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THE CHILD AND THE SPIRIT:
ARCHETYPAL PATTERNS IN NEW WOMAN FICTION

Mei-Fang Chang

Submitted to the University of Wales
in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy of English

Swansea University

June 2007

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Summary

This thesis offers a Jungian-inflected reading of three key New Woman novels: Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus (1894), Sarah Grand's The Beth Book (1897), and Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man (1926). By examining two archetypal images—the Child and the Spirit—not as psychological entities but as symbolic forms in the socio-cultural context of the *fin de siècle*, I explore the ways in which feminist New Woman writers seek to present women artists' collective experience and the extent to which their work revises the dominant discourses of female subjection and sacrifice. Part I is engaged with the Child Archetype with a focus first on the Abandoned Child, where I investigate sisterless children through a combined discourse of sisterhood and trickster. In Chapter 1, I add a discussion of Caird's maternal theory and a mythic reading to examine motherless children. In Chapter 2, I include a study of a loverless child to cast light on the conventional ideology of woman's purity. In the second section of this Part, where Chapter 3 is located, I scrutinize the ways in which Grand portrays the Nature Child in the Romantic and Transcendental fashions, the ethics of which, I argue, anticipate today's ecofeminism. Part II deals with the Spirit Archetype in different manifestations (the Wise Old Man in Chapter 4, the Romantic Knight in Chapter 5, and the Platonic Lover in Chapter 6), drawing attention to gender-power politics in relation to the New Man and the New Woman by adopting different approaches (revised Jungian, quasi-Bakhtinian Carnavalesque, and narratology). Shifting signifiers, the Child and the Spirit archetypes, I argue, are New Woman writers' strategic vehicles to (con)textualize women's collective concerns. This act of female "unconsciousness-raising" caused a sensation at the time and can now serve to better our understanding of the diversity and discursiveness of the New Woman movement.

Declaration and Statements

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed _____

Date June 15, 2007

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other resources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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Date June 15, 2007

STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organizations.

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Date June 15, 2007

Acknowledgements

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* * *

Sections of this thesis have been presented at BAVS annual conferences (2003-06), the international/annual conference of the R.O.C. English and American Literature Association in Taiwan (2006), the Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers conference in Kentucky (2007), and will be delivered at an international conference in Exeter (UK) in September 2007. I wish to thank those participants who have commented and responded at these events. I also wish to thank the University of Wales Swansea, the Ministry of Education (Taiwan), the Taipei Representative Office in the UK, the R.O.C. EALA, and National Cheng Kung University (Taiwan) for providing me with conference grants. Thanks also to the staff of the Inter-Library Loans Office at the University of Wales Swansea for the unfailing efficiency of their service.

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List of Abbreviations

- A Kate Chopin, *The Awakening: An Authoritative Text, Biographical and Historical Contexts, Criticism*, ed. Margo Culley, 2nd ed. (1899; New York; London: Norton, 1994).
- AS Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar," NAAL, 1: 931-44.
- BB Sarah Grand, *The Beth Book: Being A Study of the Life of Elizabeth Caldwell Maclure, A Woman of Genius* (1897; New York: The Dial P, 1980).
- C Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Character," CWRWE, 1: 191-203.
- CWCGJ The Collected Works of C. G. Jung, 20 vols.
[Different volumes that I refer to are published by different publishers in different years as noted below; the number of volume is indicated by numerals]
- (Vol.) 9.1 The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, ed. Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham and Gerhard Adler, trans. R. F. C. Hull (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959).
- (Vol.) 15 The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature, ed. Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, Gerhard Adler and William McGuire, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969).
- CWRWE Ralph Waldo Emerson, The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 2 vols. (London: Bell & Daldy, 1866). [Number of volume indicated by numerals]
- DD Mona Caird, The Daughters of Danaus (1894; New York: Feminist P, 1989).
- DP Percy Bysshe Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry," NAEL, 2: 778-92.
- E John Keats, "Endymion: A Poetic Romance," NAEL, 2: 800-03.
- F Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Fate," CWRWE, 2: 308-29.
- FMTM Olive Schreiner, From Man to Man, or Perhaps Only . . . (1926; Chicago: Academy P, 1977).
- GM Christina Rossetti, "Goblin Market," NAEL 2: 1508-20.
- H Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Herland (1915; London: The Women's P, 1979).
- HT Sarah Grand, The Heavenly Twins (1893; Ann Arbor: The U of Michigan P, 1992).
- I Sarah Grand, Ideala (1888; Chicago: Donohue Brothers, n.d.).
- LeOS S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, ed., The Letters of Olive Schreiner

- 1876-1920 (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1924).
- LiOS S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, ed., The Life of Olive Schreiner (Boston: Little Brown, 1924).
- LS Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott," NAEL, 2: 1100-04.
- LVMQ Ann Heilmann, ed., The Late-Victorian Marriage Question: A Collection of Key New Woman Texts, 5 vols. (London: Routledge/Thoemmes P, 1998). [Number of volume indicated by numerals]
- MMW Charlotte Perkins Gilman, The Man-Made World (1914; New York: Humanity Books, 2001).
- MOM Mona Caird, The Morality of Marriage (London: George Redway, 1897) repr. in LVMQ, 1.
- NAAL Nina Baym, et al., ed., The Norton Anthology of American Literature, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (New York: Norton, 1989). [Number of volume indicated by numerals]
- NAEL M. H. Abrams et al., ed., The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 5th ed., 2 vols. (New York; London: Norton, 1986). [Number of volume indicated by numerals]
- O William Shakespeare, Othello, ed. E. A. J. Honigmann (1604; Surrey, UK: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1997).
- OGU John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," NAEL, 2: 822-23.
- O-S Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Over-Soul," NAAL, 1: 973-84.
- OSL Richard Rive, ed., Olive Schreiner Letters, Volume 1: 1871-1899 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988).
- P William Wordsworth, "Preface" to Lyrical Ballads, NAEL, 2: 157-70.
- Po Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Poet," NAAL, 1: 984-99.
- P&P Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice (1813; Taipei: Bookman, 1990).
- RM Thomas Hardy, "The Ruined Maid," NAEL, 2: 1744-45.
- SAF Olive Schreiner (Ralph Iron), The Story of an African Farm (1893; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992).
- SOS Mona Caird, The Stones of Sacrifice (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1915).
- SSPSG Ann Heilmann and Stephanie Forward, eds., Sex, Social Purity and Sarah Grand, 4 vols. (London; New York: Routledge, 2000).
[Number of volume indicated by numerals]
- TOD Thomas Hardy, Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891; Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).
- W Henry David Thoreau, Walden, or Life in the Woods, NAAL, 1:

1635-808.

W&L

Olive Schreiner, Woman and Labor (1911; New York: Dover, 1998).

Introduction

We are quite ordinary everyday sort of people . . . we lead trivial unimportant lives: but there is something in us that vibrates to your touch, for we, too, are such as you describe.

—reader's response to George Egerton's works¹

. . . a strange expression came into her face as she said: "I read parts of it over and over." "What parts?" I asked, and her reply was, "About yon poor lass [Lyndall]," and with a far-off look in her eyes added, "I think there is hundreds of women what feels like that, but can't speak it, but *she* could speak what we feel." (emphasis in original)

—a Lancashire working woman speaking to Mary Brown about Olive Schreiner's The Story of an African Farm (1893)²

"Tell Sarah Grand," was the message [the Committee] sent her, "that we, representative women of all classes, have agreed unanimously that she was right in all that she said and wise in all that she advocated."

—Sarah Grand, "Foreword" to The Heavenly Twins (1923)³

My particular endeavour has been to represent the relationship that woman now holds to the social state. . . . The design [of The Daughters of Danaus] has been to present with fidelity to life the inner nature of the situation which every woman's history, in some degree, embodies, a situation which arrives at its tragic climax in the case which I have presented of a woman of great power and large heart placed face to face with the forces of tradition and prejudice fully conscious of what awaits her.

—Mona Caird, "Letter to Prof. Viëtor," on December 5, 1896⁴

¹ Quoted in Hugh E. M. Stutfield, "The Psychology of Feminism," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine 161 (1897): 104-17, 116, repr. in LVMQ, 5.

² Quoted in Laurence Lerner, "Olive Schreiner and the Feminists," Olive Schreiner, ed. Cherry Clayton (Johannesburg: McGraw-Hill, 1983), 181-98, 181.

³ Sarah Grand, "Foreword" to The Heavenly Twins (London: Heinemann, 1923), v-xvi, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 397-408, 400.

⁴ Mona Caird, "Letter to Prof. Viëtor," on December 5, 1896 in Ernst Foerster, Die Frauenfrage in den

“[A] novel written by a woman about women from the standpoint of Woman,” the New Woman novel, as W. T. Stead defined it, was “The Novel of Modern Woman” that demanded equal work opportunities for women, exalted the sacredness of motherhood, and revolted against “monogamic prostitution” or a loveless sex union.⁵ Yet, to another contemporary, Hugh E. M. Stutfield, the New Woman novel was “erotic, neurotic, and Tommyrotic,”⁶ belonging to “the literature of vituperation and of sex-mania” that, while characterized by “morbid pessimism, subdued or paroxysmal,” aroused an unprecedented literary and cultural sensation which he considered was devastating: “these books are . . . an undoubted aggravation of the disorder. . . . The sale of [them] by thousands is not a healthy sign.”⁷ Obsessed with a “newly-acquired consciousness,” New Woman writers, in Stutfield’s eyes, were “ego-mania[ics] . . . among the leading [proponents] of degeneration;” they were also “erotomaniacs” in presenting “she-animal” characters with “transient impulses and more or less hysterical emotions.”⁸ Binding together New Woman writers and the decadents, Stutfield described them all together as “a moral cancer,” whose neuropathic, pathological preoccupation with “all the ’ologies and ’isms” showed nothing but “exaggerated emotionalism” and “vulgarization” in their fiction, in themselves as well as in their readers, women mostly.⁹

Sensation, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is “the characteristic

Romanen Englischer Schriftstellerinnen der Gegenwart (Marburg: N. G. Elwert’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1907), 52-54, 52-53, repr. in LVMQ, 5.

⁵ W. T. Stead, “The Book of the Month: The Novel of the Modern Woman,” Review of Reviews 10 (1894): 64-74, 64-65, repr. in LVMQ, 5.

⁶ Hugh E. M. Stutfield, “Tommyrotics,” Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine 157 (1895): 833-45, 833, repr. in LVMQ, 5.

⁷ Stutfield, “The Psychology of Feminism,” 116, 112, 115, repr. in LVMQ, 5; see also *idem*, “Tommyrotics,” 834, repr. in LVMQ, 5:

· the popularity of debased and morbid literature, especially among women, is not an agreeable or healthy feature . . . the enormous sale of hysterical and disgusting books is a sign of the times which ought not to be ignored.

⁸ Stutfield, “The Psychology of Feminism,” 107, 111, 106; *idem*, “Tommyrotics,” 836, both repr. in LVMQ, 5.

⁹ Stutfield, “Tommyrotics,” 843, 837, 841; *idem*, “The Psychology of Feminism,” 117, both repr. in LVMQ, 5.

feeling arising in some particular circumstances;” it describes “A condition of excited feeling produced in a community by some occurrence; a strong impression . . . produced in an audience or body of spectators, and manifested by their demeanour.”¹⁰ If the Victorian period was an era full of many kinds of sensation,¹¹ New Woman fiction at the *fin de siècle* undoubtedly caught the sensation of the time in appealing to an unprecedented female readership by presenting women’s collective experiences in a male-dominated society. It echoed the inner feelings of half of the human race, capturing their emotions as to their predicaments, sorrows, struggles and confrontations not merely in their pursuit of self-development but in the light of their existence as equal human beings. While male critics like Stutfield¹² harshly condemned “the vulgar sensationalism of ‘the fiction of Sex and the New Woman,’”¹³ the epigraphs given above are sufficient evidence that it was not women’s disordered nerves, as male critics claimed, but women’s sense of collectivity in sharing universal experiences of subjection and sacrifice that gave New Woman fiction such a forceful resonance with and among women. If Mary Wollstonecraft’s A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792), the first British feminist manifesto defending women’s full equality with men, failed to arouse this sensational wave of female consciousness on a large scale,¹⁴ New Woman fiction nearly one hundred years after its foremother certainly had achieved it. Not only that, it expressed and put into words women’s anger, the anger on the basis of which

¹⁰ The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed., prepared by J.A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, vol. XIV, Rob-Sequyle (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1989), 976.

¹¹ “Victorian Sensations” was the 5th annual conference theme of the British Association for Victorian Studies (BAVS) in 2004.

¹² See also William Barry, “The Strike of a Sex,” Quarterly Review 179 (1894): 289-318; Janet E. Hogarth, “Literary Degenerates,” Fortnightly Review 57 (1895): 586-92, both repr. in LVMQ, 5.

¹³ A. R. Cunningham, “The ‘New Woman Fiction’ of the 1890s,” Victorian Studies 17.2 (1973): 177-86, 178. Cunningham adopts the phrase “the fiction of Sex and the New Woman” from Robert Yelverton Tyrrell’s review of Thomas Hardy’s Jude the Obscure in Fortnightly Review 65 (1896): 857-64.

¹⁴ Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds, Criticism, ed. Carol H. Poston (New York; London: Norton, 1975).

New Woman writers took action to reform the gender/sexual politics of their time. In other words, not only women readers but women writers conjured up this collectivist consciousness and harnessed sensation for New Woman fiction.

In what ways and to what extent did New Woman fiction affect women readers' emotions and promote their psychological identification with the fictional heroines? Can we look at certain metaphors or images in the texts to get a panoramic picture of the keynotes of New Woman writing? And what are their relations to the socio-cultural and political contexts of the *fin de siècle*? Who or what was the New Woman (heroine)? Did New Woman writers construct recurrent patterns that, while faithfully presenting the Woman Question, betrayed the institutionalized problems of the time and gave their prescriptions to cure it? These are my main concerns and will be dealt with throughout this thesis. I argue that women's shared experience as a whole was an archetypal feature, a transhistorical misery of subjection and sacrifice coeval with the institution of patriarchy, even if this feature varied to some extent depending on time, place, people and culture. Because of this universality, manifested by the archetypal images used by New Woman writers, women's sensational receptivity was elicited to the strongest degree and amounted to a collective awakening to self-consciousness.

The New Woman furore started fading in the last few years of the *fin de siècle* and died out entirely some time between the two World Wars. Literary/canonical scholarship afterwards rarely paid attention to it but focused on works by male writers such as Thomas Hardy, Henry James, Bram Stoker, Oscar Wilde and so on. It was not until second-wave feminism that New Woman fiction was rediscovered, and mainstream attention has been directed since then at prominent feminist New Woman writers like Sarah Grand, Mona Caird, Olive Schreiner or George Egerton. The *fin de millennium* and the first few years of the twenty-first century continue

witnessing a flourishing revival of critical interest in New Woman studies. A glance at the chronological development of New Woman scholarship can help us get a sense of the conceptual shift of critical focus and concern, from which we may also deduce what is lacking in the existing criticism.

In what follows, therefore, I will briefly discuss the New Woman Question “in fiction and in fact,”¹⁵ and then I will give a chronological synopsis of New Woman criticism since its rediscovery in the 1970s; afterwards, I will explain my theoretical approach and thematic concerns in this thesis, which, I hope, may contribute to the diversification of New Woman studies.

The New Woman Question

Although Olive Schreiner’s The Story of an African Farm (1883) was considered by Stead to be the first New Woman novel,¹⁶ the term “New Woman” did not formally emerge until August 1893 when The Woman’s Herald, a short-lived women’s journal from 1891 to 1893, published an article entitled “The Social Standing of the New Woman”: the first time the phrase was capitalized.¹⁷ Subsequently in a letter in the Daily Chronicle on January 15, 1894, the poet and novelist Robert Buchanan also “made three references to the ‘New Womanhood.’”¹⁸ Genealogically, Sarah Grand could be credited with inventing the term (in fact she herself claimed it too)¹⁹ as she first used it, without capitalization, to describe one of the three heroines, Evadne, in

¹⁵ I adopt the phrase from Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis’ essay collection, The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact, where they take the exact title from Mrs. M. Eastwood’s article in Humanitarian 5 (1894): 375-79. See Richardson and Willis’ “Introduction” to The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms, ed. Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (London: Palgrave, 2001), 1-38, 10-11.

¹⁶ Stead, “The Book of the Month,” 64, repr. in LVMQ, 5.

¹⁷ Michelle Elizabeth Tusan, “Inventing the New Woman: Print Culture and Identity Politics During the Fin-de-Siècle,” Victorian Periodical Review 31.2 (1998): 169-82.

¹⁸ David Rubinstein, Before the Suffragettes: Women’s Emancipation in the 1890s (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1986), 21, note 11.

¹⁹ See Athol Forbes’ interview with Grand in 1900, “My Impression of Sarah Grand,” Lady’s World (1900): 880-83, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 257-60, 259.

her best-known novel The Heavenly Twins, published on February 7, 1893, six months before The Woman's Herald's article.²⁰ However, "New Woman" reached its pitch when Grand and the anti-feminist novelist Ouida set out on a periodical debate in The North American Review in 1894.²¹ In the March issue, Grand used the term "new woman" again in her article "The New Aspect of the Woman Question" to differentiate her from "the cow-woman and the scum-woman" who belonged to the same camp of "the Bawling Brotherhood."²² Subsequently in the May issue, Ouida responded to Grand's article by capitalizing the term as her article title to mark it out as a label in her appellation of the so-called "unmitigated bore."²³ However, in the same issue, Grand also wrote another article, "The Man of the Moment," to criticize man's moral degradation that could only rely on the "new woman" (still without capitalization) to correct him.²⁴ It was on the basis of the Grand-Ouida debate that the anti-feminist periodical Punch made the New Woman a butt of ridicule in the same month:

There is a New Woman, and what do you think?
 She lives upon nothing but Foolscap and Ink!
 But[,] though Foolscap and Ink are[form] the whole of her diet,
 This nagging New Woman can never be quiet!²⁵

²⁰ Grand has the New Man figure in the novel, the American diplomat and man of letters Mr. Austin B. Price, describe Evadne as "one of the new women . . . with a higher ideal of duty than any which men have constructed for women" (HT, 193). For the novel's publication date, see Grand's chronology in Gillian Kersley, Darling Madame: Sarah Grand and Devoted Friend (London: Virago, 1983), x.

²¹ Ellen Jordan, "The Christening of the New Woman: May 1894," Victorian Newsletter 63 (1983): 19-21. Ann Ardis indicates that Jordan only explains how but not why the New Woman was named, and she thinks the naming itself initiated a new discourse. See her book, New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism (New Brunswick; London: Rutgers UP, 1990), chapter 1. See also Talia Schaffer's critical analysis of Grand's and Ouida's concepts of the New Woman in "Nothing But Foolscap and Ink': Inventing the New Woman," The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms, ed. Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (London: Palgrave, 2001), 39-52.

²² Sarah Grand, "The New Aspect of the Woman Question," North American Review 158 (1894): 270-76, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 29-35; see also LVMQ, 2.

²³ Ouida, "The New Woman," North American Review 158 (1894): 610-19, repr. in LVMQ, 2.

²⁴ Sarah Grand, "The Man of the Moment," North American Review 158 (1894): 620-27, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 50-57.

²⁵ "The New Woman," Punch, May 26, 1894: 252, quoted in Jordan, "The Christening of the New Woman," 21, a slightly different version from Schaffer's in "Nothing But Foolscap and Ink," 50.

But prior to this, Punch had issued several cartoons—for example, the caricatured female counterpart of Don Quixote, “Donna Quixote” (see the figure on page 8)—to mock the New Woman’s unorthodoxy.²⁶

At a time preoccupied with the “Woman Question,” it was not difficult to imagine that the New Woman who rebelled both in word and deed against the existing social code of femininity drew overwhelmingly harsh comments from the conventional and sometimes misogynist camp. Catchwords which sprang up to welcome her were as overtly disparaging as the “Wild Woman,” the “Social Insurgent,”²⁷ the “Odd Woman,”²⁸ “Novissima,”²⁹ or the “Revolting Daughter.”³⁰ As Sally Ledger remarks, the New Woman was principally “a journalistic phenomenon, a product of discourse.”³¹ While dominant journals like Punch took pains to caricature the New Woman’s unwomanliness, expressed in activities such as smoking, wearing a college tie, dressing severely, riding a bicycle in bloomers, the women’s press such as Shafts, The Woman’s Herald, The Woman’s Signal, and The Woman’s Gazette, as Michelle Elizabeth Tusan tells us, endeavored to present, as the role model and hope for England’s future, the womanly New Woman who maintained the Old Woman’s feminine virtues, while possessing at the same time the

²⁶ Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis have reprinted several of Punch’s caricatured cartoons on the New Woman, see their “Introduction” to The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact, 14-23; “Donna Quixote” is on p. 21.

²⁷ Eliza Lynn Linton wrote three articles in The Nineteenth Century to attack the New Women: “The Wild Women as Politicians,” 30 (1891): 79-88; “The Wild Women as Social Insurgents,” 30 (1891): 596-605; and “The Partisans of the Wild Women,” 31 (1892): 455-64. They all are reprinted in LVMQ, 1.

²⁸ George Gissing’s novel The Odd Women was published in 1893, reprinted by the Virago Press in 1980 with an introduction by Margaret Walters.

²⁹ H. S. Scott and E. B. Hall, “Character Note: The New Woman,” Cornhill Magazine 23 (1894): 365-68, repr. in LVMQ, 2.

³⁰ In 1894, the Nineteenth-Century journal set out on a mother-daughter debate on “The Revolt of the Daughters,” drawing articles from mothers’ perspectives to applaud women’s self-sacrifice and domestic virtues, and from girls’ replies to appeal for personal pursuits, possession of latchkeys and unchaperoned outside activities. See reprinted articles in LVMQ, 2.

³¹ Sally Ledger, The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 1997), 3.



Punch, April 28, 1894

progressive new features of independence, self-reliance, rational dress, tidy short hair, proper sports(woman)ship (bicycling), as well as receiving equal education and work

opportunities.³² Mrs. Morgan-Dockrell claimed in 1896 that it was necessary to distinguish the spurious New Woman from the genuine one. The former, derived from “a figment of the journalistic imagination,” was the one most virulent critics (including Eliza Lynn Linton and Ouida) conceived of and whom they attacked for her sexlessness or mannishness. The latter, very much in the same line as that of the Grandian school, was the woman who had awoken to her share in bettering the world and thus demanded everything of which she had been deprived before, so that she could be a companion to the true man as an equal to achieve her mission.³³ Despite this disparity, it may readily be said that a plethora of journalistic versions of the New Woman, especially those from the mainstream periodicals, prevailed in the 1890s and contributed in part to the cultural icon of the New Woman.

However, it should be noted that the journalistic and cartoonist figure of the New Woman was mostly a “cultural stereotype”³⁴—a shocking, shrieking she-monster of a degenerate race. Gail Cunningham thus suggests that we look at novels to find what the New Woman really was:

The New Woman was held up as a symbolic figurehead for a type of social rebellion which many women might concede to be generally desirable but personally unattainable; yet since the New Woman rebelled essentially against personal circumstances, the most effective way of portraying her was not in journalistic summaries of her principles, but in novels. It was the novel which could investigate in detail the clash between radical principles and the actualities of contemporary life, which could portray most convincingly the stifling social conventions from which the New Woman was trying to break free, and which could present arguments for new standards of morality, new codes of behaviour, in the context of an easily recognisable social world.³⁵

Indeed, as Talia Schaffer reminds us, most of the women associated with the New

³² Tusan, “Inventing the New Woman,” 171-72.

³³ Mrs. Morgan-Dockrell, “Is the New Woman a Myth?” *Humanitarian* 8 (1896): 339-50, repr. in *LVMQ*, 2.

³⁴ Richardson and Willis, “Introduction” to *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact*, 13.

³⁵ Gail Cunningham, *The New Woman and the Victorian Novel* (London: Macmillan, 1978), 16-17.

Woman movement lived a much humbler life. They did not act as the New Women under the media construction did; they also tried to distance themselves from the caricatured New Women.³⁶ Fiction, in this light, provided a foreground where we see women writers “construct[ing] a metahistory which convey[ed] [their] own psychological sense of the real enormity of the change, rather than the facts which produce[d] a misleadingly minor sense of this movement.”³⁷ Granted though, the fictionalized New Women were not all identical, either in being linked with sexual libertines or vampire-like monsters, or in being concerned with women’s interests and civil rights.³⁸ Even in the hands of feminist New Woman writers like Sarah Grand and Mona Caird, as I will elaborate later, the fictional New Women vary, despite the fact that they share similar characteristics such as a desire for autonomy and professional pursuits, which conflict with their traditional female identities.

As Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis declare, the New Woman was “not one figure, but several.”³⁹ Deepening the perception, Lyn Pykett says: “*The New Woman* did not exist. ‘New Woman’, both in fiction and in fact, was (and remains) a shifting and contested term. It was a mobile and contradictory figure or signifier.”⁴⁰ A provocative, subversive and complex socio-cultural phenomenon at the *fin de siècle*, the New Woman was thus both a media construct and a literary product. Either way round, she was unfixed and discursive. What is certain, however, is that her fictionality or literariness under feminist New Woman writers’ pens embodied women’s challenge to the Victorian ideology of womanhood. If the New Woman functions to “evoke an extraordinary range of emotional associations, a

³⁶ Schaffer, “‘Nothing But Foolscap and Ink,’” 39, 49.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

³⁸ Sally Ledger, “The New Woman and the Crisis of Victorianism,” *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle*, ed. Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 22-44, 30.

³⁹ Richardson and Willis, “Introduction” to *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact*, 13.

⁴⁰ Lyn Pykett, “Foreword” to *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms*, ed. Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (London: Palgrave, 2001), xi-xii, ix, emphasis in original.

flood of feelings which can powerfully support whatever goal the writer has channeled it towards,”⁴¹ the goal feminist New Woman writers wanted to achieve, then, as I will demonstrate in this thesis, was to form a new feminist ideology, where not only was women’s self-consciousness awoken but sisterhood began to cooperate with brotherhood to formulate a cosmopolitan utopia.

A literature review of New Woman criticism

As has been mentioned, the New Woman was buried unnoticed for decades until second-wave feminism unearthed her. In the 1970s, ground-breaking New Woman studies were launched by critics like Lloyd Fernando and Gail Cunningham who examined the cultural configuration of the New Woman in response to contemporary controversy and agitation for female emancipation. Although Fernando included in his study George Eliot as a proto-New Woman writer, his focus was mainly on the problem novels by male writers such as Thomas Hardy and the three Georges (Gissing, Meredith and Moore).⁴² Likewise, Cunningham discussed several female New Woman writers, but she was inclined to categorize them as “minor” novelists because their works had “nothing of lasting literary merit” and “appear[ed] a deservedly neglected by-way of popular ephemera, quirkily interesting but of no great importance.”⁴³ She thus directed her attention principally to those “major” male writers shared by Fernando. The same tendency could also be found in Patricia Stubbs’s study of the relationship between New Woman fiction and realism, in which she regarded female New Woman writers “not good enough . . . to turn their materials into an important challenge to the literary tradition” because their works

⁴¹ Schaffer, “Nothing But Foolscap and Ink,” 45.

⁴² Lloyd Fernando, *“New Women” in the Late Victorian Novel* (University Park; London: The Pennsylvania State UP, 1977); *idem*, “The Radical Ideology of the ‘New Woman,’” *Southern Review* 2.3 (1967): 206-20.

⁴³ Cunningham, *The New Woman and the Victorian Novel*, 19, 79.

were always “treatises first, novels second. Many were confused and sentimental, or bald statements of problems rather than attempts to come to grips with them.”⁴⁴

It was in Elaine Showalter’s A Literature of Their Own (1977) that female New Woman writers, such as George Egerton, Sarah Grand and Olive Schreiner, were given a substantial status in the Feminist phase (1880-1920) of the female literary tradition.⁴⁵ However, like her fellow contemporaries, Showalter conceived that feminist women writers were unimportant as artists due to their lack of artistic ability. Despite the enormous sales their works had achieved, “all the feminists,” Showalter contended, “had but one story to tell, and exhausted themselves in its narration.”⁴⁶ In like manner, although Vineta Colby was pioneering in bringing to light late nineteenth-century English novels with a purpose by several women writers, anti- and pro-feminist alike, she was less concerned with the writers’ artistic merits than with their use of the novel as a vehicle for “ethical-didactic functions.”⁴⁷

Feminist literary scholarship, when it came to the 1980s, however, witnessed a shift and a burgeoning revival of critical interest in and examination of female New Woman writers. David Rubinstein, for example, documented various aspects of the woman question (educational, political, social and economic) in relation to the New Woman portrayed by several feminist women writers. Although these writers “contributed little of permanent value to the development of English fiction” in Rubinstein’s view, he thought them deserving of recognition because the “courage

⁴⁴ Patricia Stubbs, Women and Fiction: Feminism and the Novel 1880-1920 (1979; London: Methuen, 1981), 120, 117-18.

⁴⁵ Elaine Showalter, A Literature of Their Own: From Charlotte Brontë to Doris Lessing (1977; London: Virago, 1978), 3-36, in which Showalter classified three phases of women’s literary subculture: Feminine (1840-1880), Feminist (1880-1920) and Female (1920-the present/1960). According to Showalter, the Feminine phase was characterized by the women writers’ “imitation” and “internalization” of the male culture; the Feminist phase focused on the “protests” against patriarchal standards, values, modes and “advocacy” of women’s rights; the Female phase was a period for “self-discovery” and a search for autonomy. For the Feminist phase, see chapter 7.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 215.

⁴⁷ Vineta Colby, The Singular Anomaly: Women Novelists of the Nineteenth Century (London: U of London P; New York: New York UP, 1970), 1. The women writers Colby studied are Mrs. Eliza Lynn Linton, Olive Schreiner, Mrs. Humphry Ward, John Oliver Hobbes and Vernon Lee.

and forcefulness” their works presented “opened new aspects of the case for women’s emancipation” and helped germinate the women’s suffragette movement in the early twentieth century.⁴⁸ Gerd Bjørhovde, to take another example, explored different rebellious narrative structures manipulated by four New Woman writers (Schreiner, Margaret Harkness, Grand and Egerton) in the hope of defending and reasserting their artistic value as situated in a transitional period neither Victorian nor modern.⁴⁹ Penny Boumelha, however, still positioned feminist women writers and their “New Fiction” as what Bjørhovde called the “structural asides” to her study of Hardy.⁵⁰

If Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar (to take critics other than Showalter) were contributive in their endeavor to establish a literature of women’s own, though still without giving a description of New Woman fiction, in The Madwoman in the Attic (1979),⁵¹ they certainly began taking up the latter in their No Man’s Land series. While they slightly touched, in The War of the Words (vol.1), on the *fin-de-siècle* New Woman in their research on the literary battles of the sexes in the twentieth century,⁵² they made an important excursion into the different portrayals of the New Woman made by late nineteenth-century female and male writers (Schreiner and Charlotte Perkins Gilman versus Rider Haggard) and demonstrated the “sexchanges” (which became the title of vol. 2) from the 1880s to the end of the First World War, the period of high modernism.⁵³

⁴⁸ Rubinstein, Before the Suffragettes, 34.

⁴⁹ Gerd Bjørhovde, Rebellious Structures: Women Writers and the Crisis of the Novel 1880-1900 (Oslo: Norwegian UP; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987).

⁵⁰ Penny Boumelha, Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1982), chapter 4. For Bjørhovde’s quotation, see Rebellious Structures, 5.

⁵¹ Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1979).

⁵² Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, The War of the Words, vol. 1 of No Man’s Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1988).

⁵³ Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Sexchanges, vol. 2 of No Man’s Land (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1989), chapter 2.

In a similar vein, Rachel Blau DuPlessis offered a parameter of the change of fictional endings as narrative strategies by women writers from the nineteenth century to the modern time, and she singled out Schreiner's The Story of an African Farm as the definitive "end" that ruptured the Victorian paradigmatic preference for romance over *Bildung*. Yet, rather than going beyond that conventional ending and re-making it the other way round so as to reinforce the triumph of women's self-development, the ending Schreiner devised for her heroine, as DuPlessis succinctly pointed out, laid bare a powerful image of female internal conflict, torn between traditional and new womanhood in the cultural context of the *fin de siècle*.⁵⁴

Thanks to these predecessors' efforts in establishing a female literary tradition, New Woman studies in the 1990s entered a new age of critical diversity and dynamics. To project the issue with a long historical view, Ann L. Ardis, Jane Eldridge Miller and Lyn Pykett all made a similar attempt at examining New Woman novels' experimentation with various narrative forms in relation to modernism.⁵⁵ While Ardis' New Women, New Novels (1990) drew attention to the political aesthetic of New Woman writing in contrast to the apolitical objectivity of modernist formalism, it also pointed to the "gendered modernity" manifested by such narrative representations as "decentered subjectivity and disrupted linearity" that could find their origins in New Woman fiction.⁵⁶ Similarly in Rebel Women (1994), Miller focused on the artistic/literary and social challenges New Woman novels incurred in terms of, for example, women's subjectivity, which had influenced Edwardian literature "about" feminism.⁵⁷ Pykett, on the other hand, set out to investigate in

⁵⁴ Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Writing Beyond the Ending: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985), 20-30.

⁵⁵ In the 1980s, Bjørhovde also contributed one chapter on Schreiner's embryonic modernism in The Story of an African Farm. See Rebellious Structures, chapter 2.

⁵⁶ Ardis, New Women, New Novels, 170-71.

⁵⁷ Jane Eldridge Miller, Rebel Women: Feminism, Modernism and the Edwardian Novel (London: Virago P, 1994), 1-38.

Engendering Fictions (1995) late nineteenth-century gendered discourses of various kinds (for instance, about the feminization of fiction) which served as the seed-beds for modernist novels.⁵⁸

Rather than giving a derogatory assessment as she had done before, Showalter recognized the significant contribution female New Woman writers had made to “the genealogy of modernism” by demonstrating their various narrative innovations such as dream-sequences and ellipses in the short stories she collected in Daughters of Decadence (1993).⁵⁹ In fact, earlier than most of the critics mentioned just now, Showalter had scrutinized, in Sexual Anarchy (1991), the ways in which the New Woman was presented as an anarchic figure, implicit with threat and fear in her challenge to the Victorian social codes of sexuality. By looking at the gendered discourses in *fin-de-siècle* literature, Showalter drew a parallel between the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries, suggesting that the two periods’ similarities lay in their sexual anarchy.⁶⁰ Notwithstanding her problematic approach to historiography,⁶¹ Showalter nonetheless called attention to the gender crisis that permeated the *fin de siècle*, by which the issues revolving around the New Woman were taken on board for further critical scrutiny.

In her concern with gendered discourse and the reinsertion of women’s writing

⁵⁸ Lyn Pykett, Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century (London: Edward Arnold; New York: St Martin’s P, 1995), 1-76.

⁵⁹ Elaine Showalter, ed., Daughters of Decadence: Women Writers of the Fin de Siècle (London: Virago P, 1993). For the quotation, see Showalter’s “Introduction” to Daughters of Decadence: Women Writers of the Fin de Siècle, ed. Elaine Showalter (London: Virago P, 1993), vii-xx, viii.

⁶⁰ Elaine Showalter, Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle (1991; London: Virago P, 1992).

⁶¹ Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken criticized Showalter for falling into what Gillian Beer called “presentism,” i.e., “the reinterpretation of the past through the critical apparatuses and cultural preoccupations of the present,” without giving “an adequate theoretical account of the *fin de siècle* as a transitional category.” See their “Introduction” to Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle, ed. Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 1-10, 2-3. Lyn Pykett argued that the *fin-de-siècle*’s preoccupation with gender, class and race was different from that of the late twentieth century and that a historical understanding of the *fin de siècle* should include the knowledge of “the difference of its preoccupation with difference.” See her “Introduction” to Reading Fin de Siècle Fictions, ed. Lyn Pykett (London; New York: Longman, 1996), 1-21, 19.

into literary history, Pykett, for instance, minutely compared in The 'Improper' Feminine (1992) the "sexual anxiety" reflected in the women's sensation novel of the 1860s and New Woman fiction of the 1890s. She argued that the New Woman was presented with two paradoxical contradictions, mannishness and hyperfemininity (to the extent of hysteric, degenerate emotionalism), whereby feminist New Woman writers intended to subvert the canonical gendered/sexual boundary of the "proper" feminine in order to create new forms of femininity for their literary representations of women and for women, who constituted a massive reading population in real life.⁶² As well as looking to femininity and the female readership in relation to the sensation novel and New Woman fiction, Kate Flint examined the two (sub-)genres' similarities and differences, concluding that New Woman fiction aroused a far greater sensation in "consolidat[ing] a community of woman readers, who could refer to these works as proof of their psychological, social, and ideological difference from men."⁶³

It was not only the New Woman novels but also the new press which defined women as its central readership; but if the former attempted to create new forms of femininity, the latter patterned unstable ones. Whilst the male-dominated periodical press caricatured the New Woman on both sides of the Atlantic, as Patricia Marks has demonstrated,⁶⁴ the woman's magazines were nonetheless not in opposition to those mainstream counterparts but "were in large part," as Margaret Beetham has told us, "concerned with asserting 'True Woman' against the various deviant femininities subsumed under the labels 'new' or 'modern.'" ⁶⁵ Although women's

⁶² Lyn Pykett, The 'Improper' Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing (London; New York: Routledge, 1992).

⁶³ Kate Flint, The Woman Reader, 1837-1914 (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1993), 305.

⁶⁴ Patricia Marks, Bicycles, Bangs, and Bloomers: The New Woman in the Popular Press (Lexington, Kentucky: The UP of Kentucky, 1990).

⁶⁵ Margaret Beetham, A Magazine of Her Own?: Domesticity and Desire in the Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914 (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), 118-19.

self-development and their access to higher education were often the focus of the appeal feminist women writers claimed for their periodicals, this was, according to Beetham, mainly addressed to girls, who constituted one of the diversified groups of female readership. And even figures like the “Revolting Daughters” or “the Girton Girls” in these journals were sometimes ambiguously portrayed in their return to heterosexual romance, marriage and motherhood, the same appeals as those addressed in the lady’s magazines.⁶⁶

As Sally Ledger remarked, the New Woman as a cultural product was by no means a set category.⁶⁷ Of all the contradictions and ambiguities, perhaps the most striking was the link between the New Woman and the decadent made by the periodical press. Both were characterized by their sexual candor and were classified as sexual deviants in their challenge to traditional gender boundaries,⁶⁸ but otherwise, as Showalter, Ledger and other critics have indicated, they were not the same by nature; for, while the New Woman challenged Victorian femininity, the decadent undermined the Victorian valorization of masculinity by parodically mimicking femininity.⁶⁹

New journalism that encouraged cheap newspapers and journals, moreover, also generated a debate over low and high culture in the literary market. A move or separation from the dominant aestheticism to establish a feminist aesthetics, where female New Woman writers might find the tools to politicize their fictions, was the

⁶⁶ Ibid., 131-41.

⁶⁷ Ledger, “The New Woman and the Crisis of Victorianism,” 181.

⁶⁸ Linda Dowling, “The Decadent and the New Woman in the 1890s,” *Nineteenth Century Fiction* 33 (1979): 434-53, also collected in Pykett, ed., *Reading Fin de Siècle Fictions*, 47-63. See also Pykett, *Engendering Fictions*, 16-20.

⁶⁹ Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy*, chapter 9; *idem*, *Daughters of Decadence*, x; Ledger, “The New Woman and the Crisis of Victorianism,” 22-31; *idem*, *The New Woman*, chapter 4; Lisa K. Hamilton, “New Women and ‘Old’ Men,” *Women and British Aestheticism*, ed. Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psoyiades (Charlottesville; London: UP of Virginia, 1999), 62-80; Teresa Mangum, “Style Wars of the 1890s: The New Woman and the Decadent,” *Transforming Genres: New Approaches to British Fiction of the 1890s*, ed. Nikki Lee Manos and Meri-Jane Rochelson (New York: St. Martin’s P, 1994), 47-66, in which Mangum uses Sarah Grand’s *The Beth Book* as an example to distinguish the Decadents from the New Woman writers.

subject of Rita S. Kranidis' investigation of the "cultural subjectivity" of the 1890s.⁷⁰ Specifically, both Marilyn Bonnell and Teresa Mangum took Sarah Grand's work to be the exemplar of this art-for-(wo)man's-sake aesthetics, an aesthetic composed of ethics and political activism for social regeneration.⁷¹

If the fictional New Woman was appealing to the mass female audience while generating vituperative attacks from the mainstream periodicals of the 1890s, what this phenomenon reflected was also the "real" experience women encountered in their transgression of the established gendered norms. This is what Sally Ledger aimed to demonstrate in her illuminating study, The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the *Fin de Siècle* (1997), where she opened up Showalter's limited perspective on gender relations in Sexual Anarchy by drawing on the socio-cultural and political contexts of the *fin de siècle* to illustrate the New Woman's complex configurations not only in fiction but also in association with socialism, imperialism, decadence, lesbian identity, the modern city, modernism and mass culture. While offering a multi-faceted landscape of the *fin-de-siècle* New Woman and valorizing, as other critics do, female New Woman writers' renovating narrative experimentations in connection with modernism, Ledger was nonetheless cautious not to reject, but asserted the influence of realism on New Woman writers, whose popularity at the time signaled "the symptom of the 'massification' of culture," because realism was the exact vehicle for feminist expression for the mass readership.⁷² To present the diverse and discursive ways in which New Woman fiction reflected and responded to the mass-cultural phenomenon, Ledger also edited a special journal issue, Writing's

⁷⁰ Rita S. Kranidis, Subversive Discourse: The Cultural Production of Late Victorian Feminist Novels (Basingstoke; London: Macmillan, 1995), x.

⁷¹ Marilyn Bonnell, "Sarah Grand and the Critical Establishment: Art for [Wo]man's Sake," Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature 14.1 (1995): 123-48; Teresa Mangum, Married, Middlebrow, and Militant: Sarah Grand and the New Woman Novel (Ann Arbor: The U of Michigan P, 1998).

⁷² Ledger, The New Woman, 194. See also Carolyn Christensen Nelson's British Women Fiction Writers of the 1890s (New York: Twayne, 1996), chapters 2 & 3.

Writing at the *Fin de Siècle*, for Women's Writing, in which the articles selected spanned the critical spectrum from the late nineteenth century to the first thirty years of the twentieth century (the first- and second-generation New Women so to speak), demonstrating the variety of fictional genres New Woman writers deployed to effectuate their sexual/gender politics.⁷³

Since the inception of the new millennium, we see continued work on New Woman studies aimed at elaborating on previous approaches. We also see new endeavors to broaden and enrich the scope of research. Ruth Robbins, for example, proceeds to explore the New Woman's connection with modernism in separation from realism in Pater to Forster, 1873-1924 (2003).⁷⁴ Carolyn Burdett's Olive Schreiner and the Progress of Feminism (2001) and Iveta Jusová's The New Woman and the Empire (2005), to take other examples, set out to investigate the relationship between the New Woman movement and colonialism/imperialism. While Burdett focuses exclusively on Schreiner's appropriation of evolutionary discourse in relation to gender and empire, Jusová looks at the ways in which race, class and gender/sexuality are constructed and intersected in the works of Sarah Grand, George Egerton, Elizabeth Robin and Amy Levy.⁷⁵ Following Ledger's efforts, Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis' essay collection, The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact (2001), seeks to present the polyphonic nature of the New Woman debate by drawing attention to contemporary issues of femininity, masculinity, discourses of psychoanalysis, medicine, evolution, eugenics, colonization, social campaigns for

⁷³ Sally Ledger, ed., Women's Writing at the *Fin de Siècle*, special issue of Women's Writing 3.3 (1996): 191-319. For the differentiation of the first- and second-generation New Women, see Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America (New York; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985), 245-96; Ledger, The New Woman, 1.

⁷⁴ Ruth Robbins, Pater to Forster, 1873-1924 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 159-91.

⁷⁵ Carolyn Burdett, Olive Schreiner and the Progress of Feminism: Evolution, Gender, Empire (New York: Palgrave, 2001); Iveta Jusová, The New Woman and the Empire (Columbus: The Ohio State UP, 2005).

women's oppression in marriage and motherhood as well as utopia and aesthetics.⁷⁶

If the critics of the 1990s strove to differentiate the monstrous twinship between the New Women and the decadents or male aesthetes, Talia Schaffer's The Forgotten Female Aesthetes (2000) is at pains to scrutinize the late Victorian female aestheticism upheld by a special grouping of female authors, who were unintentionally categorized under the aegis of the New Women but were in fact distinguished from that marker by their sharing of the high-art tradition with the male aesthetes of that time. While asserting that female aesthetes were the precursors as well as the rivals of some modernist writers, Schaffer also focuses on their various modes of femininity and sexuality, demonstrating their ambiguous plays of identity between the New Women and the Angels in the House.⁷⁷

If Pykett's application of French feminist theories (for instance, H el ene Cixous' *l' criture f eminine*, Julia Kristeva's semiotic and hysteric) in The 'Improper' Feminine (1992) launched a starting point from which the New Woman and the second wave feminism of the 1970s and 1980s are linked together,⁷⁸ Ann Heilmann's New Woman Fiction (2000) and New Woman Strategies (2004) offer in-depth analyses of this temporal continuity by conceptualizing the two periods' feminisms. While arguing, in her first book, that New Woman fiction as first-wave cultural feminism prefigures second-wave feminist theory, Heilmann explores their gynocentric aesthetics of subversion and recreation of new forms of femininity in New Woman Strategies, applying French feminist theories to probe into New Woman writers' different narrative strategies (myth for Caird, femininity for Grand, and allegory for Schreiner).⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Richardson and Willis, The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact.

⁷⁷ Talia Schaffer, The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England (Charlottesville; London: UP of Virginia, 2000).

⁷⁸ Pykett, The 'Improper' Feminine, 170-71, 204-07.

⁷⁹ Ann Heilmann, New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism (London: Macmillan;

The concept of temporality in relation to Victorian norms of gender/sexuality, furthermore, is also foregrounded in Time Is of the Essence (2001), where Patricia Murphy invokes Kristeva's essentialist assumption of masculine and feminine time to study New Woman novels. She observes that, while male writers like Haggard and Hardy perpetuated masculine time to marginalize women in the master narrative of culture, history and art, female writers attacked this masculine ideology of temporality: Grand used what Murphy terms "evolutionary psychology" to emphasize women's superiority to men; Caird castigated the historical determinism of the patriarchal tyranny over women's time in parental and matrimonial households that arrest women's self-development as daughters, wives and mothers; Schreiner paid attention to linguistic and narrative maneuvers to throw into relief masculine linearity in time, language and narration.⁸⁰

As Murphy asserts, many New Woman writers were essentialist in accepting the "natural" difference of masculinity and femininity.⁸¹ Of all its manifestations, one interesting phenomenon is that New Woman writers were apt to appropriate what Ledger called "an evolutionary-inflected discourse" for their feminist purpose. Applying Michel Foucault's concept of dominant and reverse discourses, Ledger argued that, while the New Woman was vehemently caricatured in the mainstream periodicals as ugly, man-hating and mannish due to her unorthodoxy, the dominant discourse itself also helped generate a reverse discourse that put forward the voice of what the real, modern New Woman should be. Intriguingly, New Woman writers' opposing voices were more often than not borrowed from the dominant discourse that, at the time, particularly aimed for the longevity of the empire predicated upon

New York: St. Martin's P, 2000); *idem*, New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 2004).

⁸⁰ Patricia Murphy, Time Is of the Essence: Temporality, Gender, and the New Woman (New York: State U of New York P, 2001).

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

the continuance of the healthy and strong race. As such, valorization of motherhood and championing of sexual and moral purity came to the forefront.⁸²

Angelique Richardson's Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century (2003) potently elucidates the extent to which eugenic feminism—"a construction of civic motherhood which sought political recognition for reproductive labour," and a belief in eugenic love and self-sacrifice for the good of the community—was amply used by New Woman writers like Grand and Egerton, but was forcefully opposed by Caird who believed that it was historical rather than biological determinism that decided social evolution.⁸³ Affirming women's importance and influence as the bearers and nurturers of future citizens, eugenic feminists, and mostly social purity feminists, made use of the Victorian dominant ideology of separate spheres to domesticate national, social and political issues and demanded gendered citizenship for women in whom lay the hope of the British Empire. In addition to the discussion in part of Ann Heilmann's Masculinity, Maternities, Motherlands, a special journal issue she edited for Nineteenth-Century Feminisms,⁸⁴ this concept of "race motherhood" is also the focal point in Raising the Dust (2004), where Beth Sutton-Ramspeck examines what she calls "civic maternalism" or "public motherhood," manifested through the metaphor of "literature as housekeeping" in the works of Mary Ward, Sarah Grand and Charlotte Perkins Gilman.⁸⁵

⁸² Ledger, The New Woman, 23, 10, 69.

⁸³ Angelique Richardson, Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003), 9, 26-27. See also Richardson's articles, "The Eugenization of Love: Sarah Grand and the Morality of Genealogy," Victorian Studies 42.2 (1999-2000): 227-55; "'People Talk a Lot of Nonsense about Heredity': Mona Caird and Anti-Eugenic Feminism," The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms, ed. Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (London: Palgrave, 2001), 183-211; "Eugenics and Freedom at the *Fin de Siècle*," Culture and Science in the Nineteenth-Century Media, ed. Louise Henson, Geoffrey Cantor, Gowan Dawson, Richard Noakes, Sally Shuttleworth and Jonathan R. Topham (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2004), 275-86.

⁸⁴ Ann Heilmann, ed., Masculinities, Maternities, Motherlands: Defining/Contesting New Woman Identities, special issue of Nineteenth-Century Feminisms 4.1 (2001): 75-118. For the quotation, see p. 11.

⁸⁵ Beth Sutton-Ramspeck, Raising the Dust: The Literary Housekeeping of Mary Ward, Sarah Grand,

Metaphor is indeed a useful way to examine literary works. Apart from Sutton-Ramspeck's literary housekeeping metaphor, David Trotter also uses the trope of mess in Cooking with Mud (2000) to analyze Grand's deployment of body politics, a politics focusing on disgust and nausea as compelling weapons to generate a dis-identification from convention that Trotter thinks both informs and violates Grand's feminism, for she never arranges divorce for her heroines.⁸⁶ A similar approach through affective and bodily reaction may find its parallel in Ethics and Narrative in the English Novel, 1880-1914 (2001), where Jil Larson calls attention to the emotionally driven ethics dramatized by the New Woman heroines' exploratory and experimental flirtation. By examining New Woman novels by Hardy, Schreiner and Grand, Larson seeks to demonstrate that, although women's flirtation, armed with intellect, can be an agent of power to challenge the ideological association of men with reason and women with feeling, and to activate women's influence by surprising men, it can also be a means of showing women's inability to break free from the conventional gendered morality, thus rendering them victims.⁸⁷

As previous criticism has shown, the periodicals of the 1890s witnessed a variety of voices on, about and by the New Woman. While the dominant discourse shaped uniformly negative assessments, the reverse discourse, especially that deriving from women's political journals, emphasized the validity and legitimacy of advanced, educated women. A particular focus on the polymorphous nature of the feminist periodical presentations of the New Woman can be found in Ann Heilmann's Feminist Forerunners (2003) and New Woman Hybridities (2004). Both essay collections also mark a new departure for New Woman scholarship in

and Charlotte Perkins Gilman (Athens: Ohio UP, 2004), 15, 3.

⁸⁶ David Trotter, Cooking with Mud: The Idea of Mess in Nineteenth-Century Art and Fiction (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), 258-86.

⁸⁷ Jil Larson, Ethics and Narrative in the English Novel, 1880-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001), 44-63.

their extended critical lens that situates the New Woman phenomenon in an international forum, engaging the New Woman debate with different nations, races and ethnicities.⁸⁸ While acknowledging this effort, Regenia Gagnier and Martin Delveaux in their article “Towards a Global Ecology of the *Fin de Siècle*” (2006) call for a still more comprehensive research dimension by including non-Anglophone, such as Asian and Arabic, perspectives to broaden New Woman study.⁸⁹ In order to do that, easy access to New Woman texts is indispensable, and reference to the republishing enterprise until recently can be found in Heilmann’s latest article, “The New Woman in the New Millennium” (2006), where she also analyzes recent critical trends in New Woman fiction.⁹⁰

A concise literature review of New Woman scholarship shows that the critical lens tends to focus on the socio-cultural and historical aspects of the New Woman, though textual investigation can be found, and in particular, in trope study or the study of narrative strategies. As Ledger rightly asserts, “textual configurations of the New Woman at the *fin de siècle* are as significant historically as the day-to-day lived experience of the feminists of the late Victorian women’s movement,” and “To a certain extent, the history of the New Woman is only available to us textually.”⁹¹ A close textual study of New Woman novels, in this light, is necessary and can help to better understand the degree to which the New Woman is “a ubiquitous fictional archetype.”⁹²

⁸⁸ Ann Heilmann, ed., Feminist Forerunners: New Womanism and Feminism in the Early Twentieth Century (London; Sydney; Chicago: Pandora, 2003); Ann Heilmann and Margaret Beetham, eds., New Woman Hybridities: Femininity, Feminism and International Consumer Culture, 1880-1930 (London; New York: Routledge, 2004).

⁸⁹ Regenia Gagnier and Martin Delveaux, “Towards a Global Ecology of the *Fin de Siècle*,” Literature Compass 3.3 (2006): 572-87.

⁹⁰ Ann Heilmann, “The New Woman in the New Millennium: Recent Trends in Criticism of New Woman Fiction,” Literature Compass 3.6.177 (2006): 1-10, 5-6. Apart from the references Heilmann listed in her article, here I add one more entry: Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst, eds., The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History, c. 1880-1900 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), esp. chapter 4.

⁹¹ Ledger, The New Woman, 3.

⁹² Ledger and Luckhurst, The Fin de Siècle, 75.

Archetypes, archetypal images, the cultural context

The concept of the “archetype” is central to this thesis, which is structured to examine, with an equivalent emphasis on textuality, certain archetypal patterns in New Woman fiction. Derived from the Greek *archi*, meaning a beginning, and *typos* a stamp,⁹³ archetype, in the definition of Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), is a “primordial image,” representing ancestral experiences shared by communities of people and serving to elicit intense emotional and psychological responses.⁹⁴ Developed from Jung’s conception of the collective unconscious, the archetype is a pre-conscious psychic structure without content. It is only through the media of image or symbol that the archetype is given its meaning. As Jung asserts, “an archetype in its quiescent, unprojected state has no exactly determinable form but is in itself an indefinite structure which can assume definite forms only in projection.”⁹⁵ That is to say, the archetype *per se* is invisible, irrepresentable, unspeakable, undetermined, but its “content expresses itself, first and foremost, in metaphors.”⁹⁶

To Jung, an archetype is not an innate idea, but “a possibility of representation,”⁹⁷ “the possibility of a certain type of perception and action.”⁹⁸ Its manifestation is often repeatedly revealed in myths, fairytales, dreams, folktales and literature, and its interpretation is dependent upon the analyst’s expression or perception, a factor having much to do with the variables of time, place and the individual as well as the culture. The archetype as manifested by the archetypal image thus contains dynamic flexibility and meanings subject to those

⁹³ Annis Pratt (with Barbara White, Andrea Loewenstein and Mary Wyer), *Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1981), 3.

⁹⁴ Carl Gustav Jung, “On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry,” *CWCGJ*, 15: 65-83, 81-82.

⁹⁵ Carl Gustav Jung, “Concerning the Archetypes, with Special Reference to the Anima Concept,” *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 54-72, 70.

⁹⁶ Carl Gustav Jung, “The Psychology of the Child Archetype,” *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 151-81, 157.

⁹⁷ Carl Gustav Jung, “Psychological Aspects of the Mother Archetype,” *CWCCG*, 9.1: 75-110, 79.

⁹⁸ Carl Gustav Jung, “The Concept of the Collective Unconscious,” *CWCCG*, 9.1: 42-53, 48.

possibilities/variables: “Not for a moment,” Jung says, “dare we succumb to the illusion that an archetype can be finally explained and disposed of.”⁹⁹

Since the archetype is “not to be fitted into a formula,”¹⁰⁰ it is not, as Naomi R. Goldenberg would have us believe, a fixed absolute.¹⁰¹ Maintaining that Jung separates the archetype (the ideal, the transcendental, the superior) from its expression in images (the actual experience and activities, the inferior), Goldenberg proposes to equate the two by saying that,

Images are, after all, our psychic pictures of action, our imaginal depictions of the behavioral patterns we are continually enacting and continually modifying. All imaginal activities, all images, could then be understood as archetypes to the degree that they move things and partake of what we might want to call “numinosity.”¹⁰²

Clearly showing more accurate knowledge than Goldenberg, who is preoccupied with a dichotomous or hierarchical paradigm of Jung’s concept of the archetype, James Hall explains that,

The most profound contents of the objective psyche are the archetypal images, the archetypes themselves not being observable in their unimagined state. . . . There is no fixed number of archetypes, since any recurrent human experience can be archetypally represented. It is perhaps more nearly correct to speak of an archetypal field, with the observable archetypal images indicating nodal points in which the field is particularly dense. *Archetypes are not inherited images; they are part of the tendency to structure experience in certain ways.*¹⁰³ (emphasis added)

Shedding similar light on the subject, Estella Lauter contends that the archetype refers to “the tendency to form images in response to recurrent or widely shared experiences . . . [and] we know it only in its changing manifestations.” Because

⁹⁹ Jung, “The Psychology of the Child Archetype,” *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 160.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁰¹ Naomi R. Goldenberg, “A Feminist Critique of Jung,” *Signs* 2.2 (1976): 443-49, 448.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 449.

¹⁰³ James Hall, *Clinical Uses of Dreams: Jungian Interpretation and Enactments* (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1977), 116, quoted in Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupperecht, “Introduction” to *Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-visions of Jungian Thought*, ed. Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupperecht (Knoxville: The U of Tennessee P, 1985), 3-22, 11.

changing here means gradual change through the centuries, the recurrent patterns that we recognize as archetypal images, the “sole means of inferring the presence of archetypes,” “*appear* relatively unchanging” (emphasis in original).¹⁰⁴ Yet, it must be borne in mind that the archetype is a fluidity subject to change rather than a fixed absolute like a stereotype. In the words of Erich Neumann:

The archetypes are varied by the media through which they pass—that is, *their form changes according to the time, the place, and the psychological constellation of the individual in whom they are manifested*. Thus, for example, the mother archetype, as a dynamic entity in the psychic substratum, always retains its identity, but it takes on different styles—different aspects or emotional color—depending on whether it is manifested in Egypt, Mexico, or Spain, or in ancient, medieval, or modern times. *The paradoxical multiplicity of its eternal presence, which makes possible an infinite variety of forms of expression, is crystallized in its realization by man in time; its archetypal eternity enters into a unique synthesis with a specific historical situation.*¹⁰⁵ (emphases added)

Obviously, Neumann’s view gives prominence to the cultural-historical influence on the archetype. This standpoint, to some extent, echoes Petteri Pietikainen’s proposition that archetypes could be viewed as symbolic forms. Situating Jung’s concept of archetypes in the context of Ernst Cassirer’s philosophy of symbolic forms, Pietikainen expounds that, in Cassirer’s reasoning, “Forms are not entities nor essences, but functional determinants, which shape our thoughts about the world. . . . The perceptual world is not a bundle of formless impressions but a result of certain basic forms of ‘synthesis.’”¹⁰⁶ Rather than denoting “immanence” or “transcendence” which signals the opposites of the metaphorical and actual worlds, the word “symbolic” represents “the ‘one in the other’ and ‘the

¹⁰⁴ Estella Lauter, “Visual Images by Women: A Test Case for the Theory of Archetypes,” *Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-visions of Jungian Thought*, ed. Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht (Knoxville: The U of Tennessee P, 1985), 46-92, 49.

¹⁰⁵ Erich Neumann, *Art and the Creative Unconscious: Four Essays*, trans. Ralph Manheim (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959), 82.

¹⁰⁶ Petteri Pietikainen, “Archetypes as Symbolic Forms,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 43.3 (1998): 325-43, 330-31.

other in the one.”¹⁰⁷ Symbolic forms that are concerned with the human understanding of the world are, in this light, “the expression of ‘mental’ contents through perceptual ‘signs’ and ‘images’” and they are culturally determined because “any area of culture is potentially a symbolic form.”¹⁰⁸

Approaching through the cultural/hermeneutic perspective, Pietikainen further argues that, where the archetype as a priori psyche in the collective unconscious is inherited, the archetypal representation/image is culture-bound in its undergoing the “undercurrents” of cultural evolution.¹⁰⁹ Despite making the same conceptual mistake as Goldenberg in separating the archetype from the archetypal image, I think Pietikainen is right in proposing that the archetypal representation is basically “a result of . . . cultural transmission, [because] our culture is not a single monolithic entity but a dynamic process.”¹¹⁰ Archetypes, in this sense, are culturally determined, reflecting a cultural phenomenon at a particular time and betraying transpersonal, supra-individual, shared beliefs, values and behavior of a particular community or people.¹¹¹ As Pietikainen pertinently quotes from S. G. F. Brandon:

[T]hrough membership of the community or group into which he is born, the individual inherits a common memory of the past which may span many generations. However long or short that span may be, and however vague and mythical the traditions preserved, the individual accordingly becomes aware of a period of time that ranges back far beyond the day of his own birth. He thus realizes that he is part of a great process of existence.¹¹²

Shared experiences constitute the accumulative and collective unconscious among people and thus reflect the universality of the archetype. As time goes by,

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 331.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 334.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 333, 335, 336, 339.

¹¹² Quoted in *ibid.*, 333, from S. G. F. Brandon, History, Time and Deity: A Historical and Comparative Study of the Conception of Time in Religious Thought and Practice (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 1965), 73-74.

there is an ongoing change in the archetype, given the slow degree of change. It is in this respect that the archetype reflects “a tendency to form and re-form images” that feminist archetypal theorists place their emphasis on, leading them to use the archetype as “a feminist tool for re-examining and re-evaluating patterns in women’s experiences.” As Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht assert,

Archetypal theory offers feminism a general sanction to look at women’s images, as well as at their social, economic, or political behavior, and to value all kinds of material, not just those kinds currently privileged in contemporary culture.¹¹³

In Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction (1981), Annis Pratt argues that “Women’s fiction reflects an experience radically different from men’s because our drive towards growth as persons is thwarted by our society’s prescriptions concerning gender.”¹¹⁴ She maintains that, even though Jung’s definition of masculine and feminine is rigid, feminists may take what is useful and ignore the useless in their analysis of women’s archetypes.¹¹⁵ In admitting the “otherness” of women, Pratt affirms the power of feminine archetypes (for instance, that of Demeter/Kore) that Jung recognizes but rarely describes,¹¹⁶ and induces certain archetypal patterns that recur in women’s fiction.

While supporting feminist archetypal theory by looking at the archetypal images particularly pertaining to women’s shared experiences, what I am concerned with here is not so much the psychoanalytical implication or essentialist questioning of Jungian archetypes.¹¹⁷ Rather, I am interested in the ways in which the archetypal images as symbolic forms were manifested in the socio-cultural context of the *fin de*

¹¹³ Lauter and Rupprecht, “Introduction” to Feminist Archetypal Theory, 16.

¹¹⁴ Pratt, Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction, 6.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6, 7, 8.

¹¹⁷ See several articles collected in Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht, eds., Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-visions of Jungian Thought (Knoxville: The U of Tennessee P, 1985).

siècle, where New Woman fiction was popularized as a purposive provocation among women: what Pratt calls the “unconsciousness-raising.”¹¹⁸

Unconsciousness-raising depends on the collective and continuous force from a collective of communities. Through manifold representations, the archetype evokes people’s emotional intensity and creates a sympathetic resonance to consolidate a powerful response. In linking psychology with literature, Jung argues that the artist is a regulator who connects the archetype, the archetypal image, the archetypal response and the environmental situation. The creative process, in Jung’s opinion, is a psychological activity in which the artist gives the image a shape and translates it into the language of the present, so as to let the reader confront the deepest and most enduring ideas. In so doing, the artist “transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind and constantly [educates] the spirit of the age, conjuring up the forms in which the age is most lacking.” This is the social significance of art in Jung’s mind. It also elucidates the fact that the archetype affects people’s emotions because “it summons up a voice that is stronger than our own. Whoever speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices.”¹¹⁹ New Woman writers, seen in this light, had a social and political function in presenting archetypal representations that reflected “the psychic residua of innumerable experiences of the same type [of women as] a picture of psychic life in the average.”¹²⁰ In so doing, they attempted to modify and renovate consciousness, adapting the best of the old and jettisoning the rest for the good of women. When women’s unconsciousness for autonomy is raised, the collective unconscious as future generations see it will differ from what we see now.

¹¹⁸ Annis V. Pratt, “Spinning Among Fields: Jung, Frye, Levi-Strauss and Feminist Archetypal Theory,” *Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-visions of Jungian Thought*, ed. Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht (Knoxville: The U of Tennessee P, 1985), 93-136, 95.

¹¹⁹ Jung, “On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry,” *CWCGJ*, 15: 82.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 81.

New Woman fiction and archetypal patterns

If Jungian archetypal theory is mainly a psychoanalytical approach, my intention in contextualizing the archetypal images in New Woman fiction within a contemporary cultural, historical and socio-political framework is an inflected one. As well as emphasizing an in-depth textual analysis of New Woman fiction, what I attempt to do in this thesis is to study two archetypal images—the Child and the Spirit—that I think are helpful in building up our understanding of the New Woman as a cultural phenomenon. Studying archetypal patterns in women’s fiction, Pratt remarks that:

Archetypal patterns, as I understand them, represent categories of particulars, which can be described in their interrelationships within a given text or within a larger body of literature. A dogmatic insistence upon preordained, invariable sets of archetypal patterns would distort literary analysis: one must not deduce categories down *into* a body of material but induce them *from* images, symbols, and narrative patterns observed in a significantly various selection of literary works. I conceive of archetypal criticism, thus, as inductive rather than deductive.¹²¹
(emphases in original)

This belief leads to Pratt’s close reading of more than three hundred women’s novels, dating from the eighteenth century to the modern period, to see the recurrent patterns in them. While the inductive methodology can certainly create this perspective, it may also risk sweeping generalization in not taking into account specific cultural, historical, social and political situations implied in the writings. Thus, rather than studying “a larger body of literature” across different historical periods, I limit my research scope mainly to New Woman novels at the *fin de siècle*, a time full of agitation in many ways, in order to see the “categories of particulars, which can be described in their interrelationships within [some] given text[s].”¹²²

Among numerous New Woman writers and more than one hundred novels

¹²¹ Pratt, *Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction*, 5.

¹²² *Ibid.*

written by them,¹²³ my attention is given to three prominent figures and a single one of their works: The Daughters of Danaus (1894) by the Anglo-Scottish Mona Caird (1854-1932), The Beth Book (1897) by the Anglo-Irish Sarah Grand (1854-1943), and From Man to Man (1926) by the Anglo-South-African Olive Schreiner (1855-1920). All of the three New Woman writers were born in adjacent years. Despite their different backgrounds, they all aroused Victorian sensation in their daunting rebellion against conventional gendered norms, a fact suggestive of the overwhelming preoccupation with the Woman Question at the time regardless of different locations: Schreiner published the first New Woman novel The Story of an African Farm (1883) to appeal for women's equal rights and independence; Mona Caird's 1888 article "Marriage" in the Westminster Review,¹²⁴ amplified by the Daily Telegraph's response in opening a letter column entitled "Is Marriage a Failure?", provoked heated discussion about the marriage question;¹²⁵ Grand's debate with Ouida in The North American Review in 1894, as has been mentioned earlier, launched the cultural preoccupation with the New Woman. As part of second-wave feminism's endeavor to rediscover "unknown" women writers, the three have now regained the critical attention they used to attract in their own time and have claimed their place in the literary canon.

Although From Man to Man was (posthumously) published much later than The Daughters of Danaus and The Beth Book, it had nevertheless been in the process of composition and revision from 1873 till Schreiner's death in 1920,¹²⁶ a duration

¹²³ This is Ardis' calculation of New Woman novels between 1883 and 1900. See her book, New Women, New Novels, 4.

¹²⁴ For the full text of Caird's "Marriage," see Carolyn Christensen Nelson, ed., A New Woman Reader (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview P, 2001), 185-99; Susan Hamilton, ed., 'Criminals, Idiots, Women, and Minors': Victorian Writing by Women on Women (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview P, 1996), 271-86. The article was completely revised and divided into several parts in The Morality of Marriage, repr. in LVMQ, 1.

¹²⁵ Harry Quilter, ed., Is Marriage a Failure? (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1888; New York; London: Garland, 1984), 1-299, repr. in LVMQ, 1.

¹²⁶ See "A Note on the Genesis of the Book" in the Academy Press edition of From Man to Man.

surely overlapping the time when Caird and Grand worked and published their novels in the last decade of the nineteenth century. At the *fin de millennium*, The Daughters of Danaus was republished by the Feminist Press in 1989; The Beth Book and From Man to Man were among the reprint series of the Virago Press.¹²⁷ Despite the writers' popularity, their novels have nonetheless received rather different critical treatment. The Daughters of Danaus, without doubt, is Caird's most famous novel; but because it is the only novel of hers that has been republished, the critical lens is usually placed mainly on this work. In comparison, The Beth Book and From Man to Man are luckier in that they are easier to access but unlucky in the sense that, even though they were reprinted, the critical attention given to them until recently has been far less extensive than that given to The Heavenly Twins (1893) and The Story of an African Farm (1883), the two works that (dis)credited Grand and Schreiner at the time and thus have drawn the most critical assessments so far.

As I will demonstrate later, however, both The Beth Book and From Man to Man, like Caird's The Daughters of Danaus, can be seen as the writers' feminist manifestoes in their broadest and deepest sense. While The Daughters of Danaus conveys Caird's severe objection to the historical determinism of conventional womanhood (girlhood, wifhood and motherhood), Grand uses semi-autobiographical writing in The Beth Book to advocate her religious cosmopolitanism and ecofeminism, a dimension, I would argue, even larger than the lavish sexual/gender discourse in The Heavenly Twins. From Man to Man, Schreiner's life-long work, on the other hand, demonstrates the change in her conception of motherhood, a change I observe and induce from her novels and correspondence with friends. It is often the case that Lyndall in The Story of an

¹²⁷ The Virago Press republished The Beth Book in 1980 and From Man to Man in 1982. However, my version of the former is The Dial Press edition of 1980 and of the latter the Academy Press edition in 1977.

African Farm, written in her early twenties, is an example of Schreiner's objection to motherhood. As I will illustrate later, Schreiner's personal life experiences brought about a gradual change in her, and From Man to Man, together with her feminist nonfiction treatise Woman and Labor (1911), testifies to her embrace of a Grandian-like eugenic and civic maternalism that critics rarely pay attention to.

In addition to the three novels' feminist messages, central to them, it must be noted, is their shared generic presentation in portraying artist heroines of some kind—composers, writers and orators—who are trapped in their conflicts between women's conventional duties as daughters, wives and mothers and their professional pursuit. Generically, the novels could be viewed as a prototype of the English *Künstlerroman* in the feminist and novelistic fashion, preceded by the verse form of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Aurora Leigh (1856) and prior to the nowadays much-discussed Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916) by James Joyce. A subgenre of the *Bildungsroman*, the *Künstlerroman* depicts the development of the artist hero(ine) towards maturity and the realization of his/her artistic potential and destiny.¹²⁸ It was not until the last two decades of the nineteenth century, particularly from 1890 to 1930, that the genre reached its highest popularity.¹²⁹

Maurice Beebe argues that the artist-novel portrays the artist-hero as a divided self split between two identities, which have given rise to two distinct traditions: a man in the Sacred Fount tradition, striving to attain personal achievement through art, and an artist in the Ivory Tower tradition, desiring freedom and solitude for his creative impetus.¹³⁰ While critics are keen to discuss artist-heroes, expanding the scope from modern to postmodern works, discussion of its female counterparts

¹²⁸ C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon, A Handbook to Literature, 5th ed. (New York: Macmillan; London: Collier Macmillan, 1986), 271.

¹²⁹ Gerald Jay Goldberg, "The Artist-Novel in Transition," English Fiction in Transition 4.3 (1961): 12-27, 13, 25.

¹³⁰ Maurice Beebe, Ivory Towers and Sacred Founts: The Artist as Hero in Fiction from Goethe to Joyce (New York: New York UP, 1964).

seems to have been relatively slight. Linda Huff argues that, whereas the artist-hero feels split between art and life, the artist-heroine “is torn not only between life and art, but more specifically, between her role as a woman, demanding selfless devotion to others, and her aspirations as an artist, requiring exclusive commitment to work.”¹³¹ Gender difference reinforces the traditional aesthetic notion that to be an artist is a male vocation for self-expression, so the artist-heroine, whether as a daughter, a wife, or a mother, is circumscribed in undertaking it, since her artistic pursuit is only permitted as a form of amateurish entertainment. As Pykett suggests, therefore, the deployment of the novelistic female artist implies four significations: that she is “an invader of a masculine (or at least, male-controlled) domain,” that she figures “a conflicted feminine interiority,” that she serves as “an intervention in a variety of contemporary debates about the nature and function of art in the modern world,” and that she offers a way to explore, “from a woman’s perspective, the relationship of the aesthetic and the political, and the competing claims of the life of the artist and that of the activist.”¹³²

A popular literary convention to demonstrate women’s conflict over vocational aspirations, the female *Künstlerroman* is central to New Woman fiction and serves as a case in point here to examine the ways in which feminist New Woman writers like Caird, Grand and Schreiner accept, negotiate, subvert or revise the canonical generic form. If Caird, the most radical feminist among the three, presents the most common paradigm of the artist manquée in The Daughters of Danaus, Grand and Schreiner take pains to create literal and literary spaces for their artist heroines in The Beth Book and From Man to Man. In so doing, they forcefully challenge

¹³¹ Linda Huff, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman: The Writer as Heroine in American Literature (New York: Frederick Ungar P, 1983), 4-11.

¹³² Lyn Pykett, “Portraits of the Artist as a Young Woman: Representations of the Female Artist in the New Woman Fiction of the 1890s,” Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question, ed. Nicola Diane Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 135-50, 138-39.

traditional ideologies of middle-class femininity and the separate spheres. While Grand subverts the aesthetic high-art tradition by giving it political and social purposes, Schreiner transforms the conventional definition of writing forms to include journal entries and story telling. New Woman fiction, in other words, attacks not only all that is related to the Woman Question but the main/male-streamed literary canon as well.

As has been mentioned, archetypal images are manifested in metaphors; they are recurrent patterns that give expression to the archetypes from the collective unconscious. Setting the stage for these three interrelated novels, this thesis aims to examine two archetypal patterns, the Child and the Spirit, both out of archetypes proposed by Jung. And my reading of them, as I have explained earlier, is to see them as cultural forms/images instead of psychological entities and to reinterpret them in the context of New Woman fiction. In the three novels under consideration, the child image abounds not only in terms of the vertical parent-children tie but also in view of the horizontal bond between biological and non-biological siblings as well as heterosexual lovers. There is also another aspect, the nature child, that is related to a recurrent archetypal pattern in women's novels, the green-world archetype, as Pratt (together with Barbara White) suggests.¹³³ Angles taken from all these provide much more diversity than if I were to explore, say, the mother archetype, where I could only focus on the maternal aspect of the image, a perspective having already been frequently discussed in relation to the mother-daughter relationship in New Woman novels. As such and most importantly, the multi-faceted child image serves to offer some of my own thoughts that may have their importance as they bear on subjects so far unnoticed by modern critics.

¹³³ Annis Pratt (with Barbara White), "The Novel of Development," Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1981), 13-37, 16-24.

The spirit archetype, in the same light, is instructive because I place my critical lens mainly on the dynamics of gender and power in the relationship of the New Woman and the New Man at the *fin de siècle*, a perspective modern criticism has not yet explored in depth. In so doing, not only is Jung's concept of the wise old man included in my analysis, but most importantly, I expand the critical dimension by investigating the New Woman heroines as spirit archetypes who offer helping hands for the formation of the New Men, an expansion much more profound, and more feminist, of course, than if I were to study, for instance, the hero archetype which is mostly a male form. Like the child archetype, the spirit archetype also brings into New Woman scholarship original insights through which, in the face of existing criticism, I wish to propose new perspectives on what the New Woman and the New Man represented for feminist New Woman writers at the time, which may also serve as a platform for modern readers to ponder the same question in our own time.

In this thesis, therefore, I divide my discussion into two parts. Part I is engaged with the Child Archetype, where I inflect Jung's psychological concept of the child to investigate two child images: the Abandoned Child (I-A) and the Nature Child (I-B), the child in his/her relation to Nature. Part II deals with the Spirit Archetype and I examine three different configurations of the New Man in the three novels in question. At the beginning of each Part (I and II) and each section (I-A and I-B), a theoretical account is given to explain my thematic concerns. In brief, Chapters 1 and 2 explore the ways in which the female protagonists in The Daughters of Danaus and From Man to Man are abandoned by sisters, female friends, and/or (pseudo-)lovers. Additional discussion in Chapter 1 is on the heroine's abandoning of both biological and adopted children to shed light on Caird's maternal theory. Chapter 3 studies the Nature Child and Grand's discourse of nature in The Beth Book. Chapters 4 to 6 are concerned with the power dynamics of different

representations of the New Man in relation to the New Woman. Chapter 4 examines the figure of the Wise Old Man in The Daughters of Danaus and his function in the artist heroine's struggle for self-development. Chapter 5 investigates Grand's subversive strategy in rewriting the canonical romance convention in The Beth Book to distinguish the Romantic Knight from the Red-Cross (K)night(ingale). Chapter 6 omits the most frequently discussed "Prelude" in From Man to Man and approaches the novel instead from the interludes and from what I define as the postlude to scrutinize Schreiner's ideal of heterosexual relationship manifested in the concept of the Platonic Lover.

By examining the Child and the Spirit in New Woman novels, this thesis presents critical dimensions as discursive and diversified as the New Woman figure/phenomenon itself. The Abandoned Child sheds light on the issues of sisterhood, the trickster figure, motherhood and a woman's body. The Nature Child connects the time spectrum from the latter half of the nineteenth century to that of the twentieth century as regards the association between women and ecological concerns. The Spirit presents feminist writers' endeavor to reconstruct both the Woman Question and "the Man Question."¹³⁴ Adopting Heilmann's illuminating analysis of New Woman strategies, I also probe into mythology in Caird's The Daughters of Danaus (Chapter 1), femininity in Grand's The Beth Book (Chapter 5), and allegory in Schreiner's From Man to Man (Chapter 6). All these dimensions, taken together, have their historical, socio-cultural and political significations at the *fin de siècle*. The Child and the Spirit serve as a vehicle then for New Woman writers like Caird, Grand and Schreiner to (con-)textualize their discontent and to revise and revolutionize the long-standing authoritative discourses that degrade women. At the same time, they also embed(ded) and arouse(d) in readers' minds women's shared

¹³⁴ Showalter, Sexual Anarchy, 49.

experience of subjection, conflict, struggle and combat, conjuring up women's "unconsciousness-raising" to seek not only equal rights for women but also for a utopian harmony between the sexes, and between humans and nonhumans.

Part I

The Child Archetype

In English literature, the child figure did not receive much attention until the Romantic Period.¹ However, it had proved its popularity long ago, in the founding epochs of Western culture, when classical mythology was rich in child god figures.² Despite the fact that the mythological aspects of the child are those of divine characters, the recurrence of the child image is sufficiently strong evidence for Jung to testify to the universality of the child archetype.³ Robert A. Segal indicates that the child in Jung's contention signifies life's possibility, because Jung sees the child's life as a biographical account of human psychological development. Segal provides an important clue to Jung's concept of the child archetype, drawing attention to Jung's comparison of the child to the human psyche; for example, the child at birth symbolizes the ego and the child's ultimate development means the self.⁴ To justify his use of drawing an analogy between the child and the human psyche, Jung states that

lay prejudice is always inclined to identify the child motif with the concrete experience 'child,' as though the real child were the cause and pre-condition of the existence of the child motif. In psychological reality,

¹ William Blake and William Wordsworth are examples of Romantic poets who use the child image in their works. For a background knowledge of the child in literature, see Peter Coveney, The Image of Childhood: The Individual and Society: A Study of the Theme in English Literature, intro., F. R. Leavis (1957; Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1967), 29-35. Coveney describes how the theme of childhood came to be the main focus of literary interest in special relation to the cultural and historical contexts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See also Penny Brown, The Captured World: The Child and Childhood in Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing in England (Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), 1-11, in which Brown gives a historical account, from the debate on children's education in the eighteenth century to the massive public concern about children in the nineteenth century.

² Carl Kerényi, "The Primordial Child in Primordial Times," Essays on A Science of Mythology: The Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis, C. G. Jung and C. Kerényi, Trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969), 25-69, in which Kerényi examines several child-god figures—Zeus, Hermes, Dionysus, and the like—from which he induces the characteristic all the figures share: solitariness in orphanhood.

³ Carl Gustav Jung, "The Psychology of the Child Archetype," CWCGJ, 9.1: 151-81.

⁴ Robert A. Segal, "Introduction" to chapter 6, "Kinds of Myths," Encountering Jung on Mythology, ed. Robert A. Segal (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998), 123.

however, the empirical idea 'child' is only the means . . . by which to express a psychic fact that cannot be formulated more exactly.⁵

Jung may have good justification to defend his argument through the psychological lens, but in terms of literary studies, the child motif may carry with it different significances and functions, which are by no means "lay prejudice" as Jung comments. Thus in applying Jung's "child archetype" to literature, I am aware of the danger of transferring his psychological argument to literary criticism. In line with his idea of the archetype, what I attempt to do here is to transform the child archetype from Jung's psychologically-oriented concern to a more practical and concrete implication, contextualizing the child figures as they are presented in *fin-de-siècle* fiction. In so doing, I do not attempt to omit Jung's argument in its psychological aspect, but rather, I try to apply his idea of the archetype in relation to the child image to literary representations.⁶ In particular, I am interested in seeing how New Woman writers utilize the child archetype to reveal their dissatisfaction with and indictment of society itself.⁷

Before I discuss the child archetype in the literary context, perhaps it is worth briefly describing Jung's idea of the child in relation to the human psyche. Jung does not categorize different types of the child archetype (since the child means the human psyche as a whole), but he offers four special characteristics that represent the child archetype: abandonment, invincibility, hermaphroditism, as well as beginning

⁵ Jung, "The Psychology of the Child Archetype," *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 161, note 21.

