body and put on dry clothes is more reluctant to go out again than another who has been indoors all the time. The trouble with our

> new nation—as I saw it then lying on that [luxurious] bed—was that none of us had been indoors long enough to be able to say "To hell with it." We had all been in the rain together until yesterday.[38]

Jonathan, too, is afraid of going back into the rain—or worse than rain. Losing what few resources he and his family have laboriously gained since the end of the war looks to him, if not other family members, like a return to living death. And death seems close at hand when the thieves beset the family: "'We are lost, we are dead!' . . . Maria [Iwegbu] and the children sobbed inaudibly like lost souls."[39]

So Jonathan's apparently reckless words as the thieves threaten to enter his house are partly driven by fear. The fear that influences nations to adopt a war-like footing, to be willing to sacrifice the lives of many of its members, is related to the fear that drives Jonathan into a kind of psychological war with the thieves, one that entails the potential sacrifice of family members and himself. Elise Boulding speaks to this fear: "War culture itself is also based on fear—the fear of being dominated, destroyed by [the] enemy. It is a pathological form of the basic need for autonomy, for having one's own space, and its smothers the other basic human needs for nurturance, empathy. . . ."[40] Still, one cannot help but be struck by the dissonance of Jonathan's gamble with his prior notions of the surpassing importance of his family's lives and the comparative insignificance of material benefits. Offering those lives to the thieves as forfeit to dissuade the men from entering may indicate that he is protecting something in his home that he values besides those lives.

His apparent hypocrisy links him to key male characters in Achebe's two other war-related stories and helps thematically bind the three tales. "Sugar Baby's narrator, Mike, confronts Cletus, whose misery over the lack of real sugar has left him debilitated. Mike reveals that Cletus writes radio scripts that encourage the people to face war's hardships: "I really lost patience with him and told him a few harsh things about fighting a war of survival, calling to my aid more or less the rhetoric for which his radio scripts were famous."[41] Evidently one of war's apparently lesser hardships renders Cletus no match for his own rhetoric.

In "Girls at War" Reginald Nwankwo is a study in almost continuous, self-serving hypocrisy—a hypocrisy sharpened by his privileged position in the Ministry of Justice. Though married, Nwaknwo begins an affair with

Gladys, who, in spite of her own self-indulgence, exposes Nwankwo's self-serving pronouncements and actions—as when he directs his driver to pick up the youthful Gladys rather than a desperate old woman. Gladys remarks simply but pointedly: "I thought you would carry her."[42] In one instance Gladys's Pidgin, though superficially lighthearted, underscores the untruthful quality of Nwankwo's comments about who she is and what he wants from her:

> "Here is one man who doesn't want you to do that. Do you remember that girl in khaki jeans who searched me without mercy at the checkpoint?"
>
> [Gladys] began to laugh.
>
> "That is the girl I [Nwankwo] want you to become again. Do you remember her? No wig. I don't even think she had any earrings. . . ."
>
> "Ah, *na lie-o*. I had earrings."
>
> "All right. But you know what I mean."
>
> "That time done pass. Now everybody want survival."[43] (emphasis added)

Although she adopts a jesting tone, Gladys reveals the truth to Nwankwo when she says he lies ("na lie-o"). Similar to the thief whose Pidgin speech reinforces his irreverent address of Jonathan, Gladys's Pidgin supports her momentarily defiant response to Nwankwo; it also exemplifies Achebe's recurring deployment of this language to dramatize truth speaking to power.[44]

Gladys's honesty and compassion extend into action, getting her killed by a bomb at the end of the story while Nwankwo, who flees his responsibilities to others at the critical moment, survives. On this pessimistic note Achebe ends the longest of the war-related tales, the one that addresses most extensively the problem of hypocrisy. That trait, which reflects a certain self-serving distortion of principles, embodies Achebe's tendency in the three tales to represent war as an extension of egotism and untruth. Why be surprised that a family man risks the lives he counts as blessings to avoid losing money to thieves when a military ruler oversees the slaughter of more than a million people to avoid losing them as citizens? Such hypocrisy overlaps with amnesia: the family man and the ruler both forget their bond with those whose lives are at stake. Hypocrisy and amnesia are lapses—of values

and memory, respectively—lapses whose convergence in Achebe's stories occasion madness: Jonathan's madness in offering his family's lives as collateral; Cletus's madness, in destroying his relationship with Mercy, "a nice, decent girl because he wouldn't part with half-a-dozen cubes of . . . sugar"[45]; and Nwankwo's madness in believing that somehow the young woman he is with should not be diminished by a war that has diminished everyone else, including himself.

In "Girls at War," Achebe describes the atmosphere that developed when the civil war had raged for over a year and a half, when death and starvation were rampant:

> It was a tight, blockaded and desperate world but none the less a world—with some goodness and some badness and plenty of heroism which, however, happened most times far, far below the eye-level of the people in this story—in out-of-the-way refugee camps, in the damp tatters, in the hungry and bare-handed courage of the first line of fire.[46]

In all three of the war-related tales Achebe asks whether the "goodness" in our nature can offset "the badness": the distortions of truth and justice that people routinely construct and that allow them to perpetrate unjust violence in the first place. Each of the stories attests to the varied ways that the civil war without is an extension of the civil war within. "Civil Peace" reminds us, moreover, that the violence that has raged between communities at war continues afterwards within a single, defeated community. The possessiveness, self-centredness, and irrationality that trigger war assert themselves in the post-war landscape of "Civil Peace" and potentially augur a return to the enormities of senseless destruction.

Yet the means of escape from such a cycle of violence may also be discerned in "Civil Peace": it consists of the courage and social stability to conduct rational dialogue between competing parties and to pursue the justice of an equitable distribution of resources. This means of escape accords with Boulding's observation that "humans are not condemned to endless rounds of violence and counterviolence. But to break that cycle requires much more attention to human development . . . as well as to national and regional institutions."[47] "Civil Peace" dramatizes the human habits that perpetuate violence, but in the Iwegbu family's cohesive and determined efforts to survive and flourish, which continue during and after the robbery, the story presents, too, a microcosm of the collective human bonds and

strength that promote human development rather than destruction.

ENDNOTES

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The Art of Peace in Senegal: Aboulaye (Pape) Tall's "Adélia" and Anne Piette's "Commandos Insolites"

M. Kathleen Madigan

In September 2003, I flew to Africa as a Fulbright scholar to teach literature and foreign language pedagogy, and to collaborate with writers on producing a collection of short stories. Though I did not know any authors there personally, I knew what I wanted to accomplish with them: to improve the image of African women through stories. While Senegalese literature had already depicted women demonstrating strength and grace in challenging circumstances, reading about a woman jumping into a well in response to ill treatment motivated me to undertake this project. The image of woman as bearer and nurturer of life was evoked in my interviews with authors. In two of the short stories created for the collection, characters use stories to explain their climactic decision to find the face of oneself in "the Other," or vice versa, instead of demonising the enemy, and thus nurture life. The arts, including literary art, are important resources in identifying ways to move beyond the fear and conflict born of ignorance, and of birthing community by highlighting what binds us.

The embedded stories in Anne Piette's "Commandos Insolites" ("Unusual Commandos")[1] and Pape Tall's "Adélia" reveal recognition of the enemy in ourselves, and of our kinship to the one firing on us, as compelling motives to curb violence. While the authors were not asked specifically to write about peace for this collection of short stories, they produced literary art on this theme compelling enough to merit attention in and of itself. In addition, description and analysis of these stories offer insight into teaching about conflict resolution through tales which hold up a mirror, and which invite us to consider the enemy.

While my initial project focused on the theme of women and social justice rather than peace, the two are of course connected, and the fundamental reason for the exchange that supported my stay in Senegal emanates from the

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will to prevent war: Senator William J. Fulbright believed that if people were afforded a way to learn deeply about each other through scholarly exchange, lasting relationships could be developed that would deepen understanding and support among nations.

In this case, building a relationship with each author with whom I was to work was essential to earning trust; this happened through numerous visits, conversations, and correspondence about the proposed stories. As we got to know each other, we also shared stories of our lives. While many writers were willing to participate, and also referred others, ultimately, nine authors produced mesmerising tales of struggle and triumph. Over eight hundred vocabulary notes, questions, and suggestions for activities later, the stories appeared in the US as a textbook: *Neuf Nouvelles: Hommage aux Sénégalaises (Nine Short Stories: Homage to Senegalese Women)*.[2] These stories will always be embedded in and enrich my life, as I hope they will those of the readers who will learn from them. I hold out hope that in the coming years especially the youth will find access to these stories in Africa.

In order to understand these stories, it may be helpful to consider briefly some historical and political background. On the westernmost coast of the continent, Senegal is sometimes called the gateway to Africa. Its capital city, Dakar, is an artistic centre, boasting numerous painters, artisans, musicians (including extraordinary drummers), and writers recognised for their talent. Religious practice pervades the culture, from calls to prayer to the observation of feast days. During my time in Dakar during the 2003-2004 academic year, I was impressed by the interreligious support in a country in which the Muslim population is estimated at 94 percent (Islam has existed in Senegal since the eleventh century), the Christian population at 5 percent (mostly Roman Catholic), and those practicing indigenous beliefs at 1 percent.[3]

French traditions continue to influence African culture, and French remains the country's official language.[4] While other forces, such as those of the Portuguese, Dutch, and English, had competed for power there in the past, the French colonised Senegal in the nineteenth century. Gaining independence in 1960, the Senegalese elected a Catholic member of the Sereer ethnic group, Léopold Sédar Senghor, as its first "poet-president." Senghor had been a founding figure of the 1940s intellectual negritude movement in Paris and wanted to combine the best of African and Western traditions within his own culture.[5] His legacy resides in his lyric poetry as much as in his political accomplishments. His art with words illustrates the dignity and

beauty of his people, and continues to be treated with respect and appreciation as a strong and living contribution to the Senegalese intellectual and artistic tradition.

Generally speaking, Senegal enjoys a reputation for stability, and has been called one of the most democratic of African regimes.[6] In fact, the country is known for its engagement in many international and regional peacekeeping efforts, including UN missions in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda. Recently, Senegal also participated in the African Union (AU) mission in Darfur.[7] Until recently, political leaders since independence have gained and relinquished power democratically and with dignity. After re-election in 1978, Senghor stepped down from power peacefully in 1980, the first African president to do so voluntarily.[8] Abdou Diouf, Senghor's prime minister, served as Senegal's second president until March 2000, when Abdoulaye Wade was elected.

Unfortunately, the gracious relinquishing of power modelled by Senghor is no longer the norm in Senegal. In 2007, Wade was re-elected, but the June legislative polls were boycotted due to complaints of fraud.[9] Concern has been expressed about how long Wade will continue to hold on to power and whether he will attempt to transfer it to his son, Karim Wade, a former businessman and Member of Parliament.[10] Tensions also continue between the current president's government and the region of Casamance, the setting for Pape Tall's story.

Multiple ethnic groups make up the people called the Senegalese. Creative ways of dealing with tensions among groups include the "teasing relationships" between ethnic groups, a model for using humour to keep each other in check while appreciating difference.[11] For instance, a member of one group may tease his ethnic "cousin" about eating a lot of one kind of food or about past social hierarchies to buttress the former's alleged claim to superiority.

Anne Piette's writing focuses on the traditions of the Diola, and Pape Tall references several ethnicities and related languages in his story. Six of the country's national languages, Wolof, Sereer, Diola, Pulaar, Soninke, and Mandinka, are associated with these ethnic groups. An estimated 50 percent of the Senegalese speak Wolof, with 20 to 30 percent speaking it as a second language.[12] Sereer speakers make up about 15 percent of the population and the majority of Senegal's Christian population today. The Lebu, a sub-group

of the Wolof-Sereer currently inhabiting the Cape Vert Peninsula as the original landowners of today's capital city of Dakar, speak Wolof.[13] The Halpulaaren (also called Fula, Fulani, Fulbe, or Peul), speakers of Pulaar, a transnational language, make up almost one-quarter of the population and are spread across the western half of the Sahelo-Sudanic zone.[14] Major Mande languages are also spoken in Senegal.[15]

The Diola make up about 3.5 percent of Senegal's population and inhabit the lower Casamance region, which is separated from the rest of Senegal by the Gambia. Before French colonisation, the Diola built up networks of autonomous villages, lineages, and spiritual associations instead of kingdoms or states, possibly as a defensive response to suffering from heavy slave raiding in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which they resisted. Today, like the Sereer, the Diola are mostly Catholic, having adopted Christianity primarily during the time of French colonial rule, though they had been in contact with Portuguese Catholics centuries before.[16] Historical factors contributing to the discontent and conflict that make up the setting of Pape Tall's story include artificial borders set up by former colonial powers, the physical isolation of the region, land use agreements, perceptions of threat to cultural and religious preservation, and a perceived lack of government investment in and attention to the region.[17]

The feared enemy of the soldiers in Pape Tall's "Adélia" is the Movement of Democratic Forces in Casamance (MFDC). Created in 1947, it contested the affiliation of Casamance with Senegal and reappeared in the 1980s. A Catholic priest and abbot, Father Augustin Diamacoune Senghor, claimed the independence of Casamance in letters sent to Presidents Senghor (whom he had supported but later felt had betrayed Casamance), and then Diouf. A march in 1982 marked the beginning of repression and an ethnically based armed separatist insurrection in the Lower Casamance. Father Diamacoune was arrested three days before the march, condemned to five years in prison, and then arrested again for several months in 1990. In this same year, Father Diamacoune wrote a letter to the Secretary General of the UN reaffirming Casamance's struggle for independence, but "by the peaceful path" (*par la voie pacifique*).[18]

Increasing poverty, the proliferation of anti-personnel mines and small arms, and the fragmentation of organisation among rebel groups exacerbated the violence.[19] Because of the conflict, many feared ground travel in the region, and some opted for the Joola ferry that operated between Ziguinchor,

the regional capital of Casamance, and Dakar. On 26 September 2002, the overcrowded ferry sank; it had been destined for the nation's capital city, and was carrying many students and teachers returning for the school year. Along with other factors, including general fatigue, this tragedy contributed to distaste for continued conflict.

Father Diamacoune, secretary general of the MFDC since 1991 and its president (some called him "honourary president") since 2001, signed a peace agreement with the authorities in Dakar in 2004. And shortly before his death in 2007, he issued a call "to continue to work for a definitive peace in Casamance" (*continuer à travailler pour une paix définitive en Casamance*).[20]

Despite a period of ensuing calm, violence continues to flare up at times in what has been termed one of Africa's longest-standing and "most complicated" conflicts.[21] The continuing tension has caused strife and loss of life within recent decades.[22] Suggestions for gaining and maintaining a lasting peace have focused on development in the Casamance region, including continued reconstruction of villages, logistical reduction of isolation, a constructive political economy, and regional as well as international aid.[23]

Both short stories, "Adélia" and "Commandos Insolites," take place in Casamance, but they address different types of tension. One focuses on the conflict between the separatists and the government outlined above, while the other concerns a problem with thieves from another village. Through interlocking stories, the works also address universal themes such as the importance of community and human kinship.

The poet, dramatist, and independent researcher Abdoulaye "Pape" Tall, author of "Adélia," has worked with children and urban youth within his own association, *Afrique Internationale Culture/Doomu Africa (Enfants d'Afrique)*, and as a volunteer with organisations such as the UN and UNESCO. Since 1985, he has been affiliated with *Enda Tiers Monde* (Environmental Development Action in the Third World). He began his interview with me by stating that "Adélia" describes not only the rebellion in Casamance, but all wars, whether military, social, or cultural. According to Tall, the human race can be saved from this "infernal tension" (*tension infernale*) by love, with its purity in relationships, sincerity, and generosity.

For Tall, woman incarnates these virtues in giving birth to life. Nothing is more barbarous, he believes, than to kill this life in wars; he also believes that the motivations for this destruction arise from lack of knowledge of

one another and the contempt (*mépris*) that results from that. He adds that whereas virility pushed to its limit can become a power that dominates and destroys, his two sources of inspiration, woman and the sea, are inexhaustibly generous and inspirational.[24]

In particular, Tall praises Diola women, stating that in addition to exhibiting beauty, love, a noble sense of human relations, fidelity, friendship, solidarity, and devotion, they are the first to be praised and saluted for their determination in working for peace, especially since they are heeded and play important roles at all levels of society. Tall believes that women's action of marching to express their desire to end violence contributed to both the government's political will to undertake negotiations, and to the positive response of the rebels. He also expressed his condolences to the families of the victims of the drowning of the Joola ferry, a consequence of the conflict.[25]

As to the multiplicity of ethnicities in Senegal, Tall believes that living together harmoniously in diversity (*cohabiter*) is "the challenge that God has issued to us" (*le défi que nous a lancé Dieu*), and that to be successful in this is to live in paradise. In Tall's view, love, the antidote to hate, is nourished by "the savours of difference" (*les saveurs de la différence*). The will to dominate, to strive to be the best or most intelligent race, ethnicity, or country, falsifies everything.

Tall sees the overall situation in Senegal as calm, but in addition to rebellion, recognizes that disputes surface at times among ethnicities, between cattle-raisers and farmers (*cultivateurs*), among fishers, and others. However, rather than becoming preoccupied about the possible domination of the Wolof language, for example, he finds it marvellous when those of one linguistic group learn to adapt to other cultures and languages, stating that a Diola or Pulaar who speaks two or three languages is intellectually rich, and at an advantage over the person who only speaks one. In general, Tall is persuaded that identification as a human being comes first, and that plurality in national and ethnic identity is enriching.[26] Accordingly, he considers all those of Casamance to be his relatives, as are those of all the many ethnicities represented in his family by "the magic of love and marriage."[27]

In his short story "Adélia," Tall's main character and narrator is a soldier on the side of the Senegalese government, fighting in foreign territory in Casamance. The first line, "*Ici même les feuilles des arbres sont des ennemies*" (Here, even the leaves of the trees are enemies), and those following show

that the territory is unknown to the narrator. The state of tension is depicted by the fact that even a soft noise of the trees shaken by the wind is enough to make the soldiers jump. That very day, the soldiers had heard the call of the President for peace and a return to negotiation, and in turn, a response for peace and a call to negotiation on the part of the chief of the rebels.

The author uses a story within a story to plead for a de-escalation of violence and to reflect the tragic consequences of war. The soldier becomes storyteller, telling about a comrade on the northern front who had been killed by mistake by a fellow soldier, who in turn became deaf and mute as a consequence. Allusion is also made to the sad story of children jumping on hidden mines in a soccer field and dying or becoming disfigured.

The soldier-narrator's lover, a Diola woman named Adélia, had told him about the luxurious vegetation of the region, but in these circumstances, with guns drawn everywhere, even the fruit appears as a false and deathly monstrosity: "The mango trees, banana trees, orange trees, and other delights which offer themselves at the point of our guns are like monsters, phantoms dressed with the mask of death. The forms distort themselves and lie to us about their intentions."[28] The threat of instant destruction changes the potential destroyer's perception of even the earth's natural products from that which nourishes and gives life to stimuli of deadly fear and horror. The mangroves, formerly imagined as beautiful and full of life, are now seen as evil and full of traps. The ensuing passage is poetic: the growing darkness is expressed as the sun no longer wanting to accompany the soldiers in their blind (*aveugle*) advance because of their refusal to see the beauty of the landscape.[29] They are at odds with all of life, and the sensory descriptions exhibit this alienation.

Nostalgically, the soldier-narrator thinks back to a visit to the Soumbedioune fish market with Adélia, who was laughed at by the Lebu women who did not speak Diola and could tell that French was not Adélia's native language, calling her "*tubaab bu nul*" or black foreigner. One woman remarked that the Diola are not familiar with ceebu jën (a popular fish and rice dish, at times called the national dish of Senegal). Nevertheless, the market remains an ideal place in the mind of the narrator, who prizes above all the cosmopolitanism of all races and colours in that scene, including the tourists. The narrative flashback provides a sort of *mise en abîme* or mirroring of both the challenges of living among multiple ethnicities and customs, and the beauty of diversity.