⁶ Actually, only very few literary critics use "the child archetype" to discuss literary works. Among them, K. Chellappan, for example, leaves out the theoretical inference of "the child archetype" from Jung, although she uses the term to name her article. She uses what the child connotes from the Wordsworthian image to discuss short stories by women writers. See K. Chellappan, "The Child Archetype in the Commonwealth Short Stories: Katherine Mansfield, Janet Frame, and Mulk Raj Anand," *Commonwealth Review* 1.1 (1989): 60-68.

⁷ Coveney indicates that, in the context of the nineteenth century when industrialization had brought various developments to people and society, the child carried within it several meanings. It could be a symbol to reflect the artist's discontent with the rapid change around him/her; it could also be an embodiment of Nature in contrast to Civilization; it could be, as with Blake, an incarnation of human innocence against social experience. It may as well signify the artist's nostalgia for childhood. See Coveney, *The Image of Childhood*, 31-32.

and end. In Jung's mind, the human psyche naturally undergoes conflicts which give rise to development. The result of this is the psyche's abandonment of or separation from its original background. To Jung, this abandonment is necessary: "it is only separation, detachment, and agonizing confrontation through opposition that produce consciousness and insight."⁸ The human psyche, moreover, is like the divine child in myth, whose divinity symbolizes its power to overcome all difficulties and realize itself. Its ultimate aim is to reach individuation to achieve awareness of its strengths and limitations. During this psychological development, the human psyche shows its capacity to reconcile opposites, thus revealing the nature of hermaphroditism to combine differences in a broader scope rather than the limited bi-sexual term. To Jung, when a person reaches individuation, his/her psyche completes a process of wholeness to unite his/her conscious and unconscious personality. The unconscious has its collectively shared experience, which exists before the conscious is formed; this is where Jung says the human psyche has its beginning (pre-conscious). When psychic wholeness is reached, the psyche is no longer what it used to be, so Jung says that the human psyche has its end (post-conscious) to anticipate "the ultimate worth or worthlessness of a personality."⁹

In brief, the process of human psychological development, together with its special psychic features, is compared by Jung to the child's life, proceeding from innocence to maturity through a series of trials. Thus a sequence is presented, beginning with the child's departure from home (the psyche's abandonment from its origin), its overcoming (the psyche's invincibility) of difficulties (the opposites), and its obtaining of maturity (the psyche's individuation). The child also involves two visions: the past and the future. The past stands for nostalgia for childhood

⁸ Jung, "The Psychology of the Child Archetype," *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 171.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 179.

innocence (beginning) and the future anticipates development and change (end).

To some extent, I think Jung's idea of the child *per se* has some bearing upon literary representations of the child image. Although his focus is not on the empirical, realistic child figure, his argument nonetheless comprises the characteristics of the child. Thus in coining "the child archetype" from Jung's terminology in an attempt to investigate shared commonalities in New Woman fiction, I will also appropriate Jung's concept of the child apropos. In this part of my thesis, I want to examine two kinds of child archetype—the Abandoned Child and the Nature Child—that I find in the works of the New Woman writers I study here.

In the first two chapters of this Part, attention is given to the Abandoned Child in Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus (1894) and Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man (1926), where I set out to explore the tropes of sisterhood and the trickster in the heroines' abandonment as pseudo-sisterless children. In The Daughters of Danaus, I add a discussion of Caird's concept of motherhood in an attempt to scrutinize her revision of the Greek myths in portraying pseudo-motherless children. In From Man to Man, I include an analysis of three men's conventionality in regard to the woman's body, resulting in the heroine's plight as a loverless child. The third chapter in this Part focuses on the child in its relation to nature and society. Here I engage mainly with Sarah Grand's The Beth Book (1897), where I contextualize Victorian socio-political and literary movements to explore Grand's green politics in presenting nature's interaction with and influence upon the heroine in ways that anticipate recent developments in ecofeminism.

Compared with Caird and Schreiner, Grand offers a relatively optimistic portrait of the (artist) heroine, displaying her positive outlook in part in the nature child (the other part of her positive ethos is revealed in her sketch of the heroine as the spirit

archetype, as will be shown in Part II, Chapter 5). Yet by also creating pessimistic pictures of abandoned children, Caird and Schreiner are equally insistent on the necessity for supportive sisterhood, healthy mothering and female subjectivity—principles which New Woman writing always sets out to promote among its readers.

I-A

The Abandoned Child

In his comment on women's tendency to evade responsibilities that used to be honorably accepted before, Hubert Temperley, the would-be husband of the heroine Hadria Fullerton in Caird's The Daughters of Danaus, remarks: "Every woman wants to be Mary, and no one will be Martha" (DD, 77). In Luke's Gospel, it says:

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her. (Luke: 10, 38-42)¹

While Martha endeavors to treat Jesus in accordance with the social code of hospitality, Mary chooses to immerse herself in spiritual cultivation by listening to Jesus' preaching. Despite the critical debate over Mary's status as a female disciple as a demonstration of Jesus' preference for women's seeking for truth rather than devoting themselves to feminine domesticity,² Hubert is certainly right to use Mary and Martha as polar opposites to contrast women's rights and women's duties.

¹ For the biblical text and a brief discussion of the story, see <http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/jesusandwomen/marymartha.stm> (accessed on March 8, 2004)

² Robert W. Wall argues that this story "affirm[s] liberated social identity for women disciples," but to Jane Schaberg, the silent Mary is merely an audience, not a disciple to instruct the whole community. In her critique of sexual inequality, Mrs. Morgan-Dockrell avers that pure and simple Christianity, as distinct from "the complex Christianity of Mosaic and Pagan," has made it clear that women have equal rights with men in regard to spiritual redemption, and she uses Jesus' judgment that Mary has chosen the better part to demonstrate his refutation of women's exclusive concern for domestic/feminine affairs. See Robert W. Wall, "Martha and Mary (Luke 10.38-42) in the Context of a Christian Deuteronomy," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 35 (1989): 19-35; Jane Schaberg, "Luke," *The Women's Bible Commentary*, ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe (London: S.P.C.K.; Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox P, 1992), 275-92, 289; Mrs. Morgan-Dockrell, "Is the New Woman a Myth?" *Humanitarian* 8 (1896): 339-50, 341, repr. in *LVMQ*, 2.

Embedded in the long history of this biblical allusion lies, in fact, an archetypal motif: the sibling contrast.

The paradigm of contrasting sisters, or “the sisters-in-opposition theme,” in the words of Ellen Moers,³ is indeed pervasive in Western culture, dating in the Bible back beyond the New Testament figures of Mary and Martha to the Old Testament opposition of Leah and Rachel, and in classical literature back beyond Antigone and Ismene in Sophocles’ Antigone⁴ to Psyche and her two sisters in the Cupid and Psyche myth or Hypermnestra and her 49 sisters in the Danaid myth.⁵ It also flourishes in fairy tales like the Grimms’ “Snow-White and Rose-Red.”⁶ As far as nineteenth-century novels are concerned, the dynamics of sibling pairs are equally characteristic of the period. As Michael Cohen observes, “sisters are almost everywhere. . . . Neither the eighteenth nor the twentieth century shows any similar concentration of sisters in fiction and painting.”⁷ Moers goes further, identifying sisters-in-opposition as a recurrent pattern in women’s literature of the period.⁸ Notable examples that immediately come to mind are Jane Austen’s Sense and Sensibility (1811) and Pride and Prejudice (1813), Christina Rossetti’s “Goblin Market” (1862), Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women (1868), and George Eliot’s Middlemarch (1871-72), to name but a few.⁹

³ Ellen Moers, Literary Women (1978; London: The Women’s P, 1986), 104.

⁴ Sophocles, The Three Theban Plays: Antigone, Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus, intro. Bernard Knox, trans. Robert Fagles (New York; London: Penguins Books, 1984).

⁵ Edith Hamilton, ed., Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes (Boston: Signet, 1969), 92-100, 281-82.

⁶ Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, “Snow-White and Rose-Red,” The Complete Illustrated Stories of the Brothers Grimm (London: Chancellor P, 1984), 656-64.

⁷ Quoted in Patricia M. Dethlefs Brennan, “The Sister Narrative in Turn-of-the-Century British and American Novels,” PhD thesis, the U of Nebraska, 2001, p. 21, note 5.

⁸ Moers, Literary Women, 104.

⁹ Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility (1811; Taipei: Bookman, 1991); *idem*, Pride and Prejudice (1813; Taipei: Bookman, 1990); Christina Rossetti, “Goblin Market,” NAEL, 2: 1508-20; Louisa May Alcott, Little Women (1868; London: Penguin Books, 1989); George Eliot, Middlemarch (1871-72; London: Penguin Books, 1994). Amy K. Levin makes the point that, even though there is a group of sisters in Pride and Prejudice, Austen usually focuses on two sisters at a time for comparison. I think this can also be applied in part to Alcott’s Little Women. See her book, The Suppressed Sister: A Relationship in Novels by Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Women (London; Toronto:

Curiously, although sibling pairs abound in Victorian primary texts, scholarly studies on sisterhood, as Diane Marie Chambers and Patricia M. Dethlefs Brennan have pointed out, have been few and attention is scantily paid to biological sisters.¹⁰ To fill this gap, Chambers studies, in her 1994 PhD thesis, blood sisters in Victorian works ranging from 1830 to 1880 by Christina Rossetti, Wilkie Collins, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, Anthony Trollope, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Arthur Hugh Clough, also touching slightly on George Gissing and Thomas Hardy and marking an exception in Sir Walter Scott. She also gives a very thorough literature review of critical studies on sisterhood (biological and metaphorical alike).¹¹ Brennan, on the other hand, draws attention particularly to turn-of-the-century novels by E. M. Forster, Arnold Bennett, Willa Cather and Jessie Redmon Fauset in her 2001 PhD thesis, where she gives a full account of the influence of the Victorian cult of true womanhood and its politics of the public-private dichotomy in forging the intimacy of biological sisterhood on both sides of the Atlantic.¹²

A quick survey of scholarly works on the Victorian sororal bond until very recent times shows that the sibling pair is not only an archetypal image in novels of the period but serves, in reality, as a means by which critics set out to explore sister

Associate UP; Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1992), 20.

¹⁰ Diane Marie Chambers, "The Tie That Binds: The Idealization of Sisterhood in Victorian Literature," PhD thesis, the Ohio State U, 1994, p. 8; Brennan, "The Sister Narrative," 19.

¹¹ Here, I will use "metaphorical sisters," "sisters by choice" or "friend-sisters" throughout my discussion to differentiate the sisterhood of female friendship from the sisterhood of blood kinship.

¹² Apart from Chambers' highly readable literature review of sisterhood studies before 1994, monographs published since then, and particularly related to biological sisterhood in nineteenth and twentieth-century British and American literature, include Michael Cohen, Sisters: Relation and Rescue in Nineteenth-Century British Novels and Paintings (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson UP; London; Toronto: Associated UP, 1995); Masako Hirai, Sisters in Literature: Female Sexuality in *Antigone*, *Middlemarch*, *Howards End* and *Women in Love* (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's P, 1998), and Sarah Annes Brown, Devoted Sisters: Representations of the Sister Relationship in Nineteenth-Century British and American Literature (Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003). Although Leila Silvana May does include biological sisters in her scrutiny, she also discusses other sibling relations such as brother-sister, half- or step-sisters, etc. See her book, Disorderly Sisters: Sibling Relations and Sororal Resistance in Nineteenth-Century British Literature (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP; London: Associated UP, 2001).

narratives, even if the sororal polarization is hidden behind the conventional marriage/love plot. As Amy K. Levin asserts, contrasting sisters is a subversive narrative strategy for the author to “enact an inner struggle . . . to satisfy and undermine conventions within the same text,” because one sister is normally designated as conventional and the other as rebellious. It also creates tension in the reader to side with one of the sisters, producing a sense of “suspense and delayed gratification” as the reader identifies a personal similarity in the reading process.¹³ To Helena Michie, the “often visually and dramatically rendered” sibling pair is one of Victorian culture’s “mechanisms for coping with the specter of female difference . . . in tableaux of physical contrast” as well as “sexual difference . . . between the fallen and the unfallen, the sexual and the pure woman.”¹⁴ Leila Silvana May makes a pertinent definition of sisterhood “as a relationship where female difference is worked out within a framework of sameness.”¹⁵ Biological sisters share the same familial origin, but they are mostly shown or identified as relative to each other physically, temperamentally, behaviorially, conceptually, or even morally.

Drawing on Jung’s idea of “thinking by metaphor” in his scrutiny of the spell of fairy tales in our conscious minds, Elizabeth Fishel argues that there are two patterns of sibling contrast.¹⁶ One is a harmonious tie like “Snow-White and Rose-Red,” in which the sisters’ polarities are actually complementarities to each other, “the yin and

¹³ Levin, *The Suppressed Sister*, 20-21. In terms of the reader’s response to the sibling contrast, Sarah Annes Brown takes the same view as Levin. See her book, *Devoted Sisters*, 2.

¹⁴ Helena Michie, “‘There is No Friend Like a Sister’: Sisterhood as Sexual Difference,” *ELH* 56.2 (1989): 401-21, 401-04.

¹⁵ Leila Silvana May, “‘Eat me, drink me, love me’: Orality, Sexuality, and the Fruits of Sororal Desire in ‘Gob(b)lin(g) Market’ and *Beloved*,” *The Significance of Sibling Relationships in Literature*, ed. JoAnna Stephens Mink and Janet Doubler Ward (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State U Popular P, 1993), 133-48, 135.

¹⁶ Elizabeth Fishel, *Sisters: Love and Rivalry Inside the Family and Beyond* (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1979), 180-83.

the yang of a comfortably unified whole.”¹⁷ The other pattern is a competitive relationship similar to “The Two Brothers,” where polarities cannot complement but intensify the rivalry between the two.¹⁸ No matter in which type, polarization resembles a mirror that reflects what is lacking or what the inner psyche is for one sister through the other:

It is clearly not only about the choices from sister to sister, but also about the choices within each sister’s mind and heart, the puzzling out of the polarities within a woman’s nature. And it is not only about the roles within the family, but also about the options without. For both within the family and without, our sisters hold up our mirrors: our images of who we are and of who we can dare to become.¹⁹

“Although feminism made us all newly aware of the importance of sisterhood,” Christine Downing claims, “there was early on a tendency to conceive the sister bond only metaphorically and thus in highly idealized terms.”²⁰ And even in the massive number of nineteenth-century family romances, May reminds us, the sororal tie is one of the familial relations likely to be romanced and “sister-romancing [could be] a sister-stalking.”²¹ In limiting her focus to mid-Victorian texts, Chambers excludes Austen’s and New Woman fiction from her research, remarking that they must wait until her study is expanded to make the connection with other time periods.²² Whereas Austen’s works have been given most attention in sisterhood studies,²³ no New Woman scholarship (particularly on Caird and Schreiner) I have come across so far makes a meticulous, substantial study of either biological or metaphorical

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 190. It is against this backdrop of the two sororal types that Toni A. H. McNaron, albeit without mentioning Fishel’s argument, edits The Sister Bond: A Feminist View of a Timeless Connection (New York; Oxford: Pergamon P, 1985).

¹⁹ Fishel, Sisters, 184.

²⁰ Christine Downing, Psyche’s Sisters: ReImagining the Meaning of Sisterhood (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 4.

²¹ May, Disorderly Sisters, 14.

²² Chambers, “The Tie That Binds,” 10.

²³ *Ibid.*, 10; Brennan, “The Sister Narrative,” 20.

sisterhood.²⁴ This is, however, not surprising, as New Woman writing is generally characterized by a sketch of the vertical axis of the parent-child relationship, in which the artist daughter revolts against parental, particularly maternal, oppression in order to develop her personal/professional pursuit. Downing proposes that to study the sororal bond is to explore “the ongoing meaning of that relationship throughout our lives, toward an understanding of how it reappears, transformed, in many of our friendships and love affairs, and to a deeply challenging revisioning of our innermost self.”²⁵ If sisterhood is one of the focal points New Woman writers want to advocate, female solidarity other than along the vertical axis (mother-daughter) cannot be ignored because biological sisterhood could be a starting point from which female friendship and heterosexual relationship stem.

Therefore, what I want to investigate in the following two chapters is the horizontal axis of the peer bond predicated mostly upon two relational ties: biological sisters and sisters by choice.²⁶ Of the key New Woman fiction I examine in this thesis, except for Grand’s The Beth Book where positive female friendship is shown in the latter part of the novel and where blood sisters have no importance in the narrative, both The Daughters of Danaus by Caird and From Man to Man by Schreiner present destructive parameters of the sororal bonds. This contributes to an archetypal image of pseudo-sisterless children who find no substantial help from the biological sisters who claim to be dear to them but who are, ironically, either selfish or absent at moments critical enough to determine their siblings’ subsequent fates. This archetype, interestingly, does not fit either of the two patterns of biological sisterhood Fishel suggests, i.e., a complementary union or a competition of

²⁴ One exception is Tess Cosslett’s Woman to Woman: Female Friendship in Victorian Fiction (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1988), in which she offers an analysis of biological and metaphorical sorority in Schreiner’s From Man to Man. See pp. 153-62.

²⁵ Downing, Psyche’s Sisters, 4.

²⁶ As my focus here is mainly on The Daughters of Danaus and From Man to Man, I exclude relative sisters like cousins such as Lyndall and Em in Schreiner’s The Story of an African Farm.

rivalry between the two sisters. Given sibling polarities, what we see in the two novels in question is more like an insufficient sorority: the sisters are not rivals to each other, but they are not close enough to generate a complementary plot, let alone the possibility of rescue, only of abandonment.

As Ruth Parkin-Gounelas remarks, the literary convention of “patterned antitheses” is often strategically used to reveal the sibling contrast in characters, attitudes, opinions and actions in life.²⁷ In The Daughters of Danaus, therefore, I want to examine the blood sisters by juxtaposing the pro-side and the con-side of Emersonian concepts of fate and character, the viewpoints that each sister respectively stands for. While the nature of the inborn character plays a crucial role in determining the sisters’ happiness, the novel also calls into question whether good sisterhood means failed New Womanhood or vice versa. And Caird seems to have made her answer, if we consider as a counterpart the novel’s fictional sister The Stones of Sacrifice (1915), in which, of the three pairs of sisters, one sister’s insistence on personal development contributes to the other’s suicide, and another sister’s sororal solidarity is at the cost of her own professional pursuit.

Although Schreiner does not emphasize this sibling dilemma in From Man to Man, she presents the malfunctioning sister relationship in another way. In addition to comparing the sisters’ differences, I want to use Christina Rossetti’s “Goblin Market” (1862) to cross-examine the trope of separation and connection between the natal sisters in the novel. I argue that Schreiner adopts three strategies—narrative and temporal discontinuities as well as what I call “affective dislocation”—to demonstrate and highlight the physical, spiritual and emotional disconnectedness between the biological sisters. Unlike the redeemed sorority with a happy ending in

²⁷ Ruth Parkin-Gounelas, Fictions of the Female Self: Charlotte Brontë, Olive Schreiner, Katherine Mansfield (London: Macmillan, 1991), 92.

“Goblin Market,” From Man to Man presents a detached and unrecoverable sibling tie, expediting the pseudo-sisterless child’s degeneration into a fallen woman.

While the natal sister bond presents one dimension of the abandoned child archetype, the metaphorical sisters theme proffers another. Janet Todd contends that “the fictional friendship grew out of the idea of the confidante—the correspondent in the epistolary novel or the recipient in the memoir, both favored forms in the eighteenth century.”²⁸ Drawing on Nancy Chodorow’s object-relations theory, but expanding its scope from the mother-children (especially daughters) tie to the female friendship bond, Elizabeth Abel argues that

women friends, as well as children, play a crucial role in relaxing ego boundaries and restoring psychic wholeness. Identification, especially with a woman who is older or . . . wiser, is essential . . . to the achievement of the central figure’s full identity.²⁹

Just as Victorian sexual/spatial boundaries intensified the blood kinship of sisters at home, so female friends became another means by which women sought intimacy, identification or sympathetic mutuality in the domestic sphere. A “fictive kinship” was thus generated to provide “a ‘soul sympathy, an *eternal* bond” (emphases in original).³⁰

According to Nina Auerbach, women’s communities—whether formed of relational or relative ties—are a recurrent literary image that speaks of “a rebuke to the conventional ideal of a solitary woman living for and through men.” It is also an emblem of “female self-sufficiency which create[s] [women’s] own corporate reality, evoking both wishes and fears.”³¹ Having said that, in nineteenth-century

²⁸ Janet Todd, Women’s Friendship in Literature (New York: Columbia P, 1980), 1.

²⁹ Elizabeth Abel, “(E)Merging Identities: The Dynamics of Female Friendship in Contemporary Fiction by Women,” Signs 6.3 (1981): 413-35, 416-18. For Nancy Chodorow’s object-relations theory, see her book, The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (Berkeley; London: U of California P, 1978).

³⁰ Carol Lasser, “‘Let Us Be Sisters Forever’: The Sororal Model of Nineteenth-Century Female Friendship,” Signs 14.1 (1988): 158-81, 165, 158.

³¹ Nina Auerbach, Communities of Women: An Idea in Fiction (London; Cambridge, Massachusetts:

fiction, Abel tells us, the literary convention “tended to fit the portrayal of female friendship into the narrative progression toward the marriage of the heroine(s), limiting the potential scope and depth of the female relationship.”³² Furthering Abel’s argument, Tess Cosslett sums up two kinds of female friendships in Victorian fiction, albeit she does not differentiate sisters from friends in discussing sisterhood. The first is involved with plot structure, presenting two women friends as potential rivals in competition for a man’s favor. The resolution is assimilation to marriage either by one or by both playing the role of the self-sacrificing angel to offer the man to the other.³³ The second type has more of a symbolic structure in merging or exchanging contrasting qualities of the two women friends so that “a process of *negotiation* about acceptable female identities is going on” (emphasis in original), and this is the place, Cosslett argues, where woman writers use female friendship to “negotiate with and between the dominant images of female identity.”³⁴

While taking pains to elaborate different kinds of Victorian female friendships, Cosslett also expands her observation to that of New Woman fiction, which is relevant to my study of Caird’s and Schreiner’s novels. As Cosslett remarks, the expectation of New Women’s solidarity against the patriarchy is surprisingly unfulfilled. What we see instead is either assimilation to the traditional feminine role, as with the pattern mentioned above, or an impossible, defeated sisterhood in the New Woman’s trajectory towards a liberated self.³⁵ As Cosslett says,

[T]he New Woman writers make use of an ideology of *individualism* to create their heroines, rather than an ideology of female solidarity. Independence and freedom are their goals, and these must be defined

Harvard UP, 1978), 5. The women’s communities Nina Auerbach discusses refer to both biological and non-biological sisters. Here, I single out the latter. For a discussion of Victorian debate over female friendships and communities, see Pauline Nestor, Female Friendships and Communities: Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1985), chapter 1.

³² Abel, “(E)Merging Identities,” 414, note 2.

³³ Cosslett, Woman to Woman, 3-4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 13-14. See also chapter 5.

against an oppressive society—there is no place here for a supportive female community. In this type of story, friends of opposite types do not merge to form acceptable identities—instead, they split apart and diverge in narratives of separation and defeat. Marriage as an ending is replaced by death or isolation, not by a relationship between women.³⁶ (emphasis in original)

While Cosslett's focus is on the New Women heroines in contrast to their friends of the opposite type, mine is not limited to this. What I want to concentrate on instead are the "other" friends who represent conventionality. In their maintaining orthodoxy, these female friends often play the role of the trickster to victimize their fellow sisters, generating a parameter that is verily not that of "a supportive female community" as Cosslett points out. The trickster is a diversified and complex figure, containing different meanings and functions pursuant to different subject fields. Before I define my usage of the tricksters in the novels, it is perhaps worth giving a brief theoretical account of the trickster figure.

Starting his observation from carnival traditions and folktales, Jung thinks the trickster is a ubiquitous figure that not only "haunts the mythology of all ages" but is presented in a variety of forms such as a demon, a magic shaman, a medicine-man, a poltergeist, a delight-maker, or more paradoxically, a beast or a saint, considering his duality of "both subhuman (bestial) and superhuman (divine)."³⁷ Despite his positive potential for being a God-like figure, the trickster nonetheless often does "the most atrocious things . . . because of his unreason and unconsciousness," an aspect in which Jung equates him to the shadow, the darker side of one's personality.³⁸ As he is "a 'psychologem,' an archetypal psychic structure of extreme antiquity" in Jung's mind, the trickster also represents "a collective shadow

³⁶ Ibid., 14.

³⁷ Carl Gustav Jung, "On the Psychology of the Trickster-Figure," *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 255-72, 260, 263.

³⁸ Ibid., 264, 262.

figure, a summation of all the inferior traits of character in individuals.”³⁹ However presented, the trickster is prone to activate negative effects in disturbing the *status quo* or other people’s minds: once he appears, danger or calamity is created.⁴⁰ He is thus considered a “breakthrough point” to lay bare not only one’s evil spirit but also, by extension, “the underside or reverse of dominant [social] values.”⁴¹ Changes of civilizations and times cannot obliterate the persistent memory of this image hidden in people’s minds. The trickster is therefore also a trans-cultural being unrestricted by any kinds of borders.

Despite Jung’s psychoanalytic interpretation of the trickster with an emphasis on the figure’s universal, archetypal aspect, anthropologists often see the trickster through a different lens, mostly contingent upon the figure’s cultural representation in reference to a particular tribe or people, such as the Native American Indians, at a particular time or place.⁴² The interpretation of the trickster figure, moreover, varies. As T. O. Beidelman remarks,

Disparate figures have all too frequently been termed *tricksters*, yet this term is clearly the product of the analysts’ ethnocentric evaluations of deviance and disorder, and does not always derive squarely from the evaluations held by the members of the cultures in which they appear. Disorder and ambiguity serve different functions in different societies and are manifest at different levels of the formal order of beliefs and behavior.⁴³ (emphasis in original)

Obviously, Beidelman’s argument is dubious about Jung’s archetypal/universal

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 260, 270.

⁴⁰ Andrew Samuels, Bani Shorter and Fred Plaut, “Trickster,” *Jungian Literary Criticism*, ed. Richard P. Sugg (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern UP, 1992), 273-74, 274.

⁴¹ William J. Hynes, “Inconclusive Conclusions: Tricksters—Metaplayers and Revealers,” *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms*, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa; London: The U of Alabama P, 1993), 202-17, 210.

⁴² William J. Hynes and William G. Doty, “Introducing the Fascinating and Perplexing Trickster Figure,” *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms*, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa; London: The U of Alabama P, 1993), 1-12.

⁴³ T. O. Beidelman, “The Moral Imagination of the Kaguru: Some Thoughts on Tricksters, Translation and Comparative Analysis,” *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms*, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa; London: The U of Alabama P, 1993), 174-92, 189.

generalization of the trickster, and he is also reluctant to conceptualize the trickster image merely in relation to a particular culture. In taking a middle stand, Beidelman suggests that analysts cannot take it as evident that the trickster represents one valid grouping, unless they know that specific trickster category well and are familiar with the relevant context involved, because understandings and translations of the trickster might differ.⁴⁴ In line with Beidelman, Kathleen M. Ashley also argues that “the interpretive community” has much to do with how the trickster functions and is presented.⁴⁵ This postulation takes into consideration individual (analysts’) variations in ideology, perception, knowledge, race, sex, and the like, variations that also reflect the implicit social and cultural constructs that have gone into the making of the trickster concept. Thus while ascribing more possibilities and meanings to the trickster, reasoning of this sort makes trickster studies not only open-ended but “tricky” at the same time. This seems to echo John Beebe’s words that “Once one goes beyond the obvious definition ‘one who tricks,’ the trickster becomes an elusive concept.”⁴⁶

Since the trickster is “the most paradoxical of all characters in Western narratives,”⁴⁷ it seems impractical and impossible to adhere to one discipline to discuss this figure.⁴⁸ Among the kaleidoscopic approaches and aspects of trickster studies, I think William J. Hynes is helpful in synthesizing six conspicuous characteristics as a heuristic guide for interpreting the trickster figure. These typologies are: (1) ambiguous/anomalous, (2) deceiver/trick-player, (3) shape-shifter,

⁴⁴ Ibid., 175.

⁴⁵ Quoted in William G. Doty and William J. Hynes, “Historical Overview of Theoretical Issues: The Problem of the Trickster,” *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms*, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa; London: The U of Alabama P, 1993), 13-32, 32.

⁴⁶ John Beebe, “The Trickster in the Arts,” *Jungian Literary Criticism*, ed. Richard P. Sugg (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern UP, 1992), 302-11, 304.

⁴⁷ Roger Abrahams, “Trickster, the Outrageous Hero,” *Our Living Tradition: An Introduction to American Folklore*, ed. Tristram P. Coffin (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 170-71, quoted in Doty and Hynes, “Historical Overview of Theoretical Issues,” 17.

⁴⁸ Hynes and Doty, “Introducing the Fascinating and Perplexing Trickster Figure,” 1-12.

(4) situation-inventor, (5) messenger/imitator of the gods, and (6) scared/lewd bricoleur.⁴⁹ As Hynes notes, these traits do not necessarily exist simultaneously in one trickster figure and by no means do they encompass all aspects of the trickster to constitute a unified theory.⁵⁰ “As long as a number of shared characteristics are found in a large number of instances,” Hynes remarks, “it is possible to speak, albeit carefully, of ‘a trickster figure;’” and this figure is still subject to individual belief systems.⁵¹

Whether the trickster is seen from Jung’s psychoanalytic perspective or from an anthropological/heuristic angle, the variation of culture and its corresponding factors have been recognized and taken into consideration. While Jung’s lens is projected onto a longer temporal spectrum to induce the universality of the trickster archetype, anthropology/heuristics tends to focus on the observant target at a particular time and place. Strictly, they do not conflict with each other as temporally one is macroscopic and the other microscopic. As New Woman fiction was a product of a transitional era, I will pay more attention to the trickster features in conjunction with the socio-cultural conditioning of women at that time in order to examine how the tricksters exert their negative influences on the fictional heroines’ development. Among Hynes’ typologies, I think the deceiver/trick-player and the situation-inventor are the archetypal tricksters to be found in The Daughters of Danaus and From Man to Man. However, rather than inscribing the tricksters in their usual sense, Caird and Schreiner seem to have played “tricks” themselves in manipulating a reverse rationale to counter the trickster discourse. In so doing, they also reveal their belief system, showing the reader the concerns that drive New Woman writers.

⁴⁹ William J. Hynes, “Mapping the Characteristics of Mythic Tricksters: A Heuristic Guide,” Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa; London: The U of Alabama P, 1993), 33-45.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 34.

⁵¹ Hynes, “Inconclusive Conclusions,” 211.

Etymologically, the trickster is a malicious figure, who uses tricks to deceive people in order to reach his/her ends. In playing tricks, the trickster often upsets or transgresses against the existing social order and makes himself/herself what Hynes calls “an ‘out’ person [whose] activities are often outlawish, outlandish, outrageous, out-of-bounds, and out-of-order.”⁵² Subject to this destructive “out-ness,” the trickster as the deceiver and trick-player is admittedly a negative exemplar, having a harmful influence or impact, and becomes “the *prima causa* of disruptions and disorders, misfortunes and improprieties.”⁵³ Hynes posits that trickster narratives are much derived from the idea of order, the order that shapes the dominant social values or central beliefs in society.⁵⁴ Therefore, the trickster as a profaner of that order could “act as a camera obscura in which the reversed mirror image serves as a valuable index to the sacred beliefs of that same system.”⁵⁵ At first glance, the social order in question is counterpoised by the social chaos that the trickster brings forth. Standing for something which is outside the order, the trickster is like the Other of society and, prompted by his/her evil spirit, functions to violate the established framework. In so doing, however, s/he also lays bare what is hidden in that order. In breaking the social rules, Christopher Vecsey notes, the trickster helps reveal, define and confirm those rules for those who are not tricksters themselves.⁵⁶ A situation-invertor who subverts the societal values, the trickster also reaffirms the belief system, so to speak.⁵⁷

Hynes’ explanations of the trickster as the deceiver/trick-player and as the situation-invertor, it could be said, are grounded on a duality of good versus bad, a

⁵² Hynes, “Mapping the Characteristics of Mythic Tricksters,” 34.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁵⁴ Hynes, “Inconclusive Conclusions,” 215-16.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 208.

⁵⁶ Christopher Vecsey, “The Exception Who Proves the Rules: Ananse the Akan Trickster,” Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa; London: The U of Alabama P, 1993), 106-21, 106.

⁵⁷ Hynes, “Inconclusive Conclusions,” 207.

duality where the tricksters play the evil part in disturbing the social order. Still retaining their evil and destructive power, the tricksters as we will see in The Daughters of Danaus and From Man to Man are, however, *not* opposed to the social system; on the contrary, they emerge so as to consolidate that system. Curiously enough, whether they are the deceiver/trick-players or the situation-invertors, they are predominantly women performers, and their targets of trickery are all their fellow sisters, who either tend to or have already violated the social norms which are not advantageous to them. In other words, the trickster's negative power is brought into play to attack not the existing social values but the women victims, making them either convert to the system (as in Hadria's case) or become completely ostracized (as in Bertie's case). The inversion of their situation, considered in this vein, is a relative outcome of the victims' persecution by the evil tricksters.

In incorporating the trickster figures into their work, it could be argued that New Woman writers like Caird and Schreiner might have wanted to call into question the validity of that dominant social order, an order defined by and catering to patriarchal standards. The tricksters, seen in this light, are accomplices to that order, and their pernicious power serves to elaborate the detrimental effects of that order upon women who go against it. As we will see in Caird's and Schreiner's novels, the female tricksters either use tricks to deceive or tricks of gossiping to activate a counter-force to their fellow sisters. The sisterhood of female friendship, accordingly, proves a negative example for sisterly solidarity, resulting in the abandonment of the heroines. An appeal for positive sisterhood, as such, becomes a *leitmotif* that New Woman writers want to reinforce for their female readers by using the configuration of the female tricksters.

In addition to approaching the abandoned child archetype from the perspective of sisterhood, I also add another two subdivisions to explore the abandonment theme:

the pseudo-motherless children in The Daughters of Danaus and the loverless child in From Man to Man. In the former, the heroine is no longer a victim of failed sisterhood but a mother-oppressor who abandons her children. Thus, an aspect of the parent-children relationship comes into the foreground here. But one cannot fully understand Caird's concept of parentage/parenthood without taking into account her feminist polemics The Morality of Marriage (1897), a collection of essays originally published from 1888 to 1894. Like Grand who considers that "The Woman Question is the Marriage Question,"⁵⁸ Caird's The Morality of Marriage forcefully attacks women's marital subjection and abjectness under the patriarchy which views/treats women merely as chained dogs and men's properties. Marriage becomes then legal prostitution and a mercenary transaction from which unwanted and unhealthy motherhood is generated. Caird thus advocates women's equal education, inherent equality with men and financial independence, asserting these to be the prerequisites for "a modified marriage" as the basis for healthy mothering (MOM, 64, 72, 90, 67). The Daughters of Danaus could thus be considered the fictional manifesto of The Morality of Marriage, where Caird contrasts institutionalized motherhood with the free motherhood she herself postulates. And she adeptly uses the Greek myths to cast light on the parent-children tie in the novel. However, I argue that, while ostensibly, Caird seems to have wanted to revise the Demeter-Persephone bond, in actuality she reinforces the Medea myth, making her concept of free motherhood questionable in my view.

In From Man to Man, on the other hand, my focus is on the weaker sister Baby-Bertie, but my attention is also directed towards the three men who abandon her. Interestingly, their abandonment has much to do with the ideological myth of

⁵⁸ Sarah Grand, "The New Aspect of the Woman Question," North American Review (1894): 270-76, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 29-35, 35.

women's virginity, as a result of which Bertie becomes the victim of her tutor who plays with her, of her lover who idolizes her as an impeccable pure goddess but condemns her later as a fallen angel, and of her keeper/client who commodifies her for the mercenary and sexual trade. In depicting Bertie's abandonment by these Old Men, Schreiner also deploys several metaphors such as the garden, the white skirt, the mimosa, the cicadas, and the rain to reinforce Bertie's downward journey. Reading this line of metaphor in conjunction with social conventions and discourse on women's bodies, I will probe Schreiner's story of an abandoned and fallen woman.

The Sisterless and Motherless Child in Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus (1894)

A New Woman *Künstlerroman*, Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus is a sketch of the psychological and emotional sufferings of an artist manqué, set within a cultural-historical era when a daughter's duty was prescribed by the law of the father and enforced by the figure of the mother. While criticisms have been focusing on the artist heroine Hadria Fullerton, exploring her futile attempts to develop her musical talent against maternal opposition and her condemnation of institutional marriage and motherhood,¹ scant attention has been paid to Hadria's sister, Algitha, who serves as an antithesis of the sibling pair² and abandons Hadria to pursue her own dream in London. Neither is fitting attention given to Hadria's female friend, Henriette Temperley, who acts out the trickster role in tricking Hadria into a false

¹ See Margaret Morganroth Gullette, "Afterword" to The Daughters of Danaus by Mona Caird (1894; New York: The Feminist P, 1989), 493-534, 499-518; Ann Heilmann, "Mona Caird (1854-1932): Wild Woman, New Woman, and Early Radical Feminist Critic of Marriage and Motherhood," Women's History Review 5.1 (1996): 67-95, 81-83; *idem*, New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's P, 2000), 146-48; *idem*, New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 2004), 214-33. See also Sally Ledger, The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 1997), 24-31; Lyn Pykett, The 'Improper' Feminine: The Woman's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), 145-48; *idem*, Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century (London: Edward Arnold; New York: St Martin's P, 1995), 57-58; *idem*, "The Cause of Women and the Course of Fiction: The Case of Mona Caird," Gender Roles and Sexuality in Victorian Literature, ed. Christopher Parker (Aldershot, Hants, England: Scolar P; Brookfield, Vermont, USA: Ashgate, 1995), 128-42. Patricia Murphy and Lisa Surridge approach the novel from the perspective of narrative temporality to highlight the Victorian construction of gender: Patricia Murphy, Time is of the Essence: Temporality, Gender, and the New Woman (New York: State U of New York P, 2001), 151-88; Lisa Surridge, "Narrative Time, History, and Feminism in Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus," special issue of Women's Writing 12.1 (2005): 127-41. Catherine J. Golden, on the other hand, approaches the novel through Hadria's reading Valeria Du Prel's novels and Emerson's essays in an attempt to highlight her incompatibility with Hubert; see her book, Images of the Woman Reader in Victorian British and American Fiction (Gainesville, FL: UP of Florida, 2003), 129-34. Rather than discussing the novel, Tracey S. Rosenberg examines Caird's encounter with the American writer Gertrude Atherton and their antagonism towards motherhood. See her article, "A Challenge to Victorian Motherhood: Mona Caird and Gertrude Atherton," Women's Writing 12.3 (2005): 485-504.

² Pykett, nonetheless, calls attention to "the contrasting-sisters plot" in the novel and gives a brief comparison of the sister pairs. See Pykett, The 'Improper' Feminine, 147.

marriage.

It is my contention that the sister bond, biological and metaphorical alike, fails to provide a supportive network for women's defiance of the forces, both parental and social, that are intent on their domination. In her attempt to achieve personal fulfillment, Algitha is selfish, in my view, in leaving Hadria to bear the familial duties and the resulting stress on her own, given her recognition of their mother's oppressive nature. Neither does she offer Hadria an escape route from an entrapped marriage that she thinks Hadria is susceptibly led into by the Temperley brother and sister. Henriette, on the other hand, is a culprit in helping her brother Hubert to marry Hadria, regardless of how incompatible the couple appears to be. An advocate of patriarchal law, Henriette demonstrates her Old Womanliness mostly in her execution of several tricks to deceive Hadria into entering the ill-matched union, resulting in Hadria's resentment and depression as seen in part II of the novel. Thus, in showing the malfunctioning of the sororal bond, manifested in the different kinds of Hadria's abandonment, I want to demonstrate Caird's purpose in underscoring the negative effects of the lack of, and thus addressing the need to build up, a functional sisterhood.

While the sisterhood discourse provides the central structure for the first half of the critical framework of this chapter, the second half centers upon Hadria's role as a mother who abandons her biological and adopted children, figures who have received equally scant attention so far. If Hadria is a victim of inadequate sisterhood in the past, she becomes a mother-oppressor in the present, whose oppression rests mostly in her objectification of her children as tools or weapons to be used in her revenge on the patriarchal system. In so doing, Hadria's biological sons become what I call "Affected Abandoned Children," for their victimization results from the unhealthy institutionalized motherhood against which their mother

struggles. Hadria's adopted daughter, on the other hand, suffers as what I term a "Double Abandoned Child," whose future, due to the adults' unwanted or false parentage, remains pathetically unknown. While I discuss the different kinds of abandonment Hadria's children experience, I will also draw attention to Caird's conception of motherhood, casting light on her revision (as well as Jung's adaptation) of the Greek myths—the Demeter-Persephone myth and the Medea myth—to elucidate her feminist/maternal philosophy.

The Danaid myth as a revised mother-daughter plot

Before I set out to explore the sister relationship in the novel, it is necessary to study beforehand Caird's intentions in drawing on the Danaid myth for her novel's title. In Greek mythology, the Danaids were the fifty daughters of Danaus and were forced to marry their fifty cousins of their father's twin brother Aegyptus to appease the dispute over familial inheritance. Suspecting a plot in Aegyptus' proposal of a mass-marriage and terrified by an oracle that he would be killed by one of his sons-in-law, Danaus gave each of his daughters a dagger, ordering them to kill their husbands on the wedding night. While forty-nine of them followed their father's instruction, Hypermnestra was the only exception who spared the life of her husband, Lynceus. There are different versions of Hypermnestra's punishment for her betrayal of her father. The other forty-nine daughters were all sentenced, for their murders, to perform the endless task of filling water in jars with holes at the bottom.³

The Danaid myth is thus a female counterpart of the Sisyphus myth, in which

³ There are slight differences about the Danaid myth as several versions of the legend show; see H. E. Blakeney and J. Warrington, eds., *Everyman's Smaller Classical Dictionary* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1956), 102; Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Penguin Books, 1955), 1: 200-05; Edith Hamilton, ed., *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes* (Boston: Signet, 1969), 281-82; Robin Hard, *The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mythology* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 119-20, 232-37; F. A. Wright, *Lemprière's Classical Dictionary of Proper Names Mentioned in Ancient Authors* (London; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 191-92.

Sisyphus is condemned to roll a rock uphill, which forever rolls back upon him. Both stories tell of eternal futility, and the Danaid myth is especially significant in its exploration of the tension between parent and children.

In Caird's The Daughters of Danaus, the authoritative father figure of the classical myth has been substituted by a dominant Victorian mother figure, Mrs. Fullerton, who demands her daughters' complete devotion to the family. While one of the two daughters, Algitha, flees to London to do philanthropic social work, the other daughter, Hadria, constrains her personal development in order to fulfill her daughterly duties in deference to her mother's wishes. As the narrative unfolds, the reader is told that Mrs. Fullerton used to show "signs of qualities" (DD 33) in her youth, but that marriage has curbed all her talents and ambitions. She has sacrificed herself for the family and the children and thus expects her daughters to pay her back by devoting themselves to her in return. It is not surprising, then, that she is furious about Algitha's disobedience in leaving home and selfishly living her own life in London. After Algitha's departure, Mrs. Fullerton diverts all her attention to Hadria, which is manifested most clearly by her monopolization of Hadria's time to perform domestic duties and social obligations so as to meet cultural expectations of femininity. As Patricia Murphy succinctly argues, temporal control is a vehicle for social control in reinforcing the separate spheres.⁴ Because of Mrs. Fullerton's temporal oppression of Hadria through daily routines, Hadria can only use the remaining precious time after midnight to do her musical work. The piece she composes and entitles "Futility" (DD, 46) and her dream of endless tennis-playing (DD, 46-47) echo the infinite water-carrying task of Danaus' forty-nine daughters in the Greek myth. A Victorian daughter like Hadria is forced to live a meaningless life without time and space for herself.

⁴ Murphy, Time is of the Essence, 156.

Hadria as a victim

In the novel, Hadria thinks of the Danaid myth when Lady Engleton, the “model of virtue and wisdom, and perfect contentment,” cries out against the emptiness of her graceful, ornate existence (DD, 467). While Hadria, in her astonishment, compares Lady Engleton with Danaus’ fifty daughters on the grounds of weary futility, she might have paralleled the endless domestic labor of daughters like herself to the punishment of Danaus’ daughters for their act of murder. However, Hadria seems to have overlooked the fact that there is one exception in the myth, Hypermnestra, who did not partake in the cruel deed and thus received a different treatment from her sisters. Whether Hadria inadvertently generalizes the fates of Danaus’ fifty daughters is hard to tell, but it is evident that she intends to throw into relief the collectiveness of women’s/daughters’ suffering under the patriarchal/maternal tyranny.

Apart from its transformed highlight from the father to the mother-daughter tie, the Danaid myth, I would argue, also provides a paradigm of the sibling contrast, endowed by Caird with different implications. At one level, it suggests a brighter alternative for daughters: just as Hadria represents Danaus’ forty-nine daughters who are obedient to parental command and thus lead a miserable life, Algitha is like Hypermnestra, *pace* Ann Heilmann,⁵ in decidedly pursuing her dream of doing

⁵ Heilmann constructs her argument based on two sources of the Danaid myth: first, from Lemprière’s Classical Dictionary (1788; Bracken Books, 1984), p. 216, in which Hypermnestra, as Heilmann reads it, is still sentenced, like her sisters, to fill with water a vessel full of holes; and second, from Graves’s remark in The Greek Myth (Folio Society, 1996), 191-95, that “A later, monogamous, society represented the Danaids with their leaking water-pots as undergoing eternal punishment for matricide.” To Heilmann, Hadria is akin to Hypermnestra because they both are “doubly victimised in being punished for a crime [they] did not commit”: for Hypermnestra, it is the murder of her husband; for Hadria, it is matricide since Caird, Heilmann posits, has inverted the plot from the original “daughter-mother aggression” to “a daughter being crushed by her mother.” However, as I read Lemprière’s interpretation, he does not include Hypermnestra when he recounts the other sisters’ punishment. Graves, on the other hand, does not offer a detailed account of how and why the Danaid myth was transformed into a matricidal plot. See Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 215; Graves, The Greek Myths, 1: 200-05, 204; Lemprière, Lemprière’s Classical Dictionary of Proper Names Mentioned in Ancient Authors, 191-92.

social work in London, irrespective of her mother's objection. If parental obstacles could be viewed as circumstance, individual character becomes, then, an important marker as to whether one is able to counterattack practical conditions that thwart one's own will. And, in that the sibling contrast is delineated in the face of external pressure. The efficacy of the biological sisterhood is thus something that cannot be ignored. In this respect, I would argue that The Daughters of Danaus provides a rather frustrating, albeit not completely failed, example of sisterly support.

Hadria's abandonment by her biological sister Algitha

The issue of character versus circumstance is indeed one central motif in the novel, manifested mostly through the contrasting presentations of the Fullerton sisters, Algitha and Hadria. If Caird, as modern critics contend, is out to criticize the overwhelmingly patriarchal orthodoxy imposed upon women, the primal cause of the artist manqué in Hadria, I would argue that Caird also draws on a reverse plot, albeit not so explicitly focused in the narrative, in having Hadria's sister Algitha break through this colossal hindrance to pursue a dream of her own.

As if to prefigure this duality, the novel begins with the hot debate over the issue of character versus circumstance conducted by the Fullerton siblings in their secret circle, the Preposterous Society. Presiding at the meeting, Hadria develops her arguments in contradistinction to Ralph Waldo Emerson's ideas addressed in his essays, "Fate" (1860) and "Character" (1844), the latter being the topic Hadria's brother Ernest lectured about at the previous gathering. To Hadria, Emerson is too optimistic in believing in the power of character over circumstance. Because "Emerson never was a girl," Hadria spiritedly retorts, he never knew that "conditions *do* count hideously in one's life" (DD, 14, emphasis in original). In Hadria's mind, conditions—including prejudice, customs and especially those ties with dear

relations—are obstacles that have imposed helpless and wretched sufferings on many girls. Thus, in contrast to Emerson’s view that “Nature magically suits the man to his fortunes[,] by making these [i.e. events or conditions] the fruit of his character” (F, 325), Hadria compares Nature’s deadly power to the blood of the mythical figure Nessus, the blood that caused Hercules’ death:⁶ “Pooh! I think Nature more often makes a man’s fortunes a veritable shirt of Nessus which burns and clings, and finally kills him with anguish!” (DD, 15).

In her fervent attack on Emerson’s idea, that is, in her reiteration of the principle of circumstance over character as far as women’s condition is concerned, the reader, however, is led to perceive Hadria’s inconsistency or “her divided character” as Catherine J. Golden remarks, a character that proves to be crucial in contributing to Hadria’s failure as an artist *manquée*.⁷ As the narrator tells us:

In spite of the view that Hadria had expounded in her capacity of lecturer, she had an inner sense that somehow, after all, she will *can* perform astonishing feats in Fate’s despite. Her intellect, rather than her heart, had opposed the philosophy of Emerson. Her sentiment recoiled from admitting the possibility of such tragedy as her expressed belief implied. (DD, 17, emphasis in original)

Such that, on the one hand, we see Hadria’s passive response in the face of maternal oppression: “I think it is better, after all, to absorb indiscriminately whatever idiocy [*sic*] may happen to be around one, and go with the crowd” (DD, 37). On the other hand, we see her vociferous criticism of the unequal treatment of women. While she has made up her mind and virtually flown to Paris to pursue her musical

⁶ In Greek mythology, Nessus was a Centaur, serving as a ferryman to carry Hercules’ bride Deianira over the river. Because Nessus insulted Deianira and she shrieked, Hercules shot Nessus dead when his wife reached the bank. Before he died, Nessus told Deianira to take some of his blood as a charm to win back Hercules’ love if ever she found him loving another woman more than her. Suspecting that Hercules was madly in love with one of his captive maidens, Iole, Deianira smeared Nessus’ blood on a splendid robe and sent it as a gift to Hercules. On wearing the robe, Hercules was set on fire, a similar condition to the wife-to-be of Medea’s husband Jason. In the end, Hercules asked his people to build a pyre and lift him onto it to end his torture. See Hamilton, *Mythology*, 171-72.

⁷ Golden, *Images of the Woman Reader in Victorian British and American Fiction*, 133.

ambitions, an “astonishing [feat] in Fate’s despite” (DD, 17), she cannot leave aside her filial duty but goes home to serve her dangerously ill mother, who, at this time, is being nursed by her sister Algitha. It is exactly because of her fluctuating, inconsistent temperament, together with her internalization of filial piety, that we see Hadria’s repeated struggles between professional development and familial condescension throughout the whole novel.

Compared with Hadria, Algitha displays a more daring and consistent spirit in defying the social obligations imposed upon daughters. Different from other girls “in force of character [rather] than in sentiment” (DD, 25), Algitha is obsessed with a “master passion” (DD, 26) to control her own life: “I do not intend to be a cow. I do not mean to fight a losing battle” (DD, 29). Hearing Hadria’s complaint about the power of circumstance over character, Algitha forcefully replies, “If one is unjustly restrained, . . . it is perfectly right to brave the infliction of the sort of pain that people feel only because they unfairly object to one’s liberty of action” (DD, 15). A strong desire for freedom, a firm belief in justice and a dauntless resolution to fulfill her dream make Algitha, in her own will, “*unwomanly*” (DD, 31, emphasis in original). This “unwomanliness,” when she moves to London, proves to be helpful for her: “She was gentler, more affectionate to her parents than of yore. The tendency to grow hard and fretful had entirely disappeared. The sense of self was obviously lessened with the need for self-defence” (DD, 132). Without the maternal pressure of domestic duties, Algitha finds herself useful and happy in the social work she is engaged in. She also builds up a steady love relation with the socialist worker Wilfred Burton. Because of her fight for personal freedom and her rights, Algitha becomes a stronger woman, “A real *cul de sac* was to Algitha almost unthinkable. There *must* be some means of finding one’s way out” (DD, 470, emphases in original)

If Caird makes Hadria a mouthpiece of anti-Emersonianism to refute the power of character over circumstance,⁸ I would argue that she also makes Algitha a counter representative to espouse Emersonian belief. As a matter of fact, Emerson's philosophy in "Character" and "Fate" undergoes a certain degree of transformation.⁹ If Caird, as Golden assumes, had encountered Emerson's work,¹⁰ she might have known the change in his thinking as regards to the notion of character.

An earlier piece of writing collected in his second series of Essays (1844), Emerson's "Character" indeed reflects his absolute optimism towards the power of one's character. "Character," as Emerson defines, is "a reserved force which acts directly by presence, and without means" (C, 191), and "The natural measure of this power is the resistance of circumstances" (C, 195). To him, a man of character is a moral order, a conscience in society (C, 194); thus "It is much, that he does not accept the conventional opinions and practices. That nonconformity will remain a goad and remembrancer" (C, 196). In "Fate," a later work collected in The Conduct of Life (1860), Emerson still endorses the power of character but with a certain

⁸ Catherine J. Golden, "Alice Mona Caird (1854-1932)," Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook, ed. Abigail Burnham Bloom (London: Aldwych, 2000), 99-103, 101.

⁹ For a brief analysis of these two essays, see Donald Yannella, Ralph Waldo Emerson (Boston: Twayne, 1982), 60, 105-08.

¹⁰ Golden refers to Lauren D. McKinney's introduction to Caird's intellectual circle, in which McKinney, however, does not mention Emerson's name. So it is Golden herself who assumes that Caird had encountered Emerson's works. See Golden, Images of the Woman Reader, 130; Lauren D. McKinney, "Mona Alison Caird (1854-1932)," Prose by Victorian Women: An Anthology, ed. Andrea Bloomfield and Sally Mitchell (New York; London: Garland, 1996), 625-28, 625-26. Thus far, very few biographical materials about Mona Caird can be found. Apart from McKinney's reference, there are Golden, "Alice Mona Caird (1854-1932)," 99-103; Gullette, "Afterword" to The Daughters of Danaus, 518-29; Laura Hapke, "Alice Mona Caird," An Encyclopedia of British Women Writers, ed. Paul Schlueter and June Schlueter (Chicago; London: St. James P, 1998), 76-77; Heilmann, "Mona Caird (1854-1932)," 76-80, information which is drawn from Heilmann's interviews with Caird's descendants and people who knew her; Nikki Lee Manos, "Caird, Mona Allison (1858-1932)," The 1890s: An Encyclopedia of British Literature, Art, and Culture, ed. G. A. Cevasco (New York; London: Garland, 1993), 98-99; G. Washington Moon, "Caird, Mrs. Mona," Men and Women of the Time: A Dictionary of Contemporaries, 13th ed. (London: Routledge, 1891), 156-57; Victor G. Plarr, "Caird, Mrs. Mona," Men and Women of the Time: A Dictionary of Contemporaries, 15th ed. (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1899), 166; Elaine Showalter, A Literature of Their Own: From Charlotte Brontë to Doris Lessing (1977; London: Virago, 1978), 339; John Sutherland, The Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction (Essex: Longman, 1988), 99-100. Note that both Manos and Sutherland date Caird's birth year to 1858.

degree of adjustment. In this work, he correlates Fate with Character, Circumstance and Nature all together. In his view, Fate is “the laws of the world” (F, 308) and “The book of Nature is the book of Fate” (F, 314). Equally, “The Circumstance is Nature. Nature is, what you may do. There is much you may not. . . . Nature is the tyrannous circumstance” (F, 313). Thus we may draw a simple equation: Circumstance = Nature = Fate. Undoubtedly, this simplification connotes a somewhat pessimistic view because Fate sets up limitations that humans cannot surpass, among which Emerson also includes factors of heredity:

All conservatives are such from personal defects. They have been effeminated by position or nature, born halt and blind, through luxury of their parents, and can only, like invalids, act on the defensive. But strong natures, backwoodsmen, New Hampshire giants, Napoleons, Burkes, Broughams, Websters, Kossuths, are inevitable patriots, until their life ebbs, and their defects and gout, palsy and money, warp them. (F, 313)

While recognizing the linking chain of Circumstance, Nature and Fate and their powerful affects and effects, Emerson, it must be noted, still affirms the value of character. For, as he says,

a part of Fate is the freedom of man. For ever wells up the impulse of choosing and acting in the soul. . . . 'Tis weak and vicious people who cast the blame on Fate. The right use of Fate is to bring up our conduct to the loftiness of nature. (F, 317)

To Emerson, human will is part of Fate and can be properly and freely used by people if they want. In combating Fate, that is to say, an individual is using the part of Fate to confront the whole Fate (F, 318-19). In this respect, I think Emerson's idea is similar to the view Chinese people generally hold of *Ming Yün* (Fate or Destiny). *Ming* means the events or circumstances to which Providence has already disposed people. *Yün* refers to an individual's will to change those ordained or prearranged conditions, normally the negative ones, for one's own good. Linguistically, *Ming* is a noun, a fixed state, but *Yün* could be a verb to activate

action, movement, or change. Chinese thinking as such, I would suggest, is parallel with what Emerson describes, a condition that “fate slides into freedom and freedom into fate” (F, 323). This also explains Emerson’s inaugural declaration in the essay: “If we must accept Fate, we are not less compelled to affirm liberty, the significance of the individual, the grandeur of duty, the power of character” (F, 308-09). Thus, it could be said that even though Emerson recognizes life’s solemnity in combating circumstance, he does not lose, albeit he moderates to some extent, his faith in character and human will.

In The Daughters of Danaus, Mrs. Fullerton’s traditional upbringing and the expectations she has of her daughters stand for the Circumstance that limits the Fullerton sisters. Given that this Circumstance is Nature in its man-made/patriarchal aspect, generally thought to be an insurmountable Fate and inherited from mothers to daughters, Algitha chooses to fight against it. She is ever hesitant in making the decision to leave home for fear that her mother cannot bear the subsequent stress; she also postpones her departure time for London, attempting a reconciliation with her mother. Efforts of this sort only bring her disappointment when leaving. A woman of intellect like Hadria, Algitha shows more courage and resolution, however, in refusing to gratify their mother’s wishes, the kind of wishes that “give pain to others in following one’s own idea of right and reasonable” and deprive others of the right to “a life of intellectual integrity and of the widest mercy that [their] nature would stretch to” (DD, 273). This is not to say that Algitha refuses any sacrifice for others like Harriet Kirkpatrick, a New Woman figure in Caird’s later novel The Stones of Sacrifice (1915), who, in the words of Frank, one of the Guild members, is “a kind-hearted woman without a heart” (SOS, 436). As Algitha professes: “I am quite ready to give gratitude and sacrifice too . . . but I don’t feel that I ought to sacrifice *everything* to an idea that seems to me wrong” (DD, 39,

emphasis in original), the idea that children are parents' properties to be disposed at will.

As if to make an ironic pun on Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice (1813), "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife" (P&P, 3), Caird has Hadria respond to Algitha, resignedly saying that:

It is universally admitted that children are summoned into the world to gratify parental instincts. Yet the parents throw all the onus of existence, after all, upon the children, and make *them* pay for it, and apologise for it, and justify it by a thousand sacrifices and an ever-flowing gratitude. (DD, 39, emphasis in original)¹¹

While Austen describes Mrs. Bennet as "a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. . . . The business of her life was to get her daughters married" (P&P, 5), Caird portrays Mrs. Fullerton as a sentimental woman of conformity, who imposes her will on her daughters and suppresses their individualities to avoid their "fly[ing] in the face of prejudice" (DD, 33). Both mothers behave in deference to the man-made Nature/Circumstance that for long has determined women's Fate as the Proper Lady. Mrs. Fullerton is particularly oppressive, acting upon what Hadria calls "an *egotism à douze*," an obsession with satisfying one's own happiness by preventing others' pursuit of integrity so as to conform to the personal, "usual negative, home-comfort-and-affection order" (DD, 273, emphasis in original).

In her revolt against maternal tyranny, Algitha is by no means exempted from feeling a sense of guilt. As Adrienne Rich points out,

It is all too easy to accept unconsciously the guilt so readily thrust upon any woman who is seeking to broaden and deepen her own existence. . . .

¹¹ In terms of the marriage prospect, moreover, the pun also provides different parameters: whereas the initial misrecognitions of Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy are resolved with a happy ending in Pride and Prejudice, the misconception Hadria is led into believing only leads to a miserable and incompatible marriage in The Daughters of Danaus.

That guilt is one of the most powerful forms of social control of women: none of us can be entirely immune to it.¹²

To mitigate this guilt, Algitha often goes home so that her mother will not feel deserted. She also, in compliance with her mother's wish, agrees to marry her lover in a conventional ceremony despite her dislike of it as a "barbaric show" (DD, 468). Between "egoism and extinction" (DD, 421), Algitha chooses the former to develop herself, despite the sense of guilt it inevitably arouses, but Hadria chooses the latter, restraining herself to meet her mother's conventional expectations. Although this either/or conflict is unfairly placed for and among daughters (the Fullerton brothers have no such conflicts and are free to leave home to receive their education), we see Algitha's courage in making a choice unfavorable to others in a circumstance unfavorable to herself, as well as her persistence and belief in what she chooses, no matter how difficult it is for her to carry it through. Emerson's views that "'Tis the best use of Fate to teach a fatal courage" (F, 318) and "For ever wells up the impulse of choosing and acting in the soul" (F, 317) clearly find their mouthpiece, if we compare the Fullerton sisters, in Algitha.

Despite the fact that Hadria enthusiastically voices many subversive ideas—"ideation [being] a static business" in the novel¹³—she fails, however, to put into action what she perceives to be her right until her virtual flight to Paris for a composing career. But this, again, ends in a failure of "choice." Hadria could equally well choose to rebel against the circumstances she faces, but she often, at critical moments, makes the contrary choice, putting herself in a state of unwilling sacrifice. Thus, to some extent, I think Hadria needs to take responsibility for her own tragedy. Sally Ledger is right to point to the prevalence of hereditary discourse

¹² Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (1977; London: Virago, 1979), 205.

¹³ Constance Harsh, "Women with Ideas: Gissing's *The Odd Women* and the New Woman Novel," *A Garland for Gissing*, ed. Bouwe Postmus (Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2001), 81-89, 84.

in the novel, manifested not only in the perpetuation of the oppression of women (mothers to daughters) and the social Darwinian idea of “fitness,” but also in the “inbred self-sacrificial tendencies of [Hadria’s] personality.”¹⁴ Indeed, although the novel could be seen as “a kind of meta-fiction, or at least as an extreme form of social realism”¹⁵ to underline the collectiveness of the predicament Victorian daughters faced in trying to have any achievements of their own, Hadria’s inborn character, specifically her weak will, makes her a case in point to support Emerson’s assertion that, “’Tis weak . . . people who cast the blame on Fate” (F, 317).

Nevertheless, this is not to say that Algitha, in making the choice for her own good, can be cleared of the conviction of implementing another mode of “egoism” at the expense of sisterhood. While she complains about the absence of friend-like mothers who can “think of one another . . . [instead] of men, and of Heaven and their souls” (DD, 472-73), Algitha seems to have overlooked the fact that she herself does not think of her sister either: her liberty, strictly speaking, is at the sacrifice of Hadria’s renunciation, or more precisely, is obtained by taking advantage of Hadria’s weak will in choosing “extinction” for herself.

As has been pointed out earlier, sisterhood is not narrowly limited to the mother-daughter bond, but is comprised of sisters among/between biological and metaphorical kinships in the broadest term. In my view, Algitha fails to fulfill a supportive biological sisterhood in four aspects. First, notwithstanding her recognition of her mother’s oppressive, conventional nature, Algitha decides to go to London, leaving the weak-willed Hadria to deal with their exacting mother alone and assume an extra burden of familial duties (psychological and physical as well as Hadria’s share and her own). Second, although Algitha returns home and

¹⁴ Ledger, *The New Woman*, 29.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 28.

corresponds with Hadria from time to time, the surface meaning of which is suggestive of their persisting sibling tie, there is no mention in the narrative of any attempt on Algitha's part to stop Hadria from proceeding with her ill-advised marriage to Hubert Temperley. As the narrator tells us, Algitha knows that Hadria is uneasy at the wrong she is doing in allowing Hubert to resume his courtship; she also knows Hadria's "emotional susceptibility" to the spell of Hubert's "convincing faculty" (DD, 143). But all these recognitions only arouse Algitha's anxiety: they do not result in any action to protect Hadria from the ensuing jeopardy of the false marriage she has been tricked into. In like manner, and a point I will elaborate later in the female trickster, despite the fact that she knows that Hubert's sister Henriette has "deliberately" lost Hadria's letter breaking off the engagement, Algitha, again, does nothing to redress the situation and rescue Hadria before she is hurried into marriage. What we see instead is merely Algitha's belated resentment at Henriette's evil doing, a response prompted by her worry over Hadria's unhappiness and declining health some years after the marriage.

Last but not least, Algitha's urgent telegram informing Hadria of their mother's serious illness is questionable, in my view, if we consider the subsequent plot development. It is understandable that, should Mrs. Fullerton be dying, Hadria would be called back, even though, as Algitha claims, she had wished to give Hadria freedom for her musical work in Paris. Yet, as the narrative reveals, those who serve at Mrs. Fullerton's bedside are Algitha, Hadria and a trained nurse, who is called for in accordance with the doctor's strong advice. The Fullerton brothers, in fact, do not return home at this "critical" moment, a time, moreover, of financial difficulty for the whole family. While Algitha feels entitled to sacrifice Hadria's freedom, she is not justified, in my view, in not demanding the same sacrifice of her brothers.

A further point to ponder is that, after the family moves to another cottage and Mrs. Fullerton recovers her health, it is not Hadria who returns to Paris to pursue her musical vocation but Algitha who returns to London to take a paying job. Curiously, we do not see Mrs. Fullerton's insistence on Algitha's returning home the first time, nor her protest at Algitha's leaving for London the second time, as she does at Hadria's. If limited income is the major reason why Mrs. Fullerton approves of Algitha's return to London, why is it that she insists on Hadria's staying nearby?

There is no doubt that Mrs. Fullerton is the prime cause of the sisters' predicaments. But if Algitha had made good use of her strong character/will, a merit from which she gets much happiness and sense of achievement for herself, to influence and help the weak-willed Hadria at several crucial moments, for instance, to take Hadria with her to London, to stop Hadria from marrying Hubert, and above all, to unchain Hadria from her mother's obsessive control, perhaps we would see a different account of the artist heroine's development. This is not to say that by making these changes, Hadria would eradicate her internalized ethic of selflessness. There is no doubt that, like Algitha, Hadria would bear a sense of guilt towards her mother, but in developing herself away from her mother's domination, Hadria would gain the same happiness and achievement that she has temporarily experienced in Paris. But all these assumptions are grounded on the conditional "if's." In reality, they have never been realized and we see Hadria's weak will becoming ever weaker until it is totally extinguished. Despite the new financial stress, Algitha's freedom is still achieved at the expense of Hadria's renunciation. The ideal that the sister bond could be as close and mutually supportive as Snow-White and Rose-Red in the fairy tale is, after all, a fantasy. Or, one may well say that a Snow-White like Hadria and a Rose-Red like Algitha are simply misplaced for a Victorian mother like Mrs. Fullerton. And there seems to be no way out as long as Hadria remains in

subjection to her own weakness of character and Mrs. Fullerton remains alive.

Rather than juxtaposing a grumbling Martha figure, who typifies woman's obedience to the socially-prescribed domestic role, with a silent Mary embodiment, who searches for spiritual fulfillment, Caird reincorporates this sibling paradigm by infusing the element of character/will to throw into relief the sisters' choices, particularly in the face of the patriarchal imperative of female self-sacrifice policed by the mother and the predicaments it creates for the daughters. If Caird makes Hadria a failing New Woman, I would suggest that she makes Algitha a prototype of a successful one, a relieved progeny of Hypermnestra, who rescues herself from assuming the endless and meaningless onus of domestic labor.

Intriguingly, the novel has a fictional sister, The Stones of Sacrifice, in which Caird presents three pairs of blood sisters—Harriet versus Mary Kirkpatrick, Claudia versus Amy Temple, and Leah versus Graine Galbraith—with the former of each set displaying a relatively stronger will and character than the latter in their confrontations with maternal oppression. Except for Leah, who resorts first to witchcraft and then to prostitution in her revolt against the parental imposition of a monotonous life, the latter choice, as she comes to understand it, being another way of making a living for women if they do not marry (SOS, 106), Harriet and Claudia are New Women who endeavor to walk out of the traditional Women's Sphere and develop their own lives. Harriet especially is an extreme New Woman figure who fights forcefully for women's rights. Her extremity, I would argue, lies mostly in her refusal to sacrifice herself for anybody's sake: "I'm so tired of this rage for self-sacrifice. Ought one to spend one's life in unsuitable occupations, in deference to the views of others, merely because they—the others—are near and dear?" (SOS, 49)—a refusal echoing Algitha's unwillingness "to sacrifice *everything* to an idea

that seems to [her] wrong” (DD, 39, emphasis in original).¹⁶ Yet, whereas Algitha’s refusal is conditional, provided that the idea for which the sacrifice is sought is unreasonable and meaningless, Harriet’s refusal is absolute at whatever cost. So that we see it is her sister Mary who stays at home to fulfill her duty as a daughter, so much so that Mary commits suicide to end her monotonous existence, an existence she originally “found . . . quite sufficient, [as] she had all the ‘rights’ she wanted in her home” (SOS, 69).

In plotting Mary’s suicide, it is obvious that Caird wants to show the lethal power of maternal tyranny, a power no less thrilling than the domination Mrs. Fullerton exercises over Hadria in The Daughters of Danaus: “The mother drives one daughter to suicide by chaining her to her Sphere, and the other kills the mother by refusing to be so driven” (SOS, 325-26). With an uncompromising will, it is without doubt that Harriet will not sacrifice herself to substitute for Mary, condescending to a system she so fiercely attacks. In portraying Harriet, however, I think Caird reveals some contradictions. For, on the one hand, she seems to want to caricature Harriet’s mannish outlook as in line with the main/male-streamed journalistic portraiture of the New Woman:

large and angular and masculine-looking. A black skimpy coat and skirt, and a manly shirt and tie constituted her attire; and she had wrung her hair, by dint of virile force, into a tight button and pulled down on the top of the button a black bowler hat. (SOS, 39-40)

But on the other hand, she uses Harriet as a counterexample to throw into relief the unfair imposition of self-sacrifice upon women. Ann Heilmann argues that Harriet is a “cliché of the mannish New Woman . . . totally unencumbered with any authentic, deeper feeling . . . [and] remain[ing] something of a caricature . . . [for] Caird to

¹⁶ An emphasized quotation here. See also p. 72.

explode anti-feminist images of the New Woman.”¹⁷ It is indeed true that Harriet ignores her sister’s depression, but one may also say that Mary internalizes her filial piety to such an extent that she endures her sufferings in silence, the very silence, so common in daughters, that draws Algitha’s particular fury (DD, 268). I think where Harriet merits condemnation is that, despite her foresight that Mary “would go all to pieces if she didn’t look out” (SOS, 69), and given that Harriet herself is such a strong advocate of women’s liberation from self-sacrifice, she still leaves Mary behind until it is too late to help her. The biological sisterhood, considered in this light, proves an ironic failure, no better than that between Algitha and Hadria.

In portraying Harriet, I think what Caird wants to convey to us is not so much Harriet’s insensibility/unfemininity; for, as the narrator tells us, “Harriet [literally] broke down” on learning Mary’s suicide (SOS, 71), and she is also worried that Graine is looking so ill due to her endless devotion to the family and attempts to save her from becoming another Mary (SOS, 132). As such, I would argue that what Caird might have wanted to emphasize is the relentless censures other people cast upon a daughter who completely leaves behind “the shrieks of near relations” (DD, 251) and becomes “the black sheep of the family” in everybody’s eyes: “Never, from that day forth [the day of Mary’s death],” the narrator tells us, “would Harriet rest while the Sphere had one stone left standing on another!” (SOS, 71). While nobody criticizes Harriet’s brother Jack, fingers are pointed at Harriet for ignoring her mother. Even the “New Man” Alpin, the narrator tells us, “could not help wondering how much Harriet’s conduct had to do with the obvious failing of her mother’s health” (SOS, 450). Alpin’s reaction speaks for that of the majority towards a rebellious daughter like Harriet and makes his New Man image, in my view, questionable. While he defends his lover Claudia’s “vagaries” (SOS, 325), he uses the orthodox

¹⁷ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 192-93.

standard to criticize Harriet.

It should be borne in mind that the mother-daughter tie is a knot so intricate that it cannot be untied by the daughter alone. Unlike Algitha who internalizes the sense of guilt society imposes on a self-seeking woman, Harriet is portrayed as someone of a stronger will, who refuses to succumb and become another Mary as long as her mother remains unchanged and is as oppressive as before. Harriet may provoke any criticism of her New Woman identity because she does not have a sense of guilt towards her dominant mother, or because she does not go through a heroic struggle of reconciliation between her duty as a daughter and her own self-development. However, I would suggest that the radical feminist Caird has envisioned Harriet as an entirely “New” Woman, a woman of the future who can pursue life in her own sweet way, and like her brother, is spared the conflict women have suffered for so long and yet which they perpetuate for their fellow sisters. Or, one could even argue that, by her extreme portrayal of Harriet, Caird may want to show the irresolvable impasse between the conventional mother and the unorthodox daughter at the *fin de siècle*, an impasse that perhaps looks to the suggestion Frank, the Guild member, makes as to “the *via media*” (SOS, 436, emphasis in original) that mothers and daughters will have to find in the future.

Compared with Harriet, Claudia perfectly exemplifies the *fin-de-siècle* daughter who could not rid herself of patriarchal regulations and yet endeavored to break free from them. To some extent, Claudia bears a resemblance to Algitha, but Caird infuses her with more decisiveness and bravery, in my view. As in Algitha’s case, Claudia’s attempt to teach English in France is blocked by her mother’s objection, but after some time of postponement, she decides to leave home and gains much benefit from the decision she has made. While Algitha frequently returns home to compensate for her sense of guilt towards her mother, Claudia returns in answer to

her sister Amy's call for help, because Amy can no longer bear their mother's oppressiveness. Despite the fact that Claudia has left Amy behind in pursuit of her own aims, she nevertheless is worried about Amy and goes home as soon as she receives her letter, so as to rescue Amy from further harm, a marked contrast with Algitha, whose home visits are not motivated by any concern for Hadria but only for her mother. In terms of sisterhood, therefore, I think Claudia shows more sisterly affection and support than Algitha.

However, this is not to say that Claudia is not troubled by her mother's exorbitant demands. Like Mrs. Fullerton (Algitha and Hadria's mother) and Mrs. Kirkpatrick (Harriet's mother), Claudia's mother, Lady Temple, thinks it her right to ask for her daughters' sacrifice in return for her own. While she has already surrendered the lives of her other two daughters, Julia and Andrienne, to save her only son (she uses the money that could have saved her sick daughters to pay off Stephen's debt), Lady Temple demands that her remaining daughters should devote themselves wholly to "the 'temple,'" as Heilmann keenly observes, "of 'the Higher Life'"¹⁸ (home and duties). So much so that, on her death bed, Lady Temple asks Claudia to fulfill her intense desire: that Claudia should marry Sir Montague Forbes, a man Claudia does not love. If Harriet shows her vagary by not fulfilling her filial piety in deference to her mother's will, I would argue that Claudia shows hers partly through her refusal of her mother's deathbed wish. This is not to say that Claudia, in so doing, is immune from any sense of guilt; rather, it almost kills her not to promise her mother: "I shall never forget—her face—when I said—I couldn't. It will haunt me as long as I live" (SOS, 345). Unlike Harriet, both Algitha and Claudia internalize, more or less, the social norms for daughters' duties, but Claudia, in my view, shows a much stronger will in following her heart and her beliefs in the

¹⁸ Ibid., 194.

face of an external force as overwhelming as her mother's deathbed wish. Although Lady Temple smiles when Claudia promises her to live with Amy until they marry, deep in Claudia's heart she knows that she has driven her mother to die in an agony of despair. If she keeps to her resolve, she fails her mother, but if she surrenders, she will be another Hadria or, even worse, another Mary.¹⁹

It is indeed true that the mother-daughter conflict is one crucial aspect of New Woman novels and Caird especially wants to highlight the generational perpetuation of women's self-sacrifice in an attempt to espouse the necessity of sisterhood. Curiously, in her depictions of blood sisters, Caird often seems to present negative portraiture, in which strong-willed sisters abandon weak-willed sisters in pursuit of their own fulfillment, leaving them to bear the full weight of maternal despotism. While they represent "vagaries" and choose "egoism" for themselves, they do not act out sisterhood to rescue their blood sisters, who have submissively chosen "extinction" as other women normally do. Except for Claudia, who undertakes an immediate rescue of Amy, both Harriet and Algitha, as my previous discussion has shown, signally fail to help Mary and Hadria, with the result that one commits suicide and the other becomes an artist manquée, an unhappy wife and mother. But in coming home to rescue Amy, Claudia's attempt to develop her career in France seems to have come to nothing, as the narrator makes no further reference to it for the rest of the novel but concludes with Claudia's "individualistic marriage" to Alpin (SOS, 383).

Leah, the one who rebels but deviates into prostitution, on the other hand, proves such a sisterhood in forging her sister Graine's letter to Alpin, making Alpin believe that Graine has fallen in love with someone else, whereas Graine's original

¹⁹ Here, I leave out discussions on Graine and Amy, because Graine is totally submissive and Amy is a minor character, whose only function is to highlight Lady Temple's domination.

letter is meant to set Alpin free because she has to take care of her family and cannot marry him. The mysterious estrangement and misunderstanding between Graine and Alpin that ensues is not resolved until Leah confesses her wrongdoing, at which point it is too late for the couple to reunite, because Alpin and Claudia have become lovers and Graine decides to sacrifice herself to complete their love. Despite the fact that Graine accepts Frank's love at the end of the novel, one may still say that Leah's evil doing has affected Graine's fate. The kind of sisterhood Leah shows amounts, in other words, to another negative example.

To sum up, the several sibling pairs I have examined here not only show a contrast in the personalities that determine their different fates in the face of maternal forces, but suggest a frustration or even a failure of biological sisterhood in women's abandonment or betrayal of their sisters that seems the very opposite of the New Woman spirit, a point testifying to Tess Cosslett's observation as I have mentioned earlier.²⁰ Perhaps in her rendition of them, Caird wants to draw attention to the familial network of the "bonds of womanhood"²¹ along its horizontal axis, in addition to the vertical axis of the mother-daughter template, to show, on the one hand, the importance of the sororal bond, and, on the other hand, the difficulty of the choices sisters had to make, not just between daughter's duty and daughter's right, but between sibling love and personal realization.

Hadria's abandonment by the female trickster Henriette Temperley

In addition to the biological sisterly abandonment which results in Hadria's intense oppression by her mother, her misfortune also partly resides in the fact that she has fallen into a loveless marriage with Hubert Temperley, a result of several tricks

²⁰ See I-A, pp. 53-54.

²¹ I adopt this term from Nancy F. Cott's book, The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835 (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1977).

played upon her by the female trickster, Henriette Temperley. As has been indicated earlier, the trickster is normally an anti-social being, designed to subvert the social order while re-affirming that same order. S/he is what Robert Pelton considers a representation of “metasocial commentary,”²² a representation of a counter-example to show the value of that countered. When the trickster is contextualized in New Woman writing, however, writers like Caird reincorporate this configuration by transforming the original oppositional discourse (trickster versus society) into a conspiracy rhetoric (female trickster + society versus women) to throw into relief another antithesis in which it is the validity of the pro-side that is brought into question. In doing so, of course, they become tricksters themselves.

As the narrative unfolds, Hubert is intrigued by Hadria’s “fine nature [and] good instincts” (DD 135). Despite his awareness of her obsessed heterodox ideas which go against his “nature [that] is conventional through and through” (DD, 267), Hubert proposes to marry Hadria, albeit failing in his first attempt. From that point onwards, Hubert’s sister Henriette starts to activate her trickster role in contriving, with Hubert’s assistance, to decoy Hadria into marriage. Thus, strictly speaking, both the Temperley brother and sister are tricksters, but Henriette plays a more devastating role insofar as sisterhood is concerned: instead of helping Hadria, Henriette betrays her, pushing her into the pitfall of “A horrible wrong . . . [a marriage that] has ruined [Hadria’s] life” (DD, 351).

A typical exemplar of an Old Woman, Henriette postulates all traditional concepts. From the lecture she delivers at the Preposterous Society, a gathering the Fullerton children organize to discuss contemporary issues they are interested in, the

²² Robert Pelton, *The Trickster in West Africa: A Study of Mythic Irony and Sacred Delight* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1980), 266, quoted in William G. Doty and William J. Hynes, “Historical Overview of Theoretical Issues: The Problem of the Trickster,” *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms*, ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty (Tuscaloosa; London: The U of Alabama P, 1993), 13-32, 21.

reader is led to know that Henriette gives precedence to women's duties over rights and that, instead of advocating women's "spiritual territory" (DD, 124), she emphasizes the need for women to cultivate "good taste and good feeling" for the purpose of privileging others rather than themselves (DD, 131). She bases women's existence purely on "the details and niceties of conduct, and the *nuances*" of it (DD, 118, emphasis in original), aligning women's duty and femininity with an appearance of conscience and morality (DD, 347). It is no surprise, then, that Henriette attempts to snuff out Hadria's idiosyncrasy and convert her to the Old Woman camp by persuading her into marriage, a marriage that demands that women resign themselves in the name of a love that may well not be genuine.

Henriette's trickstery, in brief, relies mostly on the three treacheries she performs on Hadria. Firstly, taking advantage of Hadria's simple-mindedness and need for companionship in her lonely and boring life at home, Henriette emphatically assures Hadria that to meet Hubert, after her refusal of his marriage proposal, will not be misinterpreted as encouragement. Naïvely believing Henriette, Hadria appreciates Hubert's company, on occasions most often created via Henriette's arrangement, seeing it as friendship rather than courtship (DD, 121). It is not until Hubert accuses her of cruelty and inconsistency in encouraging and yet refusing him at the same time, protesting "Do you think a man will cease to hope while he continues to see the woman he loves?" (DD, 140), that Hadria realizes she has been deceived by Henriette and regrets her ignorance.

Secondly, proud of her keen observation of women in general, Hadria among them, Henriette advises Hubert not to irritate the rebellious Hadria, but to make a false concession to whatever Hadria says until she becomes his wife. In Henriette's view, Hadria is inexperienced, "a mere infant as regards knowledge of the world," and once she becomes a wife, it will be impossible for her to continue resisting the

social laws and beliefs since, by then, she will have too many cares and responsibilities to remain loyal to her original thoughts (DD, 135). As Henriette assures Hubert,

There is nothing to be really alarmed at in [Hadria's] ideas, regrettable as they are. She is young. That sort of thing will soon wear off after she is married. . . . She doesn't know what she is talking about. These high-flown lectures and discussions have filled all their heads with nonsense. It will have to be rooted out when they come to face the world. No use to oppose her now. Nothing but *experience* will teach her. She must just be humoured for the present. They have all run a little wild in their notions. Time will cure that. (DD, 134, emphasis added)

With this thought in mind, Henriette emphasizes the need for Hubert to be duplicitous in his dealings with Hadria: "be sure to express no opposition to her ideas, however wild they may be. Ignore them, humour her, plead your cause once more" (DD, 136).

While disarming Hadria's caution over establishing an ambiguous relationship with Hubert, Henriette, on the other hand, "teaches" Hubert how to win Hadria in a treacherous way. Though still a single woman, Henriette's attitude towards women's condition in society makes her an analogue to the mother in "Virgin Soil," a story in George Egerton's Discords (1894), in which the mother does not teach the daughter how to fight "the biggest battle of a woman's life" so that the daughter, after five years' marriage, comes home, with looks so much changed, to accuse her "devoted" mother of raising her an ignorant fool, which results in her bearing a grudge against her debased status as a wife and mother.²³ The "experience" Henriette refers to in the above quotation is synonymous with the daughter's, a marital experience at the expense of a woman's youth and life-long happiness that can only result in a belated resentment of her own degradation. But for an Old

²³ George Egerton, "Virgin Soil," Discords (London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1894) repr. in George Egerton, Keynotes & Discords, intro. Martha Vicinus (London: Virago, 1983), 145-62, 157.

Woman like Henriette, this experience teaches women “the desirable lesson” (DD, 166) of how to be submissive and sacrificial for the sake of love. Thus, like the mother who abandons her daughter to the fate society has prescribed for her, Henriette is not only complicit in the inevitable change that, she thinks, will be effected on Hadria, but even worse, entraps her into experiencing it as quickly as possible.

However treacherous Henriette’s tricks are, none is quite so conclusive as her third one: the intentional losing of Hadria’s letter to Hubert before their marriage, a letter expressing Hadria’s regret at accepting Hubert’s second proposal and attempting to break off the engagement. Henriette volunteers to deliver the letter, but claims later that the letter is lost. Strange to say, there is no detailed indication elsewhere in the novel of this event, nor is there any description of Hadria’s response towards it, except for Algitha’s voicing of indignation to their brother Ernest when they are worried about Hadria’s radical change and declining health some time after her marriage. As Algitha says, giving vent to her bitterness:

I shall never forget . . . that night when Hadria was taken with a fit of terror—it was nothing less—and wrote to break off the engagement, and that woman undertook to deliver the letter and lost it, *on purpose* I am always convinced, and then the favourable moment was over. (DD, 166, emphasis in original)

Here, Caird seems to have drawn a parallel with Thomas Hardy’s Tess of the d’Urbervilles (1891), in which Tess, on Christmas Eve, one week before her wedding, slipped a confession letter under Angel’s door only to find, a few hours before the wedding ceremony, that she has accidentally thrust it beneath the carpet. This explains Angel’s attitude towards her in that week as “frank and affectionate as before” (TOD, 228) since he has never read the letter confessing to her past. Thinking to catch the fleeting chance to confess to Angel in person, Tess withdraws

the letter and destroys it in her room, but she is never given a chance to do as she plans until it is too late: the wedding night. “[T]he favourable moment,” in the words of Algitha, the moment which could have changed Tess’s fate as symbolized by the birth of Christ on Christmas Eve, as a consequence, “was over” for Tess.

While fatalism, an uncontrollable supernatural power, plays a conspicuous role in Tess’s misplaced letter and her doomed tragedy, we see a deliberate element, namely Henriette’s intervention, in Hadria’s marriage with Hubert. Algitha is right to attribute Hadria’s unhappy marriage to Henriette’s evil-doings at some level: “If it hadn’t been for [Henriette], the marriage would never have taken place” (DD, 165-66). Indeed, it is hard to believe, from a reader’s perspective, that in carrying such an important message concerning her brother’s future happiness, Henriette would have lost Hadria’s letter. It is even doubtful whether Henriette literally loses it; she might simply have destroyed it without the knowledge of Hubert. Alternatively, it is also possible to assume that Hubert has read the letter, but the brother and sister connive to pretend that nothing has happened and have the marriage take place as originally planned. Just as they give no heed to the possible problems that might result from an incompatible match, so they take no notice of Hadria’s regret, placing their hope in the power of “experience” that will eventually change Hadria after marriage. To Hubert, after all, what he wants most is Hadria’s body, “I care for what you *are*, not for what you *think*,” “Have what ideas you please, only be my wife” (DD, 140, 143, emphases in original). To Henriette, what she is mostly concerned with is the end rather than the means, the end of helping her brother to marry Hadria, even though there is not sufficient evidence to prove true love between the couple, thus rendering equally questionable Henriette’s assumption that Hadria, once she becomes a wife, “would never be able, try as she might, to act in a manner that would really distress those who were dear to her” (DD, 135).

Because of the tricks that have deceived Hadria into marriage, we see her anguish as a depressed wife and unloving mother, a situation completely inverted from what Hadria expects in marrying Hubert, an expectation that she could escape from the domestic (daughterly) yoke to gain more freedom of her own. Compared with Algitha, Hadria is indeed passive. Rather than challenging maternal authority in her own right as Algitha does, Hadria chooses to escape from it, an escape that only traps her into another domestic (wifely and motherly) bondage. And due to her passivity, we do not see her do anything, at least insofar as the narrative brings to light, to stop her own union with Hubert once she knows the letter is lost. Thus, even though both Tess and Hadria write a crucial letter before their respective marriages, and given that “the favourable moment was over” for both of them, the panoramas the two texts present are different: Tess still tries to confess but circumstance prevents her, whereas Hadria is passive through and through, or at least, this is what we see from Caird’s characterization of her, a presentation that gives no hint that Hadria has seized whatever available chances to reverse the situation before her marriage. So that, with Henriette’s further intervention to influence Mrs. Fullerton, Hadria is hurried into completing the wedding with Hubert.

Regardless of Hadria’s own passivity, there is no doubt that Hubert and Henriette are to be blamed for Hadria’s marital unhappiness. An Old Man emblem, Hubert, following Henriette’s suggestion, is hypocritical in giving Hadria a false impression, leading her to think that he will take her side in opposing social mores, tolerate whatever she thinks and whatever unorthodox music she plays, and offer her a home freer than her parents’. Patricia Murphy makes the insightful suggestion that Hubert’s surname “Temperley” foregrounds Hadria’s union with him as “not an escape from but a continuation of the temporally based restrictions experienced in

her parents' home."²⁴ As if to affirm to the reader the genuine nature of Hubert's hypocrisy independent of Henriette's instigation, Caird tells us that Hubert is eager for Hadria's return from Paris later, not because of his love for her but because of his dread of people's adverse comments: "he would give his soul (and particularly Hadria's) rather than incur a whisper from people collectively" (DD, 267). For appearance's sake, Hubert is only too glad to consent to Hadria's proposal that they live under the same roof nominally, a proposal that Hadria is merely making for her mother's sake.

While Margaret Morganroth Gullette argues that Caird does not villainize Hubert but only makes him negligible,²⁵ I would argue that, although Hubert is not given much narrative length, he is by no means neglected because, as a trickster figure, he demonstrates his villainy in having a pernicious effect on Hadria: he not only deceives her, he completely destroys her life. Instead of viewing Hadria's marriage as, in Gullette's words, "a simple case of incompatibility, itself an ingenious invention anticipating no-fault divorce,"²⁶ I would rather draw attention to the background of duplicity and intrigue that led to the making of this marriage. After all, the incompatibility of the couple does not transpire as a result of the marriage but was evident well before Hubert's entrapment of Hadria. In this respect, it is incorrect to say that the divorce, if it happens, is on a "no-fault" basis, when the entire basis of the marriage is the result of trickery. Caird certainly does not justify Hubert's tricks; rather, she has Hadria cry out against the wrongs Hubert has done her:

I believe that Hubert has acted conscientiously, according to his standard.
But I detest his standard. He did not think it wrong or treacherous to

²⁴ Murphy, *Time is of the Essence*, 162.

²⁵ Gullette, "Afterword" to *The Daughters of Danaus*, 502; see also Golden, *Images of the Woman Reader*, 134.

²⁶ Gullette, "Afterword" to *The Daughters of Danaus*, 502.

behave as he did towards me. But it is that very fact that I so bitterly resent . . . this is a sin against my entire sex, which he does not acknowledge to be a sin. It is the insolence that is implied in supposing it allowable for a man to trick a woman in that way, without the smallest damage to his self-respect, that sticks so in my throat. What does it imply as regards his attitude towards all women? Ah! it is that which makes me feel so rancorous. (DD, 349)

Because of Hubert's tricks, Hadria literally becomes a "Temper"-ley whose temper is easily driven to emotional agitation, and worst of all, to depression when she is left to contemplate her marital debasement.

While Hadria cannot forgive Hubert's fraudulence, neither can she make allowance for Henriette's "deliberate treachery" (DD, 344), the result of Henriette's indifference to the sufferings of her fellow women, an attitude, ironically, based on women's "better nature" which Henriette is so keen to uphold but which Hadria contemptuously rejects as merely "a dog-chain" on women (DD, 347). As Hadria scornfully retorts, Henriette is one of those

cunning, shallow, heartless women, who really fare best in our society; its conditions suit them. *They* have no pity, no sympathy to make a chain of; *they* don't mind stooping to conquer; *they* don't mind playing upon the weaker, baser sides of men's natures; *they* don't mind appealing, for their own ends, to the pity and generosity of others; *they* don't mind swallowing indignity and smiling abjectly, like any woman of the harem at her lord, so that they gain their object. (DD, 347, emphases in original)

In line with the laws of the father, Henriette believes that women's better nature is a sense of duty and generosity to be devoted to the ones they love; it is "the holiest of human instincts" (DD, 343). But to Hadria, it is merely a "man-allotted fate," from which thousands of women are suffering and yet about which they commit, at the same time, the "eternal conspiracy of silence" (DD, 342), such that we see the mother in Egerton's "Virgin Soul" as well as Hadria's mother condescend to this "fate" abjectly and pass on this "experience" to their daughters.

While this conspiracy is mostly revealed in the inheritance from mothers to daughters, constitutive of a conspicuous marker of New Woman novels, Caird shows us, through the rendition of the female trickster, that conspiracy can also be extended to include all Old Women who “are so ready to oppress each other” without the “spirit of sisterhood” (DD, 450, 473). Such conspiracy on the part of women reflects their internalization of the “man-allotted fate” as well as their alliance with the patriarchal Old Men. Worse than an assimilation or a negotiation of marriage in line with one pattern of Victorian female friendships, as Tess Cosslett observes,²⁷ a representation of the female trickster sheds more light on the malice the patriarchal conspiratorial circle and cycle entail: in order to achieve the end of domesticating women, the female tricksters play tricks to deceive and thus destroy the life of their fellow sisters. This is what we see in Henriette, an accessory who enforces the patriarchal laws and abandons Hadria to struggle on her own.

The original trickster configuration, seen in this light, is reworked by Caird to highlight a particular contrivance of conspiracy, in which the (female) trickster collaborates with the dominant, male-defined society to oppress unorthodox women. Rather than using an anti-social being to challenge and thus reflexively reaffirm the social value as in the original trickster discourse, Caird conflates the female trickster with the conspirator to reinforce the negative oppressive power of the social norms upon women in general. The act of this reworking, therefore, could be regarded as an expedient writing “trick” to throw into relief Caird’s metasocial commentary on the lack of and thus the need to promote sisterhood: “I wish women would think a little less of Heaven in the abstract, and a little more of one another, in the concrete” (DD, 472).

²⁷ See I-A, p. 53.

Hadria as a mother-oppressor

In the novel, little attention is paid to Hadria's interaction with her children; what there is mostly concerns her antipathy towards motherhood. Thus, before analyzing the child archetype manifested in Hadria's two sons, it is necessary to get a picture of how Hadria sees the conventional marriage and its correlation to motherhood.

Not long after her marriage, Hadria realizes her incompatibility with Hubert, a trickster figure who entices her into this loveless union, as my previous discussion has shown. Her pre-marital illusion that Hubert sides with her on issues of women's rights is completely dispelled after marrying him. From Part II of the novel, where the conjugal relationship has already existed for five years, there is relatively little attention given to the interaction between the couple, except for descriptions of their differences and of Hubert's attempt to repair his reputation due to Hadria's "selfish" flight to Paris. The five-years' ellipsis in the narrative after their wedding, a "temporal gap" in the words of Patricia Murphy, indicates that every marital day is the same to Hadria and thus depiction from any "arbitrary point" is feasible.²⁸ Given that, the narrative shows on several occasions how this unsuitable nuptial tie has pernicious repercussions upon Hadria, both physically and mentally. As Murphy rightly points out, images of death—the cemetery, the tolling clock and the pickaxe's strokes—inaugurate the narrative of Hadria's marital life in Part II.²⁹ Corresponding to that is a sketch of Hadria's declining health, languishing appearance disproportionate to her real age, undying fatigue and, above all, her fury and discontent: "Hardship, difficulty, tragedy could be faced, but not the humiliating, the degrading, the contemptible" (DD, 168).

Obviously it is the contemporary marriage system that links motherhood to a

²⁸ Murphy, *Time is of the Essence*, 162.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 162-63.

woman's duty of self-sacrifice: to find herself caught in this system insults woman, in Hadria's view, and is the source of her considerable fury. In The Morality of Marriage, Caird points out two pre-requisites for this marriage system: women's dependence and women's procreation. It was "by the law of the land, by the service of the Church, by all that we cling to and uphold in the existing order of society" (MOM, 141), Caird argues, that men were entitled to demand of their wives all they asked in the Victorian period. Dependence made women slave-like in their obedience to their husbands, shut in their small domestic circles and unremittingly devoting their energies to the management of the household. Women's "feminine abjectness" (DD, 172), a submissive quality generally thought to be inherent in women, was reinforced by the traditional feminine education, which fermented men's dictatorship and deepened women's sense of inferiority (DD, 172-73).

Victorian wives were considered men's legal property and child-bearers with no autonomous rights over their own bodies. Willingly or unwillingly, they had to fulfill society's expectation that they would give birth and raise children since these were thought to correspond to natural instinct and duty: "Women are made for purposes of reproduction No picking and choosing" (DD, 257). The patriarchal conflation of woman and womb prized biological motherhood to such an extent that a barren woman, a woman who could not bear children or remained single, was liable to incur society's contempt as someone incapable of fulfilling her function as a woman.³⁰ Biological motherhood also took women's nurturing for granted, with the result that mothers were obliged to sacrifice themselves for their children and family. Motherhood that arises from this unequal matrimonial condition is unquestionably devastating. It is merely, as Ann Heilmann remarks, "the symbol of

³⁰ For a detailed analysis of the Victorian married women's position, see MOM, 73-149, repr. in LVMQ, 1.

enforced marital sex, a prison-house of social norms, a center for the reproduction of ever more victims."³¹

The Affected Abandoned Child: Hadria's biological sons/

institutionalized motherhood

In Of Woman Born, Adrienne Rich distinguishes two meanings of motherhood:

the *potential relationship* of any woman to her powers of reproduction and to children; and the *institution*, which aims at ensuring that that potential—and all women—shall remain under male control.³² (emphases in original)

Clearly the motherhood that Hadria assumes is the one enforced by the institution of patriarchy. Its adverse effects, in addition to Hadria's declining physical and mental health, can be seen in Hadria's lack of motherly affection for her two sons. Thinking of children's relations with their mothers, Hadria is keenly critical of the fact that

Throughout history . . . children had been the unfailing means of bringing women into line with tradition. Who could stand against them? They had been able to force the most rebellious to their knees. An appeal to the maternal instinct had quenched the hardiest spirit of revolt. No wonder the instinct had been so trumpeted and exalted! Women might harbour dreams and plan insurrections; but their children—little ambassadors of the established and expected—were argument enough to convince the most hardened skeptics. Their helplessness was more powerful to suppress revolt than regiments of armed soldiers. (DD, 187)

In view of this, it is quite conceivable that being a mother imposes a restriction upon the rebel Hadria, who may not wish to undertake a form of motherhood that aligns maternal instincts and duties with social conventions and creeds rather than to personal choice. The sense that her children have been bred from a union of false love intensifies her unwillingness to provide motherly affection and care. As

³¹ Heilmann, New Woman Fiction, 144.

³² Rich, Of Woman Born, 13.

Hadria candidly states, her children represent for her “the insult of society—my own private and particular insult, the tribute exacted of my womanhood. It is through them that I am to be subdued and humble” (DD, 190). Indeed it is to her children that Hadria is expected to devote her sentiments and for them that she should sacrifice herself regardless of her will—all because she, with a woman’s body, is supposed to render her maternal functions as defined by men. Women’s physicality under patriarchy, Rich argues, becomes women’s destiny: “To have born and reared a child is to have done that thing which patriarchy joins with physiology to render into the definition of femaleness.” Motherhood, in this light, is institutionalized as the definition of woman’s only identity, negating all other female possibilities.³³

Although Caird does not indicate clearly whether Hadria is coerced into sex and motherhood, it is evident that she is not gratified to be a mother, as she denies motherhood and moves to Paris, and later refuses to return home when her sister-in-law Henriette reminds her of her maternal duties. In an instructive parallel to Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s utopian notion in *Herland* concerning childcare issues, Caird argues that not all mothers are fitted for bringing up their own children and that the task of children’s training should go to whoever is endowed with that natural gift and fittest to assume the work. In proposing the establishment of professional childcaring, both Gilman and Caird attempt to distinguish motherhood in child-bearing from motherhood in child-rearing: the former is involved with biological procreation (nature) and the latter has much to do with intellectual education (nurture). This is not to say that the child should be segregated from the mother, but that a distribution of maternal labor based on proper capabilities is the prerequisite for children’s healthy development as well as the best way of

³³ Ibid., 39, 37, 13.

safeguarding mothers from a nervous breakdown in the process of mothering.³⁴ A distinction between “nature” and “nurture” is evoked here to illuminate the fact that the maternal instinct is crudely defined and given undue emphasis by men as a way of oppressing mothers, loading supererogatory childcare onto women’s already excessive burden of everyday duties, with no consideration for individual predilection and ability. To show her repugnance at motherhood as an institution, Hadria acidly responds that

Motherhood, in our present social state, is the sign and the seal as well as the means and methods of a woman’s bondage. It forges chains of her own flesh and blood; it weaves cords of her own love and instinct. . . . A woman with a child in her arms is, to me, the symbol of an abasement, an indignity, more complete, more disfiguring and terrible, than any form of humiliation that the world has ever seen. (DD, 341)

Enforced motherhood with compulsory maternal obligations is equivalent, in Hadria’s eyes, to the persecution of women. More specifically, it “represents a prostitution of the reproductive powers” from which Hadria thinks many women seek to escape but about which they timidly conspire to keep silence (DD, 343).

Taking all these considerations into account, it should come as no surprise that Hadria’s sons have no importance for her in the novel. On the one hand, they remind Hadria of her unhappy marriage and reluctant motherhood; on the other hand, they are the “intolerable burden” (DD, 342) coming to enforce Hadria’s commitment and rob her of her self-identity. What is more, their gender itself reinforces her sense of oppression and incarceration.³⁵ Despite their existence, Caird gives them

³⁴ MOM, 131-56, 173; H, 82-83. While Gilman mentions the “co-mother” system in *Herland* (p.103), she envisions in *Moving the Mountains* (1911) “the Department of Child Culture,” an institution to evaluate which women are suited to child-caring and to give them the child-culturist diploma so that children, under their care, will develop good characters and mothers will no longer tire of nurturing and resent their motherhood. This department is also responsible for creating the child-gardens in which children receive a good education. See Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s Utopian Novels: Moving the Mountains, Herland, and With Her in Ourland*, ed. & intro. Minna Duskow (Cranbury, NJ; London: Associated UP, 1999), 76-77, 111-122.

³⁵ Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction*, 147.

no name, no voice and no action—an attempt, in my view, to show that they have no meaning to their mother. A phlegmatic mother-children relationship is thus formulated out of institutional motherhood, the inevitable consequence of its problematic character. By leaving the children without identity or significance, Caird, I argue, wants to overthrow the stereotypical conception that mothers have an innate maternal instinct to love their children, and that it is always biological children who are blessings from birth. As invisible and silent figures, Hadria's children do not represent the vitality and hope invested in the child image, but merely “the marital duty personified,”³⁶ victims of a motherhood regulated by the law of the father under which both the mother and the children are abused: procreation is forced upon women, leading to the deprivation of the children's right to good mothers (MOM, 173). Except for the biological tie with their mother, Hadria's children are presented as having no other relations with her, and thus they incarnate what I call the “Affected Abandoned Child Archetype”: affected in the sense that their abandonment is the result of unsound motherhood as an institution, rather than of actual exclusion from society. Collectively, they represent all those children who are, in a sense, emotionally abandoned/resented by their mothers in the latter's countermeasure/opposition to their coercion into motherhood under patriarchy, which results in lives of unending exhaustion, physically and psychologically.

**The Double Abandoned Child: Hadria's adopted daughter Little Martha/
the Demeter-Persephone myth and the Medea myth**

To Hadria as well as to Caird, healthy mothering comes from motherhood as an individual choice, and maternal duty is workable only “when it is absolutely free, absolutely uninfluenced by the pressure of opinion, or by any of the innumerable

³⁶ Ibid.

tyrannies that most children have now to thank for their existence” (DD, 341). A mouthpiece of Caird, Hadria proposes “free motherhood” (DD, 342) and she puts it into practice by adopting Little Martha, the illegitimate daughter of the schoolmistress Ellen Jervis and Professor Theobald. Apparently, Little Martha is the embodiment of the Abandoned Child Archetype, in contradistinction to the Affected Abandoned Child Archetype in Hadria’s two sons. From birth, Martha is doomed to represent her mother’s unchastity in the eyes of society, and to remind the reader of the Victorian double standard which protects her father from any criticism for his philandering. Because of her mother’s death, the consequence of social ostracism, and her father’s indifference to and lack of responsibility for her, Martha becomes an abandoned orphan, living outside not only of her original family circle but even of society’s acceptance of her very existence. Partly out of sisterly solidarity with Ellen Jervis and partly out of sympathy for the child, Hadria acts as a surrogate Demeter figure, plunging to the rescue of Persephone from the cruel, dark world by taking Martha under her protection, irrespective of others’ astonishment and perplexity. Through adoption, a mother-daughter tie is newly established and given relatively more attention in the narrative than Hadria’s relationship with her biological sons.

It is worth noting that Hadria’s adoption of Martha is different from that of the career woman (a writer) in George Egerton’s short story “The Spell of the White Elf” in Keynotes (1893), in which a sterile woman adopts a child to fulfill her long-term longing for motherhood. From the woman’s confession to the narrator, “I used to fancy something stirred in me, and the spirits of unborn little ones never to come to life in me troubled me,” it is clear that the mannish woman, though a bread-winner working outside the family while her husband is a housekeeper at home, is still obsessed with conventional notions that bind women to their reproductive capacity

and is often distracted from her work, fancying children's singing and playing in the room.³⁷ Although she adopts the child of her own free will, this is to compensate for her lack of womanliness, i.e. her sterility. She imposes upon herself society's definition of what a woman should be and is thus preoccupied all the time with the functioning of the maternal instinct. Only when her womanly void is filled, a malfunctioning womb replaced by the functional practice of child-adoption, can she feel satisfied with and for herself. Despite the fact that she appears to be a New Woman figure, challenging the conventional boundaries of women's domesticity by her competence as a career woman, she is essentially an Old Woman, acting out the situation that Simone de Beauvoir describes: "Woman has ovaries, a uterus: these peculiarities imprison her in her subjectivity, circumscribe her within the limits of her own nature. It is often said that she thinks with her glands."³⁸ The woman in question indeed "thinks with her glands" and conceives of the value of her existence according to culturally- and paternally-defined biological determinism. As such, her adoption of the child is not in line with Hadria's proposition of free motherhood: "free" in the sense not only of personal choice, but in the freedom from "the pressure of any social law or sentiment" (DD, 240).

Neither is Hadria's adoption similar to Rebekah's in Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man, in which Rebekah adopts her husband's illegitimate daughter Sartje out of a philanthropic desire to help the little girl. In discussing female friendship in New Woman fiction, Tess Cosslett argues that Rebekah, failing to establish sisterly solidarity with any female friends, expresses her wish for it through "a sympathy for suffering and a pitying desire to help those weaker than herself."³⁹ On hearing her

³⁷ George Egerton, "The Spell of the White Elf," Keynotes (London: Elkin Mathews & John Lane, 1893) repr. in George Egerton, Keynotes & Discords, intro. Martha Vicinus (London: Virago, 1983), 68-90, 82.

³⁸ Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (1949; London: Vintage, 1997), 15.

³⁹ Tess Cosslett, Woman to Woman: Female Friendship in Victorian Fiction (Brighton, Sussex: The



son Frank's rejection of Sartje and refusal to walk with her because she is a "nigger" girl, Rebekah tells him and the other children a story that serves as an allegory, according to which people, no matter what their color or their nation, should help one another. From Rebekah's defense of Sartje, we know that Sartje is also an abandoned child, unwanted by her mother; her existence is even unknown to her father. Although Rebekah's intention of helping Sartje's mother, the colored servant-girl, is rejected, she transfers her sympathy to Sartje through adoption. Except that Sartje is taught to call her mistress, Rebekah *treats* her as her own child, and she wants her children to be sympathetic to Sartje and include her in the family (FMTM, Ch. XII).⁴⁰

In addition to Rebekah's sympathy for Sartje and Sartje's mother, I think there is another important reason for the adoption, namely, that Sartje is her husband's daughter. From Rebekah's extraordinary tolerance to her husband's frequent unfaithfulness, it is not too far-fetched to assume that she still feels affection for him and that she extends her love for him to his child by another woman. In effect, Rebekah's generosity is frequently revealed in her philosophical and religious meditations on the generation of a harmonious human relationship among the races, the classes and the sexes (a point I will elaborate later in chapter 6). Thus Rebekah's adoption of Sartje reveals not so much "the more usual form of protectorate of woman to child" (DD, 240) as her impulse as a philanthropist to carry out what Laura Chrisman calls "missionary maternity"—an ideology that combines the "maternal and missionary notion of feminism as the making and saving of souls."⁴¹

Harvester P, 1988), 159.

⁴⁰ Strictly speaking, if Rebekah truly *sees* Sartje as her own child, their relationship wouldn't be that between mistress/guardian and protégée. Thus although she *treats* the adopted girl as her own child, her attitude towards Sartje is different from that of the mother-children tie.

⁴¹ Laura Chrisman, "Empire, 'Race' and Feminism at the *Fin de Siècle*: The Work of George Egerton

It is certain that Hadria, like Rebekah, wants to offer sisterly support to Ellen Jervis after learning, from Dodge the gravedigger, the story of her miserable disillusionment from romance to betrayal by a philanderer. To some extent, Hadria's fate is inextricably linked to Ellen's in that Hadria herself has been tricked by a man, not perhaps a philanderer but surely a degraded man. Both Theobald and Hubert take advantage of innocence and inexperience by weaving superficial romantic illusions to obtain their ends: Theobald satiates his sexual lust through playing on Ellen's feelings and Hubert enchants/enchains Hadria into a loveless marriage. As Ellen and Hadria are both victims of men's betrayals in the name of romance, Hadria can sympathize with Ellen's sorrowful fate and feels like avenging Ellen's wrong as well as her own, and by extension, the wrongs of all the fellows of her sex who have suffered the same fate. The tradition of romance that dominates nineteenth-century literature is then, as Sally Leger notes, repudiated with a vengeance in the novel.⁴²

While sisterhood urges Rebekah to stretch woman-to-woman sympathy to concern for the weak, sisterhood channels Hadria into another direction. As she herself claims, "I am no Lady Bountiful" (DD, 188). It may well be said that sisterhood drives Hadria to act out the role of Medea, a Medea transformed but still vengeful, who, instead of killing her sons to take revenge on her husband's betrayal, adopts a girl to take revenge on "the world and the system of things that I hate" (DD, 188).⁴³ Unlike the bountiful Rebekah who is kind to her children, both biological

and Olive Schreiner," *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle*, ed. Sally Ledger & Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 45-65, 59, 45.

⁴² Ledger, *The New Woman*, 26.

⁴³ Heilmann has made a valuable contribution in giving a very illuminating analysis of different configurations of Medea in different versions of literary texts from Classical mythology to the modern time, linking them to the characterizations of Hadria in terms of the artist aspect. See Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 223-28. While Heilmann compares Medea to Hadria as a tragic artist, here I associate Medea with Hadria as a vengeful mother figure, although manifested in different ways as will be discussed in the following analysis. The Greek myth that I refer to here is from Hamilton, *Mythology*.

and adoptive, Hadria chooses to abandon her sons but to mother Martha, a child “out of wedlock . . . a challenge,” Heilmann asserts, “to the system of sexual and procreative impositions (enforced marital relations with the purpose of breeding the next generation of patriarchs).”⁴⁴ As such, while Rebekah’s adoption of Sartje is concerned more with the political questioning of race and class through which Schreiner activates her notion of missionary maternal ethics, Hadria’s adoption of Martha is involved with sexual politics, whereby Caird proposes to question and readdress the unequal treatment of the sexes under patriarchy. Inscribed within this intention, moreover, is the exposure of Caird’s evolutionary theory that anticipates gradual change in the mother-daughter relationship.⁴⁵

That Hadria adopts Martha is significant in several respects. In examining the child figure in nineteenth-century literature, Penny Brown remarks that the child was regarded as “an ‘imperfect adult’ who needed to be carefully guarded and educated to develop its reason.”⁴⁶ While it was definitely the norm for the male child to be transformed to the “perfect” state, it went conversely for the female child, who was denied the opportunities of education and training, but was reminded of her duty and obedience (MOM, 52). In late eighteenth-century England, Mary Wollstonecraft stridently chastised the false system of education that cultivated in women “weak elegancy of mind, exquisite sensibility, and sweet docility of manners, supposed to be the sexual characteristics of the weaker vessel,” only to leave them “insignificant

⁴⁴ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 232. It should be noted that although the birth of Martha is free from the conventional enforcement in marital relations in regard to child-giving, her existence is overshadowed by her mother having fallen victim to her father’s betrayal, a condition, in my view, that gives her no vantage point either, since she is also a pathetic product of the conventional appeasement of the sexual double standard, a “law” enacted by patriarchy.

⁴⁵ Ledger, *The New Woman*, 28-29.

⁴⁶ Penny Brown, *The Captured World: The Child and Childhood in Nineteenth-Century Women’s Writing in England* (Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993) 3. Brown applies the notion of the “imperfect adult” from Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, trans. R. Baldick (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986), 127-29, 397.

objects of desire—mere propagators of fools.”⁴⁷ In order to equip women with reason and ameliorate their subservient social position, Wollstonecraft vociferously urged the reform of equal education, attempting to vindicate women’s right to have the same privileges as men.⁴⁸ Like Wollstonecraft, Caird is concerned with women’s subjection, tracing and placing emphasis on “the educating influences” that affect younger generations, and thus she proposes to educate girls and boys together (MOM, 110, 154, 206). Without equal education, girls will never be brought up as “adults.” “Now there is no woman, only an overgrown child,” says Margaret Fuller in her discussion of nineteenth-century women and their dependence.⁴⁹

It is indeed often the case that feminist criticism compares women to children.⁵⁰ The stereotype of femininity that links it to children’s innocence, purity and defenselessness constitutes what de Beauvoir calls “the prolonged infancy” of women.⁵¹ However, whereas the male child—abandoned or not—is an entity that, more often than not, promises to become the perfect adult in the future, the female child, due to unequal education, is doomed to be the “imperfect adult” for good. Thus in terms of power constructions, I would suggest that an abandoned girl can show more insight into women’s place in a patriarchal society. The abandonment of the female child even intensifies further the “imperfectness” of the imperfect adult in

⁴⁷ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds, Criticism*, ed. Carol H. Poston (New York; London: Norton, 1975), 9, 11.

⁴⁸ George Robert Stirling Taylor, *Mary Wollstonecraft: A Study in Economics and Romance* (1911; New York: Haskell House, 1969), 104.

⁴⁹ Margaret Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds, Criticism*, ed. Larry J. Reynolds (New York; London: Norton, 1998), 103.

⁵⁰ This analogy is based on the assumption that women are deprived of equal rights with men and that women’s lack of education and intellectual development bar them from behaving rationally and thus make them act like children. It is a result of external forces imposing upon women. Later in chapters 5 and 6, I point out that Grand and Schreiner reverse the analogy, equating men with children on the grounds of the societal privilege given to men and given to such an extent that men abuse it and are corrupted by it; consequently, men need the help of morally superior women to redeem them from moral infancy. These two analogies, it could be argued, show the different strands of feminism. While Caird and Wollstonecraft stand for equal rights feminism, Grand and Schreiner share much of evangelical (social purity) feminist thinking.

⁵¹ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 142. See also Brown, *The Captured World*, 182.

her. As the abandoned girl is cast away from society and her original family, the places in relation to which people identify themselves, so women in general are driven away from the power centers inside and outside the family, the centers that define people's status and allocate them space. In this light, Martha's position as an abandoned girl pointedly mirrors women's condition in society.

Apart from her feeling protective towards Martha, Hadria's adoption of the abandoned girl manifests clearly her intention to take up the same cause as Wollstonecraft and Caird, namely a reform of girls' education and a betterment of women's position in the long run. The following two passages indicate Hadria's new scheme of training for Martha:

[Martha] has to make her way in the world. She must not be too meek. Her mother was a victim to the general selfishness and stupidity. She was too gentle and obedient; too apt to defer to others, to be able to protect herself. I want her child to be strengthened for the battle by a good long draught of happiness, and to be armed with that stoutest of all weapons—perfect health. (DD, 246)

....

At least then, [Martha] shall have some free and happy hours first; at least she shall not be driven to it by the misery of moral starvation, starvation of the affections. She shall be protected from the solemn fools—with sawdust for brains and a mechanical squeaker for heart—who, on principle, cut off from her mother all joy and all savour in life, and then punished her for falling a victim to the starved emotional condition to which they had reduced her. (DD, 265)

Not surprisingly, Martha's mother is a product of the contemporary false system of education through which she has become a prey to men, Theobald and the villagers who utterly condemn her unchastity, but whom Hadria sees as selfish, stupid, solemnly foolish persecutors.⁵² To save Martha from her mother's fate, Hadria intends to educate her to be a strong-minded and healthy person.

⁵² It is also ironic here that Martha's mother is a school mistress who might reproduce in her female pupils the very education, constraints and ideology that have destroyed her.

This relates to what Jung says about the “child motif,” which, he argues,

represents not only something that existed in the distant past but also something that exists *now*; that is to say, it is not just a vestige but a system functioning in the present whose purpose is to compensate or correct, in a meaningful manner, the inevitable one-sidedness and extravagances of the conscious mind.⁵³ (emphasis in original)

If society itself represents the conscious mind, its “one-sidedness and extravagances” are projected, then, through its unequal treatments of the sexes, including women’s education. Thus as the child figure, Martha signifies not only matriarchy as it once existed but also a hopeful mechanism to correct the wrongs of patriarchy. Jung posits that the child is “both beginning and end, an initial and a terminal creature. The initial creature existed before man was, and the terminal creature will be when man is not.”⁵⁴ While Jung focuses on the analysis of the individual psyche, asserting that the child is the symbol of “the pre-conscious and the post-conscious essence of man,”⁵⁵ I would apply his reasoning to see the conscious mind of men as an analogy for human society as a whole. In view of this, Martha is emblematic of the initial creature with a powerful nature and instinct before patriarchy dominates human life. To educate her in the new light is to present her as the terminal creature that terminates what women are like *now* and anticipates the new women they will be in the *future*. In so doing, the antagonism of the sexes, direct or indirect, may be inducted towards a different balance where the lacks are to be compensated, the conflicts to be healed, the opposites to be united and new meanings to be rendered in the phases of civilization—a process leading to wholeness, which echoes the child’s “hermaphroditism”—not merely the literal meaning of bisexual/opposite nature but also the “functional significance [of] no longer point[ing] back, but forward to a goal

⁵³ Carl Gustav Jung, “The Psychology of the Child Archetype,” *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 151-81, 162.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 178.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

not yet reached.”⁵⁶

The watch event between Martha and Theobald, seen from this perspective, becomes significant. In the novel, Theobald is caught because Martha grasps his watch and has no intention of letting her treasure go. Hadria jokingly reifies the situation, interpreting Martha as an analogy of “Society with all its sentiments and laws, written and unwritten,” and Theobald, relatively, becomes “an excellent type of woman” whose “life and freedom,” as represented by the watch, is “chained,” as the watch-chain symbolizes, by “Her affections, her pity, her compunctions, which forbid her to wrench away her rightful property” (DD, 243). The function of the watch is to indicate time in its linear pattern, but this time, as Murphy succinctly argues, is primarily a masculine feature that denied women the chance to partake in Victorian society, because they were so bounded by their rightful duties as to have no “life” for themselves. Masculine temporality, as such, signals a constraint for, a control over, and “a form of death” to women.⁵⁷

Given that Murphy’s perception is sustained, one may also see the event the other way round. If Martha, as a child-figure, is represented with something of a pre-patriarchal nature as I have just noted, the fact that she takes command of the watch may recall (women’s) matriarchal control of the temporal linearity in the distant past. And as the child figure stands for futurity in Jung’s contention,⁵⁸ Martha could also be seen as an emblem for future development and future change, where hermaphroditism between the sexes, rather than domination over the other sex, is to be anticipated.⁵⁹ Thus that Martha controls the watch does not mean female

⁵⁶ Ibid., 173, 174.

⁵⁷ Murphy, *Time is of the Essence*, 167.

⁵⁸ Jung, “The Psychology of the Child Archetype,” *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 164.

⁵⁹ In Jung’s definition, “hermaphroditism” means “a *union* of the strongest and most striking opposites” (ibid., 173, italics my emphasis), not necessarily limited to the bisexual nature the word literally connotes. Thus instead of using “androgyny,” a term exclusively gendered, I use “hermaphroditism” to point to any antithetical possibilities between the sexes.

domination of any kind but women's leadership to reach a harmonious union.

In the novel, Martha is indeed bestowed with all that a child contains as an archetype. She is the symbol of a hope bringing forth "a sense of freshness and youth to the little *ménage*" (DD, 328, emphasis in original). Upon Martha, Hadria projects her prospective plan for girls' education, seeing it as the means of transforming women's place in society and consigning the usual fate of womanhood to the past. Into Martha, Hadria also infuses her personal urge for self-realization.

As the potential future, the child, in the words of Jung,

is a personification of vital forces quite outside the limited range of our conscious mind. . . . It represents the strongest, the most ineluctable urge in every being, namely the urge to realize itself. It is, as it were, an incarnation of *the inability to do otherwise*.⁶⁰ (emphasis in original)

Since the child contains such a force of future possibility, transmitting to Martha her unfulfilled wish becomes Hadria's craving as well. The yearning that arises from this complex is not centered upon the cultivation of Martha's "artistic" potential, for which the narrative offers no clues, but rather upon Hadria's attempt at the reparation and renovation of the mother-daughter tie, conjured up through her acting as a surrogate Demeter to rescue Persephone in Martha, and from the relation of which Hadria's wish-fulfillment is activated.

In Greek mythology, Demeter is worshipped as the Goddess of the Corn who gives the earth fertility and prosperity. After the loss of her daughter Persephone (also called Kore, which is simply the Greek for girl), Demeter is so desperate to search everywhere, and from the Sun, she learns that it is Hades who deflowered and kidnapped Persephone. In her mourning and anger, she lets no grains grow and the earth becomes so desolate that Zeus finally takes the matter in hand and sends Hermes to bring Persephone back from Hades. Because Persephone has eaten a

⁶⁰ Ibid., 170.

pomegranate seed Hades gave her, she has to return to him for a third of the year. Rejoicing at Persephone's return, Demeter makes the fields rich with fruits, even though she has to suffer separation from her daughter for part of each year.⁶¹

The Demeter-Persephone myth is significant in that it presents the cycle of death and rebirth, corresponding to Persephone's departure for the kingdom of the underworld (death) in winter, when no grains grow, and her return to the earth (rebirth) in spring, when new grains grow. The grain is Demeter's gift to the earth; it is a symbol of her child. When her actual child leaves her, the figurative child also disappears. Carl Kerényi thus states that allegorically Persephone could be viewed as equivalent to the grain and that the grain-figure, who sinks into the earth and returns with golden fullness, is essentially "the figure of both origin and end, of mother and daughter; and just because of that it points beyond the individual to the universal and eternal."⁶² As such, a note of immortality is struck here, highlighting the continuity of uninterrupted birth as well as of the matrilineal line.

The Demeter-Persephone myth is relevant to Hadria and Martha in my view because Martha is regarded by Hadria as a symbol of initiating the inheritance of the genuine matrilineal line, a line that shows a utopian mutual identity and support between mother and daughter; whereas, in actuality, it is a line, Phyllis Chesler argues, that has no existence in Catholic mythology or culture, where neither mother nor daughter can redeem the other since both mother and daughter are powerless.⁶³ "The woman who has felt 'unmothered,'" Rich tells us, "may seek mothers all her

⁶¹ Hamilton, Mythology, 47-54. See also Carl Kerényi, Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1967) 30-44; *idem*, "Kore," Essays on a Science of Mythology: The Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis, C. G. Jung and C. Kerényi, Trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969), 101-55.

⁶² Kerényi, "Kore," 117.

⁶³ Phyllis Chesler, Women and Madness (1972; New York; London: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1997), 57.

life” either by mothering others or by acting as a mothering figure.⁶⁴ Experiencing how a patriarchal daughter is treated by a conventional mother and having failed to find a surrogate mother to fill her longing for a Demeter-like maternal love, Hadria determines to be an unorthodox mothering figure, mothering Martha to be a matriarchal daughter. By adopting Martha, in other words, Hadria embarks upon a reshuffling of the mother-daughter relationship.

It is significant that Hadria adopts a *girl*, because it is only through the same sex that women’s experience has a taproot to the past as well as a potential towards the future. In line with Kerényi’s view that the Demeter myth implicates the sense of immortality, Jung indicates that

Demeter and Kore, mother and daughter, extend the feminine consciousness both upwards and downwards . . . every mother contains her daughter in herself and every daughter her mother, and . . . every woman extends backwards into her mother and forwards into her daughter. . . . The conscious experience of these ties produces the feeling that her life is spread out over generations. . . . This leads to a restoration . . . of the lives of her ancestors, who now, through the bridge of the momentary individual, pass down into the generations of the future. An experience of this kind gives the individual a place and a meaning in the life of the generations.⁶⁵

It should be noted that, as in the archetype, although a special sense of continuity is felt between mothers and daughters, this continuity will never be a fixed formula but will change in its implications over time, mostly through the daughters’ restoring and readjusting of the female line. The aim of this inheritance is that women experience “cathartic and at the same time rejuvenating effects,”⁶⁶ so that mothers and daughters, while sharing similar experiences, help each other towards a better outlook for the future rather than renewing a fettered chain of women’s fate without

⁶⁴ Rich, *Of Woman Born*, 242-43.

⁶⁵ Carl Gustav Jung, “The Psychological Aspects of the Kore,” *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 182-203, 188.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 188.

change.

It perhaps goes without saying that the Demeter-Persephone story reveals not so much about the daughter as about the mother. It legitimates the mother's anger and its expression.⁶⁷ It also demonstrates the power of maternal love, showing a mother's protectiveness towards her daughter. In her adoption of Martha, Hadria is presented with the Demeter configuration. For one thing, she is discontent with how many daughters, including Martha, are treated. Just as Persephone is raped and imprisoned by Hades in the Underworld, so Martha is figuratively raped and bullied by social norms, norms that reject her birth by a "fallen" woman and norms that make women live as in the Underworld, deprived of power over themselves.⁶⁸ Just as Demeter, sharing the same fate as her daughter, is ravished by Poseidon,⁶⁹ so Hadria, like Martha, is the victim of a patriarchal system that precipitates her, led by Hubert, into the abyss of false marriage. In regaining Persephone, Demeter regains part of her self, the lost maidenhood, not only narrowly in its corporeal term, but also broadly in its spiritual implications. Mother and daughter share the same experience, which reinforces their mutual reliance on and support for each other. Similarly, but in a more constructive way, in mothering Martha, Hadria wants to "reproduce" a re-modified mother-daughter relationship in which she performs "the humble rôle of scarecrow" (DD, 474) to watch over Martha, lest the girl repeat what Hadria herself and Martha's own mother have suffered as patriarchal daughters.

If feminism is principally a daughter's critique,⁷⁰ The Daughters of Danaus, I would argue, presents a narrative of a woman's burgeoning awareness of her role as

⁶⁷ Marianne Hirsch, The Mother/Daughter Plot: Narrative, Psychoanalysis, Feminism (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1989), 36.

⁶⁸ Chesler argues that mythologically presence on the earth is deciphered with different meanings for men and women. Whereas men are robbed of power by being sent to the earth, women's loss of power is to remove them from the earth. See Chesler, Women and Madness, 64.

⁶⁹ Kerényi, Eleusis, 31. See also *idem*, "Kore," 122.

⁷⁰ Maureen T. Reddy, "Motherhood, Knowledge, and Power," Journal of Gender Studies 1.1 (1991): 81-85, 81.

both daughter and mother. Rather than narrowing its scope to the effects of mothering and motherhood on the daughter, it provides a broader landscape to include the maternal story as well. It is true that Caird uses a daughter's perspective to criticize a mother's oppression of her daughter,⁷¹ presenting a mother's victimization under a patriarchal hegemony and her acceptance of its misogynistic values to shape her female offspring. While at the same time offering a daughter's resistance to a mother's oppression, Caird, I would argue, also attempts to set up a story seen from a mother's perspective to reflect the traditional mother-daughter bond, which emphasizes similarity (womanly subjection) rather than difference (womanly subjectivity). The power construct revealed in the novel is not merely a plot of a daughter's rebellion against maternal identity as a double tyranny (paternal law enforced by the maternal figure), but also a plot of breaking away from tradition towards a future possibility which promises both motherly and daughterly subjectivity.

The adoption of Martha reverberates exactly with such an attempt because, as a surrogate mother, Hadria intends to liberate herself from the old passive mother figure, abandoning the institutional motherhood imposed upon her, and substituting for it a project of effectuating the matrilineal tie based on which she actively and self-consciously rescues Martha from the biased gender training and nurturance manipulated by the paternal domination. Therefore, behind the arrangement of an artist-mother's adoption of an abandoned child, I would argue, lies Caird's motivation to revise and broaden a woman's story from the perspective of the daughter to that of the mother. As a rebellious artist-daughter to a conventional sacrificial mother and an unorthodox artist-mother to an adopted girl, Hadria enacts

⁷¹ Heilmann rightly points out that most New Woman novels are written from the perspective of daughters, especially daughters who are in a dilemma between their career for self-pursuit and their obedience for filial piety. See Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction*, 145.

what Rich sees as the task of “Re-vision: the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction” in order “not to pass on a tradition but to break its hold over [mothers and daughters].”⁷²

In relating the mother/daughter plot to the Demeter myth, Marianne Hirsch calls attention to the role Hades plays. Indeed, while Persephone’s reunion with Demeter (the mother) embodies life, her gathering with Hades (the husband) signifies death. Embedded within this mother-daughter bond is the ineluctable destruction incurred by male interruption, implemented first through Hades’ robbing Persephone of her virginity and later through his captivity of Persephone as the Queen of the Dead. What Hades enacts here is the role of seducer and conqueror. His intrusion is necessary, according to Hirsch, because only through it can the story of Demeter and Persephone, the story of mother and daughter, come into being.

Hirsch’s argument, making reference to the Homeric “Hymn to Demeter,” focuses on the occasion and formation of narrative itself,⁷³ but her reasoning, it seems to me, is still structured under the concept of relativity without giving the mother-daughter narrative its subjectivity to come into existence in its own right. While applauding the matriarchal significance the Demeter myth has, Hirsch, nevertheless, places emphasis on Hades’ intervention, seeing the power of male destruction as *the sine qua non* in the narrative of a women’s plot. Granted its narratological weight, it could still be argued that Greek mythology as a whole presents a picture of gender asymmetry because, ever since it came into being, participation in its education, examination, and interpretation has only rarely been

⁷² Adrienne Rich, “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision,” *Adrienne Rich’s Poetry and Prose*, ed. Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi & Albert Gelpi (1975; New York; London: Norton, 1993), 166-77, 167, 168.

⁷³ Hirsch, *The Mother/Daughter Plot*, 35-36. Hirsch’s reference of the “Hymn to Demeter” comes from *The Homeric Hymns*, ed. and trans. Apostolos N. Athanassakis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976).

granted to women.⁷⁴ Thus a hymn describing the Demeter-Persephone myth, written by a male poet,⁷⁵ is made to begin its narrative only when Hades intrudes, a narrative based on which Hirsch offers her analysis. In terms of plot tension, nevertheless, there is no question that Hades' interruption destroys the mother-daughter connection, a key point that decides Persephone's fate, and figuratively that of Martha as well. And this has much bearing upon Martha's reinforced image of the Double Abandoned Child Archetype and calls into question Hadria's motivation in "mothering" Martha.

Despite the fact that Hadria envisages a better outlook for Martha under her guardianship, it could be argued that her original motivation in adopting Martha resides not so much in her true concern for the child as in her desire for revenge. As she confesses, she adopts Martha "in a state of red-hot fury" (DD, 246), a fury against the child's impudent father as well as the social system as a whole, a fury far exceeding her sympathy for the child and the child's mother. This can be demonstrated by the fact that she uses Martha as a wish-fulfillment and an instrument of vengeance in the feud between the sexes, in her battle against men: "I can't help hoping that [Martha] may live to avenge her mother; to make some man know what it is to be horribly miserable" (DD, 264). While Hadria wishes to use herself as bait

⁷⁴ Diane Purkiss argues that classical myths belonged to "high culture," inferring authority and prestige not only for the texts but for the people who had knowledge about them, among whom only few women were included. See Diane Purkiss, "Women's Rewriting of Myth," The Feminist Companion to Mythology, ed. Carolyne Larrington (London: Pandora, 1992), 441-57, 441.

⁷⁵ Meredith A. Powers indicates that women under Homer's depiction were usually given considerable social distinctions but with minor or secondary status compared to men. Powers argues that although Homer has been considered the least misogynistic of the Greeks and even has been suspected by Samuel Butler to be a woman, his epics—the Iliad and the Odyssey—still show the nature of misogyny particularly in terms of the celebrated rules and values of heroic behavior. Homer's epics, Powers further suggests, were served as "a cultural imprimatur for the agonistic patriarchal tribalism" under which approval was only given to women who did not challenge but abided by male dominance, despite the fact that traces of matriarchy could still be found. See Meredith A. Powers, The Heroine in Western Literature: The Archetype and Her Reemergence in Modern Prose (Jefferson, North Carolina; London: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1991), 61-64. For references about Homer's gender which Powers draws, see Samuel Butler, The Authoress of the Odyssey (1897; London: J. Cape, 1922). See also Robert Graves, Homer's Daughter (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1955).

to let the sinful man who destroyed Ellen fall in love with her so that she can torture him, so Hadria wishes Martha could do the same to take vengeance on some man as well. Femininity, in this respect, becomes a weapon for Hadria to launch her attack on man and she wants this vengeance to continue through Martha.

Once in her conversation with her good friend Joseph Fleming, Hadria reveals the expectations a mother has of her children, "A mother has to find in her children all that she can hope to find in life, and she naturally desires to make the most of them" (DD, 192). Her admission, in my view, subtly satirizes her own position, which all along has been one of subverting her mother's expectations of her. While she rebels against the imposition of her mother's will on her, she imposes her own upon Martha, the only difference being that the former is in compliance with traditional womanhood and the latter with a vengeful, rebellious spirit. Just as Mrs. Fullerton sacrifices Hadria's happiness to abide by the social norms, so Hadria sacrifices Martha's happiness to carry out her retaliation. If a mother does not give her daughter freedom to develop herself, but demands or expects her to do as her mother wishes, daughters will always be sacrificed and there will never be a good interaction between mother and daughter.

It is worth noting that Hadria is not inclined to forego Martha's custody the moment she realizes that the seducer Theobald is Martha's father. In answer to Theobald's request to her to let go of the child, Hadria attempts to maintain her right to keep Martha, because she thinks Theobald is not devoted to the girl. It is not until Lady Engleton, acting as Theobald's intermediary, conveys Theobald's wish to regain his child that Hadria decides to give up her guardianship. As the narrative unfolds, Martha is seen by Hadria as her "last chance" (DD, 443) to fulfill her utopian dreams for women, mothers and daughters alike. Since this last chance is impossible to preserve, she simply uses it/Martha as an instrument to take vengeance

on Theobald. What Hadria does is to use Theobald's presumptions against him: she reacts to him beyond his expectation, since Theobald is self-righteous enough to think that he can control Hadria. By returning Martha's custody and refusing Theobald's suggested period for her to keep Martha, Hadria metaphorically gives Theobald two slaps on the face. For one thing, Theobald assumes that it will be difficult to persuade Hadria to hand Martha over to him, so he asks the acknowledged exemplar of traditional womanhood, Lady Engleton, to convince Hadria, planning to use the orthodox power to bring Hadria to heel. For another thing, he presumes that Hadria would want to keep Martha as long as she can, so in giving Hadria more time to be with the child, Theobald attempts to show his extreme generosity in the face of Hadria's expressed hatred. His schemes, however, only prove that he is over-confident, as he always is, in his assessment of the situation: to his astonishment Hadria suggests sending Martha to him the very next day. As Hadria points out, she would like to keep Ellen's rather than *his* child. Martha, in this light, becomes a bargaining chip in Hadria's rivalry with Theobald. In so doing, Hadria actually puts aside Martha's welfare, refusing to take into consideration the possible wretchedness and calamity that might fall upon Martha, since, prior to her adoption, Martha has been an abandoned orphan unwanted by her father. Just as Hadria adopts Martha "in a state of red-hot fury" (DD, 246), so she abandons her in the same light—both attempts are out of hatred and revenge. As a consequence, Martha is abandoned a second time. The utopian dream of rebuilding the matrilineal tradition between mother and daughter, as a result, proves its immaturity and impracticality, because Hadria fails to play a genuine Demeter role to protect Martha. On the contrary, she acts more like the destructive Medea-figure; she abandons not only her sons but her adopted daughter, sacrificing Martha to be revenged on Theobald.

It may be assumed that Theobald cannot give Martha a good learning environment. In his assertion that he will do his duty by Martha, it is still doubtful whether he will actually fulfill his role as father, since there has been no hint anywhere in the narrative that Theobald has any affection for or even patience with the child. In thinking to get Martha back, Theobald is merely concerned with the benefits to himself: “[Martha] will be a comfort to me, and will cheer my lonely home” (DD, 438). In this light Martha is no better than a pet, and there is no doubt that she will be trained by either Theobald or his sister to be a patriarchal daughter in line with the conventional education for girls, since he does not agree with Hadria’s educational ideas. In wrestling with Hadria for custody of Martha, I argue that Theobald, just like Hadria, is concerned not so much with Martha as with prevailing over his adversary. Theobald always imagines his power over Hadria; he even sees Hadria’s adoption of Martha as an evidence of his triumph over her. Martha is thus merely a pawn in their personal battle: Hadria wants revenge and Theobald wants masculine superiority.

Admittedly, Theobald is significant in Hadria’s relationship with Martha. Just as Hades intrudes upon the life of Demeter and Persephone, so Theobald intervenes to sever Hadria from Martha. Although the source of male intervention in each case differs (one is from the husband and the other from the father), the destruction it brings is fatal enough to influence seriously the mother-daughter relationship and change their fates. As Jung argues, the man in the Demeter-Persephone myth “is an indispensable but on the whole disturbing factor.”⁷⁶ Although he plays the role of seducer or conqueror as Jung asserts, the disturbing effect the man produces has by no means “no significance” as Jung proposes.⁷⁷ On the contrary, I would argue, it

⁷⁶ Jung, “The Psychological Aspects of the Kore,” *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 203.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

matters a great deal because, as Hirsch points out, the Demeter-Persephone story “does not reverse heterosexual plots of disconnection in favor of a model of female connection.”⁷⁸ In the novel, Theobald is the seducer and the would-be conqueror of the mother, a situation different from the original Demeter myth where Hades rapes and conquers the daughter. However, Theobald’s destructive power is no less devastating than Hades’; he destroys Martha’s futurity as well as Hadria’s several utopian projects. Because of his interruption, Martha is twice abandoned. While Persephone can still return to her mother every spring, Martha’s future fate remains unknown and she thus readily becomes the representative of the Abandoned Child Archetype. However, it is also because of Theobald’s intervention that an opportunity is offered to the reader to examine Hadria’s act of free mothering, drawing attention to her obsession with hatred and vengeance, which leads to her immature motivation in adopting Martha, an act of improper “infantuition”⁷⁹ not helping the child but harming her even more.

As such, when Jung, despite his psychological rationale, contends that abandonment is the requisite for the child’s independence, seeing it as a starting point from which the child detaches itself from its origins to gain maturity, he seems to assert that there can be a positive outlook for the child in its process of conflict confrontation. While Jung sees the abandonment as an encouraging stimulus for the child’s development, I see it as a negative force in The Daughters of Danaus, having dire effects on the child figures’ lives. The abandonment of these children, as represented in the cultural context of late nineteenth-century Britain, is strongly linked to maternal rejection and desertion, highlighting the failure of institutional motherhood but also putting into question the soundness of Caird’s concept of “free

⁷⁸ Hirsch, *The Mother/Daughter Plot*, 36.

⁷⁹ A term I adopt from the 2005 conference theme of the NCSA (the Nineteenth-Century Studies Association, USA): “Infantuition: Childhood, Youth and Nineteenth-Century Culture.”

motherhood.”

The Sisterless and Loverless Child
in Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man (1926)

“[T]he most womanly book that ever was written”¹ in Schreiner’s own opinion, From Man to Man is a depiction of the married and the literal prostitution of two sisters: Rebekah and Bertie. Parallel to Hadria in The Daughters of Danaus, who is trapped by two tricksters into a loveless marriage after her sister Algitha’s departure for London in pursuit of her own development, Bertie in From Man to Man undergoes a progression downwards to the extent of complete passivity and degeneration after her sister Rebekah leaves her to pursue a new life in marriage, a new life that, ironically and unknown to Rebekah herself at this stage of the story, amounts to institutionalized prostitution. In her downward slide to literal prostitution, Bertie is abandoned by three men, who typify patriarchal masculinity in their sexual philandering, hypocritical morality and objectification of women as an item of property. Not only that, she is tricked by three evil-minded women, who spread gossip or lay traps to hurt her. Rejection by her own aunt also reinforces the social exclusion of an impure woman like Bertie from the social community. From her abandonment by her biological sister and the patriarchal, egotistic men, to the loss of the sororal bond with other women, Bertie is portrayed as the very exemplar of an abandoned child.

In delineating such a pathetic figure, Schreiner intends to critique, on the one hand, the unequal imposition of Victorian sexual double standards on an innocent girl who has no knowledge of the world, and, on the other hand, the detrimental repercussions of the patriarchal training of women, which leads to sisterly

¹ Olive Schreiner’s letter to Havelock Ellis on February 2, 1889, LeOS, 153.

competition for men's favor instead of female solidarity. In so doing, Schreiner also draws attention to woman's dependency as a sex parasite, attesting to its destructive effect by Bertie's prostitution and final death so as to call for the urgent need for women to develop self-reliance. Centering on the desertion motif in the novel, the following discussion will examine Bertie's dysfunctional biological sister bond with Rebekah, men's arbitrary appropriations of her, as well as the female tricksters' malice of stigmatizing her, to cast light on Bertie's misfortune as an abandoned child, a misfortune rendered all the more devastating by the absence of sisterhood in her confrontation with the Old Men and the Old Women.

Bertie's abandonment by her biological sister Rebekah

A book dedicated to Schreiner's sister and daughter,² From Man to Man is, as Elaine Showalter remarks, about sisterhood and motherhood.³ However, while motherhood is potently presented, as will be shown later in the spirit archetype, sisterhood is given a negative portraiture, negative in the sense of alienation between biological sisters and rivalry among female friends. Strictly speaking, the novel is a representation of the "failure of female connectedness" as Tess Cosslett asserts,⁴ rather than "the solidarity of sisters" suggested by Ruth First and Ann Scott.⁵

In effect, at the outset of the novel, Schreiner does project a stronger sister bond, compared to that between Alghitha and Hadria in The Daughters of Danaus, by having

² Schreiner dedicates From Man to Man to "My Little Sister Ellie Who died, aged eighteen months, when I was nine years old. Also to My Only Daughter. Born on the 30th April, and died the 1st May." She never lived to know she was a woman." In a letter to Mrs. Francis Smith, Schreiner said: "I sometimes think my great love for women and girls, *not* because they are myself, but because they are *not* myself, comes from my love to her (Ellie)." See LeOS, 274, emphasis in original.

³ Elaine Showalter, A Literature of Their Own: From Charlotte Brontë to Doris Lessing (1977; London: Virago, 1978), 201.

⁴ Tess Cosslett, Woman to Woman: Female Friendship in Victorian Fiction (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1988), 153.

⁵ Ruth First and Ann Scott, Olive Schreiner: A Biography (London: The Women's P, 1989), 175; see also Murray Steele, "A Humanist Bible: Gender Roles, Sexuality and Race in Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man," Gender Roles and Sexuality in Victorian Literature, ed. Christopher Parker (Aldershot, Hants, England: Scolar P; Brookfield, Vermont, USA: Ashgate, 1995), 101-14, 107.

Rebekah act as a pseudo little mother, who not only nurtures her dream baby but also cares for her twin sisters, dead and live. In the Prelude, the five-year-old Rebekah reveals her sisterly affection by warming her dead twin sister with her fur-trimmed cape, by her meticulous caution in not making any noise to wake up the sister, who, she thought, was sleeping, and by her generosity in sharing with the sister her most precious toys. Her initial repugnance against the live twin sister, i.e. Bertie, on the other hand, is also miraculously transformed, after her dream of nurturing an imagined baby girl, into an anxious craving for sleeping with the new-born sister. Despite the housekeeper Old Ayah's teasing, the child Rebekah expresses her devotion to take care of and teach Bertie, just as she treated the dream baby in her dream. Apparently, the child Rebekah's maternal dream is significant, functioning, in my view, as a metaphorical catharsis in her preparation not only for the future New Mother in her adulthood but also for the acculturation of her sisterly dedication. So that at the end of the Prelude, Schreiner presents an affectionate picture in which the child Rebekah sleeps with her new-born sister Bertie with their hands "so interlocked, and the arm of the elder sister so closely round the younger, that [Old Ayah] could not remove it without awakening both" (FMTM, 43).

Here, an invocation of Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" (1862) seems to have come into play to illustrate the intimacy of the blood sisters:

Golden head by golden head,
 Like two pigeons in one nest
 Folded in each other's wings,
 They lay down in their curtained bed:
 Like two blossoms on one stem,
 Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
 Like two wands of ivory

....

Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
 Locked together in one nest. (GM, 1512, lines 184-98)

Parallel to Lizzie and Laura, the sister heroines in Rossetti's poem, whose physical closeness, as the quoted passage indicates, suggests their "potential sisterhood,"⁶ Rebekah and Bertie seem to have shared a similar trait, manifested by Rebekah's determination to nurture Bertie and their hand-in-hand gesture in sleeping. However, rather than eliciting a meta-narrative of Lizzie's heroic, self-sacrificing rescue of Laura from deterioration, the physical union between Rebekah and Bertie presented here serves as a foreshadowing, as Carolyn Burdett argues, of their common fate in different forms of prostitution later and thus as a revelation of Schreiner's parallel association of marriage with prostitution.⁷ Both Lizzie and the child Rebekah are portrayed as maternal nurturers. Lizzie, in particular, is endowed with the implication of a female Christ in her nourishing the "fallen" Laura, whose act of eating the goblins' forbidden fruit is akin to that of the Biblical Eve.⁸ In her attempt to redeem Laura, Janet Galligani Casey asserts, Lizzie is also redeemed from

⁶ Janet Galligani Casey uses the word "potential" because, to her, sisterhood in the poem contains several shades of meaning, not exclusively referring to the biological tie; see her article, "The Potential of Sisterhood: Christina Rossetti's 'Goblin Market,'" *Victorian Poetry* 29 (1991): 63-78.

⁷ Carolyn Burdett, *Olive Schreiner and the Progress of Feminism: Evolution, Gender, Empire* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 94.

⁸ For a discussion of Lizzie as a female Christ and a reading of Laura's fall with reference to the biblical allegory and the sexual ramifications, see Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1979), 564-75; Casey, "The Potential of Sisterhood," 63-78; Dorothy Mermin, "Heroic Sisterhood in 'Goblin Market,'" *Victorian Poetry* 21 (1983): 107-18. For Rossetti's correlation with religion and its impact on her writing of "Goblin Market," see Mary Arseneau, "Incarnation and Interpretation: Christina Rossetti, the Oxford Movement, and 'Goblin Market,'" *Victorian Poetry* 31 (1993): 79-93. Rather than interpreting Laura's eating the fruit in a sensory vein, Arseneau argues that Laura's fall is an evidence of her turning away from God, her failure to act according to God's will and thus her inability to interpret the symbolic meanings of the goblins, the fruit and Jeanie's story, since she knows what consequences will follow if she eats the fruit. In other words, she allows herself, Arseneau posits, to be tempted by the material world. Ellen Moers offers another dimension of critical thinking, regarding Lizzie's rescue and engagement with the goblins as "a spirit of heroism rather than of sainthood." In regard to the sibling pairs, Moers also points out an interesting Victorian feminine fantasy of the Gothic that the goblins are a group of monster brothers of "a separate breed" in opposition to Lizzie and Laura, appearing to tempt, to harass, to torture and to destroy the sisters. See Ellen Moers, *Literary Women* (1978; London: The Women's P, 1986), 100-04. Leila Silvana May, furthermore, approaches the poem from the perspective of female/sororal desire in confrontation with the male/fraternal desire of the goblins. See her article, "'Eat me, drink me, love me': Orality, Sexuality, and the Fruits of Sororal Desire in 'Gob(b)lin(g) Market' and *Beloved*," *The Significance of Sibling Relationships in Literature*, ed. JoAnna Stephens Mink and Janet Doubler Ward (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State U Popular P, 1993), 133-48, 135-40.

her passivity and timidity. The redeemer, in other words, is also the redeemed, and this is applicable to Laura as well: she is the redeemed, but her “fortunate” fall makes her the redeemer of Lizzie. Sisterhood between them thus exemplifies their interdependence.⁹ Rebekah’s nurturing of Bertie as seen in the Prelude, on the other hand, can only be effected in their childhood, and more precisely, in their sleep and in Rebekah’s anticipation, a fact indicative of the fantasized projection rather than the real practice of the ideal sisterhood. As the narrative unfolds, it becomes clear that sibling intimacy is largely replaced by estrangement and poor communication, and neither of the two sisters redeems or is redeemed by the other.

In discussing the sororal bond in “Goblin Market,” Diane Marie Chambers argues that the language of the poem is “a language of moral ‘should’ and a language of separation and connection, and it is this language which reminds us of the significance of sisterhood.”¹⁰ Likewise in From Man to Man, the motif of separation and connection is also a crucial marker in examining the relationship between Rebekah and Bertie. Both From Man to Man and “Goblin Market” envisage a utopian sorority and tackle the issue of moral “should,” but, where “Goblin Market” testifies to the reunion of sisters, From Man to Man underlines the detached, non-reintegrated sister tie until it is too late to repair it.

As Chambers observes, the original affinity between Lizzie and Laura is severed when Laura is tempted to eat the goblins’ fruit but Lizzie remains faithful to her moral principles. Although Lizzie has warned Laura of the potential danger, she returns home alone, leaving Laura at the mercy of the goblins. Even her appalling reminder of Jeanie’s wretched fate is told after Laura has committed the “fall.” Thus Lizzie fails to act out the moral “should” and this, Chambers conceives,

⁹ Casey, “The Potential of Sisterhood,” 68-70.

¹⁰ Diane Marie Chambers, “The Tie That Binds: The Idealization of Sisterhood in Victorian Literature,” PhD thesis, the Ohio State U, 1994, p. 95.

announces the beginning of the sibling separation.¹¹ Although Laura returns home after her fall to reunite physically with Lizzie, the two sisters are spiritually separated: “Lizzie with an open heart,/ Laura in an absent dream,/ One content, one sick in part;” “Day after day, night after night,/ Laura kept watch in vain/ In sullen silence of exceeding pain” (GM, 1514, lines 210-12, 269-71). Unable to bear the fact that she cannot share Laura’s pain and urged by her desire to reconnect with Laura on the verge of death, a condition implying their permanent separation, Lizzie is spurred, at the risk of her own life, to rescue Laura by getting the antidote from the evil goblins. The poem concludes with the moral the redeemed Laura teaches to the sisters’ children, whose hands cling together, about the importance of sisterhood:

“For there is no friend like a sister
 In calm or stormy weather;
 To cheer one on the tedious way,
 To fetch one if one goes astray,
 To lift one if one totters down,
 To strengthen whilst one stands.” (GM, 1520, lines 562-67)

In contrast to the supportive blood kinship Lizzie and Laura sustain and pass on to the following generation, the sisterly attachment envisioned in the Prelude to From Man to Man is immediately undermined when the central narrative, i.e. “The Book—The Woman’s Day” where Rebekah’s and Bertie’s adulthoods are portrayed, begins with a depiction of the eve of Rebekah’s wedding at the age of twenty. Like the temporal gap in Caird’s The Daughters of Danaus where a period of Hadria’s marital life is omitted to illustrate the tedium of her daily routine, a narrative discontinuity also emerges here: a lacuna of fifteen years is skipped over without any description of the two sisters’ mutual reciprocity, as if their relationship is so insignificant that there is nothing special to tell. At this juncture, Rebekah’s impending marriage, an event apparently suggestive of the inevitable physical

¹¹ Ibid., 93-100.

separation between Bertie and her, is incorporated, it could be argued, to weaken the already implicit, loose sister tie, *inter alia*, their emotional and spiritual contacts. A further foreboding to deepen the sense of their separation is conveyed by the narrator's comparison of the sisters' differences in appearance, personality and interests.

Physically, Bertie looks more femininely attractive: she has a tall figure, square shoulders, velvety cheeks and round brown eyes (FMTM, 49). Beneath her mature body lies, however, a child-like mentality, as suggested by her nickname *Baby-Bertie*, which indicates her innocence and simplicity but also her vulnerability. A pair of tiny feet disproportionate to her physique, which makes her stagger rather than walk, also hints at her defenselessness. Albeit older than Bertie, Rebekah, in contrast, is small in stature and white in face, but prior to her adulthood, her "sharp-cut face" (FMTM, 38) with "a firmness [like] a woman's" (FMTM, 7) in her child's day has already foretold her strong-mindedness as a "virile" woman, as will be seen in my discussion of the spirit archetype. Unlike Bertie, who has no interest in books, a fact implying her ignorance, Rebekah enjoys the world of knowledge in various kinds, and she takes delight in thinking and learning.

Christine Downing remarks that polarization is a means to perceive differences between sisters. It is also a way through which sisters define themselves as other than their "other" self:

For a woman the sister is the other most like ourselves of any creature in the world. She is of the same gender and generation, of the same biological and social heritage. . . . Yet this other so like myself is, ineluctably, *other*. She, more than any other, serves as the one over against whom I define myself.¹² (emphasis in original)

In contrast to Rebekah, Bertie is well aware of her lack of knowledge, and she longs

¹² Christine Downing, *Psyche's Sisters: ReImagining the Meaning of Sisterhood* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 11-12.

to be clever and different like Rebekah (FMFM, 90), but she is never shown at any point in the novel initiating her intellectual or spiritual development. Rather, she abides by the conventional regulations of womanhood, engaging herself mainly in domestic and physical attainments of femininity. Such divergences between them, albeit not completely in line with the common good-versus-bad paradigm of the novelistic sibling pairs,¹³ already give sufficient clues to bring to the foreground the different reactions to frustration the two sisters will show in their futures. For, although Bertie possesses physical beauty, she is unable to resolve, let alone transcend, all the problems her beauty incurs: men's lustful temptation, fetishistic idolization and excessive materialization of her, as well as the jealousy and rivalry that lead women to attack her. Rebekah, on the contrary, uses her intellect—another mode of beauty—to rescue herself, albeit after a succession of mental agonies, from further injuries inflicted by her philandering husband, a point I will explore later in the spirit archetype. The biological sibling pair, seen in this light, also display their disparity in personality, a contrast paradigm of active versus passive attitudes analogous to that between Algitha and Hadria in The Daughters of Danaus.

Like a baby, Bertie is especially dependent on emotion, eager to be loved and protected. Evidence may be adduced from the narrative recurrence of an arching arm metaphor: from the child Rebekah's sleeping gesture with Bertie in the Prelude, to the later parts where Bertie, after Rebekah's marriage, frequently imagines herself nestling inside a strong arm bending over her, and where she habitually clenches

¹³ Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Sisters," Fetter'd or Free?: British Women Novelists, 1690-1815, ed. Mary Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski (Athens, OH; London: Ohio UP, 1986), 136-51, in which Spacks, by comparing eighteenth-century works by Charlotte Lennox, Jane West and Jane Austen, argues that many women novelists dramatize the sibling pairs on the good versus bad plane, where the more beautiful sister is often morally inferior to the less beautiful sister. See also JoAnna Stephens Mink and Janet Doubler Ward, "Introduction" to The Significance of Sibling Relationships in Literature, ed. JoAnna Stephens Mink and Janet Doubler Ward (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State U Popular P, 1993), 1-10.

pillows tight in sleep as if to hold somebody firmly to gain a sense of protection.¹⁴ The overarching arm image, it could be argued, reveals Bertie's longing for same-sex mutuality, stretching from maternal affection to sisterly proximity.

As Nancy Chodorow succinctly points out, women mother in most societies and if biological mothers cannot mother, other women, rather than men, will replace them.¹⁵ As the novel unfolds, the two sisters' mother, known only by the name "little mother," mal-functions. In stark contrast to Hadria's and Beth's mothers who are dominant enforcers of patriarchal rules, the little mother in From Man to Man, as the epithet "little" suggests, exerts almost no influence on and over her daughters. Given that this maternal estrangement relaxes the ever-tensed mother-daughter tie seen in The Daughters of Danaus (and that will be seen later in my discussion of The Beth Book), it nonetheless places Bertie in line with the abandoned child, such that she looks for maternal comfort from her sister Rebekah instead, who, regrettably, also fails her. Parallel to Algitha in The Daughters of Danaus, who is determined to pursue a life of her own in London instead of cramping herself, in compliance with her mother's wish, into a dutiful and submissive daughter without self-identity, Rebekah in From Man to Man decides to marry her cousin Frank to satiate "a vague, insatiable hunger" inside her (FMTM, 56), a hunger, as the narrative reveals, springing from her romantic desire, which she wishes to consummate with Frank.¹⁶ Although Rebekah fulfills her personal wish, her marriage launches the sibling

¹⁴ For the metaphor of an overarching arm in the text, see FMTM 43, 74, 215, 299, 316.

¹⁵ Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (Berkeley; London: U of California P, 1978), 3.

¹⁶ Carol L. Barash argues that Rebekah's hunger for marriage is mainly out of a primordial desire to have children rather than constituting an act of love or passion. Yet, as the narrator tells us, Rebekah keeps Frank's letters under her pillow and "she did not need to read them; she knew them by heart. She kissed them one by one" (FMTM, 62). Later in Rebekah's letter to Frank, we are led to know that Rebekah truly loves Frank and desires to establish a family with him, despite the fact that she often associates Frank with a child, a point I will explore later in my discussion of the spirit archetype. It is indeed true that Schreiner intends to highlight Rebekah's maternity in the novel, but to deny any emotional content in her marriage impulse as Barash does is, to me, quite far-fetched. For Barash's argument, see "Virile Womanhood: Olive Schreiner's Narratives of a Master Race," Speaking of Gender, ed. Elaine Showalter (New York; London: Routledge, 1989), 269-81, 275.

separation, which, together with her failure to act out the moral "should," sets in motion Bertie's irreparable fall.

Bertie's tragedy, to be specific, begins when the family takes Rebekah's advice and hires a male tutor, Percy Lawrie, to fill her tutorial role after her departure. But Rebekah's advice reveals its cursoriness and crudeness in her neither thoroughly inspecting the tutor (despite his good credentials), nor refusing his assumption of the post when, on seeing him in person, she does not like him (FMTM, 54). In other words, Rebekah hands over her sister to a man she does not like and presumably cannot trust, with whom Bertie is to embark on a one-to-one apprenticeship, a hierarchy of power which is surely to Bertie's disadvantage, given her innocence and lack of learning. As Rebekah astutely observes,

[Bertie] has led a lonely life here. A woman who grows up alone on a solitary farm in South Africa is not quite in the position of most other women . . . she is still a child in the knowledge of men and life. Bertie does not know even the world of books. (FMTM, 91-92)

While Rebekah can be cautious enough to remind John-Ferdinand, their cousin and a would-be spouse for Bertie, of Bertie's simplicity and warn him not to bully her, she seems to be obtuse in overlooking the potential danger Percy Lawrie, a male stranger unknown to everybody, might bring to Bertie. Even when Frank, Rebekah's future husband, remarks on the danger of letting the beautiful Bertie alone with a man, "it's not the Garden of Eden yet" (FMFM, 54), Rebekah does not take this warning seriously and thus takes no preventative measures to save Bertie from the ensuing jeopardy: defloration.

It could be argued that Rebekah's sibling concern at this moment succumbs to her personal desire for emotional intimacy with her lover. She leaves behind the intimacy (such as it was) she had developed with Bertie, for whom she had played the role of a substitute mother in caressing, nurturing and teaching. This is not to

say that the sisterly bond has to take precedence over marriage, but that Rebekah fails to make the best preparation for Bertie before her marriage, given that she is the person who is supposed to understand Bertie the best, and on whom Bertie most relies since their “little mother” provides no useful help. In her concentration on her own heterosexual gratification, Rebekah is indiscreet in putting Bertie in danger of Percy’s potential sexual aggression, a condition parallel to Lizzie’s retaining personal moral principles while leaving Laura subject to the tempting power of the evil goblins. Like Lizzie, therefore, I think Rebekah fails to act out the moral “should” of sisterhood. Yet, while Lizzie literally sacrifices herself to rescue Laura, an act also suggestive of atonement for her lapse, we do not see Rebekah’s active intrusion at critical moments to help Bertie.