In the typical everyday setting of the market, Adélia had called the soldier a dreamer; here, in the military setting of regional and ethnic conflict, the narrator states, he would kill them all with his "enraged rifle" (*mon fusil enragé*). In this intense atmosphere of fear of attack and pressure to fire on the enemy, the soldier who normally appreciates contemplating natural and cultural dignity struggles to maintain composure. The arms as weapons against humanity are personified and implicated in the destruction.[30]

The narrator then remembers how he and Adélia had grilled fish outdoors; he had written a poem in the sand for her before they made love. As if talking to her now, he pleads with her to name her future child of mixed races (*métis*) "*Baneex*" (when the crops will be harvested), to take him everywhere, and to tell him the truth about the loss of ethnic diversity and, indeed, the human race, due to its pride. In a reversal of the earlier celebration of diversity, the narrator states that the child will have no ethnicity, caste, region, or territory to defend. He wants Adélia to tell the child about the effects of lies, jokes that hurt, scorn, and arrogance. The market thus becomes symbolic of the best and worst of ethnic diversity, wonderful in its variety and richness, but painful in its exclusion and pejorative remarks pertaining to difference. The racially mixed child he is imagining will have difference erased, whether of race, social standing, or region, and thus will have nothing exclusive to defend.[31]

Returning to the current military scene, the commander orders the soldiers to shoot at everything that moves, and does not even finish the sentence when firing rings out: with "an appalling cry of distress" (*un cri de détresse effroyable*) that continues to haunt the soldier, monkeys, birds, mangoes, other regional fruit, and branches drop with a "deafening noise" (*un bruit assourdissant*), covering the sickened, "discouraged ground" (*le sol écoeuré*). Once again, all of nature feels the effects of war. At first, the soldiers begin to laugh like mad, but the narrator is seized with the need to sing a lullaby, using names from many different ethnicities in an inclusive way.[32]

Moving into a state beyond fear, the soldier cries out to everyone to sing songs of life, with voices animated with the happiness of living, as an offering to death to drown out the sound of the cannon. He requests that the lullaby be sung in all languages, hoping that his and Adélia's child will one day engrave on his tomb sweet words of eternal fraternity that neither the President nor the chief of the rebels will be able to erase. As the commanding officer yells that he is crazy, the narrator asks for yet more singing,

and taking a tuft of "assassinated" leaves with a defiant gesture, he stuffs the mouth of his "murderous rifle" (*fusil meurtrier*). As his comrades pounce on him, the former soldier cries out that he himself is the enemy (*C'est moi l'ennemi, c'est moi l'ennemi*).[33] A parallel is made with the story of the soldier who fired on his fellow soldier by mistake.

The narrator of "Adélia" experiences a *prise de conscience* or awakening to the absurdity of his role in fighting "the enemy." The fact that the soldiers have been commanded to shoot at anything that moves—in other words, anything living—reveals to him that he is ultimately shooting against himself. Instead of seeing clearer lines of demarcation, he sees more fully that in fighting against an ethnicity that is part of his kin, he is destroying his own family. In a greater sense, then, the story can be applied to the human family. As the story ends, the narrator has become a pacifist. He seems to think that taking this position could mean the end of his life, for he imagines his child writing on his tomb in the future. But by refusing to continue shooting, the soldier is convinced that he is at least halting senseless violence.

By writing this story, Pape Tall pleads for more appreciation of different ethnicities and also for less hurtfulness, including that resulting from deprecating words. The description of darkness, error, and unnecessary death as part of the soldier's life, compared with the peaceful, loving, and life-giving relationship he enjoyed with a Diola woman, makes the commander's claim that he is crazy ring false. The narrator accuses himself of being the enemy; that self-accusation calls into question the role of his comrades, as well as those fighting on the other side.

In Anne Piette's story, "Commandos Insolites," the protagonists are neither complete pacifists nor passive, but the leader of the women also evokes a story about the past and kinship to reduce violence. Anne Piette, of French origin and a long-time resident of Senegal, first in Dakar and more recently in Casamance, is recognised by Pape Tall as Senegalese, or "*casamançaise*," and a contributor to national and international peace.[34] In my interview with her, she spoke of becoming a part of another culture as an opening to the world, and as increasing understanding and enrichment in terms of superimposed identities. Thus, becoming a cultural *métis*, or hybrid, enables one to act as a sort of bridge or ferryman between cultures, and as a citizen of the world. With regard to the story's setting and where the characters gather, she still feels a sense of magic, peace, and harmony when she finds herself next to a traditional thatched cottage in the villages

of Casamance.[35]

When asked about the role of the Diola women of Casamance, Piette remarked that she has always been impressed by their assurance, autonomy, and equality with men. In fact, rather than ask their husbands' permission, they simply inform them (*Nous, nous informons nos maris*). She also admires their work in growing and harvesting rice. Diola women think of other communities as part of the human family, particularly because at times they remarry in a different village after becoming widowed or leaving a spouse. Thus, they do not want to run the risk of cousins, even distant ones, killing each other. In general, she feels that these women also take things into their own hands when their husbands fail to resolve problems, though she is careful to state that she is not speaking about the Casamance conflict between the rebels and the government, which she characterizes as beyond everyone's ability to resolve.[36]

The action in "Commandos Insolites" takes place in an isolated village, Bussana. The tension is caused by cattle thieves who seize booty from herdsmen and then cross the border. The village women quickly begin to strategise. Normally, for the sake of nephews and allies living in the surrounding villages, they would try negotiating before taking vengeance. In this case, however, there is no proof of who committed the crime, and thus no specific party with whom to negotiate. The deliberations concentrate on whether to release the "secret weapon." They prefer not to use this weapon in minor conflicts, but they must act, as entire herds of cattle are disappearing. Livestock is precious and needed because although many villagers have left to work in the city or across the border, they still return for familial and social ceremonies.

The women agree that the poachers merit punishment but question whether it is necessary to kill them, as the men are preparing to do. What makes them wonder is the fact that the *récits* or stories (narratives) of their grandmothers are still very *vivaces* or lively in their spirits. Rather than turn a blind eye to the brutal force that the village men intend to use, the women decide to use the a milder version of the means by which their ancestors confronted the enemy. Two women set out for the thatched cottage of the elder woman Akintomagne and explain that the men plan to unleash all their deadly "little allies."[37]

The character Kangoussi then shares a story from her childhood, which featured a similar conflict. Also there, the men planned to respond in ways

that proved fatal to the thieves and some of the stolen cattle. Akintomagne is also reminded that she has grandchildren here and there, "a little bit everywhere" (*des petits-fils un peu partout*), and so, as in Tall's story, the implication is that to do violence to the robbers would be to rob family of life as well. As a result, the women convince her to release only a small part of the secret weapon to which she has access, believing that the cattle thieves will flee, fearing further use of the deterrent against them. After advancing towards the little wood cabin and speaking sacred words, Akintomagne emerges with a sort of moving armour about her arms and hands, and after murmuring further incantations, the secret defence is launched.[38]

All happens as planned. The men, suspicious because of the whispering of the women, wonder what has happened to the thieves, who have been seen near the village. But the village women keep the secret, and their husbands, content to think they are feared, do not ask questions. The women, unsure that the men can bear thinking that women worked out a solution better than they did, let the men believe that they have solved the problem. The thieves return to their village empty-handed, and the elders recount how no one survived the secret attack in the past. Only in the last line is it revealed that the secret weapon is bees![39]

Thus, in Anne Piette's story, women play an active role in reducing violence among the villages. Their aim is to protect themselves and their way of life by employing a psychological tactic that will translate into a minimum amount of pain. Indeed, in this case, there is no loss of life, but it is the fear of loss of life that keeps the perpetrators at bay. Furthermore, the women are willing to forego receiving credit or praise for their actions in order to preserve the esteem in which the men hold their ability to protect their own; silence and lack of recognition in this regard are the prices of peace. The women are willing to make this sacrifice, knowing that this type of labour pain will save lives in their own and in surrounding villages. Ultimately, though, while women lead the way here, the art of peacekeeping transcends gender, as it transcends neighbourhoods, for in the case of the first story, "Adélia," the author who created the peacemaking character is male. The author demonstrates that crafting peace entails using all of our wits, talent, and art to remind us of what we have in common and what is at stake.

Both Pape Tall's "Adélia" and Anne Piette's "Commandos Insolites" are powerful tales of stances taken to reduce violence, the result of lessons learned through reflections on stories. In "Adélia," the soldier-narrator

becomes conscious of his lack of knowledge of himself as perpetrator, and throws away his rifle as a first step toward reducing the insidious effects of war. Nature and its loss, as a result of the soldiers' attack on it in response to his commander's orders, have helped the narrator to see that the life even on the enemy side is part of his own life. Though he does not anticipate a happy ending for himself, he does hold out hope for the future, for he believes that Adélia can teach their son about valuing other ethnicities and traditions through consciousness of brotherhood.

In Piette's story, the women leaders of the village find a way to prevent fighting, stop thievery, and keep the pride of the men intact through an ancient means of self-defence coupled with calculation of proportion and psychology. Their strategy includes assessment of emotions, including how others will react when attacked by the bees, as well as their own belief, reinforced through story, that the enemy is not so easily dissociated from family or oneself. To kill a thief could be to kill a relative, in which case the villagers would rob life from their own family. The men of their village, unaware of what really transpired and assuming that their power kept the thieves of the other villages away, do not consciously increase in understanding of conflict resolution. But perhaps a certain nagging feeling of wondering if that is all that put off the criminals will eventually bring them to further reflection. In other words, the peacekeepers of the village can one day tell the story of how lives were spared through acting on lessons drawn from the tales of their grandmothers. Both artists pay special homage also to the relationship between the arts and peacemaking. In Tall's story, the narrator offers a love poem to the Diola woman Adélia, thereby modelling the appreciation of one ethnicity by another. The lullaby he sings, which he desires to be sung in all languages, is music to assuage pain and fear; in this way, it soothes in the maternal tongue and at the same time accents eternal fraternity.

In Piette's story, the occasion for the expected thievery and conflict is the villagers' celebration of the harvest festival, when traditional dance precedes a wrestling match between those who are returning to the village from the other places where they have worked (*les émigrés*) and those who have remained (*les sédentaires*). Within the story, Piette inserts a scene that models how two groups of people within the village work out their differences with the traditional arts. Just when the robbers hope the villagers are most distracted by the celebration, the women leaders take charge and ward off an attack by means of a defence they know about through oral tradition,

using storytelling to convince others to mitigate violence. The arts, whether music, dance, poetry, or narrative, enable us to live as the Other for a moment and to return to ourselves with a changed vision.

Piette's and Tall's stories and those embedded in them stress the interconnectedness of the human family and the bonds among us. We live for such integrating stories, because they connect us to family, to ourselves, and ultimately to the opposition, interior or exterior. These lessons can be drawn from pertinent stories of any culture or tradition, recounting local or international scenes in which an individual person, group, or nation comes to terms with another.[40] This is not to say that peacekeeping is simple. On the contrary, conflicts resulting in polarisation are complex, yet certain types of art can penetrate across barriers to reveal and remind us of what we have—and are—in common, in unique and powerful ways.

Pape Tall's "Adélia" and Anne Piette's "Commandos Insolites" offer particularly striking illustrations of how lines of demarcation in ethnic conflict and between villages become blurred as greater consciousness of the interconnectedness of the human family comes into focus. They demonstrate how a member of one ethnicity or village may rise above division or even ethnic difference to become a citizen of the world (*citoyen/citoyenne du monde*).[41] Granted, the stories from the past from which lessons are drawn are sometimes grim, but as Simon Wiesenthal has said, "Never think there is an easy way to make an end to such bitter memories. Only know that hope lives when people remember."[42] Pride of power becomes replaced by lyric humility in the art of creating citizens of the human heart. Both Tall and Piette offer their art in testimony to the value of peacekeeping efforts. Furthermore, they challenge us to seek and retell those embedded stories of grandmothers and peers that warn against ignoring human bonds and call forth the art of peace.

ENDNOTES

1 My translations from the French into English throughout.

2 M. Kathleen Madigan, ed., *Neuf nouvelles: hommage aux Sénégalaises* (Eatontown, NJ: Academic, 2008).

3 "Senegal," *The World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sg.html.

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2008), 1-2.

5 Ross, *Culture and Customs*, 23-27.

6 Sheldon Gellar, *Senegal: An African Nation between Islam and the West* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995), 21.

7 US Department of State, Background Note: Senegal, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2862.htm.

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10 Juma Kwayera, "Political Power: Keeping it in the Family," *The Standard for Fairness and Justice* (27 September 2009), http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/specialreports/InsidePage.php?id=1144025019&cid=259&.

11 M. Kathleen Madigan, *Senegal Sojourn: Selections from One Teacher's Journal* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010), 140 and http://www.sakho.com/country.html#Les%20hommes.

12 Ross, *Culture and Customs*, 7.

13 Ross, *Culture and Customs*, 8.

14 Ross, *Culture and Customs*, 9.

15 Ross, *Culture and Customs*, 11-12.

16 Ross, *Culture and Customs*, 10.

17 Emery Brusset, Marina Buch Kristensen, and Ndeye Baté Cissokho, "Evaluation of the USAID Peace-Building Program in Casamance and Sub-Region," Channel Research (01 June 2006): 5, pdf.usaid.gv/pdf_docs/PDACI085.pdf.

18 Elisa Drago, "L'abbé Diamacoune est mort," RFI (14 January 2007), http://www.rfi.fr/actufr/articles/085/article_48883.asp. See also Jean-Claude Marut, "Guinea-Bissau and Casamance: Instability and Stabilization," trans. Carolyn Norris, WriteNet (June 2001), http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/3bc5aa09c.pdf.

19 Brusset, "Evaluation," 5.

20 Drago, "L'abbé Diamacoune."

21 Brusset, "Evaluation," 5 and Binneh S. Minteh, "The Crisis in

Casamance, Southern Senegal: A Constructive Conflict Resolution Approach," *Senegambia News* (29 January 2009): 5, http://www.senegambianews.com/article/Education/Education/The_Crisis_in_Casamance_Southern_Senegal_A_Constructive_Conflict_Resolution_Approach/18558. See also Madigan, *Neuf nouvelles*.

22 Violence has flared as recently as March 2010; one soldier was killed and five injured in an attack on separatist rebels according to *IC Publications* (19 March 2010), http://www.africasia.com/services/news/newsitem.php?area=africa&item=100319132147.p7xtxnzd.php.

23 Brusset, "Evaluation," 5 and Minteh, "The Crisis in Casamance."

24 Madigan, "Entretien avec Pape Tall," in *Neuf Nouvelles: hommage aux Sénégalaises*, ed. M. Kathleen Madigan (Eatontown, NJ: Academic, 2008), 182.

25 Madigan, "Entretien avec Pape Tall," 184.

26 Madigan, "Entretien avec Pape Tall," 185-86.

27 Madigan, "Entretien avec Pape Tall," 183.

28 "Les manguiers, les bananiers, les orangers et autres délices qui s'offrent à la pointe de nos fusils sont comme des monstres, fantômes habillés du masque de la mort. Les formes se dénaturent et nous mentent sur leurs intentions."

29 Pape Tall, "Adélia," in *Neuf Nouvelles: hommage aux Sénégalaises*, ed. M. Kathleen Madigan (Eatontown, NJ: Academic, 2008), 193.

30 Tall, "Adélia," 193.

31 Tall, "Adélia," 195-97.

32 Tall, "Adélia," 197.

33 Tall, "Adélia," 197-98.

34 Madigan, "Entretien avec Pape Tall," 184.

35 Madigan, "Entretien avec Anne Piette," in *Neuf Nouvelles: hommage aux Sénégalaises*, ed. M. Kathleen Madigan (Eatontown, NJ: Academic, 2008), 144-46.

36 Madigan, "Entretien avec Anne Piette," 142-43.

37 Anne Piette, "Commandos Insolites," in *Neuf Nouvelles: hommage aux Sénégalaises*, ed. M. Kathleen Madigan (Eatontown, NJ: Academic, 2008), 150.

38 Piette, "Commandos Insolites," 151.

39 Piette, "Commandos Insolites," 152.

40 For instance, Greg Mortenson's *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace . . . One School at a Time* (Toronto: Penguin, 2007) and Greg Boyle's *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* (New York: Free Press, 2010) are packed with embedded stories that offer lessons for teaching about peace and our common humanity, whether through being nursed back to life and adopted as family before learning to let the natives lead in building schools for girls in their region, or learning about compassion from former gang members employed at Homeboy Industries. I have had the privilege to hear both of them speak, and they, as well as two artists, Juan Carlos Munoz Hernandez and Fabian "Spade" Debora, who have become part of Boyle's Homeboy Industries family and who recently exhibited and talked with us at our university, have influenced profoundly my thinking about peacemaking. Like Piette and Tall, they live their art. Special thanks as well to the anonymous reviewers of this article, who offered excellent support and suggestions.

41 Madigan, *Neuf Nouvelles*, "Entretien avec Anne Piette," 146.

42 http://motlc.wiesenthal.com/site/pp.asp?c=gvKVLcMVIuG&b=394687#bitternessandhope.

Razones De Vida by Vera Grabe: Pro-Peace Narrative or the Search for Memory

Constanza López-Baquero

While conflict and civil strife are commonplace for those who study Latin America, scholars generally consider the case of Colombia to be especially intractable. Rich in natural resources and strategically located between the Caribbean and the Pacific, Colombia has been, for over sixty years, a nation divided by war, with astounding numbers of displaced people, kidnapped children, disappearances, and extrajudicial killings. The nature of the Colombian conflicts ranges from drug-related violence and guerrilla warfare to paramilitary, military, and state terrorism. Violence has sent millions into exile; many journalists, writers, and judges have left after receiving threats while doing their jobs, and others have fled the country as a result of racial, gender, and sexual discrimination. Many who have remained in Colombia live in fear because they are targeted for their political beliefs, or for their involvement in human rights organizations or workers' unions. Academics who have analysed the labyrinthine nature of the country's history have found themselves compelled to explain that, contrary to what many may suppose, Colombians are generally a happy and hard-working people who, above all, desire to live in a peaceful country.

In the midst of this conflict, women have been deeply affected. About half of all the displaced people in Colombia are women. Their bodies have been considered spoils of war; many have been detained illegally, tortured, and killed; some have simply disappeared. Colombian women, in general, have had to endure great losses, including the deaths, kidnappings, and disappearances of their husbands, children, and other loved ones. Many have also taken the lead in denouncing impunity and claiming reparation, they have filled the streets demanding that the state protect them, and they have formed organizations for peace and justice. A few have written their personal memories, and by doing so, they have made visible the pain and

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wounds of the nation.

The following study focuses on a specific narration of memory and trauma, *Razones de vida* (2000) by Vera Grabe, which recounts the personal experience of a woman who fought in the guerrilla forces in Colombia.[1] This text joins a wide range of female narratives from Latin America and around the world that challenge totalizing discourses. It is exemplary for vividly illustrating the trials that women, including those who have themselves been combatants, undergo in situations of conflict and war. It is also an account of a woman who ultimately chose peace over war, and an exploration of the implications this choice has had in her life and her outlook for the future.

INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, women have taken the lead in the production of testimonial writing in Latin America, and the study of the genre has passed largely into the hands of feminist critics. The theories that have resulted from the feminist approach borrow from a variety of disciplines, including psychology, anthropology, history, and literature. This interdisciplinary approach is needed because these writings deal with memory, both personal and collective. These existing studies, however, continue to exclude Colombia, not for a lack of a cultural production by women addressing the multiple forms of violence that continuously affect the country, but due to a loss of memory. A topic of preoccupation among Colombian intellectuals is the amnesia that seems to afflict society; on one side, there has been a covert action on the part of the government to obscure official history, and, on the other, a collective forgetfulness through which the nation copes with the fallout of the accumulated conflicts.[2] Both of these processes—deliberate erasure and wilful forgetting—have obstructed the way to national reconciliation and the possibility of overcoming Colombia's traumas. However, personal memories and, in particular, those written by women, remind us that the nation cannot create a future starting from oblivion. Furthermore, Colombian women, the survivors and protagonists of violence, are not willing to participate in the reconstruction of the present without first confronting the past.

One of these voices is that of Vera Grabe, a leader of the *Movimiento 19 de abril* (M-19) guerrilla force, active in Colombia from 1970 to 1990. She participated in the group's 1990 demobilization and its subsequent transformation into the political party, *Alianza Democrática M-19* (AD-M19),

in the same year. As an elected congresswoman and senator she has been very active. She served as a member of the National Constituent Assembly, helping to write the Constitution of 1991 that replaced the outdated Constitution of 1886, and continues in the pacifist struggle today as director of the program *Pedagogía de Paz* in the Observatory for Peace. However, like perhaps all other ex-militants, Grabe has been marginalized from the historical discourse, annulled by both official history and by the gender discrimination to which she was originally subjected within the M-19 movement.

Grabe's writing represents a double transgression, at once re-evaluating history and doing so from a woman's perspective. Her book, *Razones de vida (Reasons for Living),* is a hybrid text that, through a variety of discursive modes, seeks personal and political reconciliation. By inscribing her experiences and those of other women, Grabe rewrites and reconstructs herself, appropriating spaces of reflection and dialogue. She pursues a politics of peace that will allow her to look to the future and build a place for herself in Colombia, the country that rejects her because it has been wounded by decades of fighting. At the same time, she seeks acceptance from her own daughter, whom she abandoned to embrace the revolutionary cause. From the intimate place of her own body, Grabe narrates all that is absent in the narratives of her male contemporaries, who, seeking to protect their revolutionary cause from mundane or bourgeois considerations (*cosas pequeño burguesas*), hide their feelings, their physical and moral suffering, and their sexuality. Grabe's narration is charged with corporality, vividly portraying the violence against the body through repeated references to her own body, the dead body of a comrade, the tortured and wounded body, and the social body, also wounded and tortured.[4] In this article, I first examine Grabe's narrative as a process of reconciliation both with her daughter and with Colombia. Then, I investigate the author's struggle to rediscover her identity through a literary reconstruction of her past militancy and her desire to create a personal and national space she can occupy. Lastly, I examine the meaning of the body in relation to personal and national trauma and memory. In a larger sense, my exploration of Grabe's narration illustrates how trauma narrations have a role in the reformulation of identities, communities, and nations. These texts demand attention and make visible not only a personal account but the collective struggles of women at the centre of war.

RAZONES DE VIDA AS A PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION

Like the majority of testimonies and female autobiographies, Grabe's text resists classification because it makes use of multiple means of expression and borrows from a variety of literary genres. This often results in such texts being categorized as minor literature or as non-literary. As Amy Kaminsky observes,

> All literary taxonomies tend to lose clarity at the edges and relegate certain borderline phenomena to anomaly. Since the classification of rebellious texts can in this way easily turn into repression, literary taxonomy should be looked upon warily by feminists or otherwise politically committed critics of Latin American literature. Insofar as literary identity (i.e., genre) is similar to human identity in that they both have to do with conforming to certain norms, and to the extent that borderline texts are analogous to marginalized people, the issue of classification is of considerable interest to feminist criticism.[5]

Grabe's narration is "anomalous" in this sense precisely because of the multiple literary and non-literary genres it encompasses and the specific function of each. Her text is at once a letter to her daughter, a written memory for herself, and a testimony addressed to the nation. These genres do not exist separately, but are interconnected; by complementing each other, they create a whole. Grabe's communication with her daughter is evidenced through visual means, as a series of italicized paragraphs addressed to a singular, second-person interlocutor (*tú*), inserted into the main narration.[6] The written memory and the testimony are not so easily discerned, but they serve as support to the letter to her daughter and together they constitute a proposal for reconciliation.

A central motif of the narration is the trauma of having abandoned her child. Grabe states, "If, from the depths of my heart someone would ask me the reason or feeling that guided me to elaborate this hard and difficult recounting of my life, fuller of gaps than of memories, . . . I would say that my inspiration was you, my daughter."[7] This expedition through memory, which originates in guilt, is transformed through the narration into a conciliatory project. Grabe asks herself whether she did the right thing when she left her child, and she concludes that she did what she believed was best. For the author, as well as for her contemporaries, maternity represented not only her own fulfilment, but also the realization of the revolutionary project:

"Being a mother was also an example of commitment because we had to fight for the country our children deserved, a better country than the one in which we had grown."[8] It was important to populate the country with new citizens who would consolidate the better future sought by the militants, and, at the same time, abandoning these children constituted the ultimate sacrifice for the country.

This belief is equally expressed in other narrations by women ex-guerrillas. Such is the case of María Eugenia Vásquez Perdomo, author of *My Life as a Colombian Revolutionary: Reflections of a Former Guerrillera,* who was also one of the founders of the M-19:[9]

> Maternity and participation in war are not compatible activities. Yet, your question is, more or less, the same one our children ask us. They ask, "Why did you have children if you knew that their lives would be in so much danger? Did you think of us?" I have only been able to answer that we had children because they were part of the future we dreamt of, and we never thought about death, but about life. When I was participating in an operative I was convinced that it was worth the risk so my children and all children could live in a better country.[10]

The utopian vision of these women contrasts with the more pragmatic view of their male superiors, according to whom maternity had to wait until the revolution had triumphed. For the women, this meant an imposition on their bodies and the control of their desires, and even more so when men themselves did not have to postpone fatherhood. In a letter addressed to her ex-lover, Jaime Bateman, Grabe states, "The great difference was that you, comrades, had both historical responsibility and children, because there were wives/mothers that took care of them and raised them well, with immense generosity and the clear goal of maintaining a lofty paternal image."[11]

Grabe fulfils her wish to be a mother but must leave Juanita, her baby, in the hands of others, an abandonment that has consequences later in the rejection and recrimination of the growing child. Therefore, as Ángela Robledo has pointed out, Grabe's writing can be seen as a "bridge"[12] between mother and daughter and, above all, the beginning of a dialogue that has been postponed by distance. This bridge also unites Grabe with the country that blames her for her actions, and which she feels she has wounded and abandoned.[13] In order to make this communication happen, Grabe creates a "mother narrator" that finds discursive means to explain to her adolescent

child the decisions she has taken in life. Juanita needs to understand the abandonment and the reasons for which the mother became a guerrilla fighter. This task is extremely arduous because her daughter has grown in a time when armed revolution is no longer an alternative and guerrilla fighters have been rejected by society as a whole.[14] Even more difficult is it to tell Juanita of the most controversial actions of the M-19 and her participation in them, because she must admit her responsibility for contributing to the national trauma. Furthermore, she must keep in mind the stigma that her daughter has to endure for the actions of her parents.

Carmiña Navia has noted that when speaking to her daughter of topics such as kidnappings, Grabe seems to have very few words; she does not know how to explain herself.[15] This lack of clarity is evident in her account of one of the most dramatic situations of recent Colombian history: the seizing of the Palace of Justice in 1985.[16] Grabe is conscious of the fact that she is rewriting history and that by putting her version on the page she will be judged.[17] In the case of the Palace of Justice, she offers us an ambiguous version. This is obviously a taboo topic, as evidenced by her silence and her insistence that her knowledge is limited because she was not present. Grabe can only hope her daughter will understand:

> I know of your capacity to understand without judging. To describe to you, my daughter, this painful episode—in which, for reasons of security and internal M-19 policy, I was not involved—is difficult. I must fill myself with courage and the light of truth. It is one of the most controversial and resonating historical-subversive acts in the political history of twentieth-century Colombia. . . . I appeal to the greatness of your heart that it may contribute to your understanding and I ask you to rid yourself of all prejudices and judgments.[18]

Her account of events at the Palace of Justice are inserted in the chapter *"Naciste en abril"* ("You were born in April"), which deals with the gestation of her daughter, and in which the life/death dyad provides a constant tension. On the one hand, the author lengthens her account of her pregnancy, and, on the other, she narrates briefly how comrades and friends, one by one, lose their lives. In trauma narrations, one of the greatest difficulties is expressing the pain caused by violence. In Grabe's case, the rapprochement with her daughter is at risk, and the same can be said in respect to the reconciliation with her readers, who are also victims of her actions.

Throughout the book Grabe makes an effort to justify her enlistment in the armed struggle. She has to explain her origins, her actions, her initial success in the political arena, and her later defeat. The trauma suffered is evident in the pain and the silences of the narration. Grabe can only speak after distancing herself physically and temporally, writing from voluntary exile and at the end of the century. She accepts her mistakes and the mistakes of the M-19, and keeps silent when unable to express her pain. At the same time, she is convinced that she has been obliterated from history and therefore must intervene and give her point of view. She exercises agency when she chooses what to say, when she speaks, and when she questions what has already been said. Her posture, after making an effort to recover her memory, is that of peace: "The particular point of view of my narration is not one of hate or guilt. It is one of peace."[19]

MILITANCY

Feminist criticism has promoted the analysis of trauma literature not as a fixed product but as a process, an exercise in which narrators reconstruct themselves through the act of remembering. Through autobiographic writing, women return to their origins in order to reencounter their past and reconstruct their history. In this way, travel—of various types—constitutes a central motif in Grabe's narration, with far-reaching implications for the re-formation and re-formulation of her identity. In one initial journey, she visits Germany, the land of her parents, defining herself as a bicultural subject and justifying her right to be and to feel Colombian. She recounts her travels within and beyond Colombia as a spokesperson for M-19. These travels eventually secured her a role of leadership and visibility within the organization. In a more abstract sense, *Razones de vida* itself represents two separate but related journeys: first, a physical journey, as Grabe distances herself physically from Colombia in order to remember her past, and second, an emotional process, as she seeks through the act of writing to rediscover her identity as a woman, something she was forced to repress due to her commitment to the revolutionary cause.

Grabe narrates simultaneously at least two militant struggles. In the first, she fights as part of the M-19, and in the second, she asserts herself in a world dominated by men. In order to legitimise herself and validate her cause, she must redefine herself, becoming a subject in constant change. Julia Kristeva proposes that the speaking subject who remembers is a "subject in

process," who is simultaneously judged by others and in a constant process of self-reconfiguration. In order to position herself, this subject must reconstruct herself through a combination of strategies of representation that comprise "fitting together, detaching, including, and building up 'parts' into some kind of 'totality.'"[20] Grabe reattaches the pieces of her life through a painful process of memory that gives meaning to her writing.

As a pioneer in the testimonial narrative of women guerrillas in Colombia, she knows that she has been excluded from history. Amid the plentiful material written about the M-19, very little has been said about the role of women or their experiences within the institution: "About women—where to begin? There were examples of those who gave up their children for the country or immolated themselves. What they felt, how they lived, when they felt doubt, when they made decisions—what do we know about any of that? It's a history that has not been written."[21] To address this gap, Grabe re-evaluates and rewrites history, asserting her own agency independent of the men who dominated the organization. She insists that she speaks from her own perspective, that she joined the institution for her own beliefs, and that she became a leader on her own merits. Her attempt at justification here responds in part to the fact that she contradicts what has been written by others—that Grabe rose in the ranks of the M-19 through the romantic relationship she maintained with the group's leader, Jaime Bateman.[22]

As the military is the place of men, one of the most difficult battles women must fight, in particular if they occupy a high rank, is finding their own voice, which must be of command, but without losing its female attributes. Melissa Herbert affirms that women in the military live "under the microscope" and with the tension of either being too feminine or too masculine. In order to be accepted, Grabe must renegotiate her femininity and chooses to become "one of the guys."[23] Since she belongs to a minority in the group, she must keep a good image, and at the same time, she seeks to vindicate her femininity.

While seeking her own female voice within the guerrilla front, Grabe also questions the moral double standard of those in command concerning sexuality. Of all armed forces in Colombia, the M-19 was considered the least *machista*, as Donny Meertens has pointed out, but even so, women were always in a disadvantageous position.[24] On the one hand, they exhibited a sexuality that appeared to be "liberal," and on the other, they were subordinated to men (sexuality was also enslaving). Concerning the military's

double morality, Francine D'Amico and Laurie Weinstein explain: "permitting—and even encouraging—heterosexual promiscuity for servicemen and prohibiting it for servicewomen is well established by decades of military policy and practice."[25] In *Razones de vida*, Grabe questions these practices, of which she herself has been a victim. Regarding her relationship with Bateman, for example, she complains about the doctrine of *compartimentación*, which obliges the guerrilla fighter to know only what is absolutely necessary, a policy convenient only to Bateman because he could visit his other lovers without having to give explanations.

After reflecting on her role and that of other women within the M-19, Grabe denounces the marginalization to which they were subjected. Experience and distance permit her to commiserate with other women like herself who sacrificed themselves for the institution and suffered gender discrimination. For example, she honours *La Chiqui*, killed in a military operation. Grabe laments that, in spite of her courage and commitment, she was punished for asserting her sexuality: "She was punished by the high command for leaving one of the leaders to be with a young poet. She was sad and sick, her days were numbered, and she wanted to spend them fighting. . . ."[26] Interestingly, that leader was Rosemberg Pabón, Grabe's own ex-lover and father of her daughter, Juanita. As in the case of Bateman, Pabón had a wife and children, and maintained extramarital relations, first with La Chiqui and later with Grabe.

Friendship with other women is a key element in Grabe's narration because her female friends are part of her memories; they have nurtured her, shared her sorrows during imprisonment, taken care of her daughter when she could not, and given her *muletas de optimismo* (crutches of optimism) when she was heartbroken.[27] She therefore gives them a voice by including in her text the letters they have written to her. These voices, strategically inserted, serve her as backing when she believes she has been treated unfairly or when her authority has been questioned. At the same time, they provide evidence that what she says is the truth. The letters, notes, and voices that Grabe interpolates in her text introduce us to others, remit us to the conversations of others, and show us different aspects of "reality." The history that she recounts is not her own; it is the history of a community, of women who fought, of families who suffered, of people who loved and hated. This multiplicity of voices constitutes an open and dialogical text.

Interestingly, not only in Grabe's text but also in cases of political

repression and violence in Colombia and in other parts of Latin America, women have come together to help each other, to organize themselves politically, and to make a strong community against their oppressors. Examples include the Damas de Blanco of Cuba, an organization of women who call for the liberation of political prisoners, and the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, a group of women who have been demanding justice for their loved ones who disappeared and/or died during the Argentinian Dirty War (1976-1983).

One of the most meaningful letters is the one that she writes to Bateman after his death, a letter that has both psychological and historical functions. First, it works as the means to overcome the traumas caused by his death and the fact that she could not express her feelings while he was alive. Second, it establishes a part of history that has not been told: her relationship with Jaime Bateman and the void of his absence. Grabe must justify eight years of relationship with a married man whose death left her empty and alone, without guidance in her role as a commander and, given the secret nature of their love affair, without the right to mourn his death:

> Reviewing my own writings from the time in which you left forever, I promised myself that one day I was going to tell this (hi)story far and wide. I do so with full consciousness and begging forgiveness for the general pain that I may cause, but I believe the world, and your daughters, should know you as you were.[28]

Grabe cannot express her feelings to her lover because of her marginal position in his life. This prevents her from speaking, from criticizing him, or being too demanding of him until after his death. She will attempt to show that she occupied an important place in his heart through voices other than her own. For instance, she includes in her narration a note that Bateman sent to her when she, along with other members of the M-19, was in jail: "Monita [her nickname]: Thinking of you. I have returned. We are negotiating a massive release, to see if we could get all of you out. I hope it works out. Be strong. So we can see each other again, soon. Kisses. P [Pablo, his *nom de guerre*]."[29]

Patricia Tovar has voiced a need to redefine the meaning of "widow" in Colombia, a country where a man might have more than one family, particularly when war has taken him away from the official home: "In order to understand better who are these women, who have lost their partners, it

is necessary to hear what they have to say."[30] In other words, it is enough to feel like a widow, to experience the trauma of a loved one's death and the impossibility of overcoming it, just as in the case of Grabe, whose lack of official status does not prevent her from feeling the pain of losing her lover: "Every morning, I forced myself to get up, and even if I was feeling like a widow, at least I had to force myself to stop feeling like an orphan."[31]

The letter to Bateman is a farewell and a tribute to their love, but it also helps her cope with the feeling of guilt about having had an abortion one month before Bateman's death. Grabe yielded to his will on this matter, adding to her frustration and the trauma of being and not being a wife, being and not being a mother, being and not being a widow. By writing this letter and including it in her narration, Grabe sets the record straight and demands that the blame be shared. The imposition of an abortion is an assault on her body, which Grabe will not keep to herself because it is a mark of violence that affects women and society.

CORPUS AND CORPORALITY

Grabe's narration is a vindication of femininity, and therefore is characterized by a continuous presence of the corporal, specifically as it pertains to women: the menstrual period, sexuality, pregnancy, pains, and all that is related to the dialogue among women, and between mother and daughter. She narrates her experience from the perspective of a woman, inserting her female voice and body in discourses that have traditionally been masculine. In Grabe's text, contrary to canonical texts of male guerrilla leaders such as Omar Cabezas' *Fire from the Mountain*, the guerrilla experience is tainted with female knowledge and feeling. The body is always present, and therefore Grabe narrates pain and pleasure: pain in the legs and muscles, pleasure in her lover's embrace and in the hand of a friend. Furthermore, she describes the vicissitudes of her body while going up and down the mountain with another being growing in her womb. The body, her own and those of others, is sometimes a symbol of courage; Grabe forced herself to be an example of endurance even while she was pregnant and also under the pressures of torture. This latter experience of the body, however, is the one she cannot narrate.

Trauma theories that arise from the Holocaust and recent studies about institutionalised violence in the Southern Cone of South America inform us of the difficulty in narrating the incommunicable experience of pain and, in

particular, that of victims of torture.[32] In order to do so, different narrative strategies are used, and it is common to find silences that sometimes say more than words. Grabe's narration makes her torturer invisible: she will not describe him, refusing to humanize one who lacks all compassion. Her body also dehumanises itself, becoming *un trapo* (a rag).[33] Her mind is occupied with the lack of time and space. Her thoughts travel from the self to the other, and through the other, we see what happens to her but which she cannot express because her experience is inenarrable. The following passage, although lengthy, merits citing in its entirety:

> They blast rock music and begin. They pinch my breasts, open my legs and hit my genitals with a wet towel. Until they get bored . . . and again. It must be morning. The same pinches, they threaten to rape me, they strike my abdomen, they throw me on the floor and insert a stick into my vagina. I bleed and have pain in my abdomen for a month and a half. I think a lot of María Etty, a comrade of only seventeen that eight men raped during her detention. A raped woman is an insult to all women. They use rape as a weapon of war.
>
> The only thing that keeps me going is an immense fury. People like that do not deserve that I talk to them. The body all ruined, goes in one way, and the mind in another. It does not matter, that body I no longer feel does not belong to me. They can destroy it because my heart is intact, they can never reach it. They humiliate only themselves.
>
> One night I hear Álvaro [her comrade and close friend] screaming. He is in a nearby cell. In another, while they take me to the building where the nocturnal session will begin, I see him: They are taking him back to his cell, naked and skinny, brutally beaten. And when I return to my cell, I start to sing at the top of my lungs, all that comes to my head, songs of my childhood, boleros, rebellious songs, "Ode to Joy," to tell him that I am alive, firm and strong. And, that I am with him.[34]

Trauma theories about torture reveal that the main victims are women and that this violence is almost always sexual.[35] Grabe's text joins a tradition of women's denunciations of state terrorism in Latin America, but in Colombia it is one of the first. It constitutes a painful exercise of memory

in which "all scenes overlap, join and invert themselves, not knowing what is first and what goes next. All is designed to debilitate the body—through pain, hunger, thirst, fatigue—and the mind, with questions, humiliations, threats, blackmail."[36] The difficulty involved in such a narration is exacerbated by the fact that her writing has a specific reader in mind, her own daughter. However, like Argentina's Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Grabe has the mission to denounce this outrage *para que nunca más se repita* (so it will never happen again).[37] Betina Kaplan informs us that in the Southern Cone, Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the HIJOS foundation have created *espacios alternativos de sanción social*[38] (alternative spaces for social censure) such as street theatre or *escraches*, protests, and graffiti, among others, which are all "ways of rebuking violence that produce an inscription."[39] I agree with Kaplan's idea that testimonial narrations, literary or not, also perform this function. By making her private trauma public, Grabe uncovers the social and political violence that affects the Colombian nation.

Vera Grabe is facing down the void in history, in politics, and in her private life: in history because she has been relegated to a few lines in the narratives of the M-19; in politics because her political party, AD-M19, has suffered defeat in the electoral urns; and in private because her loved ones and friends are dead and her daughter is not hers anymore. With her narration, she hopes to open spaces of communication that will allow her to recover a place in her country and in her daughter's heart. Otherwise, how will she justify her fight, her sacrifice, and her existence? Just as the title indicates, Grabe's book is a search for reasons to live. She recovers her identity by digging into her memories, and reaffirms herself by writing history from her own perspective and in her female voice. She searches for peace because only by re-creating, in the double meaning of the word, can she overcome the traumas that violence has left her. To fulfil her objective, as we have seen, Grabe has dedicated herself to dialogue—with her daughter, with herself, and with her country. Since her work has been multiple, she has intertwined various literary and non-literary genres in order to form a whole. *Razones de vida*, together with other recent testimonial narratives that have emerged in the country, forms a new literature that dialogues, transforms, and searches for memory, but most importantly gives women a place in the reconfiguration of Colombia.

All over the world, testimonial narratives that emerge out of conflict

make visible the pain and traumas that warfare instills in women. All of these narratives are alternative and liminal, and curiously, they all place peace at the core of their claims. However, women's narratives remind us that peace is not obtained by forgetting and starting anew. These narratives highlight the importance of memory, dialogue, reparation, and justice. They also demand that women, the survivors of conflict, have a place in history and in the future.

ENDNOTES

1 Like most testimonial production by Colombian women, *Razones de vida* has not yet been translated. Slowly, however, these narratives are becoming available to English-speaking readers. A few examples of this trend include María Eugenia and Vásquez Perdomo, *My Life as a Colombian Revolutionary: Reflections of a Former Guerrillera* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005); Constanza Ardila Galvis, *The Heart of the War in Colombia* (London: Latin America Bureau, 2000); and Luz María Londoño's documentary film *Desde diversas orillas/From Far Away Shores* (Medillin, Colombia: Universidad de Antioquia, 2009).