If the temporal gap is a revelation, as Patricia Murphy conceives, of the Victorian “temporal regulation” of women’s subjection, as shown in Caird’s The Daughters of Danaus,¹⁷ I would argue that the temporal gap is a device adeptly appropriated by Schreiner to reinforce the sibling disconnectedness in From Man to Man. For, in addition to the previous narrative discontinuity of a fifteen years’ hiatus, Schreiner leaves out another four years between Bertie’s loss of virginity and Rebekah’s first return to her maiden home after marriage. Unlike Algitha, who stays in contact with Hadria after her move to London, there is no hint of an intimate correspondence between Rebekah and Bertie during this critical interval, in which Bertie suffers an innocent but deadly fall and Rebekah goes through the anguish of a disloyal marriage. In other words, neither of them confides to the other her distress, and each suffers alone without emotional support from the other. (Bertie tries twice

¹⁷ Patricia Murphy, Time Is of the Essence: Temporality, Gender, and the New Woman (New York: State U of New York P, 2001), 157. In contrast to Murphy, Lisa Surridge keeps a more positive attitude, arguing that “temporal shift,” in her own words, could be viewed as Hadria’s chance for liberation from the constrained, realistic narrative history. See her article, “Narrative Time, History, and Feminism in Mona Caird’s The Daughters of Danaus,” special issue of Women’s Writing 12.1 (2005): 127-41.

to write to Rebekah but twice she tears up the letters). The temporal gap thus not only lays bare but highlights their spiritual estrangement. They lack the intense spiritual and emotional intimacy that a properly functioning “bond of sisterhood” can create, an intimacy especially important when either of them is needy of solace, subject to despair, fear, or frustration.¹⁸

Repeatedly in the novel, the narrator tells us how well Rebekah understands Bertie and how much she endeavors to protect her. However, dramatic ironies often lie behind these attempts. For instance, in her revelation of Bertie’s nature to John-Ferdinand, Rebekah states:

Some women with complex, many-sided natures, if love fails them and one half of their nature dies, can still draw a kind of broken life through the other. The world of the impersonal is left them: they can still turn fiercely to it, and through the intellect draw in a kind of life — a poor, broken, half-asphyxiated life . . . — but still life. But Bertie and such as Bertie have only one life possible, the life of the personal relations; if that fails them, all fails. . . . If the life of personal relations fails Bertie, all will have failed her; I want to save her from this. (FMTM, 92-93)

Personal relations are a multi-dimensional connection, encompassing not only heterosexual but parent-children, biological and metaphorical sibling relationships. According to Nancy Chodorow, girls’ development starts from personal identification with their mothers. This identification process is “interpersonal, particularistic, and affective,” different from that of boys which stresses “differentiation from others, the denial of affective relation, and categorical universalistic components of the masculine role.” Defining themselves as relational to others, women tend to

¹⁸ Carol Lasser, “‘Let Us Be Sisters Forever’: The Sororal Model of Nineteenth-Century Female Friendship,” *Signs* 14.1 (1988): 158-81. Although Lasser focuses more on female friendship, this “fictive kinship,” according to her, is transplanted from the familial networks of “bonds of womanhood” like mothers, daughters, sisters, sisters-in-law, aunts, cousins, etc. See also Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1977), 160-96, in which Cott extends women’s mutual identification from blood ties to “the peer relationship,” positing that sisterhood expressed in either affective way constitutes a group consciousness of womanhood.

establish closer ties especially with other women, since “relationships to men are unlikely to provide for women satisfaction of the relational needs that their mothering by women and the social organization of gender have produced.”¹⁹

While Rebekah recognizes that Bertie’s self is built in relation to others, and given that she is concerned about Bertie’s heterosexual tie with John-Ferdinand, Rebekah seems unable to see that she herself is also part of Bertie’s relational network and a link especially crucial to Bertie: she is both a surrogate mother and a sister to Bertie. However, prior to John-Ferdinand’s harm to Bertie, Rebekah has already done Bertie wrong by her negligence in setting the wolf to keep the sheep and by her failure, as the narrative discontinuity suggests, in effectuating a continuous, substantial care for Bertie after marriage. Given her attempt to “save” Bertie as she resolutely professes in the passages quoted above, a dramatic irony is clearly revealed here. Whether in terms of surrogate mother or biological sister, Rebekah achieves none of these roles successfully. It is no surprise, then, that Bertie has reservations about confiding to Rebekah her problems. Already a child abandoned by her “little mother,” Bertie is abandoned again as a sisterless child. Physical separation, in this light, is a development intended, in my view, to make clear the loose sibling relationship between Rebekah and Bertie.

To strengthen this point, Schreiner uses what I term “affective dislocation,” manifest in the way proclamations of sisterly devotion are only matched by a complete lack of communication, to illustrate the sisters’ alienation, an alienation which is at root spiritual, but which achieves its most ironic expression when they are physically (re-)connected. For example, on the eve of Rebekah’s wedding, perhaps from fear of the unknown future, Rebekah longs to be caressed and comforted just as she used to comfort Bertie. But Schreiner has Bertie “[sleep] on—a deep, calm

¹⁹ Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering*, 173-77, 199-200.

sleep" (FMTM, 62), as if to reinforce the impossibility of any emotional exchange between them. On her visit to her maiden home, that is, when she is physically reunited with Bertie, to give another example, Rebekah learns of Bertie's predilection for John-Ferdinand and indeed acts out of sisterly concern in warning John-Ferdinand not to hurt Bertie. Yet, when Bertie abruptly decides to go with her back to her marital home, Rebekah neither prompts Bertie to speak of what has driven her to this nor does she inquire of John-Ferdinand, even though she perceives that something must have happened to the couple. Similarly, when Bertie suddenly expresses a wish to move to her aunt's, after she has rushed back to Rebekah's from the dancing party in a state of distress, Rebekah never asks Bertie what happened at the party or why she wants to leave. Rebekah's silence and inaction on these occasions, in contrast to her proclaimed desire to protect Bertie, constitute the deepest of dramatic ironies. It may also be said that, having failed to establish a continuous close sisterly bond, it is unlikely that Rebekah could be privy to Bertie's trauma. The ineffectiveness of Rebekah's sisterly devotion is also manifest in John-Ferdinand's disregard of her warning not to fail Bertie. Yet, as far back as the Prelude, as Cosslett asserts, Rebekah's futile care for her dead twin sister has already foreshadowed her ineffectual love for the fallen Bertie.²⁰

Three calamities have happened to Bertie thus far. Although the first calamity, her fall from innocence, occurred when the two sisters were physically apart, the other two (John-Ferdinand's rejection of Bertie when she confesses to her lost virginity, and Bertie's overhearing gossip at the party about her defloration) both take place when Rebekah and Bertie are together. What is evident to the reader, however, is that Bertie never seeks support from Rebekah, and that Rebekah, though she does show some sisterly affection, shows it at the wrong time or in such a weak form that

²⁰ Cosslett, *Woman to Woman*, 154.

there is no prospect of her being able to rescue Bertie from her acute sufferings. Lack of communication and spiritual alienation so permeate the two sisters' interaction that even physical proximity cannot enable them to make contact. The motif of separation and connection thus lays bare another dramatic irony here: the nearest in distance is actually the farthest in mind. The interdependence we see in Lizzie and Laura in "Goblin Market," the mutuality of the helper (the redeemer) and the helped (the redeemed), is, after all, a mirage to Rebekah and Bertie.

Without a close sibling bond to support her, Bertie has to seek help from outside the family in order to escape from the haunting of gossips. This decision prefigures not only the sisters' permanent separation but also Bertie's fall into the irrevocable abyss: prostitution. Yet, this is the only solution the intellectually undeveloped, emotionally lonely and spiritually helpless Bertie can think of. Rebekah surely should bear a certain degree of responsibility for this outcome. No matter how anxious and strenuous she is in her eventual search for Bertie, Rebekah misses every opportunity to solidify a sisterly bond with Bertie until it is too late. Dysfunctional biological sisterhood thus initiates Bertie's fate as an abandoned child, doomed to wander from place to place, from person to person, until death can give her a permanent sanctuary more secure than Rebekah's unobtainable overarching arm. While death is the only socially prescribed ending for the fallen Bertie, death is also a dramatic irony that satirizes the failure of her sisterhood with Rebekah, despite their inexorably converging fates in prostitution, albeit of different kinds.

Bertie's abandonment by the Old Men

Preceded by sibling abandonment, Bertie's story, it could be argued, is a sketch of nomadism for a social outcast, starting from her seduction and ending with her death (presumably of venereal disease). On this itinerant downward path, Bertie drifts

from one man to another, as is partially suggested by the novel's title From Man to Man. Three men act as key figures in the narrative, and each represents a particular patriarchal trait that drives her step by step towards complete self-denial.

As has been briefly touched on, Percy Lawrie is the wicked initiator in the destruction of Bertie's life. He uses his authority as a tutor to entice the innocent Bertie. In order not to irritate him, Bertie, who wants to be liked by everyone, gives herself to Percy, only to find that he is an imposter playing with her: once his sexual lust is gratified, he leaves her stealthily but promptly. Here Schreiner draws on a garden image as an analogue to Bertie's purity. Built by the shared labor of the tutor and the disciple, "A Wild-Flower Garden in the Bush" (also the chapter title delineating their encounter) sets Bertie in a quasi-biblical surrounding in which Percy, rather than an Adam incarnate, is the manipulative deceiver who seduces the pure Bertie to eat the forbidden fruit. Unlike Laura in "Goblin Market," who is conscious of the danger of eating the goblins' fruit but unable to resist the temptation, Bertie is ignorant of the physical nature behind Percy's sexual coercion, and she loses her virginity in the hope of maintaining a harmonious relationship with him, a substitute affective tie that is all the more important to her after Rebekah's departure. Considered in this light, it may readily be said that Laura's fall is out of self will but Bertie's is innocent, since she is unaware of the social condemnation that awaits a fallen woman. The wild-flower garden in the bush, the original symbol of the Garden of Eden with a pure Eve inside, is thus severely destroyed. From one perspective, the garden (synonymous with Bertie) is destroyed by the snakelike Percy; from another perspective, that Bertie literally ruins the garden after Percy's departure also reveals her regret at having lost her purity. Despite her ignorance, Bertie's fall enacts what Rebekah is to tell John-Ferdinand later, that Bertie's life is built upon and dependent upon personal relations. The irony is that, in her attempt

to keep a relational tie with Percy at the cost of her virginity, Bertie exposes herself to endless adversity: her relational ties with others, as the novel unravels, are not strengthened but grievously disrupted as a consequence of her innocent fall.

If Percy is the initiator of Bertie's impurity, John-Ferdinand could be viewed as the catalyst in expediting Bertie's corruption. While the former is a typical shallow man of lust, the latter is an archetypal hypocrite of patriarchy in using the male-defined moral value system to judge Bertie, and in his later inadvertency in letting slip to his wife Veronica Bertie's misfortune. The chapter "Showing How Baby-Bertie Heard the Cicadas Cry" is a sketch of Bertie's encounter with John-Ferdinand. The cicadas are insects whose singing is a mating call produced by the males and whose life cycle lasts only a few weeks.²¹ Apparently, Schreiner uses this metaphor to refer to John-Ferdinand's courting of Bertie and his transient love for her.

As the narrative reveals, John-Ferdinand develops a fondness for Bertie during his visit to Bertie's parents. In this interval, they often take a walk in the bush up in the kloof, though they are mostly wordless walks. John-Ferdinand finds in Bertie a nature of the plumbago, a delicate flower characterized by its sensitive curling up if touched or plucked and by its fading in a moment once put in the hot, stifling air (FMTM, 85-86). While discovering Bertie's sensitivity and fragility as symbolized by the plumbago, John-Ferdinand is also impressed by Bertie's purity, so much so that he apotheosizes Bertie as an "absolutely spotless, Christ-like thing . . . a god of woman—the eternal virgin mother . . . almost too pure and sacred a thing for me to approach" (FMTM, 93-94). Obviously, in his idolization of Bertie, John-Ferdinand not only associates Bertie with the traditional femininity of a pure maiden, but also

²¹ For concise information on cicadas, see <http://www.amonline.net.au/factsheets/cicada.htm> (accessed on July 26, 2005)

idyllically envisions an Eden-like garden (as emblemized by the natural kloof where they seem to glimpse each other's inner being) where Bertie and he can live happily with their children, so happily that, in his own words, "Nothing can ever alter, nothing can ever change, our happiness, that springs from such deep love" (FMTM, 105). This declaration, however, only proves its insincerity when Bertie confesses to him her innocent fall, a fall so severe that his "deep" love for her is changed all of a sudden to an unsympathetic rejection of her, making his courting as short as the cicadas' life and his mating "crying" (rather than "singing") only a strident mockery of his momentarily fragile love.

Karen Scherzinger argues that From Man to Man could be viewed as a pastoral novel with the South African karoo as its prelapsarian background. To Scherzinger, Schreiner has nostalgia for an idyllic nature and she attempts to use pastoralism to highlight the parallel of a pure woman and a peaceful landscape.²² Indeed, the novel presents a pastoral setting in which John-Ferdinand is no longer a male intruder like Percy tempting Bertie, but an angelic Adam demanding an angelic Eve. It is no wonder that, on learning of Bertie's fall, John-Ferdinand makes no allowance for its innocent cause but responds that "It is not pain that matters, Bertie; it is sin" (FMTM, 109)—a priggish moral comment more destructive than a direct refusal to marry her would have been. As such, Bertie rushes down the kloof and part of her white muslin skirt is torn off "from top to bottom" by the thorny mimosa branch (FMTM, 109).

The image of the torn white skirt on the mimosa is significant in several aspects.

²² Karen Scherzinger, "The Problem of the Pure Woman: South African Pastoralism and Female Rites of Passage," Unisa English Studies: Journal of the Department of English 29.2 (1991): 29-35. For Schreiner's artistic outputs in relation to African landscape, see Cherry Clayton, "Olive Schreiner and Katherine Mansfield: Artistic Transformations of the Outcast Figure by the Two Colonial Women Writers," Short Fiction in the New Literatures in English: Proceedings of the Nice Conference of the European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, ed. Jacqueline Bardolph (Nice: Cédex, 1988), 31-39.

For one thing, and most clearly, it is used to reinforce Bertie's loss of virginity: a white dress often symbolizes female purity and its torn state suggests otherwise.²³ But that Schreiner draws on the image here, in addition to the previous image of the destroyed wild-flower garden, can also be deciphered, it could be argued, as a foreshadowing of Bertie's spiritual fall, the irretrievable fall of her innate pure nature after John-Ferdinand's rejection of her for her "sin" caused by Percy's seduction of her physical purity.²⁴

To elaborate John-Ferdinand's destructive power in contrast to that of Percy, Schreiner incorporates the rain motif in both cases. While the torrential rain after Percy's sexual aggression and departure can purify Bertie, the thunderstorm following John-Ferdinand's denial of her fails to revive her. In the first case, the narrator tells us:

All the earth had been washed clean and fresh. . . . A curious feeling came over [Bertie] as she sat there watching [the sunray after the rain]; it was as though a strong great hand were put out and took fast hold of her heart, that trembled and was so heavy, and held it fast. A curious quiet came over her. Was there not something that might make the past as if it had never been, and the "I have done it" as meaningless as "I have dreamed it"?

She sat gazing at that drenched world. It seemed as though the great hand stretched itself out and stroked her. (FMTM, 73)

Just as the rain cleanses the world, so it provides a function of catharsis in refreshing Bertie from her wound. That she regards her loss of virginity as a dream may not be an act of self-deceit but a renewal of hope as symbolized by the sun: she is awakened to the fact that, although she has lost her virginity, she is still a pure woman in mind, which matters the most.

²³ Rose Lovell-Smith, "Science and Religion in the Feminist Fin-de-Siècle and a New Reading of Olive Schreiner's *From Man to Man*," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 29.2 (2001): 303-26, 319; Gerald Monsman, *Olive Schreiner's Fiction: Landscape and Power* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1991), 155.

²⁴ Of course, the torn white skirt also symbolizes Bertie's ruined reputation as suggested by Monsman, *Olive Schreiner's Fiction*, 155.

However, one cannot deny the possibility that the return of menstruation is what releases Bertie from fear and back into innocence, though there is no explicit mention of this in the narrative other than the fact that the rain comes two months after Percy's departure, a panic-stricken flight that, to Helen Bradford, means something more than intercourse with a virgin.²⁵ Rose Lovell-Smith posits that the narrations of the rushing stream in the mountain bed, the redness of the sun reflected over the wet world, and Bertie's white shawl round her face (FMTM, 73) can all be seen as symbols of Bertie's period and her return to the original pure world.²⁶ To Lovell-Smith, there is a feminist implication here, that "women did not—and do not—'fall' once and for ever into a state of sexual uncleanliness: history has not already been written, the future may always be redeemed." While arguing that Schreiner rewrites a covenant for women, Lovell-Smith admits that it is, after all, a utopian vision, because Schreiner realistically presents Bertie's fall as irreversible, since the society does not allow Bertie to rewrite her past.²⁷ Despite the fact that Bertie's fall is not as visible as the scarlet letter A on the breast of Hester's gown in Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter (1850),²⁸ it leaves on Bertie the same indelible stigma, pinned on by John-Ferdinand and reinforced by the agency of the gossiping women.

It could be argued that John-Ferdinand's denial of Bertie is the propellant that brings Bertie to a clear realization of the harsh fate her innocent fall entails. And

²⁵ Helen Bradford, "Olive Schreiner's Hidden Agony: Fact, Fiction and Teenage Abortion," Journal of Southern African Studies 21.4 (1995): 623-41, 633.

²⁶ Lovell-Smith, "Science and Religion in the Feminist Fin-de-Siècle and a New Reading of Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man," 317. See also Bradford, "Olive Schreiner's Hidden Agony," 633-34, in which Bradford argues that, in Victorian times, Schreiner could only use symbols or images to represent menstruation and that "redness and rain commonly symbolized female blood, and the nineteenth century term for a miscarriage was 'flooding.'"

²⁷ Lovell-Smith, "Science and Religion in the Feminist Fin-de-Siècle and a New Reading of Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man," 317.

²⁸ Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter: An Authoritative Text, Essays in Criticism and Scholarship, ed. Seymour Gross, Sculley Bradley, Richmond Croom Beatty and E. Hudson Long, 3rd ed. (New York; London: Norton, 1988).

the impact is so devastating that the rain cannot revive her (FMTM, 109), and she decides immediately to leave the Eden-like karoo, a place emblematic of her purity, for the sophisticated city of Cape Town. This departure initiates Bertie's permanent separation from the pastoral, a setting that, for Schreiner, admits only the pure woman. As Scherzinger notes,

If Bertie must fall, she must be seen to do so away from the rural life, and her fall must be seen to be caused by strangers to this landscape. If Bertie is to be tainted, the pastoral cannot be portrayed as infected by her disease.²⁹

Although Bertie is not portrayed as a literal prostitute immediately after John-Ferdinand's rejection, the torn white skirt has already suggested not only the rupture of Bertie's intrinsic pure nature, pierced by John-Ferdinand's orthodox morality, but also the collapse of her illusions about her purity and personal value.

Seen from this perspective, John-Ferdinand, who proves so prickly in his judgment of Bertie's chastity, is synonymous with the mimosa, which is an effective image for patriarchal judgment in that it is fast spreading and inveterate, yet has so restrained a nature if touched.³⁰ Examining Schreiner's allegory "Three Dreams in a Desert: Under a Mimosa-Tree" (1890),³¹ Ann Heilmann remarks that the mimosa is "a symbol of Christian suffering and redemption" and that, when it is invoked in From Man to Man, it "figures Bertie's expulsion from bourgeois 'paradise' and the beginning of her social crucifixion."³² If the mimosa has a religious implication as Heilmann suggests, I would add that, while Bertie's suffering may well inaugurate her crucifixion, it promises her no redemption, only eternal damnation.

²⁹ Scherzinger, "The Problem of the Pure Woman," 33.

³⁰ For a brief knowledge of the nature of mimosa, see www.weeds.crc.org.au/documents/wmg_mimosa.pdf (accessed on Aug 3, 2005)

³¹ Olive Schreiner, "Three Dreams in a Desert: Under a Mimosa-Tree," Dreams (1890; London: Unwin, 1909), 67-85, repr. in LVMQ, 4.

³² Ann Heilmann, New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 2004), 131.

In depicting John-Ferdinand as a man of morality, Schreiner reveals his hypocrisy not only in the priggish pretensions of his response to Bertie, but also in his betrayal of Bertie's misfortune to a third person. Situated in a society that strictly regulates women's virtue in accordance with patriarchal rules to which he himself firmly adheres, John-Ferdinand should be aware of the outcome if the secret of Bertie's fall were ever to become known. If he really loves Bertie as he claims and sympathizes with her mishap (he writes to ask Bertie to return to marry him, but the letter is never sent), he should at least preserve Bertie's reputation. While he is conscious that Bertie has taken him into her confidence, and given that he considers Bertie's fall "a matter more hers than [his]" (FMTM, 137), John-Ferdinand can still be so careless as to disclose Bertie's secret to another person.

In fact, as far back as the Prelude, Schreiner has already insinuated John-Ferdinand's tendency to let his tongue run away with him. As the narrator tells us, the child Rebekah did not like the child John-Ferdinand. The main reason is that the child John-Ferdinand once snitched to the housekeeper Old Ayah about a maid, who had mistakenly broken the churn stick, and thus caused the maid to be beaten. While the child Rebekah and the child Frank also knew of this accident but kept silent about it, the child John-Ferdinand disclosed it and got the maid into trouble. For this, the child Frank even composed a little poem satirizing his brother: "You tell tale tit,/ Your tongue shall be slit,/ And every dog in the town/ Shall have a little bit!" (FMTM, 26). John-Ferdinand's gossipy nature, when he grows up, brings his victim a consequence far worse than a mere beating: it exposes Bertie to the endless haunting of gossips that eventually deprives her of any living space except prostitution.

Apparently, Bertie's story thus far is a parallel to Thomas Hardy's Tess of the

d'Urbervilles (1891).³³ Both novels depict the innocent fall of pure women: Bertie and Tess. And just as Percy Lawrie is a parallel to Alec, so John-Ferdinand is akin to Angel Clare. Like the simple Tess who concedes to Alec's sexual aggression lest he get angry and prevent her earning a living for her family, Bertie loses her virginity to please Percy. Whereas Tess confesses to Angel her past disgrace in response to his equal candor on their wedding night, Bertie confides her innocent fall to John-Ferdinand in answer to his revelation of a passionate love for her. Both Angel and John-Ferdinand share a similar trait in idolizing their lovers. What they actually fall in love with is, however, "a vision of purity."³⁴ Thus while Angel protests to Tess that "the woman I have been loving is not you" but "Another woman in your shape" (TOD, 248-49), John-Ferdinand convicts Bertie of being a sinful woman. Although Schreiner does not explicitly attack the Victorian sexual double standard through John-Ferdinand as Hardy does through Angel (John-Ferdinand does not have a dissipated past), she does, however, critique the fetish of feminine purity that preoccupies archetypal Old Men like Angel and John-Ferdinand, a patriarchal fetish that drives them to desert their "tarnished" women: Angel leaves for Brazil and John-Ferdinand establishes a farm, making Veronica the mistress of it in place of Bertie.

In contrast to Gerald Monsman, therefore, I think John-Ferdinand, like Angel, is more a villain in the outcome of his actions than a victim of social convention.³⁵ Yet to emphasize a villainy that is more hideous than Angel's, and the key to their difference, Schreiner infuses John-Ferdinand with a gossipy nature that will prove to be the ruin of Bertie. It should be noted that, although Bertie is haunted by

³³ From Man to Man was published posthumously in 1926, but Schreiner wrote about Bertie's encounter with John-Ferdinand in 1884. See her letter to Havelock Ellis on December 15, 1884, LeOS, 50.

³⁴ Scherzinger, "The Problem of the Pure Woman," 33.

³⁵ Monsman, Olive Schreiner's Fiction, 153.

women-gossipers, John-Ferdinand is the original gossip purveyor, who initiates Bertie's expulsion from the community. Here, Schreiner seems to imply that, even if John-Ferdinand rejects Bertie on the grounds of unchastity, he should not disclose Bertie's past to a third person, even a person so intimate as his wife, since the confidence is between Bertie and him alone. While he uses his moral standing to judge Bertie, he seems to have spared himself any moral chastisement for confidence breaking. Such an act is indicative of his discourtesy, insincerity, flippancy and unreliability. While Angel recognizes his mistake and returns to find Tess, John-Ferdinand still self-righteously holds Bertie to be in the wrong (when he sees her picture taken in Cape Town on his visit to Rebekah's home) and, even worse, has so little integrity as to reveal Bertie's secret to his wife. Tess and Bertie share the same fate as abandoned fallen women, but Schreiner intensifies Bertie's misfortune at the hands of a gossiping lover, so as to highlight John-Ferdinand's hypocrisy and cast his morality into question.

In writing Bertie's story thus far, Schreiner was, to some extent, writing her own, and she self-reflexively revealed her anxiety about the gossiping culture she was situated in. In a letter to Havelock Ellis, Schreiner stated her identification with Bertie:

Rebekah is me; I don't know which is which any more. But Bertie is me, and Drummond is me, and all is me, only not Veronica and Mrs. Drummond (except a little!). Sometimes I really don't know whether I am I or one of the others.³⁶

As some critics have pointed out, Bertie's seduction by Percy and betrayal by John-Ferdinand mirrored Schreiner's own affair with Julius Gau, her first lover whom she met at the age of 16 when she was leading an impoverished governess' life

³⁶ Olive Schreiner's letter to Havelock Ellis on January 24, 1888, LeOS, 129.

in Dordrecht.³⁷ According to the Reverend Zadoc Robinson, Schreiner came to his family around 1870 for an extended visit, and she then became intimate with Mr. and Miss Gau not long after. When Miss Gau had typhoid fever, Schreiner moved into the Gau's residence to nurse her.³⁸ A sophisticated businessman ten years older than Schreiner, Gau is said to have seduced her, which led to a quick engagement, a suspected pregnancy and an abortion (or a miscarriage), an event to which Cherry Clayton attributes the frequent image of dead babies in Schreiner's fiction.³⁹

Although, as Ruth First and Ann Scott indicate, very few factual accounts exist that could clarify Schreiner's relationship with Gau,⁴⁰ from scattered clues, we may still get a rough picture of their affair as well as Schreiner's sense of being haunted by gossips. In a letter to Ellis nearly twenty years after the Gau episode, Schreiner recalled her situation then: "when I was at Dordrecht, I had such a horror of eating before people, I couldn't, and how I used to have to eat alone, and how it kept on *all the time my periods stayed away*, and I told you what unkind, untrue things they said about it" (emphasis added).⁴¹ Troubled by the gossip and her delayed menstruation, but released by Miss Gau's recovery at this juncture, Schreiner started a long journey, in Gau's company, from Dordrecht to Hertzog to join her parents there. It was after the journey that Schreiner mentioned, in a family correspondence to her sister Katie,⁴² her engagement with Gau without yet a fixed date for their wedding. Nonetheless, Schreiner cautioned Katie to keep secret about it:

³⁷ Cherry Clayton, Olive Schreiner (New York: Twayne, 1997) 10-12; Bradford, "Olive Schreiner's Hidden Agony," 624-34.

³⁸ LiOS, 84-90; First and Scott, Olive Schreiner, 61-63, in which First and Scott also make reference to and modify the accounts of two other Schreiner biographers, Vera Buchanan-Gould and Johannes Meintjes; Joyce Avrech Berkman, The Healing Imagination of Olive Schreiner: Beyond South African Colonialism (Oxford: Plantin, 1989), 29-30.

³⁹ Clayton, Olive Schreiner, 11. See also Bradford, "Olive Schreiner's Hidden Agony," 623-41.

⁴⁰ First and Scott, Olive Schreiner, 62.

⁴¹ Olive Schreiner's letter to Havelock Ellis on March 18, 1889, OLS, 151. Interestingly, S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner also collected this letter, but he omitted the phrase I italicized; see LeOS, 157.

⁴² Catherine Whitby (1838-98) was Schreiner's eldest sister, wife of John Findlay. See OLS, 4, note 1.

As a rule I think it great nonsense to wish such a thing not to be spoken of, but circumstances alter cases . . . [people take] such an interest in other people's affairs that when one person knows the whole country knows in few weeks."⁴³

It is unknown whether Schreiner had an abortion, a miscarriage, or simply delayed periods, but her engagement with Gau was eventually broken off: "It is all dark, dark, no hope, none, wish for nothing, the only bright spot is my foolish dream."⁴⁴ Obviously not a happy encounter, the Gau episode kept haunting Schreiner to such an extent that, nearly twenty years later, she described it as "the hidden agony of my life no human being understands."⁴⁵ As Schreiner said in her own defense, "I have never moved without a motive,"⁴⁶ it is clear that she left Dordrecht in order to escape malicious gossip. Seen in this light, her portrayal of Bertie seems to have betrayed her abhorrence of gossipers and her belief in the deadly power gossips, even just one gossip, could have over their victim.

Twice spurned by the Old Men incarnates in the pastoral scene, Bertie, as Scherzinger conceives, is virtually abandoned by Schreiner, because Schreiner keeps the fallen Bertie away from returning to the pastoral so as to preserve the purity of Nature.⁴⁷ Indeed, once she has left her native place, Bertie is continuously surrounded by civil communities: from Rebekah's house in metropolitan Cape Town, to Aunt Mary-Anna's at a small town in the up country, and eventually to London. While the two former places are like execution fields where Bertie is persecuted by endless gossips, London becomes the burial ground of Bertie's body and soul as a woman kept by a nameless Jew, carrying to its completion the spiritual fall that I have argued was foreshadowed by her torn white skirt on the mimosa branch. It is

⁴³ Olive Schreiner's letter to Katie on August 18, 1872, *OLS*, 6.

⁴⁴ *LiOS*, 89.

⁴⁵ Olive Schreiner's letter to Havelock Ellis on March 18, 1889, *LeOS*, 158. See also *OLS*, 152.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Scherzinger, "The Problem of the Pure Woman," 33.

in London that Schreiner brings Bertie to her final downfall. It is also in London that Schreiner distinctly conveys her complete desertion of Bertie: she not only precludes Bertie from any return to Nature, but denies her the alternative of living in dignity in a social community. Bertie degenerates to the point where she becomes a sex parasite (albeit illegally), a status Schreiner was forcefully asking women to discard at the time, and then a streetwalker.

Ranging over sixty pages in length, the chapter, "How the Rain Rains in London," outlines Bertie's life with a Jew, the only part of the novel that had any vitality in Hugh Walpole's eyes.⁴⁸ As the chapter title subtly suggests, particularity and triviality are to be suffused into the portrayal of Bertie's regressive state as a kept woman. In so doing, Schreiner also simultaneously intensifies the alignment of the Jew, Bertie's captor, with material obsession and possession, so as to criticize the commodity exchange of women in the patriarchy.

Basically, Schreiner's Jew is pictured in concurrence with the stereotypical literary portraiture of the race: an old-clothes lad in childhood, a wandering Jew immigrating from Germany to England, a money-minded businessman engaged in the diamond speculation enterprise in South Africa, a usurer like Shakespeare's Shylock in The Merchant of Venice (1596/1597),⁴⁹ a miser (who lives in a small room, letting the rest of the house to lodgers) and social outcast in London like Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol (1843).⁵⁰ To impress on

⁴⁸ Hugh Walpole, "The Permanent Elements in Olive Schreiner's Fiction: Review of From Man to Man," The New York Herald Tribune, May 1, 1927, repr. in Cherry Clayton, ed., Olive Schreiner (Johannesburg: McGraw-Hill, 1983), 91-93, 92.

⁴⁹ William Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, ed. M. M. Mahood (1596/1597; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

⁵⁰ Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol, ed. & intro. John Mortimer (1843; New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1993). Examining the historical changes of the images of the Jew in Europe (Spain, Germany and England) from the Middle Ages to the Victorian era, Anne Aresty Naman synthesizes several Jewish stereotypes: the moneylender, the old-clothes man, the peddler, the usurer, the murderer, the devil, the pariah, and scapegoat and so on. See her book, The Jew in the Victorian Novel: Some Relationships Between Prejudice and Art (New York: AMS P, 1980), 31-56. Although Scrooge is never indicated clearly as a Jew in Dickens' A Christmas Carol, his miserliness, alienation from

the reader the race's peculiar physical traits—"the aquiline nose, dark eyes, pale forehead, and raven locks,"⁵¹ Schreiner introduces her Jew as follows:

He was a small man of about fifty, with slightly bent shoulders and thin, small limbs. His face was of a dull Oriental pallor, and his piercing dark eyes and marked nose proclaimed him at once a Jew; above a high square forehead rose a tower of stiffly curling, gray, upright hair. He spoke with a strong foreign accent. (FMTM, 306)

While Dickens often calls the villainous Fagin in Oliver Twist (1838) "the Jew,"⁵² Schreiner even goes further in never giving her Jew a name but simply dubbing him "the Jew" throughout the narrative. Though not entirely anti-Semitic, this non-naming artifice must reflect to some degree Schreiner's stereotyping of the Jewish people, despite her high appraisal of the race some years later.⁵³

As the narrator tells us, Bertie elopes with the Jew to escape the molestation of gossips. Her life with him is, however, all the more restricted because she can only remain on the first floor in his house, and is forbidden to go outside unless escorted by the Jew himself or Isaac, the housekeeper's retarded son. Not only that, the Jew prevents Bertie from conversing and corresponding with other people. Although he showers Bertie with as much luxury as he can afford, Bertie is penniless: whatever she wants, the Jew buys for her. Like a caged bird, Bertie is gradually driven to depression, anorexia and eventually an eating disorder that leaves her sloppy, fat, and

communities and resistance to celebrate Christmas seem to suggest his Jewishness. To Jonathan H. Grossman, that Dickens does not point out Scrooge's possible Jewish identity implies the race's silence and effacement in fiction and in fact. See his article, "The Absent Jew in Dickens: Narrators in Oliver Twist, Our Mutual Friend, and A Christmas Carol," Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian Fiction 24 (1996): 37-57, 49-52.

⁵¹ Rev. John Dunlop, ed., Memory of Gospel Triumphs among the Jews during the Victorian Era (London: S. W. Partridge and Co., 1894), p. 344, quoted in Naman, The Jew in the Victorian Novel, 55. On page 34 of the book, Naman also points out the public association of the Jew with the markers of the devil: "horns, tail, talons, goat's beard, black coloring, a unique odor."

⁵² Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist, or, The Parish Boy's Progress, ed. and intro. Philip Horne (1838; London: Penguin Books, 2003). Grossman studies how Dickens' narrator presents Fagin in Oliver Twist, focusing on the naming of this character rather than the stereotypical references to the Jew. See Grossman, "The Absent Jew in Dickens," 38-45.

⁵³ Schreiner wrote "How the Rain Rains in London" in September, 1883, but she wrote "A Letter on the Jew" for a public meeting of the Jewish organization on July 1, 1906. Read by her husband S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, the draft expressed Schreiner's deep respect for and appreciation of the Jewish contribution to the world. See LiOS, 158; and Appendix F, LeOS, 392-95.

silent. Schreiner delineates Bertie's progressive deterioration in such a meticulous way that the whole description centers on details of Bertie's monotonous and confined life, so much so that it comes as no surprise that Bertie should pay attention to "How Rain Rains in London." Ruth Parkin-Gounelas rightly remarks that the depiction is a "language of objectification;" it is "mostly external; objects and physical gestures . . . confine and define [Bertie] . . . [till] she is reduced to the status of the objects that surround her."⁵⁴

It perhaps goes without saying that the Jew considers Bertie not only an object, but more precisely, a commodity that he gains in exchange for his wealth. Vice versa for Bertie, she exchanges her body for material shelter from the Jew. Developing the concept of the abstraction implied in exchange, Laura E. Donaldson states:

The capitalist process of exchange requires that its objects remain immutable during all phases of its transactions: exchange not only abstracts the material content from commodities and substitutes contents of purely human significance, but also "excludes everything that makes up history. . . . The entire empirical reality of facts, events and description by which one moment and locality of time and space is distinguishable from another is wiped out."⁵⁵

Imprisoned at the Jew's house like a commodity, Bertie becomes a kept woman whose spiritual purity, if there is any left after the damage John-Ferdinand has done her, is totally abstracted now. Between the Jew and Bertie, there is certainly a sexual exchange as the narrative hints at their sleeping together (FMTM, 345-46). Yet, as Janet Galligani Casey points out, it was impossible for Schreiner, writing when she did, to give an explicit account of the affair: she is obliged to describe it

⁵⁴ Ruth Parkin-Gounelas, *Fictions of the Female Self: Charlotte Brontë, Olive Schreiner, Katherine Mansfield* (London: Macmillan, 1991), 111-13.

⁵⁵ Laura E. Donaldson, "(ex)Changing (wo)Man: Towards a Materialist-Feminist Semiotics," *Cultural Critique* 11 (1988-89): 5-23, 11, inner quotation from Alfred Sohn-Rethel, *Intellectual and Manual Labor: A Critique of Epistemology*, trans. Martin Sohn-Rethel (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities P, 1978), 48-49.

metaphorically “in terms of sensuality turned grotesque.”⁵⁶

Donaldson argues that timelessness and universality are the characteristics of commodity exchange since, as is often the case, what is to be changed is the owner/buyer, not the object.⁵⁷ Thus a detailed portrayal of Bertie’s status as a commodity leaves out the factors of time and space: every day and every place she stays or goes are the same. To emphasize the universal marker of the kept woman in Bertie, Schreiner incorporates a scene, in which Bertie meets a mother with her daughter on the street, to give a sense of the public conception and reception of women of Bertie’s sort:

Bertie looked at them, and an irresistible impulse came over her; she put out her hand and laid it softly on the sleeve of the sealskin jacket. The woman glanced down quickly, as everyone glances at being touched in London. For an instant she looked at Bertie and took it all in—the beautiful round white face with its fringed eyes, the little *fifteen-guinea* French bonnet tied a little askew on the natural curls, the *ninety-guinea* sealskin coat with the edge of pink silk showing below it, and the points of white petticoat with *priceless* lace that had tipped here and there in the mud; she looked at the little house-shoe with the paste buckle and the ungloved hand with the rings. All her face hardened . . . she turned and said to her daughter, “Dear, we must go now.” (FMTM, 354, emphases added)

As if to draw a partial parallel to Melia in Hardy’s “The Ruined Maid” (1901) whose appearance [“fair garments,” “gay bracelets and bright feathers three,” “delicate cheek,/ And . . . little gloves fit as on any la-dy” (RM, 1744-45, lines 3, 7, 14-15)], as she explains to her girl friend, denotes her ruined state as a prostitute,⁵⁸ Schreiner describes Bertie’s looks through a material lens, adding in the monetary values of what she wears, to illustrate the materiality of Bertie as a commodity to be purchased, a marker whereby her status is defined but also one that is easily

⁵⁶ Janet Galligani Casey, “Power, Agency, Desire: Olive Schreiner and the Pre-Modern Narrative Moment,” *Narrative* 4.2 (1996): 124-41, 136.

⁵⁷ Donaldson, “(ex)Changing (wo)Man,” 11.

⁵⁸ I am grateful to Roger Garfitt for this reference.

recognized, as the mother on the street has shown us. Bertie does not have Melia's motivation for accepting her fallen state, Melia being a poor country girl who had known the harsh alternative of field labor, but equally Bertie makes no attempt to escape from it: she accepts her *status quo*, a response as passive as her recognition of her insufficient knowledge compared with her sister Rebekah. If Schreiner is cruel in ejecting Bertie from the pastoral, it could also be said that she shows no sympathy in her description of Bertie's downfall: while the Jew objectifies Bertie, Schreiner describes Bertie from a materialistic perspective and presents her as somewhat lackadaisical, as suffering, in fact, from what contemporary therapists would call low self-esteem and deep clinical depression.⁵⁹ However, it is only through a realistic depiction of the change from a passive woman to a fallen woman as a commodity of exchange that Schreiner can show the female parasite outside marriage in contrast, or more precisely, in parallel to that inside marriage (as shown in Rebekah), in order to call into question the debasement that women of both kinds face as the destiny marked out for them by society.

In sketching Bertie's life in London, it is manifest that Schreiner wants to present the villainy of the Jew, but she is also reserved in so doing because she provides reasons for the Jew's morbid obsession, tracing it back to the insecurity and poverty of his life with his sister, which gives him not only an intense desire for wealth and family affection but also a profound mistrust of people. What is more interesting is that Schreiner often associates the Jew with a mother image. For instance, he caresses the diamond stone Bertie has touched "as a mother might the hair of a child with which she was to part" (FMTM, 312). Seeing that Bertie is

⁵⁹ Presenting a different view, albeit insufficiently supported, in my opinion, by the evidence, Vineta Colby argues that Bertie's martyrdom is "redeemed" by Schreiner's "intense compassion for the character and her moving account of the girl's gradual withdrawal from reality." See Vineta Colby, The Singular Anomaly: Women Novelists of the Nineteenth Century (London: U of London P; New York: New York UP, 1970), 99.

sleeping, to give another example, the Jew feels like pressing Bertie's soles against his face, "as women press the feet of little children" (FMTM, 331). When Bertie sobs in front of the piano and her shoulder convulses, the Jew "moved from one foot to the other with his hand extended, as an old hen might shuffle whose chicken was in a convulsion she could not understand" (FMTM, 339-40). One night after a visit to the theater, Bertie sobs hysterically and the Jew coaxes her to drink some wine to calm down "as one speaks to a child" (FMTM, 349). All these descriptions seem to re-reinforce the baby image that Bertie's nickname suggests, and the representation of the Jew, it could be argued, is the outcome of over-affective transference.

Earlier in the narrative when the Jew first appears (in chapter 9: "Cart Tracks in the Sand"), Schreiner uses flashback to rough out a strong brother-sister tie between the Jew and his sister fifty years ago, sketching their destitution as orphans and their strong determination to make each other's life better in the future. Memories of his sister overcome the Jew when he recalls his first encounter with Bertie at her aunt's house: "all the while, as [the Jew] saw the pictures, he saw also dimly Bertie's face at the head of the table, with the thick curling hair above the low forehead and the large eyes with the curled lashes that had waked the old pictures" (FMTM, 311). Specifically, the curled lashes bring back a picture from his early years, his sister greeting him as he returned to their East End garret with a fresh collection of old clothes to repair. The sister's subsequent fate is unknown (very likely death as the Jew has already been living alone in London with his housekeeper and her retarded son for twenty years), but it is reasonable to assume that the Jew transfers his memory of and concern for his sister to Bertie. This explains his anxiety about Bertie's health: he sends for a doctor when she falls into depression and follows the doctor's advice to let Bertie take a walk every day and later go to the seaside for fresh air. As if to keep his early promise of providing material ease for his sister,

the Jew has become rich, buying the tall house in Bloomsbury they had always dreamed of. But in the absence of his sister, the Jew has Bertie to enjoy all the luxury he can offer. This affective transference, when it goes to extremes, becomes first a mothering of Bertie and then an obsessive possession of her, driven by the fear that he might lose his "sister" all over again.

Having experienced economic penury and social isolation before, the Jew prizes his wealth to such an extent that he cannot trust anyone else except himself to monitor his possessions. As Bertie is, on one level, his "possession," the Jew controls her in every way, yet with affection, given her role as his substitute sister and metaphorical daughter. Whatever Bertie is, one thing for certain is that the Jew cannot share her with others. This explains the fury in which he drives Bertie away once he learns of her encounter with his nephew, an encounter contrived by the housekeeper to get rid of Bertie for her own ends. Associated with money and portrayed as a captor, the Jew is a villain no better than John-Ferdinand because, as Donaldson notes, they both regard Bertie as a commodity: while the Jew materializes Bertie, John-Ferdinand denies Bertie's value as a pure wife, a construct built on the concept that woman is a commodity "exchanged patronymically from father to husband."⁶⁰ Having said that, it cannot be denied that Schreiner is inclined to attribute the Jew's villainy to the psychological trauma of his early life. As Ann Heilmann rightly argues, both the Jew and Bertie are social outcasts,⁶¹ but Bertie's fate is all the more adverse, since she is not only a motherless and sisterless child, but is abandoned by archetypal Old Men like Percy Lawrie, John-Ferdinand and the Jew. The rain that rains in London, seen in this light, not only implies Bertie's purposeless,

⁶⁰ Donaldson, "(ex)Changing (wo)Man," 9.

⁶¹ Ann Heilmann, "Over that Bridge Built with our Bodies the Entire Human Race Will Pass': A Rereading of Olive Schreiner's *From Man to Man* (1926)," *The European Journal of Women's Studies* 2 (1995): 33-50, 47, note 11.

boring life but also metaphorically suggests the tears she sheds in her despair.

Bertie's abandonment by the female tricksters

If only Bertie had the support of sisterhood, her tragedy would have been lessened to a considerable degree. Schreiner explicitly indicates this point, firstly, by showing the looseness of Bertie's bond with her mother and sister Rebekah, as I have discussed earlier, and secondly, through a depiction of how Bertie is hurt by gossips and tricks effected by women, the result of which is Bertie's social ostracism. As has been remarked, tricksters represent some evil part of individuals or societies and often invoke negative effects. Like Caird, Schreiner appropriates two trickster figures, the deceiver (trick-player) and the situation-invertor, to illustrate the failure of sisterly solidarity in the novel. Here, the situation-invertor, apart from that provoked by trick-playing as we have seen in The Daughters of Danaus and will see in the Jew's housekeeper Martha, refers mostly to the malicious gossip, or more precisely, the scandalmonger, whose derogatory talk topples the life of the talked-about.

In her thorough study of gossip, Patricia Meyer Spacks categorizes three kinds of gossip: first, gossip with malice, aiming to damage one's reputation; second, gossip without purposeful intent, deriving purely from unconsidered idle talk; and third, serious gossip serving to consolidate intimate relationships.⁶² Although the second type, "tattling," may not originate from the deadly sins of the heart (pride, envy, greed, and anger) as the malicious gossiping often does, its indiscretion can be equally destructive of one's reputation, which, once it happens, is hard to counter, however unfair it may be. And this is especially so for women whose reputation, as far as their portrayal in novels and plays is concerned, is tantamount to sexual

⁶² Patricia Meyer Spacks, Gossip (Chicago; London: The U of Chicago P, 1985), 4-6.

reputation.⁶³

Having said that, women are still often associated with gossip. Even The Oxford English Dictionary defines gossip as most likely to be a woman's characteristic or a female activity.⁶⁴ Spacks traces the possible origins of this connection to the biblical Eve, to women's biological constitution, and to their deprivation of an economic function.⁶⁵ These links are conceivably negative for women but Spacks also draws our attention to the "positive" function gossip serves in enhancing the alliance among/between women, a consciousness of unity for the insiders (the gossipers) to exclude the outsiders (the gossiped about).⁶⁶ Yet, a coin has two sides: if the consciousness of unity is built upon a biased value system, the alliance the insiders forge may be a sharp weapon to destroy the innocent outsider, leading to a cannibalistic situation that proves a failure of sisterhood. This is what we see in Schreiner's From Man to Man.

In the novel, Schreiner is ambivalent in locating the proper gossip category of her female gossipers, Mrs. Drummond and John-Ferdinand's wife Veronica Grey. As the narrative shows, Mrs. Drummond is a garrulous hypocrite: while keeping on good terms with Rebekah and Bertie on the surface, she can be harsh and frivolous enough to criticize them behind their back and in front of her "new" friend Veronica (FMTM, 130-32). Her calumny may not necessarily be purposeful, since the two

⁶³ Ibid., 26-34.

⁶⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed., prepared by J. A. Simpson & E. S. C. Weiner, vol. VI, Follow-Haswed (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1989), 699-700.

⁶⁵ Spacks, Gossip, 38-41. On page 41, Spacks gives a long quotation concerning women's natural weakness of mind, but she does not specify her source:

Women being for the most part of a Constitution naturally feeble, because their Blood and Humours hold more from the Nature of Water than any other Principle, and their brain is of a soft consistence, because their Fibres are fine and slender, their Animal Spirits which in Truth are agitated enough, but feeble, weak and light, and by consequence very easily dissipated. . . . The Difficulty they have to give a serious Attention to any thing abstracted and above the Senses, the dislike they conceive for all solid Reasoning, fully proves the Delicateness of their Imagination, or, what is here much the same thing, the Weakness of their Minds.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 5, 45.

sisters generate no threat to her, nor do they do her wrong. Yet, her propensity for “tattling” without consideration for others can be destructive, especially when the “tattling” subject is related to social mores. As we will see later, it does provide a handy tool for Veronica to circulate news of Bertie’s disgrace.

Earlier in the novel, the reader is led to know that Veronica secretly enters John-Ferdinand’s room at Thorn Kloof and destroys one of his belongings, i.e., Bertie’s picture as a child (FMTM, 101-03).⁶⁷ She is infatuated with John-Ferdinand and thus intends to replace Bertie in his mind. It could be argued that behind Veronica’s motive in anonymously revealing Bertie’s secret to Mrs. Drummond lies her long-term jealousy of Bertie, a response especially intense when John-Ferdinand confesses to her his continuous, albeit unworthy, fantasy of Bertie before and after their marriage. Since John-Ferdinand has declared his faithfulness to her ever after, Veronica could perfectly well ignore Bertie, but she chooses the contrary. In betraying Bertie’s secret, it seems that Veronica attempts to take revenge on Bertie for stealing her husband’s heart, though Bertie herself is innocent of any enticement. Veronica’s attitude is similar to a wife’s accusation of the innocent third person, rather than fixing upon her own husband’s infidelity in being attracted to another woman. Monsman draws our attention to Veronica’s name, which means “true image” and is related to Saint Veronica “who cherished the true likeness of condemned innocence.”⁶⁸ Unlike her name, however, Veronica is akin to a wolf in sheep’s clothing; she not only does not cherish the innocent Bertie but condemns her to social exclusion.

Skillfully double-plotted, the chapter “Raindrops in the Avenue” opens and ends

⁶⁷ Studying the invasion motif in the novel, Monsman parallels Veronica’s intrusion into the private sphere (John-Ferdinand’s room and later Rebekah’s house) with the colonial invasion of the local inhabitants in order to gain power. See Monsman, *Olive Schreiner’s Fiction*, 161.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 152.

with Bertie's libel by gossip while placing Rebekah's philosophical rumination in the middle. Interestingly, one of Rebekah's intellectual reflections touches upon the issue of hypocrisy that has a direct relation to the effects of gossip I am considering here. As Rebekah says:

the great criminal was not necessarily the murderer, the ruffian, the drunkard, the prostitute, or even the frank, direct, and open liar; but, maybe, a spirit encased in a fair and gentle body, rich in many graces of character and manner, openly breaking no social law and with no need to lie directly to others, because it lies always and so successfully to itself and within itself and acts persistently in harmony with that lie: a rotten apple with dead seeds and a worm at its core, and a shining surface. (FMTM, 159-60)

As Tess Cosslett remarks, Veronica is an imposter and usurper, behaving in such a way as to imitate Bertie, so as to fill her place in everybody's mind.⁶⁹ Mrs. Drummond, on the other hand, is a liar who deceives and betrays her husband while acting pretentiously as a respectable woman. Both "rotten apples" with "shining surfaces" establish a "school for scandal" to calumniate Bertie. Yet, while Lady Sneerwell in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's The School for Scandal (1777) spreads a false rumor about Charles Surface's affair with Lady Teazle in the hope of winning him from a prospective marriage with Maria,⁷⁰ we do not see a clear motivation behind Veronica and Mrs. Drummond's backbiting.

Whether with or without purpose, it is certain that their gossiping contains malice; but perhaps a more proper explanation for their evil doing is that Bertie's loss of her maidenhead is an act of social transgression serious enough to bar her from the camp of women like Veronica and Mrs. Drummond, though the latter's marital disloyalty is in ironic contrast to Bertie's innocent fall. Bertie's disgrace makes her

⁶⁹ Cosslett, Woman to Woman, 157.

⁷⁰ Richard Brinsley Sheridan, The School for Scandal and Other Plays (London: Penguin Books, 1988).

an outsider from the female community, whose mode of conduct strictly abides by the patriarchal demand for women's chastity. As a consequence, exclusion is repeatedly shown in the narrative, from the distance Mrs. Drummond and the party attendants keep from Bertie, to her later dislodgement from her aunt's house lest her "improper" conduct, according to her aunt and uncle, contaminate their daughters. "Gossip is great to enjoy, but tougher to tolerate," as Roger Wilkes rightly says.⁷¹ Schreiner does not need to expatiate on how widespread the gossip is; the fact that Bertie has to shift from one place to another to escape from its torment is a clear enough demonstration of its destructive power. The consciousness of unity that the insiders create, considered in this light, may not necessarily be a positive aspect of female gossiping as Spacks postulates. By a parity of reasoning, the society as a whole is both the original sinner and an accomplice in training and encouraging women gossipers like Veronica and Mrs. Drummond to attack, without delving into the real cause which would have shown the innocence of their fellow sister, an attack, moreover, based on an unfair, male-defined standard of chastity for women.

As with her mastery in allegory, Schreiner is adept at the machination of metaphors. That the chapter "Raindrops in the Avenue" begins with Mrs. Drummond's unusual aloofness and her question about Bertie's early schooling gives an evil premonition of Bertie's upcoming shock by the gossip at the party. As if to draw a parallel with Bertie's past trauma, Schreiner has Bertie overhear in the dressing room two girls' talk about her sexual lapse, when she withdraws from the dance to repair her torn skirt: "The white gauze which covered the silk skirt tore from the waist to the bottom and the long gossamer flounce made a streamer behind her" (FMTM, 210). The white muslin skirt torn off "from top to bottom" by the thorny mimosa branch when John-Ferdinand rejects Bertie (FMTM, 109) has now become

⁷¹ Roger Wilkes, *Scandal: A Scurrilous History of Gossip* (London: Atlantic Books, 2002), 2.

the white gauze torn “from the waist to the bottom” at the party (FMTM, 210). If the former foreshadows the rupture of Bertie’s inner purity, as I have suggested earlier, the latter could be seen as a portent to reinforce that rupture, aggravated by the malevolent gossip.

Interestingly, the image of the torn white skirt also appears in Bertie’s nightmare, after she rushes home in despair from the party, a dream vividly conveying her horror of becoming the butt of the multitude. In the dream, Bertie is sitting in a crowded, round circus theater, watching dancers in white dancing in the center down below. Suddenly, agitation among the audience emerges and Bertie becomes everybody’s focus of attention, after one man sitting on the opposite side points her out. One dancer’s skirt, at this juncture, gets torn and the white trail, as she keeps whirling, gets longer and longer till the theater, from bottom to top, becomes “a sea of misty white” and the “soft billowy waves” submerge all the people inside (FMTM, 214). Apparently, the dancer here also refers to Bertie, and the social code of women’s purity, symbolized by the white skirt, is so much attached to her that, even though it is damaged (synonymous with her loss of purity), Bertie cannot shake it off through whirling, but has to wear the stigma for all time. Rather than using the rain motif as she previously did, Schreiner deploys the sea image here to suggest the massive control of this social convention, so much so that the obsessive preoccupation constitutes a sense of suffocation and drowning for everyone.

It could be argued that the image of the white skirt is a *leitmotif* at the turning points of Bertie’s life. Just as she abruptly decides to leave the farm after the mimosa scene, so she leaves Rebekah’s house right after the party event and the nightmare. A sexual flaw is to a woman’s reputation what an indelible mark is to a repaired skirt. To emphasize this point, Schreiner uses a metaphorical title “Cart Tracks in the Sand” to depict Bertie’s unwelcome situation at her next haven, her

aunt's house. The cart is tantamount to Bether's fall, and once it is in a wet, damp weather, embodied as the outside force, namely gossip, it leaves deeper tracks in the sand, which also makes the cart hard to move away. Emphatically, Bertie's aunt makes it clear that

a woman's character is like gossamer, when you've once dropped it in the mud and pulled it about it can never be put right again. With a man it's different; he can live down anything. People say, 'Oh, he was young, he's changed.' They never say that of a woman; the soap isn't invented that can wash a woman's character clean. (FMTM, 305)

To shut Bertie up in her attempt to explain, the aunt adds, "If a woman has made a mistake there is only one course for her—silence!" (FMTM, 308). Without giving Bertie any chance for self-defense, her aunt and uncle decide to send her home. Before her departure, the reader is led to see Bertie's further misery, in addition to her abandonment by so many people (mother, sister, Old Men and aunt), in finding no help even from the Kaffir housemaid Dorcas, who sleeps so heavily regardless of Bertie's call for comfort.

Another figure to add to Bertie's trajectory of desertion is the Jew's housekeeper Martha. She is a trickster in its plainest sense: a deceiver who plays tricks for her own ends. For fear that Bertie and the Jew's cousin, instead of she herself and her retarded son Isaac, will be the Jew's heirs, Martha contrives a scheme, delivering false messages to make the Jew's cousin believe that the lonely Bertie wants to see him when the Jew is away on business. Because of Martha's lies and plots, the Jew drives Bertie away, closes his door upon his cousin and presumably never thinks of bequeathing his fortune to either of the two victims. Martha's tricks are out of greed to win the Jew's inheritance. To achieve her purpose, sisterhood is never one of her concerns, not to mention care for a fallen woman and a mistress objectified like Bertie. Her trickery could be seen as the last straw that breaks Bertie's life.

Driven out by the Jew, Bertie is eventually driven to the brothel in Soho. Female tricksters in the novel, all in all, are accomplices of the patriarchy; they either defer to masculine orthodoxy or compete for men's favor. In telling Bertie's story, Schreiner also conveys the destitution of female sex parasites, providing a counter example to stress for her readers the importance of female independence.

I-B

The Nature Child

If sisterhood plays a prominent role in Caird's The Daughters of Danaus and Schreiner's From Man to Man, sisterhood is incorporated with or hidden behind the overall construction of Grand's ecofeminist philosophy in The Beth Book, in which the spirit of kinship/fellowship and a utopian oneness with all living and inanimate things are potently presented in the Nature-Child Archetype: Beth. The word "nature" is implicated with several levels of meaning, conceived by Raymond Williams as "perhaps the most complex word in the [English] language."¹ To the ecocritic Jhan Hochman, Nature (with the capital letter "N") is a rhetorical term associated with "the highly suspect realms of the otherworldly or transcendental," whereas nature (with the small letter "n") is a worldly name, alluding to plants and non-human animals or elements, the inclusion of which Hochman prefers to call "worldnature" to avoid the conceptual confusion the lower/upper cases of nature might incur.² To give a catholic summary, Kate Soper remarks that "nature" has three aspects: the metaphysical, the realist, and the lay/surface. The metaphysical sense of nature is in a philosophical line to designate the concept of the non-human, the idea "through which humanity thinks its difference and specificity." Nature arising from this meaning serves as a collation of what we often hear of, a collation between non-human (nature) and human (culture). The realist sense of nature refers to "the structures, processes and causal powers that are constantly operative within

¹ Raymond Williams, Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society (London: Fontana P, 1976), 219.

² Jhan Hochman, Green Cultural Studies: Nature in Film, Novel, and Theory (Moscow, ID: U of Idaho P, 1998), 2-3, quoted in Laurence Coupe, "General Introduction" to The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism, ed. Laurence Coupe, foreword, Jonathan Bate (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 1-8, 3; see also another article of Hochman's, "Green Cultural Studies," Literature of Nature: An International Sourcebook, ed. Patrick D. Murphy (Chicago; London: Fitzroy Dearborn P, 1998), 422-28, 422.

the physical world,” which prompt scientists’ endeavors to study them. Nature, in this sense, is indicative more of the environmental phenomena than of the abstractness that “nature” metaphorically implies. The lay/surface sense of nature is the commonest and the most comprehensible notion, pointing to all observable physical features in the green world. Nature, in this light, provides visual as well as aesthetic experiences.³ In literature, the green world nature especially supplies a mystic psychological enchantment for women.

In their discussion of the female *Bildungsroman*, Annis Pratt and Barbara White call attention to the recurrence of several archetypal patterns inscribed within this kind of narrative plot, one of which is what they call “the green-world archetype.” Supported by their inductive methodology of examining more than three hundred novels written by women writers, Pratt and White argue that nature is one of the popular realms in women’s fiction. At some point, it is a memory that heroines feel nostalgic to be reunited with or to renew their life from. At other points, it serves as a place from which heroines set forth their lives, expecting to kindle their potentials through natural epiphanies. Nature, in the words of Pratt and White, is “an ally of the woman hero, *keeping her in touch with her selfhood*, a kind of talisman that enables her to make her way through the alienations of male society” (emphasis added).⁴ Although Pratt and White do not indicate clearly how they define the word “nature,” they nonetheless illustrate their ideas of the term from heroines’ attachments to the animals, the wilderness, or any physical natural scenery, examining the ways in which the green world influences those who go to embrace it.

At first glance, an argument of this sort seems to reinforce the woman/nature

³ Kate Soper, “The Idea of Nature,” *What is Nature?* (London: Blackwell, 1995), extracted in Laurence Coupe, ed., *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism*, foreword, Jonathan Bate (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 123-26, 125.

⁴ Annis Pratt (with Barbara White), “The Novel of Development,” *Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1981), 13-37, 13-24, 21.

equation in contrast to the man/culture matrix, a dichotomy or, more specifically, a hierarchy that has for long provoked feminist criticism of the feminization of nature (as for instance, Mother Earth) along with biological determinism on women's part.⁵ On second thoughts, this argument seems to have something in common with "green studies," a field embraced by the ecocritic Laurence Coupe who proposes to see nature as both a (con)text and a concept, deployed to be a challenge to industrialism and culturalism while at the same time speaking *about* and *for* nature in and of itself.⁶ In this ecocritical discourse, nature is no longer inferior to culture but is given considerable significance in terms of its interaction with and influence upon humanity. Alongside this approach goes ecofeminists' attempt at examining "the 'places' in which women find themselves and *the relation of environment to [women's] selfhood*" (emphasis added),⁷ a concept similar to Pratt and White's proposition for nature in relation to women that I have just quoted.

A newly-established doctrine that emerged alongside second-wave feminism in the 1970s and cooperated with the green movement in the 1980s, ecofeminism, or

⁵ Notable examples can be dated as far back as the late eighteenth century when Mary Wollstonecraft, in her pioneering feminist manifesto *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), called for women's equal education in order to elevate their inferior social status defined by their reproductive and nurturing function. See Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds, Criticism*, ed. Carol H. Poston (New York; London: Norton, 1975). Until recently, feminist critics like Sherry B. Ortner and Caroline Merchant also expressed concern with the nature-woman equation. Ortner argues that nature/women versus culture/men is a socially constructed notion, created by the patriarchy to privilege male dominance. Similarly, Merchant upholds the belief that the organic theory in defining nature as a nurturing mother is a masculine perspective, degrading women in seeing them as equivalent to nature "plowed and cultivated . . . used as a commodity and manipulated as a resource." See Sherry B. Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" *Feminism, the Public and the Private*, ed. Joan B. Landes (Oxford; New York: Oxford UP, 1998), 21-44; Caroline Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980), introduction, chapters 1 & 6, for the above quotation, see p. 8. Sylvia Bowerbank also offers a genealogical discussion of the nature-woman linkage in *Speaking for Nature: Women and Ecologies of Early Modern England* (Baltimore; London: The John Hopkins UP, 2004), 1-23; see also, Mary Mellor, *Feminism and Ecology* (Cambridge: Polity P, 1997), chapter 4, in which Mellor discusses several feminist critics from contrasting camps of the woman-nature equation; Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London; New York: Routledge, 1993), chapters 2 & 3.

⁶ Coupe, "General Introduction" to *The Green Studies Reader*, 4-5.

⁷ Patrick D. Murphy, *Literature, Nature, and Other: Ecofeminist Critiques* (New York: State U of New York P, 1995), 48.

“ecological feminism,” has its roots in the belief of the close connection between the domination of women and the domination of the natural world. Karen J. Warren makes it clear that the woman-nature connection is one of the most important concerns in ecofeminism because, on the one hand, sex/gender as put at the heart of its analysis is what makes the doctrine feminist; and on the other hand, the commitment to the importance and value of the ecosystem is what makes ecofeminism ecological. Warren also asserts that the woman-nature association is multicultural in its involvement with “all social systems of domination, for instance, racism, classism, ageism, ethnocentrism, imperialism, colonialism, as well as sexism.” Thus, to call for a consciousness-raising ethic of ecological/environmental preservation and protection from further damage is to call into question women’s oppression in the gendered society.⁸

However, as both Mary Mellor and Ynestra King have pointed out, ecofeminism varies in its viewpoints towards women and nature, and conflicts mostly spring from the different strands of feminist thinking. Affinity ecofeminism refers to radical/cultural/spiritual feminism in their essentialist stress on the affinity of women and nature through women’s embodiment as mothers, nurturers and care-takers. Socialist/materialist/rationalist/liberal ecofeminism, on the other hand, repudiates the nature-woman equation and diverts attention particularly to the political aspect of women’s experience/embeddedness in the power division of the gender relation. While affinity ecofeminists think the woman-nature connection gives women a particular stake in ending any kind of domination and repairing the human-nonhuman relationship, socialist ecofeminists think it a barrier grounded in the nature/culture dualism that needs to be broken down, done away with or

⁸ Karen J. Warren, “Introduction” to *Ecological Feminism*, ed. Karen J. Warren (London; New York: Routledge, 1994), 1-7; see also Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*.

transcended.⁹ Despite its different strands, whenever ecofeminism is alluded to, identification, however, often “[goes] solely with its cultural/spiritual feminist roots and hence [is] subject to critiques of essentialism, romanticism and political naivety.”¹⁰

Even within the same strand of ecofeminism, difference also distinguishes one form from another. For example, in reclaiming a female image of spirituality in the form of a goddess and in asserting the connection between women’s bodies and nature, spiritual feminists vary in their arguments as to whether there is indeed a matriarchal heritage of goddess or whether stress should be put on seeing the goddess as merely a symbol for the empowerment of women. Divergences or variances as such are so many that ecofeminism forms a doctrine so complicated and diverse that, as Mellor says, it is not easy to make a clear-cut distinction between those based on the biological and those on the cosmological forces, because women represent both embodiment (as related to their natures) and embeddedness (as the inevitable outcome of their experience in social construction) in the biological, social, ecological and historical contexts.¹¹

As Stacy Alaimo candidly asserts, both a celebration of the woman/nature connection and an objection to being linked to nature, or a clarion call for liberation to transcend nature, involve an acceptance of or an entanglement with the culture/nature dualism defined by the patriarchy. Thus she proposes to use “situated theorizing,” a concept she adapts from Donna J. Haraway’s “situated knowledge,” to illustrate a doctrine that simply recognizes the range of implications in the discourse of nature, though with an emphasis on “grounded immersion [into] rather than

⁹ Mellor gives a very detailed discussion of different strands of ecofeminism, see *Feminism and Ecology*, chapters 3-5; see also Ynestra King, “Healing the Wounds: Feminism, Ecology, and the Nature/Culture Dualism,” *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism*, ed. Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990), 106-21.

¹⁰ Mellor, *Feminism and Ecology*, 45.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 68; see also Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*, 9.

bodiless flight [from]" nature. She also suggests a redefinition of nature itself: "If nature is no longer a repository of stasis and essentialism, no longer the mirror image of culture, then the female body need not be misogyny's best resource." While leaving aside the woman-nature versus man-culture opposition, Alaimo's proposition, more importantly, affirms the validity of women's going "into, out of, and through nature."¹²

It is against these backdrops, therefore, that, in my following discussion of the Nature Child Archetype, essentialism/biological determinism or the nature/cultural dualism will not be my concern when I probe into the heroine's relationship with the green world of nature. What I intend to do instead is to contextualize Anglophone Victorian literary trends (Romanticism and Transcendentalism) and contemporary reformist movements (Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts, Anti-Vivisection, Social Purity and Back to Nature) in my textual analysis of Grand's portraiture of the nature-child in The Beth Book. In so doing, I want to present the subtlety and interrelatedness of Grand's multifaceted feminist philosophy in literary, political, social, ethical, spiritual and religious politics, which are all, I would argue, grounded in her conception that nature is concentric and humans and nonhumans are essentially equal, constituting an interconnected and interdependent unity or whole. This conception, in fact, prefigures the very focal belief of ecofeminism today.

A combined discourse of ecology and feminism, ecofeminism is one of the five branches of the "radical environmental movement."¹³ Invented in 1866 and widely

¹² Stacy Alaimo, Undomesticated Ground: Recasting Nature as Feminist Space (Ithaca; London: Cornell UP, 2000), 1-23. For Donna J. Haraway's "situated knowledge," see her book, Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature (London: Free Association Books, 1991), chapter 9.

¹³ Mellor, Feminism and Ecology, 131. According to Mellor who adopts Andrew McLaughlin's definition, the five branches of the radical environmental movement are "human-centred environmentalism, social ecology, ecological feminism, bioregionalism and deep ecology." For McLaughlin's definition, see his book, Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology (New York: State U of New York P, 1993), 198. Val Plumwood, however, only lists three main ecopolitical positions: social ecology, deep ecology and ecological feminism. See her article, "The Ecopolitics Debate and the Politics of Nature," Ecological Feminism, ed. Karen J. Warren (London; New York:

used by scientists and intellectuals since the 1890s, the word “ecology” refers to “relations, communities and whole systems,”¹⁴ and the study of ecology concerns itself mostly with human domination over nonhuman nature. Jim Tarter points out that ecological study has undergone “a shift from the argument that *people* have a right to healthy ecosystems to the argument that ecosystems themselves and the subjects (all the living things) within them have intrinsic value and a right to exist and flourish” (emphasis in original).¹⁵ This shift speaks of a change of perspective from anthropocentrism (human-centeredness) to ecocentrism. Deep ecologists use the term “biospheric egalitarianism” to indicate the intrinsic, equal right to existence for all living things. They later rephrase the term as “ecocentric egalitarianism” to “embrace non-living nature” as well.¹⁶ Given its ecopolitics of egalitarianism in nature, and despite the fact that it emphasizes the development of a wider sense of self in relation to others, deep ecology still marginalizes or neglects women’s unequal existence and experience, making its advocacy of egalitarianism questionable.¹⁷

Ecofeminism thus remains distinctive in its drawing particular attention to the domination of women, seeing it as a prototype of dominations of nature, race, sex and class. Believing that all living and inanimate things, while maintaining their diversities and differences, constitute an interconnected web on the earth, ecofeminism takes as its standpoint the particularization of women’s experience.

Routledge, 1994), 64-87, 65.

¹⁴ Jim Tarter, “Collective Subjectivity and Postmodern Ecology,” *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 2.2 (1996): 65-84, 70. Raymond Williams, however, gives a different etymological account, noting that the scientific use of “ecology” dates from the 1870s. See Williams, *Keywords*, 110.

¹⁵ Tarter, “Collective Subjectivity and Postmodern Ecology,” 70.

¹⁶ Mellor, *Feminism and Ecology*, 133.

¹⁷ However, it is acknowledged that deep ecology has much in common with ecofeminism. For an understanding of their relationship, see Mellor, *Feminism and Ecology*, chapter 6. See also Plumwood, “The Ecopolitics Debate and the Politics of Nature,” 64-87; *idem*, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*, chapter 7.

Thus its recognition of interconnectedness is “from the ‘inside out’, based on the experiences, feelings and particular bodies of women,” rather than “from the ‘outside in’” as in deep ecology’s cosmological sense, which is so vaguely inclusive that it virtually omits women from its consideration.¹⁸ Resting its central conviction on real egalitarianism (i.e., non/anti-hierarchy), ecofeminism calls for an ecologically sustainable natural environment where a harmonious utopia of empathy, compassion, unity, morality, justice, humanitarianism and cosmopolitanism could be founded to benefit all forms of life, humans (men and women of all races and classes) and nonhumans (animals and inanimate things). It is this essential core of ecofeminism that I will draw on to explore Grand’s green politics in the historical context of the late-Victorian period, leaving aside the fundamental and theoretical divergences of ecofeminism as well as those of the sub-divisions of what is loosely called “green theory.”

In addition to being under persistent literary influence of the Romantic spirit, where the love of nature was emphasized, England in the latter half of the nineteenth-century witnessed several social upheavals, some of which, in my view, were concerned with the politics of nature and, by extension, that of ecofeminism, in one form or another. Rooted in the evangelical movement of religious enthusiasm, the Victorian Social Purity movement (1880s – 1890s) demanded equal rights for the sexes and took pains to promote cosmopolitan philanthropy in effectuating a moral revival/reform of sexual purity and an eradication of social double standards.¹⁹ It

¹⁸ Mellor, *Feminism and Ecology*, 143, 136.

¹⁹ For the social purity movement, see Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast: English Feminism and Sexual Morality 1885-1914* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), 95-123; Olive Banks, *Faces of Feminism: A Study of Feminism as a Social Movement* (New York; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981), 13-27, 63-102; Frank Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities: Medico-Moral Politics in England Since 1830* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), part III; Sheila Jeffreys, “‘Free from All Uninvited Touch of Man’: Women’s Campaigns around Sexuality, 1880-1914,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 5.6 (1982): 629-45; Jean Lawrence L’Espérance, “Woman’s Mission to Woman: Explorations in the Operation of the Double Standard and Female Solidarity in Nineteenth Century England,” *Social History—Histoire Sociale* 12 (1979): 316-38; Edward J. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance: Purity*

was preceded by the Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts movement (1860s – 1880s) to rescue exploited diseased women²⁰ and the Anti-Vivisection movement (1870s – 1880s) to call for animal welfare and animal rights.²¹ It could be argued that behind these protests lay the proto-ecofeminist credence in egalitarianism for all living things, demanding in particular an end of the domination of women and the domination of animals in the hope of establishing a harmonious kinship between humans (men and women) and nonhumans (animals).

This utopian expectation of comradeship also had something in common with the Romantic spirit across the Atlantic (Romanticism and Transcendentalism), where a respect for and worship of nature, while generating a mystic/religious/spiritual experience for personal development (self-reliance and spiritual growth), also helped conjure up a world consciousness, that is, “an awareness of being at one with all living and inanimate things, as an alternative to Christianity.”²² This is a cosmopolitan vision of universal oneness in the ecosystem where humans, as well as

Movements in Britain Since 1700 (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan; Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1977), part II & III.

²⁰ For a brief historical account of the Contagious Diseases Acts, see F. B. Smith, “Ethics and Disease in the Later Nineteenth Century: The Contagious Diseases Acts,” Historical Studies 15 (1971): 118-35; Tabitha Sparks, “Medical Gothic and the Return of the Contagious Diseases Acts in Stoker and Machen,” Nineteenth-Century Feminisms 6 (2002): 87-91. For a detailed study of the Acts, see Judith R. Walkowitz, Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980); Mort, Dangerous Sexualities, part II; Bristow, Vice and Vigilance, part II.

²¹ For a brief understanding of the Victorian pro- and anti-vivisection controversy in England, see Susan Hamilton, “Introduction” to Animal Welfare and Anti-Vivisection 1870-1910: Nineteenth-Century Woman’s Mission, ed. Susan Hamilton, 3 vols. (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 1: xiv-xlvii; Nicolaas A. Rupke, “Pro-vivisection in England in the Early 1880s: Arguments and Motives,” and Mary Ann Elston, “Women and Anti-vivisection in Victorian England, 1870-1900,” both collected in Nicolaas A. Rupke, ed., Vivisection in Historical Perspective (London; New York; Sydney: Croom Helm, 1987), 188- 213, 259-94; Hilda Kean, “The ‘Smooth Cool Men of Science’: The Feminist and Socialist Response to Vivisection,” History Workshop Journal 40 (1995): 16-38; Coral Lansbury, “Gynaecology, Pornography, and the Antivivisection Movement,” Victorian Studies 28.3 (1985): 413-37; *idem*, The Old Brown Dog: Women, Workers, and Vivisection in Edwardian England (Madison, Wisconsin: The U of Wisconsin P, 1985), 130-51, in which contemporary anti-vivisection literature is studied. For Darwin’s relationship to vivisection, see Rod Preece, “Darwinism, Christianity, and the Great Vivisection Debate,” Journal of the History of Ideas 64.3 (2003): 399-419; Barbara T. Gates, “Revisioning Darwin, with Sympathy,” History of European Ideas 19.4-6 (1994): 761-68.

²² Peter C. Gould, Early Green Politics: Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Britain, 1880-1900 (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P; New York: St. Martin’s P, 1988), 157.

nonhumans, are part of and embraced by nature, intricately connected with one another. Nature, in this light, has a divine/spiritual/moral function synonymous with that of the evangelical Christianity characteristic of Social Purity Feminism. Interestingly, the correlation of nature, spiritualism, fellowship and a sense of oneness with the total environment also exemplified the central ideas of the Back to Nature movement during the 1880s and the 1890s.²³

It is within this grandiose dimension that sisterhood is embedded and from this that a focus on the discourse of nature must take its bearings if we are to obtain a holistic picture. In the following chapter, therefore, I intend to contextualize historical, cultural, literary and socio-political conditionings all together to study Grand's eco-conception, an early green politics as manifested in the nature-child that, I would argue, makes her a forerunner of ecofeminism today.

²³ For an understanding of the Back to Nature movement, see Gould, Early Green Politics, esp. 1-57; Regenia Gagnier and Martin Delveaux, "Towards a Global Ecology of the *Fin de Siècle*," Literature Compass 3.3 (2006): 572-87.

The Ecofeminist Forerunner:

The Nature Child in Sarah Grand's The Beth Book (1897)

Subtitled “Being a Study of the Life of Elizabeth Caldwell Maclure, A Woman of Genius,” Sarah Grand’s The Beth Book launches its narrative with a multiple discourse, comprised of (semi-auto-)biography and a presentation of woman genius and nature. In appropriating the generic format of the *Bildungsroman* to sketch the development of the artist heroine from childhood to adulthood, Grand sets nature upon a pedestal, attempting to show its powerful influence in activating a “further faculty” (BB, 28) in the eponymous heroine—a faculty in terms of not only Beth’s literary genius but also her ultimate discovery of her innate oratorical gift (public speaking) which she is determined, at the close of the novel, to wield powerfully in order to better the lives of the weak. As with Beth’s initiation from personal pursuit to social and political endeavor, an endeavor inclusive of the ecological appeals for animal rights (anti-vivisection) and the welfare of the diseased women in the Lock Hospitals, nature undergoes a functional transformation, in my view, from an initial sensory stimulus to an agency that helps Beth construct her subsequent grand vision of, and thus mission to create, a harmony between nature and culture, men and women, humans and nonhumans.

In the first stage of Beth’s trajectory, nature is in line with the Wordsworthian tradition: it serves to inspire Beth’s feelings. This is a responsive transference of the external landscape to the individual sensory receptivity, manifested most clearly through Beth’s spontaneous literary outpourings in spoken verses, songs and fanciful stories. Nature fires Beth’s imagination; it also arouses her keenest desire to be united with it. In this Romantic vein, nature also functions as a refuge wherein Beth

finds solace and comfort as a wounded child abused by her patriarchal mother or by institutional rigidity. In other words, what nature provides at this stage is mostly related to Beth's personal or egocentric experiences.

In the second stage of Beth's journey, nature is tinged with the Emersonian-Thoreauvian shade that, despite Beth's absence of physical involvement with it, offers a template for her transformation from sensory excitement to sensible contemplation. Effected in her secret attic room, Beth's meditation in tranquility gives rise to her egalitarian, cosmopolitan, humanitarian, in short, her ecofeminist concerns for all living things on earth. This results in her attempt at purposeful writing to give spiritual nourishment to her readers, an engagement of art for (wo)man's sake rather than the dominant literary pursuit of art for art's sake. It is Beth's ecological awakening at this time, I would argue, that prepares her later revolt against her husband's injustice to other women and animals.

In depicting Beth's different interactions with nature, one related to her sensation and the other to her perception, Grand intends, in my view, to create a balance between Beth's development in sense (body) and sensibility (mind). The trajectory of her narration, I would argue, rests on Beth's progressive move from egocentricity to ecocentrism. Rather than belittling Beth's sensory experience with nature, Grand infuses it with theosophical spiritualism,¹ making it a starting point from which Beth's ecoconsciousness develops along the same lines as Grand's own social purity feminism. It is a journey "through one's own cosmos from within outward" to realize her connectedness to other living beings in the world.² So that,

¹ Theosophical spiritualism was a late nineteenth-century movement. Although there is no direct historical inference to indicate Grand's relationship with it, her concepts show distinct similarities to its doctrines. Until recently, only Ann Heilmann has pointed out their correlation and I will explore this later in my discussion. See Ann Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird* (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 2004), 90-103.

² Leonard M. Scigaj and Nancy Craig Simmons, "Ecofeminist Cosmology in Thoreau's Walden," *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 1.1 (1993): 121-29, 128.

at the end of the novel, Beth, still set solitary in the natural environment, is seen as seeking a personal immanence with nature while at the same time she is on her way to confirm the oratorical gift through which she is to work out an “ecofeminist cosmology”³—a mission for which Grand relies on female leadership capacity to achieve a harmonious universe in the future.

In this chapter, therefore, my discussion will focus on two aspects of Beth—that she is a Wordsworthian and an Emersonian-Thoreauvian nature-child respectively—with more consideration, however, on the latter, as it has hardly received any critical attention thus far.⁴ Equally lacking critical attention are the three epigraphs (from William Shakespeare, John Ruskin and Ralph Waldo Emerson) to the novel.⁵ In my view, they presage Grand’s mapping of the transformation of a nature-child in Beth which, when juxtaposed with the Victorian socio-cultural-political-literary context (the Social Purity Feminist movement, Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts movement, Anti-Vivisection movement, Back to Nature movement, Romanticism and Transcendentalism), casts light on the novel’s genealogical potential as a precursor of an ecofeminism that has been gathering strength since the 1970s. Thus, included as well in this chapter is my exploration of Grand’s incorporation of the three epigraphs as a cumulative illustration of her proto-ecofeminist philosophy.

Beth as the Wordsworthian nature-child

In the course of the novel Beth is relocated a number of times: from the north of

³ A term I adopt from Scigaj and Simmons’ article, “Ecofeminist Cosmology in Thoreau’s Walden.”

⁴ The only reference I have come across to touch on the novel’s relationship to American Transcendentalism is Teresa Mangum’s Married, Middlebrow, and Militant: Sarah Grand and the New Woman Novel (Ann Arbor: The U of Michigan P, 1998), 150, but her focus is on gendered genius and the difference of genius and talent in the Romantic conceptions.

⁵ Only Ann Heilmann briefly mentions Grand’s title-page epigraph from Shakespeare’s Othello, pointing to the aspect of “Emilia’s momentous coming-into-language” as “the iconoclastic nature of female cultural agency.” See her book, New Woman Strategies, 103.

Ireland to the “wild” western village of Castletownrock, from Uncle James Pattern’s house at Fairholm to his seaside property at Rainharbour, and later to Harrowgate [*sic*] where Beth spends holidays with Great-Aunt Victoria Bench, from the Royal Service School for Officers’ Daughters (St. Catherine’s) in southern England to a finishing school in London, from her husband’s solitary house on the outskirts of the inland town of Slane near Morningquest to a small attic in London, and finally to the seaside Iverthorpe Cottage provided by her friend Angelica’s husband. Among all these spatial/geographical shifts, the distinctive line that differentiates her interactions with nature is her marriage to Dr. Daniel Maclure. Before her marriage, Beth’s series of activities show a remarkable preference for nature. At this stage, nature stimulates Beth’s inherent genius of instantaneous creativity. At a time when genius was generally considered masculine, the story of “a woman of genius” evidently presented a feminist subversion of the dominant biological determinism. In addition to stirring Beth’s intuition, nature also provides an asylum for Beth to escape from external oppression. It is a place of spiritual power to recharge and refresh her, whereby she gains inner tranquility and spiritual immanence.

From the moment of Beth’s birth which initiates the narrative of the novel, Grand emphasizes to the reader Beth’s intricate relationship with the natural elements.

As the narrative unfolds:

It was the sunshine really that first called her into conscious existence, the blessed heat and light; up to the moment that she recognised these with a certain acknowledgment of them, and consequently of things in general outside herself, she had been as unconscious as a white grub without legs. But that moment roused her, calling forth from her senses their first response in the thrill of warmth and well-being to which she awoke, and quickening her intellect at the same time with the stimulating effort to discover from whence her comfort came. She could remember no circumstance in connection with this earliest awakening. All she knew of it was the feeling of warmth and brightness, which she said recurred to her

at odd times ever afterwards, and could be recalled at will. (BB, 10)

“[B]orn to be a child of light, and to live in it” (BB, 10), Beth is attracted to the versatility of nature—the color, the shape, the scent, the content—all the beauty and complexity that nature presents to strike her sentiment and arouse her keen observation and imagination: “The books of nature and of life were spread out before her, and she was conning their contents to more purpose than any one else could have interpreted them to her in those days” (BB, 19). The novel devotes three-fifths of its length to detailing Beth’s sensitive kinship with nature,⁶ so that we often see her delights in rambling freely alone, her passion in embracing trees, or her indulgence in burying her head to touch and smell flowers. Endowed with a special capacity, the nature-child is also capable of understanding the language of the plants. Her excellent terms with animals also win her “singular confidence” from them (BB, 20).

Approaching the novel through Darwinian evolutionary theory, Patricia Murphy argues that Grand attempts to turn on its head the dominant medico-scientific discourse that determines women’s inferior status in physiological terms. By reinforcing Beth’s susceptibility to sensory impression and linking it to her inherent genius, Grand, Murphy maintains, takes issue with the dichotomy of woman/body/intuition and man/mind/reasoning. In so doing, she reworks women’s inferiority as superiority, because it is primarily owing to Beth’s impulsive, emotional responses to her sensory contact with nature that her spontaneous creativity is stirred, thereby marking her as a genius, a figure feminized by Grand to dispute the gendered bias in seeing female genius as “a sign of physiological deviance” or “a biological anomaly.” Thus, far from privileging a logical process of acquisition and maturation, for instance, book reading and maths learning which Beth shuns to embrace the books of nature and life instead, Murphy thinks that

⁶ The novel has 52 chapters, 527 pages; I set the dividing line at chapter 37, page 327, wherefrom Beth’s marriage begins.

Grand emphasizes the importance of expressionistic experience in nature, affirming women's sensitivity, emotionality and compassion as the propellants for human advancement.⁷

Indeed, sense experience plays a crucial role in Beth's formative years; it is particularly related to Beth's genius. As the narrator tells us, Beth's "further faculty" first appears when she visits the Castle Hill, where she is convulsed by its natural beauty:

the green of the grass, the brambles, the ferns, the ruined masonry against which she leant, the union of sea and sky and shore, the light, the colour, absorbed her, and drew her out of herself. *Her soul expanded, it spread its wings, it stretched out spiritual arms to meet and clasp the beloved nature of which it felt itself to be a part. It was her earliest recognition of their kinship, a glimpse of greatness, a moment of ecstasy never to be forgotten, the first stirring in herself of the creative faculty, for in her joy she burst out into a little song. . . . It was as if the pleasure played upon her, using her as a passive instrument by which it attained to audible expression.* (BB, 15-16, emphases added)

Such a sensory experience of nature, accompanied by emotional fervor, spiritual immersion and instantaneous literary outpourings, is repeatedly shown in the novel. As Lyn Pykett succinctly points out, Grand constructs Beth as partly a "Wordsworthian infant . . . a 'natural' poet seeking to name the sight and sounds of the world around her and to articulate a pre-intellectual sense of the world."⁸ In the "Preface" to Lyrical Ballads (1802), William Wordsworth states that,

poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility: the emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction the tranquility gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is

⁷ Patricia Murphy, Time Is of the Essence: Temporality, Gender, and the New Woman (New York: State U of New York P, 2001), 109-50. For the quotation, see p. 133.

⁸ Lyn Pykett, The 'Improper' Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), 178.

carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind and in whatever degree, from various causes is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will upon the whole be in a state of enjoyment. (P, 168-69)

As if to act as a variant of Wordsworth's spokesperson, Beth's literary creativity is evoked under the influence of natural beauty whereby her powerful feelings are spontaneously given expression through her physical body, presented in the spoken form of songs, verses and imagined stories.⁹ In her ecstasy as such lies her reverence for nature: for one thing, nature is a source of creative energy for her impressionistic experience and extemporaneous literary outpourings; for another, nature is a spiritual phenomenon in which Beth's utopian desire for the oneness of humans with nature has a religious and moral import. By emphasizing the nature-child's susceptibility to nature as a vital mechanism for the operation of deeper perception, Grand correlates nature, art and spiritual revelation to throw into relief the Romantic heritage of the female genius artist, blurring and challenging the patriarchal gender binaries of body and mind.

Epigraph from John Ruskin's Modern Painters (1843): Nature, art and spiritualism

Before the novel starts, Grand projects a blissful triad of nature, art and spiritualism in the second epigraph, a passage extracted from John Ruskin's "General Remarks Respecting the Truth of Turner" in the first volume (1843) of Modern Painters:

I cannot gather the sunbeams out of the east, or I would make them tell you what I have seen; but read this and interpret this, and let us remember together. I cannot gather the gloom out of the night sky, or I would make that tell you what I have seen; but read this and interpret this, and let us

⁹ Although Beth's spoken literary outpourings are in line with the Wordsworthian "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," they are not intellectual/mental products recollected in tranquility. It is not until she writes in the attic that her writing is an intellectual/mental outcome recollected in tranquility, and I will explore this point later in the second stage of Beth's transformation.

feel together. And if you have not that within you which I can summon to my aid, if you have not the sun in your spirit and the passion in your heart which my words may awaken, though they be indistinct and swift, leave me, for I will give you no patient mockery, no labouring insults of *that glorious Nature whose I am and whom I serve*.¹⁰ (emphasis added)

Ruskin had a tremendous admiration for the drawings of the landscape painter J. W. M. Turner and he had, since young, established a habit of collecting Turner's works.¹¹ This contributed eventually to his writing the first volume of The Modern Painters to defend the man he considered a hero, whose paintings, he thought, had not been justly received, being criticized as not true to life.¹² Believing that painting, "the sister of Poetry,"¹³ served not only to please but to elevate the soul, and that "art is the greatest which conveys to the mind the greatest number of greatest ideas,"¹⁴ Ruskin postulated that a good landscape painter should faithfully present natural objects based on his/her impression of them, in the hope of guiding the spectator's contemplation to strike a chord in mind, that is, to help establish "the bond between the human mind and all visible things."¹⁵ This, he thought, Turner had achieved beyond anyone else and thus considered him "the epitome of all art, the

¹⁰ This is a direct quotation from the novel's epigraph; slight variations occur in the version I refer to here:

I cannot gather the sunbeams out of the east, or I would make *them* tell you what I have seen; but read this, and interpret this, and let us remember together. I cannot gather the gloom out of the night-sky, or I would make that teach you what I have seen; but read this, and interpret this, and let us feel together. And if you have not that within you which I can summon to my aid, if you have not the sun in your spirit, and the passion in your heart, which my words may awaken, though they be indistinct and swift, leave me; for I will give you no patient mockery, no laborious insult of that glorious nature, whose I am and whom I serve. (emphasis in original)

John Ruskin, Modern Painters, vol. 3 of The Works of John Ruskin, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, (London: George Allen; New York: Longman, 1903), 611-12.

¹¹ Ruskin's first Turner watercolor was given to him by his father in about 1837 when he was 18; from then on he collected Turner's drawings. Luke Herrmann, Ruskin and Turner: A Study of Ruskin as a Collector of Turner, Based on His Gifts to the University of Oxford Incorporating a Catalogue Raisonné of the Turner Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum (London: Faber, 1968), 19-28.

¹² Joan Evans, John Ruskin (London: The Alden P, 1954), 83-95; George P. Landow, The Aesthetic and Critical Theory of John Ruskin (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1971), 43-44, 89.

¹³ Ruskin's phrase quoted in Landow, The Aesthetic and Critical Theory of John Ruskin, 55.

¹⁴ Ruskin's phrase quoted in Henry Ladd, The Victorian Morality of Art: An Analysis of Ruskin's Esthetics (1932; New York: Octagon Books, 1968), 27.

¹⁵ Quoted in Joan Abse, John Ruskin: The Passionate Moralizer (London; New York; Melbourne: Quartet Book, 1980), 64.

concentration of all power. . . . He seems to have seen everything, remembered everything, spiritualised everything in the visible world.”¹⁶ In Turner’s works, Ruskin found “Nature and art in one—all that I best love in nature with all that I most revere in art.”¹⁷ “[A]n Apostle of Nature and Art” himself, Ruskin thus made it his mission “to preach the aesthetic study of Nature and to justify Turner as the chief interpreter of the new Nature-Worship.”¹⁸ Frederic Harrison, accordingly, makes a pertinent remark about their companionship: “the prose poet of Nature who had placed the lasting crown on the head of the colour-poet of Nature.”¹⁹

As Dinah Birch points out, there is often a conjunction of Romanticism with evangelical Christianity in Ruskin’s early works, and the first volume of Modern Painters can be construed as an extended demonstration of Ruskin’s belief that religion cannot be separated from a reverence for nature.²⁰ Edward Tyas Cook also draws attention to Ruskin’s linkage of religion, art and nature. In “the Ruskinian Gospel of Art,” Cook says, art is to interpret the beauty of God’s creation,²¹ and so-called “beauty,” in Ruskin’s own definition, is “the expression of the creating Spirit of the universe.”²² Art is to imitate, reflect and preach truth through nature. Art is also religion in the sense of noble emotions such as love and reverence, to which the human mind is moved by beauty and truth and through which hope and passion are aroused for the pursuit of happiness, justice and mercy, so art is morality as well.²³ It comes as no surprise that, in Ruskin’s works, George Eliot saw his

¹⁶ Ruskin’s letter to Edward Clayton quoted in Herrmann, Ruskin and Turner, 20.

¹⁷ Ruskin’s letter quoted in Herrmann, Ruskin and Turner, 25.

¹⁸ Frederic Harrison, English Men of Letters: John Ruskin (London: Macmillan, 1902), 41.

¹⁹ Ibid., 44.

²⁰ Dinah Birch, “Ruskin, Myth and Modernism,” Ruskin and Modernism, ed. Giovanni Cianci and Peter Nicholls (Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave, 2001), 32-47, 34.

²¹ Edward Tyas Cook, Studies in Ruskin: Some Aspects of the Work and Teaching of John Ruskin (London: George Allen, 1891), 19, 6.

²² Ibid., 11-12.

²³ Ibid., 15.

teaching of "Truth, Sincerity, and Nobleness."²⁴

Now, it may be said that Grand's appropriation of Ruskin's passage here is to emphasize as much the divine message of nature in relation to Beth's spontaneous art as the spiritual vision Beth the beholder/artist derives from that divinity. The last accentuated phrase, "that glorious Nature whose I am and whom I serve," strikes a resonance with Grand's description of Beth who is "not gazing with seeing eyes nor listening with open ears, but apprehending through her further faculty the great harmony of Nature of which she herself was one of the triumphant notes" (BB, 271). Ruskin's passage is actually a quotation from somewhere unspecified, and I assume the words are attributed to Turner himself, and by extension, to all like-minded painters of nature, who not only express a sense of belonging to nature but serve nature in the way in which they use the transcendental vision they possess to guide the rest of humanity to perceive the divine message inherent in the natural elements, the sunbeams, the gloom of the night sky and so on. It is in accordance with Ruskin's aesthetic concept in his vindication of Turner's works that the painter/artist is to guide the spectator's mind to natural objects for contemplation and to create "the bond between the human mind and all visible things." Likewise, whilst Beth expresses her kinship with nature, she is often portrayed as endowed with an almost supernatural power to envision something unforeseen that amounts to a prediction of the future. Her spontaneous spoken art is closely bound up with the mystic vision she sees in, of and through nature. If Grand makes Beth an incarnation of the likes of Turner, then the reader is the spectator to whom the artist Beth (as well as Grand) wants to show the message of divine truth: eternal oneness with nature.

It should be noted that, of the natural scenes to which Beth is exposed, she is especially drawn to the seascape, extremely susceptible as she is to the movements

²⁴ Ibid., 3.

and the sounds of the sea waves. And in describing Beth as “a sea-child” (BB, 206), Grand draws a spiritual element into Beth’s sensory contact with nature, attempting to take the human-nature union to a point of ecstasy, where it would reach eternal oneness:

She wanted to hear what the little waves were saying . . . the murmur of the calm sea threw her at once into a dreamy state, full of pleasurable excitement . . . then she took her hat off, her dress, her boots and stockings, everything. . . . The little waves had called her, coming up closer and closer, and fascinating her, until, yielding to their allurements, she went in amongst them, and floated on them, or lay her length in the shallows, letting them ripple over her, and make merry about her, *the gladdest girl alive, yet with the rapt impassive face of a devotee whose ecstasy is apart from all that acts on mere flesh and makes expression. All through life Beth had her moments, and they were generally such as this, when her higher self was near upon release from its fetters, and she arose an interval towards oneness with the Eternal.* (BB, 270-71, emphasis added)

The sea-voice connotes “the great song of eternity it sings on always” (BB, 282), and the sea-wave, as its endless movement suggests, is something that leads not to “the contemplation of calmness; it exhilarate[s] instead of soothing” (BB, 324). It could be argued that the seascape is a natural setting designed by Grand to provide a religious ritual, where Beth the devotee repeatedly experiences a spiritual ecstasy that *does not* “act on mere flesh [to] make expression,” and where her longing for infinity issues in a spiritual transcendence released from the fetters of her body.

This spiritual experience seems to have borne a relation to the views of the Theosophical Society founded by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott in New York in 1875 and flourishing in London by the 1880s.²⁵ According to Joy Dixon, the Theosophical Society recognized the equality of the sexes, believing that

²⁵ For a brief account of the Theosophical Society (TS), see Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast: English Feminism and Sexual Morality 1885-1914* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), 167-68. For an account of the TS and its relation to women, see Joy Dixon, *Divine Feminine: Theosophy and Feminism in England* (Baltimore; London: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2001), 152-205.

“the humanity is dual,” because each sex had a different role to play, and when “the Ego or Higher Self developed, passing through numberless lives in both male and female bodies, it began to manifest the highest qualities of both, culminating in the emergence of the spiritual androgyne or ‘Divine Hermaphrodite.’”²⁶ Male and Female are thus “two halves of one whole, the Absolute;” and the human body is merely “a temporary vehicle for an eternal spirit, evolved through all material forms up to the spiritual.”²⁷ The idea of reincarnation is invoked here, for the Higher Self is “the reincarnating individuality” different from its temporary, imperfect presentation, namely, personality, in this earth-life.²⁸ And it is through its reincarnation as different sexes that the human soul, “temporarily clothed in the garb of [man- or] woman-hood,” journeys on and on through physical bodies to develop the best qualities of both sexes and moves upward to reach its highest state, spiritual equilibrium.²⁹ To the Theosophists, the physical body is merely a visible vehicle that, together with other invisible bodies,³⁰ manifests the astral projection, the chakra:

Through the chakras, spiritual, mental, and emotional experiences were refracted through the physical body, and bodily experience reverberated on the higher planes. The term *chakras* . . . signified the “wheel-like vortices” a clairvoyant could detect in the luminous energy field that surrounded the physical body.³¹ (emphasis in original)

Beth’s “bodily” merging with the sea, her sensory contact with nature, seen in this light, is perhaps more of a vehicle to express her spontaneous creativity and a stimulus for her to reach her ego or higher self than an experience “of a sexual

²⁶ Dixon, *Divine Feminine*, 154.

²⁷ Bland, *Banishing the Beast*, 167.

²⁸ Dixon, *Divine Feminine*, 127.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 157.

³⁰ Drawing on C. W. Leadbeater’s concept, Dixon notes that “man is a soul and owns a body;” and apart from the physical body by which an individual conducts his/her business with the lower world, s/he also has other invisible bodies by the means of which s/he deals with her/his emotional and mental worlds. See Dixon, *Divine Feminine*, 126-27.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 127.

nature” as Ann Heilmann posits.³²

Drawing on H el ene Cixous’ notion, Heilmann thinks that Beth “belongs to the race of the waves” and that the water image symbolizes sexual energy; thus Beth’s merging with the sea is indicative of her artistic *jouissance* in feminine writing as well as her self-directed psycho-eroticism.³³ While Heilmann aligns the theosophical concept of the seventh “race”³⁴ with Grand’s idea of the “seventh wave” woman proposed in The Heavenly Twins (1893), attesting to Beth’s role “as the harbinger of a new ‘race’ of seventh-wave women adepts [a term referring to intelligence, conscience and will],”³⁵ she contends that Grand differentiated herself from the Theosophists in terms of sexual matters. The Theosophical Society, Heilmann explains, stressed a curb or a redirection of sexual desire, whereas Grand uses the image of the waves to highlight Beth’s sexuality.³⁶ To demonstrate her point, Heilmann adds another two episodes for discussion. One is where Beth and her lover in her youth Alfred Cayley Pounce embrace and kiss each other before they are almost drowned by the devouring sea “galloping like a racehorse” (BB, 243). The wave image, to Heilmann, suggests sexual intercourse, and the two young people’s exhaustion after their dangerous encounter with the sea is evocative of a sexual orgasm. The other episode is where Beth sees the waves continuously lapping up the rocks until she finally “draw[s] in her breath involuntarily, and inhale[s] long deep draughts with delight [after] the water went out. . . . Her bosom

³² Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 99.

³³ *Ibid.*, 81, 100.

³⁴ Heilmann explains that, in Blavatsky’s conception, there are seven stages or “races” for human spiritual progress. The first and second races are astral-bodied, sexless or asexual people; the third race is androgyny; the fourth and fifth races are humans in their present form tied to their physicality; the sixth and seventh races will be future humanity with spiritual powers but will also, like the first two races, become asexual. Thus the theosophical concept is basically anthropocentric. See *ibid.*, 97. For the seven races of spiritual development, see also George Robb, “Race Motherhood: Moral Eugenics vs Progressive Eugenics, 1880-1920,” Maternal Instincts: Visions of Motherhood and Sexuality in Britain, 1875-1925, ed. Claudia Nelson and Ann Summer Holmes (London: Macmillan, 1997), 58-74, 63.

³⁵ Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 97.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 98-99.

heaved with the heaving water rhythmically” (BB, 257). This Heilmann interprets as Beth’s “auto-erotic potential of the female body in its dynamic interplay with the element of water.”³⁷

If what I argue is sustained, the argument that the seascape provides a religious ritual for Beth the devotee, then, Beth’s merging with or bath in the sea, the latter being her nude bathing as shown in the passage quoted earlier, could be viewed as an analogy for baptismal cleansing, the purification of Beth’s soul on her way to spiritual evolution. It is one of the means by which Beth finds that there is something in her, “a power lying latent in the whole race, [of] which [she] will eventually come into possession” (BB, 27). This “something,” to see it in a narrow sense, is related to Beth’s personal achievement of spirituality, and the two episodes that Heilmann singles out as having a sexual implication become cases in point here: for the former occasion suggests the theosophical notion of reincarnation as well as the spiritual androgyny, and the latter is an evidence of Beth’s spiritual transcendence from her body.

As the narrator tells us, before Beth and Alfred are drowned, Beth’s supernatural power of prediction, one manifestation of the chakra, tells her that they will not die. Despite the fact that this psychic power disappears for a while, it revives when the sea nearly overwhelms Beth. In showing her dauntlessness in the face of impending death, Beth tells Alfred her belief in reincarnation: “even if we were [drowned], it wouldn’t be the end of us. We have been here in this world before, you and I, and we shall come again” (BB, 240). While Heilmann regards their embrace and kiss at this critical moment of life and death in front of the devouring sea as a metaphor for their sexual climax, I would rather see their intimacy as a potential symbol of the “Divine Hermaphrodite,” the temporary apogee of their

³⁷ Ibid., 99-100.

reincarnation in this life. That the sea “rose . . . once more, up, up . . . [and] sank back . . . rose and fell, rose and fell again . . . galloping like a racehorse” (BB, 242-43) could be seen as an emblem of the spiritual evolution that anticipates the coming of the seventh-wave New Woman in Beth, since, as Heilmann pointedly observes, the image of the wave was frequently used by the feminists at the time to highlight the advancement of the women’s movement.³⁸

The anticipation that Beth will be a spiritual, asexual and astral-bodied figure (the features of the seventh-wave New Woman) is further shown in the second episode Heilmann mentions where Beth

lost herself in contemplation of sea and sky scape . . . *the vision and the dream were upon her. That other self of hers unfurled its wings, and she floated off, reveling in an ecstasy of gentle motion.* Beyond the sea-line were palaces with terraced gardens, white palaces against which grass and trees showed glossy green; and there she wandered among the flowers, and waited. *She was waiting for something that did not happen, for some one who did not come.* (BB, 257, emphases added)

If “the vision and the dream” is Beth’s astral projection, that “some one” she is expecting will be the New Man manifested in Alfred at this moment, and that “something” she is envisioning points to the emergence of the divine androgyny between them in the utopian Eden-like garden. Yet as Beth’s supernatural psychical power foresees, neither the New Man nor the androgyny will come: the narrator tells us that Alfred not only walks out of Beth’s life without saying goodbye to her but develops into a decadent later when they meet again in adulthood.

In fact, a similar “vision and dream” had happened to Beth earlier. It was on the occasion when she had finished fishing in the sea and offered a whiting on toast to her playmate Sammy Lee, an effeminate, timid and yet patriarchal figure, who

³⁸ Heilmann lists four women writers (Florence Nightingale, Frances Power Cobbe, Olive Schreiner and Gertrude Colmore) and draws relevant passages from each writer’s work to demonstrate feminist usage of the sea-wave image. See *ibid.*, 97, 256, note 57.

thinks that women have no talents at all to write books like men:

Beth gazed at [the sea] until *she was seized with a great yearning to lie back on its shining surface and be gently borne away to some bright eternity, where Sammy would be, and all her other friends. The longing became imperative. . . . The vision and the dream were upon her that evening, her nerves were overwrought, and she was yearning for an outlet for ideas that oppressed her. . . .* Things come into my mind, but I don't think them, and I can't say them. They don't come in words. It's more like seeing them . . . only you don't see them with your eyes, but with something inside yourself. Do you know what it is when you are fishing off the rocks, and there is no breaking of waves, only a rising and falling of the water; and it comes swelling up about you with a sort of sob that brings with it a whiff of fresh air every time, and makes you take in your breath with a sort of sob too, every time—and *at last you seem to be the sea, or the sea seems to be you—it's all one*; but you don't think it. (BB, 177-78, emphases added)

Aged 11 then, Beth could not explain clearly what she was obsessed with, only that she knew she had seen through something. While Murphy uses this passage as a “manifestation of [Beth's] stream-of-consciousness utterance based on sensation” to differentiate cognitive meditation and involuntary intuition,³⁹ my focus here is on Beth's spirituality in her vision and dream of that “bright eternity,” a place where she imagines Sammy, the one half of the whole, would unite with her as the other half, and where spiritual equilibrium for all her friends could be found. It is an eternity of the “Divine Hermaphrodite,” a utopian harmony between the sexes. While Beth is trying to make Sammy feel what she feels, Sammy simply cannot understand her but feels horrid about her “fool-fashion” (BB, 179) and runs away. In response to this, Beth cries: “Sammy! Sammy! He's gone. I've lost him. This is the most dreadful grief I have ever had in my life” (BB, 180). It could be argued that Beth's reaction speaks not so much of her over-sentimentality as of Sammy's inability to reach the same spiritual vision as she does, to say nothing of his playing his part to

³⁹ Murphy, *Time Is of the Essence*, 121.

work out the spiritual androgyny with her in the eternal realm. This is the main reason, I assume, for Beth's "most dreadful grief."

If Grand draws on Alfred's regression and Sammy's mundaneness to indicate that it takes more time for men to elevate their soul (as she does with the romantic knight Arthur Brock and Beth's husband Dan, points I will discuss later), she certainly sketches a pleasurable picture of Beth. For Beth's "other self"—the self hardly disassociating itself from the theosophical conception of ego or higher self—transcends the fetters of her body after her soul is metaphorically purified by and through the sea. The gentle motion of the sea-wave thus invokes and parallels the gentle upward moving of Beth's spiritual development. The sea(-scape), in other words, provides a milieu for Beth's union with nature, combined with her spirituality and her extemporaneous spoken art, rather than suggesting Beth's psycho-autoeroticism as Heilmann proposes.

Nature versus culture

To some extent, the sea is aligned with the Romantic spirit in serving as "a kingdom and a place of exile"⁴⁰ from which Beth seeks solace and refuge. The case in point is Beth's jumping into the sea to escape from her mother's brutal force. Like several Victorian mothers portrayed in New Woman fiction as I have discussed earlier (for instance, Hadria and Algitha's mother Mrs. Fullerton in The Daughters of Danaus, Harriet's mother Mrs. Kirkpatrick and Claudia's mother Lady Temple in The Stones of Sacrifice), Beth's mother Mrs. Caldwell gives unequal treatment to her children of different sexes.⁴¹ While she sends her sons away to receive an

⁴⁰ Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (1949; London: Vintage, 1997), 719.

⁴¹ In The Heavenly Twins (1893), Grand also presents unequal treatment of the sexes through the eponymous twins, Angelica and Diavolo. When they are children, Angelica and Diavolo are equally treated and they often cross-dress or perform the role of the opposite sex to amuse themselves and others. But when they reach adolescence, Diavolo is sent to a military school to receive a formal

education, she keeps her daughters at home, giving them uninteresting and difficult lessons in an attempt to mould their characters “on lines of ghastly uniformity” (BB, 125), just as she herself was brought up. Her over-partiality is further shown in her persuading Beth to support her brother Jim with the money Beth was bequeathed by Great-Aunt Victoria Bench. Thus a drastic contrast we see is that, while Jim plays billiards, drinks beer, smokes pipes, even coaxes money out of his mother for these pursuits (BB, 155), Beth and her sisters are shabbily dressed and the whole family are meagerly fed, until Beth’s hunting food outside more or less satisfies everyone’s hunger.

Throughout the novel, the reader is led to see a phlegmatic and yet tensed mother-daughter relationship. Mrs. Caldwell seldom kisses, caresses or expresses her love for Beth. Rather, due to her lack of patience in cultivating her sensitive daughter, she often abuses Beth physically (shaking, slapping, and beating) and verbally (reviling and jeering) in order to silence or control her. Her oppression is so forcefully executed that the narrator tells us of two violent explosions of Beth in rebellion against her mother. The first is when Beth is so attracted to the musical band on the pier and resists leaving, the result being that she falls victim to her mother’s brutality to such an extent that, instead of running back inland, Beth jumps into the sea to escape from her mother’s abuse. Despite the fact that the sea is the nearest and most immediate rescue Beth can find around her, it may not be too far-fetched to say that, as a sea-child, she feels a stronger kinship with the sea, which, in addition to stimulating her spirituality and creativity, may also provide an anchor for her emotional stability. Beth’s second rebellion happens in a piano lesson when her mother expects her to know a musical notation without teaching it to her and is

education, while Angelica is kept at home to learn feminine decorum, even though she proves to be more intelligent and intellectual than her brother.

infuriated at getting no response from Beth. To respond to her mother's fury, which is as ridiculous as her teaching, Beth bangs the keyboard forcefully, threatening her mother that "if I had not struck the piano, I should have struck you" (BB, 162). From then on, Mrs. Caldwell is careful not to irritate Beth, because she knows that Beth will literally attack her if she is provoked. The two events show that, rather than playing the obedient victim as before, Beth starts to find ways of counteracting the oppression that restricts and stifles her, one of which is to seek a refuge in nature.

In depicting Beth's domestic life in childhood, Grand does not actually sketch a clear contrast of nature (the green world) versus culture, because Mrs. Caldwell is careless about Beth's upbringing and does not limit her freedom to go outside, although she does make a deliberate attempt to differentiate her family from the "lower" people due to her class prejudice in thinking that those villagers are inferior by nature.⁴² What we often see is that Beth is drawn to go into nature (especially the sea) of her own initiative in order to experience its diversity, freshness and spaciousness. However, a vivid contrast of nature versus culture is presented in Beth's boarding school life at St. Catherine's, an institution "regulated on a system of exemplary dullness" (BB, 301) that imposes a formality and conventionality clearly at odds with Beth's liberated nature.

As the narrator tells us, Beth takes no interest in the school lessons, and she knows more than the school textbooks contain. Her peculiarity is mostly shown in her marvelous story telling, which fascinates many schoolgirls. There, Beth's vision and dream appear again, in which she and the vague male being who loves her embark on a visionary walk towards the sea, his arm around her and her head on his

⁴² For a discussion of the imperialistic discourse in relation to race and class in Grand's novels, see Iveta Jusová, "Imperialist Feminism: Colonial Issues in Sarah Grand's *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book*," *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920* 43.2 (2000): 298-315; *idem*, *The New Woman and the Empire* (Columbus: The Ohio State UP, 2005), 13-46.

shoulder (BB, 306-07), a harmonious picture presumably analogous with what she had previously imagined, as I have pointed out. It is not surprising that this beautiful vision, together with Beth's vitality, cannot survive St. Catherine's rigid discipline. And it is not until Beth sneaks out to the garden at midnight to enjoy fresh air and freedom that her energy, vision and dream are revived once more:

To be out—to be free to sit under the apple-trees and look up through the boughs at the faintly blushed blossom, till *the vision and the dream came upon her, and she passed from conscious thought into a higher phase of being*—just to do that was her one desire till the petals fell. (BB, 308, emphasis added)

If Beth's jumping into the sea could be regarded as one manifestation of nature versus culture, culture in the sense of what Mrs. Caldwell symbolizes in terms of feminine education under the patriarchy, Beth's "wild" escape into nature at midnight certainly casts light on the suffocating effect the "civilized" institution has on the nature-child Beth. While Beth seeks solace from the sea to heal the emotional wound caused by her mother's abuse, her embrace of the garden to revive her higher self clearly echoes her repeated search for spiritual evolution in the seascape.

Epigraph from Shakespeare's Othello (1604): The wifely voice of anger and the revolt against injustice

If nature, in Beth's girlhood, serves as a visual-sensory incentive that spurs her latent literary faculty and intensifies her spiritual longing for a harmonious union with it, I would argue that nature, along with Beth's marriage to the crude and superficial doctor Daniel Maclure, has a different effect on the adult Beth, expanding her concern from the personal/ego-conscious achievement to the public/eco-conscious wellbeing of humans and non-humans. And it is this change in Beth's broader concerns, concerns that draw particular attention to and protest against injustice to

women and animals, that, I would argue, makes her a precursor of ecofeminism today. Yet a study of Beth's proto-ecofeminist ethics cannot be understood without an understanding of her marital relationship with Dan, the superintendent of a Lock Hospital and a vivisector.

Whereas Hadria, in The Daughters of Danaus, enters a loveless marriage to escape from maternal oppression and familial drudgery, Beth marries Dan to end "the long dull dreary days, and the loneliness" (BB, 330), a result of her receiving no systematic and instructive education at home. But more importantly, she marries in order to satisfy her mother's wish and to please her, an often-beaten child's hunger for maternal love. Parallel to Caird, who insinuates Hubert's conventionality in contradistinction to Hadria's rebelliousness prior to their marriage in The Daughters of Danaus, Grand suggests the incompatibility between Beth and Dan in the light of their different attitudes towards nature. Once on their walk to the Beck river, Beth is shown enjoying the natural scenes which fire her imagination, but the "earth"-y Dan, ironically, does not take delight in the Earth's creations; he sees them as they are and finds the walk rather uninteresting. This contrast of affective responses to nature tellingly prefigures a striking clash between a nature-child and a science-man. But right on the novel's title page, in the epigraph taken from Emilia's defiant dialogue with Iago in Shakespeare's Othello, Grand has already announced to the reader that the novel, in addition to the biographical portrait of a woman genius that the subtitle suggests, presents a wife's dauntless revolt against a patriarchal husband and his corrupt practices:

Iago. Come, hold your peace.
 Emilia. 'Twill out, 'twill out: I—hold my peace,
 Sir? no;
 I'll be in speaking, liberal as the air:
 Let heaven, and men, and devils, let

them all
All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll
speak.⁴³

Undoubtedly, the location of the epigraph underlines its importance.

In the final act of Othello where Desdemona is killed by her husband, the serving matron Emilia insists on her mistress' fidelity and reveals the truth about the lost handkerchief, the token by which Othello mistakenly convicts his wife of adultery with Cassio and which prompts her murder. Although Emilia conceals from Desdemona the fact that it was she who gave the handkerchief to her husband Iago, she was an innocent accomplice, since she was unaware of Iago's evil intrigues, and her lie is prompted by her marital devotion to Iago and by her subservient wish to please him. It is not until Desdemona is slandered and murdered by Othello that Emilia is awakened to the villainy of the "wayward" Iago (O, 227, III, iii, 296). As such, regardless of Iago's repeated and coarse command that she hold her tongue, Emilia refuses to submit as she used to but is resolved to speak the truth. In so doing, she not only compensates for the sin (deceit) she has committed and redeems herself, but she also protects Desdemona's posthumous reputation. In so doing, however, Emilia runs the risk of losing her own reputation by becoming an unfaithful and disobedient wife, a severe charge in her time. Between loyalty to a spousal relation and loyalty to a female bond, it is evident that Emilia chooses the latter.⁴⁴ This choice is also made in the causes of truth, justice and moral conscience. So

⁴³ This is a direct quotation from the novel's title page; slight variations occur in the version I refer to here:

Iago	Zounds, hold your peace!
Emilia	'Twill out, 'twill out! I peace?
	No, I will speak as liberal as the north.
	Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,
	All, all cry shame against me, yet I'll speak. (O, 321, V, ii, 216-220)

The following references to Shakespeare's Othello will be based on the Arden Shakespeare series, edited by E. A. J. Honigmann (Surrey, UK: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1997).

⁴⁴ Philip C. McGuire, Shakespeare: The Jacobean Plays (London: Macmillan, 1994) 77. See also T. McAlindon, "Othello, the Moor of Venice" Shakespeare and Decorum (London: Macmillan, 1973), extracted in Harold Bloom, ed., Iago (New York; Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 1992), 59-63, 60.

that, even though Emilia is stabbed to death by Iago after her testimony (and confession), the ultimate price she pays for all those causes, she expends her last breath in defending her mistress again and in redeeming herself by saying:

—Moor, she [Desdemona] was chaste, she loved thee, cruel Moor,
So come my soul to bliss as I speak true!
So speaking as I think, alas, I die. (O, 323, V, ii, 247-49)

Apparently, Grand attempts to draw a parallel between Emilia and Beth in the novel, but she reworks the Shakespearian tragedy in such a way that the exploited wife is empowered not only to confront the immoral husband but to beat him off, instead of being condemned to death and lasting silence. Most importantly, the wifely disobedience is grounded on a refined cause that, while based on the appeal for truth, justice and morality that Emilia represents, extends its scope not only from one-to-one to one-to-many sisterhood but from human to non-human compassion. It is this combined cause of ecological feminism, a doctrine that shows equal concern for “weaker” beings (women and animals) and endeavors to promote a harmonious relationship between humans and non-humans, that, I would argue, motivates Grand’s positioning of the Emilia-Iago dialogue on the title page.

It could be said that both Emilia and Beth are exploited wives suffering from habitual domestic violence emotionally, mentally and psychologically, if not physically.⁴⁵ Despite the fact that Emilia sometimes shows her keen insight into the relationship of the sexes and her contempt at men’s nature, when she is in private with Desdemona, she always acts as a docile wife in front of Iago, who never appreciates but scorns her in public. As Iago comments in response to the gallant lieutenant Cassio’s welcome kiss to Emilia on her arrival at Cyprus:

Sir, would she give you so much of her lips

⁴⁵ Based on the theory of abuser and the abused, Roxanne Y. Schwab has given a study of Iago’s domestic violence in *Othello*. See her article, “‘Filth, thou liest’: The Spousal Abuse of Emilia in *Othello*,” *PsyArt: An Online Journal for the Psychological Study of the Arts* 9 (2005), at http://www.clas.ufl.edu/ipsa/journal/2005_schwab01.shtml (accessed on February 27, 2006)

As of her tongue she oft bestows on me
 You'd have enough. (O, 168, II, i, 100-03)

.....
 She puts her tongue a little in her heart
 And chides with thinking. (O, 169, II, i, 106-07)

Although Emilia defends herself, her retort is brief and weak.⁴⁶ Throughout the play, up until the point of Desdemona's death, Emilia is seen as succumbing to Iago's domination, for she considers it a proper duty for a wife to fulfill. A chauvinistic husband, Iago holds misogynistic views towards women, regarding them as merely

. . . pictures out of doors,
 Bells in your parlours, wild-cats in your kitchen,
 Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
 Players in your housewifery, and housewives in . . .
 Your beds! (O, 169, II, i, 109-13)

He also satirizes women's sensuality, sneering that "[Women] rise to play, and go to bed to work" (O, 170, II, i, 115). To give a picture of his idealized woman, Iago makes a list of feminine virtues as follows:

She that was ever fair and never proud,
 Had tongue at will, and yet was never loud,
 Never lacked gold, and yet went never gay,
 Fled from her wish, and yet said 'now I may',
 She that, being angered, her revenge being nigh,
 Bade her wrong stay, and her displeasure fly,
 She that in wisdom never was so frail
 To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail,
 She that could think, and ne'er disclose her mind,
 See suitors following, and not look behind,
 She was a wight, if ever such wights were— (O, 172-73, II, i, 148-58)⁴⁷

As if to reproduce a Iago in the novel, Grand makes Beth's husband Dan a similar character, who also often abuses Beth in every way except physical violence.

⁴⁶ Jane Adamson thinks that Emilia seems to know Iago's "sour disposition," an assumption impelling her to conceive it futile to challenge her husband, so that, in the face of Iago's derision, Emilia chooses not to play with him but remains silent. See her article, "'Pluming up the Will': Iago's Place in the Play," *Iago*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York; Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 1992), 165-90, 169-70.

⁴⁷ For Iago's misogyny in contemporaneity with other anti-feminists views, see Carroll Camden, "Iago on Women," *Iago*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York; Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 1992), 99-111.

As the narrator tells us, Dan sees Beth as “a silly little idiot” which, he thinks, suits a pretty girl like her (BB, 342). A patriarchal man like Iago, Dan treats Beth in such a way that he opens her letters, uses her bequeathed money without giving her any, uses duplicate keys to pry into her drawers and boxes, frequently shouts Beth down, demands that Beth obey him even to the point of getting his consent before she visits people and yet feels entitled to bring home, without consulting Beth, a nominal paying patient (Bertha Petterick) who, in fact, is his mistress. Not only that, Dan privileges himself with the possession of a dressing-room and a consulting room (a laboratory, a surgery) where no one can enter without his permission, but is discourteous enough to intrude into Beth’s bedroom—the only place she has in the house prior to her discovery of the attic—to disturb her, and once he even demands that Beth unlock the door when she wants to be alone, claiming that it is his legal right to enter the room at will. Mirroring the double personality of the honest-evil Iago, Dan is hypocritical and contradictory. While he is crude to Beth at home, he acts as an admirable husband in public. While he thinks women unwomanly if they feel bored, he deflates Beth’s attempt at authorship, satirically commenting, “my dear child, your head wouldn’t contain a book, and if you were just a little cleverer you would know that yourself” (BB, 365). To Dan, “Literature is men’s work” and if women do that, they make themselves “exceptional,” “Coarse and masculine!” (BB, 366).

With vulgar behavior and language, Dan is also sensuous to the extent that his “incessant billing and cooing, and of a coarser kind . . . his caresses . . . were [all] for his own gratification, irrespective of [Beth’s],” and these sicken her (BB, 343). Obviously, Dan’s sensuality is reminiscent of Emilia’s astute observation of men’s sexual appetites nature:

They are all but stomachs, and we all but food:

They eat us hungerly, and when they are full
They belch us. (O, 247, III, iv, 105-07)

Figuratively edible and consumable, woman's body is described here as mainly to gratify man's sexual appetite. And to a philanderer like Dan, if he cannot find this sensual satisfaction from Beth, he gratifies it with his mistress, but spares himself from the criticisms he high-mindedly casts on women who commit a similar sin.

While never giving Beth encouragement and approval, just as Iago withholds these from Emilia, Dan also shares other commonalities with his predecessor: he is suspicious and jealous of Sir George Galbraith's visits to Beth and of any male friend coming to visit him but having a cordial conversation with her. Intriguingly, whereas Shakespeare highlights and attributes Iago's destructive revenge to his suspicion (that he is cuckolded by Cassio and Othello) and jealousy (that it is Cassio, not he, who is promoted by Othello), traits that release the demon in Iago, Grand ridicules Dan's similar tendencies, pointing to the fact that they make him "the laughing-stock of the place" (BB, 380). Dan is certainly devilish like Iago, but Grand focuses attention on his devilry mostly in relation to his scientific cruelty combined with his professional immorality.

Like Emilia, who is unaware of Iago's revengeful plans, Beth has only the faintest idea of Dan's medical business, except that he often describes disdainfully his patients' cases in front of her, an act for which Beth feels revulsion, reminding her of the "talking doctor" her mother criticized, her childhood playmate Charlotte's medical father whose revelation of patients' conditions to his family she views as not high-minded enough (BB, 266). In charge of the Lock Hospital, Dan withholds information from the ill-educated Beth as to his actual responsibilities except for saying that he works for "the hospital for the diseases of women" (BB, 398). It is not until Angelica, the feminist activist in the neighborhood, visits to check how

much Beth knows of Dan's real undertaking and explains to her what a lock hospital is, that Beth realizes why she is excluded from the local women's communities like Angelica's, a group led by Ideala, the eponymous heroine of the first novel of the trilogy, who campaigns for the New Order for women. Although Beth feels relieved that her unpopularity is not her own fault, she also feels regretful at marrying such an obnoxious and reprehensible husband as Dan: "The whole thing makes me sick. I ought to have been told before I married him. I never would have spoken to a man in such a position had I known" (BB, 399).

Beth's discontent with marriage markedly surfaces at this juncture. She can endure Dan's coarseness but, like Emilia, she can no longer remain silent knowing Dan's devilry and starts a quarrel with him after Angelica has left. Parallel to Emilia's dauntlessness in vindicating Desdemona's virtue in the name of justice, Beth, in the same cause, confronts Dan to speak for those unfortunate diseased women in the lock hospital. And her wifely revolt climaxes later in her giving Dan an ultimatum when she discovers that he vivisects a terrier in his laboratory, an ultimatum that either Dan give up his "*damnable* cruelties" (BB, 439, emphasis in original) as a lock hospital doctor and a vivisector or she will leave the house and publish her reasons.

Beth as the Emersonian-Thoreauvian nature-child

It could be argued that Beth's stand is the result of her transformation in the secret attic room she discovered and claimed for herself in the house, the change from a Wordsworthian child to an Emersonian-Thoreauvian type. As the narrator tells us, ever since Beth's marriage to Dan, her good nature has been jeopardized, "the depravity of [Dan's] tastes and habits, had tended towards the brutalisation of Beth.

Married life for her was one long initiation into the ways of the vicious” (BB, 380).⁴⁸ In this situation, nature has lost its charm for and influence upon Beth who thus gives up her habit of wandering in the woods and fields, not to mention her spontaneous literary outpourings. It is not until her awakening to the fact that Dan will never return the loan he owes her mother, an awakening that prompts her to take up professional needlework to pay the debt herself, together with engaging in writing and thinking at the same time in the attic, that “Nature spoke to [Beth] again and her eyes were opened” (BB, 354).

Different from her mother’s needlework of “everlasting mending” (BB, 140) which typifies Victorian maternal niggling and poverty, Beth’s needlework presents her creative genius in domestic femininity. “A branch of literary housekeeping,” in the words of Beth Sutton-Ramspeck,⁴⁹ Beth’s embroidery proves original, fascinating, and above all, profitable; the earnings from which also enable her to leave Dan and to live alone independently in London. “Female craftwork, while also constituting a vital source for independent income,” as Ann Heilmann observes, “facilitates an explorative journey towards feminine art production.”⁵⁰ Beth’s

⁴⁸ Grand does not object to women’s entry into marriage; in fact, she thinks it helpful in fully developing one’s experience of life, provided that marriage can develop women’s intellectual and physical growth to the largest extent. But if women marry inferior men, the degrading contamination will have a serious effect on women’s self-development. As she declares:

Tied to a man who, from obtuseness or selfishness or principle, not only does not assist her development, but refuses to recognize either the necessity or the possibility of further development, the married woman finds her intellect shut in a dungeon from which there is no escape. And added to the blight of the ghastly constant fact of uncongenial companionship, she learns to her cost that it is just this type of man who, while forever prating of the unfitness of women for the work of life, thrusts upon her every sordid and wearisome detail of tedious labour in the house whilst he essays to achieve manhood by airing his opinions at the clubs, or by doing such work of the world as consists in a strenuous attempt to preserve his balance on an office stool.

Prior to The Beth Book where Grand depicts Dan’s degrading influence upon Beth, she gives a similar account in the first novel of the trilogy, Ideala, in which the eponymous heroine, suffering from marital abuse in every way, is worried by her gradual degeneration in daily associating with her disgraceful husband. For Grand’s declaration, see her article, “Does Marriage Hinder A Woman’s Self-development?” Lady’s Realm 5 (1898-99): 576-77, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 119-20.

⁴⁹ Beth Sutton-Ramspeck, Raising the Dust: The Literary Housekeeping of Mary Ward, Sarah Grand, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman (Athens: Ohio UP, 2004), 217.

⁵⁰ Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 110.

embroidery, seen in this light, not only shows “the beauty of the female imagination,”⁵¹ but more importantly, symbolizes her capacity to cross between the public (needlework sold in London) and the private (feminine decorative and functional objects made in the domestic realm). It is an aesthetic expression with a secular purpose (paying the debt), and charged, in particular, with a feminist/political object (challenging the Victorian convention of the separate spheres).⁵²

“There is no better stimulant [than sewing] for the brain of a woman,” Grand said, recollecting that she “did a great deal of plain sewing” when she had trouble writing out The Heavenly Twins during her sojourn in London with a friend.⁵³ While doing her manual weaving in the attic, Beth, a fictional representation of Grand, is also weaving her mental thoughts and putting them into words.⁵⁴ With books by great minds opened in front of her for contemplation during sewing, “by slow degrees [Beth] acquired the precious habit of clear thought” (BB, 357). To enrich her knowledge for writing, Beth also seeks inspiration from her literary ancestors’ lives, and

she felt a strange kindred with them; she entered into their sorrows, understood their difficulties, was uplifted by their aspirations, and gloried in their successes. Their greatness never disheartened her; on the contrary, she was at home with them in all their experiences, and at her ease as she never was with the petty people about her. It delighted her when she found in them some small trait or habit which she herself had already developed or contracted, such as she found in the early part of George

⁵¹ Rozsika Parker, The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine (London: The Women’s P, 1984), 7.

⁵² Although Rozsika Parker recognizes Beth’s creativity in embroidery, she ascertains that Beth’s needlework reinforces the rigid Victorian dichotomy of the spheres. In contrast to Parker, both Beth Sutton-Ramspeck and Ann Heilmann confirm that Beth’s embroidery serves as a challenge to the conventional spatial/sexual division. See Parker, The Subversive Stitch, 7; Sutton-Ramspeck, Raising the Dust, 217-25; Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 110.

⁵³ Grand, “Foreword” to The Heavenly Twins (London: Heinemann, 1923) v-xvi, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 397-408, 401.

⁵⁴ However, in The Heavenly Twins, Grand has the intellectual heroine Evadne kept away from intellectual activities, in obedience to her vow to her husband, by spending her time on embroidery. See HT, 584.

Sand's *Histoire de ma Vie*, and in the lives of the Brontës. (BB, 370)

In solitude, Beth meditates, and “learnt by degrees to possess her soul” (BB, 370). Accordingly, from the initial scribbling to the latter rather complicated writing with “the more soul-stirring themes in the region of philosophy and ethics,” Beth comes to the recognition that “Art for art’s sake she despised, but in *art for man’s sake* she already discovered noble possibilities” (BB, 358, emphasis added). Such recognition even reaches its highest state in Beth’s coming to see the collectivity of women’s conditions and in her decision to write about all aspects of life and, above all,

. . . to write for women, not for men. I don’t care about amusing men. Let them see to their own amusements, they think of nothing else. Men entertain each other with intellectual ingenuities and Art and Style, while women are busy with the great problems of life, and are striving might and main to make it beautiful. (BB, 376)

As if to present in Beth a combined heritage of the English and American Romanticisms,⁵⁵ Grand has Beth’s writing “avoid the abnormal as much as the conventional” but stick to “the normal—the every day. . . . It is the little things that make life livable” (BB, 373). To some extent, I think Beth’s choice of subject matter is synonymous with Wordsworth’s precept in the “Preface” to *Lyrical Ballads* that the poet should “choose incidents and situations from common life . . . [from] [l]ow and rustic life” (P, 159). It is also in tune with Ralph Waldo Emerson’s address in “The American Scholar” (1837) that “I embrace the common, I explore

⁵⁵ For a brief understanding of the Romantic periods in British and American literature, see C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon, eds., *A Handbook to Literature*, 5th ed. (New York; London: Macmillan, 1986), 438-43; Martin S. Day, *History of English Literature 1660-1837* (New York: Doubleday; Taipei: Bookman, 1984), 316-31; *idem*, *A Handbook of American Literature: A Comprehensive Study from Colonial Times to the Present Day* (Taipei: Bookman, 1985), 78-82. Here, my focus is on Beth’s writing in relation to Romanticism, but one may also say that Grand draws in the uncanny, gothic element of Romanticism (for example, Coleridge’s supernaturalism/mysticism as shown in “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”) in having Beth possess the supernatural power of predicting Grant-Aunt Victoria Bench’s death and her being able to see the specter of the hanged man on the top of Gallows Hill whom others cannot see (BB, 35-36). Beth’s supernatural power, as my previous discussion has shown, is also related to theosophical spiritualism.

and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low” (AS, 942). Henry David Thoreau’s belief in Walden, or Life in the Woods (1854) that “the work of art [should be] nearest to life itself” (W, 1689) can find resonance here as well. Although Beth does not define her subject matter as coming from the “low” but common life, the fact that she means to address common problems faced by common people (especially women) can partially align her, in my view, with writers in the Romantic periods on both sides of the Atlantic.

Another example to demonstrate Beth’s literary alliance with the Romantic predecessors may be found in her purposeful writing. In his call for the use of a common, plainer language to describe common life, Wordsworth emphasizes that the poet should speak in a manner as “a man speaking to men” (P, 164) and write with a purpose:

Not that I mean to say, that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but I believe that my habits of meditation have so formed my feelings, as that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a *purpose*. (P, 160, emphasis in original)

This purpose, according to Wordsworth, is to give the reader immediate pleasure as a direct response to the poet’s expression of feelings in nature, and through this process to affirm “an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe” (P, 166). If the Wordsworthian writing purpose aims at the arousal of emotional and spiritual excitement in the reader, American Romantic writing such as Emerson’s or Thoreau’s shares a similar aim in creating for the reader a transcendental vision in nature, in which spiritual intuition, self-reliance, and an endeavor to preserve individual creativity against conformity are highly anticipated. Although Beth’s writing forsakes the Wordsworthian sense of “pleasure” and is perhaps far from animating a transcendental vision as the American transcendentalists do, it nonetheless makes an

analogous attempt to elevate the reader's soul. For Beth wants to write for [wo]men's sake and uses her writing to supply spiritual sustenance to sufferers in actual life, particularly to women. As she claims, "what we want from the written word that reaches all of us is help and advice, comfort and encouragement. If art interferes with that, then art had better go" (BB, 460). As such, in her writing, she wants to "Give . . . something with hope in it—something that appeals to the best part of us—something which, while we read, puts us in touch with fine ideals, and makes us feel better than we are" (BB, 375).

If the Romantic writers on either side of the Atlantic venture to attack the pre-established literary conventions (Neoclassical decorum or the Enlightenment for the British Romantics and Unitarian rationalism for the American Transcendentalists), Beth's writing serves, then, as a reaction against the contemporary (*fin de siècle*) literary canon of art for art's sake, the so-called "high art" which insists purely on the aesthetic aspect of art and excludes from art any other purposes such as moral, political or social reforms. A book of the art-and-style school, as Beth's friend Sir George Galbraith indicates and as Beth herself agrees, is "a deadly dull artistic presentment of hopeless levels of life. It is all cold polish" (BB, 376). In an attempt to write common experiences of, about and for humanity, Beth pursues what the main/male-streamed literati call "low art" whereas, in actuality, it is an art that conveys social concern, ethics and humanitarianism. As Grand declared in the "Foreword" to the 1923 edition of The Heavenly Twins, thirty years after its first publication: "Some books are works of art and some are works of nature—of human nature. . . . Art is exclusive, human nature is for everybody; and what was wanted was something for everybody."⁵⁶ Beth's writing, seen in this light, is meant to be a work of human nature for everybody.

⁵⁶ Grand, "Foreword" to The Heavenly Twins, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 401.

Her endeavor as such, it could be argued, is partially consonant with Emerson's concept in "The Poet" (1844) that "The poet is the sayer, the namer, and represents beauty" (Po, 986). In Emerson's view, the poet is "sent into the world to the end of expression. . . [s]he writes primarily what will and must be spoken" (Po, 986); and the principal attribute that makes him/her a namer resides in his/her use of "forms according to the life, not according to the form" (Po, 991), so that his/her writing eventually "yield[s] us a new thought . . . unlocks our chains, and admits us to a new scene" (Po, 995). Acknowledged as "a woman of genius" (BB, 527), genius by Emerson's definition being "the activity which repairs the decays of things, whether wholly or partly of a material and finite kind" (Po, 991), Beth wants to use her writing to repair the "decays"—the wrongs, the sufferings, the injustices—that a patriarchal society grounded on hierarchy has inflicted on women and by extension on animals. She may write as "a woman speaking to (wo)men," in adaptation of Wordsworth's "a man speaking to men," to show her sympathy with humanity, her fellow sisters in particular. And as the subsequent narrative reveals, to expedite the spiritual effects she wants to bring to her addressees, Beth makes a pragmatic move from the relatively less-agitated written form of communication to the immediately receptive and active exchange of public speaking, when she discovers her oratorical gift at the close of the novel, consolidating her role as truly a woman "speaking" to (wo)men: "her words should come with comfort to thousands of those that suffer, who, when they heard, would raise their heads once more in hope" (BB, 527).

Analogous to her engagement in embroidery "for a better purpose" (BB, 357), Beth's purposeful writing not only demonstrates her literary ability, but politically, gives her access to the public sphere: she writes in her secret attic room, but her writing, when published, makes her a distinguished writer in the dominant publishing market. The fame it brings may also supply her with substantial royalties to support

herself. Although Beth gives up the personal glory of authorship to devote herself to social and moral work through oratory in the end, this speaking mode still enables her to cross over the public-private dichotomy.

In designating Beth as “a woman of genius,” I think Grand’s construction of genius is predicated not only upon a challenge to the contemporary medico-scientific theory as Patricia Murphy avers and thus to the socio-cultural ideology of “somatic determinism” as Penny Boumelha argues,⁵⁷ but also upon an attempt to accommodate any form of manifestation that could demonstrate the diversification of Beth’s special qualities to mark her singularity. As Ideala says in her observation of Beth, “Genius is versatile. There are many ways in which she might succeed. It depends on herself—on the way she is finally impelled to choose” (BB, 391). Thus, on the one hand, we see Grand’s differentiation of genius from talent as follows:

Talent may manufacture to order, but works of genius are the outcome of an irresistible impulse, a craving to express something for its own sake and the pleasure of expressing it, with no thought of anything beyond. It is talent that thinks first of all of applause and profits, and only works to secure them—works for the result, for the end in view—never for love of the work. (BB, 231)

On the other hand, we see genius’ relation to spirituality that testifies to Beth’s philanthropic urge to write and speak for others:

Genius to [Beth] was yet only another word for soul. (BB, 16)

. . . .

Genius is sympathetic insight made perfect; and it must have this diversity if it is ever to be effectual—must touch on every human experience, must suffer, and must also enjoy; great, therefore, are its compensations. It feels the sorrows of all mankind, and is elevated by them . . . and all its pains are transmuted into something subtle, mysterious, invisible, neither to be named nor ignored—a

⁵⁷ Murphy, *Time Is of the Essence*, 133-36; Penny Boumelha, “The Woman of Genius and the Woman of Grub Street: Figures of the Female Writer in British *Fin-de-Siècle* Fiction,” *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920* 40 (1997): 164-80. For a discussion of the female genius in *The Beth Book*, see also Mangum, *Married, Middlebrow, and Militant*, 150-54; Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 110-11.

fertilising essence which is the source of its own heaven, and may also contain the salvation of earth. (BB, 80-81)

Beth's writing that aims to give hope, comfort and redemption, seen in this light, is one manifestation of her genius that is "sympathetic insight made perfect" to "touch on every human experience." Thus in equating innate genius with spiritual intent in writing for humanity, Grand's concept of genius expands from a subversion of biological determinism to include a suggestion of ethical, social and political activism.

Taken together, it is not too far-fetched to say that what Beth engages in in the attic—sewing, writing and meditating—are very important for the transformation of her mental outlook. Her weaving hands activate her thinking head, which ascends to her feeling soul and issues as concern for the poor and the weak through her command of the written (and later spoken) form of language. And it is this transformation, I would argue, imaginative in essence but practical in effect, that prompts Beth to revolt against Dan, when she realizes the full extent of his injustice to her, to other women and to animals.

Beth's secret attic room

It should be noted that, in associating Beth with the Romantic/Transcendental spirit, I do not overlook the fact that she is not physically in nature to work out her transformation in the way that Emerson, say, or Thoreau are, creating masterpieces in which bodily contact with nature is crucial to their writing. During her sewing, writing and thinking in the attic, Beth is indeed environed with nature but Grand reworks it in another way: the eye contact through the attic window. Situated at the top of the house, the location itself suggestive of its seclusion, the secret attic room is the only place where Beth, the wife, can find for herself the solitude and tranquility

that nature traditionally represents. Given that Beth is not immersed in an open, natural environment like Walden Pond (her status equally restraining her from a Waldenian life), she has, in this little world all to herself, what Thoreau describes as “unfenced Nature reaching up to [her] very sills” (W, 1702): the changing sky above, the cheery garden below, the gentle meadows across and far beyond the house, all in all in the company of the whisperings of the trees, the fragrances of flowers and the busy movement and language of the birds (BB, 357).

Here, Thoreau’s manual labor (house building, plant growing and journal writing) is replaced by Beth’s purposeful manual weaving and prose writing. And if housekeeping is a prerequisite for Thoreau’s economy of living [“Before we can adorn our houses with beautiful objects the walls must be stripped, and our lives must be stripped, and beautiful housekeeping and beautiful living be laid for a foundation” (W, 1655)], Beth’s needlework and literary housekeeping become, then, practical feminist agencies in demonstrating Emerson’s concept of self-reliance, for they symbolize Beth’s emotional, spiritual and financial independence. Beth’s metaphorical housekeeping, when she comes to assume the role of New Woman and New Mother at the end of the novel (a point I will discuss in the Romantic Knight chapter), throws further light on Grand’s “eugenic maternalism,”⁵⁸ a politics of women’s leadership that strives not only to help in the child-man’s shaping into the New Man, but to sweep away the dust of human dirt to “set the human household in order, to see to it that all is clean and sweet and comfortable.”⁵⁹ The human household, seen in its broadest term, can be expanded from individual to country, from one race to entire humankind, all contingent upon women’s power to make it an

⁵⁸ Janet Beer and Ann Heilmann, “‘If I Were a Man’: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Sarah Grand and the Sexual Education of Girls,” Special Relationships: Anglo-American Affinities and Antagonisms 1854-1936, ed. Janet Beer and Bridget Bennett (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 2002), 178-201, 191.

⁵⁹ Sarah Grand, “The New Aspect of the Woman Question,” North American Review 158 (1894): 270-76, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 29-35, 35.

agreeable place to live in.

Significantly, the natural scene exposed before Beth's eyes from the attic window is not a seascape but a landscape. Prior to her marriage, it is unquestionable that Beth's bodily contact with nature, particularly her involvement in the seascape—the sea wind, the sea's roaring sound, and the sea waves—often evokes from within her intense sensations that, aside from her longing for oneness with nature, prompt her further faculty to literary production in the form of orally-composed poems, song and stories. If this “oceanic” influence constitutes what Ann Heilmann calls a *jouissance* in Beth, a merging of sensual inspiration and literary creativity,⁶⁰ I would suggest that it is purely related to Beth's personal/ego-conscious/subjective sense and sensibility. It is not until Beth starts her weaving and writing in the attic with a view onto the natural world, in concurrence with her rumination on books of great minds opened in front of her for contemplation, that

Wholesome consideration of the realities of life now took the place of fanciful dreams. Her mind, wonderfully fertilized, teemed again—not with vain imaginings, however, as heretofore, but with something more substantial. (BB, 357)

In this fair window prospect of natural landscape, the narrator tells us, Beth “vowed again to accomplish *one act of justice* at all events” (BB, 357, emphasis added). This vow, undoubtedly, anticipates the eco-consciousness that will lead Beth to protest against Dan's brutalization of women and animals.

Accordingly, despite the fact that nature is presented in a far less conspicuous way at this stage than it is in Beth's girlhood, where her literal natural excursions often inflame her Wordsworthian sensitivity and imagination, it is nonetheless instrumental in prompting in Beth a transcendental mental excursion which has a

⁶⁰ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 80-115.

distinct Emersonian-Thoreauvian tint in that it leads to her reflecting, critiquing and diagnosing life, literature and gender issues, and finally to her concern for and decision to write for women. Taken together, Beth's attic is significant in that it is not, as Elaine Showalter criticizes, a "fantastic sanctuar[y]" to reflect Beth's "housewife's daydream" in "professionalism and autonomy."⁶¹ Rather, as Lyn Pykett pointedly observes, it "serves . . . as a route *to* reality and the self" (emphasis in original).⁶² Just as Thoreau makes Walden a "book" (literal and literary) about his selfhood within nature, so Grand makes Beth's attic, under the implicit influence of the natural view, "a private place" that brings to light "her secret, private self . . . the realization of a wish-fulfilment fantasy (shared by the author and the character, and also implicating the reader) and a way of figuring the character's interiority."⁶³ The attic also becomes what Heilmann calls "an emblem of the womb, the locus of individual and artistic rebirth."⁶⁴ Whilst Beth's artistic rebirth is manifested by her needlework and purposeful writing, her interiority and individual rebirth, I would argue, can be demonstrated in her increasing eco-consciousness. The attic, seen in this light, not only shows to the reader part of "The *Book* of Beth" (emphasis added),⁶⁵ but is also crucial in directing Beth's transformation from a concern for her self (ego-conscious being) to a broader, eco-conscious concern for all humanity.

As opposed to "the civilized life" (W, 1636), Thoreau's "alternative, decentered, and relational" Waldenian world, as Laura Dassow Walls asserts, is "constructed on the ethic of interaction rather than dominance, knowledge not through control but

⁶¹ Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own: From Charlotte Brontë to Doris Lessing* (1977; London: Virago, 1978), 208-09, 215.

⁶² Pykett, *The 'Improper' Feminine*, 184.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁶⁴ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 105; Heilmann also elaborates her concept of the secret room as a metaphorical womb in *New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism* (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's P, 2000), 178-93.

⁶⁵ I. Zangwill, "The Month in England," *Cosmopolitan* 24 (1898): 155-56, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 492-93, 492.

through ‘sympathy’ and the intimacy of sensual contact, action not alone but through the cooperation of the community’s individual members.”⁶⁶ In a similar vein, Grand makes Beth’s attic an “alternative, decentered, and relational” route to nurture the feminist energy with which Beth is empowered to set up the feminist ethics of harmony in the world. And the first mission Beth takes on is to attack the “civilized” Dan—civilized in his own interpretation and justified in his medical and scientific progressivism, which is in effect brutality in its very essence.

Beth’s story as the stories of woman, nation and world

“In woman,” Hélène Cixous remarks, “personal history blends together with the history of all women, as well as national and world history.”⁶⁷ In depicting Beth’s life story, Grand is indeed reflecting, on the one hand, Victorian daughters’ want of education except for the interest of the marriage market, as seen in Beth’s mother’s treatment of her, and on the other hand, Victorian wives’ misery and mistreatment, as seen in Dan’s treatment of her. But unlike Caird who portrays in The Daughters of Danaus a pessimistic wife in Hadria, despite her temporary flight to Paris in pursuit of her music, Grand presents a relatively positive figure in Beth in The Beth Book, who not only recovers from marital depression by herself (albeit with the help of a perfect knight, an issue I will explore later in the Romantic Knight chapter), but voices her anger at Dan’s degradation of women, herself included. And parallel to her feminist sister Ideala who, sickened by her husband’s caresses, struggles free from his physical abuse and adultery, and awakened from her fancy for the would-be paramour Lorrimer, leaves her marriage for China and a subsequent engagement in

⁶⁶ Laura Dassow Walls, “Walden as Feminist Manifesto,” ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment 1.1 (1993): 137-44, 143.

⁶⁷ Hélène Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa,” Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism, ed. robyn r. warhol and diane price herndl [sic] (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1993), 334-49, 339-40.

social work, Beth takes a similar route by moving away to London, physically (and sexually) severing herself from the exploitative Dan to establish her own life.⁶⁸ In deploying this wifely rebellion in Beth, Grand substantiates the plotline with historical events, bringing to the forefront the Victorian controversies of the Contagious Diseases Acts, also known as the CD Acts (1860s – 1880s), and the Anti-Vivisection agitation (1870s – 1880s), together with the Social Purity movement (1880s – 1890s) and the Back to Nature campaign (1880s – 1890s), threading together the interrelatedness of contemporary British histories of women, medicine, science and nature. The combined issue of the exploitation of women and animals in fact reflects the pivotal concerns of twentieth and twenty-first century eco-feminism, spanning the time spectrum across two centuries to present a complex problem not yet resolved.

The Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts movement (1860s – 1880s)

Introduced to curb the fast spread of venereal disease among the armed forces, the Contagious Diseases Acts in 1864, 1866, and 1869 was legislation targeted mainly at women, because any woman suspected of prostitution could be arrested by the plain-clothes police and forced to undergo a gynecological examination and be registered as a prostitute irrespective of whether she was one. If she was found to be syphilitic, the woman would be sent for a compulsory detention for three to nine months for medical examination and treatment in the lock hospital, where she was treated as a degraded creature.⁶⁹ The Acts not only showed society's disregard of women's legal rights, for the authorized police could arrest any woman they

⁶⁸ This is also what Grand herself had done; she left her husband in 1890 after twenty years' unhappy marital life. See Gillian Kersley, *Darling Madame: Sarah Grand and Devoted Friend* (London: Virago, 1983), 62.

⁶⁹ For references to the Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts movement, see I-B, note 20 (p. 170).

suspected in the protected garrison towns and ports, but revealed the capitalistic strata of class distinction, in which the persecuted women were mostly the socially and economically powerless group who made their living by prostitution, and yet were regarded as the threatening “conduit of infection to respectable society.”⁷⁰ The Acts were also, as Florence Nightingale criticized, an official sanction of vice,⁷¹ because men were exempt from the equivalent operations imposed on those poor women, a fact laying bare the contemporary sexual double standard in conniving at men’s sexual incontinence. This societal conspiracy thus often resulted in many innocent wives’ infection with venereal disease contracted by their husbands, increasing the possibility of their giving birth to tertiary syphilitic children. All in all, the CD Acts generated forceful opposition, in which Josephine Butler was a significant figure in arduously leading the repeal campaign and appealing for sexual morality and women’s right to their bodies.⁷² Thanks to the repealers’ continuous efforts over many years, the compulsory examination was abolished in 1872, the Acts were suspended in 1883 and the total repeal was finally achieved in 1886.

Originating from the Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts Movement, middle-class social purity feminism had as its principal goal the pursuit of religious philanthropy and the advocacy of sexual morality.⁷³ Grand was among the crusaders who propagated its doctrine, and before she drew on the Contagious Diseases Acts in The Beth Book, she had in fact made it a focal point, among other feminist issues, in the

⁷⁰ Judith R. Walkowitz, Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980), 4.

⁷¹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 1.

⁷² For a brief understanding of the crusaders’ reasons for the repeal of the CD Acts, see Josephine Butler, “The Ladies’ Appeal and Protest against the Contagious Diseases Acts (1870),” collected in Janet Horowitz Murray, ed., Strong-Minded Women: And Other Lost Voices from Nineteenth-Century England (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984), 428-32; Murray also collected several other documents under the title of “The Contagious Diseases Acts,” see pp. 424-37. See also Jane Jordan, Josephine Butler (London: John Murray, 2001) for a biography; Jane Jordan and Ingrid Sharp, eds., Josephine Butler and the Prostitution Campaigns: Diseases of the Body Politic, 5 vols. (London: Routledge, 2002).

⁷³ For references to the Social Purity movement, see I-B, note 19 (pp. 169-70).

second novel of her trilogy, The Heavenly Twins (1893). If Grand uses female bodies as a trope to insinuate the vileness of the CD Acts in The Heavenly Twins, she draws on spousal brawls in The Beth Book to voice, through Beth, her discontent with the Acts and the medical establishment involved in upholding them.

Twice Beth straightforwardly quarrels with Dan to declare her strong objection to his vocation as a lock hospital doctor. From their disputes, the reader gets to know Dan's sexual double standard and the medical stance he represents, which is in concert with Dr. William Acton, the crucial figure in the CD Acts' controversy, who was "an advocate of RECOGNITION" (emphasis in original) that "prostitution ought to be an object of legislation," directing the legislative target onto the diseased women in order to ease men's anxiety.⁷⁴ Thus it comes as no surprise that, while Dan thinks it necessary to have sexually diseased women treated in the lock hospitals, regarding it as good for society, it does not strike him that it might be beneficial to include the men who spread the disease in his sanitary practice. As he says in his defense,

It's a deuced awkward thing for a man to be suspected of disease. It's a stigma, and might spoil his prospects. Women are so cursedly prying nowadays. They've got wind of its being incurable, and many a one won't marry a man if a suspicion of it attaches to him. (BB, 400)

While Dan takes account of men's reputation and prospects, he downplays women's. Where he sees women with disease as a matter of lack of sanitation and immorality, he refuses to apply this logic to the diseased men. His inconsistency is further demonstrated in his professional morals. Whereas he can be a talking doctor contemptuously releasing female patients' records, he, like other like-minded doctors,

⁷⁴ This is exactly what Grand strongly opposed. In an interview, Grand said, "Men endeavour to protect themselves from disease by restrictive laws bearing on women, but nothing has yet been done to protect the married women from contagion." See Sarah A. Tooley, "The Woman's Question: An Interview with Madame Sarah Grand," Humanitarian 8 (1896): 161-69, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 220-29, 222. For Dr. William Acton's article quoted here, "The Need for Legislation (1870)," see Murray, Strong-Minded Women, 427-28.

sticks to professional secrecy and, even worse, takes no action over the men who spread the disease. Medical etiquette as such is so unjustified and unjust that Beth retorts to Dan:

You talk about Nature when it suits you; but it is the cant of the subject you employ, for you are at variance with Nature. Your whole endeavour is to thwart her. Nature decrees the survival of the fittest; you exercise your skill to preserve the unfittest, and stop there. . . . Let the unfit who are with us live, and save them from suffering when you can, by all means; but take pains to prevent the appearance of any more of them. By the reproduction of the unfit, the strength, the beauty, the morality of the race is undermined, and with them its best chances of happiness. (BB, 442)

While accusing Dan of his connivance at sexually diseased men and his support for the Lock Hospital to punish diseased prostitutes, Beth thinks Dan fails to act responsibly because he does not warn prospective wives of their husbands' potential illness, so as to avoid their contracting the disease and bearing syphilitic children. A eugenic concept is clearly revealed here. However, it must be noted that, although Grand adopts Darwin's notion of "the survival of the fittest," she reworks it for her social purity feminist purposes for morality and philanthropy. Obviously, "the unfittest" Beth refers to in the above quotation are the diseased men, particularly those sexually immoral and sinful ones who are spared social castigation and compulsory medical treatment. Unlike syphilitic women, these fallen men bring the disease incurable at the time upon themselves, simply because of their reprobate conduct. In other words, they contribute to their own unfitness and thus deserve no help. They are different from the poor, the weak and the fallen (i.e. prostitutes who are, as has been mentioned, on the lowest social strata and have to make a living through sexual trade), whom Beth is devoted to offer help later, categories easily defined as "the unfittest" in Darwinian terms, but whose inferior conditions mostly result from external factors and who thus deserve assistance to help them rise.

While promoting the idea that a marriage bar should be set up to protect women from marrying this kind of men, Beth as well as Grand think the diseased men should be barred from marriage primarily to ensure the healthy longevity of the human race in the long run. Admittedly, Grand's eugenic feminism resorts to the rational selection of a reproductive husband and to some extent, it relies on medical men to achieve this goal. Small wonder, then, that Beth discounts Dan from the medical men she appreciates, such as Dr. Galbraith, the kind of doctors who, "[I]ike Christ[,] . . . will teach as well as heal" with "their high-mindedness, their courage, their devotion, and their genuine disinterestedness" (BB, 443), and that she accuses Dan of being "a mere pander" (BB, 443), whose willingness to admit more panders into society goes "against the Anglo-Saxon spirit" (BB, 399).

Perhaps by virtue of her own marriage to a soldier surgeon,⁷⁵ figures of medical men are a recurrent image in Grand's novels: in addition to Dan who works as a lock hospital doctor here in The Beth Book, the male narrator Lord Dawne and Ideala's fanciful lover Lorrimer in Ideala are medical doctors (mental consultants) like Dr. Galbraith, who is also a narrator in Book VI of The Heavenly Twins. Despite the fact that Grand seems to have wanted to portray compassionate and understanding

⁷⁵ In 1871 when Grand was sixteen, she married the medical officer David Chambers McFall, a thirty-nine-year-old widower with two sons. According to Kersley, Dr. McFall was also involved in the implementation of the Contagious Diseases Acts and treated suspected prostitutes in the local Lock Hospital. For an understanding of Grand's marital life and her relationship with her husband, see Kersley, Darling Madame, 30-63; for Dr. McFall's involvement in the CD Acts, see p. 47. Because of this marriage, Grand had access to knowledge of medicine and army life. That she dwelt on the debauchery of Evadne's and Edith's soldier husbands in The Heavenly Twins might be adduced from her observation of the army circle. And she was very complacent about receiving compliments from medical doctors in regard to her description of syphilis in the novel. In one interview, she said:
 Medical men . . . have written, commending the accuracy of the physiological parts of the book. One reviewer, I may mention, suggested that it would be well for me to take a course of physiology. The fact is, that for five years, I made a close study of the subject under competent medical men.

See Jane T. Stoddart, "Illustrated Interview: Sarah Grand," Woman at Home 3 (1895): 247-52, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 211-19, 213; see also Kersley, Darling Madame, 91, in which she quotes A. T. Camden Pratt's comment in 1897:

Many letters from medical men, known and unknown, complimenting her on her accurate knowledge of physiology and pathology . . . [and] women in distant lands, telling her that she had done more in the cause of women and children than she will ever know.

New Men in Lord Dawne (who secretly loves Ideala and dissuades her from moral corruption in an extra-marital affair) and in Galbraith (who tries to cure Evadne's hysteria), for they both participate in Ideala's New Order movement for women, she nonetheless reveals her distrust of them by questioning a masculine narrative authority built upon their male/medical gaze at the women they love.⁷⁶

As Teresa Mangum indicates, Lord Dawne's narration of Ideala is out of his own idealization of her which, though at variance with the conventional ideology of Victorian womanhood, still shows his framing and controlling of her in his request that she leave Lorrimer and return to her disloyal marriage, a request made out of his jealousy of her lover and his romanticization of female duty, even though he knows the brutality of Ideala's husband. To contrast with Lord Dawne's narrow male view, Grand incorporates the perspective of his widowed sister Claudia, who claims that "it is immoral for a woman to live with such a husband" (I, 48) and asks for a fine line to be drawn where a woman's duty is concerned:

will you kindly tell me where a woman's duty to her husband ends and her duty to herself begins? I suppose you will allow that she has a duty to herself? And the line should be drawn somewhere. (I, 80)

Accordingly, Claudia functions as "a feminist corrective" to Lord Dawne's masculine narration, projecting its unreliability and his masculine surveillance of Ideala.⁷⁷ And rather than relocating herself into the traditional marriage plot pursuant to Lord Dawne's suggestion after she leaves Lorrimer, Ideala leaves for China and does not go back to her husband, even when she returns to England.

Similarly, in Book VI—"The Impressions of Dr. Galbraith"—of The Heavenly

⁷⁶ Here I dismiss Lorrimer from my discussion because he is portrayed as merely an ordinary man who wants to save Ideala from an unfortunate marriage by giving "her the natural joys of a woman—husband, home, children, friends, and only such intellectual pursuits which are pleasant" (I, 169), joys that are still grounded on the conventional marriage framework without erasing the adulterous stigma of Ideala's elopement with him.

⁷⁷ For a discussion of Lord Dawne's role as a male narrator in Ideala, see Mangum, Married, Middlebrow, and Militant, 59-84; for the quotation, see p. 79. See also Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 47-59.

Twins, Galbraith's narration/recording of what he observes of Evadne's hysteria obviously makes Evadne "a case or an object" for his medical study.⁷⁸ In discussing the novel's shift from a third-person to a first-person narrative, Lyn Pykett argues that the former invites the reader's sympathetic identification with Evadne; it tells Evadne's story from the woman's point of view and considers women's hysteria "a form of withdrawal [from] or resistance [to]" their economic and socio-familial exploitation. Galbraith's first-person narration, on the other hand, reveals the contemporary medico-scientific discourse of women's "perverse femininity."⁷⁹ His scrutiny, in John Kucich's words, "follows all the classic patterns of late-century psychoanalytic colonization of the feminine."⁸⁰ However, as both Gerd Bjørhovde and Mangum indicate, Grand entrusts medical men with an authoritative voice because their profession signifies "some sort of ideal, of reason, and common sense, of a scientific and hence a moral rational, as opposed to for instance a religious or superstitious, attitude;" thus she relies on the masculine power Galbraith represents to voice women's anger, "making the powers of patriarchy available to, in fact subservient to, the needs of women."⁸¹

Having said that, Grand does not show her full confidence in Galbraith for she weakens his mastery of narration by inserting an authorial note prior to his medical account of Evadne's case, asserting the reader's superior knowledge over his medical intelligence about his client:

NOTE—The fact that Dr. Galbraith had not the advantage of knowing Evadne's early history when they first became acquainted adds a certain piquancy to the flavour of his impression, and the reader, better informed than himself with regard to the antecedents of his "subject," will find it

⁷⁸ Gerd Bjørhovde, Rebellious Structures: Women Writers and the Crisis of the Novel 1880-1900 (Oslo: Norwegian UP; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987), 119.

⁷⁹ Pykett, The 'Improper' Feminine, 175.

⁸⁰ John Kucich, The Power of Lies: Transgression in Victorian Fiction (Ithaca; London: Cornell UP, 1994), 256.

⁸¹ Bjørhovde, Rebellious Structures, 116; Mangum, Married, Middlebrow, and Militant, 122.

interesting to note both the accuracy of his insight and the curious mistakes which it is possible even for a trained observer like himself to make by the half light of such imperfect knowledge as he was able to collect under the circumstances. (HT, 554)

Parallel to the opinions with which Claudia counters Lord Dawne's, the reader is empowered here to examine Galbraith's examination of his medical case. Although, as Sally Ledger claims, Grand as a social purity feminist is complicit with the contemporary medico-scientific constructions of femininity in terms of monogamy, purity and motherhood,⁸² when these same concerns for women are applied to the context of Galbraith's diagnosis and treatment of Evadne [that he expects moral influence to awaken her conscience (HT, 575), believes maternity to be a natural power to cure her (HT, 660) and controls her reading taste (HT, 662)], it can hardly be denied that Galbraith objectifies Evadne via his "imperialist gaze," to use Heilmann's term.⁸³ Evadne's inertia, passivity, silence, even her suicidal attempt with her unborn child, though promptly quenched by Galbraith, all cast an ironic doubt on his medical, masculine power that is supposed to be "subservient to . . . the needs of women."⁸⁴ Unlike Ideala who strives to establish a life of her own, Evadne's case proves the incurability of her illness and thus affirms the failure of Galbraith's profession.

In fact, Grand's portrayal of Galbraith is not consistent if we consider The Heavenly Twins and The Beth Book together. While she satirizes his imperfect medical knowledge and semi-medical/patriarchal views in the former, she presents him as a god-like doctor whom Beth highly respects in the latter. And if Grand's condemnation of Dan's indecency in being a talking doctor in The Beth Book is sustained, it leaves in doubt her plotting of Galbraith in The Heavenly Twins to talk

⁸² Sally Ledger, "The New Woman and the Crisis of Victorianism," Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle, ed. Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 22-44, 32-33.

⁸³ Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 69.