2 About the erasure of history in Colombia, Gabriel García Márquez has stated,

> Our history has been complacently written and officialized, made to hide not clarify, in which original sins are perpetuated, wars that never took place are won, and victories, that we never deserved, are made sacred. This is because we are pleased with the dream that our history does not resemble the Colombia in which we live, but that Colombia might end up resembling its history as written (my translation).
>
> [Nos han escrito y oficializado una versión complaciente de la historia, hecha más para esconder que para clarificar, en la cual se perpetúan vicios originales, se ganan batallas que nunca se dieron y se sacralizan glorias que nunca merecimos. Pues nos complacemos en el ensueño de que la historia no se parezca a la Colombia en que vivimos, sino que Colombia termine por parecerse a su historia escrita.]

"Por un país al alcance de los niños," *El Tiempo*, July 23, 1994, http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-179534.

3 Vera Grabe, *Razones de vida* (Bogotá: Planeta, 2000).

4 Linda Maier explains that for women, political and personal concerns are often inseparable: "As an expression of a demand for social change, testimonial literature cannot be dissociated from political considerations. For women, such considerations are often connected with issues of family and gender." Linda S. Maier and Isabel Dulfano, *Woman as Witness: Essays on Testimonial Literature by Latin American Women* (New York: P. Lang, 2004), 7.

5 Amy K Kaminsky, *Reading the Body Politic: Feminist Criticism and Latin American Women Writers* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 61.

6 This visual trope appears to have been an editorial, not authorial, decision. Ángela Robledo, "Escritura para construir la matria: *Razones de vida*, por Vera Grabe," *Nova e vetera: boletín del instituto de derechos humanos "Guillermo Cano"* 47 (2002): 90.

7 All translations from the Spanish are my own unless otherwise noted. *"Si desde el fondo de mi corazón me preguntaran qué razón o sentimiento me guió a elaborar este largo, duro y azaroso recuento de mi vida, más llena de olvidos que de recuerdos . . . diría que ese impulso eres tú, hija mía."* Grabe, *Razones*, 281 (italics in original).

8 "Ser madre era también ser ejemplo de compromiso porque teníamos que luchar por el país que los hijos merecían, mejor que el que nos había visto crecer a nosotros." Grabe, *Razones*, 243.

9 *Escrito para no morir: bitácora de una militancia* (Bogotá: Intermedio, 2000). In a more literal translation of the original Spanish title (*Written Not to Die: Notebook of a Militancy*), we can observe the equivalences with Grabe's *Reasons for Living*. Both texts are written with the life/death dyad in mind and both are the anchors that will deliver these authors from historical oblivion.

10 María Eugenia Vásquez Perdomo, "Interview with María Eugenia Vásquez Perdomo," *Author Interviews* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), http://www.temple.edu/tempress/authors/1756_qa.html.

11 "La gran diferencia era que ustedes, compañeros dirigentes, tenían responsabilidad histórica e hijos, porque había esposas-madres que los cuidaban y sacaban adelante, con inmensa generosidad y la claridad de mantener en alto la imagen paterna." Grabe, *Razones*, 179.

12 Robledo, "Escritura para construir la matria," 90.

13 All memory narratives—such as autobiographies, life writing and testimonies—make frequent use of various means of representation. In those writings, the narrator often creates a narrative subject that can represent her, that acts for her: "the autobiographical speaker becomes a performative subject." (Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 108). I believe that in Grabe, one of these "performative subjects," is the mother who unfolds herself in order to appeal to her daughter and to recover her parental role. Helen Buss has explained that this situation presents itself because "the writer desires authenticity and truthfulness in representation, but recognizes the conditional and temporal nature of representation of the self. The self that is represented is not guaranteed as factual in a strictly historical sense." Helen Buss, *Repossessing the World: Reading Memoirs by Contemporary Women* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2002), 20.

14 See "Carta de los intelectuales colombianos a la Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar," *Nueva Sociedad* 125 (1993), http://www.nuso.org/upload/articulos/2246_1.pdf. In this iconic document, for the first time, the country's intellectuals united to publicly condemn the guerrilla actions, a significant development given that some of the undersigners had been supporters of revolutionary movements, and, in particular, of the M-19. This letter was published on 20 November, 1992, two years after the demobilization of this and other insurgent groups. The letter encourages the remaining groups to follow this example of peace:

> Your war, understandable in its beginnings, today goes against history. The kidnappings, coercion and extortion that nowadays are your most lucrative tactics are at the same time an abominable violation of human rights. Terrorism, which you yourselves have always condemned as

an illegitimate means to the revolutionary struggle, is today your daily resource. Corruption, which you disdain, has contaminated your own ranks through your involvement in the drug trade, ignoring its reactionary (non-revolutionary) character and contributing to the deterioration of the nation. The innumerable and purposeless deaths on both sides, the systematic attacks on the nation's wealth, and the ecological disasters are expensive and undeserved tributes to impose on a country that has already paid too much.

[Su guerra, comprensible en sus orígenes, va ahora en sentido contrario de la historia. El secuestro, la coacción, las contribuciones forzosas, que son hoy su instrumento más fructífero, son a la vez violaciones abominables de los derechos humanos. El terrorismo, que estuvo siempre condenado por ustedes mismos como una forma ilegítima de la lucha revolucionaria, es hoy un recurso cotidiano. La corrupción, que ustedes rechazan, ha contaminado sus propias filas a través de sus negocios con el narcotráfico, haciendo caso omiso de su carácter reaccionario y de su contribución al deterioro social. Las incontables muertes inútiles de ambos lados, los atentados sistemáticos a la riqueza nacional, los desastres ecológicos, son tributos muy costosos e inmerecidos para un país que ya ha pagado demasiado] (italics in original).

15 Carmiña Navia Velasco, *Guerras y paz en Colombia: miradas de mujer* (Cali, Colombia: Escuela de Estudios Literarios, Universidad del Valle, 2003), 62.

16 On 5 November 1985, a commando unit of the M-19 seized the Palace of Justice in order to demand compliance with previously signed agreements between the armed group and the president. The response of the military was a counteroffensive that resulted in the burning of the Palace, the disappearance of eleven employees, and many deaths, including all but one of the guerillas, numerous civilians, several magistrates, and the president of the Supreme Court. This event has been one of the most controversial and discussed topics of recent Colombian history, and the bibliography is enormous. Some of the main titles are as follows: Germán Castro Caycedo, *El Palacio*

sin máscara (Bogotá: Planeta, 2008); Maureén Maya and Gustavo Petro, *Prohibido olvidar: dos miradas sobre la toma del Palacio de Justicia* (Bogotá: Casa Editorial Pisando Callos, 2006); Humberto Vélez R. and Adolfo Atehortúa, *Militares, guerrilleros y autoridad civil: el caso del Palacio de Justicia* (Cali, Columbia: Universidad del Valle, 1993); Ann Carrigan, *The Palace of Justice: a Colombian Tragedy* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1993); Ramón Jimeno, *Noche de lobos* (Bogotá: Distribuye, Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1989); Juan Manuel López Caballero, *El Palacio de Justicia: ¿defensa de nuestras instituciones?* (Bogotá: Fundación Pro-Esclarecimiento de los Hechos del Palacio de Justicia, 1987); Jorge Enrique Rojas and Germán Salgado Morales, *¡Que cese el fuego!: el testimonio* (Bogotá: Ariel, 1986); Manuel Vicente Peña Gómez, *Las 2 tomas: Palacio de Justicia* (Bogotá: Fundación Ciudad Abierta, 1986).

17 Leigh Gilmore argues that when women write their own testimonies, their words are always questioned. Consequently, women fear being accused of lying and incurring the shame attached to public humiliation, and therefore they restrain themselves from speaking about traumatic events:

> Telling the story of one's life suggests a conversion of trauma's morbid contents into speech, and thereby, the prospect of working through trauma's hold on the subject. Yet, autobiography's impediments to such working through consist of its almost legalistic definition of truth-telling, its anxiety about invention, and its preference for the literal and verifiable, even in the presence of some ambivalence about those criteria. Conventions about truth-telling, salutary as they are, can be inimical to the ways in which some writers bring trauma stories into language. The portals are too narrow, and the demands too restrictive. Moreover, the judgments such accounts invite may be too similar to forms in which trauma was experienced. When the contest is waged over who can tell the truth, the risk of being accused of lying (or malingering, or inflating, or whining) threatens the writer into continued silence.

Leigh Gilmore, "Limit-cases: Trauma, Self-Representation, and the

Jurisdiction of Identity," *Biography* 24, no. 1 (2001): 129.

18 *Sé de tu capacidad de comprender sin juzgar. Describirte, hija mía, este doloroso episodio en el que por razones de seguridad y determinación dentro del M-19 no estuve involucrada, me cuesta. Me tengo que llenar de valor y de la luz de la verdad. Es uno de los hechos histórico-subversivos más controvertidos e impactantes de la historia política del siglo XX en Colombia . . . . Apelo a tu grandeza de corazón, para que contribuya a tu comprensión, y te pido que te despojes de toda prevención o juicio.* Grabe, *Razones, 251* (italics in original).

19 *"La mirada particular de mi relato, no es desde el odio ni desde la culpa. Es desde la paz."* Grabe, *Razones*, 251 (italics in original). Carmiña Navia Velasco explains the important input of women in the narratives that are born from the conflict but that elaborate a pro-peace discourse:

> Women's discourse regarding peace has been defining itself and constructing itself, as in other cases, from the experience of women amid the vicissitudes of the war that the country endures. It is a word that emerges from feeling, suffering, working, building . . . . It is therefore a word that is born in the middle of war but glimpses insistently towards peace, a word that dreams about peace.
>
> In some cases we find texts and words that emerge from the pain itself of a recent past of war, in other instances it is about discourses that emerge in the course of reorienting a life, and finally some of these words express proposals of peace that are more or less utopian, more or less realistic.
>
> [El discurso femenino en torno a la paz, se ha ido definiendo y construyendo, como en otros casos, a partir de la experiencia misma de las mujeres en medio de los avatares de la guerra que atraviesa el país. Se trata de una palabra que surge en medio del sentir, del sufrir, del trabajar y construir…es por lo tanto una palabra que nace en medio de la guerra y que mira insistentemente hacia la paz, que sueña la paz.
>
> En algunos casos nos encontramos con textos y palabras que surgen del dolor mismo de un pasado reciente de guerra,

> en otros momentos se trata de discursos que surgen en el camino de reorientación de una vida y finalmente algunas palabras expresan propuestas más o menos utópicas, más o menos realistas de paz.] Navia Velasco, *Guerras*, 123.

20 Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 102.

21 "De las mujeres ni hablar: estaban los ejemplos de quienes entregaron sus hijos a la patria o se inmolaron por ella. Qué sintieron, cómo vivieron, cuándo dudaron, cuándo decidieron, ¿qué sabemos de eso? Es una historia que está por escribirse." Grabe, *Razones*, 50.

22 Although the M-19 was an insurgent institution, its leaders, while they were alive and furthermore after death, have been public figures, recognized, loved, and profoundly admired. Grabe's text re-evaluates and contradicts what has been said in order to break myths and find her own space in history. Suzette Henke explains,

> Autobiography has always offered the tantalizing possibility of reinventing the self and reconstructing the subject ideologically inflected by language, history, and social imbrication. As a genre, life-writing encourages the author/narrator to reassess the past and to reinterpret the intertextual codes inscribed on personal consciousness by society and culture. Because the author can instantiate the alienated or marginal self into the pliable body of a protean text, the newly revised subject, emerging as the semifictive protagonist of an enabling counternarrative, is free to rebel against the values and practices of a dominant culture and to assume an empowered position of political agency in the world.

Suzette Henke, *Shattered Subjects: Trauma and Testimony in Women's Life-Writing* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), xvi.

23 Melissa S Herbert, *Camouflage Isn't Only for Combat: Gender, Sexuality and Women in the Military* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 22.

24 Donny Meertens, *Género y conflicto armado en Colombia: aproximación a un diagnóstico* (Bogotá: Consejería Presidencial para la Política Social

/ PNUD, 1995), 47.

25 Francine D'Amico and Laurie Lee Weinstein, *Gender Camouflage: Women and the U.S. Military* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 4.

26 "[f]ue sancionada por los jefes por dejar a un comandante para amar a un sardino [joven] poeta. Estaba triste y enferma, tenía los días contados y quería gastárselos peleando. . . ." Grabe, *Razones*, 145.

27 Grabe, *Razones*, 52.

28 "Revisando mis escritos de la época en que usted se fue para siempre, me prometí que algún día iba a contar esta historia a los cuatro vientos. Con plena conciencia y pidiendo disculpas por el dolor que pueda generar hacerlo, pero creo que el mundo y sus hijas deben conocerlo como era." Grabe, *Razones*, 177.

29 "Monita: Pensándote mucho. Ya estoy de regreso. Estamos organizando una salida masiva para ver si los sacamos a todos. Espero que resulte. Haz fuerza. Para que nos veamos pronto de nuevo. Besos. P." Grabe, *Razones*, 118.

30 "[P]ara entender mejor quiénes son esas mujeres que pierden a sus compañeros es necesario oír lo que [ellas] tienen que decir." Patricia Tovar Rojas, *Las viudas del conflicto armado en Colombia: memorias y relatos* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2006), 32.

31 "Cada mañana me obligaba a levantarme y así me sintiera viuda, por lo menos tenía que esforzarme por dejar de sentirme huérfana." Grabe, *Razones*, 175.

32 Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 3-5; Betina Kaplan, *Género y violencia en la narrativa del Cono Sur*, 1954-2003 (Woodbridge, UK: Tamesis, 2007), 41-73.

33 Grabe, *Razones*, 99.

34 Ponen música rock a todo volumen y empiezan. Me pellizcan los senos, me abren las piernas y me golpean los genitales con una toalla mojada. Hasta que se aburren . . . y vuelven. Ya debe de ser mañana. Los mismos pellizcos, amenazan con violarme, me golpean el vientre,

me tiran al piso y me meten un palo en la vagina. Sangro y tengo dolores en el vientre por mes y medio. Pienso mucho en María Etty, una compañera de diecisiete años de edad a quien violaron ocho tipos durante su detención. Una mujer violada es un ultraje para todas. Es la violación como arma de guerra.

Sólo me mantiene una rabia muy grande. Gente así no merece que yo les dirija ni una palabra. El cuerpo anda por un lado, todo desbaratado, y la mente por otro. Me da igual, ese cuerpo que ya no siento, no me pertenece. Lo pueden destrozar porque el corazón está intacto, y no lo pueden alcanzar jamás. Los que se humillan son ellos.

Una noche oigo los gritos de Álvaro. Está en una celda cercana. En otra, mientras me sacan al recinto donde va a empezar la sesión nocturna, alcanzo a verlo: lo llevan de vuelta a la celda, desnudo, flaco, atrozmente golpeado. Y cuando regreso a mi celda, empiezo a cantar a toda voz, todo lo que se me atraviesa por la cabeza, canciones de mi niñez, boleros, cantos rebeldes, el himno de la alegría, para decirle que estoy viva, firme y bien. Y que estoy con él. Grabe, *Razones*, 100.

35 Kaplan, *Género y violencia*, 50-52.

36 "[E]scenas se superponen, se juntan, se invierten, sin saber qué es primero y qué después. Todo está diseñado para debilitar el cuerpo mediante el dolor, e1 hambre, la sed, e1 cansancio, y la mente con preguntas, humillaciones, amenazas, chantajes. . . ." Grabe, *Razones*, 99.

37 Kaplan, *Género y violencia*, 99.

38 The HIJOS foundation stands for Sons for Identity and Justice against Oblivion and Silence (Hijos por la Identidad y la Justicia contra el Olvido y el Silencio). Like the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, the HIJOS demand justice for their parents who disappeared during the Argentinian Dirty War. Kaplan, *Género y violencia*, 124.

39 "[F]ormas alternativas de sancionar la violencia [que] producen una inscripción." Kaplan, *Género y violencia*, 125.

Johnny Got His Gun and Working Class Students: Using Rhetorical Analysis to Intellectualize Pacifism

Ed Dauterich

Over the past several years, I have taught a variety of writing and argument courses at a large, public university in northeastern Ohio. The majority of the people in my classes are first generation college students from a working class background. Many are non-traditional students as well. Given their different majors and areas of interests and my own understanding of writing pedagogy, I look for a common subject that will allow me to teach writing while keeping the students engaged beyond the level of instruction in grammar or style alone. Currently, I have been teaching composition courses that examine violence and what I see as pro-war culture in the United States. At the beginning of these classes, the greatest challenges are getting students to define violence, to see the motives for violence, to examine and begin to construct theories of violence, and to recognise the rhetoric of violence and war that surrounds them in contemporary popular culture. By the conclusion of the course, I hope that their knowledge of violence can lead them to a critically constructive way of addressing both violent acts and violent rhetoric. However, I am not teaching in a sociology department, in a history department, or in a course on conflict resolution. I am an English professor. In light of recent criticism and debate among scholars such as Stanley Fish and Gerald Graff over what the job of a humanities professor entails,[1] it is necessary to put my own pedagogical goals in a context where students can see the practical social value of what they learn without completely divorcing it from applications inside of the classroom or becoming preoccupied with the political concerns of their professor. However, unlike Fish, who in *Save the World on Your Own Time* argues that the real job of the humanities professor is to teach students to perform a historical analysis of a controversy without making a pronouncement about it, I believe it is vital to teach students both analysis and the rhetorical skills necessary to voice their own

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educated opinions as clearly as possible. Since many of the courses I teach fill liberal education requirements at the university, these writing courses are meant to help students effectively argue points in a variety of contexts, rather than merely dispassionately analysing existing debates. It is also important that students not be encouraged to see me as a demagogue, who forces my opinions upon them with no tolerance for alternative ideas. In order to do this as a teacher of literature and composition, I have had to ask some important questions. Can a work of literature encourage student involvement in a movement toward significant pacifist change and social justice? If so, how? How should that work be approached? In what context should it be presented, so that the instructor can avoid accusations of indoctrination? How can an instructor expect the student to connect the work and the issues in it with more than the scholarly disinterested analysis?

At first, my goals are to deflect a negative initial reaction to *Johnny Got His Gun*, and point students toward an analysis of the rhetorical structure rather than the subject matter itself. I believe that it is possible for literature to be used for the purpose of studying pacifism and combative argument when it is coupled with a study of dialogic argument that allows students to analyse the work rhetorically and then apply their own understanding of argument to the issues connected with the work. Students quickly realize that the value of dialogic argument lies in its clear presentation of a claim and support while also inviting the audience to engage in debate and even pose counterarguments, as opposed to combative argument, which merely seeks to silence opposition. This step towards critical thinking is an important educational achievement that encourages *pro-war* students to deal with a pacifist message analytically rather than emotionally and *anti-war* students to look beyond complacent agreement and into *why* they have their responses. I see this as a move towards peace education without *forcing* students to think in ways that are incompatible their individual beliefs. While I hope their beliefs will evolve, this should happen through empowerment of the student rather than by instructor decree.

As far as whether or not works of literature can significantly interest students in the idea of social change generally and, specifically, change toward peace, I have found that many are inspired by the works of literature I use in writing classes. I tend to focus on fiction and non-fiction that was written in or had a strong influence on the culture of the United States in the World War I era, including but not limited to Hemingway's *A Farewell*

to Arms, Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto*, the poetry of Wilfred Owen and Rupert Brooke, and other supplementary texts that connect with the early 1900s. I want students to see that there are a variety of opinions about war itself—for example, Brooke's view of patriotism in "The Soldier" versus Owen's view in "Dulce et Decorum Est"—and that they can be examined from multiple viewpoints. They read a variety of theorists who discuss violence and its sources, including Foucault, Benjamin, Girard, and Hegel, before I encourage them to make judgements of their own.

One work that helps answer my questions and meet my goals is Dalton Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun*. Trumbo's novel advocates for a class-based pacifism through the character of Joe Bonham, a young American soldier serving overseas during World War I. Joe comes from a working class background, and over the course of the novel, he flashes back to different moments in his own life that deal with the adverse effects that poverty can have on even those who are employed. He also thinks about how his lack of wealth affects his decision to enter the military and how it helped shape the morals and ideas that led him to military service in the first place. Prior to the beginning of the narrative, Joe loses all of his limbs as well as his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth when he is hit by a mortar shell. Military medicine somehow keeps Joe alive after the explosion, and the novel tracks his thoughts as he regains consciousness, slowly realises the details of his situation, and finally begins to question his decision to go to war. Joe's reaction to his situation when he fully realises the extent of his injuries is typical of the working class rhetoric that Trumbo uses to critique the war throughout the book:

> He thought here you are Joe Bonham lying like a side of beef all the rest of your life and for what? Somebody tapped you on the shoulder and said come along son we're going to war. So you went. But why? In any other deal even like buying a car or running an errand you had the right to say what's there in it for me? Otherwise you'd be buying bad cars for too much money or running errands for fools and starving to death. It was a kind of duty you owed yourself that when anybody said come on son do this or do that you should stand up and say look mister why should I do this for who am I doing it and what am I going to get out of it in the end? But when a guy comes along and says here come with me and risk your life and maybe die or be crippled

> why then you've got no rights. You haven't even the right to say yes or no or I'll think it over. There are plenty of laws to protect guys' money even in war time but there's nothing on the books says a man's life's his own.[2]

Joe's thoughts about the war connect solidly with his working class values and his distrust of those with money and power. His questions about World War I mirror those that many of my students have about war in the present, even though there is no direct conscription involved in war at this time.