⁸⁴ Mangum, Married, Middlebrow, and Militant, 122. An emphasized quotation, see p. 216, note 81.

at a dinner party about one of his patients' cases. Although Grand defends Galbraith in that he disapproves of medical talk, "shop talk," in public,⁸⁵ the reason for his stand, ironically however, is not because of the professional code of secrecy, ethics that Beth thinks Dan too low-minded to cling to, but "because of the morbid fascination it has for most people" (HT, 573). As if to give one more strike against his medical prestige that the claims of public opinion would possibly surpass those of his profession, Grand has Galbraith submit to "the will-power of the majority" (HT, 573) and ends up discussing his medical case at table.

Needless to say, Galbraith is an important person in The Beth Book who, after Beth is shunned from the community, first comes to talk to her, encourages her to write and draws others' attention to the likelihood of her ignorance of Dan's medical business. He is also the person who brings Beth's writing to Ideala's notice, whose insight into Beth's genius opens up her subsequent bright life. In his discussion with Beth of writing purpose and style, Galbraith reveals his high-mindedness:

So long as we understand that happiness is the end of life, and that the best way to secure it for ourselves is by helping others to attain to it, we are travelling in the right direction. By happiness I do not mean excitement, of course, nor the pleasure we owe to others altogether; but that quiet content in ourselves, that large toleration and love which should overflow from us continually, and make the fact of our existence a source of joy and strength to all who know us. (BB, 374)

It could be said that, Beth sees Galbraith's his positive side as reported in The Heavenly Twins:

the simple earnestness of the man, the cautious professionalism and integrity . . . the healthy-minded human nature, the capacity for enjoyment and sorrow, the love of life, and above all, the perfect unconsciousness with which he shows himself to have been a man of fastidious refinement and exemplary moral strength and delicacy; of the highest possible character; and most lovable. . . . (HT, 554)

⁸⁵ A term Bjørhovde uses in Rebellious Structures, 122.

Beth is not Galbraith's patient; her friendship with him is not apt to fall into hierarchical politics like that of the husband-wife and doctor-patient tangle between Evadne and Galbraith. Nor is it likened to Lord Dawne's ambiguous relationship with Ideala, where his affection for her gives rise to a disguised patriarchal supervision. Thus, it could be argued that, in providing conflicting perspectives of Galbraith in her novels, Grand shows her ambivalence as a social purity feminist towards traditional medicine. On the one hand, she wants to attack masculine authority over marriage and medicine. On the other hand, she reveals her confidence in medical doctors⁸⁶ as well as her expectation that they should be as noble as social purity feminists in doing philanthropic work to save the poor and the weak. As if to justify her ambiguity, Grand indicates that

There were plenty of high-minded men; right-hearted it might be, but wrong-headed; victims themselves, many of them, of custom, ignorance, prejudice, and lack of imagination, who deplored, in particular, the horror of disease to which all women were exposed, without redress, from the highest to the lowest in the land; but such men were none the less to blame in that they only interfered to shield and protect each other and "punish the

⁸⁶ According to Mangum, Grand herself suffered from neurasthenia due to the pressure she felt from the public whenever she published a novel, so she sought help from medical consultation and gained support from a treatment called "the Salisbury Cure" with which she felt very pleased and intended without avail to publish in a magazine in 1894. See Mangum, Married, Middlebrow, and Militant, 117-18. Curiously, this regimen reminds me of the Salisbury treatment Beth uses in nursing Arthur in The Beth Book (BB, 506). If the two treatments have something in common or are actually identical, perhaps Grand was happy to make it known in the novel (in 1897) after her previous futile attempt at a magazine article. However, Stephanie Forward offers a different account of Grand's neurasthenia, attributing the illness to Grand's suffering from financial pressure as the main breadwinner of the household and to her rupture with her stepson Haldane because of his relationship with a woman which led to Haldane's removal from Grand's house in 1903 after his seventeen years' dependence on her. Grand's several letters in 1903 revealed her worry over Haldane's destitution in the outside world but also her resentment at the ease with which he had achieved nothing when he was under her care. In addition to the different recorded years and causes of Grand's neurasthenia, Forward also notes a different medical treatment Grand received, namely, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell's rest cure, the same treatment Charlotte Perkins Gilman received. Forward doesn't cite her reference, nor does she indicate whether Grand was satisfied with and cured by the rest cure, the same treatment that only led to Gilman's "progressive insanity." Taking Mangum's and Forward's studies together, it is very likely that Grand had suffered neurasthenia for quite a long time, from the 1890s to 1903, and that she had tried different medical treatments. For Forward's discussion, see her "Introduction" to SSPSG, 2: 1-12. For Grand's letters, see SSPSG, 2: 74-78. See also Gilman, The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman: An Autobiography by Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1935; Madison, Wisconsin: U of Wisconsin P, 1990), 119.

women.”⁸⁷

Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to refer the initial statement to Galbraith, a high-minded, right-hearted but wrong-headed doctor in his medical treatment of Evadne. And the latter statement could point to Dan in its most precise sense, for, in Grand’s depiction, Dan is definitely wrong-headed in his medical engagement and cold-hearted in his vivisection. No matter what intention lies behind Grand’s contradictory portraits of Galbraith, one purpose is very clear: she wants to use Galbraith as a sharp contrast to Dan, whose debasement lies in his sexual/moral double standard, his fraudulence to Beth and his scientific atrocity in vivisection.

The Anti-Vivisection movement (1870s – 1880s) and the Social Purity movement (1880s – 1890s)

Coming to the fore during the 1870s and 1880s, the Anti-Vivisection movement was comprised of several pressure groups who shared the same concern for animal rights and animal welfare in opposition to materialist, experimental (medical) science.⁸⁸ As Nicolaas A. Rupke points out, Victorian vivisection controversy focused largely on “the *utility* and the *cruelty* of animal experiments” (emphases in original).⁸⁹ The former, of course, is what the pro-vivisectionists maintained was necessary for the increase of medical and scientific knowledge, with the ultimate aim of alleviating human suffering and legitimizing scientific research. But for the anti-vivisectionists, experiments on living animals, whether or not anesthesia was used, were immoral, uncivil and anthropocentrically selfish with no respect for animals’ rights. It was against this backdrop that Frances Power Cobbe, a journalist, essayist and active

⁸⁷ Grand, “Foreword” to *The Heavenly Twins*, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 403.

⁸⁸ For references to the Anti-vivisection movement, see I-B, note 21 (p. 170).

⁸⁹ Nicolaas A. Rupke, “Pro-vivisection in England in the Early 1880s: Arguments and Motives,” *Vivisection in Historical Perspective*, ed. Nicolaas A. Rupke (London; New York; Sydney: Croom Helm, 1987), 188-213, 195.

feminist who strove for women's equal right to professionalism, education and work opportunities, co-founded in 1875 the Victoria Street Society for the Protection of Animals liable to Vivisection.⁹⁰

As in any activism, there were different voices in anti-vivisectionism: some campaigned for restriction, for instance, inspection or a certain level of suppression in vivisection; but some, like Cobbe (and Caird), advocated total abolition, the main differentiated ideal that contributed to Cobbe's resignation from the Victoria Street Society and her founding instead of the British Union for Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) in 1898.⁹¹ Despite the fact that its components were mostly middle- and upper-class women, the Anti-Vivisection movement was by no means a feminist movement. As Mary Ann Elston points out, some male anti-vivisectionists opposed the women's movement and some feminists were not anti- but pro-vivisectionists.⁹² "If contemporary testimony is to be trusted," Richard D. French says, the large proportion of female participants in the campaign "would seem to have been among the very highest for movements without overtly feminist objectives."⁹³ Having said that, anti-vivisectionism was nevertheless frequently regarded as a woman's cause. Elston offers the clue that this association mostly lay in women's mission in

⁹⁰ For a brief biographical guide to Frances Power Cobbe, see Susan Hamilton, ed., Animal Welfare and Anti-Vivisection 1870-1910: Nineteenth-Century Woman's Mission, 3 vols. (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 1: 170-71. For a fuller biography, see Sally Mitchell, Frances Power Cobbe: Victorian Feminist, Journalist, Reformer (Charlottesville: U of Virginia P, 2004); Lori Williamson, Power and Protest: Frances Power Cobbe and Victorian Society (New York; London; Sydney: Rivers Oram P, 2005). Cobbe was also famous for her writing about marital abuse, "Wife-torture in England," repr. in Susan Hamilton, ed., 'Criminals, Idiots, Women and Minors': Victorian Writing by Women on Women (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview P, 1995), 132-70.

⁹¹ For the different stands of the anti-vivisectionists and their organizations, see Hilda Kean, "The 'Smooth Cool Men of Science': The Feminist and Socialist Response to Vivisection," History Workshop Journal 40 (1995): 16-38, 24-26; Susan Hamilton, "Introduction" to Animal Welfare and Anti-Vivisection 1870-1910: Nineteenth-Century Woman's Mission, 3 vols. (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 1: xiv-xlvii, xxxii-xl.

⁹² Mary Ann Elston, "Women and Anti-vivisection in Victorian England, 1870-1900," Vivisection in Historical Perspective, ed. Nicolaas A. Rupke (London; New York; Sydney: Croom Helm, 1987), 259-94, 263-64.

⁹³ R. D. French, Antivivisection and Medical Science in Victorian Society (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1975) 239-40, quoted in Elston, "Women and Anti-vivisection in Victorian England, 1870-1900," 264.

philanthropic work ushered in by the contemporaneous Sexual Purity movement.⁹⁴

As Lucy Bland indicates, nineteenth-century social purity feminists believed that women's moral superiority was the crucial force that had made women not only the "moral guardians of the home" but had also, through their philanthropic social works, extended their influence from the domestic to the public sphere: they were engaged in "municipal housekeeping" to effect their "moral politics."⁹⁵ In addition to the attempts to abolish the sexual double standard and the call for morality for both sexes as signaled by the Anti-CD Acts movement, moral reform campaigns at that time also included the crusade against animal cruelty and animal suffering, for a benign treatment of animals was thought by the campaigners to be moral and civil. Just as "feminine philanthropy" made its target of rescue the poor, the weak and the fallen, animals, classed among the weak that could not provide for their own welfare and defend their own rights, were thus brought within the range of women's charity.⁹⁶

To some extent, women and animals shared a similar vulnerability at the hands of medical science. Medical doctors of Dan's kind, who complied with the CD Acts to ignore diseased men, put women in danger of contracting venereal disease. Their treatment of diseased women in the lock hospitals, as evinced in Dan's disgust, displayed no respect for those poor women either. Equally, as both Elston and Coral Lansbury have pointed out, women were also vulnerable not only to gynecologists' coarse and cynical behavior but to "horrible and indecent exposure"

⁹⁴ Elston maintains that her positioning of anti-vivisection into the context of the social purity feminism is what is lacking in Coral Lansbury's study of Victorian anti-vivisection literature in The Old Brown Dog: Women, Workers, and Vivisection in Edwardian England (Madison, Wisconsin: The U of Wisconsin P, 1985). See Elston, "Women and Anti-vivisection in Victorian England, 1870-1900," 293, note 102.

⁹⁵ Bland, Banishing the Beast, 110, 113, 114.

⁹⁶ Elston, "Women and Anti-vivisection in Victorian England, 1870-1900," 293, 272.

during medical inspection.⁹⁷ This exposure hardly differentiated women from vivisected animals in physiological demonstrations, in which scientific researchers ignored altogether animals' suffering and pain, just as gynecologists' disregarded female patients' pain so that, while they were still suffering from illness, they became the object of medical students' study. A feminist link between women and animals was thus generated, despite the fact that modern social/ist feminists think it a category error, believing that the inferior status of women and their association with nature (animals included) are the result of a social and cultural construct rather than biologically determined.⁹⁸

Now, parallel to her contextualization of the CD Acts agitation in The Heavenly Twins and The Beth Book, Grand fictionalizes the contemporary vivisection controversy in Beth's quarrel with Dan about his vivisecting a dog. While Dan justifies himself in the name of utility, contending that scientific experiments are made in the interests of suffering people, Beth persists in her moral concerns, arguing that "There never could be a human life worth saving at such an expense of suffering to other creatures" (BB, 441). She also brings forward the contemporary debates on the issue of anesthesia, condemning Dan for using curare in his experiment, a kind of substance that paralyzes animals' bodies without deadening their sense of pain.⁹⁹ Voicing some anti-vivisectionists' opinion, Beth asserts that scientific men merely use animal experiments to satisfy their ambitious desires for fame, money and competition. To unmask Dan's true color, Beth retorts:

Don't pretend you pursue such experiments reluctantly—you delight in them. But whatever the excuse for them, I am sure that the time is

⁹⁷ Ibid., 277-80; Coral Lansbury, "Gynaecology, Pornography, and the Antivivisection Movement," Victorian Studies 28.3 (1985): 413-37, 413-21; *idem*, The Old Brown Dog, 83-95.

⁹⁸ The woman-animal link is generally included in the woman-nature equation in the nature/culture dualism debate. For references, see I-B, note 5 (p. 164).

⁹⁹ For the issue of anesthesia in vivisection, see Hamilton, "Introduction" to Animal Welfare and Anti-Vivisection 1870-1910, 1: xviii-xxi.

coming when the vivisector will be treated like the people who prepared the dead for embalming in ancient Egypt. You will be called in when there is no help for it; but, your task accomplished, you will be driven out of all decent society, to consort with the hangman—if even he will associate with you. (BB, 441)

Just as she expressed her regret at marrying a lock hospital doctor, when told by Angelica about Dan's medical business, here Beth tells Dan in no uncertain terms:

Had I known you were a vivisector, I should not only have refused to marry you, I should have declined to associate with you. To conceal such a thing from the woman you were about to marry was a cruel injustice. (BB, 441)

Like the injustice (sexual double standard) Dan has done the diseased women in the lock hospital, he has done Beth an injustice of insincerity in deceiving her about his medical and scientific engagements. Similarly, he lacks a sense of justice in his brutalization of animals, ignoring their right of being by regarding them as mere tools to advance his accomplishment.

It is worth noting that, throughout the narrative, Grand meticulously employs the image of white hands to satirize Dan's nasty businesses in medicine and vivisection. Dan first appears in the novel when Beth waits on the rocks for her friends Alfred and Dicksie after her cross-dressing event. To help Beth walk back through the rough and slippery rocks, Dan offers his hand, which, as the narrator describes, is "noticeably white and well-shaped" (BB, 258). Dan's second encounter with Beth takes place when he visits Mrs. Caldwell on the day of Beth's return from the finishing school. Again, the narrator recounts Beth's impression of him: "his finely-formed hands would have looked better had they not been so obtrusively white" (BB, 321). Obviously, noticeable whiteness is an emphatic symbol of nobility and the fineness of hands connotes a high level of delicacy. But when these two features are applied to Dan, they constitute a dramatic irony and foreshadow Beth's forthcoming repulsion, when she knows Dan's cruelty and

indecent in medical and scientific engagements. As such, ever since Beth's discovery of Dan's vivisection and her quarrel with him, the narrator tells us, "everything he did was an offence to Beth, a source of irritation" (BB, 444) and he becomes

a subject that repelled her. . . . His hands in particular, his handsome white hands, had a horrid sort of fascination for her. She had admired them while she thought of them as the healing hands of the physician, bringing hope and health; but now she knew them to be the cruel hands of the vivisector, associated with torture, from which humanity instinctively shrinks; and when he touched her, her delicate skin crisped with a shudder. She used to wonder how he could eat with hands so polluted, and once, at dessert, when he handed her a piece of orange in his fingers, she was obliged to leave it on her plate, she could not swallow it. (BB, 445)

Clearly, this passage reveals in part Beth's expectation of the medical profession which sheds further light on why she idealizes Galbraith as a Christ-like figure in sharp contradistinction to the degraded Dan who works as a lock hospital doctor. It also reinforces the collapse of Beth's illusions about Dan, for his extremely white hands serve as nothing but a counter-demonstration of his monstrosity in vivisection.

Both David Trotter and Coral Lansbury suggest that it is Dan's vivisection, not his vocation as a lock hospital doctor, that prompts Beth's final decision to leave him.¹⁰⁰ Trotter certainly is right in drawing attention to the nausea and disgust that compel Beth to confront Dan. He also makes a pertinent remark that Beth's awareness of the Anti-CD Acts and the Anti-Vivisection movements makes her personal story political, a fact that justifies her revolt and protects her from the charge of hysteria.¹⁰¹ As he keenly declares, while the Anti-CD Acts campaign "crossed the gap between classes," the Anti-Vivisection crusade "crossed the gap

¹⁰⁰ David Trotter, *Cooking with Mud: The Idea of Mess in Nineteenth-Century Art and Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), 270; Lansbury, *The Old Brown Dog*, 144-49; *idem*, "Gynaecology, Pornography, and the Antivivisection Movement," 433-35.

¹⁰¹ Trotter, *Cooking with the Mud*, 268, 275.

between species”: the former showed sympathy for the victims, the latter expressed disgust for the perpetrator.¹⁰² To him, Beth’s solidarity with the diseased women in the Lock Hospital does not change her life, but her abhorrence at Dan as a vivisector does.¹⁰³ However, I think Beth’s revolt is not an impulsive, sudden act, but the result of cumulative disgust with and suffering from Dan’s numerous crude deeds. Thus, I would rather see his vivisection as the last straw that convinces Beth of the impossibility of redeeming him and the necessity of removing herself from his noxious influence.

In Othello, Emilia refuses to conform to the wifely virtues of silence and obedience, and of her own initiative expresses her intention to “unhouse”¹⁰⁴ herself in response to Iago’s command that she shut her mouth and get home:

Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak.

’Tis proper I obey him—but not now.

Perchance, Iago, I will ne’er go home. (O, 320, V, ii, 192-94)

In like manner, Beth “voices” her fury and braves Dan’s several injustices by “unhousing” herself from his property when a chance occurs for her to offer an alibi, which in the event he does not need, to the adult Alfred who reappears in the narrative and is mistakenly charged with murder. After this, Beth embarks on a new life of her own in London.

The Back to Nature movement (1880s – 1890s)

When The Beth Book was published, Frank Harris and Frank Danby reviewed it in the Saturday Review. To Danby, despite the fact that Grand demonstrated her “immense talent, almost amounting to genius,” she nevertheless held “iconoclastic

¹⁰² Ibid., 271, 275-76.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 276.

¹⁰⁴ A term I adapt from Carol Thomas Neely, “Women and Men in Othello,” Shakespeare’s Middle Tragedies: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. David Young (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993), 91-116, 113.

fervour . . . a strange and hideous obsession” in drawing on the CD Acts controversy that had happened twenty years before and was dead and buried by the time the book was published to create “volumes of hysteric shriekings about the imaginary wrongs [women] suffer at the hands of the sanitarians.”¹⁰⁵ Harris’ critical response, on the other hand, focused on Grand’s “egotistic outpourings” in her heavy self-portraiture through Beth the heroine.¹⁰⁶ It is indeed true that the historical conflicts drawn on here were mostly ended by the time the novel was published, but the essential problems still remain unsolved even to this day: the equality of the sexes and the issue of using live animals for experiments, the subject of passionate contemporary debate because of their use in the rapidly developing bio-industries.

To a large extent, these problems reflect Grand’s ecological concern, consonant, I would argue, with that of the socialist Back to Nature movement of her time. “Back to Nature” and “Back to the Land” were two concepts particularly flourishing in Britain during the period 1880-1900. They testified to the Victorian enthusiasm for environmentalism and served as the foundations for the green politics of the 1980s.¹⁰⁷ In their discussion of global ecology at the *fin de siècle*, Regenia Gagnier and Martin Delveaux unify the two concepts as a whole, stating that the “Back to Nature—Back to the Land” movement called for a healthier life in nature away from the bustling, crowded cities, and aimed to preserve and restore the land from industrial devastation. More importantly, the movement rested on the belief that

one needed to know one’s place intimately in order to fit human communities to the earth, and not vice versa. It called for a human society to be more closely related to nature, and to be more conscious of its locale, region or life-place . . . [for] attachment to place is a fundamental

¹⁰⁵ Frank Harris and Frank Danby, “Reviews: Sarah Grand’s Latest Book,” Saturday Review (Nov. 20, 1987): 557-58, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 468-73, 472, 473.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 468.

¹⁰⁷ Peter C. Gould, Early Green Politics: Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Britain, 1880-1900 (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P; New York: St. Martin’s P, 1988), viii.

precondition for a sustainable environment.¹⁰⁸

Despite the fact that Gagnier and Delveaux make pertinent remarks about the eco-centric essence of Back to Nature and Back to the Land, and given that the two concepts share commonality in their endorsement of nature, Peter C. Gould tends to analyze the two notions separately in his study of the early green politics in late nineteenth-century Britain. As he puts it:

Back to Nature conveys notions of the simple life, an alternative to life in the city and work in industry, living in harmony with and as part of Nature, the liberalisation of sexual and social relations, and a more sensitive approach to animals. Back to the Land denotes dissatisfaction with urban-industrial society and sympathy for things rural and natural. It demonstrates warmth towards the creation of small, self-sufficient and self-governing communities and rural regeneration.¹⁰⁹

To Gould, Back to the Land was the successor of Back to Nature in the sense that it was a socio-political ideology that attempted to restore the land and “countrify” the city in order to break the barrier and reach an integration between city and country. Back to Nature, on the other hand, was more ethereal and concerned with self-development. However, Gould also points out a socialist and cosmic characteristic in its involvement with “the breaking down of barriers between human beings, the sexes, humans and animals, and humans and other manifestations of nature.”¹¹⁰ And it is in this respect that I find similarities with Grand’s ecopolitics in The Beth Book.

It can hardly be denied that Back to Nature followed the Romantic tradition in which a close physical/sensory contact with nature may instill an intense sentiment and a mystic, mental and spiritual experience as we have seen in the transformation of the nature-child Beth. As Gould notes, the Back to Nature movement saw nature

¹⁰⁸ Regenia Gagnier and Martin Delveaux, “Towards a Global Ecology of the *Fin de Siècle*,” Literature Compass 3.3 (2006): 572-87, 574-75.

¹⁰⁹ Gould, Early Green Politics, ix.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 76.

as a religion that would restore moral value and inner strength.¹¹¹ This idea parallels Ruskin's Christian-like moral art in nature and bears no small resemblance to theosophist spiritualism, as I have elucidated in Beth's mystic spiritual growth prior to her marriage. Not only calling for a return to a simple life in nature, Back to Nature also promoted the "creed of kinship" in line with the contemporary Socialist propaganda of brotherhood and humanitarianism in protecting the weak against the strong, and this was endorsed by literati like Ruskin, Carlyle, Dickens, Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman.¹¹² Interestingly, some of these writers' works are among those that enlighten Beth's thinking in her secret attic room (BB, 370-71). Grand's portraiture of the nature-child is also epitomizing along these lines as I have previously shown. The spirit of kinship asks for compassion, empathy and sympathy between humans (men and women) and between humans and animals. Thus, to re-establish equality between the sexes and to protest against cruelty to animals from vivisection, the fur and feather trade became important missions in the Back to Nature campaign. Beth's call for justice for diseased women and vivisected animals, seen in this light, shares the same aim as the Back to Nature canon of comradeship, whose ultimate end was to create a harmonious, ethical global ecosystem where all things and beings, living and inanimate, could be interdependent and interconnected in unity.¹¹³

Epigraph from Emerson's "Fate" (1860): Women's leadership

Social movements are usually ascribed some expectations of social reform. If Back to Nature, like deep ecology today, only took a vaguely inclusive stand for sexual equality in its call for kinship and universal oneness, I would argue that Grand's

¹¹¹ Ibid., 15-28.

¹¹² Ibid., 29-57. For the quotation, see p. 45.

¹¹³ Ibid., 46-49.

green politics draw heavily on women's experience and perspective. In incorporating several historical events into Beth's story, I argue that Grand's purpose is to emphasize the emergence of women as a powerful collective force, for as Beth says to Dan, "You can hide nothing from sensible women now that concerns the good of the community" (BB, 443). This concern of sensible women, seen in its broadest sense, may include animal welfare and animals' relationships with humans in the universe as a global village; for, to some extent, mistreated women (fallen or not) in the male-dominant society are likened to mistreated animals in experiments for medical and scientific purposes. Accordingly, in writing the novel, Grand is obsessed not so much with egoistic (as Harris comments) as with eco-conscious outpourings, a crucial point, I would argue, that makes the novel a prefiguration of the eco-feminism that has emerged since the 1970s, more or less one century after Victorian social movements like the Anti-CD Acts, the Anti-Vivisection controversy, the Social Purity crusade and the Back to Nature campaign.¹¹⁴

The ecological concept replaces hierarchy with equality, opposition with cooperation, conflict with harmony. In promoting eco-conscious beliefs in the novel, Grand bestows on women (Beth and her like-minded sisters) a sacred mission to pursue a universal harmony, if not oneness, first between men and women:

When the weaker of our sex are subjected to great wrongs we, as women, are bound to look after them, and if that brings us into opposition to some men we cannot help ourselves, but I always feel very sorry when it occurs. I entirely deprecate rivalry and the spirit of war between the sexes; what we want is to work together for the good of each.¹¹⁵

Women's mission as such locates them in a leading position in the reforms that should make for a better Earth:

¹¹⁴ Elston makes the interesting observation that anti-vivisection movements in the two centuries occurred concurrently with the rise of first- and second-wave feminisms, although neither movement disappeared during the interval. See Elston, "Women and Anti-vivisection in Victorian England, 1870-1900," 262-63.

¹¹⁵ Tooley, "The Woman's Question," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 222.

The true leaders of society are women whose names hardly ever appear in the newspapers, but who in their own spheres are influencing large sections of public opinion, and so really sowing the seed of the future.¹¹⁶

To highlight women's capacity for leadership, Grand draws on one passage from Emerson's "Fate" (1860), and announces its significance by putting it as the third epigraph to the novel:

The men who come on the stage at one period are all found to be related to "one another" [*sic*]. Certain ideas are in the air. We are all impressionable, for we are made of them; all impressionable, but some more than others, and these first express them. This explains the curious "temporaneousness" [*sic*] of inventions and discoveries. The truth is in the air, and the most impressionable brain will announce it first, but all will announce it a few minutes later. *So women, as most susceptible, are the best index of the coming hour.* (F, 326-27, emphasis added)¹¹⁷

This passage is significant in that, firstly, it points out the interrelatedness of humanity, irrespective of the sexes. And if we consider Emerson's concept as a whole, we may adduce an assumption that in all humans we see elements of non-humanity and the interrelatedness of all elements (humans and nonhumans alike) in the universe. In "The Over-Soul" (1841), Emerson asserts that

The Supreme Critic . . . is that great nature . . . that Unity, that Over-Soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other. . . . We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence, the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE. . . . We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul. (O-S, 973-74, emphasis in original)

Far from eulogizing an anthropocentric world with a hierarchy like the Great Chain of Being, Emerson's notion is replete with ecocentrism in which humanity and the nonhumanities constitute an intricate network of oneness. In this relational unity,

¹¹⁶ Stoddart, "Illustrated Interview," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 216.

¹¹⁷ Two transcription errors occur in Grand's epigraph here: the first *sic* is mistakenly taken from "each other," and the second *sic* from "contemporaneousness."

Grand points to the existence of the universal truth that she feels is in the air, the truth that all beings—women and animals included—should have equality with men.

If Beth's spiritual immersion in child and girlhood has something to do with Madame Blavatsky's theosophical philosophy of "Anthropogenesis,"¹¹⁸ I would argue that the spirituality with which she wants to influence others ("she herself [being] pure spirit [as well] . . . released from her case of clay" [BB, 283]) in both written and spoken forms at the later stage is expanded to facilitate the souls of all living things.¹¹⁹ This might explain in part Beth's humanitarian concern for vivisected animals and mistreated diseased women. It also reveals Grand's anticipation of the liberation of all women, a truth contingent upon women, who are the most susceptible, to use Emerson's term, to carve a way out for themselves. Just as social purity feminism had a high regard for women's femininity as a useful instrument to effectuate philanthropic social works, so Grand thinks that women's susceptibility, the nature of "tending to experience strong feelings easily and be easily influenced by other people,"¹²⁰ can be a strong weapon of collective force, if women are united and their susceptibility is aroused by the most susceptible woman among them, i.e., the gifted leader who helps them move forward towards the

¹¹⁸ See note 34 (p. 184) for Blavatsky's anthropocentric concept of human spiritual development.

¹¹⁹ In discussing the Victorian Anti-Vivisection movement, Elston also slightly touches on Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society, explaining that, although the Society was grounded on complementarity, two halves (masculine and feminine) of a single soul, it was still related to animals because "experiment on live animals was torture of past and future souls." See her article, "Women and Anti-vivisection in Victorian England, 1870-1900," 275-76. On one website of the Theosophical Society, it states clearly that the main idea of its philosophy is:

essential oneness of all beings. Life is everywhere throughout the cosmos because all originates from the same unknowable divine source. Consequently, everything from the subatomic to plants, animals, humans, planets, stars, and galaxies is alive and evolving. Each is divine at its root and expresses itself through spiritual, intellectual, psychological, ethereal, and material ranges of consciousness and substance. Evolution reflects this emerging self-expression of faculties which differentiates into material forms; develops spiritual and conscious aspects; and, over cosmic time-periods, returns to the divine source. The life of the individual, of humanity, and of the entire earth is part of this cosmic process. (emphasis in original)

See the "basic concepts" on the above left column at <http://www.theosociety.org/> (accessed on May 18, 2006)

¹²⁰ A definition of the word in *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 3rd ed. (Essex, England: Longman Group Ltd, 1995), 1455.

emancipation of women.

Interestingly, Grand's expectation as such is also found in her "Foreword" to the 1923 edition of The Heavenly Twins, in which Emerson's passage is quoted again and in which Grand described herself as "one of the roadmakers" in the long battle of the women's movement.¹²¹ And parallel to Beth and Emerson's notion of the writer/poet as one who "writes primarily what will and must be spoken" (Po, 986), Grand said that she wrote The Heavenly Twins to "br[e]ak silence . . . on the impulse to speak . . . and to be exact, on the urgency to write which comes to the writer who has something to say. The *Zeitgeist* determined my subject matter" (emphasis in original).¹²² Like Grand, Beth, the genius she has created, is endowed with a special faculty that has made her the chosen medium to announce, through her command of written and spoken languages, the ideas/truth in the air, and her "preaching" aims not only to soothe but, most importantly, to lead people toward a better and more harmonious future.

In retrospect, Grand has in fact foreshadowed Beth's leadership potential in the earlier part of the novel. It was when Beth formed a secret society to lead a group of "common" girls dedicated to what she called the Secret Service of Humanity, a philanthropic enterprise that aimed to "make the world just like heaven" with the belief that "everybody will be good and beautiful, and have enough of everything, and we shall all be happy, because nobody will care to be happy unless everybody else has been made so" (BB, 272). In this society, Beth had already been emblemized as "the white priestess" (a point I will elucidate later in the Romantic Knight chapter), who taught "that girls had a strength as great as the strength of boys,

¹²¹ Grand, "Foreword" to The Heavenly Twins, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 400. Here, Grand made another transcription error on the last word of Emerson's passage, "So women, as the most susceptible, are the best index of the coming *time*" [*sic*].

¹²² *Ibid.*, 401.

but different, if only they would do things” (BB, 283). The society members, as the narrator tells us, were all fascinated by Beth’s force of character, eloquent discourse and the interests she inspired in them. Beth the leader, on the other hand, also showed her charisma, managing not only public business, such as conducting drills, bathing rites and mysterious adventures, but also private welfare as in caring for every member’s daily life and providing whatever she could to relieve the member’s needs and wants.

While these “common” girls were viewed as coming from the lower class by Beth’s mother who had strong class and racial prejudice: “It was not *what* people were, but *who* they were, that was all important to her” (BB, 52, emphases in original),¹²³ their social status exactly illustrates Beth’s charismatic quality in seeing all walks of life without distinction. It is also indicative of Beth’s consistency in refusing to renounce commonality in every way. So that we see her closeness to her nurse Kitty and later to the kitchen maid Harriet who, after Beth’s pleading with her mother, joins the family reading. We also see Beth’s wish to improve the village girl Emily’s knowledge, and from the process of teaching Beth improves herself as well. Her hospitality and gregarious character are shown in her inviting country people in to see her parents’ house. Her friendliness to girls outside and inside the schools, her aim to write of common life, addressing common problems in order to help common people, moreover, are altogether illustrations to show her affinity with common folks in sharp contradistinction to her mother’s snobbish social standard, a “vulgar exclusiveness” (BB, 161) that sickens Beth, causing her to pity and disapprove of her mother: “That kind of diplomacy or tract, the means by which people who have had every advantage impose upon those who have had no advantages to speak of, did not appeal to Beth as pleasant, even at fourteen” (BB,

¹²³ See note 42 (p. 190) for the references to Grand’s imperialistic discourse.

263)—the same age when Grand herself was deeply interested in Josephine Butler’s campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts, seeing them as a means of medical/patriarchal oppression of all women.¹²⁴

The secret society, seen in this light, is a prefiguration of Beth’s leadership in feminist activity that, in addition to its political intent, is charged with spiritual/theosophical purpose: “To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.”¹²⁵ This is also similar to Ideala’s feminist manifesto:

What I want to do is to make women discontented. . . . Women have never yet united to use their influence steadily and all together against that of which they disapprove. They work too much for themselves, each trying to make their own life happier. They have yet to learn to take a wider view of things, and to be shown that the only way to gain their end is by working for everybody else, with intent to make the whole world better, which means happier. . . . Our influence is like those strong currents which run beneath the surface of the ocean without disturbing it. . . . It is to help in the direction of that force that I am going to devote my life. (I, 188)

The forming of “girls” in the secret society, seen from this perspective, becomes a starting point from which the reformative power is to be acted on and then extended to the other sex and finally to the whole world.

It is worth noting that both Caird and Grand, intriguingly, make reference to Emerson’s “Fate” in the key novels I examine here, but the stances they take are completely different. As I have discussed earlier, in The Daughters of Danaus, Caird portrays her artist manqué Hadria Fullerton as an anti-Emersonian figure who severely criticizes, at the meetings of the Preposterous Society, Emerson’s rationale

¹²⁴ Forward, “Introduction” to SSPSG, 2: 2.

¹²⁵ A quotation from Lucy Bland’s communication with the Theosophical Society researcher Joy Dixon, see Bland, Banishing the Beast, 167. According to Dixon, the Theosophical Society was one of the religious organizations in nineteenth century England that actively welcomed women’s leadership. See Dixon, Divine Feminine, 153-54.

of Nature that does not take into consideration women's social condition, a critique *de facto* evocative of a backlash against the weakness of character Hadria shows in failing to confront her circumstances. In The Beth Book, on the contrary, Grand emphasizes Emerson's appraisal of women's susceptibility, an attribute that has made women "the best index of the coming hour" to express "the spirit of the time" (F, 327). If the epigraph from Ruskin's Modern Painters connotes Grand's vision of Nature (the green world) as a divine image of God that evokes Beth's desire for a spiritual-sensational-artistic immanence with it, I would argue that the epigraph from Emerson's "Fate" is used to pinpoint and project an ecological harmony and, above all, women's leadership in constituting this harmony—a leadership, as my later discussion of the Romantic Knight will show, that envisions Beth a New Woman and a New Mother to live for others.

Another point worth noting is that Emerson's "Fate" is also one reference, among others, which Beth draws on to form "a code of literary principles for herself" during her transformation in the attic (BB, 371). Although Grand does not indicate whether Beth is much influenced by Emerson's works other than by "Fate" and "Beauty," the fact is that her writing subject matter, writing purpose, writing style and self-expectation of being a writer are all resonant, in my view, with Emerson's key concepts of literary writing. This perhaps may explain why she is partially portrayed as an Emersonian nature-child, as I see her.

A utopian oneness

It should be noted that, in demonstrating the two stages of Beth's transformation as a nature-child, I do not suggest that she forsakes the original Wordsworthian heritage in the latter stage, but that her previous sensory response to nature has taken second place to her later sensible, ecological thought. Nature provides a medium for Beth's

bodily contact with it, which gives rise to her artistic *jouissance* (literary outputs in various forms); but nature also offers a template (the secret attic room) to arouse Beth's ecoconsciousness to work for others, women and animals alike. So that, as Beth says at the close of the novel:

My idea of perfect bliss . . . when my work is done, and my friends are not with me, is to lie my length upon a cliff above the sea, listening to the many-murmurous, soothed by it into a sense of oneness with Nature, till I seem to be mixed with the elements, a part of sky and sea and shore, and akin to the wandering winds. This mood for my easy moments; but give me work for my live delight. I know nothing so altogether ecstatic as a good mood for work. (BB, 521)

Ann Heilmann uses this passage to demonstrate that Beth's artistic *jouissance* in writing reaches its most active, creative state when she is situated in "a nature environment and aligned with the element of water." Beth's "feminine writing," Heilmann asserts, is created out of a fusion of Beth's "libidinal body and the creative urges of her mind."¹²⁶ While *jouissance*, with the element of water, can be applied to Beth's earlier spontaneous literary outpourings in spoken forms, it is questionable, in my view, to apply it here: for one thing, as my previous discussion has shown, it is landscape, rather than seascape, that has inspired Beth's writing in the attic; for another thing, Beth's utterance at this point is made after her decision to give up her writing: "Writing has lost its charm. . . . I don't think mere literary success would satisfy me. I have tasted enough of that to know what it would be—a sordid triumph, a mere personal thing" (BB, 520).

Still believing that "what I call work is the effort to express myself" (BB, 521), Beth is on the verge of confirming her oratorical gift. In the interim, nature (Beth's living at the Ilverthorpe Cottage) executes a similar function as it did when Beth was in her secret attic room, providing the same solitude for tranquility:

¹²⁶ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 81.

It will come to me, I dare say . . . if I shut the din of the world far from me, and sit with folded arms in contemplation, waiting for the moment and the match which shall fire me to the right pitch of enthusiasm. (BB, 521)

In the natural setting of the Ilverthorpe Cottage, the sea in sight, the harvest fields beyond, the garden and the tree-sheltered highroad in front of the house, a mixture of natural scenes so to speak, Beth reads a great deal and aspires to a religious calling: “God is Love—no! *Love is God!* . . . I follow, follow—*God*—I know not where” (BB, 523-24, emphases in original). Here, a rising ecoconsciousness is combined with religious epiphany in Beth’s devoting herself to giving love. And when “the moment and the match” arrive in her performing as a stopgap speaker at a public meeting, Beth discovers that oratory will be “the right pitch of [her] enthusiasm.” She still maintains the Wordsworthian sensation she has had since childhood, a Ruskinian style of personal immanence with nature, but as Beth says, this is “for [her] easy moments.” Her “live delight” for work rests in her “mesmeric power” of preaching that, as the narrator foresees, will make her “one of the first swallows of the woman’s summer” (BB, 525, 527), a charismatic leader who not only voices women’s anger at injustice but devotes herself to giving hope and love to those who need her. A utopian vision of oneness is thus projected, a oneness not only in terms of Beth’s personal union with nature but a future coalition in which the human world will be wed to the larger biotic community contingent upon equality and justice among all living things. It is against this complex tissue of nature in relation to the trajectory of Beth’s development that I see the subtlety of Grand’s philosophy, the unifying vision that leads me to propose her as a forerunner of ecofeminist ethics and cosmology.

Part II

The Spirit Archetype

Whether she be a radical feminist like Mona Caird, a social purity feminist like Sarah Grand, or a liberal free thinker like Olive Schreiner, these New Woman writers all share one narrative device: they all conjure up the spirit archetype in their depiction of the artist heroines' struggle to fulfill their personal aspirations. A term coined in his lecture on "The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales" (1945), the spirit archetype derives from Jung's analysis of the psychic manifestations of the unconscious. Giving hermeneutic accounts of its meanings, Jung addresses the significance of the spirit, maintaining its dynamic spontaneity in form and in content.¹ In stark contrast to the material world, the spirit is often associated with something soulful, transcendent and psychic. With its "wind-nature," the spirit, in the words of Jung, "is always an active, winged, swift-moving being as well as that which *vivifies, stimulates, incites, fires and inspires*" (emphasis added).² It is small wonder then that the spirit is frequently associated with all that is good and positive, even linked to the concept of God.

Symbolizing "all the phenomena of rational thought, or of the intellect, including the will, memory, imagination, creative power, and aspiration motivated by ideals,"³ the spirit archetype is mostly expressed by Jung through the image of the wise old man, a superior and helpful figure often seen in fairytales. However, this is not to suggest that Jung equates the spirit with the wise old man, nor to indicate that he denies or overlooks the opposite possibility, the evil spirit. "Just as all archetypes have a positive, favourable, bright side that points upwards," Jung says,

¹ Carl Gustav Jung, "The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales," *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 207-54.

² *Ibid.*, 210.

³ *Ibid.*, 208.

“so also they have one that points downwards, partly negative and unfavourable, partly chthonic, but for the rest merely neutral. To this the spirit archetype is no exception.”⁴ In order to demonstrate his binary argument, Jung gives brief accounts of the wicked spirit in several folktales, an elaboration, strange to say, still focusing on the old man figures.⁵ In effect, Jung’s concept of the spirit is not limited to humans, but is inclusive of animals, goblins or divine beings.⁶ He means to present it diversely and not necessarily as always good. In his discussion of the spirit, however, Jung often uses the wise old man to illustrate his contention, so that the ambiguous impression created is that the spirit archetype and the wise old man are the same, as some critics postulate.⁷ Since the spirit archetype has positive and negative attributes and takes different forms, it seems reasonable to classify the wise old man as that which represents the good spirit in opposition to the demonic spirit, incarnated, for instance, in the malicious trickster figures, who featured in my previous discussion of the sisterly abandoned child.

Though they were writing well before Jung’s proposition of the spirit archetype in 1945, it is evident that the three New Woman writers I set out to examine here had long been elaborating the concept of the spirit figures in their artist novels. In this part of my thesis, I want to explore exclusively the good spirit archetypes, manifested in different incarnations: the Wise Old Man in Caird’s The Daughters of Danaus (1894), the Romantic Knight in Grand’s The Beth Book (1897), and the Platonic

⁴ Ibid., 226.

⁵ Ibid., 226-30.

⁶ In the section “Theriomorphic Spirit Symbolism in Fairytales,” Jung discusses the motifs of helpful animals, indicating that they may act like humans and are sometimes superior in knowledge and wisdom, so that they can equally be seen as spirit archetypes. See *ibid.*, 230-42.

⁷ In an interesting paper discussing J. R. R. Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings, Jason Clarke defines Gandalf as the wise old man archetype. That he considers the spirit archetype to be the same as that of the wise old man is to some extent reasonable in terms of the novel he deals with. Clarke makes considerable reference in his argument to Timothy R. O’Neill who, he thinks, equates the spirit archetype with the wise old man. See Timothy R. O’Neill, The Individuated Hobbit: Jung, Tolkien and the Archetypes of Middle-earth (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979), 37; Jason Clarke, “The Wise Old Man: Gandalf as Archetype in The Lord of the Rings,” December 9, 1998, at <http://valarguild.org/vara/Tolkien/encyc/papers/gandalf.html> (accessed on May 14, 2004)

Lover in Schreiner's From Man to Man (1926). Undoubtedly, Caird prefigures Jung's idea of the wise old man, but she is meticulous about the gendered power politics involved. Such a caution results in a quite intentional device by which she portrays, on the one hand, New Men figures who support the thwarted artist heroine in defiance of familial duties, but on the other hand, debilitating figures who fail to exert their supposedly authoritative power. In her portrayal of the Wise Old Man, Caird draws on a mentor-disciple (dominant-subordinate) relationship to emphasize an expectation of inheritance. This unbalanced power construction, when it comes to Grand's The Beth Book, is turned upside down. The Romantic Knight, a spirit figure modern critics often regard as the New Man who, according to romance convention, should exercise a positive influence and rescue the lady, is sardonically carnivalized as a vulnerable invalid, a physical and spiritual weakling who has to be nursed by the Amazonian Nightingale, the spirit heroine finally incarnated at the end of the novel as the Holy Mother. It is not until Schreiner's depiction of the Platonic Lover in From Man to Man that the reader sees a power balance between the sexes. However, as the platonic feature suggests, this balance is merely an idealized vision hardly to be realized at present but possibly to be fulfilled in the future.

A quick survey of the different representations of the spirit archetype draws attention to their correlation with the New Men, a personage receiving scanty attention in New Woman criticism.⁸ As my following discussion will show, the New Men presented in the novels all share similar qualities—interests or perspectives of certain kinds—with the potential New Women. This shows New Woman writers' expectations of the advent of New Men. However, in allowing certain Old Man flaws to remain in the New Men, New Woman writers also want to

⁸ Stephanie Forward, "The 'New Man' in *Fin-de-Siècle* Fiction," Women's Writing 5.3 (1998): 437-56, 437.

weaken their power while at the same time throwing into relief the difficulty men face in shedding long-standing patriarchal vices. In so doing, New Woman writers also purport to empower their heroines (as daughters, wives and mothers) with the virtues of chivalry, virility or gallantry as epitomes of a new spirit invested in the New Woman and the New Mother. Although the New Men and the New Women are not given ideal conditions, they project New Woman writers' utopian vision of a promised land in the future where men and women are equal entities sharing common labors, common interests and common thoughts.

One point particularly worth noting is that behind New Woman writers' attempt to form a positive spirit archetype is their humanistic concern to help the weak, a quasi-religious spirit of offering service to others by compassion and devotion. Thus even though Caird, Grand and Schreiner have different feminist standpoints and present their artist heroines with different panoramas, they possess the same goal in advocating a cosmopolitan fellowship to better the situation of the weak, which, under the conditions of patriarchy, has to include women. With such a mission in mind, the New Woman writers all produce their artist novels for humanity's sake rather than for art's sake, expecting to use their work to touch people's minds and souls. In this light, pro-religious humanism is armed with feminist politics to usher in the aesthetic re-conceptualization of literary writing. Interestingly, the three artist novels I discuss here all conclude with some form of open ending, a technique, in my view, that implies that the achievement of the writers' visions lies in the future and that it requires pioneering virile women to build up the "bridges . . . towards [the] unseen shore."⁹

⁹ A phrase I adapt from Jung, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology of Poetry," *CWCGJ*, 15: 65-83, 76.

4

The Wise Old Man
in Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus (1894)

A radical feminist vehemently advocating the reformation of patriarchal marriage and the implementation of women's rights, Mona Caird presents, however, the most frustrating story of an artist manquée in The Daughters of Danaus (1894), if we compare the novel with the other two works by Grand and Schreiner included in my study. In the novel, the artist heroine Hadria Fullerton repeatedly fluctuates between the desire to pursue her musical ambition and the anxiety induced by filial piety, the internalized notion that she has to comply with socially-enforced norms of femininity. In her discussion of the female archetypal quest, Elaine Martin gives a vivid picture of the heroine's development, seeing it as

a dialectic between inward and outward tensions. The impetus for the interior psychic split originates externally, but the resolution itself is internal. In turn, potential resolution is undercut by wholly external (social) factors. Thus the quester is forced back in upon herself although she continually attempts—through new consciousness—to resurface. Thus a see-saw pattern is established.¹

Indeed, the swing of the pendulum often leads Hadria to a tension between personal fulfillment and social conformity (mostly enforced by her patriarchally-trained mother). In the midst of her struggles, the archetypal figure of the wise old man is incorporated to offer Hadria spiritual guidance and support. In the following discussion, therefore, I will introduce Jung's concept of the wise old man first, and then examine its application in the context of New Woman fiction; afterwards, I will focus textual analysis on the two wise old men in the novel to shed light on their

¹ Elaine Martin, "Theoretical Soundings: The Female Archetypal Quest in Contemporary French and German Women's Fiction," Perspectives on Contemporary Literature 8 (1983): 48-57, 49. Although Martin's focus is on contemporary French and German women's fiction, her points about the female archetypal quest can also be applied to turn-of-the-century British women's fiction.

significance in Hadria's journey towards self-development.

Jung's concept of the wise old man

The wise old man, according to Jung, is a spiritual character, usually a father-image who represents authority and "all spiritual dogmas and values" and elicits from people "the liveliest spiritual aspirations and interests."² Albeit without fixed status and form, the wise old man appears more often than not "in the guise of a magician, doctor, priest, teacher, professor, grandfather, or any other person possessing authority."³ No matter in what configuration, it is important that he should be an authoritative figure in control of a certain field and, above all, stand for the spiritual characteristics which Jung defines as referring to "knowledge, reflection, insight, wisdom, cleverness and intuition on the one hand, and on the other, moral qualities, such as good will and readiness to help."⁴ To exert his positive spiritual force, the wise old man is seen to rescue the hero from his hopeless and desperate condition since the hero is short of those qualities that the wise old man represents.⁵ It should be noted that the wise old man has much to do with a positive outcome and thus his help, be it knowledge or advice, is conducive to a "good" ending. The hero, after receiving the wise old man's help, is able to overcome his problem and complete his task. Sometimes the wise old man's emergence and aid at the turning point may be enough to solve all the troubles faced by the hero, so that the satisfactory outcome ensues immediately. Such is a typical deployment of the wise old man and the figure's operation with reference to the hero's success in the mission he undertakes. Although Jung does not specify that the wise old man is an archetype, the fact that he

² Carl Gustav Jung, "The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales," *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 207-54, 214.

³ *Ibid.*, 216.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 222.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 216-18.

often takes the figure as an illustration for the (good) spirit archetype may sustain its wide currency as a recurrent pattern like an archetype.

The wise old man in the context of New Woman fiction

As has been mentioned earlier, Jung encapsulated the notion of the wise old man in his lecture of 1945 ("The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales"), but prior to his analysis, writers like Caird had used this concept in their work.⁶ Despite the chronological displacement, when this mode is applied to Victorian feminist writing, questions inevitably occur, such questions as why it should be the image of the father rather than the mother who has a significant impact on the New Woman heroine's self-quest? Is the wise old man able to function properly to help the heroine complete her task—a "task" which will often clash with female role expectations—and to give the plot a satisfactory outcome, as is the case with her male counterpart? Is feminist writing not more likely to reject the authority of older males than to embrace it? Feminist archetypal theory, as Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht assert, does not object to Jung's concepts of the archetype, but prefers to re-conceptualize it to reflect women's experiences, which are conceivably different from those of men's.⁷ In terms of the wise old man archetype, it is manifest that, although the image *per se* remains the same, its function and purpose vary greatly in male and female plots.

In my view, the fact that the wise, authoritative figure is a father-image may not

⁶ For example, Chaucer, Wordsworth, Browning, Melville and James Fenimore Cooper had applied the image of the wise old man in their works. See Richard Gill, "Jung's Archetypes of the Wise Old Man in Poems by Chaucer, Wordsworth, and Browning," Journal of Evolutionary Psychology 2.1-2 (1981): 18-32; Gloria L. Young, "Melville's Archetypal 'Wise Old Man,'" Melville Society Extracts 38 (1979): 3-6; William Bysshe Stein, "The Prairie: A Scenario of the Wise Old Man," Bucknell Review 19.1 (1979): 15-36.

⁷ Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht, "Introduction" to Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-visions of Jungian Thought, ed. Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht (Knoxville: The U of Tennessee P, 1985), 3-22, 3.

be a totally inappropriate device in late-Victorian feminist writing, if we consider women's treatment and condition in the patriarchal world at that time. Women then were considered physically weak by nature and thus were subject to whatever position and duties men arranged for them. Mona Caird in The Morality of Marriage (1897) refuted this notion by arguing that physical strength depended on "the mode of life and training rather on the sex," factors that also determined whether it was the father or the mother who held authority over the family (MOM, 12, 26). Maternal caring in the home was considered a necessity with which men justified women's confinement to the private domain. Lack of training led to women's weak constitution, which reinforced the validity of limiting women's space and lack of opportunities in terms of education and work, and hence their development as human beings was hindered by the socially and patriarchally-defined rules. Until women were liberated from the social law and were treated equitably, Caird argued, they had not sufficient knowledge and experience to judge for themselves, not to mention to help their sex. In this state, they could not but exhort their sisters to do their traditional duties as the patriarchal social system expected of them. These "honest" women were "trained" to punish their professional sisters by despising and excluding them from their social communities, so that their lives became miserable and impoverished since they were emblems of "social failure" in not marrying like other "good" women (MOM, 82-83, 99).⁸ This is precisely what happens in The Daughters of Danaus when Mrs. Fullerton demands of her daughters that they fulfill their daughterly obligations, and the surrogate mother figure Miss Valeria Du Prel, having experienced how society treats a professional spinster, persuades Hadria to

⁸ In her study of women's position in patriarchal society, Caird notes that society offered only two alternatives for women to choose in life: marriage for a livelihood and starvation. The professional women, Caird says, were usually those despised and outcast women who would prefer having a degraded life outside marriage to selling their bodies to lead a more approved form of degraded life inside marriage. See MOM, 81-102, repr. in LVMQ, 1.

marry a man she does not love lest Hadria should, like her, suffer rejection by the traditional circles and become lonely in her spinsterhood. Therefore, the use of the father-image helped lay bare the absence of the wise woman figure and the cultural and political othering of women in general, and it also enabled writers to draw attention to the inequitable treatment of the sexes.

More significantly, the wise old man in a feminist context is constructive in the sense that his spiritual guidance of the heroine illustrates New Man qualities that feminist women writers endeavored to cultivate in the average man. That the wise old man is able to acknowledge the importance for a woman of developing her self-identity and is willing to offer help to the opposite sex in reaching that goal, albeit regretfully in his senior age, suggests that it has required life-long experience to enable him to recognize the absurdity of weakening and degrading women. If such is the case for an authoritative and wise old figure, it is open to speculation how much time and effort it might take to effect a similar transformation in other men of all positions and ages. Such a message, despite the idea that men in general are still Old Men, implies a feminist anticipation of a possible regeneration of the relations between the sexes through men's awakening to the expediency of the liberation and support of women. The device of the wise old man archetype, seen in this light, is not meant to belittle women's power, but is intended to create both in men and women an optimistic vision of a future community in which men are regenerated and women more empowered. *Fin-de-siècle* feminist women writers used this device to speed up the advent of this utopian state, if only in imagination.

Despite its well-intentioned outlook, I think the operation of the wise old man archetype leads to quite different plot developments in novels by male and female writers. In a male plot, the wise old man is crucial to the hero's completion of his

task and he appears archetypally at a critical moment to bring this about.⁹ When the wise old man is deployed in a female plot, especially a female quest story, his spiritual influence may not always be successful and the timing of his appearance tends to be less conclusive. It should be noted that the wise old man in a female plot is employed to inspire the heroine's self-consciousness and help her develop her self-identity. Such influence relies more on a continuous support than on a flashy epiphany. As the heroine is socially prevented from developing herself, her attempts in themselves make her a target of people's anger. As a result, the wise old man needs to appear on several occasions in order to reinforce his encouragement and sustain the heroine's spirit, helping her to fight against outside forces for her own sake. More often than not, the heroine's persistence is in proportion to the intensity of the wise old man's influence. In The Daughters of Danaus, for instance, Fortescue appears when Hadria is tired of family duties after Algitha's departure; when Hubert proposes to Hadria the first time; when Hadria feels unhappy in her marriage; and when Hadria needs financial support to survive in Paris—occasions when Hadria is in need of advice and help to resist external forces or temptations that are likely to hinder her self-development. However, Fortescue fails to appear at the critical moments when Hubert and Henriette entrap Hadria into a false marriage and when Hadria, returning from Paris, finds her life entirely meaningless and abandons herself to flirtation with men. Fortescue is also absent when Hadria feels restless about Theobald's courting and hesitates whether or not to reject him. If Fortescue had turned up on these crucial occasions and intensified his positive influence throughout, Hadria might have escaped from performing the prescribed traditional role as a daughter, wife and mother, and have persisted in her musical development

⁹ Jung, "The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales," CWCGJ, 9.1: 216-18. Jung does not specify the differences of the wise old man in male and female plots, but the heroes in his discussion are always male. For the critical references of the wise old man in male plots, see p. 246, note 6.

instead.

From this perspective, therefore, the timing of the wise old man's visitations has a considerable impact on the process of the heroine's self-fulfillment. In addition to appearing more often in a female plot to maintain his spiritual support, the wise old man has to turn up especially in moments of need, just as he does in a male plot, to provide his help to the heroine. Failing to do so foreshadows, in effect, his failure to support the heroine effectively and proves a disaster. The device of sidelining the wise old man at non-crucial junctures also implies that feminist writers intended to partially devitalize or paralyze the wise old man's function and, by extension, his authority. In their application of the wise old man archetype, therefore, it is manifest that feminist writers remained suspicious of the fatherly figure and that they did not equip him with the ultimate power.

In his efforts to help the heroine, the wise old man puts himself in opposition to the rest of his sex, violating the credo established by his male ancestors, a credo that prohibits women from moving beyond their "natural" role. Even though he is aware of the other men's error, the wise old man is nonetheless in the minority and thus with the heroine among the weak. Whereas he is an absolutely powerful figure determining the climax in a male plot, the wise old man's influence in a female plot appears to be restricted. Because his power is relatively feeble, it is often the case that the wise old man cannot fulfill his function to the same extent that he does in a male plot, and as a result the help he offers to the heroine cannot but be truncated by the external, social forces. This partly contributes to the heroine's failure in her attempt to assert her self-identity, especially if she loses the only male comrade she has to support her. Fortescue's death at the end of The Daughters of Danaus is a case in point. The wise old man's inability to function properly also demonstrates, in a large sense, that one New Man is not enough to help the heroine and by

extension, the rest of women, to develop themselves. It requires more than one New Man to help produce more New Women. This is not to say that the formation and growth of New Women is passively dependent on New Men; rather, that with more New Men's help, there will be fewer obstacles in the creation of New Women, and that it will take less time to reach an equal and harmonious state of play between the sexes.

One interesting aspect of the wise old man in a female plot is that, as a spiritual figure, he is normally depicted as the solitary pursuer of an ideal that he believes in. In some sense, he is a perfectionist seeking for what he conceives to be the true, the good and the beautiful. In order to pursue this ideal, the wise old man has wholly to devote himself to his mission, irrespective of others' deflating comments. However, due to the ideal's comparative impracticality or its irrelevance to ordinary people, the wise old man's attempt often makes him look eccentric, which results in his solitude. Significantly, that the wise old man is attracted to the heroine and vice versa is largely owing to the characteristics and fate they share. The heroine aims to develop herself, which is socially forbidden. The wise old man endeavors to pursue his ideal, which is not accepted by the public. Both of them command little respect and are lonely dream-questers in society, who seem eccentric to everyone else. Out of sympathy and empathy, the wise old man is willing to stand by the heroine, for whom he is a role-model when she seeks for advice and support. Aside from this surface relationship, it could be argued that, metaphorically, one is the other's double. That is to say, each can identify with the other and "look into the future and see [himself/herself] as another person."¹⁰ Paul Coates states that the Double is crystallized "under the concurrence of two conditions: when other people begin to be

¹⁰ Paul Coates, *The Double and the Other: Identity as Ideology in Post-Romantic Fiction* (Montreal: McGill U, 1988), 2.

viewed as akin to ourselves; and when the self is projected into a space hitherto defined as other.”¹¹ Between the wise old man and the heroine, there exists an implicit doubling because the patterns and conditions of their quest journeys are identical and the one who fails or succeeds first foreshadows the other’s progress or failure.

In particular, I would further argue, the heroine could be seen as an heir to the wise old man because, in her pursuit of self-expression, she carries out an ideal promulgated by the wise old man. Her quest is initially personal but its ultimate aim is toward the ideal that the wise old man advocates. From this perspective, the heroine is the medium of the wise old man’s wish-fulfillment. It is interesting to point out that, whereas the heroine is her mother’s wish-fulfillment in terms of carrying out an imposed expectation of woman’s duty, as the wise old man’s wish-fulfillment she is able to affirm her existence as a human being and to encourage others to work for an ideal to be cherished and believed in. Such a comparison reveals the traditional mother’s lack of wisdom and, by extension, the failure of her education and training as manipulated by patriarchal society. In terms of the wise old man’s activity, furthermore, it is manifest that, whereas he detaches himself from the hero in a male plot, he is much more involved with the heroine in a female plot.

The debilitating wise old men in The Daughters of Danaus

In The Daughters of Danaus, Professor Fortescue and M. Jouffroy are the incarnations of the wise old man archetype. Although there is no clear indication of their age, the reader may judge from the narrative that they are both past their middle years: Fortescue is an old friend of Hadria’s parents and was a romantic love object

¹¹ Ibid., 32.

for the old spinster Valeria when they were young; Jouffroy acted as a musical teacher to Madame Vauchelet who gave up her musical pursuits for her family's sake when she was young. Full of worldly experience, Fortescue's and Jouffroy's authority also manifests itself in their professional knowledge. Whereas Fortescue is a professor in a non-specified subject having much to do with laboratory experiments, Jouffroy is depicted as a great musician. While activating their function as wise old men, Fortescue and Jouffroy's conspicuousness, I would argue, rests not so much on their rescue of Hadria from a desperate state, as in their faithful endeavor to provide help, by means of their respective qualities, in awakening and forming her self-awareness and awareness of her abilities. Fortescue offers unremitting spiritual and moral guidance in his efforts to strengthen Hadria's fortitude. Jouffroy is a prominent influence during Hadria's self-emancipatory stay in Paris and serves to stimulate her musical potential through his professional instruction. Both are instrumental in their encouragement of Hadria, coming to resemble father figures or role-models from whom she seeks advice and help. They are also mentor figures, cultivating in Hadria a temperament or quality that they think may contribute to humanity's ideal state of the true, the good and the beautiful, an impulse they have devoted all their lives to activating in others. While Hadria acts as their disciple, she is expected by them to fulfill their wishes and functions also as their spiritual heir, wishing to pass on their ideals to later generations. Yet, as reflected in their lonely existence, Fortescue and Jouffroy are confronted with outward forces in their mentoring of Hadria. As their help is obstructed, so Hadria's self-quest is suspended, which at the same time also mirrors the failures of the two men's pursuit of their own ideals.

The debilitating spiritual and moral mentor: Professor Fortescue

Characterized by his humanistic nature, Fortescue finds no pleasure in causing pain and has a humane concern for every being in the world, paying particular attention to the poor and the weak, including women. At a time when talk is all of the survival of the fittest based on a mechanism of competition that strengthens the strong and weakens the weak, Fortescue seeks for an ideal which resorts

not to the cowardly sacrifice of the unfortunate . . . but to a more brotherly spirit of loyalty, a more generous treatment of all who are defenceless, a more faithful holding together among ourselves—weak and strong, favoured and luckless. (DD, 104)

Extending his sympathy to all, Fortescue indulges himself in a series of experiments, trying to invent a pain-saving method to ease animals' death agony when they are killed. His endeavor is regarded, however, as the foolish mania of "a modern Don Quixote" (DD, 217), as Professor Theobald describes him, the pursuit of a practice that Theobald thinks brings neither name nor profit. Theobald's response clearly reveals his cruelty towards the weak and a practical nature that values personal interest above anything else, traits significantly opposite to Fortescue's benevolence and morally good nature. Fortescue's experimental endeavor, from a feminist perspective, nonetheless, is not so much Don Quixote-like, as Theobald claims, as ironically pointless, because a real humane concern for the poor animals would be to rescue them from being killed rather than to lessen their pain in being killed. Fortescue fails to recognize the essence of the humanitarianism that he aims to advocate, and thus his digressive effort reflects his lack of wisdom, foreshadowing the fruitlessness of his labors and his failure in the pursuit of his ideal. In this light, Fortescue's credibility as a wise old man is impaired and his function of providing "intellectual" advice is thus weakened.

Persistent in his humanistic ideal, Fortescue sees the traditional mother's

command over her daughter and her expectation of the daughter's self sacrifice as "a doctrine [most] insane, [most] immoral, or [most] suicidal" (DD, 103), a doctrine that is "monstrous . . . dastardly . . . damnable" (DD, 105). Setting a high value on individual freedom, Fortescue believes that no one can "usurp another person's life on the plea of affection," and that everyone has the duty to resist it (DD, 273). It is not at all strange, in this light, that Fortescue considers motherly affection to be a curse rather than a blessing (DD, 268), since this affection is dependent upon the limitation of the daughter's development. In his efforts to help Hadria, therefore, Fortescue consistently encourages her to cultivate her musical gift and not to "be persuaded to do fancy embroidery, as a better mode of employing energy" (DD, 107). He does not wish Hadria to follow in her mother's footsteps, and indeed in all women's footsteps, in renouncing her talents in exchange for an immoral self-sacrifice, no matter for what cause. In his urge for Hadria's self-development, Fortescue does not forget to remind her of the hardships she is likely to be confronted with. In line with his morally good nature, he advises her to find the right direction for herself and cling to it with courage and strength.

As has been mentioned, the wise old man in a female plot acts more as a continuous support to inspire the heroine's self-consciousness than as a momentarily powerful *deus ex machina* who enlightens and helps the hero. In Caird's novel, Fortescue is seen as repeatedly offering encouragement to Hadria by telling her what he believes is right based on his observation and experience in life. He opposes the enslavement of women, people's mundane pursuit of fame and profit, and the cruel treatment of the powerless, appealing instead for "the development of the human mind and the widening of human mercy" (DD, 272). In his conversations with Hadria, he reveals his spiritual qualities in terms of knowledge, wisdom, insight, and intuition, his high standard of morality, his benevolent and humane nature which is

always ready to help. It is the recurrence of Fortescue's positive influence that helps determine Hadria to pursue her musical career in Paris. However, as has been indicated, despite the fact that Fortescue appears on many occasions to help Hadria, he is absent at several critical moments that determine her fate. In this respect, therefore, it appears that Caird intends to weaken Fortescue's authority as a wise old man by mis-timing his appearances.

To Hadria, Fortescue is a spiritual wellspring, the only person whose advice she can trust. To Fortescue, Hadria is not only one of the weak that he intends to rescue, but his disciple in whom he wishes to implant the ideals he aims to popularize, something he has not yet achieved. As has been indicated, the wise old man in a female plot is sometimes the heroine's double and vice versa. In Caird's novel, Fortescue sees traits of himself in Hadria, for she has requisite qualities—"instincts, impulse, inspiration" (DD, 200)—that enable her not only to strive for self-development, but which make her, like Fortescue himself, "a knight-errant" to the helpless (DD, 490). At the same time, Hadria's struggles for self-expression coincide with Fortescue's own journey towards the advocacy of his humanistic concerns. Admittedly, both Fortescue and Hadria have to contend with similar conflicts and difficulties since their ideals are not recognized by the public. In Hadria's case, before marriage she is not allowed to pursue her professional ambition and most of the time her mother acts as the enforcer of this patriarchal dictate. In Fortescue's case, his efforts to rescue the weak, the unfortunate and the poor are incompatible with the contemporary societal trend of the survival of the fittest, a force exceeding his ability to fight it. There is no doubt that Hadria as a woman is among the weak, and her self-quest even makes her the weakest of the weak, a double victim, so to speak. If Fortescue is able to achieve his desired humanitarian transformation of society, it is not impossible that Hadria can be set free. Fortescue

as a wise old man figure is originally meant to help Hadria. Yet as his own quest is replete with difficulties, so his power to aid Hadria in her search for personal identity is limited. Ultimately the text reflects the failure of both Hadria's and Fortescue's pursuits.

Despite the pessimistic aspect of this doubling, the ending of the novel holds out a certain promise in that Fortescue asks Hadria on his death-bed to continue with the mission he has not fulfilled, his mission to ease the pain and the sorrow of the weak. Although a person's physical body is mortal, his spirit can be made to live on in his or her successor. As a younger double to Fortescue, Hadria acts as an heir to continue his pursuit of the humanistic ideal. Such a message also implies an optimistic vision of Hadria's own quest, since hers is one of the fundamental units in Fortescue's broader and wider scheme of humanitarianism. Whether or not Hadria is capable of fulfilling Fortescue's wish, as long as she continues to fight for her right to self-development, there is always the hope that the idealistic state that Fortescue envisions may come true some day. The robin appearing at the end seems to highlight this, because the creature is a symbol of loyal and harmonious friendship between humans and animals and his "requiem" transmits the message of a peaceful future to Hadria. Although the image of a bird appearing at the end of the novel is rather stereotypical, this deployment, as Ann Heilmann argues, "invokes a transcendentalist vision of renewal and rebirth" that provides "a mystic space for the recuperation of the failing female artist."¹²

The debilitating musical mentor: M. Jouffroy

Another wise old man figure, M. Jouffroy is distinguished in his musical fervor and

¹² Ann Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird* (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 2004), 220.

in his professional instruction, which stimulates Hadria's talent for musical composition. Although his influence is comparatively limited and its duration relatively short, being restricted to the time Hadria stays in Paris, his function cannot be neglected in that he, like Fortescue, displays spiritual qualities which encourage and help Hadria in her search for a professional career. Jouffroy is a renowned musician, who cares much about his disciples' complete dedication to art. In his mind, an artist's success relies much on endless work and attentive concentration; an artist is also often seen as an eccentric because he/she sometimes has to break through conventions for his/her art, which is likely to make him/her misunderstood, resulting in the public rejection of his/her art and inevitable solitude (DD, 316-319). To him, an artist requires considerable patience because "only very slowly would the quality of the [art] be recognized by even the more cultivated public" (DD, 321). Thus to Jouffroy, strong determination and persistence are the necessary conditions to produce an artist, and this is also what he strictly demands in his teaching of music.

It may be sensible to assume that Jouffroy's understanding of the artist's life and work, even his expectation of the artist, is practically speaking applied only to male artists, despite the fact that ideally he thinks artistic pursuit has nothing to do with gender difference. As Jouffroy recounts, he regrets seeing many talented women give up their professional pursuits for women's duties. While he laments their lack of perseverance in adhering to their goals, Jouffroy seems to neglect the fact that those talented women might have foregone their brilliant careers reluctantly. In women artists' struggles between an art which requires inexhaustible commitment and a female role which demands endless self-sacrifice, we get the sense that society has already made the decision for them. Their bodies, as Grace Stewart remarks,

are always a reminder of how social constructs restrict their role as artists.¹³ Their bodies, I would further argue, are always a mark for the patriarchal social system to impose upon them their “natural” duties. Thus, it is not so much that they want to, but rather that they are forced to let go of their artistic fervor in the name of morality and the feminine virtues imposed by the patriarchy. It is perhaps partly owing to Jouffroy’s great dismay that women’s talents are squandered and partly due to his professional concern that the public might miss out on a sublime genius that he discerns the necessity to encourage Hadria to rid herself of anything that blocks her progress towards self-development. After all, in Hadria Jouffroy sees a special gift that he wishes to help release, and “Never before had he felt a faith so profound, or an interest so fervid in the genius of any woman” (DD, 336).

It might be too far-fetched to say that Jouffroy regards Hadria as his double because their homogeneity is in the main limited to musical taste. However, it is primarily on account of this commonality that Jouffroy is keen to stimulate Hadria’s powerful musical gift. As Jouffroy indicates, Hadria is “a revelation” to him. Her music is eccentric, individual, remarkable, full of genius. He feels “a sentiment of admiration and reverence the most profound” for her gift (DD, 336). Therefore, it is Hadria’s musical gift rather than any particular doubling aspect that triggers in Jouffroy the impulse to encourage and instruct her. Jouffroy’s concern is principally for the professional/musical aspects of her life and thus differs from Fortescue’s spiritual/moral/humanistic concern in helping Hadria. No matter how they activate their wise old man functions, it is worth noting that, in line with Fortescue, Jouffroy also despises any kind of affection and any maternal instincts, because they are “a curse, a disease . . . the scourge of genius . . . the devil’s

¹³ Grace Stewart, *A New Mythos: The Novel of the Artist as Heroine 1877-1977* (Montreal: Eden P, 1981), 179.

truncheon" (DD, 319), "an oppression, a weariness" (DD, 334). They are, in a word, the obstacles that make the world produce fewer female musicians, whose work demands concentration rather than the distractions and worries of a woman's duties. In accordance with his sharp and straightforward character, Jouffroy goes so far as to advise Hadria to "cut herself entirely adrift from her country, her ties" and "to remain in France . . . the country of your soul . . . not England . . . the land of fogs, the land of the *bourgeois*" (DD, 334-35).

It is interesting to note that Jouffroy's professional conception of the artistic pursuit is a slap in the face for Mr. St. George, who maintains that music requires no particular liberty and even under this condition women are still incapable of rising from the occasional composition to the production of operas and oratorios (DD, 372). Clearly St. George is purely a layman pretending to speak professionally and thus misconstrues the effort required for any musical undertaking. He is also one of the Old Men who consider that women have to stay in the home to do their natural duties, and who calls into question women's talents in pursuing art. St. George's narrow and orthodox views serve exactly as a salient contrast to Jouffroy's New Man quality in so far as women's musical engagement is concerned.

In terms of music, it is manifest that Jouffroy has high expectations of Hadria's musical gift, hoping that she can "give . . . a sublime gift to her century" (DD, 334), and he is willing to help her reach this goal, the goal that any artist desires to reach. It cannot be discerned from the narrative whether Jouffroy himself has achieved this state, and hence it is doubtful whether Hadria is the medium of his own wish-fulfillment. If Jouffroy has achieved the artistic sublime, it is possible that he wants to pass on this spirit to Hadria and the generations to come. If he has failed to reach that goal, he would, like Fortescue, want to find a successor to fulfill his unrealized ideal. Despite the fact that in either case Hadria is expected to carry out

the artistic ideal, the significance in each case varies greatly, in terms of Jouffroy's personal fulfillment. However, it may be readily said that in his mentoring of Hadria, Jouffroy is fulfilling a wish, the wish that he will be able to see a change in society, that is, that talented women will no longer give up "their art for '*la famille*.'" (DD, 333, emphasis in original). In this respect, Jouffroy is not gender-biased in excluding women from the world of art, but instead aims to give them his support. However, as the story reveals, Jouffroy's attempt fails, because Hadria cannot resist her duties and chooses to return to England. Jouffroy's function as the wise old man, together with his wish to invigorate women artists, is therefore truncated.

In illustrating the wise old man archetype in the novel, Caird, it seems to me, intends to deploy positive spiritual influences to steer Hadria onto the right track of self-development. The wise old man figures as represented by Fortescue and Jouffroy stand for the New Men characters that Caird anticipates will help produce the New Woman in the frustrated daughter-wife Hadria. Although their functions are successful to some extent, their power is nonetheless too limited to change the *status quo* that demands women's self-sacrifice as regulated by men and reinforced by women. In applying the archetype of the wise old man, therefore, Caird does not completely trust their "fatherly" authority. For one thing, she enervates the wise old men by suspending or making ambiguous the completion of their personal fulfillment. For another thing, Caird challenges and satirizes the wise old man's wisdom, as exemplified in Fortescue's experimental efforts. Moreover, she mis-times the wise old man's appearances, confining him to less crucial moments to weaken his function, despite the fact that he appears frequently to offer help to Hadria. However, Caird still recognizes the importance of the wise old man archetype, because it reveals the absence of the "wise" Old Woman figure, who could support her sex based on the spirit of sisterhood. In this sense, only the father-image with New Man qualities is

able to inspire the heroine's self-awareness. Despite the fact that Fortescue and Jouffroy fail in putting their function into complete effect, their role as wise old men exemplifies the good spirit archetype that helps map Hadria's quest for self-realization.

**The Romantic Knight
in Sarah Grand's The Beth Book (1897)**

A novel replete with the discourse of chivalry, The Beth Book, written by the social purity feminist Sarah Grand, presents a rather optimistic panorama in terms of the artist heroine's professional pursuit. Rather than relying on the spirit archetype, manifested in the Wise Old Man figures, as Hadria does in Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus, Elizabeth Caldwell Maclure, also called Beth, is presented in The Beth Book under a "new aspect," in which Grand has her act as the spirit archetype *per se*, one personification of which is a complex figure I have christened the Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale) and another the more traditional figure of the Holy Mother. The spirit archetype, originally devised for its constructive effects on the hero(ine)s as Jung asserts and partially adopted by Caird, is adapted in a most striking manner by Grand as part of a complicated writing maneuver, in which she uses what Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin calls the carnivalesque¹ to turn the literary romance and Jungian conventions topsy-turvy, out of which emerges a call central to Grand's religious-cum-political feminist canon, a call for a universal, equal relation between the sexes.

In this narrative stratagem, the New Man undergoes a process of replaceability, so called from his status being made obscure, as he is carnivalistically suspended

¹ Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin talks about the carnival in his published dissertation Rabelais and His World, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1984), but a detailed explanation of the carnival theory is in chapter four of his Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, intro. Wayne C. Booth (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984), 101-80, esp. 106-37. Briefly speaking, the carnival is a literary representation in which traditional or hierarchical canons are turned topsy-turvy in a carnivalistic parody, a parody that demands a degeneration or decrowning as well as a resurgence or recrowning. For critical references, see Simon Dentith, Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader (London: Routledge, 1995), 65-87; Sue Vice, Introducing Bakhtin (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 1997), 149-99. See also Pam Morris, ed., The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, Voloshinov (London: Edward Arnold, 1994), 194-26.

from “everything [that results] from socio-hierarchical inequality or any other form of inequality among people,” to the close of the novel where he is rewarded with the promise of rejuvenation, of a carnivalesque renewal.² But Grand goes further: she reconceptualizes the carnival essence by not only crowning her heroine to perform feats of chivalry but, most importantly, by securing and even magnifying her crowning status beyond the ending of the novel, sanctifying her as the spirit archetype who welcomes the New Man as another hopeful emblem. In this section, therefore, I will focus on Grand’s carnivalistic parody as she portrays a would-be New Man as a Romantic Knight figure, her carnivalesque strategy in overturning the romance and Jungian conventions, and her narrative reworking from chivalric romance to the ideals of her religious-cum-political feminism.

Whereas in The Daughters of Danaus Caird deploys the Wise Old Man figures to illustrate the debilitating New Man qualities, throwing into relief a seemingly hierarchical, yet ironic, mentor-disciple relationship to question the Wise Old Men’s power, Grand uses the image of the Romantic Knight in The Beth Book to satirize the deficiency of the would-be New Man, putting him into postures that mimic those of a medieval knight in a romance construction. In a striking parallel to Caird’s manipulation in marginalizing the Wise Old Men’s influence and authority, by allocating their emergences at non-critical moments with discontinuous, belated, or insufficient support for Hadria, Grand takes no pains to give her Romantic Knight, Arthur Milbank Brock, a prominent role, allocating him only one twenty-fifth of the narrative length of the novel,³ within which Grand focuses not so much on Arthur himself as on Beth’s nursing of him back from the brink of death.

In these limited passages, Arthur is presented as either too ill to talk or only able

² Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics, 125, 123.

³ Among the 52 chapters ranging over 527 pages of the novel, Arthur appears extraordinarily late in chapter 50 for 25 pages or so.

to say very little, especially as compared to Beth's dialogues elsewhere in the book with the verbose, sophisticated Alfred Cayley Pounce, a priggish decadent who was her second boyfriend. The lack of narrative utterance gives Arthur no sufficient ground on which to display his chivalric virtues, if he has any. His fragility in health further makes his knightly image a mockery in contradistinction to the heroic deeds of the medieval knight, or more precisely, those of King Arthur's Round Table, a possible association that Grand parodies in her choice of his name. While the conventional knight in the medieval romance is able to go through trials of temptation to demonstrate his allegiance and integrity, Grand's Arthur is made to believe, under his friend Gresham Powell's influence, that Beth's caring for him is merely a trap to make him marry her, the ploy of an adventuress. Unable to see the truth for himself, Arthur is lured into leaving with Powell to convalesce at a country resort, giving Beth nothing but the most grudging gratitude and, instead of rescuing her, leaving her collapsed unconscious, exhausted from nursing him, a state from which she is only rescued by Angelica, Beth's friend in the feminist community, who just happens to pass by.

It could be argued that the traditional romance conventions are here reworked by Grand to caricaturize the ingrained belief in the gallantry of (male) knighthood since Arthur, reified as a knight figure, fails to act chivalrously. More importantly, rather than presenting a canonical romance plot in which a power construction is built upon a hierarchy of male domination/activity/salvation over female subjection/passivity/captivity, Grand, I would argue, attempts to burlesque this "high culture" paradigm in carnival fashion,⁴ overturning its traditional literary mode in a role reversal where the male knight is positioned as the weaker sex waiting to be

⁴ Joseph Childers and Gary Hentzi, eds, The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism (New York: Columbia UP, 1995), 38-39.

rescued by a female figure. The knight's chivalry and masculine prowess are replaced by feminine tenderness and fortitude, by a woman's courage and ability to solve problems unruffled. Rather than being an adventuress in the marriage market, as Powell assumes, Beth acts as a caring Amazon whose adventure is to fight against Azrael,⁵ in order to save the life of the charming prince stricken with rheumatic fever and thus captive in a garret in London, a situation similar to the chivalric knight in the courtly love convention heroically rescuing, at the risk of his own life, the enchanted princess from imprisonment. That Beth finally faints does not suggest her weakness but demonstrates that the task of bringing relief can be as complicated as that of the conventional chivalric knight who is often depicted as badly wounded in his quest adventures. Angelica's rescue of Beth, despite its being the very kind of narrative coincidence that Beth refuses to use in her own work, highlights not only Arthur's inability to rescue the lady, if that is how Beth is to be seen, but, more significantly, timely strong support from the sisterhood, which can be seen as lampooning Powell's selfish and sanctimonious concept of fraternity, rooted in the prevailing Victorian belief in masculine superiority. Rather than helping Arthur, Powell's influence results in his losing further credit as a knight figure.