In a time when the United States is involved in both geographic wars and wars against abstract concepts, and many students have friends or relatives serving overseas or have themselves served in combat, this novel might be taught initially as a way of having students analyse and critically question capitalist, pro-war culture in the United States. Since most of the classes I teach are writing intensive, students learn about argument and critical analysis. With Trumbo's novel, the first thing they learn to examine is war as a metaphor—something many of them have taken for granted. Henry Giroux clearly states the problem with the current acceptance of this metaphor in a recent article:

> The concept of war has been both expanded and inverted. It has been expanded in that it has become one of the most powerful concepts for understanding and structuring political culture, public space, and everyday life. Wars are waged against crime, labor unions, drugs, terrorism, and a host of alleged public disorders. Wars are not declared against foreign enemies but against alleged domestic threats. The concept of war has also been inverted in that it has been removed from any concept of social justice. . . . [3]

In order for students to make significant arguments about the novel, they need first to understand the contemporary nature of war as a metaphor but also the connection that that metaphor has with any social contract in the United States. Trumbo's novel helps them see the connection between actual war and poverty quite clearly, as well as other connections of actual war to instances of social injustice, but because it takes place during World War I, it makes it possible for me to empower students to make their own connections between the past and the present without forcing them to see my personal opinion on current events as the one they should hold if they want to succeed in the course. Trumbo's attention to labour issues, government

encroachment on civil rights, and the purposes of both metaphorical and physical war gives students plenty of raw material to work with when they begin to examine how the use of the term "war" connects with current social events, their own lives, and their own reasons for debate.

On the surface, Trumbo's arguments against war are clear, and students quickly see how Joe Bonham's impoverished background leads him to his current state. Because of their personal connections with members of the military and their own economic backgrounds, they do not find some of Bonham's interior monologues particularly opposite to their own beliefs about and understandings of war and its purposes. In a passage near the middle of the book, Joe lies on his hospital bed and considers the abstract reasons that soldiers are given as a justification for war:

> If they weren't fighting for liberty they were fighting for independence or democracy or freedom or decency or honor or their native land or something else that didn't mean anything. The war was to make the world safe for democracy for the little countries for everybody. If the war was over now then the world was all safe for democracy. Was it? And what kind of democracy? And how much? And whose? [4]

Passages like this one allow beginning writing students to make distinctions between abstract and concrete terms and to analyse these ideas without simply resorting to platitudes. They also provide grounds for constructive debate about these topics in the classroom, allowing students to sharpen their rhetorical strategies and deliveries. Many students believe that democracy is worth going to war for, yet few can agree on what democracy actually is and whom such wars actually serve. Fewer still recognise from the beginning the implicit connections between war and the power structure of American capitalism. So in this way, the book serves as groundwork for opening the debate on war and its connection to many abstract ideas in the present, and with examples like the previous passage, Trumbo often invites readers to form their own opinions about these concepts. Many students respond positively to this questioning approach. One student writes,

> I find it amazing that it seems my peers are so quick to say they would give their lives for these abstract things democracy and freedom, but if you ask them if they would give a limb or two for such a thing the hesitation shows. It is almost as if a pre-programmed answer is set in our minds to give our lives up so

> easily. I think it was ingenious of Trumbo to not make a story about a person who was dead or died, but about a person who would have been better off dead. It was a great way to make readers think past their ingrained views and see the situation from a different view.[5]

In this case, the student agreed with what he saw as a dialogic attempt by Trumbo to engage his audience in a real debate about who goes to war and why. This particular student had also served in Afghanistan and was more vocal about questioning the acceptance of war for abstract reasons that was often espoused by some of his classmates. In addition, by referring to his and his fellow classmates' responses as "pre-programmed" he may be recognising the class-based nature of appeals to patriotism, particularly the ability of those with wealth and power to influence the behaviour of those without them, at times without their knowledge.

On the other hand, many parts of Trumbo's work do not encourage dialogic argument, but rather set a very combative tone. For example, in a later passage, Trumbo makes Joe's feelings much more confrontational. Joe manages to communicate with his attending doctors and nurses by tapping out Morse code with his head on his pillow, and he shows both anger at the war and a disregard for the way contemporary society connects war with religion. He demands that the military place him on display as an example for others:

> Take me into your churches your great towering cathedrals that have to be rebuilt every fifty years because they are destroyed by war. Carry me in my glass box down the aisles where kings and priests and brides and children at their confirmation have gone so many times before to kiss a splinter of wood from a true cross on which was nailed the body of a man who was lucky enough to die. Set me high on your altars and call on god to look down on his murderous little children his dearly beloved children. Wave over me the incense I can't smell. Swill down the sacramental wine I can't taste. Drone out the prayers I can't hear. Go through the old holy gestures for which I have no legs and no arms. Chorus out the hallelujas [*sic*] I can't sing. Bring them out loud and strong for me your hallelujas all of them for me because I know the truth and you don't you fools. You fools you fools you fools. . . . [6]

Students easily recognise passages like this as combative argument, the type that they are most used to hearing while watching television or often from engaging in it with friends, yet they also find these passages less convincing than ones where they are invited to form their own opinions. Trumbo's argument against war, although based on populist middle class assumptions about the reasons to avoid it, does not always resonate with students who share similar backgrounds. The following response to the book is typical of students who read the more direct passages:

> In *Johnny Got His Gun*, Dalton is sending the audience an obvious anti-war message. However, I do not think that Dalton makes an effective anti-war argument. Dalton uses the main character, Joe Bonham, as the vessel for his argument against war. Joe is a byproduct of war, having had his arms, legs, and face blown off, which Dalton tries to convince us is a fate worse than death. This is meant to scare the audience into thinking about what happens when young men are sent off to war. Dalton supports this claim in many of Joe's memories and dream sequences, such as when little Joe is talking to his father while he cleans his fishing pole about what happens when young men are sent to war. Dalton doesn't really acknowledge any positions that oppose him; all the soldiers are portrayed as poor young men who are tricked into doomed fates, and all the doctors are portrayed as uncaring. His argument is very "in your face", and doesn't leave much room for the audience to think for themselves; they're led in the direction in which they're "supposed" to think. Dalton seems to shout his message to the audience, which makes it more annoying than effective.

In this case, the student herself was from a working class background and had both friends and relatives who were enlisted in the military, yet she found the overall approach that Trumbo takes in the novel to be "annoying," and she seems to lose faith in his credibility as a writer, which is evidenced by her open critique of his method and motives. During early stages of discussion, I try to limit the students to recognising the differences between dialogic and combative argument, so that they learn to value the greater effectiveness of dialogic argument in any attempt to persuade others.

After gathering students' initial reactions to the novel, I then introduce them to Toulmin's structure of argument: claim, grounds, warrant, and

backing.[7] My purpose in introducing them to these concepts is to help them understand the components of a successful persuasive argument, so that they will be able to recognise one when they see it as well as be able to apply these principles to persuasive dialogic arguments of their own, rather than resorting to more familiar combative forms that merely serve to exacerbate conflict between the writer and the people the writer is trying to persuade. Once they have an understanding of what these principles are and how they work, I encourage the students to go back to the text and reevaluate it, not on the basis of their first impressions, but as a coherent, unified argument. My reasons for doing this are many. First of all, I am teaching writing courses, and learning to evaluate and analyse argument is a valuable skill for students to learn in these courses. Second, by having the students analyse Trumbo's work on the basis of whether or not it succeeds as an argument, I avoid accusations of political indoctrination from students who may disagree with the purpose of Trumbo's argument. Finally, although I do personally agree with Trumbo's purpose, it is important for students to realise that when viewed as argument, his novel can be seen primarily as a combative one as well as one that makes many unjustified assumptions and pays little attention to opposing views. Because of its weakness as an argument, its purpose, while noble, can easily be distorted and used to support ideologies that use the anti-war message to promote other agendas. In his biography of Trumbo, Bruce Cook points out one such moment that occurred several years after the book's publication, but before Trumbo's trial before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and his eventual blacklisting in Hollywood:

> The incident . . . had to do with some odd correspondence he had been receiving from certain readers of the book. He found that because of the anti-war message of the book, it had suddenly become useful as propaganda to the far right in America as Axis fortunes began to fail. Anti-Semitic and native Fascist groups put on a big push for an early peace, demanding that Hitler be offered a conditional peace. Trumbo was understandably distressed that he and his book had been embraced by such as these. . . .[8]

When I explain the history of the book and its publication to students, they are often surprised that the book, and Trumbo himself, received such a mixed variety of responses both from readers and from the government

agencies that were watching him, but many of them can see that part of the reason that the book may be misunderstood in the first place is that it fails to make a dialogic argument and instead invites combative response. The weakness of the argument makes it possible for the ostensible purpose to be shifted in the minds of readers and propagandists.

Beyond the combative nature of the argument, students themselves are quick to point out the places where its weaknesses in other areas add to the possibility of misinterpretation of Trumbo's purpose. A third student writes,

> The only backing Trumbo has for his claim that war isn't what the media presents it as is the death toll which isn't even directly put into the novel but only in the introduction. Trumbo's argument is only based on opinion and a warrant claiming that war is always bad and if you go you will end up like Joe Bonham. Never once does Trumbo acknowledge the possibility that war could benefit the country as a whole, but instead he mocks it and everyone involved in it. Overall, Trumbo's novel does not present a successful argument, but rather an in your face opinion.

In this case, the student can see that Trumbo often fails to get his point across because of the way that he disregards the principles of dialogic argument, failing to even consider counterarguments or to examine his own assumptions about war in order to defend them. While she did agree with the overall message Trumbo was advancing in the novel, she also saw how the novel itself could have been more effective at getting its ideas across. Other students also focus on the combative nature of the argument but reach different conclusions:

> The novel may not be an intelligent debate between two different views but sometimes the best way to change the views of your audience is to just force it on them. This seems to have worked for Trumbo and a lot of other people. My views on war still remain unchanged after reading the book and watching the movie however. I think some wars are necessary such as World War 2. Germany had to be stopped. Also a lot of good can come from war such as improved medical and other types of technology and Dalton Trumbo fails to show this in *Johnny Got His Gun.*

In this example, the student presents the idea that many people would rather have ideas forced on them or that it can be effective to do so, but the

student himself remains unconvinced by Trumbo and like others points out flaws in his argument. Now that the student has a grasp of the principles of argument, he can see where Trumbo's is weak, but he still believes that Trumbo's methods may be effective depending on the audience. What I try to show students in my classes is that this type of argument only works well if you are addressing an audience who already believes the point that you are trying to make. The audience for political talk shows is good evidence of the limited scope of the combative approach. How many people on the political left find themselves convinced by the punditry of Bill O'Reilly? How many on the right eagerly wait to be persuaded by the pronouncements of Keith Olbermann? I would guess that few do. My goal in using Trumbo's novel is to show students how making a stronger, more dialogic argument can help them to reach a wider audience instead of merely reinforcing the beliefs of those who already agree with them.

Trumbo himself seems happy to take the combative route and to discourage those who disagree with his warrants. He suggests that the reason more people are not interested in his message is pure apathy—a failure in their character. In a 1970 addendum to his original introduction to the book, he writes, "Numbers have dehumanized us. Over breakfast coffee we read of 40,000 American dead in Vietnam. Instead of vomiting, we reach for the toast. Our morning rush through crowded streets is not to cry murder but to hit that trough before somebody else gobbles our share."[9] He also asks, "Do we scream in the night when it touches our dreams? No. We don't dream about it because we don't think about it; we don't think about it because we don't care about it."[10] Perhaps the most combative part of the introduction occurs in his final words to his readers:

> But exactly how many hundreds of thousands of the dead-while-living does *that* give us? We don't know. We don't ask. We turn away from them; we avert the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, face. "Why should I look, it wasn't my fault, was it?" It was, of course, but no matter. Time presses. Death waits even for us. We have a dream to pursue, the whitest white hope of them all, and we must follow and find it before the night fails.
>
> So long, losers. God bless. Take care. We'll be seeing you.[11]

When I have students read the introduction and examine Trumbo's tactics here, those who disagree with his message can see how and why his methods create their offended reactions, and even those who agree with him—while

originally smugly confident that they are the ones who really understand what is going on and the rest of the world is the problem—eventually realise how combative argument works and how it will fail to persuade those who hold opposite opinions. What I try to explain to students is that again, in the introduction as in the novel, the combative nature of Trumbo's approach serves only to reaffirm the beliefs that either side already had. In order for real progress to be made toward peace or social justice, they need to move beyond having faith in the results of combative argument. Combative argument may make a strong appeal to pathos, but it does not meaningfully encourage a change of opinions.

During the course of my teaching the novel with this approach, I have come across two questions in both pedagogical literature and in conversation with my colleagues: (1) Why use fictional literature to teach these principles, and (2) does the use of fiction achieve the goals? Both of these deserve to be answered, and I believe that the answer in both cases is related to the concept of reflection.

In *Teaching Literature as a Reflective Practice*, Kathleen Blake Yancey points out that the "default view" of the value of teaching literature in writing courses often reverts to the ideas of Matthew Arnold—that literature is "the best that has been thought and said"—but that this view holds little resonance with students and is often poorly articulated by instructors.[12] I agree with Yancey that when literature is presented for its own sake, as something that students should just accept as the epitome of wisdom or some form of high art, there will be little chance of using it to successfully encourage critical thinking in non-English majors. This approach often leads to a particular style of reading that students think is expected of them, but that leads to little more than an academic exercise with little application outside of a literature classroom. Jerome McGann discusses the problem:

> We all know how young students, in discussing a novel, want to talk about characters (as if they were "real") and plot (as if it were a sequence of events). They usually try to "understand" characters, for example, in terms of types and in more or less generalized psychological terms. They deal with plot and events in a similarly schematic way. Events are viewed not as structure for exposing (for example) more and more complex features of the characters, but as a sequence of connected happenings meant to interest the reader in the outcome of the fictional events (the

> story). In this context we also see the students' inclination to seek thematic and conceptual interpretations of character and event, often completely abstracting away those literal textual levels that license such thematic moves. They are, for example, largely incompetent in dealing with historicalities of all kinds—not just the significance of dates and places, but of fashion, mores, class, the social significance of language, and so forth. When they do respond to such matters, they commonly have little self-conscious awareness that they are doing so, or how, or why.[13]

When taught to non-majors as a form of reflective practice that allows them to take an approach that examines the rhetorical structure of the work and its connection with their own class-oriented interests rather than theme and character as seen through the lens of traditional literature instruction, the study of novels can move beyond an academic exercise and into a place that addresses where they might be able, as McGann stresses, to "usefully study the art of their fictional construction."[14] In this way, literature can be used to study methods that may lead students to effect social change in the world outside of the text rather than leading them to make pronouncements about character or theme that only serve to glorify the study of a particular work or author.

As to the question of whether or not the study of literature helps students to achieve those goals, I can only look to the results from my own students. This past semester was the first time that I had all students hand in electronic copies of their work, and it is interesting to see how one student's reaction changed from the first day of the course to the completion of the final project. On the first day of class, I invite students to write hypothetical questions that they would ask of previous English instructors if they were given the chance. One student responded, "I would ask why we have to read so many boring books. Why can't we read something that connects to us? And why do teachers care about symbolism? I don't understand it and it doesn't help me." While on the surface, comments like these might seem to be resistant to reading in general, they point out the problematic way that fiction had been taught to the student in the past. Similarly, her response to the course theme showed some of the initial lack of depth with which students tend to approach fictional works. After giving a brief overview of each of the texts for the class, including *Johnny Got His Gun*, I asked them to write a response to the course's goals and objectives in relation to the books

and their own interests. This same student summed up her wariness about the course as a whole by writing, "I don't know if I'll stay in this class. I'm not a war head."

As the course progressed, she began to see the goals and the literature in a different light. One of the final goals in this particular course was to complete a series of scaffolded assignments that eventually led to a research paper. I do not demand that the students write their paper on the literature used in the course, or even on the World War I era, but rather on any subject that connects with ideas in the class (of course they are able to write on the literature if they wish, but relatively few choose to do so). Encouraged by the discussion of war as a metaphor and the use of abstract terms to justify reasons for war, this student began to explore the implications of the war metaphor when applied to the treatment of disease, particularly cancer. She successfully completed a final paper that examined the development of the metaphor, the application of the metaphor to the treatment of the illness, and the effects of the metaphor on both patients' and physicians' understanding of the illness. In the final paper, she was critical of the use of war as a metaphor for the treatment of disease, and she was particularly critical of the attitudes that the war metaphor fostered in popular perception of the disease and its treatment by the general public. She effectively traced historical discussions of the metaphor, including ideas from Susan Sontag,[15] Nora Gustavsson,[16] and Stephen Gillers[17] and was able to create a coherent, unified argument against the use of the metaphor based on her own personal dislike of war and the public focus on it, both in metaphor and reality. I see this as a successful result of her experience with a combination of literature and rhetorical analysis in the classroom. It allowed her to move beyond simplistic readings of novels and apply the ideas in the novel and the structure of argument to a real, contemporary problem.

I do realise that the case of one student does not completely prove the effectiveness of the approach, but I find that the majority of students in the class—coming from different levels of critical sophistication and different aptitudes for rhetorical analysis—make similar strides toward a questioning of pro-war culture. Whether it be a questioning of metaphors or actual war or even papers that lead toward the most effective possibilities for peace (one student wrote an extensive persuasive paper on how the United Nations should be restructured to achieve such a goal), the majority of them learn the importance of using dialogic argument to help persuade others

to stop blindly accepting war and the concept of war. They also learn that combative argument, like war itself, rarely encourages people to change their minds based on critical, rational thought, but rather serves simply to force others to take a submissive relationship to physical and economic power (in the case of non-believers) or to blindly accept what they already believe they understand. Based on student evaluations at the end of the course, none of the students feel that an anti-war agenda has been pushed down their throats—I had one student thank me for not being a "liberal" like other professors—but they do learn to question war instead of accepting it as inevitable. They learn valuable rhetorical skills. They also learn the value of effective communication and cooperation. While I do not believe that a fifteen week semester is sufficient to teach students to become perfect writers or to change their attitudes about and their approach toward war, I believe that my approach, given the time that we have, allows for a significant move in that direction. They see the manipulation of the term that comes from those with money and power, and they see both effective and ineffective ways that those without these things can respond.

ENDNOTES

1 See Stanley Fish, *Save the World on Your Own Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) and Gerald Graff, "Presidential Address 2008: Courseocentrism," *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 124, no. 3 (May 2009): 727-43.

2 Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1939; reprint, New York: Bantam, 1989), 109-10.

3 Henry A. Giroux, "War Talk and the Shredding of the Social Contract: Youth and the Politics of Domestic Militarization," in *Critical Theories, Radical Pedagogies, and Global Conflicts*, ed. Gustavo E. Fischman, et al. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 52.

4 Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*, 112.

5 Permission for faculty use of student materials has been secured according to Kent State University policy governing the use of student work. A sample form can be found at http://www.library.kent.edu/files/Faculty_Use_Student_Materials_Permission_General.pdf.

Although the form grants instructors permission to use student names,

I verbally informed them that their work would remain anonymous for the purposes of this article.

6 Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*, 231-32.

7 Stephen Toulmin, Richard D. Rieke, and Allan Janik, *An Introduction to Reasoning*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1984), 73-75.

8 Bruce Cook, *Dalton Trumbo* (New York: Scribner's, 1977), 149.

9 Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*, iv.

10 Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*, v.

11 Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*, vi.

12 Kathleen Blake Yancey, *Teaching Literature as Reflective Practice* (Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2004), 4-5.

13 Jerome McGann, et al., "'Reading Fiction/Teaching Fiction': A Pedagogical Experiment," *Pedagogy* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 145.

14 McGann, et al., "'Reading Fiction/Teaching Fiction,'" 146.

15 Susan Sontag, "How Grief Turned into Humbug," *New Statesman* 131, no. 4605 (16 September 2002): 32.

16 Nora S. Gustavsson, "The War Metaphor: A Threat to Vulnerable Populations," *Social Work* 36, no. 4 (July 1991): 277-78.

17 Stephen Gillers, "Behind the War Metaphor," *Nation* 234, no. 12 (27 March 1982): 365-66.

Using Literature to Teach Peace

Patrick Henry and Richard Middleton-Kaplan

In this essay, we present our experiences teaching the literature of peace and nonviolence at the college level. Our classes are largely framed by the US experience and we demonstrate to our students that there are always alternatives to violence. We focus almost exclusively on non-fiction writing and employ an expanded definition of "literature" that includes essays, speeches, letters, and life writing. We describe the foundational assumptions of our approach in terms of both methodology and ideology, discuss the difficulties and opportunities that this material presents in the classroom, and offer pedagogical strategies and practical tips for teaching peace writing.

Hoping to employ education to awaken our students from apathy and spur them toward social action, we recognize the direct connection between peace education and engaging in active work to promote peace. We therefore centre our courses on the common interfaith principles of working toward peace that brought together Tolstoy and Gandhi; unified figures as seemingly diverse as Philip and Daniel Berrigan, Dorothy Day, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thomas Merton, and Thich Nhat Hanh in opposing the Vietnam War and in using nonviolence to fight for civil and human rights; sparked an extraordinary exchange of mutually respectful, peace-building communiqués between Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scholars between 2000 and 2008; and serve as the basis for a burgeoning but little-known interfaith peace movement.[1]

We welcome all views in our class discussions; we do not silence any perspective. We recognize the essential contribution of atheist and agnostic thinkers who were activists in the cause of peace, and we strive to establish in our courses a safe environment for civil, rational discussion of peace and religion by students of all levels of belief, nonbelief, and unbelief. We aim to make students with deeply-held religious convictions feel comfortable

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voicing their opinions while making agnostic and atheist students equally at ease in our classrooms. At the same time, when we consider that followers of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism together constitute about 55 percent of the world's population, and that conflicts between them have accounted and continue to account for many of the world's most incendiary hot spots, we cannot see how peace will be achieved without a significant worldwide contribution from the major religions. This assumption guides our choices of reading assignments. The materials we use can be presented chronologically, thematically, or by faith tradition.

We also seek to redress deficiencies that have weakened many peace education efforts. One such deficiency is that peace education has tended to exclude and distort African-American perspectives.[2] We attempt to counter this by devoting significant time to the speeches and writings of both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. We bring these figures to life through various media including documentary and feature films. Moreover, we present the Civil Rights Movement not as an exclusively African-American concern, but as one that drew the support of many others including the Berrigans, Heschel, Merton, and Nhat Hanh; in that way, we are able to emphasize a broad, unifying interfaith support for human rights without in any way diluting the particular African-American perspectives and concerns that informed the movement.

A second troubling and all-too-frequent deficiency, according to a study by Yaacov Boaz Yablon published in *Gender and Education*, is that gender differences are not usually taken into account in Peace Studies pedagogy.[3] We try to address this with an extended focus on the autobiography of Catholic social worker and peace activist Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*, and with the inclusion of Jane Addams and Mother Teresa.

Finally, our engagement with peace education stems from an awareness that in the aftermath of 9/11, peace education is more visible and essential than ever. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, our students stand poised at a moment of unique historical opportunity to contribute to peace: as the United States Institute of Peace celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary and continues construction of a new headquarters building in Washington, DC; as momentum gathers for establishing a cabinet-level US Department of Peace; as globalised communication makes it possible for a student to create and maintain, for example, a Genocide Prevention Network and a Student Alliance for Peace; as Internet interconnectivity makes

it easier than ever for students to join and assist any of the many national and international organisations working for peace; as the opportunities for establishing a career in peace-building extend well beyond traditional opportunities such as the Peace Corps and Doctors Without Borders; as our students see their family members, friends, and classmates going off to two foreign wars, not always returning; and as they themselves perhaps go to or return from combat action . . . as all these things take place, we as educators likewise stand poised at a unique moment of opportunity—an opportunity to help our students think through the possibilities and advantages of nonviolent practice, interfaith cooperation, and social activism, all in the service of peace. Only through peace education can we give our students examples of major historical figures who waged peace and show them the crucial importance of finding nonviolent ways of conflict resolution. By modelling our pedagogy on the principles and activities of these peace builders, we hope to equip students to become peace builders after they step out of our classrooms.

In the sections below, we discuss how we put these ideas into practice in four different types of courses in different settings at the college level. First, Patrick Henry describes a seminar at Whitman College, a four-year liberal arts institution in Walla Walla, Washington. Then Richard Middleton-Kaplan describes three variations of a course taught at William Rainey Harper College, a comprehensive community college in Palatine, Illinois, in the northwest suburbs of Chicago. We each offer pedagogical strategies and practical suggestions for teachers of peace literature. Sample syllabi, a sample assignment, and a list of suggested readings are available from the authors.

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Alternatives to violence exist and must be explored and put into practice before we destroy ourselves and our planet. One alternative would be religious unity. Imagine what might happen if, after centuries of religious wars, religious people came to believe that, whatever their particular religion, their faith in God united them in ways far more profound than any doctrinal concept might separate them. Imagine a world where religion would never again be an excuse for hatred and murder! Imagine a world where religion, no longer an impediment to peace, actually became a major way of creating peace!

My "Literature of Peace" seminar is dedicated to helping students imagine and explore these alternative possibilities by focusing solely on "Religion and Peace." I do this because I cannot imagine a peaceful future without a world-wide religious contribution. I do not believe that any single religion will be able to make a significant impact on world peace in our new century. Only a unified interfaith peace movement will be able to have such an effect. That movement will recognize that all religious people worship the same God and will identify and emphasize common ethical values within all the major religions that inspire and unite us beyond doctrinal differences. That movement will not seek to erase differences but to respect them. It will seek, however, to eliminate divisions, to increase understanding, and to establish a deep sense of community among people of different faiths.

I have taught "The Literature of Peace" seminar five times at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, and once at Walla Walla University, a Seventh-day Adventist school in the neighbouring town of College Place. After two weeks of classical "Just War Theory" readings (Augustine and Aquinas) and Renaissance peace writings (two essays by Erasmus and Rabelais' fictional masterpiece, *Gargantua*), we begin the modern texts by reading Gandhi's seminal writings on nonviolence. Then we settle down for ten weeks of twentieth-century religiously inspired readings, almost all of which were written by religious figures who waged peace in America during the war in Vietnam: Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Jr., Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, Thich Nhat Hanh, Daniel Berrigan, Thomas Merton, and Malcolm X. In addition to reading these authors, we study many lengthy scriptural passages from the Hebrew Bible, the Apostolic Writings, and the Qur'an that inspired them. We end the class with Bernie Glassman's original, provocative, and activist *Bearing Witness: A Zen Master's Lessons in Making Peace*.

* * * *

I have designed special pedagogical strategies for teaching my "Literature of Peace" seminar. First of all, I accept only ten students in the class so that we can form a small, coherent group where everyone gets to know everyone else and all are expected to contribute often during each class period. Second, in order to create a space radically different from the normal classroom situation, I hold the seminar in my home. To break the standard fifty-minute

session, the class meets one night a week for three hours and is divided into two ninety-minute segments with a half-hour in between for tea, cake, fruit, and conversation. Each time I have taught the class, students have uniformly remarked that the relaxed home atmosphere made our meetings unlike their other classes and created an ambiance that made it easier for them to open up and express personal views about religion.

Third, our religion and peace seminar is fundamentally founded upon dialogue. So absolutely do I subscribe to Merton's belief in the need to recognize that "the true solution to our problems is not accessible to any one isolated party or nation[;] all must arrive at it by working together,"[4] that I have made dialogue the seminar's cornerstone. Dialogue actually takes place before the weekly session does. Two students are assigned to give a twenty-minute presentation that they prepare together on the work to be discussed each week. Each class begins with that presentation and the rest of the class consists of questions, discussion, and open, no-holds-barred debate of the issues at the heart of the week's reading. There are no lectures.

Fourth, I make use of interviews, documentaries, and feature films so that, whenever possible, students can hear the voices of the writers they are reading and see them as flesh and blood human beings committed to peacemaking in the world. For Dorothy Day, we watch three television shows from the 1970s, one with Bill Moyers (20 February 1973), in which she is interviewed and her life in the Catholic Worker movement examined. For Gandhi, we watch both a documentary, *Pilgrim of Peace*, and long excerpts depicting non-violent resistance in action from Richard Attenborough's award-winning film, *Gandhi*. We watch *Merton: A Film Biography*, and *Abraham Joshua Heschel Remembered*, an illuminating interview with Heschel and Carl Stern. We listen to and watch Martin Luther King, Jr. deliver three of his most celebrated speeches: "I Have a Dream" (28 August 1963; Washington, DC); "Our God Is Marching On" (25 March 1965; Montgomery, Alabama); and the speech he gave the night before he was murdered, "I See the Promised Land" (3 April 1968; Memphis, Tennessee). For Malcolm X, we watch a documentary and long excerpts from Spike Lee's film, *Malcolm X*, that deal with his two conversions to Islam. Finally, for Thich Nhat Hanh, we watch two interviews found in *The Door of Compassion* and *The Mind of Transformation: Combining Ethics and Meditation*.

I also make significant use of guest speakers in the "Literature of Peace" seminar. A Buddhist monk gives an introduction to Buddhism, an Orthodox

priest who spent many months in the monastery where Merton spent twenty-seven years offers the introduction to Merton, and a local Muslim teacher introduces us to Islam. If there were a rabbi in Walla Walla, I would ask that person to present the first class on the Hebrew Bible. Whenever possible, it is important to have people who know and practice a religion talk to others about their religion. Hearing it "from the horse's mouth," as it were, not only cuts down on the possibility of misinterpretation but also gives non-practitioners a chance to meet another person with different religious views and to question that person not only about the religion per se but about how persons of the faith in question are to act toward others in the world. This human encounter among people of different faiths is germane in the teaching of peace.

Finally, in addition to the readings for the next week, the homework for all members of the class, teacher included, is to work on finding inner peace. Peace begins on the inside and moves outward. Gandhi tells us that the only war worth fighting is the war between our violent animal self and our non-violent spiritual self. Only when that war has been won and we establish inner peace, as Thich Nhat Hahn corroborates, will we be able to open up to others in true dialogue. We subscribe wholeheartedly to the practical wisdom normally attributed to Gandhi: "You must be the change you want to see in the world."[5]

* * * *

During my thirty-year career at Whitman College, I have had good enrolment in my literature courses (ten to fifteen students) and I have had, generally speaking, good to excellent teaching evaluations. Nothing during those years, however, could have prepared me for the reactions to my "Literature of Peace" seminar. After the first time I taught it, I had waiting lists of up to thirty students each time I repeated the class. Not only did students never cut this class, they were always prepared and anxious to discuss the weekly readings. Student evaluations of the seminar were exceedingly high, by far the best I have ever received. The students uniformly stressed, above all, the texts themselves, but they also underscored the home setting, the dialogical nature of the class, the videos, and the guest lectures as crucial aspects of the entire pedagogical experience. They also reported that they felt liberated to speak openly about their religious convictions without fear of intimidation

that they had experienced in other classes. Almost every student, every time the class was offered, said that it was "a course that changes lives" or that it was "the best" or "one of the very best" courses he or she had taken in college. It is the course and not the instructor that has been singled out for praise.

Many students today are waiting not only for courses that deal with peace but for a course that brings together peace and religion. Students who graduated from college in 2011 were impressionable youngsters in the sixth grade on 9/11 and their country has been at war ever since. As a recent *New York Times* article makes clear, there is a definite renewed interest in religion on American campuses. Professor Peter Gomes, the "university preacher" at Harvard, remarks, "There is probably more active religious life [on campus] now than there has been in 100 years."[6] The article cites similar situations at Colgate, Lehigh, and the Universities of Richmond, Wisconsin, and California at Berkeley. Strikingly, the article points out that more than two-thirds of the 112,000 first-year college students interviewed in 2004 said that they prayed and almost 80 percent said that they believed in God. The more ethnically diverse our campuses have become, the more religious the student bodies seem to have become. This is in sharp contrast to college and university faculty members, who remain largely agnostic and atheistic.

* * * *

I offer my students three important reasons to hope for and to work for the formation of a successful twenty-first-century interfaith peace movement. First of all, the religious peace activists who began the anti-Vietnam War campaign in 1963 continued to play a major part in the peace movement that eventually helped bring the war to an end. These war resisters did not stop the violence in Vietnam but they garnered enough public support "to thwart the White House's more desperate plans for the drastic expansion and intensification of the war, especially during the critical years of 1968-69."[7] Philip and Daniel Berrigan, Rabbi Heschel, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thomas Merton, and Thich Nhat Hanh, among others, constituted the greatest example of interfaith peace activism in our nation's history. In his autobiography, Daniel Berrigan depicts the labour required to bring this interfaith endeavour to life: "We were in it up to our tonsures, our somber Protestant stocks, our yarmulkes: the disorder of a new creation,

battling toward birth."[8]

Second, we must not underestimate the importance of post-Holocaust Judeo-Christian reconciliation. Just forty years ago, in the wake of almost 2,000 years of anti-Judaism within Christianity, the Second Vatican Council set out to redefine its relationship with Jewish people and that relationship has now been completely redefined. During this time, we have witnessed a series of formal apologies offered by various Christian churches from different countries and one from the Vatican as well. These apologies, mostly written by clergy who had absolutely nothing to do with the events in question, express not only contrition for what happened in the past but deep commitment to the construction of a new Christianity totally devoid of anti-Judaism and of a future of Judeo-Christian reconciliation. Just as remarkable is the fact that in the year 2000, more than 170 Jewish scholars representing all branches of Judaism issued a statement called *"Dabru Emet"* ("Speak the Truth"), which calls on Jewish people to relinquish their fears of Christianity and to acknowledge Church efforts since the Holocaust to amend Christian teaching about Judaism. Without negating the history of Christian anti-Judaism nor the fact that "without the long history of Christian anti-Judaism and Christian violence against Jews, Nazi ideology could never have taken hold nor could it have been carried out," the document explicitly states that "Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon [and] not an inevitable outcome of Christianity."[9]

Third, an interfaith peace movement has already begun. Initiated by Muslims, this proposal for dialogue and solidarity took the initial form of a twenty-nine page letter addressed to Christian leaders worldwide. Entitled "A Common Word between Us and You" and signed by 138 Muslim scholars and clerics from across the globe, it constitutes an invitation to work together for peace. It is based on the belief that Christianity and Islam share the basic principles of worshipping one God and loving one's neighbour. The Muslim letter cites the Qur'an, the Apostolic Writings, and the Torah. "Without peace and justice between [our] two communities," the authors argue—communities that constitute 55 percent of the world's population—"there can be no meaningful peace in the world."[10] On 18 November 2007, roughly three hundred Christian theologians and clerics signed their enthusiastic response to the Muslim initiative. Entitled "Loving God and Neighbor Together: A Christian Response to 'A Common Word between Us and You,'" the document reaffirmed the common Christian-Muslim ground

found in the two commandments of love.[11]

The same Muslim clerics and scholars addressed the Jewish community on 25 February 2008 in "A Call to Peace, Dialogue and Understanding between Muslims and Jews."[12] Clearly an attempt to establish mutual respect and improve Jewish-Muslim relations, this call to peace, dialogue, and understanding emphasizes the commonalties between the two religions with their same father, Abraham, and calls for an end to stereotypes and prejudices that dehumanize both Muslims and Jews. The wholeheartedly favourable Jewish response to the Muslim proposal, "Seek Peace and Pursue It," was issued on 3 March 2008 by the International Jewish Committee for Inter-religious Consultations.[13] The creation of this Abrahamic Tent under which Muslims, Jews, and Christians come together for prayer and for peace, if developed fully, can have an unparalleled positive effect on matters of war and peace in our new century.

* * * *

Every semester my students teach me more about peace than I am able to teach them. For my part, I try, above all, to emphasize ten interfaith principles drawn from the works of Trappist monk Thomas Merton, Conservative Jewish rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, and Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh, all three of whom were part of the interfaith peace movement during the war in Vietnam.

1. *Inner Peace*. It is clear, above all in the writings of Gandhi and Thich Nhat Hanh, that creating inner peace allows us to open ourselves up to others in a significant way. Creating peace in our personal relationships is the first step toward establishing peace between communities and then between nations. By doing so, like the Trappists and the Buddhists, we learn to recycle everything, thereby transforming hatred into understanding, anger into compassion, swords into plowshares, and ourselves into sources of peace for others.

2. *Dialogue*. No one more than Merton insisted that true solutions can only emerge from open dialogue between all parties. The true solution is never accessible to one isolated party. Without communication there can be no understanding, no trust, no forgiveness, no reconciliation, no communion.

3. *Detachment*. We do not have to give up our ideas in order to engage

in meaningful dialogue, only our attachment to them, so that an excessive attachment to dogma does not prevent us from receiving truths from outside our particular faith group, thereby undermining authentic interfaith communication. The practice of detachment from one's doctrines enables us to receive the viewpoints of others and hear them in a new and profound manner that opens paths of mutual discovery.

4. *Faith transcends dogma and unites all believers*. This is the fundamental principle of ecumenism, expressed in these words by Rabbi Heschel in "What Ecumenism Is": "God is greater than religion [and] faith is deeper than dogma." Similarly, in *Pacem in Terris*, the first encyclical addressed not simply to Catholics but to "all men of good will," Pope John XXIII affirms that "Every human being has the right to honor God according to the dictates of an upright conscience."[14]

5. *Religion is a means, not an end.* As Thich Nhat Hanh and Daniel Berrigan make clear in their co-authored book, *The Raft Is Not the Shore*, religion is a means, not an end in itself. Heschel warns us that we must not make a God of our religion, which is only a means of taking us to God. "To equate religion and God," Heschel writes, "is idolatry."[15] Ecumenism recognizes the validity of other paths to God and the Roman Catholic Church's 1965 *Nostra Aetate (In Our Age)*, for example, which represents a virtual revolution in Roman Catholic thinking regarding the Jews, should be seen in this light. Among other things, it rejected the idea that the Jews were responsible for the death of Christ. It denounced all forms of anti-Semitism as affronts to the Gospel, and gave up all claims of supersessionism as it recognized the Hebrew Bible as the living covenant between Yahweh and the Jewish people.

6. *Holiness is not the monopoly of any particular religion*. Rabbi Heschel enunciated this principle and lived it at all times, sometimes in the most remarkable ways. His work together with Christians, teaching at Union Theological Seminary with Protestant and Catholic students in his classes, created new possibilities for insights and learning. Heschel celebrated this atmosphere of increasing mutual esteem between Christians and Jews and, with unusual generosity and originality, reached out and embraced Christianity. Strikingly, in his March 1966 "Interview at Notre Dame," he observed, "A Jew, in his own way, should acknowledge the role of Christianity in God's plan for the redemption of all men. . . . I recognize in Christianity the presence of holiness. I see it. I sense it. I feel it. You are not

an embarrassment to us and we shouldn't be an embarrassment to you."[16] With the same interfaith fervour, eighteen months earlier, Thomas Merton told Heschel that one of his "latent ambitions" was "to be a true Jew under my Catholic skin."[17] Nhat Hanh, too, spoke often about the holiness of other religions—"The moment I met Martin Luther King, Jr., I knew I was in the presence of a holy person"—and emphasizes our ability to grow spiritually from our encounters with them: "We humans can be nourished by the best values of many traditions."[18]

7. *Respect and reverence for other faith traditions*. To this end, we must be on the side of dialogue, understanding, and communion and opposed to exclusivist concepts of salvation and the denigration of other religions. Being able to see the divine in others creates a spiritual unity that transcends individual religions and serves to unite all believers.

8. *No attempts to convert others to one's religion*. Nhat Hanh is forceful on this point. He stresses that a good Buddhist demonstrates the love and compassion of Jesus and that a good Christian and Jew would already have the Buddha-nature within themselves. Therefore, there is never any reason to convert. Furthermore, since our roots are important, a conversion could actually be dangerous. It is always safer in his view to remain where we are rooted and to show reverence for all other religious traditions.[19]

9. *Religious diversity is the will of God*.

10. *God is the father of all human beings or of none*. These last two interfaith principles, enunciated by Heschel[20] but adhered to by all the religious figures we have examined, form a sound interfaith basis that allows religious tolerance to be the path that leads to peace for it recognizes and respects the sanctity of the great religious traditions.

Both religious and non-religious students have uniformly related to these principles. Some have told me that short, daily periods of meditation, the practice of detachment from strongly held beliefs, and an effort to listen more intensely to others have helped them attain both a greater sense of inner peace and an openness to dialogue with others. Since all of these principles stress the importance of tolerance, non-religious students claim that they have also learned from them how to be more tolerant of those, including religious people, who hold different views than they do. These same students have also pointed to the universal application of biblical injunctions to love one's neighbour and to be compassionate to the less fortunate. "You don't have to be religious," one agnostic student pointed

out, "to practice the ethical wisdom found in religious texts." Finally, it was a Jewish student who taught us all how we can be nourished spiritually by the faith of other traditions. "The key moment in the class for me," she said, "was hearing Dorothy Day say that if you sit down with anyone over a cup of coffee or a bowl of soup, you will find Christ in that person." She then went on to say that, from that moment, she has sought God in every person she speaks to and that she always addresses each person at that level of her or his being.