Beth as the Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale) and the Holy Mother

In the nursing scene, Beth is depicted as unconditionally devoting herself day and night to looking after Arthur. She exchanges her warmer room for his, manages his daily meals, spends her limited savings on his food and heat, while starving and freezing herself, sells her superb clothes, rings, books, and any other blessed things (except those bequeathed by Great Aunt Victoria), and eventually has her beautiful

⁵ The Arabic/Hebrew word meaning "the Angel of Death." See the website, <http://www.sarahsarchangels.com/archangels/azrael.html> (accessed on March 3, 2005)

hair sold when she runs out of money. Though she could spend the money Arthur gives her for expenditure during his illness, she keeps it, intending to make “a pious fraud” (BB, 506) to free him from the anxiety of having to start working right after recovery, since he still has money in hand. During this time, Beth has no income from her literary work, as her time is all occupied in nurturing Arthur. The little money she thinks she has safely stored from her embroidery work is also found to have been stolen by her penny-pinching husband, a discovery she does not make until she opens the box of her belongings he has sent on. All in all, the “pious fraud” that Beth contrives to meet Arthur’s need and restore him to health is at her own expense. Yet “In spite of poverty, anxiety, and fatigue,” the narrator tells us, Beth enjoys this life, seeing it as “the ‘homiest time’ she had had since Aunt Victoria’s death, and she loved it” (BB, 504). Thus, even though Arthur shows indifference and selfishness on his leaving (he takes the money Beth returns to him without hesitation, though with a little display of surprise that there should be money left, as he did not give her much in the first place), Beth feels neither resentment nor anger, only disappointment in parting from him for good.

Modern critics have mixed reactions towards this nursing scene. Lyn Pykett, for instance, argues that it merely serves to reinstate and reinforce the traditional feminine roles of self-sacrifice and self-immolation, since Beth, in nursing Arthur, has regressed herself to women’s socially-prescribed nursing function at the cost of her own health. To Pykett, The Beth Book is still constructed under “the discourse of the proper feminine” which provides no sanction and outlet for women’s self-development, despite the fact that sketches in the narrative truly reveal Beth’s rebellious challenges in writing and public speaking.⁶ In a similar vein, Terri

⁶ Lyn Pykett, The ‘Improper’ Feminine: The Women’s Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), 185-86.

Doughty asserts that, in Beth's self-imposed self-sacrifice to look after Arthur, she has given up her literary pursuit, the pursuit through which she had attempted to demonstrate her independence, when she left her unscrupulous husband to live alone in London.⁷

In their negative responses to this nursing setting, both Pykett and Doughty draw attention to Grand's association with Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott," aligning Beth with the Lady and Arthur with Sir Lancelot. In Tennyson's poem, the Lady is captive in a tower chamber, forbidden to see the outside world except in the reflection of a mirror, from which she weaves her tapestries day and night, half sick of shadows. The lady remains passive in her limited and unreal world until she sees Lancelot's shining appearance reflected in the mirror. She breaks away from her isolation, floats in a boat with her name inscribed on the prow, and mysteriously dies in her search for Lancelot, who, glancing at her dead body, coldly comments that "She has a lovely face;/ God in his mercy lend her grace" (LS, 1104, lines 169-70). While Pykett contends that Grand domesticates Tennyson's allegory, replacing the Lady's departure from her weaving in the constricted tower room with Beth's self-willed constraint in re-assuming women's domestic role, Doughty calls into question the likelihood that Beth's artistic career will be terminated like Tennyson's Lady's who, on catching sight of Lancelot, forsakes her weaving and dies in her search for him.⁸

But there are some interpretative fallacies, in my view, in the association of Beth with the Lady and Arthur with Lancelot. For one thing, the Lady's weaving is not a creative act; her tapestry is merely a reflection of a reflection, "a copy via the

⁷ Terri Doughty, "Sarah Grand's The Beth Book: The New Woman and the Ideology of the Romance Ending," Anxious Power: Reading, Writing, and Ambivalence in Narrative by Women, ed. Carol J. Singley and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney (New York: State U of New York P, 1983), 185-96, 192.

⁸ Pykett, The 'Improper' Feminine, 185; Doughty, "Sarah Grand's The Beth Book," 192.

reflective mediation of the mirror.”⁹ Thus her weaving is reproductive manual labor requiring nothing but adroit craft, in stark contrast to the creative struggle of Beth’s writing, which is brain work. One might even question the Lady’s identity as an artist, arguing that she is more like a production line worker. Impelled by a curse, which can be seen as an embodiment of the patriarchal system, the Lady’s weaving represents the socio-cultural regulation of domestic femininity, which demands of women neither innovation nor autonomy, an absence imaged in the Lady’s lack of identity (there is not even an image of her in the mirror).¹⁰ The curse confines the Lady to a restricted area, limits her freedom and shadows her vision, in other words, her cognition. Beth’s writing, on the contrary, symbolizes her self-reliance, breaking the shackles that bound women at that time; Beth can claim it as her self-definition. Whereas the Lady weaves the tapestry of her own imprisonment, the weaving itself being enforced by the patriarchy, Beth writes a text indicative of her personal liberation. Doughty’s inference that Beth’s forsaking of her writing echoes the Lady’s abandoning of her weaving is problematic in terms of the nature of the artistic work the two women take on. The Lady’s abandoning of her weaving has the effect of translating her from the inside (constraint) to the outside world (freedom but also death), which is quite different from Beth’s breaking off from writing, as my later discussion will show.

It is obvious that, in aligning Beth with the Lady, Doughty has in mind the

⁹ Gerhard Joseph, “Victorian Weaving: The Alienation of Work into Text in ‘The Lady of Shalott,’” Tennyson, ed. and intro. Rebecca Stott (London; New York: Longman, 1996), 24-32, 27. Critics also refer this mirror within a mirror to Plato’s cave theory; see Joseph Chadwick, “A Blessing and a Curse: The Poetics of Privacy in Tennyson’s ‘The Lady of Shalott,’” *Victorian Poetry* 24.1 (1986): 13-30, 24; Jennifer Gribble, *The Lady of Shalott in the Victorian Novel* (London: The Macmillan P, 1983) 29-30; Gerhard Joseph, “The Echo and the Mirror: *en abîme* in Victorian Poetry,” *Victorian Poetry* 23.4 (1985): 403-12, 409-11; Lona Mosk Packer, “Sun and Shadow: The Nature of Experience in Tennyson’s ‘The Lady of Shalott,’” *The Victorian Newsletter* 25 (1964): 4-8, 7-8; Carl Plasa, “‘Cracked from Side to Side’: Sexual Politics in ‘The Lady of Shalott,’” *Victorian Poetry* 30.3-4 (1992): 247-63, 252.

¹⁰ Chadwick has given an illuminating discussion of the mirror in relation to the Lady’s substantiality. See Chadwick, “A Blessing and a Curse,” 18-21.

power of love that drives the artists' moves. Yet it should be borne in mind that the Lady's leave is urged, not so much by love, as by her desire to experience reality since, before she spots Lancelot, she is already "half sick of shadows" (LS, 1101, line 71). The sight of Lancelot reflected in the mirror, as James R. Kincaid indicates, appears justly as "the symbol of personality and fulfillment in the vast scene of the world's growth and beauty . . . the achievement of individual identity,"¹¹ in contradistinction to the Lady's confinement and namelessness. Lancelot thus becomes added fuel (preceded by the reflected scenes of the wedding, the funeral and so on), the last kindling straw that fires the Lady's determination to break free from her imposed physical and creative limitations, and by extension, from her passivity. In this vein, it can be readily said that a romance (and in particular an unrequited love) is inscribed as part of but not as the main motif that Tennyson wants to create.

In Beth's case, it is apparent that she bears Arthur goodwill, and the narrator twice states that Beth is much attracted by Arthur's appearance (BB, 486, 492) and that, in her longing for natural tenderness, she often thinks about this "young man" (an expression often used of Arthur, seemingly suggestive of his naivety and vulnerability) during her solitary wandering (that is, prior to Arthur's illness). Without further contacts between them, there seems to be, however, no explicit clue in the narrative to suggest that Beth's nursing of Arthur is purely out of romantic love. What is more evident, and what is hardly noticed by the critics, is Beth's religious impulse of philanthropy. As the narrative unfolds:

The thought of a young man of small means, ill alone in a London lodging, probably without a bell in the room, and certainly with no one anxious to answer it if he should ring, though not cheering, is *stimulating to the energy of the benevolent*, and Beth went downstairs to ask as soon as the

¹¹ James R. Kincaid, *Tennyson's Major Poems: The Comic and Ironic Patterns*, March 28, 2001, a Victorian Web book at <http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/tennyson/kincaid/ch3.html#shalott> (accessed on January 2, 2005)

notion occurred to her. (BB, 496, emphasis added)

Learning from the landlady of his illness, Beth immediately takes on the responsibility of taking care of Arthur, telling him that “We are all of the same family here . . . *the great human family*” (BB, 497, emphasis added). During her nursing of Arthur, the narrator tells us,

[Beth] pondered on the difference it would have made if only she had been married early—just to a good man. It would not have been necessary for her to have loved him—not with passion—only to have relied upon him. Some one to trust, she craved for, more than some one to love; yet she allowed that a loveless marriage is a mock marriage. She did not regret the loss of her conventional faith, but she wished she could *join the congregation just for the human fellowship*. She felt the need of union, of some central station, a centre of peace, unlike the church, the house of disunion. (BB, 499, emphasis added)

The word “fellowship” connotes Beth’s desire for friendship more than love. Taking all these considerations into account, therefore, it seems to be sustainable, in my view, to assume that the nursing scene is not so much a romance plot, as most modern critics maintain,¹² as something akin to a text of universal companionship with a philanthropic import, echoing Beth’s religious contemplation at this time.

That Beth replaces writing with nursing is not necessarily a fall from feminist grace, the assumption of a lesser role, as Pykett suggests.¹³ From the start of the nursing scene, Beth is always the active figure, freely going between the public and the private spaces and tactfully showing her competence in caring for the invalid. I would argue that, in re-inscribing Tennyson’s poem into the novelistic plot, Grand turns the characters’ situations topsy-turvy, aligning Arthur’s isolation in the garret

¹² Almost all modern critics consider this nursing scene as a romance plot. See Doughty, “Sarah Grand’s *The Beth Book*,” 185-96; Ann Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird* (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 2004), 83-84; Teresa Mangum, *Married, Middlebrow, and Militant: Sarah Grand and the New Woman Novel* (Ann Arbor: The U of Michigan P, 1998), 189-91; Jane Eldridge Miller, *Rebel Women: Feminism, Modernism and the Edwardian Novel* (London: Virago, 1994), 20; Pykett, *The ‘Improper’ Feminine*, 185-86.

¹³ Pykett, *The ‘Improper’ Feminine*, 185. See also Mangum, *Married, Middlebrow, and Militant*, 189; Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 110.

with the Lady's incarceration in the tower chamber, and transforming "A red-cross knight forever knelled/ To a lady in his shield" (LS, 1102, lines 78-79) into a Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale) voluntarily offering the victim assistance with all her might (whether or not she is acquainted with his needs).¹⁴ Nursing, in this respect, is not degraded to a subservient status but rather elevated to a higher humanitarian realm, where assistance is unconditionally provided to the sufferer.

In the limited dialogues she has with Arthur, Beth once (and, interestingly enough, it is on Christmas Eve) mentions her disapproval of the God of the Hebrews:

this is not God—this blood-lover, this son-slayer, this blind omniscience, this impotent omnipotence, this merciful cruelty, this meek arrogance, this peaceful combatant; this is not God, but man. . . . I would not accept salvation at the hands of such futile omnipotence, such cruel mercy, such blood-stained justice. The sight of suffering was grateful to man when the world was young, as it still is to savages; but we revolt from it now. We should not be happy in heaven, as the saved were said to be in the old tales, within sight of the sinners suffering in hell. (BB, 500-01)

Given such a religious attitude, it is possible to argue that the nursing Beth tenders to Arthur is not, then, limited to the surfaced ambiguous lover-to-lover concern, but expanded to the savior-victim level through which Grand empowers her heroine to save the weak. This savior image of Beth is in line with Ann Heilmann's comment that Beth is "a female Christ relieved from the martyrdom of the body."¹⁵ To some extent, Beth indeed acts as a female Christ, since she sacrifices herself to save Arthur. If Beth is compared to Christ, then her help to Arthur is tantamount to God's

¹⁴ Here I attempt to extend Tennyson's "red-cross knight" to include the female gender and Florence Nightingale's voluntary service and contribution in the Crimean War comes to mind. In line with social purity feminists like Grand, Nightingale was one of those who strongly opposed the Contagious Diseases Acts. As a pioneer of nursing in the war, Nightingale's heroic and selfless deeds are equivalent to the humanistic and philanthropic concerns of the Red Cross. Thus, I use the term "Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale)" to create a counterpart to Tennyson's "red-cross knight." For a brief biographical account of Florence Nightingale, see the websites, <http://www.agnesscott.edu/lriddle/women/nitegale.htm>; and <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/REnightingale.htm> (accessed on January 5, 2005)

¹⁵ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 84.

unconditional love, whether or not she is betrayed—a point that resonates with the lack of resentment Beth shows when Arthur is so off-hand with her as he leaves. The love of Christ is thought to be philanthropic and merciful, different from the God of the Hebrews to whom Beth takes such exception. As her subsequent religious epiphany “God is Love—no! *Love is God*” (BB, 523, emphasis in original)¹⁶ shows, it may readily be said that Beth’s nursing of Arthur is not a debasement on her part to the traditional feminine role; nor is her action necessarily motivated by romantic love, springing more from her humanitarian concern to help the sick, because to be able to love is to act as God does.

If Tennyson’s Shalott allegory draws on the medieval romance and fairy tale conventions,¹⁷ the nursing setting in The Beth Book, I would argue, is a reversed representation of the canonical literary traditions. Unlike her strategy in reworking Tennyson’s poem in The Heavenly Twins, where Angelica cross-dresses herself to see the Tenor “[a]s a kind of cross-dressed Lady of Shalott,”¹⁸ Grand leaves Beth’s gender intact in The Beth Book, but portrays her as a figurative Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale), a caring Amazon who sets out to free the prince, an act of heroic chivalry traditionally performed by the male knight.¹⁹ Just as the medieval knight

¹⁶ An emphasized quotation here, see also Chapter 3, p. 239.

¹⁷ Shuli Barzilai, “‘Say That I Had a Lovely Face’: The Grimms’ ‘Rapunzel,’ Tennyson’s ‘Lady of Shalott,’ and Atwood’s Lady Oracle,” Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature 19.2 (2000): 231-54, in which Barzilai argues that Rapunzel is a more passive figure waiting to be rescued, compared to Tennyson’s Lady, though the latter’s self-liberation leads her to another mode of imprisonment—death. See also J. Evetts-Secker, “‘Repining Restlessness’: On the Nature of Desire in Blake, Tennyson, and Fairy Tales,” University of Hartford Studies in Literature 20.2 (1988): 1-18.

¹⁸ Michelle J. Mouton, “Taking on Tennyson: Sarah Grand’s The Heavenly Twins and the Ethics of Androgynous Reading,” Victorian Review 23.2 (1997): 184-211, 193-97; John Kucich, The Power of Lies: Transgression in Victorian Fiction (Ithaca; London: Cornell UP, 1994), 267.

¹⁹ Despite her proclamations that “woman was never meant to be developed man” and that “the fashion of women dressing in imitation of men [was] detestable,” Grand nonetheless seems to favor the writing technique of cross-dressing—literal, figurative, and narrative—in her novels. For narrative cross-dressing, see her Ideala and “Book IV: The Impressions of Dr. Galbraith” in The Heavenly Twins. For literal cross-dressing, see particularly “Book IV: The Tenor and the Boy—An Interlude” as well as chapter 12 in “Book I: Childhoods and Girlhood” in The Heavenly Twins; in The Beth Book, Beth also cross-dresses herself in order to join her romantic lover in youth, Alfred Cayley Pounce and his friend Dicksie to see the menagerie. For the previous quotations of Grand’s ideas, see Athol Forbes, “My Impressions of Sarah Grand,” Lady’s World (1900): 880-83; Jane T. Stoddart,

undergoes a series of quests (including the rescue of the imprisoned princess) to demonstrate his devotion to Christ, so Grand's Beth is presented as going through several difficulties during her nursing/rescuing of Arthur, in order to fulfill her dedication to God via her humanitarian service. Whether captive or liberated, Tennyson's Lady has no exit for her existence,²⁰ but Beth's nursing serves to foreshadow her later renunciation of any personal achievement as a writer to embrace, instead, a holier mission of saving the mass of the people, in particular, the people of her own sex, from their sufferings, through the more effective and extensive gift of public speaking—the last of the natural gifts she discovers in herself.

Ironically, however, Beth's "excessive piety" is not so much valued as obliquely disparaged by Arthur as "a disease of the nerves" (BB, 501).²¹ Like Caird who does not mould her New Men figures into perfection but satirizes their wisdom and authority, Grand portrays Arthur as a "would-be" New Man with several Old Man traits in order to undermine his significance, even though he has already been given very little narrative length.²² Although Arthur shows gentleness and concern for

"Illustrated Interview: Sarah Grand," *Woman at Home* 3 (1895): 247-52, both repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 257-60, 259; 211-19, 214. For relevant criticisms, see Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 44-79; *idem*, "(Un)Masking Desire: Cross-dressing and the Crisis of Gender in New Woman Fiction," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 5.1 (2000): 83-111.

²⁰ Kincaid, *Tennyson's Major Poems*, March 28, 2001, a Victorian Web book at <http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/tennyson/kincaid/ch3.html#shalott> (accessed on January 2, 2005)

²¹ On first glance, Arthur seems to express a neutral stand towards people with excessive piety, but a backlash appears, in my view, right after his remark that "what is piety in one generation does appear to be perversity in the next" (BB, 501).

²² Heilmann maintains that Arthur is "a New Man with human blemishes, though with none of the serious moral failings of the Old Man." Mangum considers him "the ideal man (sensitive, gentle, communicative) . . . [but] short of perfection." Forward also regards Arthur as a New Man, though "too insubstantial a creation to make a convincing Sir Lancelot," believing that Arthur will prove worthy of Beth. It is true that Arthur, in some respects, is an amiable man, but from several details in the nursing scene, as will be discussed shortly, I find him not a New Man as he is thought to be by modern critics. Thus I label him a "would-be" New Man to point out the potential of his becoming one in resonance with his later realization of his insensitivity to and misunderstanding of Beth's goodness and in his return at the very close of the novel. For criticisms of Arthur as a New Man, see Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 83; Mangum, *Married, Middlebrow, and Militant*, 189; Stephanie Forward, "The 'New Man' in *Fin-de-Siècle* Fiction," *Women's Writing* 5.3 (1998): 437-56, 442-43.

Beth's fatigue during his illness, the fact that he insists on keeping her in sight reveals his dependent nature, just like a self-willed child's demand that the mother, no matter how tired she is, should always prioritize him, behavior also similar to an autocratic husband demanding service of his wife. Despite his claim that "I don't feel much of a man lying here and letting you work for me" (BB, 505) when he sees Beth doing the household chores, Arthur can be so self-contradictory as to "[lie] contentedly watching her—'*superintending* her domestic duties,' [as] he used to call it" (BB, 503, emphasis added). The gaze Arthur throws upon Beth is by no means equally based; otherwise the word he chooses would be something other than "superintending," a word suggestive of the hierarchal power of the dominant over the subordinate. Further, though an adult in stature, Arthur is naïve and obtuse in monetary terms, requesting the food he feels like eating (the Salisbury treatment), without considering whether he can afford it after a period of illness without income and whether it will give Beth any trouble to prepare it. His naïve request merely reinforces his ignorance and imprudence, falling short of the courtesy expected of a knight.

Beth's haircut

One point that particularly shows Arthur's conventional nature is his displeasure at Beth's hair-cut. Considering it "a tasteless thing" (BB, 510), Arthur goes so far as to group Beth among "the unsexed crew that shriek on platforms" (BB, 509). From his reaction, it is obvious that Arthur is not in line with the contemporary women's movement which he sees as an insane resistance to nature, a belief vociferously propagated by, for instance, the anti-feminist Eliza Lynn Linton, who labeled contemporary rebellious women as unnatural, unladylike "Wild Women" and "Social

Insurgents”²³—arguments of the sort Beth refutes as “cheap journalism” (BB, 509).

Synonymous with his repulsion at women’s revolts, Arthur is one among the many Old Men who align women’s long hair with femininity. As Karen Stevenson points out, women’s long hair has long been a signifier of femininity in white, European nations. It is a marker for gendered identity as well as a social construct. Short hair, in this socio-cultural context, is perceived as “deviant, punitive, or a self-inflicted denial of sexuality.”²⁴ In her advocacy of hair reform, Charlotte Perkins Gilman promotes short hair for women, and she projects the idea in her utopian novel *Herland*, in which the narrator Van (Vandyck) says,

[Women here] all wore short hair . . . all light and clean and fresh-looking. . . . I rather liked it myself, after I got used to it. Why we should so admire “a woman’s crown of hair” and not admire a Chinaman’s queue is hard to explain, except that we are so convinced that the long hair “belongs” to a woman. (H, 30)

Van’s remark reveals exactly the commonly-shared socio-cultural western belief in the alliance of women with long hair. In contrast to the wish of Jeff, another of the explorers, that the women’s hair should be longer to look more feminine, Van takes the view that femininity is “but mere reflected masculinity—developed to please us because they had to please us, and in no way essential to the real fulfillment of their great process” (H, 59). Arthur, in contrast to Van, is an Old Man figure like Jeff, considering Beth’s long hair an essential feminine marker that she loses once she has her hair cut short. It is no wonder that with Beth’s haircut the relationship between Arthur and Beth is subtly changed: “they were not as they had been with each other, nor could they continue together as they were” (BB, 511).

²³ Eliza Lynn Linton, “The Wild Women as Politicians,” *The Nineteenth Century* 30 (1891): 79-88; “The Wild Women as Social Insurgents,” *The Nineteenth Century* 30 (1891): 596-605, both reprinted in *LVMQ*, 1.

²⁴ Karen Stevenson, “Hair Today, Shorn Tomorrow?: Hair Symbolism, Gender, and the Agency of Self,” *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Optimist Reformer*, ed. Jill Rudd and Val Gough (Iowa: U of Iowa P, 1999), 219-42, 226.

As has been indicated earlier, Beth sells her hair in order to supply Arthur's need for convalescence. This is a practical act, similar to Jo March in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women, who sacrifices her hair to help her sick father recover sooner.²⁵ Both Beth and Jo make the sudden decision, when passing barbershops, to crop their heads out of a desperate need for money to help the invalid. While Jo's crying after the haircut is prompted by vanity, by the thought that she has lost her beautiful hair, though she has no regrets, Beth sobs at Arthur's repulsion, "not because she regretted her hair," the narrator tells us, "but because he was hurt, and for once she had no comfort to give him" (BB, 509). Although one cannot completely deny the possibility that Beth resents not being able to please Arthur in the traditional feminine way he likes, I would rather suggest that, as a Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale), Beth wants to provide whatever she can to give her patient spiritual comfort in addition to medical care. Thus while she intentionally covers her cropped head later "with a white muslin mob-cap" to cheer Arthur up, she still affirms her religious piety in dressing herself "like a sweet little Puritan" (BB, 510) to demonstrate her devotion to God.

In regard to women's sacrifices, it is important, in my view, to distinguish the hidden motivations. New Woman fictional artist heroines are often depicted as railing against the self-sacrifices imposed by the patriarchy and policed by their mothers, arresting their professional development and leading to a life-long resentment. Hadria in Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus is a case in point. In The Beth Book, although Beth yields to her mother's wish to marry a man she does not love, I would argue that in the nursing scene she is in a stage of religious transformation, arranged by Grand to pave the way for her later wider dedication to

²⁵ Louisa May Alcott, Little Women (1868; London: Penguin Books, 1989). About the episode of Jo's hair-cut, see chapter 15: "A Telegram," 157-65.

serving people. So that at the very close of the novel, Beth's devotion to God, her god-like benevolence, is further shown in her almsgiving to a stonebreaker (BB, 522), and in her giving food to an old watchman sitting by his brazier, who sees Beth in the image of the Holy Mother (BB, 526)—a vision suggestive of “the new Eve and the new Mother of humanity” in Beth.²⁶ Just as the Virgin Mary sacrifices her body to nurture Jesus Christ, so Beth sacrifices herself to nurse Arthur. And in her religious revelation after her second success in public speaking, Beth awakens to her true vocation in oratory—a gift similar to the preaching gift of a priest that Beth had already shown in her girlhood but not realized as an ability. In her determination to live for others, Beth is assigned by Grand to use her natural gift to bring comfort and hope to sufferers and to regenerate humanity by “conscientiously cultivating the divine in human nature” (BB, 523), making her an emblematic New Mother figure for the future generations.

If self-sacrifice is from personal choice, not from compulsion, and is made to fulfill something meaningful, sacrifice is, then, not necessarily a negative, “feminine orgy of charity.”²⁷ Nor is it in compliance with the traditional stereotyping of women's sacrifice as romanticized in marriage and motherhood.²⁸ Rather, it is a divine act, similar to what Grand conveys in *Ideala*, her first novel in the trilogy, in which the eponymous heroine Ideala says, “One may be made an instrument for good without merit of one's own” (I, 189). It also corresponds to the broader concept the male narrator Lord Dawne says: “Every act . . . has a meaning; it either helps or hinders what is being done to further . . . the object of life, [and] the duty of

²⁶ Scott Hahn, “Answering Common Objections: A Closer Look at Christ's Church, Mary, Holy Mother,” The Catholic Resource Network, Trinity Communications, 1994, at <http://www.star.ucl.ac.uk/~vgg/rc/aplctc/hahn/m4/m.html> (accessed on January 10, 2005)

²⁷ Rachel Blau DuPlessis, *Writing beyond the Ending: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985), 89.

²⁸ Penny Brown, *The Captured World: The Child and Childhood in Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing in England* (Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), 175; Miller, *Rebel Women*, 21.

individuals [is] to sacrifice themselves for the good of the community at large” (I, 164). Both Beth and Jo do not sacrifice their hair for nothing; on the contrary, they save the lives of Arthur and Mr. March, and this explains why they do not regret but feel happy with what they have done.

It should be noted that Beth’s haircut in the nursing scene does not indicate her de-feminization and is a quite different employment of the motif from her juvenile cropping of the head. On that occasion Beth had her hair cut short like a boy’s in order to atone for her extravagant entertainment in acting out her imaginative adventures (BB, 279). That haircut, as Penny Brown observes, signaled Beth’s repudiation of “both the artificial, external glamour of her fantasies and the image of femininity endorsed by her mother.”²⁹ If that was a proclamation of Beth’s resolution to act realistically or rationally as boys do, her later head-cropping, I would suggest, conveys an infusion of a new form of femininity, incorporating the better qualities of the New Woman with those of the Old one.

A proponent for women’s advancement, Grand postulates the necessity of women’s cultivation of manner and appearance, asserting that women should have

a desire to please—and that, not only on occasion but always, no matter where she may be, nor whom she may address. For good manners are a decoration that must be worn continually if they are to sit well upon us. They must be a fundamental part of the character, an evidence of *unselfishness, delicate consideration for the feelings of others, powers of appreciation* and many other good qualities.³⁰ (emphasis added)

Believing that the women’s movement is not “to coarsen women” but to strengthen women’s womanliness,³¹ Grand preaches that the New Woman should learn the Old Woman’s “charm of manner, that way of doing things which does not ruffle

²⁹ Brown, *The Captured World*, 175.

³⁰ Sarah Grand, “The Modern Girl,” *Temple Magazine* 2 (1898): 323-26, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 45-49, 48-49.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 48, 46.

anybody's temper or irritate them into opposition" to make herself agreeable, while making efforts to develop her independence, high thinking and fine nature.³² The New Woman, in Grand's construction, becomes, then, an ideal synthesis of womanhood, "new in the perfection of her physique, old in her home-loving proclivities; a stronger, better, more beautiful creature . . . always gentle and serene . . . magnanimous by nature"³³—a person,

who, while retaining all the grace of manner and feminine charm, had thrown off all the silliness and hysterical feebleness of her sex, and improved herself so as to be in every way the best companion for man, and without him, the best fitted for a place of usefulness in the world.³⁴

In her advocacy of the art of pleasing, Grand does not debase femininity in relation to beauty; on the contrary, she attempts to substantiate both qualities by elevating femininity from its corporeal, shallow implications predicated upon male definitions, infusing it with higher spiritual worth to reinforce beauty in mind rather than beauty in body.³⁵

Seen from this perspective, the manipulation of Beth's haircut is used, I would argue, not only to disclaim the canonical alignment of femininity with women's long hair and passivity (a Rapunzel-like association) but, more importantly, to highlight Beth's inner qualities, qualities keenly promoted by Grand in resonance with Plato's precept of moral beauty — "the archetype of which all visible beauty is only the shadow or the image," — as well as with Christ's "notable example of that gentleness, grace, dignity, and refinement of manner, which is essentially the

³² Sarah Grand, "The Morals of Manner and Appearance," *Humanitarian* 3 (1893): 87-93, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 21-28, 28. See also *idem*, "The Duty of Looking Nice: By the Author of 'The Heavenly Twins,'" *Review of Reviews* 8 (1893): 152-53, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 351-53.

³³ Sarah Grand, "The New Woman and the Old," *Lady's Realm* 4 (1898): 466-70, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 69-76, 70.

³⁴ Forbes, "My Impressions of Sarah Grand," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 259.

³⁵ Grand also pays attention to beauty in body for she advocates that New Women need to be careful about their appearance to make themselves agreeable. But this kind of charm is not coquettish to cater to men's taste, but should correspond with women's beautiful inner qualities.

outcome of courtesy and kindly consideration for the feelings of others.”³⁶ Ostensibly, Beth seems to be de-feminized by her short hair, but essentially her femininity is glorified by her sacrifice of her hair to complete her unselfish devotion to Arthur’s recuperation, a point in line with my contention that Beth is acting as a Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale), an image projected not only to fulfill religious humanitarianism, the “Christ-like compassion”³⁷ that Grand argues the New Woman assumes in late-Victorian society, but to exalt womanly beauty: the kind of feminine attractiveness in appearance that is born “of loyal nature, and of noble mind.”³⁸

Interweaving Beth’s haircut with the Shalott myth, it could be argued that Grand attempts to emphasize the spatial/sexual politics in which Beth is given access to the public hairdresser’s, a place generally open only to men in the late Victorian period (the time Beth enters the hairdresser’s, Powell is there waiting to be attended on).³⁹ Although Beth is not a consumer in its original sense, purchasing a new look to beautify herself, the fact that she transforms the hairdresser’s to another mode of exchange, enacting a business-to-business negotiation with the shop proprietor in order to reach a fair trade, symbolizes, in my view, her independence and individuality in crisis management, in terms of her financial difficulty, on the one hand, and her determination, on the other hand, to assert her equal standing, displaying “a business-like way without hesitation” (BB, 508), when she enters the male domain. The liberty Grand confers on Beth corresponds to my assumption that she means to deploy the Bakhtinian carnivalesque strategy of turning the Lady and the Knight in Tennyson’s poem topsy-turvy, bestowing on Beth the Knight’s freedom in the outer (male) world while confining Arthur to the inner (domestic)

³⁶ Grand, “The Morals of Manner and Appearance,” repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 21, 22.

³⁷ Grand, “The New Aspect of the Woman Question,” repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 34.

³⁸ Grand, “The Morals of Manner and Appearance,” repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 25.

³⁹ Stevenson, “Hair Today, Shorn Tomorrow?” 221. Stevenson notes that since classical times, women had their hair cut or hair dressed privately, and that barbershops/hairdresser’s had long been “a male institution” till the early twentieth century.

sphere.

If Grand uses a cross-dressing narrative in The Heavenly Twins to underscore the polarities of masculine and feminine natures and spheres in response to the dress reforms of her time,⁴⁰ I would suggest that in The Beth Book she launches her attack on the absurdity of the cultural association of women's femininity with long hair,⁴¹ appealing, instead, for a new form of femininity, while anticipating Gilman's hair reform of 1916.⁴² In contrast to her depiction of the American diplomat and man of letters, Mr. Austin B. Price, in The Heavenly Twins, who is the typical representative of "the chivalry of the present," a New Man figure defending Evadne from public criticism of her oddities, Grand portrays the American artist Arthur Milbank Brock as a mimicry of "the chivalry of the past, high-minded, ill-informed, unforeseeing" to highlight his imperfection and conformity (HT, 184). Where Austin sustains Evadne as "one of the new women . . . with a higher ideal of duty than any which men have constructed for women" (HT, 193),⁴³ Arthur, on seeing Beth's hair cut short, resents her taking sides with "the unsexed crew" (BB, 509). From the haircut episode, therefore, it is evident that femininity and women's long hair are both socially constructed to constrain women into a stereotype catering to men's taste.

⁴⁰ In The Heavenly Twins, Angelica cross-dresses in imitation of her twin brother Diavolo and establishes an ambiguous relationship with the Tenor. When her real identity is revealed due to an accident on the boat, Angelica defends herself, declaring that:

I wanted to be free to go and come as I would. I felt a galling sense of restraint all at once, and I determined to break the law that imposed it . . . my dress was an obstacle. As a woman, I could not expect to be treated by men with as much respect as they show to each other. (HT, 451)

Cross-dressing enables Angelica to transgress her prescribed private sphere and freely do things privileged only to men, a point strikingly showing the miraculous effect of dress on both sexes. For the New Woman cross-dressing narrative in relation to the Victorian dress reform, see Heilmann, "(Un)Masking Desire," 83-111; *idem*, New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's P, 2000), 118-42.

⁴¹ Beth also cross-dresses in her youth to go to the menagerie, an act, like Angelica, indicative of her transgression against the prescribed gendered space. But here I want to draw the particular connection of Beth's short hair to the topsy-turvy displacement of the Shalott theme in order to emphasize Grand's concern about the generally-approved gendered hair legacy.

⁴² According to Karen Stevenson, Gilman promoted short hair for women on her lecture circuit in 1916. See her article, "Hair Today, Shorn Tomorrow?" 219.

⁴³ See also note 20 (p. 6) in the Introduction.

Interestingly at this juncture, the narrator intrudes into the narrative to criticize Arthur:⁴⁴

Men are monotonous creatures. Given a position, and ninety-nine out of a hundred will come to the same conclusion about it, only by diverse methods, according to their prejudices; and this is especially the case when women are in question. Woman is generally out of focus in the mind of men; *he sees her less as she is than as she ought or ought not to be.* (BB, 510, emphasis added)

Beth's short hair is not an indication of the loss of her femininity; she is still the same person as she used to be, except that Grand bestows on her a more beautiful nature to venerate her true womanliness. But to Arthur, "[Beth has] set up a doubt where all was settled certainty" (BB, 510), a response indicative of his conventional belief as well as an ironic clue, for the reader, to his Old Mannishness.

The discourse of chivalry and the would-be New Man Arthur Brock

It needs to be emphasized that in portraying the Old Man figure in Arthur, Grand does not mean to reject him entirely but have him reborn to realize his Old Man flaws when he sees Powell's sketches of Beth before and after her haircut. In empowering Beth as a Red-Cross Amazon in the nursing scene, Grand, none the less, manipulates a novelistic climax at the end of the novel, by having Arthur riding a horse across a wide field towards Beth. Arthur's reappearance reminds Beth (as well as the reader) of "the Knight of her daily vision, her savior, who had come to rescue her in the dark days of her deep distress at Slane" (BB, 527). Here Grand juxtaposes two scenes of different Knights, inscribing in both the Shalott allegory, as she also does in the nursing scene that occurs in the interval between. A lineal

⁴⁴ In discussing the portrayal of Beth as a child, Brown holds the view that Grand cannot "resist the temptation to interpret, as intrusive omniscient narrator, the significance of what she has portrayed." Indeed the narrator's intrusion is frequently seen in the novel to reveal Grand's opinions and responses, evoking, in particular, her women readers' empathy with other women. For Brown's quotation, see The Captured World, 171.

representation is thus revealed, first, by a true Knight figure coming to rescue Beth from her mental turmoil, and second, by Beth's acting as the female Knight to rescue Arthur, and last, by Arthur's reinstatement as a Knight at the close of the novel.

On the first occasion, it is apparent that Tennyson's poem is incorporated so as to indicate Beth's degenerated and constrained marital situation, paralleling the confinement of the Lady. To Beth, the rider then is "virile, knightly, high-bred, refined [with] the face of one that *lives for others, and lives openly*" (BB, 432, emphasis added). Impressed by his "quiet dignity, and strength in repose," Beth believes that the rider is "[a] man to be trusted . . . true and tender, a perfect knight" (BB, 433). They never talk to each other, but because of him, Beth is inspired and recovers from her depression—"The horrid spell was broken," the narrator tells us (BB, 433). Neither having Beth literally rescued by the knight, as if to endorse an elopement plot, nor assigning her to break through her restriction as plainly as the Lady, Grand romanticizes the Shalott knight by infusing a tacit understanding between them, through which a spiritual awakening is initiated in Beth.

Teresa Mangum remarks that this mysterious knight is not so much "an object of romance" as "a kind of male muse," because he reawakens Beth to think and write, pushing forward her career as a professional writer.⁴⁵ Given that, it may be sustainable to assume that in portraying this perfect knight figure, Grand attempts to project her own expectation of the men of the future, who may share similar qualities to this knight's, while sanctioning in Beth (through her transformation in the secret attic room) a determination for self-reliance, manifested first by her recovery of self-possession, making her no longer susceptible to her husband's pernicious influences, and later by her resolution to leave her vivisectionist husband to live alone in London. The Shalott myth, in this light, is inscribed here for Grand to

⁴⁵ Mangum, *Married, Middlebrow, and Militant*, 190.

demonstrate her conception, promoted in her journalistic writings, that a harmonious relationship between the sexes can only be established when men possess perfect chivalry to live for others and live openly and when women become independent, a relationship not so much built on corporeal, worldly terms as on spiritual, equal ties, and also a relationship not necessarily limited to the lover-to-lover level but expanded to that of the whole human race (a universal type, so to speak).⁴⁶ The deployment of the Shalott allegory at this time also serves, in my view, as a prefiguring of Arthur's inability to be trusted as the perfect knight in the nursing scene,⁴⁷ as has been demonstrated earlier, as well as a reiteration of Beth's active character, shown throughout the narrative.

Conspicuous as an imaginative child, Beth is depicted as frequently immersing herself in romantic dreams and experiences. She often images herself, especially when she is unfairly treated by her mother, as a captive princess or an ill-used heroine, passively waiting to be rescued by her charming prince (BB, 20, 150). In her actual romantic encounters, however, Beth is always playing the active role, not only initiating the relationship but also assuming the traditional male lover's position in courting, escorting, protecting and saving. Throughout the novel Beth has experienced several romances (with Sammy Lee, Alfred Cayley Pounce, and later, more ambiguously, with Arthur Brock). In her talented story-weavings, romance is also a motif that Beth repeatedly draws on to fascinate her friends and schoolmates. Examining all her romantic adventures, I would argue that the sensitive Beth has the

⁴⁶ Grand, "The New Aspect of the Woman Question," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 31.

⁴⁷ Kucich points out that Grand has the tendency to identify women with sincerity and men with falsehood. That Arthur declines to hear the story of Beth's life with her husband is, to Kucich, a demonstration of his lack of trust. See his book, *The Power of Lies*, 271. The narrator, as a matter of fact, has intruded into the narrative to comment that Arthur shows insincerity in expressing his respect for Beth while refusing to listen to her story when she offers to tell it:

The fact that he should shrink from hearing the story bespoke a doubt that made his generous expression an offence. It may be kind to ignore the past of a guilty person, but the innocent ask to be heard and judged; and full faith has no fear of revelations. (BB, 511)

tendency to romanticize her love object, positioning herself as a gazer/subject to scrutinize the men/objects she is involved with. With Sammy, Beth prefers to see him at a distance, keeping him as a source of inspiration for her verse making (BB, 174). With Alfred, especially at the beach, Beth enjoys watching “every inch of him” in his making of the sand model (BB, 237) and during his nap on the beach. Likewise with Arthur, Beth keeps “watching” him during his illness, romanticizing him as

a man of the highest character and the most perfect refinement. She had never before realised that there could be such men, so heroic in suffering, so unselfish, and so good; and this discovery had stimulated her strangely—filled her with hope, strengthened her love of life, and made everything seem worth while. (BB, 504-05)

Despite the fact that both Sammy and Alfred believe that women have no talents other than housekeeping, they are portrayed as effeminate in behavior and complexion in stark contrast to Beth’s mannish/tomboyish valor.⁴⁸ Except for his communicativeness on religious topics with Beth, there is no direct demonstration, as has been argued, of Arthur’s knighthood throughout the narrative either. In portraying a terribly ill Arthur in need of care, I would suggest that Grand attempts to present him as not, perhaps, effeminate but certainly as not valiant enough to shed his conventional beliefs, a rendering similar to her portraits of Sammy and Alfred. If the passage above has an inkling of romantic sentiment, I would suggest that it resides more in Beth’s anticipation of an ideal partner, echoing her appreciation of the romanticized Shalott knight on the previous occasion, than in her actual liking or understanding of Arthur. More specifically, it is a reflection, it could be argued, of

⁴⁸ Sammy has a beautiful face with a timid personality. See BB, 167-74. Alfred has “long, delicate, nervous hands [with a] somewhat sallow complexion . . . smooth to effeminacy.” See BB, 237. As Alfred matures and meets Beth again some years later, his appearance, as Angelique Richardson suggests in her discussion of the association of his name with “ponce,” shows signs of hysteria. See BB, 477; see also Angelique Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003), 111.

Beth's own projection as a female knight, who feels herself important when she has someone dependent upon her and thus acts chivalrously in line with the romance convention. Just as in her relationships with Sammy and Alfred, in which she plays the traditional male suitor's role, in her encounter with Arthur Beth strides one step further to rescue him. Just as the romanticized Shalott knight emerges to save Beth from distress, so Beth appears as a female knight to save Arthur from death.

That Grand deploys a role-reversal strategy in having Beth act as a female knight has its root in her journalistic writings. In her observation of "the man of the moment,"⁴⁹ Grand expresses her chagrin at the growing lack of manliness and her support for the New Women's virility. As she states,

But there is the difficulty. The trouble is not because women are mannish, but because men grow ever more effeminate. Manliness is at a premium now because there is so little of it. . . . But where are our men? Where is the chivalry, the truth, and affection, the earnest purpose, the plain living, high thinking, and noble self-sacrifice that make a man?⁵⁰

Undoubtedly, the "manliness" Grand has in mind refers not so much to the physical force as to the moral courage exhibited by the medieval knight. In a condition where women are made defenseless creatures without personal rights and are consistently bullied by men in various ways, men's chivalry, to Grand, has deteriorated into cowardice: without respect and courtesy towards women, men are not gentlemen.⁵¹ Thus "Woman . . . by being dissatisfied with the inferior moral qualities of [men]," Grand says, "is coming to the rescue." She acts chivalrously to protect her own sex, undertaking what is originally men's work while at the same time doing her own work, so that the double burden, "the horrid necessity," can only

⁴⁹ Grand uses the term "the man of the moment" to indicate the impossibility of men's remaining unchanged. See her article, "The Man of the Moment," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 51.

⁵⁰ Grand, "The New Aspect of the Woman Question," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 33.

⁵¹ Richardson draws attention to Grand's social purity feminism in relation to her appeal for chivalrous men to support the British Empire, a point in contrast to John Stuart Mill's counterattack on the age of chivalry. See Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century*, 106-08.

be relieved when men are restored, through her aid, to their chivalric virtues.⁵² This is not to say that Grand expects a return to the power construction of the old days, where captive ladies had to be rescued by chivalric knights, but that she anticipates a utopian world where “[t]he man of the future will be better, while the woman will be stronger and wiser”⁵³—“My theory of the relations of the sexes is not to lower the woman, but to raise the man.”⁵⁴ Seen from this perspective, it is no surprise that, under a condition where Arthur lacks the chivalrous spirit to respect women, in particular women who are making efforts to better the life of their own sex, Beth has to assume the knight’s role, exerting her influence upon the “degenerated” Arthur, rescuing him, ironically, from his weak body first, and then moving towards the possible liberation of his mind and soul that is suggested by the novel’s ending.

Arthur’s reappearance, together with the novel’s open ending, is prone to be read as a romantic closure, an expectation reverting to the assumption that Arthur is not only the New Man, who will realize Beth’s happiness, but the *sine qua non*, the due reward for all her strivings. Norma Clarke, for instance, argues that Arthur’s reappearance is to complete Beth’s “emotional fulfilment . . . through the love of one good man” in order to fill up that “Something [which] was wanting [in Beth]” (BB, 527).⁵⁵ To Marilyn Bonnell, Arthur is “a reward” for Beth’s being able to resolve the dilemma between taking care of her own life and those of others who listen to her speeches.⁵⁶ Focusing on Beth’s sensual perceptivity, Ann Heilmann argues that Beth undergoes a transformation from disembodiment (her self-sacrifice to take care of Arthur) to re-embodiment (her final *reunion* with him based on an equal

⁵² Grand, “The Man of the Moment,” repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 52, 54, 50.

⁵³ Grand, “The New Aspect of the Woman Question,” repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 31.

⁵⁴ Stoddart, “Illustrated Interview,” repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 214.

⁵⁵ Norma Clarke, “Feminism and the Popular Novel of the 1890s: A Brief Consideration of a Forgotten Feminist Novelist,” *Feminist Review* 20 (1985): 91-104, 103.

⁵⁶ Marilyn Bonnell, “Sarah Grand: The New Woman and Feminist Aesthetics,” PhD thesis, the Pennsylvania State U, 1992, p. 179.

relationship), a process through which the once desensualized Beth is resensualized, “a very literal ‘resurrection’ of [her] body.”⁵⁷ Reasoning of this sort seems, in the first place, not seriously to question Arthur’s New Man attributes;⁵⁸ secondly, it implicates the necessity of a heterosexual love relationship, an implication, it appears to me, that springs more from critics’ inclination to romanticize the novel’s ending than from the very possible inference that Grand intends us to draw, if we refer to her journalistic writings on human relationships in general, and if we consider her specific maneuverings of her heroines in the trilogy.

As my previous arguments have shown, Arthur is presented as having Old Man traits rather than New Man qualities, and it is not until he sees Powell’s sketches of Beth that an improvement is shown in him. Arthur’s realization of his misunderstanding of Beth and his return to find her testify to his repentance of his selfishness and egotism, to his recognition of Beth’s tenderness and devotion and, most importantly, to his possible acceptance of her New Womanliness—a point indicative of his “potential” for “becoming” a New Man rather than of the “fact” of his “already being” one. Despite his admission of his failings, there is still doubt, in my view, about Arthur’s alteration for the better, since he seems unprepared to accept the whole blame himself and reproaches Powell for poisoning his mind. That he unabashedly defends himself, pleading he has “just taken things for granted as they came, beautifully” (BB, 514), and that he lacks the self-reflection to see his own naivety in the face of (Powell’s) temptation, are evidence, in my view, that he has not completely awoken from his purblind state.

Although one cannot deny the romance element in Arthur’s return and in Beth’s

⁵⁷ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 84.

⁵⁸ Although Kate Flint remarks that Arthur is “a potential ‘New Man’ from the New World,” she does not question Arthur’s character but Beth’s wisdom and faith in Arthur’s return in the image of the Shalott knight, an image Flint thinks unlikely to prophesy a happy, active future. See Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1993), 295-96.

feelings towards him, the fact that Beth still has a marital contract with Daniel Maclure cannot be ignored. If Grand attempts to unite them in the happily-ever-after fashion of the conventional romance plot, when Beth has not yet divorced her husband, their relationship will be that of an adulterous free-love union, just what the adult Alfred had proposed to Beth behind his wife's back. Since Beth had rejected Alfred, expressing her unwillingness to "sacrifice a position of safety for a position of danger—one that might be changed into an invidious position by the least indiscretion" (BB, 472), it would be contradictory for her to accept Arthur behind her husband's back. As Grand makes it clear: "I would do nothing to facilitate divorce, except to equalize the law for both sexes. . . . Some people seem to imagine that I advocate a kind of free-and-easy Bohemianism for women. The exact contrary is the case."⁵⁹ It seems reasonable to assume that a romantic closure for Beth and Arthur is only one of the possibilities and very likely not the main one, *pace* the majority of modern critics, that Grand intends to suggest to her readers.⁶⁰ And we may also draw some support for this hypothesis from Grand's renderings of her heroines in the trilogy.

To some extent, I think Grand draws a parallel between Beth's situation and that

⁵⁹ Stoddart, "Illustrated Interview," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 214.

⁶⁰ Miller contends that Beth cannot live without romance even though she has established a writing career for herself and that Grand devises a romantic ending to cater to her audience's taste, a point that shows, in Miller's view, the conservative nature of turn-of-the-century feminism. In a similar vein, DuPlessis argues that the quest and the romance plots are incompatible for heroines in nineteenth-century fiction by women writers; if neither of the two plots is repressed or set aside, ambivalence between "power and frustration" has to become the major narrative, a situation especially pertinent to Beth as an artist heroine: "The description of genius offers a vocabulary of passionate and frustrated striving; the events of the plot offer the conciliations and closures demanded by the femaleness of the artist." Clarke puts forward another view, expressing her chagrin that the ending is "so thinly done, such an anaemic little rag for convention (and the man himself is so anaemic), that it almost (but not quite) doesn't matter." Though Mangum recognizes that the novel's ending resists the conventional romance plot, she proposes that, as Arthur fulfills Beth's romantic desire, he "invalidates the implicit marital contract of the romance plot." Believing that the novel's ending does not conform to the literary convention, since a conventional romantic closure will be that Beth sacrifices herself to redeem her fallen husband and that they live happily ever after, Bonnell holds the view that Grand is optimistic about Beth's ability and knowledge (as well as those of her readers) to solve this dilemma, leaving an ending open to any possible conjecture. See Miller, *Rebel Women*, 20; DuPlessis, *Writing beyond the Ending*, 3-4, 89; Clarke, "Feminism and the Popular Novel of the 1890s," 103; Mangum, *Married, Middlebrow, and Militant*, 191; Bonnell, "Sarah Grand," 179-80.

of her eponymous heroine Ideala in the first novel of the trilogy. Both Beth and Ideala suffer depression due to a degenerate marriage to a husband who is unfaithful, dishonest, and autocratic in depriving the wife of privacy (opening her letters and grudging her spatial/personal freedom). Ideala is even more unfortunate in experiencing marital abuse and the loss of her child. Both Beth and Ideala have an ambiguous relationship with a man other than their husbands. However, rather than portraying Beth in a passionate mode like that of the not-yet-redeemed Ideala, whose attempt to build up an unconventional heterosexual relationship (an adulterous free-love union) with her mental consultant Lorrimer is quenched by her good friend, also the narrator, Lord Dawne,⁶¹ Grand presents Beth in a relatively rational and ideal state (an act testifying to Grand's writing process in modifying her heroines as the trilogy proceeds), by transforming Ideala's intense desire for Lorrimer into Beth's constant nursing of Arthur—a deed, as I argued earlier, stemming more from Beth's philanthropic concern and her expectation of a universal companionship with Arthur than from her romantic longing for a heterosexual (adulterous) love union with him. Beth's devotion as such is yet synonymous with that which prompts the redeemed Ideala, after her travel overseas, to take up the social work of making female social outcasts worthy women, an undertaking in line with her feminist activism as shown in the latter two novels of the trilogy, The Heavenly Twins and The Beth Book.

Linking major characters across the trilogy, Grand may have wanted to create an ideal heroine to publicize her feminist manifesto, a political rhetoric comprised of social purity feminism and religious spiritualism.⁶² Mirror images of each other, both Beth and Ideala do not believe anything before they investigate it; they share a belief in art for man's sake instead of art for art's sake or style's sake. Recognizing

⁶¹ For a discussion of Lord Dawne's role as a male narrator in Ideala and the relevant critical materials, see Chapter 3, pp. 215-16.

⁶² Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 53-54, 90-98.

Beth's genius, Ideala is the first in the women's community to accept Beth cordially, an act in tune with her own conviction that women should unite together instead of criticizing one another (BB, 392). Just as Ideala forsakes personal life for social works, so Beth renounces her own writing career in favor of the public mission, a mission similar to, but with a broader scope than, Ideala's, as is suggested by Beth's genius: "A great teacher has arisen among us, a woman of genius. . . . Beth was one of the first swallows of the woman's summer" (BB, 527).⁶³

Intriguingly, Grand leaves unresolved her two heroines' marital problems, envisaging them, however, as heroic feminist martyrs in their devotion to helping the weak, including women. As Tess Cosslett notes,

New Woman writers were concerned not to overturn women's traditional roles of marriage and motherhood, but to reform them and to take them *more* seriously, emphasising women's worth, dignity and even superiority.⁶⁴ (emphasis in original)

New Woman fictional heroines, in this condition, are often constructed as heroic individuals, ending up, none the less, in isolation, an outcome that serves to increase "the impression of female heroism."⁶⁵ This "woman-alone ending," as Heilmann points out,

did present a constructive alternative to the Victorian marriage plot because it removed the heroine from her conventional domestic setting (with its romantic engagements) to the public arena (hence professional and political commitment).⁶⁶

However, while Heilmann suggests that "only if [a woman withdraws] from heterosexual relationship altogether could an 'ideal' feminist come into being,"⁶⁷ I would suggest that Grand's social purity feminist belief, a belief still clinging to

⁶³ An emphasized quotation, see also Chapter 3, p. 239.

⁶⁴ Tess Cosslett, Woman to Woman: Female Friendship in Victorian Fiction (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1988), 139.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁶⁶ Heilmann, New Woman Fiction, 85. "The woman-alone ending" is quoted from Cosslett, Woman to Woman, 138.

⁶⁷ Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 52.

women's roles in marriage and motherhood,⁶⁸ may focus her attention less on how to solve the tricky problem of marriage⁶⁹ than on what her New Women heroines *can do* for the world, a matter of "doing" rather than "being."⁷⁰ And among all the tasks they need to assume, one is overwhelmingly important, that is, to reform "the man of the moment" to "the man of the future," one issue of "the Man Question"⁷¹ that New Woman writers like Grand seek to tackle.

Arthur is surely not a romantic hero, neither does he glorify knightly chivalry in the nursing scene. It is indeed true that Grand has always envisioned an ideal New Man in the novel, but this figure is by no means personified by Arthur but by the perfect knight Beth sees during her marital despair.⁷² If the epithet "romantic" can be attached to Arthur, it is as the projection of an idealized fantasy or anticipation that Beth, like Grand herself, has of men, rather than as a faithful portrayal of Arthur in the chivalric convention, which can only insinuate his lack of true knighthood.

⁶⁸ As a social purity feminist, Grand reconfigures women's domestic role into a socio-political mechanism to generate a moral and social reformation. See *ibid.*, 17-18. Another social purity feminist, Ellice Hopkins, also shares the same view, maintaining that women are moral guardians to lift men to a higher level and save the nation. See Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century*, 52-54.

⁶⁹ Grand's depictions of marriage are often frustrating, a reflection, perhaps, of her own marriage to David Chambers McFall, an army surgeon twenty-three years older than her. A biographer of Grand, Gillian Kersley suspects that Grand was never fond of men, a result of Grand's impoverished childhood with a weak father and an unsympathetic mother and of an early marriage to a profligate man much older than her. To Kersley, Grand is concerned more with "'purity' for men, and some kind of autonomy for women" than with "any sexual relationship, in however spiritual a light such a relationship is portrayed." Though Caird and Grand share similar ideas on marriage, Kersley thinks that Caird's reasoning in her novels and essays is better than Grand's. See Gillian Kersley, *Darling Madame: Sarah Grand and Devoted Friend* (London: Virago, 1983), 5, 30, 58.

⁷⁰ In saying so, I do not ignore Grand's attempts to promote feminine charms and self-reliance as the prerequisites for "being" new women. What I emphasize here is the New Women's missions in reforming society, one of which is to have men taught and trained for the better, because if men are not changed, marital problems like those Ideala and Beth suffer may always remain unsolved.

⁷¹ Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (1991; London: Virago P, 1992), 49; an emphasized quotation here, see also Introduction, p. 38. In *The Beth Book*, Grand also deals with other issues of The Man Question, such as the sexual double standard, vivisection, public-private allocation and education in relation to Beth's husband, uncle, and brothers.

⁷² Dr. Galbraith, furthermore, is also shown as having a New Man quality when he encourages Beth to develop her writing ability. However, Grand reveals his Old Man faults in his relationship with his wife, Evadne, in *The Heavenly Twins*, the novel that precedes *The Beth Book* in the trilogy, in which Galbraith looks at Evadne through the eyes of a doctor, recording and diagnosing her mental depression. See the last Book, "The Impressions of Dr. Galbraith," in *The Heavenly Twins*. For relevant criticisms and my discussion of it, see Chapter 3, pp. 216-19.

However, in presenting Arthur in the image of the romanticized Shalott knight at the end of the novel, Grand, I would argue, sees him as a purgatorial figure, his appearance interpreted by Beth, the narrator tells us, as “an augury, the fulfilment of a promise” (BB, 527).

“[R]each[ing] out her hands towards him as if to welcome . . . the Knight of her long winter vigil—Arthur Brock” (BB, 527), Beth, I propose, may not so much need Arthur’s devotion to complete her emotional fulfillment, as Clarke suggests,⁷³ as anticipate him casting off his Old Man traits and initiating a change for the better in and for himself. As Grand asserts,

We [women] know [man’s] weakness, and will be patient with him, and help him with his lessons. It is the woman’s place and pride and pleasure to teach the child, and man morally is in his infancy . . . and *now woman holds out a strong hand to the child-man, and insists, but with infinite tenderness and pity, upon helping him up.*⁷⁴ (emphasis added)

Believing that the most influential writers are those who write with a purpose in order to do something good in the world,⁷⁵ Grand, in line with the statement I have just quoted, may not focus her concern narrowly on the heterosexual “love” relationship but on the evolutionary effect of the woman’s movement in transforming men in general from their “Brawling brotherhood,” the promise residing in the belief that “[man] would come like that at last, [and] that he had been coming, coming, coming through all the years” (BB, 507). That “Something [which] was wanting [in Beth]” (BB, 527), seen in this vein, sheds more light on Beth’s (as well as on Grand’s) utopian expectation of a harmonious, equal relation between the sexes (not limited

⁷³ Clarke, “Feminism and the Popular Novel of the 1890s,” 103. See also Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 153, in which Heilmann thinks that Grand presents an “all-in-one dénouement of *The Beth Book* (reflected in the heroine’s artistic, activist and emotional fulfillment with a New Man who is pointedly not her husband).”

⁷⁴ Grand, “The New Aspect of the Woman Question,” repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 31.

⁷⁵ Sarah Grand, “[From] Letter to Professor Viëtor, Nizza,” on December 1896, *Die Frauenfrage in den Romanen Englischer Schriftstellerinnen der Gegenwart*, Ernest Foerster, Marburg, N. G. Elwert’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1907, 56-58, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 190-91.

only to heterosexual love, but inclusive of all aspects—professional, economic and political) than on her personal emotional fulfillment. As Beth gives up personal glory in writing to embrace a holier mission of public service, she may not want to adhere to personal emotional satisfaction via a heterosexual love union with a man who is not her husband—a contradiction to the sacred image she embodies as well as being inconsistent with the social purity feminist belief in self-reliance and in exalting women's domestic value to "its public-political equivalent (the feminist, the nation's housekeeper)."⁷⁶ Symbolizing modern womanhood, Beth is magnanimous in welcoming Arthur back and helping him up. So will she do, Grand implies, for her husband, if he, like Arthur, awakens from his faults and returns to her—a point consolidating Grand's conviction of women's moral superiority over men.

Compared with Beth's husband, Arthur is so much better, "not licentious . . . only selfish," one reviewer notes.⁷⁷ Despite the failings I have discussed earlier, Arthur's return to find Beth, at the very least, demonstrates his penitence for the wrongs he did to her and amounts to a recognition of his imperfection, the first step a New Man has to take if he is to embark upon his journey towards perfect chivalry, prefigured in his representation in the image of the romanticized Shalott knight. In other words, while Grand satirizes Arthur's shortcomings in acting as the perfect knight, she does not forget to cast her optimistic vision over him—a Bakhtinian carnivalesque parody and renewal in "the mock decrowning and subsequent crowning" of Arthur.⁷⁸ In presenting Arthur in limited passages in which Beth is given more of the narration, Grand's purpose is very clear: she means to ridicule Arthur's romanticized New Man image while, most importantly, glorifying Beth's

⁷⁶ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 18.

⁷⁷ "Some Books of the Month: *The Beth Book*," *Review of Reviews* 16 (1897): 618-22, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 459-66, 466.

⁷⁸ Here I adapt Bakhtin's idea of "the *mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the carnival king*." Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 124, emphasis in original.

chivalry (this results in my discussion being more about Beth than about Arthur), manifested first in Beth's representation as a Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale) and later in her transcendent image as the magnanimous Holy Mother who welcomes the repentant Arthur—the first person, significantly after her religious revelation, through whom Beth will put her mission into practice.⁷⁹

In an interview with Sarah A. Tooley, Grand expressed her respect for and appreciation of the Quaker ladies' devotion to social and philanthropic works; and, recognizing Florence Nightingale's great contribution in training nurses in time of war, she grieved over the fact that people gave Nightingale no more than a grudging "fitting gratitude."⁸⁰ "[A] knight-errant" by nature herself in bettering women's conditions,⁸¹ Grand may have associated Nightingale's nursing with the role of a medical Amazon, a chivalric female knight warring against illnesses of all kinds, from physical to mental, from behavioral to moral. This association is also linked to the maternal love manifested by the Holy Mother, who can sacrifice herself without regret to achieve a holier mission. If Caird, in The Daughters of Danaus, leaves the ending open in order to project her humanitarian anticipation of Hadria's assuming the role of the knight-errant to help the weak, I would suggest that Grand, in The Beth Book, has not only endowed Beth with the knightly qualities of "instinct, impulse, inspiration" (DD, 200)⁸² but also made her a truly chivalric knight to rescue Arthur's body with the promise, as the open ending connotes, of liberating his mind

⁷⁹ When I use "Red-Cross (K)Night(ingale)" to describe Beth, my focus is on the discourse of chivalry to emphasize her heroic and humanitarian concern for Arthur. When I use "Holy Mother" to label Beth, the focus is elevated to the grander, religious level where Arthur becomes a metaphorical child of the Virgin Mary, for whom Beth will not only sacrifice herself to nurture him but reform him as well. Sharing many qualities with Beth, the redemptive Ideala is also portrayed as "a mother nursing the Infant Goodness of the race" (I, 190).

⁸⁰ Sarah A. Tooley, "The Woman's Question: An Interview with Madame Sarah Grand," Humanitarian 8 (1896): 161-69, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 220-29, 225.

⁸¹ "Some books of the Month," repr. in SSPSG, 1: 459. From another interviewer, we know that Grand herself also showed great enthusiasm for helping poor girls. See Stoddart, "Illustrated Interview," repr. in SSPSG, 1: 213.

⁸² An emphasized quotation here, see also Chapter 4, p. 256.

and soul, and the minds and souls of all those who suffer.

While the Wise Old Man figures in The Daughters of Danaus are presented as catalysts for the New Woman to emerge from the frustrated daughter-wife Hadria, Arthur's existence in The Beth Book throws into relief Beth's chivalry as a New Woman, necessitating his role as a would-be New Man, in whom Beth the Holy Mother sees the possibility of reform on his return as a prodigal son. Rather than using the spirit archetype, personified by male characters, to exert positive influences on the heroine as Caird does in The Daughters of Danaus, Grand empowers her heroine to be the spirit archetype *per se*, overturning the male-defined literary romance convention (as well as the Jungian convention) by writing "The Book of Beth."⁸³ In so doing, Grand does not follow the "'queen for a day' format of Bakhtinian carnival;"⁸⁴ on the contrary, she consolidates her heroine's status, allowing her to stay "in place" in contrast to the Bakhtinian concept of replaceability, while anticipating the Bakhtinian carnivalesque in Arthur's renewal from degradation, a renewal that illustrates how strongly her work is rooted in her biblical-cum-political feminist credo.

⁸³ I. Zangwill, "The Month in England," Cosmopolitan 24 (1898): 155-56, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 492-93, 492. In contradistinction to Chapter 3, p. 208, where my focus is on the analogy of the attic as a "book" to parallel Thoreau's Walden, here I adopt "The Book of Beth" again but in order to emphasize the religious/biblical meaning Grand infuses into the novel.

⁸⁴ Vice, Introducing Bakhtin, 189.

The Platonic Lover

in Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man (1926)

Posthumously published by her husband S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner in 1926, Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man, her magnum opus in my opinion, receives far less critical attention than her best-known novel, The Story of an African Farm (1883), with which Schreiner, the first South African colonial feminist writer, established her literary reputation in the English-speaking world as a pioneer in developing "The Novel of the Modern Woman."¹ Pursued through sporadic drafts and revisions across some forty-five years but still unfinished at her death in 1920, From Man to Man is Schreiner's favorite work,² into which she infuses much of her thought in relation to manifold issues that deeply concerned her throughout her life, issues such as gender, class, race, marriage, love, sex, humanity and the evolutionary discourse, to name but a few. It is perhaps precisely because of the novel's kaleidoscope of arguments on the so-called "Woman Question" that Schreiner devoted such a long period of time to the completion of the novel, expecting, as she expressed in a letter to her close friend Havelock Ellis on July 12, 1884, that

From Man to Man will help other people, for it will help to make men

¹ W. T. Stead, "The Book of the Month: The Novel of the Modern Woman," *Review of Reviews* 10 (1894): 64-74, 64, repr. in *LVMQ*, 5. In addition to his labeling of The Story of an African Farm as "the forerunner of all the novels of the Modern Woman," Stead also regards Schreiner as the "Modern Woman *par excellence*, the founder and high priestess of the [modern] school" (emphasis in original).

² In her several letters to Havelock Ellis, Schreiner expressed her preference for From Man to Man over her celebrated work, The Story of an African Farm. On July 21, 1884, she wrote that From Man to Man "is going to be awfully outspoken; An African Farm was nothing to it." On December 10, 1887, she said, "I love my new book [From Man to Man] so, a hundred times better than I ever loved An African Farm." On April 11, 1889, she wrote, "I love it [From Man to Man] more than I love anything in the world, more than any place or person. I've never loved any work so." See *LeOS*, 34, 124, 161. See also *LiOS*, 161, in which S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner notes that Schreiner sees The Story of an African Farm as "a crude and youthful book" while From Man to Man, though unfinished, is "on a higher artistic level and more intellectually mature." See also Vera Buchanan-Gould, *Not Without Honour: The Life and Writings of Olive Schreiner* (London: Hutchinson, 1949) 203; Paul Foot, "New Introduction" to From Man to Man, or Perhaps Only. . . by Olive Schreiner (1926; London: Virago, 1982), ix-xvii, xii.

more tender to women, because they will understand them better; it will help to make some women more tender to others; it will comfort some women by showing them that others have felt as they do.³

“If only one lonely struggling woman read it and found strength and comfort from it,” Schreiner said in her painful struggle to finish what she thought would be her best work, “one would not feel one had lived quite in vain.”⁴

In her intermittently assiduous attempt to produce such a “big” novel,⁵ what Schreiner aims at is not only to utter “what others feel and can’t say,” which “makes the use of [herself as] a writer,”⁶ but to create, ultimately, a utopian state of harmonious human relationships where people, regardless of sex, race and class, are a unity,⁷ respecting and empathizing with one another, as well as sharing equal rights in all aspects in life: “we are men and women in the second place, human beings in the first.”⁸ Such a grand vision, as Vineta Colby professes, reflects Schreiner’s strong belief in the “spiritual, Christlike love that transcend[s] the differences between the sexes.”⁹ It is also held to anticipate the erasure of all kinds of man-made boundaries and prejudices, intending, as the title of the novel suggests, to connect, from man to man, all human races together in a comradeship through charity—an inference Cronwright-Schreiner assumed that Schreiner took from Lord

³ LeOS, 29.

⁴ Olive Schreiner’s letter to Miss E. Hobhouse in March, 1913, LeOS, 321.

⁵ Schreiner used the adjective “big” to describe From Man to Man several times in her letters to Mary Sauer (February-March, 1898), Metty Molteno (November 10, 1898), and Betty Molteno (September 18, 1899). See OSL, 325, 339, 380. See also LiOS, 254, 271, in which Schreiner said From Man to Man and The Buddhist Priest’s Wife are her two “big” novels.

⁶ Olive Schreiner’s letter to her husband S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner on February 25, 1907, LeOS, 263.

⁷ Schreiner owes her belief in unity to Herbert Spencer. In her letter to Havelock Ellis on April 8, 1884, Schreiner wrote,

You ask me whether Spencer is to me what he was. If one has a broken leg and the doctor sets it, when once it is set one may be said to have no more need of the doctor, nevertheless one always walks on his leg. I think that is how it is with regard to myself and Herbert Spencer. I have read all his works since, some three or four times, now I read him no more. He helped me to believe in a unity underlying all nature; that was a great thing. (LeOS, 82)

⁸ Olive Schreiner’s letter to Havelock Ellis on December 19, 1884, LeOS, 51.

⁹ Vineta Colby, The Singular Anomaly: Women Novelists of the Nineteenth Century (London: U of London P; New York: New York UP, 1970), 90.

John Morley's phrase: "From man to man nothing matters but a divine charity."¹⁰ Despite the dream fulfillment only possibly to be realized in the future, this vision acts out the essential humanist spirit that Schreiner endeavors to preach to her readers. Murray Steele thus acclaims From Man to Man as "A Humanist Bible," providing "moral instruction" to put forward Schreiner's idea of humanism.¹¹

In mapping out this *fin-de-siècle* humanitarian testament, Schreiner shares with her contemporaries, and also New Woman writers, such as Mona Caird and Sarah Grand, the project of arming late-Victorian feminism with the evangelical Christian views of compassion and service to others, enacting a feminist rhetoric comprised of religious, political, social, scientific, artistic, and economic discourses, manifested, in particular, through the representation of the spirit archetype, a representation that markedly offers an even more positive landscape of power construction, where superiority, frequently tied up with the spirit archetype—whether in the conventional or subversive fashions—as shown in the works of Caird and Grand, is peremptorily dismissed. In place of it is a power balance between the sexes; namely Schreiner does not disparage male influence as Grand sarcastically does in pinning the child image to the fragile Romantic Knight, while empowering her heroine to the fullest extent in the Holy Mother figure. Nor does she count on male authority as Caird does in prefiguring Jungian thought, equating the Wise Old Man with the mentor personage and investing him with the strength her heroine needs for survival. In From Man to Man, I argue that Schreiner presents two spirit archetype emblems—one male and one female—with equal status, though without even narrative weight for each, to illustrate her ideal heterosexual union, a union,

¹⁰ LiOS, 159.

¹¹ Murray Steele, "A Humanist Bible: Gender Roles, Sexuality and Race in Olive Schreiner's From Man to Man," Gender Roles and Sexuality in Victorian Literature, ed. Christopher Parker (Aldershot, Hants, England: Scolar P; Brookfield, Vermont, USA: Ashgate, 1995), 101-14, 101.

regrettably, only projected onto the platonic level where the couple's spiritual and intellectual exchanges, though having "made a track to the water's edge,"¹² have to be written in water in the context of the late Victorian period.

As if to reverberate with what she herself advocates in her allegory, "Three Dreams in A Desert: Under a Mimosa-Tree" (1890), that men and women have to go it alone before reaching the Land of Freedom,¹³ Schreiner makes meticulous efforts in From Man to Man to depict the solitary progress of her female protagonist's development primarily through two long narrations—Rebekah's diary writing of her philosophical contemplation and her letter to her unfaithful husband Frank—before the spirit heroine's encounter with her male counterpart, presumably a New Man incarnate, Mr. Drummond, who appears startlingly late in the penultimate chapter and substantiates his significance by his talk with Rebekah in the final chapter—"final" in the sense of the novel's unfinished, published form, which is the only form in which we can examine the novel as it is. If the two long narrations are interludes, digressively inserted in the narrative plotting, the "final" dialogue between Rebekah and Drummond, I would suggest, could be viewed as a postlude in its open-ended form.¹⁴ Thus in the light of narrative structure, the novel has its

¹² I adapt this phrase from Schreiner's "Three Dreams in a Desert: Under a Mimosa-Tree," Dreams (1890; London: Unwin, 1909), 67-85, 82, repr. in LVMQ, 4.

¹³ This is the message implied in the second dream of Schreiner's "Three Dreams in a Desert," 75-83, repr. in LVMQ, 4. In addition to the allegory, in her letter to Havelock Ellis on April 8, 1884, Schreiner also expressed the same thought: "In the ideal condition for which we look men and women will walk close, hand in hand, but now the fight has oftenest to be fought out alone by both." See LeOS, 15.

¹⁴ According to Cronwright-Schreiner, after his sorting out of all Schreiner's various drafts of From Man to Man, Schreiner had basically "finished" the novel in her mind, despite the fact that she embarked upon a new chapter (chapter 14) by writing a few lines about Rebekah's dialogue with Drummond. To Cronwright-Schreiner, he felt certain that "[Schreiner] had not only thus 'finished' the plan of it, but had done so in considerable detail in parts." See his "Introduction" and "Publisher's Note" in the novel's 1926 edition, collected in Virago's 1982 reprint, pp. 500-07. If we compare the plot of the novel as it is published with the one Schreiner described to Havelock Ellis on July 9, 1886, the result is astonishing, for Schreiner changed almost all her plan in regard to the sections on Rebekah and Drummond. See OSL, 91-95. Such evidence may reflect the fact that Schreiner had been continuously making efforts to revise the novel and that the plot changed as her thoughts altered in response to her different life experiences. It is also possible that Cronwright-Schreiner indicated his own preferred reading.

organic unity, consisting of the Prelude (“The Child’s Day”), the interludes (chapter 7: “Raindrops in the Avenue” and chapter 8: “You Cannot Capture the Ideal by a Coup d’État”), and the postlude (chapter 13: “The Veranda”)—all intertwined within the portrayal of the spirit heroine’s progression upwards in anticipation of a visionary union with the spirit hero.

The quasi-musical narrative devices (the Prelude, the interludes, and the postlude), flawed as some of them may be, are the most important sections to examine, in my view, for the “spirits” of the novel, the characters, and the writer. The most applauded section in the novel, the Prelude presents the child Rebekah as the prophetic mother archetype, foreshadowing her performance, in terms akin to that of Beth, as the New Mother of New Humanity in the later “Book,” entitled “The Woman’s Day,” a writing stratagem comparable to Grand’s in delineating “The Book of Beth” in The Beth Book.¹⁵ The interludes and the postlude are the places where the adult Rebekah and her platonic lover Drummond appear as embodiments of the spirit archetype, the mediums through which Schreiner attempts to exert spiritual influences to enlighten her readers in multifarious aspects. Where Rebekah’s philosophical ruminations incorporate the evolutionary discourse within the process of human civilization, dwelling on the needs of humanitarian mutualism and egalitarianism instead of the Darwinian annihilation of the weaker by the stronger, her extraordinarily lengthy letter to Frank reveals not only a detailed account of a husband’s extra-marital affairs and his bestial nature, but most importantly, an uncovering of the psychological transformation of a betrayed wife’s reaction to and against a treacherous wedlock, her ideas of an ideal conjugal relation, her condemnation of colonial exploitation, and, above all, her awakening to female self-reliance. The postlude, Rebekah’s dialogue with Drummond, on the other hand,

¹⁵ An emphasized quotation, see also Chapter 5, p. 297.

is concerned mainly with issues of art. Unilateral as this part is, it nonetheless provides a historic-literary platform, calling to mind the Romantic/Keatsian conception of temporality in relation to life and art. It also throws light on the Jungian/realistic notion of the role of the artist in the creative process. The postlude, in other words, builds a literary bridge connecting the aesthetics of past and future.

Briefly considered in these lights, it is not too far-fetched to say that the matters the spirit archetypes touch on are as qualitatively deep in thought as they are quantitatively wide in range, a fact attesting to the extensive narrative length they entail. Both the interludes and the postlude, despite their discursiveness from the central narrative, articulate the marrow of Schreiner's life philosophy as well as her concepts of the woman's question and the question of art. It is worth noting that, in portraying the spirit archetype figures, Schreiner draws special attention to Rebekah's identity as a mother-artist, locating her spiritual progress exclusively in the domestic arena to illustrate her conflict between maternal duties and the creative calling. Drummond's artist proclivity bestows upon him the prerequisite for entering the ideal Garden of Eden Schreiner envisions in Woman and Labor (1911), where men and women are fellow-workers sharing common labor, culture, thought, interests and thus life (W&L, 114-17). In this Chapter, therefore, while my study is on the interludes and the postlude, places in which the intellectual/philosophical messages are potently conveyed via the spirit archetypes, I will also explore Schreiner's idea of maternal geopolitics¹⁶ in alliance with her heuristic, prophetic utopianism, to shed light on how the spirit archetypes bring forward with them

¹⁶ According to Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, "geopolitics" refers to "the study that analyzes geography, history and social science with reference to international politics. It examines the political and strategic significance of geography, where geography is defined in terms of the location, size, and resources of places." Here I use the term to address Schreiner's strategic maneuver in relating the mother heroine's self-development to the study she owes it to herself to undertake. For the definition of the term "geopolitics," see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geopolitics> (accessed on January 9, 2007)

multifarious powers to wield positive influences not only among themselves, but more importantly, on the readers.

The interludes: the spirit heroine Rebekah

The two long interludes, Rebekah's diary writing of philosophical reflection and her letter to Frank, intrusively placed in the flow of the novelistic action, are where critics often find fault and where the novel is discredited as "[m]elodramatic, derivative . . . didactic, propagandist,"¹⁷ formless and sentimental;¹⁸ "tedious . . . insufficiently dramatized, repetitious, and inflated,"¹⁹ full of "authorial emotion" for moral purpose but short of artistic coherence.²⁰ However, as Paul Foot notes in his introduction to Virago's reissue of the novel in 1982 after half a century's neglect, all these digressions are indispensable to the narrative; they are "not just didactic propaganda. They are the thoughts of Olive Schreiner, sensitively and powerfully expressed as an argument between a woman and herself."²¹ Narratologically, they are part of the "metanarrative," as Janet Galligani Casey indicates, a "subtext" for Schreiner to relate her own ideology of narrativity to political meanings, as well as an interplay between herself and her alter ego, the fictional writer heroine Rebekah.²² Defending the novel's artistic merit, Vera Buchanan-Gould draws a parallel between Schreiner and Shakespeare, claiming that Rebekah's rambling musings in the novel are equivalent to Shakespeare's soliloquies in his plays.²³ Margaret Fairley strikes a

¹⁷ Ruth First and Ann Scott, *Olive Schreiner: A Biography* (London: The Women's P, 1989), 172.

¹⁸ Merryn Williams, *Six Women Novelists* (London: Macmillan, 1987), 5-6.

¹⁹ Colby, *The Singular Anomaly*, 98.

²⁰ Ruth Parkin-Gounelas, *Fictions of the Female Self: Charlotte Brontë, Olive Schreiner, Katherine Mansfield* (London: Macmillan, 1991), 80-83, in which critiques of Schreiner's writing style are illustrated. For a brief history of critical responses to Schreiner's literary artistry from her time to the present, see also Joyce Avrech Berkman, *The Healing Imagination of Olive Schreiner: Beyond South African Colonialism* (Oxford: Plantin, 1989), 196-97.

²¹ Foot, "New Introduction" to *FMTM*, xiv.

²² Janet Galligani Casey, "Power, Agency, Desire: Olive Schreiner and the Pre-Modern Narrative Moment," *Narrative* 4.2 (1996): 124-41, 126.

²³ Buchanan-Gould, *Not Without Honour*, 211.

resounding comment congruent with my main argument here:

These long chapters in which Rebekah talks and writes are as fully alive as any in the book, and contain some of Olive Schreiner's most vivid dream-pictures and allegories. They cannot be detached from the book, but are fused right into the story, if we remember that it is *a history of the spirit* which we are reading.²⁴ (emphasis added)

Indeed, the two interludes, discursive as they are in terms of plot development, are virtually a history of Rebekah's spiritual progress, a sketch of her assertion of independence, for which Laurence Lerner finds no parallel among the fictional variants of the nineteenth century.²⁵

Drawing attention to Schreiner's treatment of narrative structure, Anthony Voss points out that the importance of the interludes in From Man to Man (chapters 7 and 8) is accentuated by their central position among the thirteen chapters of the novel, the locative centrality standing for the narrative kernel, analogous to the central, crucial chapters in The Story of an African Farm (Part II, chapter 1: "Times and Seasons," and chapter 2: "Waldo's Stranger"), where the philosophical, religious and instructive messages are delivered.²⁶ Yet while the spiritual essence Voss indicates in The Story of an African Farm is related mainly to the spirit hero Waldo's development, an indication, it seems to me, marginalizing the spirit heroine Lyndall in terms of narrative signification in connection to narrative location,²⁷ the interludes

²⁴ Margaret A. Fairley, "The Novels of Olive Schreiner," Dalhousie Review 9.2 (1929): 168-80, 177-78.

²⁵ Laurence Lerner, "Olive Schreiner and the Feminists," Olive Schreiner, ed. Cherry Clayton (Johannesburg: McGraw-Hill, 1983), 181-98, 191.

²⁶ Anthony Voss, "From Man to Man: Heroic Fragment," The Flawed Diamond: Essays on Olive Schreiner, ed. Itala Vivan (Sydney: Dangaroo P, 1991), 135-45, 137. Carol L. Barash also specifies the similar narrative parallel between The Story of an African Farm and From Man to Man, regarding the interludes in the latter as the core of the novel with "more woman-identified and more Darwinian" colors. See Carol L. Barash, "Virile Womanhood: Olive Schreiner's Narratives of a Master Race," Speaking of Gender, ed. Elaine Showalter (New York; London: Routledge, 1989), 269-81, 275.