RICHARD MIDDLETON-KAPLAN: TEACHING PEACE AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In Fall 2009, I taught "Pathways to Peace: Nonviolence and Social Activism" as a theme-based first-year composition course (English 101). The three sections that I taught consisted of three distinct populations: a class with a maximum enrolment of twenty-four students (hereafter referred to as Section 1); a class of Honours students with a maximum enrolment of fifteen (hereafter Section 2-H); and a six-week class of adult learners in a "Fast Track" program (hereafter Section 3-FT)—designed to provide working adults with a flexible, accelerated path to an associate's degree—with a maximum enrolment of twenty-four.

The first-year composition course emphasizes critical reading and the writing of expository prose, and is designed to help students write college-level English. At Harper College, instructors have the freedom to focus the course on a unifying theme. Students who signed up for the Honours and Fast Track sections of my course knew that it would focus on the themes of peace and nonviolence; however, students in Section 1 did not know this until the first day of class.

On day one in Section 1, I described the special theme I had chosen for the class, assured them that if this theme did not interest them, they could seek out another section without negative judgment from me, and welcomed those who chose to stay. I asked them each at the end of the first meeting to offer their thoughts about the topic, and their words echoed those of the students in Section 2-H and Section 3-FT. All agreed that they had never before studied anything about peace. In high school they had studied military history, and their history classes moved forward from war to war, leaping over intervening periods of peace as if they were fallow eras in which nothing of interest happened. The students realised they

had not learned the history or ideology of peace. They observed that in the major bookseller chain stores, in aisle after aisle, the shelves sag under many volumes of military history. But the history of peace? They had not been taught anything about that.[21]

The students in Section 1 were most cautious about embracing the theme—understandably, since they had not known about it in advance. As for the other sections, their open-minded willingness to consider the topic was perhaps best summarized by one student in Section 3-FT, a son of two New York City police detectives, who said, "I went straight out of high school into the Marine Corps for eight years, and what you're talking about goes against everything I have ever been taught to believe." I drew a deep breath, mentally preparing a response, but before I could formulate my reply he continued: "So I'm really looking forward to seeing the other side and hearing what you have to say." I concluded the first day in all three classes by playing John Lennon's "Give Peace a Chance" and Elvis Costello's performance of Nick Lowe's "(What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love, and Understanding," and we left it at that—asking them only to give the ideas of peace and nonviolence a chance, to approach the course content with open minds.

* * * *

Because English 101 focuses on the reading and writing of expository prose, I did not include fiction, drama, or (with the exception of Walt Whitman's "Reconciliation") poetry in my syllabus. Like Patrick Henry, whose syllabus I used as a launching pad, I emphasized the importance of interfaith cooperation in peace-building by including representatives from a wide range of religious and philosophical traditions: Christian (Tolstoy, Merton, King Jr., Mother Teresa); Jewish (Einstein, Heschel); Muslim (Malcolm X, Fathi Osman); Buddhist (Nhat Hanh, the Dalai Lama); and Hindu (Gandhi).

In addition to the fact that my courses differed from Patrick Henry's with respect to institutional setting and course level, I modified his syllabus in ways that gave my classes a subtly different focus. First, to the authors and traditions just named, I added writers who did not arrive at their peaceful philosophies from a primarily religious perspective (Thoreau, Whitman, Twain, and to an extent Einstein). I did this as a way of acknowledging the contribution of nonreligious thinkers to the history and ideology of

peace and nonviolence, and in the interest of wanting atheist and agnostic students to feel that their views were also represented on the syllabus. Second, I arranged the readings chronologically rather than thematically or by religious group. Beginning with Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" as a starting point of modern-era non-violent resistance, we moved forward to Tolstoy, Twain, Merton's essay "Gandhi: The Gentle Revolutionary,"[22] and then Gandhi himself.

On the positive side, this approach allowed students to see the development of non-violent thinking and practice. For example, they could see Thoreau's influence on Tolstoy and Gandhi, and later in the semester on King. They could see that to Thoreau's idea of individual nonviolent noncooperation with the government, Tolstoy adds an understanding that the modern nation-state is maintained not just by force but by public opinion, and he anticipated the influence of mass communication in shaping that opinion. As a result, Tolstoy realised that governments must control public opinion, and that the public can influence government policy by mobilizing and by using mass communication to advance its own agenda. In turn, students could see how Gandhi adapted Tolstoy's ideas on a mass scale. We discussed (although we did not read) Gandhi's exchange of letters with Tolstoy, his writings about Tolstoy,[23] and even his attempt to found a Tolstoyan commune. In short, the chronological approach made the linking chains of influence clearly visible.

On the negative side, the chronological approach dampened the initial enthusiasm of the students in Section 1 because of the difficulty of the reading material. Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" held a certain appeal once its ideas were unpacked in class discussion, but its rhetorical sophistication and wide-ranging vocabulary proved a daunting challenge for many students. Tolstoy's writings seemed distant, obscure, and forbidding. Only with Twain's "A War Prayer" did the students in Section 1 feel they had encountered a work that was accessible. At last, they had a story, written in familiar language!

In the future, in a standard composition course I would abandon the chronological approach and begin with more accessible writings, and then later in the semester double back to explore the historical underpinnings. Students in the Honours and Fast Track sections did not seem troubled by the chronological approach, so I would be inclined to preserve it for them. Students in Section 1 also struggled with the volume of the reading. To

cut down on the volume, for standard composition classes in the future I would limit the assigned reading, in almost all cases reducing the number of essays to one per author. Any of three excellent anthologies would serve this purpose: *Peace Is the Way: Writings on Nonviolence from the Fellowship of Reconciliation*, edited by Walter Wink;[24] *The Power of Nonviolence: Writings by Advocates of Peace*, edited with an introduction by Howard Zinn;[25] or *A Peace Reader: Essential Readings on War, Justice, Non-Violence and World Order*, edited by Joseph J. Fahey and Richard Armstrong.[26] Out of print but worth searching for, and perhaps having students order used online, is *Peace and Nonviolence: Basic Writings by Prophetic Voices in the World Religions*, edited by Edward Guinan.[27]

* * * *

First, as Patrick Henry did, I founded my courses upon the principles of open dialogue and the free, respectful exchange of ideas. One particularly effective technique for making sure that every student had a voice was to take the last ten to fifteen minutes of class and go around the room, asking each student to offer one reflection on any aspect of the day's assigned reading or discussion. I established two ground rules in connection with these closing comments: (1) I would not question or otherwise respond to the comment, so that every person's thought would stand on its own and would not generate another round of discussion, which might then cut into the time that others had for their closing comments; and (2) each person had to say something; students could say "I pass," but I would come back to them. I did not always find time for these comments at the end of class, but I always was pleased with the results when I did. The end-of-class comments brought out important points not otherwise touched on in our discussions, and they revealed the depth and variety of ways in which students engaged with the topic. Students too shy or self-effacing to participate in the main discussion received an opportunity to share their insights. Finally, even on days when discussion flagged in Section 1 (it never did in Sections 2-H or 3-FT), the end-of-class comments gave everyone a chance to participate—and knowing they might be called upon to offer a reflection at the end of class kept students alert throughout the class.

Second, again following the lead of Patrick Henry, I made use of interviews, documentaries, and feature films. These I supplemented with

material from other media. For example, when we studied the 1963 March on Washington and King's "I Have a Dream" speech, the students read Ho Che Anderson's representation of the event from his stunningly illustrated graphic novel, *King 2: A Comics Biography of Martin Luther King, Jr., Volume II*. Anderson's chapter on the march begins with an illustration of the great gospel vocalist Mahalia Jackson singing "I've Been 'Buked," so I played a recording of that for the students. When we came to *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, I brought in jazz recordings such as John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* and Max Roach's *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite*, opening a discussion of the influence of the Civil Rights Movement, black nationalism, and 1960s identity politics on what was called the "new thing" in jazz. From Roach's suite, I played "Triptych: Prayer/Protest/Peace" and asked the students to identify the moments of shifting from one section to the next—a task they did with ease, and which they enjoyed. We discussed the cover of the Roach album, which depicts three black men sitting at a counter with a nervous-looking white soda jerk behind the counter, as a commentary on sit-in protests.

Third, I adopted Patrick Henry's use of guest speakers. Antony Adolf, author of *Peace: A World History*, gave a presentation in which he described for students a wide variety of careers and activities through which they could participate in peace-building throughout their adult lives. In a second appearance, Adolf also emphasized a central message of our classes: the importance of first establishing inner peace, then peace between individuals (such as parent and child or spouse and spouse), then peace within our communities, our nation, and finally the world at large. This message dovetailed with our readings from the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh's *Creating True Peace: Ending Violence in Yourself, Your Family, Your Community, and the World*.

Finally, to spark greater interest in Section 1, I arranged a field trip to the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie, IL, and I incorporated more readings from opposing perspectives, such as Alabama Governor George Wallace's speech in response to passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. While these strategies were not necessary in the other two sections, they were helpful in Section 1. On the final day, those present unanimously expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to study a topic to which they had never given much thought. Students in Sections 2-H and 3-FT unanimously voiced similar appreciation, and several shared

stories of how they or their loved ones had already begun to transform their lives by putting ideas from the course into practice.

* * * *

It is common for students to regard advocates of non-violent resistance as naïve, soft-headed idealists who have little grasp of reality. As educators, we must be prepared to encounter—and counter—this resistance. We can encourage our students' healthy skepticism while still proactively confronting their cynicism. The following ten activities and assignments were notably successful at overcoming student skepticism or resistance, and they produced the most engaged, stimulating sessions of the semester.

1. *Engage students by having them choose one class discussion to lead.*

2. *Begin with a narrative essay.* For the first of their four formal essays, I asked students to do the following:

> Compose a descriptive narrative that focuses on you. Tell us the story of an important event in your life, one in which you were the primary participant, in which you had an encounter—or potential encounter—with violence. This could be in the form of violence threatened or used against you, or violence you have used or been tempted to use against someone else. Narrate the event, explain why it was significant or meaningful for you, and offer a judgment about whether violence or nonviolence provided the best solution in that conflict. For example, if you used violence, would the situation have come to a better resolution if you had not? If you used a nonviolent approach, would there have been a better resolution if you had resorted to violence?[28]

This assignment allowed students to connect their personal experiences with the theme of violence on a small scale. Many students explored profound experiences. A handful at first claimed that they had never had an encounter with violence. After congratulating them on their good fortune, I was able to help them recognize instances when they had felt or encountered violent impulses, and they then explored these moments, discovering previously hidden truths about themselves. If students can extrapolate from firsthand experience, if they can recognize the place of violence in their own lives and think about its meaning, then we have a platform from which to dive into deeper exploration of the topic.

3. *Require journal writing*. Journals should be viewed as central, rather than peripheral, to the purpose of coming to terms with philosophies of nonviolence and prospects for building peace. Some can be in-class writings, while on other occasions students may be asked to write a journal entry at home. Ten minutes of journal writing at the start of class can also help students gather their thoughts, thereby making them more ready than otherwise to engage in discussion. Journal responses give students space to engage fundamental questions about the material, to discover in their own words what meaning the topic may or may not have for them, and to explore their own emotional and philosophical reactions to the readings and films.

4. *Incorporate current events into class discussions.* During the Fall 2009 semester, we learned of the mass shooting at Fort Hood, Texas; we observed Veterans' Day and the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall; twenty-year-old University of Connecticut football player Jasper Howard was stabbed to death after an on-campus party; sixteen-year-old Honours student Derrion Albert was beaten to death outside a Chicago high school; and President Obama received the Nobel Peace Prize. Each of these became the basis for a lively class discussion.

Section 3-FT had its first meeting on 9 November 2009, and I began by pointing out that this was a particularly apt day on which to begin our study of peace and nonviolence, as it marked the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the seventy-first anniversary of *Kristallnacht*. Veterans' Day was just two days away, I pointed out, when the former Marine said, "You forgot one." I asked what. "This week is also the 234th anniversary of the founding of the Marine Corps," he informed me.

On another occasion, a hate group exercised its right of free speech by setting up an information table on campus. After discussing possible responses, Sections 1 and 2-H decided to march over to the table. (Section 3-FT did not have this opportunity, as it had not yet begun its six-week semester at this point.) Students would be free to engage or not engage the group in whatever nonviolent way they wished, from handing group members a Harper College Faculty Senate statement supporting diversity to debating them to just standing back and observing. It seemed the perfect opportunity to put nonviolent protest into action! By the time we arrived, however, the hate group had decamped, its members claiming they felt uncomfortable and unwelcome because of student protests against them. Although the class was disappointed in some ways, we could point to the

hate group's retreat as a victory for nonviolent protest.

President Obama's receiving the Nobel Peace Prize sparked energetic debate. I took the occasion to make this a topic for the students' final formal essay, an argument paper, on which I asked them to argue in favour of or against the Nobel committee's decision. President Obama gave his acceptance speech just hours before the final class meeting of Sections 1 and 2-H, allowing us to spend part of our final session debating his defence of "just war." The discussion sparked a wide variety of student responses. More important than the content of my students' responses, however, is the fact that teaching peace provides an ideal topic for instructors to incorporate relevant contemporary events into class discussions. Not every class will experience such confluences of dates as mine did, of course, but there will surely be instances of violence and of peacemaking, from local to international levels, that can be brought into the classroom to help students appreciate the relevance of the subject matter to the assigned theoretical readings and, most importantly, to their own worlds.

5. *Emphasize the role of students in peace movements.* Our courses should not become exercises in hagiography. Students should learn to see the thinkers and peace activists we study not as detached, abstract intellectuals but as human beings deeply engaged with the harsh and brutal realities of their eras. At the same time, students should recognize that a titan such as Martin Luther King, Jr. did not initiate the Civil Rights Movement and achieve its gains by himself. Students, just like our students, played a crucial role. When we discussed the contributions of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and when we discussed the fact that students like themselves founded the Genocide Prevention Network and the Student Peace Alliance, my students began to feel empowered in their own capacity to effect change.

6. *Have students assess one peace-related website.*[29] Students were free to choose a website to report on. Not only was this a useful exercise in terms of analysis and evaluation of electronic sources, but it allowed every student to discover that whatever one's interests and religious beliefs or nonbeliefs, there exists a group of like-minded people who have banded together to work for peace. Students could also share their chosen websites with the class. This exercise was essential for sowing seeds of hope. On the last day of class, when I asked students what signs of positive prospects they saw for peace, they pointed back to the astonishing proliferation of websites, each representing a multitude of people devoted to the pursuit of peace through

nonviolent means.

7. *Brainstorm with students ways in which they can participate in peacebuilding.* We can offer guidance here, but we can also allow the students to surprise us with their ingenuity and creativity.

8. *Identify promising signs of prospects for peace.* Many of these were discussed in the opening section of this essay, such as the construction of a new headquarters for the United States Institute of Peace and serious discussion about establishing a cabinet-level US Department of Peace. Other encouraging signs include a worldwide interfaith movement for peace as evidenced by the documents "*Dabru Emet*" ("Speak the Truth"), "A Common Word between Us and You," "Loving God and Neighbor Together: A Christian Response to 'A Common Word between Us and You,'" "A Call to Peace, Dialogue and Understanding between Muslims and Jews," and "Seek Peace and Pursuit It." More evidence for hope can be found in the growing interfaith peace movement within the United States, as chronicled in Gustav Niebuhr's book *Beyond Tolerance: Searching for Interfaith Understanding in America*.

9. *Ask the students to look for signs of the existence of humanity.* After our first day discussing the works of Heschel, I presented the students with three Heschel quotations:

- "For the opposite of human is not the animal. *The opposite of human is the demonic*."[30]
- "The question about Auschwitz to be asked is not 'Where was God?' but rather 'Where was man?,'"[31] for in Heschel's view it was not God who died at Auschwitz, but man.
- "In the Middle Ages thinkers were trying to discover proofs for the existence of God. Today we seem to look for proof for the existence of man."[32]

I then asked the students to look for signs of the existence of humanity between the end of that day's class and our next session. Watch behavior, yes, but look into people's faces, I urged them. At the beginning of the next class, they wrote for ten minutes in their journals about where, if anywhere, they had seen signs of the existence of humanity. I then asked each student what he or she had seen. What followed was one of the most spirited discussions of the semester, with every student participating avidly. Many of the instances students pointed to involved relatively small acts such as someone opening a door or allowing another driver to change lanes. Often,

the students themselves had not been direct beneficiaries of these actions, but had merely witnessed them.

This discussion brought forth several crucial points. First, students immediately grasped that such small acts produced within them a sense of contentment or inner peacefulness, even when they themselves did not directly benefit. Second, they understood the internal, spiritual, emotional, and psychological rewards of altruism, whether enacted by themselves or by another.[33] Third, they realised that small acts of humanity foster more such small acts, as a person who has experienced or witnessed such an act is then more likely to treat another person with kindness. Like concentric circles rippling out from where a pebble has been thrown into a pond, the ripples of humane acts spread out, ultimately to touch shores not seen or imagined by the pebble thrower. Fourth, this laid the groundwork for our discussion of Thich Nhat Hanh and the Dalai Lama, both of whom contend that world peace must begin with inner peace. Finally, this discussion resulted in students recognizing that working for peace need not mean acting on a grand or global scale.

10. *Ask the students what they themselves can do to promote peace, at even the smallest level, and to transform themselves into living proofs of the existence of humanity.* As overwhelming as the problems of war and violence are, we wish to send our students out of our classrooms and into the world not feeling overwhelmed, discouraged, and powerless, but able to contribute to peace through nonviolent social action. We want to urge them to consider how they can move from being observers of the tableau of peace to becoming actors within that tableau. By the end of the semester, we have learned from Nhat Hanh, the Dalai Lama, and others that peace begins within the individual. If we can help students realise that they themselves are such individuals with transformative potential, then the pedagogy of peace has been put to the best possible use.

CONCLUSION

Peace education teaches alternatives to societal violence.[34] Schooled in the history of war, awash in a world of violence, our students hardly know that a history or discipline of peace exists. While some may at first respond with a socialized skepticism or even dismissal of nonviolent peacemakers, others will welcome the opportunity to survey what is for them unchartered territory, and all can benefit from this study. We stand the best chance of turning

our students into active peacemakers by employing a pedagogy modeled on the elements of peacebuilding: respectful dialogue, recognition of a common ethos beneath surface differences, and interracial and interfaith cooperation. To the extent that our classrooms embody these principles, we can send our students forth well-equipped to put these principles into practice in their own lives, and into the lives of all those with whom they come in contact.

ENDNOTES

1 For an account of the interfaith movement in the United States, see Gustav Niebuhr, *Beyond Tolerance: Searching for Interfaith Understanding in America* (New York: Viking, 2008). A selective list of the many interfaith organisations dedicated to peace both within the United States and internationally is available from the authors.

2 Marvin J. Berlowitz, Nathan A. Long, and Eric R. Jackson, "The Exclusion and Distortion of African-American Perspectives in Peace Education," *Educational Studies: Journal of the American Educational Studies Association* 39, no. 1 (February 2006): 5-15.

3 Yaacov Boaz Yablon, "Gender Differences in Peace Education Programmes," *Gender and Education* 21, no. 6 (November 2009): 689-701.

4 Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Directions, 1962), 116-17.

5 See *Gandhi on Non-Violence,* ed. Thomas Merton (New York: New Directions, 1964), 27, 38; Thich Nhat Hanh, *Living Buddha, Living Christ* (New York: Riverhead, 1995), 10.

6 Alan Finder, "Matters of Faith Find a New Prominence on Campus," *The New York Times* (2 May 2007), http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/02/education/02spirituality.html?scp=1&sq=Matters%20of%20Faith%20Find%20a%20New%20Prominence%20on%20Campus&st=cse.

7 Charles De Benedetti, ed., *Peace Heroes in Twentieth-Century America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), 16. I also profited from a discussion with my colleague, Dave Schmitz, who insisted upon the limits that the growing peace movement placed upon both the Johnson and Nixon administrations regarding what would be

acceptable to the public.

8 Daniel Berrigan, *To Dwell in Peace: An Autobiography* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 191.

9 "*Dabru Emet*" appeared in its entirety in *The New York Times* (10 September 2000): 23.

10 "A Common Word between Us and You" can be found at http://www.acommonword.com.

11 "Loving God and Neighbor Together: A Christian Response to 'A Common Word between Us and You,'" *The New York Times*, "Week In Review" (18 November 2007): 4.

12 "A Call to Peace, Dialogue and Understanding between Muslims and Jews" can be found at http://www.mujca.com/muslimsandjews.htm.

13 "Seek Peace and Pursue It" can be found at http://www.wfn.org/2008/03/msg00012.html.

14 Abraham Joshua Heschel, "What Ecumenism Is," in *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity,* ed. Susannah Heschel (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1996), 287-88; Encyclical Pacem in Terris of John XXIII, 11 April 1963, http://www.papalencyclicals.net/John23/j23pacem.htm.

15 Abraham Joshua Heschel, "No Religion Is an Island," *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity*, 243.

16 Abraham Joshua Heschel, "Interview at Notre Dame," *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity*, 387.

17 Thomas Merton, *The Hidden Ground of Love: Letters of Thomas Merton on Religious Experience and Social Concerns*, ed. William H. Shannon (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1985), 434.

18 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Living Buddha, Living Christ*, 2, 5-6. See also Thich Nhat Hanh and Daniel Berrigan, *The Raft Is Not The Shore. Conversations Toward A Buddhist-Christian Awareness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1975, 2001), 31.

19 Pierre Marchand, "Cultivating the Flower of Nonviolence: An Interview with Thich Nhat Hanh," *Fellowship of Reconciliation* (January-February 1999): 5.

20 Heschel, "No Religion Is an Island," 249, 254; "Carl Stern's Interview with Dr. Heschel," *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity,* 398, 405.

21 This has begun to change with the recent publication of the following titles: Antony Adolf, *Peace: A World History* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2009), and David Cortright, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). See also two less systematic and less academic works that have many merits in their own right: Ken Kolsbun, *Peace: The Biography of a Symbol* (Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2008), and Barry Miles, *Peace: 50 Years of Protest* (New York: Reader's Digest, 2008).

22 Thomas Merton, "Gandhi: The Gentle Revolutionary," in *Passion for Peace: Reflections on War and Nonviolence* (New York: Crossroad, 1995), 72-86.

23 See *The Essential Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, ed. Raghavan Iyer (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1991), particularly the following: "Reading Thoreau," 70-71; "Tolstoy on Non-Retaliation," 73-75; "Civilization and Conscience," 88-92; and "The Use and Scope of Truth-Force," 301-03.

24 Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 2000.

25 Boston: Beacon, 2002.

26 New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1992.

27 New York: Paulist, 1973.

28 I am indebted to Dr. Elizabeth Turner of the English Department at Harper College for this assignment. I have adapted the assignment to the theme of violence, but she created the narrative assignment itself.

29 This assignment is available from the authors.

30 Heschel, "No Religion Is an Island," 293.

31 Abraham Joshua Heschel, "What We Might Do Together," *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity,* 291.

32 Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Who Is Man?* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1965), 26.

33 For an examination of pure altruism as seen in the acts of rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust, see Patrick Henry, "Chapter Five: The

Rescuers of Jews," in *"We Only Know Men": The Rescue of Jews in France during the Holocaust* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 137-70.

34 See Ian M. Harris and Mary Lee Morrison, *Peace Education*, 2nd ed (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2003).

Dustin Ells Howes. *Toward a Credible Pacifism: Violence and the Possibilities of Politics*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2010. ISBN 978-1-4384-2862-8 (pb). Pp. 278.

Is violence a tenable means of exercising power? Is nonviolence morally superior as a method of achieving peace in society? In a world dominated by violence, is pacifism still relevant? Dustin Ells Howes admirably confronts these persistent queries in his diverting work, *Toward a Credible Pacifism: Violence and the Possibilities of Politics*, and reaches some profound conclusions in the process.

Howes simultaneously rejects the oft-invoked moralistic elevation of nonviolence and the tactical supremacy of "realistic" violence in politics, concluding that neither is more reliable than the other. Instead, success is highly contextual and circumscribed by a range of conditions, yielding a world in which—all things being equal—nonviolent methods regain their efficacy by consistently emphasizing values such as responsibility and the role of suffering. This conclusion in itself contains the splendor and the contradictions inherent in Howes's thesis. On the one hand, we learn through insightful and well-illustrated assessments of "physical violence" (Part I) and "intersubjective violence" (Part II) that such practices are unreliable for asserting and maintaining power and, thus, are potentially self-defeating. This is a timely and much-needed exegesis, and Howes delivers it with skill and the forceful persuasion of an argument well-reasoned and supported by concrete examples from history and contemporary society.

Howes describes the utility of "self-sufficient power" and the virtues of *satyagraha* in nuanced terms (Part III), concluding with a radical reclamation of thoughtfulness and responsibility. A critical insight is that nonviolence can break the cycle of reactivity in which we yield our power to others rather than manifesting it on our own terms. Howes adds to the nonviolence canon by bringing to bear his expertise in political theory, and wading fearlessly

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into topics that can be taken as foregone conclusions in a milieu devoid of adequate reflection. Yet it is difficult to see how, in the end, this is not simply a validation of the moral superiority of nonviolence—which Howes critically displaces—since primary ethical virtues are invoked as the "tiebreaker" in the tactical contest of power with violent methods.

Howes validates the moral premise in his ultimate conclusion that "losing well can be more important than victory if it encourages dialogue, because the dialogue that follows action determines the character of victory and defeat" (181). We see efficacy subsumed by ethicality, counterposing itself to the "realist" perspective that suggests the measure of success is winning, over and above adhering to larger principles. This is a worthy insight into the nonviolentist's mindset, yet it flies in the face of the idea that Howes propounds *vis-à-vis* the rejection of moralistic defenses of pacifism.

Perhaps the conundrum lies in the conflation of political ethics with social morality as the basis for action. Whereas the latter oftentimes devolves upon an ethereal, even spiritual, basis for its claims, the former represents a grounded approach that seeks to balance what is right with what actually works. This subtle but critical rift is partially exacerbated by Howes's own conflation of pacifism with nonviolence, lapsing between the two almost interchangeably. Perhaps a more fruitful approach—one that would help the reader more readily discern the important conclusion that Howes is offering—might be to consider pacifism and moralism as intertwined concepts, and nonviolence and ethical reasoning as similarly conjoined.

Still, none of these suggestions diminishes the impressive accomplishment Howes has achieved. This is one of those books that comes along all too infrequently, and one that stays with you after you have read it. Howes wades into the dark side of the human soul in a manner that is usually susceptible of sensationalism, with the result being glorification, desensitization, or both. Howes casts our collective gaze on the human capacity for violence unflinchingly, but without salaciousness. He does so for a noble, even paradigm-shifting purpose to persuade political actors at all levels that violence "is no more or less effective than any other political method" (3).

One can almost hear the technicians of militarism and punitive justice mounting a defense: "Violence is all these people understand. Certain vengeance deters bad behavior. Superior force is necessary for the maintenance of order in society." To such claims, Howes steadfastly asserts that theory and experience alike suggest otherwise, that violence is not a *fait accompli*

of power, and is equally likely to bring about disorder and unproductive behavior as it is to achieve its purported aims. Howes argues for a critically informed version of pacifism that is "credible" in the sense of recognizing that it, too, is an imperfect sociopolitical mechanism, and that "an active life will always cause and involve taking on some degree of suffering" (11).

In this manner, Howes counsels the adherents of nonviolence toward a mature perspective in which "a realistic pacifism should demur from trying to solve every problem . . . all at once" (48). Continuing this germane critique, he openly chides those proponents who hypocritically invoke nonviolence as talismanic while denigrating others who do not share the same view. "Pointing to capitalists or the criminal element, believers or infidels, foreigners or the white man, to explain conflict is just as facile as pointing to our common humanity or God as a solution to it" (52). Here, perhaps, we come to experience the ultimate form of inclusivity, a true equivalent that implicates even ourselves and those with whom we are temperamentally inclined to agree.

In fact, Howes does not shy away from the conclusion that all of us are potentially and innately violent, at least in our actions if not our intentions. A kernel of conflict and even force lies at the core of our interpersonal relationships, economic arrangements, legal mechanisms, patterns of consumption, and exercises of freedom, and ultimately our very perceptions (ch. 4). This threatens to degenerate into a slippery slope of hopelessness, except that its ultimate aim is to bring pragmatic balance to the pacifist's assertions and likewise to debunk the Machiavellian contention that superior violence holds sway, since it is in fact much more equally distributed than is often presumed.

These are profound points that would benefit from being unpacked in greater detail. For instance, Howes mentions almost in passing such modern-day exemplars as torture, terrorism, and the death penalty as potential loci of misapplied violence, but does not spell out in a manner likely to persuade exponents what else we might imagine would take their place in a complex world. Howes himself sets the bar high—in the end perhaps too much so—by constructing his aim as "swaying those with a certain brand of Machiavellian pragmatism, materialism, and realism" (xii), eventually leading to an overarching rejection of violence in society. "The challenge for a credible pacifism, then, is to describe and foster forms of action and power that expose the illusion that physical violence is a special kind of action

necessary for sustaining power" (119).

What follows this call, however, is a standard assessment of "equivalent action" that ruminates principally upon Gandhian methodologies of nonviolent praxis. Howes then segues into a penultimate paean to "thoughtfulness" before concluding with a call to reinvigorate our sense of responsibility "for our own judgments and actions, even when others attack us" (180). Undoubtedly, this is a noble aim, one that tests the limits of our capacities and calls forth our better impulses. Despite his stated desire "to offer a version of pacifism that deemphasizes moral arguments" (xi), Dustin Ells Howes may have actually done us a greater service by developing more sophisticated and vigorous ones in the process.

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Bruce W. Dayton and Louis Kriesberg, eds. *Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding: Moving from Violence to Sustainable Peace*. Oxon, UK and New York: Routledge, 2009. ISBN 13: 978-0-415-48084-0 (hc); ISBN 13: 978-0-415-48085-7 (pb); ISBN 13: 978-0-203-88104-0 (eb). Pp. 276.

The interlinked imperatives of ending violent conflict and building sustainable peace continue to be substantial challenges for policy makers, scholars, and peacebuilding practitioners. As many scholars have noted, peace accords are important milestones, but they remain as steps on a long road to sustainable peace. As the editors of this volume point out, almost 40 percent of the time, peace agreements fail within five years (1). The goal of the book is twofold: (a) to examine the factors that help explain the transformations of violent state challengers into governance participants, and (b) to offer some case studies and begin to theorize on the sustainability of post conflict peace processes. Conflict transformation is a huge project and Kriesberg has already contributed substantially to its scholarship. Focusing on the transformation of rebel movements to political parties helps fill a gap in the study of factors relevant to the building of sustainable peace. The topic is wider than can be covered in one volume, but the contributors do a valiant job.

The thematic section of the book covers several aspects of transformation: non-violent strategic choices parties may make, leadership roles and styles, disaggregating the parties in a conflict, the role of intermediaries, the use of language, the impacts of globalization, and conceptualizations of security. The themes do not exhaust the factors relevant to challengers' transitions from violent struggle, but important ones are covered.

Leaders of movements come and go, but as Margaret G. Hermann and Catherine Gerard explain, leaders can have a huge impact on the direction of conflicts. An illustrative case would be the dramatic changes to the Mozambican conflict when Joachim Chisano took over as president after the death of Samora Machel. Elham Atashi draws attention to an often made fallacy—the conflation of "grass roots" and "the people" as though these are one homogenous victim group. Civilians can be deeply divided and on different sides of a conflict, and that, Atashi explains, adds to the complexities of transporting elite-driven reconciliations to the generality of a population. Bruce W. Dayton offers a very sobering reflection on the role of intermediaries and reminds us that however skilled third party intermediaries may be, agreements only work if there is local ownership of and engagement in the peace processes.

The use of rhetoric in fuelling or helping resolve conflict is an understudied aspect of violent conflict and Bradford Vivian contributes greatly to the field in drawing attention to this. Vivian stops short, however, of suggesting ways in which this could be theorized. Case studies abound wherein rhetoric has been effectively utilized by leaderships on both sides to fan the flames or to sooth emotions. Questions such as under what conditions rhetoric works or fails, or what imagery appeals successfully to populations in conflict, hold interest for further investigation.

Terrence Lyons provides yet another sobering reflection on the assumption of elections as the *sine qua non* of democracy. He drives home the reality that far from being a magic bullet to democracy, elections are tools that require tremendous preparatory groundwork in order to function properly. This dovetails well with Gavan Duffy's chapter on insecurity as a contributory cause for conflict. A cowed, fearful, or hungry electorate in a militarized context can hardly be expected to freely express itself. That needs to be addressed prior to holding elections.

The case studies are interesting, and include exceptions like Mozambique, which defied conventional wisdom on transitional justice being an

indispensable pre-requisite of sustainable peace. The inclusion of the ANC and South Africa as illustrative of transition from violence to participation is not so convincing, however. Clearly from the discussions by the various authors, the ANC did not perceive violent overthrow as a feasible option in a state as militarily powerful as was South Africa. This case needed more nuanced treatment. Another aspect that required more attention was the assumption of challengers as the initiators or propagators of violence. The violence of governments gets less attention and consequently the change of governments from reliance on violence to negotiation is not well represented. The system of apartheid in South Africa, for example, was maintained through state violence, so it was the government that went from violence to negotiation.

The book adds considerably to our understanding of challengers' transitions from violence to political participation, and of the groundwork necessary in post conflict state building. Readers of this volume may be interested in a related book by Jeroen de Zeeuw, *From Soldiers to Politicians: Transforming Rebel Movements After Civil War.*

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Arthur Clark. *The ABCs of Human Survival: A Paradigm of Global Citizenship*. Edmonton, AB: University of Athabasca Press, 2010. ISBN 978-1-897425-68-8 (pb). Pp. xviii + 262.

Arthur Clark serves on the Board of Directors for the nascent Calgary Centre for Global Community and is Professor of Medicine at the city's main university. In this volume, he uses a medical model to examine world issues. Clark's methodology emerges from a frustration with the inaccessibility of writing in peace studies and particularly in academic disciplines that implicitly and explicitly endorse destructive violence. In place of such writing, Clark offers a discussion of thirty healing principles for global citizenship, which parallel medical principles of care.

Clark asserts that a central choice is to support what he labels as "Option A" or "Option B." Option A, the choice he hopes to clarify in this

monograph, involves "learning to live together as human beings" (1). Option B centres in narrowed militant nationalism, or old paradigm thinking.

At many points, Option A is described as good, a new paradigm, and the clear choice for the future. It soon becomes clear that Clark advocates fostering human security through stronger international law systems. Anticipating a pessimistic response to his work, Clark praises the emancipation of women, the UN Charter, the US civil rights movement, and the five day work week as examples of Option A achievements that were at first deemed impossible or unrealistic by their detractors. Clark repeatedly frames civil society groups as principal Option A innovators today. He returns often to Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous words: "We must learn to live together as brothers, or perish together as fools."

For Clark, Option B epitomizes the negative outcome implied in King's maxim. Lest there be any confusion, Clark advises readers to remember that the "B" denotes "bad." According to Clark's analysis, Option B is old paradigm thinking represented by the "realist" school of political thought. It is the foundation for militant forms of nationalism that put the short term needs of a nation above the success of global human security. Option B is represented by the type of power politics that encourages apathy among a citizenry and turns democracies away from their participatory potential. For Clark, such misdirected democracies then become places where decision making power is surrendered to experts and professional politicians to the detriment of the well-being of the nation-state and the world community as a whole. Only under the limited ethical vision concomitant with militant nationalism could destruction on the scale of 1945 Hiroshima and Nagasaki have taken place. Clark characterizes Option B as a pathological choice. Based on this characterization of militant nationalism as malignant, Clark has harsh words for the foreign policy of his native United States. Drawing on his experience as a medic in the US armed forces in the 1960s, Clark argues that the world's superpower would be better served by a respect for international law equal to or greater than its respect for domestic law. He further explains the folly of Option B choices with an insightful case study centred in the recent wars in Iraq.

Clark's argument is clear, accessible, and yet fairly subtle. From a peace ecology perspective, there is, however, a tension that should be raised with his discourse. The dichotomy suggested by Clark is Option A/New/Good versus Option B/Old/Bad. Although Clark does not fully maintain

this dichotomy throughout his argument, it is nonetheless present often enough that his prognosis becomes tied to a view of progress. An example of an exception to this trend, which may be problematic for other reasons, is Clark's characterization of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount as Option A thinking subsequently corrupted by Option B institutionalization of Christianity. In general terms, he returns to a progressive view of history frequently enough that the pre-modern past (with the exception of uncorrupted religious wisdom) may not appear to be a source of peace-fostering healing to uncritical readers. Despite this tension, Clark's main points relating to the pathology of militant nationalism and the need for more a cosmopolitan and communitarian reality of global citizenship will resonate with many peace theorists and conflict resolution practitioners. It is increasingly evident from a variety of peace and conflict studies perspectives that the entire Earth community must move forward together as sisters and brothers lest human and ecological diversity perish. Though not without its flaws, the type of optimistic thinking presented in *The ABCs of Human Survival* can contribute to finding paths toward a diverse and sustainable future marked by solidarity that represents what Clark calls the Option A choice.

A free downloadable e-book version of this title along with a supporting web-based video can be found by clicking on the horizontal tabs at http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120173.

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Andrew Woolford. *The Politics of Restorative Justice: A Critical Introduction*. Winnipeg, MB: Fernwood Publishing, 2009. ISBN: 9781552663165 (pb). Pp. 175.

Restorative justice (RJ) theorists and practitioners alike can benefit from the fresh perspectives and provocative questions presented by Andrew Woolford. Speaking from within the self-declared ambivalence of one who is both a scholar of critical social theory and board chair of a well-known RJ agency, Woolford manages simultaneously to critique, challenge, encourage, and tantalize his readers.

Woolford begins with the assertion that RJ is a political process in three distinct senses. First, it exists in a political context, which inevitably impacts how it is received and implemented. Second, it is in itself a form of governance that can complement other governmental tasks of ensuring social peace and minimizing costly forms of conflict. Third, it needs to mobilize a broader, social movement politics in order to realize its own potentially transformative goals. Through this assertion of RJ as a political process, Woolford introduces the underlying theme that pervades the rest of the book—the tension between an RJ theory and practice that enables the political status quo versus the development of a larger RJ social movement with the potential for a truly transformative politics.

In the next five chapters, Woolford systematically dissects aspects of RJ theory and practice to bring to the surface different facets of this tension between status quo and transformation. Chapter 2 examines the crime event that triggers an RJ response, questioning the extent of the reliance on status quo definitions of crime and justice. Chapter 3 steps back a pace to critique the theorization of RJ and to ask whether the hopefulness of the RJ ethos can withstand the crass political realities of conflict. Chapter 4 delves into specific RJ practices, asking whether these specific processes can fulfill their theoretical promises without being co-opted and misused on behalf of the status quo. Chapter 5 examines the different stakeholders involved in the RJ encounter, questioning the way in which each of these stakeholder identities is constructed, as well as the political implications behind the assumptions made of each one. Chapter 6 analyzes the many settings of the RJ encounter, exploring the range of contextual factors that decisively influence the methods used and outcomes expected.

All these questions and challenges are integrated in Chapter 7, as Woolford raises the larger question of the degree to which RJ is, or should be, attached to the formal criminal justice system. Woolford here surveys the theoretical literature and summarizes a sampling of critiques of RJ—critiques which, in his words, "help us to identify the current political barriers to effective restorative justice practice and the practical and technical oversights of existing restorative justice practice . . . [and] encourage us to interrogate the foundational assumptions of restorative justice" (144-45).

In the light of these critiques, Woolford then returns more directly to the theme of RJ as political transformation and begins to suggest tentative answers to all the questions raised thus far. He reminds his readers of the

three-fold political impact of RJ discussed early in the book and encourages advocates of RJ to continue striving for transformative social movement that RJ can potentially become. His conclusion is worth repeating in his own words:

> In the end, restorative justice is a movement with many competing parts. Those that affirm the present social order appear, for the present, to be winning out, and this, in my view, is unfortunate. The potential of restorative justice is to be part of something bigger. Through an enabling politics networked with other social justice movements, restorative justice can transpire toward transformative justice (162).

Provocative and deeply critical as it may be, this book is also at its heart deeply hopeful. Woolford provides a crucial service for all RJ theorists and practitioners by grappling with questions and issues which can be too easily ignored in the midst of day-to-day program practicalities. This book is a must-read for anyone who wants to reflect more deeply and engage more fully with the depth and the potential of RJ.

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Book Reviews

Dustin Ells Howes, *Toward a Credible Pacifism: Violence and the Possibilities of Politics* (Randall Amster); Bruce W. Dayton and Louis Kriesberg, eds, *Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding: Moving from Violence to Sustainable Peace* (Ismael Muvingi); Arthur Clark, *The ABCs of Human Survival: A Paradigm of Global Citizenship* (Christopher Hrynkow); Andrew Woolford, *The Politics of Restorative Justice: A Critical Introduction* (Neil Funk-Unrau)

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