²⁷ In The Story of an African Farm, Lyndall and Waldo are two representatives of the spirit archetype in my view. While Waldo seeks for a rather religious, existential meaning in life, Lyndall is more concerned about her woman's identity in the world. Gregory Rose, on the other hand, embodies the ideal androgynous spirit Schreiner attempts to advocate in conjunction with her emphasis on service to others. For a general discussion of the novel, see First and Scott, Olive Schreiner, 93-107; Sally Ledger, The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle (Manchester; New York:

in From Man to Man, centrally placed in the text, focus precisely on the spirit heroine Rebekah's process of awakening, an awakening as important as Waldo's realization of "an art of living."²⁸ Rebekah attempts to combine theory and practice, reality and fantasy in her strenuous search for self-value and balance among her complex identities as artist, wife and mother. Rather than coming to a realization of her "limitations" as a *woman*, a realization in accordance with the formative prescription of the novel of awakening prevalent in turn-of-the-century women's literature,²⁹ I would argue that Rebekah, acting as Schreiner's spokeswoman, awakens to a perception of the necessity for emotional and financial independence. She begins to equip herself with qualities not only of the New Woman but the New Mother, combining independence with maternal devotion to project a feminist

Manchester UP, 1997), 77-83; Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Sexchanges, vol. 2 of No Man's Land (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1989), 50-63. For Rose's androgyny, see Ann Heilmann, New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird (Manchester; New York: Manchester UP, 2004), 139-45; Laura Stempel Mumford, "Selfless Androgyny: Gregory Rose as 'Virile Woman' in Olive Schreiner's The Story of an African Farm," Women's Studies International Forum 8.6 (1985): 621-29.

²⁸ Susan J. Rosowski compares the traditional *Bildungsroman* with the novel of awakening, attributing the former mainly to its masculine tradition in contrast to the latter's feminine form, that is, a form written by and about women in accordance with women's own experience. One of the differences between these two generic patterns, though both concerned with the spiritual *Bildung* of their protagonists, is that the hero's growth results typically in an understanding of "an art of living," whereas the heroine's results in an act of limitations. In The Story of an African Farm where the two central chapters are concerned, Waldo attempts to define his existence in relation to God and to the universe. Though not appearing in a wise-old-man formula, the Stranger in the "Waldo's Stranger" chapter is significant in telling Waldo the Hunter allegory, a parable about the pursuit of the Truth, which may serve as a prefiguration for Waldo's later journey to taste life. The "art of living," in a sense, stands for the attitude of seeing and living life, despite the pessimism the novel presents in Waldo's final death. The Stranger's Hunter allegory, in other words, is by no means unnecessary as Merryn Williams remarks. See Williams, Six Women Novelists, 5. For a comparison of the male and the female novels of development, see Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch and Elizabeth Langland, "Introduction" to The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development, ed. Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch, and Elizabeth Langland (Hanover; London: UP of New England, 1983), 3-19. See also Marianne Hirsch, "Spiritual *Bildung*: The Beautiful Soul as Paradigm," and Susan J. Rosowski, "The Novel of Awakening," both collected in Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch and Elizabeth Langland, eds., The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development (Hanover; London: UP of New England, 1983), 23-48, 49-68. See also Susan Fraiman, Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development (New York: Columbia UP, 1993), esp. 1-31; Annis Pratt (with Barbara White), "The Novel of Development," Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P, 1981), 13-37.

²⁹ See Rosowski, "The Novel of Awakening," 49-68, where Rosowski pays special attention to women's identity as wife and mother.

mother-artist's potential "IN THE FUTURE" (Schreiner's own emphasis).³⁰

The first interlude: Rebekah's journal writing

It could be argued that the two interludes which delineate Rebekah's transformation are a sequel of theory and practice, the ideas she conceives in the first interlude becoming the subject of exposition in the second. In the first interlude, Rebekah develops an internal dialogue on philosophical matters concerning universal welfare.³¹ Beneath her extensive mental weavings over fifty pages lie two key concepts: firstly, a strong belief in, leading to an endless search for, the omnipotent truth, that is, an exact knowledge of reality; and secondly, a cultivation of collective human advance through comradeship in place of the law of the survival of the fittest. Elucidating several attitudes towards truth (personal relations, emotional relations, moral judgments, and artistic concepts), Rebekah remarks that everything in the universe is interconnected, be it significant or insignificant, all contributing to the completion of the organic whole. By a parity of reasoning, truth has no distinction: "There is no small truth—all truth is great" (FMTM, 156). So long as truth is a code of conduct, people of all walks of life will do their duty following their hearts; couples will worship "an almighty sincerity" as "the highest sacrament of love" (FMTM, 159); people will commit no base sin in affectation; and a work of art will always be a reflection of truth.

In addition to truth, Rebekah ponders, the achievement of the whole human progress still requires the humanistic spirit to "Bring up your rears!" (FMTM, 170),

³⁰ Schreiner, "Three Dreams in a Desert," 84, repr. in *LVMQ*, 4.

³¹ To a large extent, Schreiner manifests herself through Rebekah: they both like to make up stories (the child Rebekah in the Prelude), preserve habits of talking to themselves and keeping a journal, and walk up and down when they are thinking (the adult Rebekah in the interludes). For Schreiner's part, see First and Scott, *Olive Schreiner*, 82. In Schreiner's letter to Mrs. Francis Smith on July 25, 1908, she wrote that her walking-up-and-down habit was perhaps inherited from her mother and that she started having this habit when she was less than three years old. See *LeOS*, 287.

the spirit mingled with altruism and mutualism. To Rebekah, egoism and jingoism only propel human destruction, as both tend to exterminate the weak or the undesirable for personal (the stronger's) advantage. She uses the example of a "little savage" Bushman woman, who has no knowledge but cries wildly to warn her people of the advent of danger, even though she becomes the target of poison arrows and is struck dead (FMTM 172), to illustrate her belief that gracious virtues lie not in one's social rank, nor in one's intellectual knowledge, but in one's

passionate devotion and self-sacrifice . . . the profound truth recognized everywhere [is] that an almighty affection and the instinct for even self-immolation in the serving of others is not merely one of the highest but one of the strongest forces modifying human life. (FMTM, 187-88)

Rebekah equates this kind of humanitarian spirit with mother-love, exalting motherly affection towards the young as "the universal substance of life" (FMTM, 188) and extending its power to the race-to-race and man-to-woman planes. That is to say, when humanity possesses quasi-maternal love and willingness to sacrifice for others, "the conquest by the most cunning, the most merciless, the most consuming, the muscularly or osseously stronger" (FMTM, 196) will vanish and "a perfect free and even comradeship between men and women at large in human society" (FMTM, 169) will be on the threshold of reality, as will be pacifism between the nations of the world. Undoubtedly, Rebekah's conviction follows that of her fictional foremother Lyndall in *The Story of an African Farm*, in which Lyndall, in a state of literal dying after the death of her newborn baby, states "that holiness is an infinite compassion for others; that greatness is to take the common things of life and walk truly among them; that . . . happiness is a great love and much serving" (SAF, 249). Rebekah's Christian revelation goes even further than Lyndall's in her aligning religious devotion and self-sacrifice with mother love.

Late nineteenth-century feminism, as Rose Lovell-Smith asserts, had the

tendency to combine religious references with scientific, Darwinian rhetoric to argue for political reform of the situation of women, a reform based on evolutionary and progressive models and anticipating the ultimate change for the better, a change not to be realized in the present but only in the future.³² In Woman and Labor (1911), a nonfiction treatise acknowledged by her feminist progeny as “the Bible of the Women’s Movement,”³³ Schreiner proclaims that the women’s movement should be placed “in a line with those vast religious developments” (W&L, 44). So that just as there is Jesus Christ, there is a female counterpart: as Florence Nightingale puts it, “The next Christ will perhaps be a female Christ.” As Christ suffers, so “Give us back our suffering.”³⁴

Schreiner’s correlation between feminism and crucifixion can also be seen in her letter to Havelock Ellis on November 9, 1888:

Once God Almighty said: “I will produce a self-working automatic machine for enduring suffering, which shall be capable of the largest amount of suffering in a given space”; and he made woman. But he wasn’t satisfied that he [had] reached the highest point of perfection; so he made a man of genius. He was [not] satisfied yet. So he combined the two—and made a woman of genius—and he was satisfied!³⁵

This passage is significant for four reasons: firstly, Schreiner links woman with suffering, as if she had the most perfect capacity for it, almost a divine calling; secondly, she subordinates the man of genius to the woman of genius, the former being a component of the latter, a state God Almighty prefers to that of vice versa; thirdly, the combination stands for androgyny; and lastly, the woman with suffering is a genius, meaning that she has special talent of some kind. In Rebekah’s case,

³² Rose Lovell-Smith, “Science and Religion in the Feminist Fin-de-Siècle and a New Reading of Olive Schreiner’s From Man to Man,” Victorian Literature and Culture 29.2 (2001): 303-26. See also Gilbert and Gubar, Sexchanges, 68-71.

³³ Vera Brittain, “The Influence of Olive Schreiner,” Until the Heart Changes: A Garland for Olive Schreiner, ed. Zelda Friedlander (Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers, 1967), 125-27, 125.

³⁴ Florence Nightingale, Cassandra and Other Selections from Suggestions for Thought, ed. Mary Poovey (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1991), 230, 208.

³⁵ Olive Schreiner’s letter to Havelock Ellis on November 9, 1888, LeOS, 146.

this talent is intelligence and wisdom revealed in writing, as seen in the interludes. Further, as a woman of genius, Rebekah is a mother, and motherhood informs her labors, literal and literary, as my later discussion will show.

In arming feminism with Christian martyrdom, Schreiner glorifies selflessness and service to others, seeing them as essentials for the moral good of society as well as for the good of women at large. Moral endeavor was prompted by a humanist empathy with the weak, altruistic even to the point of sacrificing oneself in order to achieve progress for the species as a whole. Self-sacrifice is also a crucial notion in Schreiner's attitude towards the women's movement, a movement boosted by women's accumulative efforts to reach women's better state:

It is this abiding consciousness of an end to be attained, reaching beyond her personal life and individual interests, which constitutes the religious element of the woman's movement of our day, and binds with the common bond of an impersonal enthusiasm into one solid body the women of whatsoever race, class, and nation who are struggling after the readjustment of woman to life. (W&L, 46)

As if to construct a trinity, Schreiner has Rebekah parallel maternal affection with self-sacrifice in order to complete the triple link between feminism, martyrdom and mother love, a love that, as Rebekah explains, is not simply parental sympathy towards one's own children, but "a much wider feeling for the weak . . . [a] willingness to be destroyed that others might live" (FMTM, 186). While connecting the three dimensions together, centering on their compassion and sacrificial spirit for the service of others, this association also bears witness to Schreiner's intention to venerate "[a] near-deification of motherhood" as Sally Ledger remarks,³⁶ an intention comparable to Grand's in equating Beth in The Beth Book with the Holy Mother for her divine self-sacrifice in nursing Arthur and her later abandonment of personal writing for public oratory to heal people's souls.

³⁶ Ledger, The New Woman, 82.

It needs to be emphasized that, in associating maternity with self-sacrifice, Schreiner does not, as Ann Heilmann maintains, “reveal her residual allegiance to authoritative discourse” which demands woman-sacrifice,³⁷ but attempts, I would argue, to enlarge the stereotypical conception of sacrificial motherhood by infusing it with a religious spirit and raising it to the level of nobility. Just as woman’s renunciation of individuality in the collective purpose of the women’s movement is to make “more possible a fuller and higher attainment of motherhood and wifehood to the women who will follow her” (W&L, 46), so a mother’s sacrifice is to bring up more well-rounded and healthier offspring for the nation as well as for future generations. Sacrifice, in this light, is for an impersonal end, made out of personal choice rather than compulsion, a choice for the moral good of society. Motherhood, in a similar vein, is not only sustained on its material/biological plane as the bearer/rearer of population, but more importantly, is endowed with majestic purpose as the reformer of humanity. Accordingly, it could be said that Schreiner’s feminist politics bears no small resemblance to Grand’s “civic motherhood,” an eugenic feminism emphasizing the power of maternity for the longevity of the human race as Angelique Richardson suggests.³⁸

Actually, at the same time across the Atlantic, Charlotte Perkins Gilman was also affirming the significance of quasi-Christian maternity, stating that “To be a teacher and leader, to love and serve, to guard and guide and help, are well in line with motherhood” (MMW, 189). Gilman’s assertion manifests clearly a blending of religious devotion, maternal love and political mission for the whole human race, substantiating motherhood with leadership of every kind, from the domestic to the public sphere, religious, social, political and professional—“It is the woman who is

³⁷ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 123.

³⁸ Angelique Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003), 9.

the final standard of the race” (W&L, 37). In this respect, Gilman is also Schreiner’s literary (and political) sister sharing the same views.³⁹

Insofar as maternal sacrifice is concerned, I would argue that Schreiner does not go against her New Woman sister Mona Caird, who bitterly condemns enforced motherhood and the restrictions of marriage. As has been mentioned in Chapter 1, Caird indeed chafes against married women’s enslavement to domestic duty and child care in her radical polemic The Morality of Marriage (1897), where she attributes women’s subjection to their economic dependence, knowledge/education deficiency, and men’s possession of them as properties, all causes of moral and social degeneration. Marriage becomes a legal contract of selling women’s bodies and souls in exchange for material stability and comfort from men. True love in marriage is hardly sustained due to inequality between the husband and the wife. Motherhood is then coercive in its sacrificial aspects since women have no right to refuse maternity. Caird thus calls for a modified marriage, first and foremost, by respecting women’s right of freedom, which is the basis for their legal, sexual, and social equality with men. She also promotes rewarding housework to ensure women’s economic independence at home (MOM, 127). Considered in these lights, it could readily be said that what Caird opposes is reluctant or unwilling motherhood, an imposed force from outside that demands women’s self-sacrifice as a necessity. Her radical feminism is, in a word, to condemn institutional/patriarchal motherhood, a critical stance, I would suggest, not in line with Schreiner’s social purity feminism, which centers on glorifying voluntary motherhood as being as magnificent as that of Jesus Christ. If Caird does not support Schreiner’s idea of quasi-religious maternal

³⁹ Both Gilman and Schreiner are skeptical about the patriarchal deity, but they support the religious spirit of service and love for the benefit of humanity. For a comparison between Gilman and Schreiner, see Barbara Scott Winkler, “Victorian Daughters: The Lives and Feminism of Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Olive Schreiner,” Critical Essays on Charlotte Perkins Gilman, ed. Joanne B. Karpinski (New York: G. K. Hall, 1992), 173-83; see also Gilbert and Gubar, Sexchanges, 71-82.

self-sacrifice, she at least, I would argue, is not against Schreiner's reformatory motherhood for the sake of future generations, because behind Caird's radical feminism is her deep concern over the pernicious effects of institutional motherhood on children.

Different critical footings present different fictional panoramas. This explains why Hadria in Caird's The Daughters of Danaus bitterly resents motherhood but Rebekah in Schreiner's From Man to Man does not. Hadria marries a man she does not love in the hope of escaping from the endless familial duties imposed by her mother. In a loveless marriage like this, her children become the products of a coerced motherhood at the expense of her musical calling, resentment from which results in her psychological abandonment of her children, as I have discussed in Chapter 1. Rebekah, on the contrary, marries Frank because they love each other—this is what she thought before her final realization of Frank's incurable philandering. Prior to that, as she expresses in her letter to him in the second interlude, Rebekah loves him very much. This love resolves her frequent dilemmas between maternal duty and solitary writing, and Rebekah is never shown in the narrative as a resentful mother such as Hadria.⁴⁰ Even after her final comprehension of her married prostitution, Rebekah's solution shows her spiritual awakening in refusing any sexual contact with Frank rather than, like Medea, in taking revenge on him through her children, despite her once attempting suicide with

⁴⁰ In a letter to Betty Molteno on October 11, 1896, Schreiner spoke of her idea of motherhood, which may give a clue to her depiction of Rebekah's attitude towards maternity:

in having a child a married or any woman for the matter of that, should feel that she is receiving a great reward—and a woman who doesn't feel so should never have children at all. It's like writing a book—it may be a great labour and half kill you, but if you don't feel it's a great joy and bliss to suffer the agony of writing it, and a reward in itself, you're not fit to write it! . . . the woman has the joy possessing a child, feeding it from herself as a man can't! What I *do* hate, is to hear a woman always groaning over her children, when other women would give years and years of their life and hard work to have one: I think the MODERN wealthy, and middle class married woman tends to become very selfish, and to fall into a complete state of mental and moral disease! (OSL, 291, emphases in original)

them (FMTM, 277). Motherhood before Rebekah's awakening is voluntary, a choice grounded on the ideal spousal love she believes in. Motherhood after her awakening is reformatory, because she starts to teach her children right from wrong, so that they will grow up to act out of truth and humanistic compassion, rather than imitating their father's habitual falsity and exploitation of the weak, faults that I will analyze in my discussion of the second interlude.

It should be noted that, although Schreiner created Lyndall in The Story of an African Farm to rebuff motherhood ["I am not in so great a hurry to put my neck beneath any man's foot; and I do not so greatly admire the crying of babies" (SAF, 159)], she had her heroine give birth to a baby girl, giving an account of Lyndall's anguish at the child's short life:

It was so small . . . it lived such a little while—only three hours. They laid it close by me, but I never saw it; I could feel it by me. . . . Its feet were so cold; I took them in my hand to make them warm, and my hand closed right over them they were so little. . . . It crept close to me; it wanted to drink, it wanted to be warm. . . . I did not love it; its father was not my prince; I did not care for it; but it was so little. (SAF, 246)

Although Lyndall laments the child's dying young and even kneels down at her grave in the rain, bringing on her own death from a serious cold, Schreiner does not portray her motherhood as a grand endeavor like Rebekah's. Lyndall has no love for her child; maternity supposedly comes to her unexpectedly and thus unwillingly, a situation partially similar to that of Hadria in The Daughters of Danaus.

Schreiner began writing The Story of an African Farm in 1875 when she was twenty years old.⁴¹ As she was exposed to many life experiences, including the death of her only daughter sixteen hours after the child's birth,⁴² she may have

⁴¹ Schreiner finished the revised manuscript, together with the other two novels, Undine and From Man to Man, before she left for England in 1881. See First and Scott, Olive Schreiner, 84.

⁴² Schreiner gave birth in 1895 when she was forty years old, two years after her marriage to Cronwright-Schreiner. Her daughter died of unknown causes. It was a deadly shock to her and she held the dead baby for ten hours. For her response to the sad event, see her letters to Dr. and Mrs.

gradually modified her views of motherhood. These views, it could be argued, underwent a change from her rejection of motherhood in her early twenties to her acceptance of it in her thirties.⁴³ From her forties onwards, Schreiner began to pay high tribute to motherhood, asserting its influence on and significance for the nation and humanity. Evidence can be adduced from the mother Rebekah in From Man to Man and Schreiner's feminist tract Woman and Labor, a work calling for women's economic independence as well as stressing the influence of a good womanhood on future generations, an influence related to its maternal aspect.⁴⁴ As Schreiner claims,

Only an able and laboring womanhood can permanently produce an able and laboring manhood; only an effete and inactive male can ultimately be produced by an effete and inactive womanhood . . . it is the power of the human female to impress herself on her descendants, male and female, through germinal inheritance, through influence during the period of gestation, and *above all by producing the mental atmosphere in which the impressionable infant years of life are passed, which makes the condition of the child-bearing female one of paramount interest to the race.* (W&L, 37, emphasis added)

In this light, womanhood contains the potential of motherhood. In order to nurture capable offspring, Schreiner argues that women need to equip themselves with positive qualities first. Motherhood, moreover, does not refer merely to the labor of child-bearing, but is inclusive, in particular, of the first few years of child-rearing so

Brown and Alice Corthorn in LiOS, 274-75. See also First and Scott, Olive Schreiner, 213-14; Ledger, The New Woman, 77.

⁴³ In a letter to Havelock Ellis on April 19, 1886, when Schreiner was thirty-one years old, she had changed her view of motherhood: "I would like so much to have a child, but I couldn't *bear* to be married; neither could I bear any relationship that was not absolutely open to all the world—so I could never have one" (emphasis in original). See LeOS, 98. In her journal entry on December 18, 1888, she wrote, "I have killed out everything now, I think, except the wish to have a child. That I shall never quite kill. I think it's bodily." Cronwright-Schreiner added his explanation, "Olive said to me once that every unmarried woman over thirty should, if she wished, be allowed to have a child without any disgrace. She said it was a necessity for the proper health of the bodily functions of woman, and that a woman had a right to have a child when she was old enough to know what she was doing." See LiOS, 182.

⁴⁴ The first three chapters on parasitism in Woman and Labor are particularly relevant to womanhood/motherhood.

as to mold children's temperament for the "paramount interest to the race."

Schreiner's idea of womanhood is "a virile womanhood" (W&L, 24)—"virile," as Carol L. Barash rightly decodes, both in its usual sense of "masculine, adult, or strong," and in its archaic meanings of "nubile, ready for child-bearing,"⁴⁵ to constitute "the highly versatile, active, vital, adaptive, sensitive, physically fine-drawn type" (W&L, 83). Using an oxymoron to parallel women's reproduction with masculine features, Schreiner may have wanted to project an androgynous combination of the best of masculinity and femininity,⁴⁶ a synthesis echoing the account of the woman of genius discussed earlier in Schreiner's letter to Ellis. This amalgamation also parallels Grand's molding of the new form of femininity, which coalesces the better qualities of the New Woman (masculine chivalry) with those of the Old one (feminine tenderness)—a femininity "desexualized" in its erotic, masculine-defined term, resulting in Arthur's resentment of Beth's shorn hair in The Beth Book, and also a femininity, when it comes to Gilman's no man utopia in Herland (1915), "asexualized" since the Herlanders are all women without sexual desire.

Late nineteenth-century New Woman fiction is popularized with a re-conceptualization of medieval chivalry in appropriating masculine gallantry for feminist purposes. As has been indicated, whereas Caird expects her heroine Hadria in The Daughters of Danaus to act as a knight errant to help the weak, Grand contrives female chivalry in The Beth Book to put forward moral, social regeneration for the degenerate child-like men as well as for the rest of society's poor souls. While Gilman imagines an Amazonian "queen"dom in Herland to throw light on the supremacy of female gallantry independent of man's domination in his kingdom,

⁴⁵ Barash, "Virile Womanhood," 278.

⁴⁶ Mumford, "Selfless Androgyny," 626.

Schreiner relates female virility primarily to women's procreation and self-regeneration, an approach from within (a reconstruction of female self) to without (a reproduction of that new self through motherhood), to illustrate the importance of maternity in a reformed womanhood.

In Woman and Labor, Schreiner traces the origin of female virility back to the

old, old Teutonic womanhood . . . that wore no veil, and had no foot bound; whose realized ideal of marriage was sexual companionship and an equality in duty and labor; who stood side by side with the males they loved in peace or war, and whose children, when they had borne them, sucked manhood from their breasts. . . . We are women of a breed whose racial ideal was no Helen of Troy, passed passively from male hand to male hand, as men pass gold or lead; but that Brynhild whom Segurd found, clad in helm and byrnie, the warrior maid, who gave him counsel, "the deepest that ever yet was given to living man," and "wrought on him to the performing of great deeds". . . . We are of a race of women that of old knew no fear, and feared no death. (W&L, 54)

In recalling the old spirit of an ideal womanhood, it is evident that Schreiner intends to insist that the New Womanhood vigorously postulated, but also bitterly condemned at the time, is not new but old, and that it had been replaced by the passive female sex parasitism deep rooted in human civilization for centuries. "[A] Founding Mother of women's liberation in Britain,"⁴⁷ Schreiner argues that, under the conditions of an industrialized society, women's life has undergone a change: they need to avoid being sex parasites who make no substantial contribution, since child-birth is no longer women's main calling in life. She thus postulates women's self-reliance and their right to waged work to be economically independent, seeing these as the priority if women are to evolve in accordance with social progress and to re-embrace the old spirit of virile womanhood: "We have to rise."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Nadine Gordimer, "'The Prison-House of Colonialism': Review of Ruth First and Ann Scott's Olive Schreiner," The Times Literary Supplement, London (August 15, 1980), repr. in Cherry Clayton, ed. Olive Schreiner (Johannesburg: McGraw-Hill, 1983), 95-98, 95.

⁴⁸ Olive Schreiner's letter to Mrs. Mary King Roberts in 1889, LeOS, 151.

Such an expectation is potently illustrated by an inspiring allegory Rebekah imagines in the first interlude, entitled "The Spirit of the Ages." The allegory depicts the visit of the Spirit of the Ages to a beautiful woman crying sadly alone in a wasteland, because her feet are deep sunken in the sand with chains she binds to herself out of anger, and her limbs are gangrenous from her striking them out of fury at her imprisonment. Always looking towards the distant green mountain, the woman hopes someone may come to rescue her and take her there. The Spirit of the Ages tells her that she has to save herself, as there will be no deliverer to come. He tells her to use her weak limbs to strike off the fetters that bind her and her strong hands to heal the wounds she herself has made and remove the sand from around her feet. Before he leaves, he asks her name and she replies, "My name is Humanity" (FMTM, 201).

This allegory is significant in that the woman in question embodies women at large, situated as she is in hardened, if not hostile, surroundings (the snake in the allegory has withdrawn leaving its track in the sand), and passively waiting for somebody to rescue her. The wasteland is like the desert in another allegory, "Three Dreams in a Desert," a place suggestive of women's uncultivated self-awareness for self-development. While it is hard to prevail over the power of sand, the embodiment of passivity, the woman in the allegory internalizes its existence by chaining herself to it. Although she attempts to move her feet, the wounds on her limbs indicative of her efforts in this direction, their gangrened state symbolizes the seriousness of her passivity and thus the enormous difficulty she faces if she wants to be free. As nobody will come to save her, the Spirit of the Ages advises her to be self-reliant and make good use of her own hands and limbs to save herself, so that she is able "to rise" and go to the beautiful mountain she longs for, a mountain whose vitality and prosperity are symbolic of the achievement of

women's independence in contrast to the desolation of the wasteland that results from women's passivity. In using a woman to represent women at large, Schreiner also wants to emphasize the importance of matrilineal inheritance, by analogizing her allegorical heroine with humanity as a whole: because woman is the Mother of People, conveying her crucial influences to later generations, she has to be independent in order to nurture descendants of a similar kind.

While expecting the woman in the allegory to help herself, Schreiner deploys a quasi-deified figure of male gender, *The Spirit of the Ages*, to tell the fettered woman how to set herself free, a device parallel to Schreiner's manipulation of a wise old man named Reason to instruct the woman how to cross over the deep river that signifies Suffering, one stage on her laborious search for the Land of Freedom in the second dream of "Three Dreams in A Desert." Here Schreiner seems to share Caird's use of the wise old man in aligning wisdom with male figures, but different from Caird's attempt to partially undermine the power politics involved, Schreiner's focus is on humanistic comradeship, a utopian anticipation that the stronger (an omniscient male figure) should help the weaker (a subjugated woman). As Rebekah questions:

Has not the time come when the slow perfecting of humanity can find no aid from the destruction of the weak by the stronger, but by the continual bending down of the stronger to the weaker to share with them their ideals and aid them in the struggle with their qualities? (FMTM, 199)

It must be emphasized that the stronger's humanistic compassion in helping the weaker does not mean that the former personally solves problems for the latter. In the two allegories mentioned above, the Spirit of the Ages and Reason only offer their guidance: the woman sunk in the sand has to unbind her fettered feet and move by herself, just as the woman seeking for the Land of Freedom must shake off her burdens and cross the dangerous river alone. They both have to equip themselves

with virility and independence if they want to reach the “Land of Promise” (W&L, 52). Thus the humanitarian spirit does not foster dependent passivity but encourages its opposite, self-reliance.

When compassion for others touches on heterosexual relations, the notion of androgyny comes to the fore, and this is illustrated by Rebekah’s so-called “self-to-self” story created in her half sleep that results from the hours-long meditation in the first interlude. In the story Rebekah dreams that she is a man lying beside his “little” wife, who is sleeping deeply within his arm. She, the husband, can feel their unborn baby’s unease through his pregnant wife and seeing the whole scene, he feels a great tenderness for them. Later, the baby is born and she, the husband, holds it tight in his arms, kisses its lips and then puts it close to its mother’s breast for feeding. The dream ends when she, the husband, bends contentedly over the “little” mother and baby. Before the dream, Rebekah had fancied dreamily:

How nice it would be to be a man. She fancied she was one till she felt her very body grow strong and hard and shaped like a man’s. She felt that the great freedom opened to her, no place shut off from her, the long chain broken, all work possible for her, no law to say this and this is for women, you are woman. . . . Oh, how beautiful to be a man and *be able to take care of and defend all the creatures weaker and smaller than you are.* (FMTM, 202, emphasis added)

Obviously, this fancy reveals, in part, society’s gendered norms for the different sexes against which Rebekah wishes to transgress, an intention, it should be emphasized, springing not from her desire to escape her feminine share but from her longing to act like a free, “strong” man so as to exercise her humanism without restriction. Despite Schreiner’s use of biological terms (for instance, strong vs. weak, big vs. small), a point based on which Ann Heilmann criticizes Schreiner’s

gender symbolism,⁴⁹ behind Rebekah's fancy, I think, lies Schreiner's expectation that man's physical strength and unbounded freedom should be mixed with (the arguably essentialist idea of) woman's extensive maternal love for the weak, the same devotion as Rebekah's linking of motherly affection with Christian martyrdom mentioned earlier. A message of combined masculinity and femininity is thus revealed here, irrespective of physiological shapes: while Schreiner expects women to be virile and the stronger sisters (even in small figure) to be able to help the weaker sisters, she equally hopes men to be tender, and most importantly, protective to "defend all the creatures weaker and smaller than [they] are." Fulfillment of this fancy is shown in Rebekah's self-to-self story, her dream of being a maternal man affectionately adoring his wife and child.

It should be noted that Schreiner's utopian vision is much grounded on humanism where the law of the fittest should be supplanted by compassion for others in anticipation of equality and unity. She believes that once humanism is attained, a harmonious union between men and women could emerge naturally, a union marked by an androgynous spirit that preserves the best virtues of one's own sex while obtaining those of the other: "I believe there is, deep in human nature, a need for this close unending relationship with one above all who shall be as it were a part of oneself which it is the highest function of marriage to satisfy."⁵⁰ Rebekah's fancy and literal dreaming of being a man, seen in this light, reveals neither her masculine inclination, nor her lesbian affection towards the wife in the dream, but her utopian

⁴⁹ Ann Heilmann, "'Over that Bridge Built with our Bodies the Entire Human Race Will Pass': A Rereading of Olive Schreiner's *From Man to Man* (1926)," *The European Journal of Women's Studies* 2 (1995): 33-50, 44-45. See also Kathleen Blake, *Love and the Woman Question in Victorian Literature: The Art of Self-Postponement* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester P; Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Books, 1983), 219-220, in which Blake holds a similar opinion to Heilmann and argues that womanhood here is conceived "not as a self, but as an 'other.'"

⁵⁰ Olive Schreiner's letter to Mrs. Francis Smith on May 14, 1904, *LeOS*, 247.

expectation of an ideal heterosexual relationship.⁵¹

Taken together, it could be argued that Rebekah's philosophical reflections in the first interlude draw heavily on feminist utopianism, a "counter-factual thought-experiment" prevalent at the *fin de siècle*, grounded, in the words of Matthew Beaumont, on the "politics of fellowship," in seeking ways to construct "a New World inside the shell of the Old."⁵² Sharing the concepts of Mary Wollstonecraft⁵³ and John Stuart Mill,⁵⁴ Schreiner was one of the liberal feminists

⁵¹ Schreiner's sexual inclination has triggered different discussions. For Kathleen Blake, Schreiner's nature is toward the masculine and misogynous; for Vera Buchanan-Gould, Schreiner has a masculine trait which "amounts almost entirely to [her] mental independence and nothing more." For D. L. Hobman, Schreiner has "a Lesbian strain" because she has some extraordinarily intimate, affectionate female friends. Vineta Colby and Murray Steele rebuff all these assumptions. Colby thinks that it is Schreiner's excited imagination that makes her play with alternative gender roles, so as to feel what men feel and to show her sympathy with other women. Steele avers that Schreiner's extroverted masculinity is grounded on her utopian expectation that the stronger (men) should help the weaker (women) and that stronger women should help their unfortunate sisters. I agree with Steele's view and think it is from this motive that Schreiner makes Rebekah imagine and dream of being a man. See Blake, Love and the Woman Question in Victorian Literature, 220-21; Buchanan-Gould, Not Without Honour, 116; D. L. Hobman, Olive Schreiner: Her Friends and Times (London: Watts & Co, 1955), 87-88; Colby, The Singular Anomaly, 90-91; Steele, "A Humanist Bible," 106-07.

⁵² Matthew Beaumont, "The New Woman in Nowhere: Feminism and Utopianism at the *Fin de Siècle*," The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact; Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms, ed. Angélique Richardson and Chris Willis (London: Palgrave, 2001), 212-23, 213.

⁵³ Schreiner was approached by the publisher Walter Scott in 1886 to write an introduction to a new edition of Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. In her letter to Karl Pearson on May 12, 1886, Schreiner talked about her plan in writing the introduction,

What I have to say of Mary Wollstonecraft is not to excuse her and not even to *justify* her; but to show that her greatness lay in this, her view with regard to marriage; and her action with regard to it. That she is the greatest of English women because she saw a hundred years ago with regard to sex and sex relationships what a few see today, and what the world will see in three hundred years' time. (emphasis in original)

But as she confesses to Pearson on October 26, 1886, Schreiner had "only glanced through the *Rights of Woman* before, never read it. But the great point of interest in her to me is her life; I mean to treat her as a woman." In a letter to Mrs. J. H. Philpot on February 18, 1888, Schreiner mentioned that she would put all her thoughts on the man and woman question into this introduction. In another letter to Ernest Rhys, Schreiner said writing this introduction "has cost me already about four times as much labour as *African Farm* did, but in one sense immeasurably more because I have gathered into it the result of my whole life's work." In a letter to Havelock Ellis on November 2, 1888, Schreiner said that her writing of this introduction "is all poetry from the first to the last . . . [with] six or seven allegories in it." For all the passion that went into her planning, Schreiner was never able to complete the work. See First and Scott, Olive Schreiner, 163, 182; Laura Chrisman, "Allegory, Feminist Thought and the Dreams of Olive Schreiner," Edward Carpenter and Late Victorian Radicalism, ed. Tony Brown (London: Frank Cass, 1990), 126-50, 126-127. Schreiner's letters, see OSL, 111, 78, 136-37, 142. For a brief analysis of Schreiner's fragmented introduction to Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, see Chrisman, "Allegory, Feminist Thought and the Dreams of Olive Schreiner," 132-40. The unfinished introduction was published later, see Olive Schreiner, "Introduction to the Life of Mary Wollstonecraft and The Rights of Woman," History Workshop Journal 37.1 (1994): 189-93. See also Carolyn Burdett's article in regard to this, "Document: A Difficult Vindication: Olive Schreiner's Wollstonecraft Introduction," History Workshop Journal 37.1 (1994): 177-87.

of the time, who appealed for women's access as citizens to education, work opportunities, and political participation, and fervently argued for the abolition of the deep-rooted inequality in sexual relationships.⁵⁵ Her colonial background further deepened her conviction of the necessity for racial unity throughout the world. Utopianism thus provides one spectrum to project her anticipation of better alternatives for humanity. Yet as it is a utopian dream, fulfillment is only to be achieved in the future or in "dreams." Rebekah's vision of fellowship is attributable to what she perceives in the first interlude, the omnipotent truth and the humanistic exhortation to "Bring up your rears!" (FMTM, 170),⁵⁶ but her expectation of the dream-come-true experiences a difficult labor in her interaction with her husband, as the second interlude reveals.

The second interlude: Rebekah's letter to Frank

As with the first interlude, the second interlude ranges over some fifty pages of narrative, giving a record of a husband's infidelity in the form of a letter produced by the wife Rebekah in a single night, an achievement, as Schreiner herself admitted, impossible to effect in real life.⁵⁷ From the beginning of Part II, "The Book—The Woman's Day," the narrative centers mostly on Rebekah's sister Baby-Bertie and only a few sketches hint at Rebekah's marital condition (she marries at the start of Part II). It is not until the second interlude in chapter 8 that the reader begins to get

⁵⁴ Mill's influence on Schreiner, according to her own account, resides largely in his moral teaching. See *LiOS*, 219-20. Joyce Avrech Berkman points out that Schreiner did not declare her debt to any feminist writer and that Schreiner differs from Wollstonecraft and Mill "in her close examination of women's work, in her discussion of working-class women and women of color, in her treatment of sexual desire, and in her vision of the comradeship between the 'new woman' and 'new man.'" See Berkman, *The Healing Imagination of Olive Schreiner*, 128. For Schreiner's relation with Wollstonecraft and Mill, see Cherry Clayton, "Olive Schreiner: Paradoxical Pioneer," *Women and Writing in South Africa: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Cherry Clayton (Marshalltown: Heinemann Southern Africa, 1989), 41-59, 42-45.

⁵⁵ For Schreiner's relationship with feminism, see Clayton, "Olive Schreiner," 42-59.

⁵⁶ An emphasized quotation, see also p. 307.

⁵⁷ In Schreiner's diary on April 28, 1907, she wrote, "I like Rebekah's letter; it's too long, all to have been written in one night, but that doesn't matter." See *LiOS*, 350.

a sense from Rebekah's letter of her life with a sensualist, irresponsible husband. Motivated by her discovery of Frank's third affair with their colored servant girl, Rebekah writes the letter as a flashback, recollecting the time before and after their marriage to give an account of their "love" history: love that arises from true, equal caring for Rebekah but for Frank is merely equivalent to the pleasure of conquest.

Parallel to Grand's deployment of differentiating Beth from Dan through their different responses towards the natural world, Schreiner illustrates Rebekah's different nature from Frank's by their different treatments of wild animals. For Rebekah, the motivation to possess wild animals is that she feels their need of her companionship:

what I wanted from living things was what they could *give* me, not what I could take from them. The supreme moment to me is not when I kill or conquer a living thing, but that moment its eye and mine meet and a line of connection is formed between me and the life that is in it. (FMTM 269, emphasis in original).

Frank, on the contrary, enjoys the triumphant moment of catching rather than possessing the animals; so when he catches one, he does not care for it and even throws it away, directing his attention to the next target instead. His predatory nature as such is also applicable to his treatment of women, a condition parallel to what Lyndall says of men in general in The Story of an African Farm: "Your man's love is a child's love for butterflies. You follow till you have the thing, and break it" (SAF, 205). As a consequence, the pursuit of successive women for sport makes up the sum total of Frank's life: from Rebekah to their neighbor Mrs. Drummond, from the station-master's adolescent niece to the colored housemaid. His hunting appetite is aroused by Rebekah's initial refusal of his courtship, by his pleasure at luring a coquettish, married woman, by his voluptuous lust for a young girl and, last but not the least, by asserting his white superiority in exploiting a black servant girl.

None of the women he pursues retains his subsequent attention; once he gets them, he loses interest in them.

Because of his beastly, predatory nature, Frank's marriage with Rebekah is permeated with lies and subterfuges to cover his extra-marital affairs, falsities that subvert the principle that Rebekah proposes in the first interlude—truth in heterosexual relations:

Give us truth! Not jewels, not ease—nor even caresses, precious as they are to us—are the first thing we seek: give us truth. We are weary with seeking for truth and being baffled everywhere by subterfuge and seeing; in your eyes, beloved, let us never have to seek it, let it come out to meet us. (FMTM, 158)

Rebekah's belief in complete, all-encompassing sincerity between man and woman, a perfect comradeship between two souls, is repeatedly shattered and undermined by Frank's adultery. As she exclaims, "it isn't only the body of a woman that a man touches when he takes her in his hands; it's her brain, it's her intellect, it's her whole life! . . . it isn't only her body a woman gives a man" (FMTM, 250).

From Lyndall to Rebekah, Schreiner consistently maps an ideal picture of marriage with love and fellowship. Through Lyndall, she utters, "Marriage for love is the beautifullest external symbol of the union of souls; marriage without it is the uncleanliest traffic that defiles the world" (SAF, 156). Through Rebekah, she states, "the loveliest thing that has blossomed on the earth is the binding of man and woman in one body, one fellowship" (FMTM, 275). In a personal letter to W. T. Stead on January 10, 1895, Schreiner expressed a similar idea:

I don't see how the relations of married life can be well and nobly, in any way ideally, arranged when there is not perfect and profound union of aims. . . . Marriage, perfect marriage of mind and body, is such a lovely and holy thing, that rather than an imperfect travesty of it, I should say none was better. To me it appears that in highly developed and intellectual people, the mental and spiritual union is more important, more

truly the *marriage*, than the physical.⁵⁸ (emphasis in original)

If romance, or more specifically, courtly love, is not Grand's major concern in her reconfiguration of the chivalric female knight in The Beth Book, romance does play a significant role in From Man to Man, carrying with it Schreiner's vision of egalitarian relations between the sexes by constructing two frameworks, sensual versus spiritual, in Rebekah's interactions with her philandering husband and with a platonic lover, who appears in the final two chapters of the novel.

Given her belief in truth and two-souls-in-one fellowship in heterosexual relationships, Rebekah expects Frank to talk things out with her:

You must meet me, fairly and straightly, as one man meets another, and speak to me as one speaks to one's own soul. (FMTM, 267)

....

I will try to be a man with you . . . only . . . speak the truth to me, as you would if I were another man. (FMTM, 275)

Synonymous with her previous dream of becoming a maternal man in the first interlude, a dream which conveys her humanitarian vision of the stronger helping the weaker, Rebekah imagines herself being a man again, not, as Kathleen Blake asserts,⁵⁹ to diminish her concept of femininity, nor to imitate male competitiveness and egoism to counteract Frank, but to enact her assumption that men and women are created fundamentally equal: "I am not a woman speaking to the man who owns her, before whom she trembles; we are two free souls looking at each other" (FMTM, 266).

It should be noted that humanistic compassion to help the weak does not mean that the weak are born by nature in subordinated positions. It is precisely by virtue of a belief in inherent equality between humans that Rebekah expects that a cosmopolitan comradeship, ushered in by empathy, sympathy and altruism, could be

⁵⁸ Olive Schreiner's letter to W. T. Stead on January 10, 1895, LeOS, 217.

⁵⁹ Blake, Love and the Woman Question in Victorian Literature, 220-22.

set up from man to man, from man to woman, and from woman to woman as well, so that harmony among humanity becomes a promising prospect. As a pacifist, Schreiner's feminist philosophy, it should be borne in mind, stresses consolidation rather than destruction. Her concern is with what one can contribute for the benefit of others, rather than with how one can excel another: "In love there is no first nor last" (W&L, 86). Thus even though Schreiner admits the existence of a gender division into femininity and masculinity in terms of psychic attitudes and always distinguishes physiological differences between the sexes,⁶⁰ what she aims to promote ultimately is equal status between the sexes: "the relation between men and women [shall] become a co-partnership between freemen" (W&L, 100).

To some extent, Rebekah is portrayed with an ambivalence in her nature, caught between her intellectual scrutiny and her emotional superabundance. While she can analyze her betrayed situation, she cannot cut herself off completely from Frank, who, as her inner voice constantly echoes, is "The father of your children!—the lord of your body!—the owner of your life!" (FMTM, 253). A womanly woman, Rebekah inherits some of the Old Woman's traits in blindly immersing herself in a self-weaving romantic web to worship Frank as "God's light shining out upon my life" (FMTM, 272): she shows innocence but also ignorance in justifying his pretension and deception, and in keeping silence, waiting passively and even naively for Frank to take the initiative in telling her the truth of his marital indiscretions. From her initial unwillingness to face Frank's adultery to her later self-declaration that nothing matters to her, deep in Rebekah's heart lie her what-if concerns for Frank, "If he should need me!—If he should want me!—If I am good for him!"

⁶⁰ See W&L, 70-77, in which Schreiner discusses sex differences and remarks that there are some psychic differences in relation to human sexual and reproductive activity. Barbara Scott Winkler rightly states that, although Schreiner advocates an egalitarian relationship between the sexes, she cannot escape entirely from the Victorian conception of femininity. See her article, "Victorian Daughters," 174.

(FMTM, 263), concerns that block her resolve to leave him for good.

Interestingly, Schreiner creates a subtle interaction between Rebekah's romantic love and her maternal care for Frank. While Rebekah expresses her love to Frank to such an extent that she is happy to do whatever is best for him, she often parallels this devotion to that of a mother for her child. To some extent this echoes Grand's belief that men are but children and that women hold out their hands to help the child-man.⁶¹ However, it should be emphasized that the New Women in Grand's view are to offer help to *reform* the immoral men rather than to spoil men in their own ways. In her admonition to young girls about how to choose a husband, Grand warns them not to fall into women's common weakness in

so often abas[ing] themselves before the undeserving . . . [and] giv[ing] themselves to men who have nothing adequate in the way of merit to offer them in return, who are not on the same plane with them, but much lower morally, if not intellectually, in the scale of development.⁶²

In her interaction with Frank before her awakening, Rebekah is however the exact portraiture of the Old Woman Grand describes.

On discovering Frank's first affair with their neighbor Mrs. Drummond, Rebekah imagines that, if a similar situation arose with her son, who confessed to her that he loved a woman other than his wife, she, as a mother, would surely sympathize with her son and offer him her help. Likewise, believing that Frank loves Mrs. Drummond, Rebekah wants to help him by proposing a divorce, so that he can unite with his lover and she will still love him whatsoever (FMTM, 245-47). Rebekah's maternal devotion to the child-husband Frank can be extended to the point where,

⁶¹ Sarah Grand, "The New Aspect of the Woman Question," North American Review 158 (1894): 270-76, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 29-35, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 29-35, 31.

⁶² Sarah Grand, "On the Choice of a Husband," Young Woman 7 (1898): 1-3, repr. in SSPSG, 1: 106-11, 109.

after her discoveries of his second affair with the station-master's niece and many of his lies, she fears to leave him against his will, apprehending the situation as if she were to leave her child when he cried for his mother (FMTM, 263). Neither critiquing nor attempting to reform Frank's immorality, Rebekah sentimentally exerts her maternal love and sacrifice for the child-like, undeserving man.

While Arthur in The Beth Book is a physical and spiritual weakling, Frank in From Man to Man is sexually immoral. Whereas Beth sacrifices herself, with the feminist social purity mission in mind, to rescue Arthur and is rewarded by his return as a prodigal son, Rebekah's maternal-like sacrifice for Frank is in the Old Womanish fashion of debasing herself, only serving to increase Frank's lustful appetite for further betrayals and degeneration without improving his moral good at all. Rebekah misuses maternal love and confuses it with romantic affection, which results in her blind willingness to do anything to meet Frank's needs. This kind of maternal affection and sacrifice is thus problematic and cannot be linked to feminism and martyrdom to complete the trinity I discussed earlier.

Although Schreiner, in some ways, takes sides with social purity feminism, she does not, like Grand, espouse women's moral superiority as the foundation for women's chivalric action to reform men. Linking her cause with women's experience as the bearers of men from time immemorial, Schreiner believes that "on this one point, and on this point almost alone, the knowledge of woman, simply as woman, is superior to that of man" (W&L, 66), that "woman, by reason of those very sexual conditions which in the past have crushed and trammled her . . . is bound to lead the way, and man to follow" (W&L, xvi). In valorizing woman's womb, Schreiner endorses its power by linking maternity with women's evolutionary progress, maintaining women's sensibility and gift of procreation while calling for the necessary development of women's sense, their voice, and their right to work, in

order to make it clear that the woman's movement is not merely "an endeavor on the part of woman" but "a great movement of the sexes towards each other, a movement towards common occupations, common interests, common ideals, and an emotional tenderness and sympathy between the sexes" (W&L, 106). Rebekah's Old Womanish traits of motherly tenderness and sympathy for her husband, in this vein, have to be infused with the New Woman's "intellectual power and strength of will" (W&L, xvii), so that she is able to cast off the destructive Old Womanliness that silences and debases her and to equip herself with the qualities of leadership and guardianship. Maternal sacrifice, in this light, then, will not be a pointless but constructive endeavor to enhance human progress at large. The utopian ideal of spiritual union can thus be sustained once women are transformed/regenerated and men are reformed.

Longing for Frank's tenderness ("A great tenderness swept over her as when one thinks of one's little child"), Rebekah enters her marriage chamber late at night, only to see Frank, "The beautiful boy, the father of all her children" (FMTM, 221), step stealthily into the colored servant girl's room in the backyard. After this dramatically ironic encounter, Rebekah immediately resorts to writing a letter to Frank, concluding her outpouring with three alternatives for him to choose in regard to their marital condition. "Letter writing," Cronwright-Schreiner notes,

was a form of [Schreiner's] imperative impulse to express herself to others, and constituted also a mild form of physical exercise. She once said to me of herself that, just as walking or other muscular exertion was essential to the bodily health of some people, so talking was to others, that talking was not merely a mental relief and stimulus, but was, in its other effect, a physical and renovating exercise.⁶³

In writing the long letter, Rebekah finds an outlet for her emotions and articulates her thoughts to let Frank know her state of mind. What is more striking is that the

⁶³ Cronwright-Schreiner, "Preface" to *LeOS*, v-vi.

reflecting and writing process helps Rebekah come to realize that

It is the lightness of the attraction which could come between your manhood and my womanhood that is the measure of our degradation. (FMTM, 265)

. . . .

It is this life of lies and subterfuges which we have been living which is dragging down both our souls to hell. (FMTM, 276)

While ardently expecting to unite with a man who can be her other self, a union predicated more on spiritual and intellectual than on physical intercourse, Rebekah awakens to the impossibility of changing Frank's animalistic nature: "You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear" (FMTM, 277), an idea echoing Grand's phrase, "Once a dog, always a dog,"⁶⁴ and also an idea implicit in the chapter title of the second interlude, "You Cannot Capture the Ideal by a Coup d'État." "As if a soft dew were falling on her mind," the narrator tells us, Rebekah is awakened "like a soul come back from a long journey" (FMTM, 278).

In inserting Rebekah's letter into the novelistic flow, Schreiner reveals to the reader "what the novel cannot say within its logical confines, and hence reveals its functionality."⁶⁵ The form itself also subverts, as Janet Galligani Casey argues, the traditional linear narrative sequence of the nineteenth-century *Bildung* convention by locating Rebekah's self-development in nonfiction prose which, originally supposed to be peripheral, becomes the central focus of the narrative.⁶⁶ However, it should be noted that, although Rebekah's letter writing plays a crucial role in her spiritual awakening, her letter, as big as "a book" in Frank's words (FMTM, 281), is still unread by its addressee. The written form of expression which means to open up another mode of communication is thus a failure, and it is not until Rebekah speaks

⁶⁴ Grand, "On the Choice of a Husband," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 109.

⁶⁵ Mary Jacobus, "The Difference of View," *Women Writing and Writing about Women*, ed. Mary Jacobus (London; Croom Helm; New York: Barnes & Nobles, 1979), 10-21, 17.

⁶⁶ Casey, "Power, Agency, Desire," 129.

to Frank, giving him a succinct account of what she writes later in a shorter form of letter, i.e., the remaining two alternatives he can choose between, that Rebekah's awakening is complete, and she is freed from the spiritual anguish she has endured for so long:

It was as though a vast dome were reared over her, as though a dark pall, which for years had been stretched out just above her, were folded up and removed and she looked up into almost infinite space. So wide, so still, so peaceful; and she was alone there! (FMTM, 288)

From Man to Man, as Stephanie Forward rightly asserts, is "a plea for communication."⁶⁷ From the very start of their marriage, Rebekah and Frank never communicate openly with each other. Most of the time Rebekah is silent, expecting Frank to say something to clarify the situation, but he pretends that nothing has happened. Although Rebekah's long letter is a truthful account of their marriage, disclosing minutely her psychic responses to Frank's repeated betrayals, the letter also lays bare her failure to look for an efficient way of communicating with Frank. Conjectures, in this light, replace factual discussions, resulting in the final eruption of verbal contact which amounts, however, only to a one-way dialogue: the ultimatum of an either/or choice for Frank, divorce or keeping a marriage that is purely superficial. Having said that, the reader still sees Rebekah's change from a silent Victorian wife to an articulate New Woman, who is awakened to assert her autonomy through her voice.

In her final realization of her married prostitution and her incompatibility with Frank, Rebekah sees her personal suffering as a collective misfortune she shares with many other married sisters. Yet rather than grieving and begrudging like Hadria in The Daughters of Danaus, Rebekah transforms her anguish into a reformative power,

⁶⁷ Stephanie Forward, "Attitudes to Marriage in the Late Nineteenth Century, with Special Reference to the Lives and Works of Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird, Sarah Grand and George Egerton," PhD thesis, the U of Birmingham, 1997, p. 76.

anticipating a course of action similar to that of Hester Durham, the heroic heroine of the story Rebekah told as a child to her dream baby in the Prelude, who helped the black people of India to confront violent, brutal enemies, while she herself endured the misery of losing her son and being badly treated by her husband. "If life has no value to you," Rebekah asks herself, "are there not others weaker than yourself to whom you can make it of value?" (FMTM, 278). Stopping any further sexual contact with Frank and merely keeping a nominal marriage with him since he refuses, for the sake of saving his face, her second divorce proposal, Rebekah teaches moral lessons to her children (the allegory of the alien race) and puts into practice her humanitarian ideal of "missionary maternity"⁶⁸ by adopting the poor orphan Sartje, Frank's illegitimate daughter, unknown to him and abandoned by the child's mother, the black servant girl. While retaining her motherly tenderness and human sympathy, Rebekah develops her intellectual power, demonstrating strength of will and adaptability as a way of resolving the hopeless impasse of her marriage.

Unlike the women in "Three Dreams in A Desert" and "The Spirit of the Ages," who have semi-deified counselors to instruct them "to rise," Rebekah in From Man to Man is all alone in her soul-searching. While the second dream woman in "Three Dreams in A Desert" is advised to let go from her breast the tiny baby boy, the embodiment of the immature child-man, so as to continue her quest journey, Rebekah, being a mother of four sons and one adopted girl, chooses to sever not her (pseudo-)biological web with the children, but her spousal tie with the child-husband Frank and to live an independent life of her own. This decision reveals not only Schreiner's homage to motherhood, but also her conception that marriage should be

⁶⁸ A term coined by Laura Chrisman to indicate an ideology of combining "maternal and missionary notion of feminism as the making and saving of souls." See her article, "Empire, 'Race' and Feminism at the *Fin de Siècle*: The Work of George Egerton and Olive Schreiner," Cultural Politics at the *Fin de Siècle*, ed. Sally Ledger & Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 45-65, 59, 45.

built upon “a fellowship of comrades, rather than [on] the relationship of the owner and the bought, the keeper and the kept” (W&L, 105). In order not to live as a married prostitute and a sex parasite, nor to abandon her children, leaving them in danger of becoming as degenerate as their father, and by no means willing to see the weak weakened and destroyed, Rebekah’s decision and action pave a new way for her sister descendents to follow, especially for those who, like her, are mother artists. Her new life may be suffused with many difficulties since she has to support not only herself but also her five children. Yet, as Schreiner observes, “any course of human action leading to adjustment leads also to immediate suffering . . . suffering is the crown of thorns which marks the kingship of earth’s Messiahs: it is the mark of the leader” (W&L, 112). In asserting her autonomy in balance with her maternal duty, what Rebekah experiences and suffers is the very preparation she needs to become an example for the New Woman and the New Mother to come.

Maternal geopolitics

In the portrayal of Rebekah’s spiritual awakening, it is particularly worth noting that the two interludes take place in her study, a small room compartmentalized from her children’s bedroom as an expedient for her to take up her maternal duty at the same time as her private writing. Elaine Showalter in her influential book A Literature of Their Own has argued that the image of an enclosed, secret room has been a popular, powerful symbol in women’s novels since Jane Eyre, and that this image, when it comes to the end of the nineteenth century, has become associated with the womb and women’s conflict.⁶⁹ In her discussion of feminist novels from 1880 to 1920, Showalter comments that Schreiner’s fictional world is “obsessed with a femaleness

⁶⁹ Elaine Showalter, A Literature of Their Own: From Charlotte Brontë to Doris Lessing (1977; London: Virago, 1978), 33.

grown monstrous in confinement—a world full of Bertha Masons.”⁷⁰ To her, Rebekah’s tiny room is full of femaleness, because it is next to her children’s room and close to Nature (a garden); the fossil collection stored inside symbolizes the evolutionary past. The study, all in all, presents “literally a womb with a view . . . [and] Rebekah is like a prisoner in a cell.”⁷¹

Showalter’s critique is not, it seems to me, completely applicable, because, first and foremost, Rebekah’s study is made of her own free will for her personal use rather than imposed by any male force and treated as a form of capture, a situation, *pace* some modern critics, contrary to Gilman’s narrator in “The Yellow Wallpaper,” who is kept inside the attic nursery by her physician husband John.⁷² While Rebekah creates a space of her own, tiny as it is, for personal writing and thinking under her full control (Frank has no access to it as he has no idea where to find the key of the room), Gilman’s narrator is locked up in the limited space, forbidden to write anything because of her rest cure treatment, and is supervised by John’s sister Jennie when he is absent or busy on medical cases. In her recognition of the fact that Rebekah uses the study as a refuge, Showalter fails to see the value of the space, a space created out of a mother artist’s self-will to possess “a room of her own,” which not only represents her determination for intellectual independence but also helps her spiritual awakening later, manifesting a visualization of her psyche.

Juxtaposing Rebekah’s study with Beth’s attic in The Beth Book, Ann Heilmann scrutinizes the ways in which spatial politics is incorporated differently in the personal pursuits of the two artist heroines. To Heilmann, Beth’s secret attic room could be regarded as “a metaphorical womb,” from which Beth not only undertakes

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 202-03.

⁷² Both Showalter and Heilmann parallel the attic nursery in Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper” with Rebekah’s study. See Showalter, A Literature of One’s Own, 203; Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 150-51.

embroidery for financial independence, but more importantly, gives birth to her creative writing.⁷³ Rebekah's study, a space where she does needlework for children and where she embarks on her writing, on the contrary, is open to her children, a fact potentially revealing the conflicts her double identities as mother and artist may involve; thus the study is "the site of radical ambivalence."⁷⁴ Not only that, Heilmann goes on to assert, its size and surrounding suggest the claustrophobic confinement of Rebekah, both literally and literarily (her writing is repeatedly interrupted, illustrated by her short scraps, notes, letters or dashes in the diary). Thus although the study itself is "a mirror-image of Rebekah's development" (books of various kinds and collections of insects, fossils, and art since her childhood),⁷⁵ Heilmann argues that it is a demonstration of the "heavy toll [on Rebekah's] creative energy" implicit in marriage and motherhood.⁷⁶ The study, in short, is "refuge and prison-house in one" and Rebekah, Heilmann avers, fails to rediscover a female tradition as Beth does.⁷⁷

In their concentration upon the spatial enclosure of Rebekah's study, Heilmann's arguments reveal some interpretative fallacies in my view. Firstly, while she sees Rebekah's study as a property in Frank's house, she sees Beth's secret attic as "a room of her own," despite its being in Dan's house. If the study is not a room of Rebekah's own, why is it that Frank "is pointedly excluded" from it, to use Heilmann's words?⁷⁸ Secondly, both Beth's attic and Rebekah's study are small,

⁷³ Ann Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism* (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's P, 2000), 184-89; for the quotation, see p. 155. For criticisms on Beth's secret attic room, see also Heilmann's "Feminist Resistance, the Artist and 'A Room of One's Own' in New Woman Fiction," *Women's Writing* 2.3 (1995): 291-308, 297-300; Lyn Pykett, *The 'Improper' Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), 181-85; Showalter, *A Literature of One's Own*, 208-09. See also my reading of it in Chapter 3, pp. 206-10.

⁷⁴ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 150.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 152, 148.

⁷⁸ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 150. As I will point out later, Rebekah is financially

but Heilmann glorifies the smallness of the former, comparing it to a metaphorically productive womb, while applying claustrophobic discourse to the latter, arguing that Rebekah's submission to duty in line with patriarchal authority is pointless.⁷⁹ It is indeed true that, in contrast to the small window with a narrow view in Rebekah's study, there is a large bow window in Beth's attic room looking out over the garden. But Rebekah's study, circumscribed as it is, stands for the autonomy of the space in which she works on her writing, albeit intermittently.⁸⁰ Her self-sacrifice in taking on maternal duties, as my earlier discussion has shown, is not an expression of her submission to patriarchal regulation but an expression of her voluntary motherhood, first out of spousal love and later as an assumption of the mission of reformative motherhood.

It is certainly true that identity discrepancy (a childless wife versus a mother of four sons plus one adopted girl) is the main cause of the different lives of Beth and Rebekah. Yet to convict Rebekah as an artist *manquée* in contrast to Beth as a successful writer and orator is unfair to Rebekah, in my view, because the identities of the two women have formed in response to quite different circumstances, and Rebekah's are considerably more complex. Although putting them on the same footing for a comparison may offer a lucid picture of how maternal duty affects the mother artist's self-development, I would rather draw attention to the alternatives the mother Rebekah creates for herself in the attempt to keep a balance between her personal quest and her maternal devotion. Rebekah, in my view, is given more resilience than Beth and is altogether a more significant figure.

Nineteenth-century fiction by women, as Rachel Blau DuPlessis indicates, often

independent of Frank, so it is very possible that Rebekah uses her own money to compartmentalize part of her children's bedroom for her own study. This also applies to her building another house in the garden for her younger children and herself.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 150, 154.

⁸⁰ Beth embarks on her writing in the secret attic room when Dan goes out for work, and sometimes her writing has to be stopped abruptly, if Dan returns home earlier or unexpectedly.

resolves the contradiction of romance and quest plots by repressing *Bildung* either by marriage or death.⁸¹ When it comes to the last two decades of the century where New Woman fiction emerges and is prevalent with artist heroines' aspirations for personal pursuits, literary attention, as Lyn Pykett remarks, centers minutely "on the conflicts, frustrations, and the compromised or thwarted careers and/or vocations of the professional woman writer and the aspiring woman artist," revealed in a recurrent pattern of either New Grub Street writers or unhappy married wives and mothers who, under the social pressures, give up their artistic ambitions.⁸² However, critical focus, it seems to me, pays less attention to maternal space in conjunction with voluntary motherhood than to the condemnation of maternal duty and self-sacrifice as the very obstacles to women's self-development, a condemnation which seems to present motherhood and creativity as two entities so incompatible that, if a woman chooses the former, she is unable to realize the latter. Granted that Schreiner herself suffered in her life from a conflict between her writing and her duty to others,⁸³ and given that she has her autobiographical heroine Rebekah express the dilemma between giving birth to artistic work and fulfilling the duty to satisfy others' needs (FMTM, 459), I think what Schreiner sets out to present, both in fiction and in fact, is a conflict not exclusively maternal but existential, relevant to all humanity, men

⁸¹ Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Writing Beyond the Ending: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985), 3-4.

⁸² Lyn Pykett, "Portraits of the Artist as a Young Woman: Representations of the Female Artist in the New Woman Fiction of the 1890s," Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question, ed. Nicola Diane Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 135-50, 136. For relevant critiques on New Woman artist novels, see also Heilmann, "Feminist Resistance, the Artist and 'A Room of One's Own' in New Woman Fiction," 291-308; *idem*, New Woman Fiction, 155-93.

⁸³ In a letter to Mrs. J. H. Philpot on December 25, 1885, Schreiner articulated an existential impasse between one's duty and one's work:

Life, from the time one enters it, seems to be a battle between the duty one owes to one's work of life, and the duty one owes to the fellowmen one loves and to one's own nature. If one was a little wiser, one would know how to combine all.

As she hoped her work would help other people, Schreiner wanted to save more time for her writing, but faced with a visit, she yielded to the necessity of talking to visitors and thus spent less time on her work. In a letter to Havelock Ellis on March 1, 1886, Schreiner lamented that "This question between the duty to the individual and the work is the agony of my life. Whichever side I decide for my conscience tortures me on the other." See LeOS, 88, 94.

and women alike: “that suffocating sense that all his life long a man or woman might live striving to do his duty and then at the end find it all wrong” (FMTM, 459). When a decision has to be made, compromise or renunciation of one side of the conflict becomes unavoidable.

Given Schreiner’s argument in Woman and Labor that women are the mothers of humanity and that motherhood inculcates reformatory functions in teaching, guiding, helping, serving, and loving, and given that Rebekah’s children are still young, the youngest not yet born in the two interludes, and that she has neither a helpful nurse nor a supportive husband to help her, it would be impossible for Schreiner to have Rebekah ignore or abandon her children to pursue her professional development, as George Mandeville does to her only daughter Rosina in Elizabeth Robins’ George Mandeville’s Husband (1894).⁸⁴ While fingers are pointed at Rebekah’s failure to rediscover a female tradition, I would argue that Rebekah is “creating” an alternative that takes account of her own situation as well as her children’s growth, a creation manifest in the two successive designs of her study, in her taking over a farm and building another house in the garden. In From Man to Man, I suggest, Schreiner attempts to establish a maternal geopolitics to pave a new way of life for independent mothers to follow. Her contrivance, I would argue, is to bestow upon Rebekah “genius” in reconciling voluntary maternal self-sacrifice and reformatory motherhood with personal autonomy, holding up Rebekah’s efforts at

⁸⁴ In Elizabeth Robins’ George Mandeville’s Husband (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1894), the heroine, Miss Lois Carpenter, under the pseudonym of George Mandeville, is a professional novelist and dramatist. In order to establish her literary reputation, she devotes her time to her writing or busies herself in socializing with the elite, and thus leaves the duty of nurturing her only daughter Rosina to her husband, a frustrated artist, Mr. Wilbraham. George Mandeville’s growing professional ambition is evidenced by her occupation of her husband’s private space: first, his studio is turned into a drawing room to entertain her friends, and later his box room is given over to her friend who comes as her assistant. Rosina is educated by her father to be feminine and is forbidden to develop any artistic talents. She receives no love and care from her mother throughout the novel. In the end, she gets ill by sitting too long in a cold theatre watching her mother’s play and dies shortly after.

combining literal, literary and financial labors as an example of a virile woman/motherhood that is a world away from sex parasitism and married prostitution, and true to the very tenets Schreiner herself advocates in Woman and Labor.

As if to echo the five-year-old Rebekah in the Prelude, who uses a spare room for her private space whenever she wants to be alone, the adult Rebekah makes a small study for herself in order to obtain solitude. Although her writing, as the two interludes vividly present, is often undertaken late at night, when her children are asleep, and is constantly interrupted by her need to be alert to their call, the study is still a refuge for her to meditate and express her thoughts and feelings in the diary: "For days often, and sometimes for weeks, she did not come into this room; but she knew it was there; and there was always a quiet spot in her mind answering to it" (FMTM, 149). Although Rebekah indeed sacrifices herself for the children's sake, she does not completely forsake her personal interest. As has been indicated earlier, Schreiner lays special emphasis on the mother's nurturing role in the early stages of a child's life; the door of Rebekah's study, opening onto the children's room, demonstrates this significant correlation. The study's location also reveals Rebekah's dual attempts to sustain her selfhood without overlooking her maternal duty. Implicitly, it also tells something about her relationship with Frank.

Geographically, the study's situation is peripheral, connecting to the children's room, which in turn is linked to her marital chamber with Frank. While all three spaces communicate, indicating the family's interrelations, the peripheral location of the study signifies, on the one hand, its isolation essential for Rebekah's solitary writing, and on the other hand, its marginality, suggesting that her writing has to take second place to the children, whose room, located in the middle of the three, underlines its importance. However, Rebekah's walling up of the door of the study

after her fourth child is born, shortly after her spiritual awakening, symbolizes not only a halt to her intensive maternal care for her two older children, but most importantly, the end of her sexual relations with Frank. Just as there is no longer any architectural connection of her study to Frank's room, so there is no longer any substantial relationship between them. That Rebekah builds another house in the garden, to which she moves and where she lives with her three younger children, a space completely severed from the main building of Frank's house, reveals even more clearly her determination to mark her life off from her debauched husband. Rebekah's study, after its inner door to the children's room is walled up and the original window is turned into a door to the outside garden, becomes an independent unit, emblemizing her emotional and sexual independence. It also implicates her intellectual uniqueness as being no longer affected by marriage.

While the study embodies Rebekah's intellectual activity and her emotional and sexual life with Frank, the little farm she buys using the money her father gives her and a mortgage she raises tells something more about her practical ability to survive independently. The farm is an immediate source of relief, when she suffers the deadly blow of Frank's second affair with the station-master's niece. It is a place for her to give vent to her marital tension and discontent, and most importantly, a source from which she gains an income by growing plants and selling crops. Like a child of nature, Rebekah enjoys working in the open air on the farm. Whenever she goes there, she takes the children with her. The farm, as she describes to Frank in her letter, is "my hold on freedom and life; and it has been so to me ever since" (FMTM, 260). Seen in this light, it may be reasonable to assume that it is not the children but wedlock with a philanderer that troubles Rebekah and makes her invest her hope in the farm. "Married by ante-nuptial contract" (FMTM, 129), Rebekah has been economically independent from Frank long since. She buys Frank's poor

horse with a broken leg (FMTM, 245); she even pays for her own ticket when they attend the concert together (FMTM, 394). Frank's businessman's instinct in trading with Rebekah seemingly testifies to what Lady Benyon observes in The Beth Book: "beware of a man who does his own housekeeping. When they keep the money in their own hands, and pay the bills themselves, don't trust them. That sort of man is a cur at heart, you may be sure" (BB, 144). Although the narrative does not indicate who does the housekeeping, it does point out that Rebekah does not rely on Frank financially. Frank's nature, as revealed in Rebekah's letter, has just proven to the reader what "a cur at heart" he is.

From the study to the farm and the garden house later, it is evident that Rebekah is making efforts to create a maternal as well as a marital space of her own. Although she compromises her personal writing with her maternal duty, it is a temporary, transitional expedient for her to reconcile the conflicts while her children are still very young. Just as she can be resilient enough to manage a farm, rescuing herself from mental agony while supporting herself financially, so she can be strong-minded enough to separate herself from Frank, keeping merely a nominal relationship with him. Similarly, it may be reasonable to assume that Rebekah will draw her full attention back to her writing, when her children grow older and do not need so much of her care.

In depicting a mother artist, Schreiner presents and predicts an experience as well as a dilemma that will be commonly faced by all women, single and married mothers alike, who attempt to pursue their professional ambitions while at the same time responding to their maternity. In undertaking dual labors, literal and literary, with contradictory natures, Rebekah shows her genius in reformative motherhood and sophisticated journal and letter writing. Her labor on the farm also demonstrates her genius in practical skills for survival. As Ideala pointedly

observes in The Beth Book:

Women who work for women in the present period of our progress—I mean the women who bring about the changes which benefit their sex—must resign themselves to martyrdom. Only the martyr spirit will carry them through. . . . There is little union between women workers, and less tolerance. (BB, 392)

If Schreiner presents Rebekah as a martyr to set an example for her sisters to follow,⁸⁵ she may also expect her readers to extend their tolerance to her heroine of genius. Not only that, Schreiner implies, but sisterly solidarity and human compassion to support, encourage, and help mother artists like Rebekah should be extended from the fictional world to reality.⁸⁶

To some extent, I think From Man to Man bears a resemblance to The Awakening (1899), another *fin-de-siècle* feminist piece written by the American southern regionalist, Kate Chopin, who was also a New Woman writer. Both novels locate their heroines in foreign cultures due to their marriages: Rebekah lives on the outskirts of metropolitan Cape Town, a community different from her natural, remote birthplace, Thorn Kloof in the karoo of the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope; and Edna inhabits Grand Isle, a famous resort near the bustling New Orleans city and distinguished by a candid Creole culture alien to Edna's traditional, Presbyterian Kentucky upbringing. While experiencing difficulty in involving themselves with new cultures and new communities, both heroines also face a

⁸⁵ In line with social purity feminism, Schreiner pays homage to martyrs who suffer for the benefits of others. In a letter to Havelock Ellis on February 19, 1885, she wrote, "When one breaks away from all old moorings, and shapes a higher path of morality for oneself, and perhaps for others who shall follow one, it cannot be done without suffering." In another letter to Mrs. Francis Smith on August 27, 1912, she noted, "Personally I prefer the martyr to the warrior—but I admire the warrior too." See LeOS, 59, 317.

⁸⁶ In a letter to Mrs. J. H. Philpot on March 17, 1889, Schreiner talked about her desire to help other women:

I wish I was large and strong and could put my arms round all the tired lonely women in the world and help them. The work of my life is to try and teach women to love one another. If we would leave off quarrelling with men and just love and hold each other's hands all would come right. Oh, I love the two women in my book so [Rebekah and Bertie in From Man to Man]. I am getting to love women more and more. I love men too, so very much—only they don't *need* me. (LeOS, 157, emphasis in original)

dilemma between maternal duty and creative impetus: Edna is a painter-mother of two sons, and Rebekah is a writer-mother of four sons (and one adopted girl later).

Although Edna's husband Léonce is not as adulterous as Rebekah's husband Frank, the two men share similar patriarchal notions in belittling their wives, imposing upon them the full responsibility of child-rearing.⁸⁷ Léonce reproaches Edna for her carelessness, seeing it as the cause of their son's illness, "If it was not a mother's place to look after children, whose on earth was it?" (A, 7). Impatient of Rebekah's insistence that he should read her letter produced out of her sitting up the whole night, Frank rebukes Rebekah's irrational behavior,

If you don't care anything for me or yourself, you might at least think of your duty towards the child. . . . If you've no sense of right, or shame, or decency left in you, please remember I have. You are not fit to be allowed to have children at all if you conduct yourself in this manner! . . . you're acting like a mad woman. (FMTM, 227)

In addition to their patriarchal dominance of labor division, both Léonce and Frank enjoy the Victorian spatial privilege of the public sphere. Whereas Léonce busies himself during the weekdays on Carondelet Street, a New Orleans Wall Street so to speak, and finds entertainment at Klein's hotel or men's clubs on weekends, Frank enjoys the travel his job entails on the frontier and often has fun at parties, in fishing trips, billiard games with his male friends, or even affairs behind Rebekah's back. In other words, both Edna and Rebekah are frequently left alone with their children at home.

As mother artists, Edna and Rebekah have made efforts to create a room of their own. While Edna makes an atelier in the top of Léonce's house for her painting,

⁸⁷ Schreiner thinks it necessary that couples should share the duty of child-rearing together. In a letter to Betty Molteno on October 11, 1896, she wrote,

I do think the husband and wife should share equally or almost so the care of the children: but ostriches are the ideal creatures to me in that respect—the way in which the male watches over the eggs and the young with as much tender solicitude as the female. My ideal is an equal care physical and mental from both father and mother. (OSL, 291)

Rebekah makes a study in Frank's house for her thinking and writing. Edna "like[s] the dabbling. She [feels] in it satisfaction of a kind which no other employment afford[s] her" (A, 12). Rebekah likes "scribbling" and scratching out sentences in her diary writing.⁸⁸ They both open their "professional" rooms for their children; Edna's atelier is especially open to others, because she needs models to pose for her painting. The locations of their studios are also significant in that both the rooms are at peripheral sites, a location indicative of their unimportance in the family on the one hand, but suggestive on the other hand of the isolation required for their mistresses' creative undertakings. Where Edna uses inherited money and the money she gets from selling her paintings to buy a pigeon house of her own and virtually moves there, Rebekah, albeit still staying in Frank's property, buys a farm with the money her father gives her at her wedding and a bond she places with the bank. Edna is infatuated with the sea, a natural source of inspiration for her spiritual awakening, and attains her autonomy through learning to swim. Rebekah often goes with her children to the farm, a natural healing source for soothing her spiritual anguish from marriage, and obtains financial independence from growing and selling plants.

In terms of emotional life, both Edna and Rebekah have an ambiguous relationship alongside the relationship with their husbands. Edna has Robert LeBrun, an imaginative romantic lover to inspire her sexual desire; Rebekah has Drummond, a visionary platonic lover to conjure up her spiritual force. However, while Robert decides to leave Edna, it is Rebekah, according to the novel's ending Cronwright-Schreiner provides, who chooses to leave Drummond. Robert loves Edna but he does not want her to bear the social castigation of adultery. He may also be a conventional man himself, who dares not transgress traditional mores and

⁸⁸ See FMTM, 150, 151, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 229, 250, 273.

morality to be with her. Rebekah, on the other hand, cherishes the close fellowship with Drummond, but she does not want this ideal spiritual union to be blemished by any erotic intimacy. In order not to degrade this love, she leaves Drummond for good. In their search for love, Rebekah cares more for spiritual and emotional sublimation and Edna for sexual liberation.⁸⁹

In addition to the difference in the love quest, the two novels also differ from each other in one major point, crucial enough to lead to their different endings: the heroines' attitudes towards motherhood. Edna loves Robert, but it is not because she loses him that she commits suicide by drowning herself in the sea. Rather, it is because of the conflicts she is trapped in, the conflict between her maternity and her autonomy. While Edna wants to have her own way of doing things, even though she has to "trample upon the lives, the hearts, the prejudices of others," she knows that she "shouldn't want to trample upon the little lives" (A, 105). She awakens to the fact that one can never sever the biological web from one's own children, and that any discretions of hers, discretions according to social standards but in opposition to her personal judgment, will definitely dishonor her children: "Today it is Arobin, tomorrow it will be some one else. It makes no difference to me, it doesn't matter about Léonce Pontellier—but Raoul and Etienne [her sons]" (A, 108). Feeling that her children are "like antagonists who had overcome her; who had overpowered and sought to drag her into the soul's slavery for the rest of her days," Edna finds a way to "elude them"—death (A, 108). While she loses her life, she does not lose her self.⁹⁰ From another perspective, however, it could also be said that Edna surrenders to the will of the world by ending her suffering via death.

⁸⁹ Schreiner has touched on topics of erotic sexual pleasure in her writing, but I don't think she deals with this issue in *From Man to Man*. Berkman has some elaboration about this, see her book, *The Healing Imagination of Olive Schreiner*, 151-54.

⁹⁰ Anne Goodwyn Jones, *Tomorrow Is Another Day: The Women Writer in the South, 1859-1936* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1981), 169, quoted in Carole Stone, "The Female Artist in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*: Birth and Creativity," *Women's Studies* 13.1-2 (1986): 23-32, 30.

Rebekah, on the contrary, does not see maternity as burdensome. Although she questions the duty to others and the duty to work, she is resilient enough to transform her situation into powerful agencies: a reformatory motherhood and a maternal space. While Edna gives herself physical death to elude the maternal bond, Rebekah tries to make the most/best out of the least/worst by assigning herself the grand mission of educating a better, healthier generation. Despite the fact that she has once thought of suicide, that attempt, as the narrative unravels, is “an instant . . . impulse” (FMTM, 277) and is extinguished by her will/reason shortly afterwards. Thus her life is *not*, as Penelope A. LeFew asserts, “doomed to . . . [be that] of emptiness and frustration . . . in a state of emotional and spiritual atrophy” (emphasis added).⁹¹ Rather, it is a portrait of a mother artist’s transformation with will, labor, courage, intellect and resilience, a model of Schreiner’s virile womanhood so to speak. Different from Chopin’s pessimism, Schreiner enacts a deeper respect for life and a heroic solemnity to fight against the unbearable for survival. Rebekah’s spiritual awakening, tortured and solitary as it is, opens up a new vision and a new life for herself and her children. It also preaches to the reader the “spirits” of the novel, demonstrating what a powerful spirit archetype Rebekah is in the writer’s representation of a Humanistic Bible.

The postlude: The spirit hero Mr. Drummond

As with the apparatus of the Wise Old Man and the Romantic Knight, Schreiner establishes the image of the Platonic Lover in From Man to Man to show her ideal New Manhood. In line with Caird’s and Grand’s reluctance to bestow absolute supremacy on the New Men, sidelining or disempowering their narrative importance,

⁹¹ Penelope A. LeFew, “Schopenhauerian Pessimism in Olive Schreiner’s A [sic] Story of an African Farm and From Man to Man,” English Literature in Transition 37.3 (1994): 303-16, 313-14.

Schreiner keeps her platonic lover Drummond obscure almost throughout the whole novel until the final two chapters, asserting his value by merely one twenty-third narrative length in the text.⁹² However, as opposed to her sister contemporaries' tactics in underlining, even in already limited narratives, the plausible weaknesses of the New Man figures (the Wise Old Man's absence at critical moments and the Romantic Knight's physical and mental vulnerability), Schreiner portrays Drummond with a relatively powerful force, if not in the climactic sense, in his capacity to open up an intellectual conversation with Rebekah, discussing, significantly, their common interest in art, a condition Rebekah has already fantasized in her philosophical rumination in the first interlude:

Often at night, as she sat alone in that room [her study], she had pictured to herself what great works of art must be like, or great orchestral music. She had seen or heard neither, but she dreamed of them, as she dreamed of what it must be to be one of a company of men and women in a room together, all sharing somewhat the same outlook on life and therefore thinking somewhat the same thought, and able to understand one another without explanation—a thing she knew was possible somewhere in time and space. (FMTM, 149)

As if in answer to Rebekah's utopian anticipation, Drummond appears seemingly to fulfill her idealized vision: both of them possess a taste for art, hold similar opinions about artistic creation, and take on writing themselves. Their dialogue presents a rational, intellectual and harmonious picture, so spiritually exhilarating to themselves that it is precisely at this moment that Drummond fully activates his role as the spirit archetype in his interaction with the spirit heroine Rebekah. It is also a time, albeit transitory, when Schreiner projects to her readers what an ideal Garden of Eden would be like.

⁹² Though Drummond appears in the penultimate chapter (from page 425 in the 463 pages of the novel) offering to help look for Rebekah's lost sister, the spiritual aspect of his role as the New Man does not come into play until he discusses art and artists with her in the final chapter, lasting 17 pages or so.

Rebekah's talk with Drummond, lasting one and half hours at night, proceeds after an ellipsis in the narrative, the punctuation itself intimating some descriptions to be left out. Awkward as the impression it makes on the reader may be at first sight, since the context preceding and following it shows a clear narrative gap, Schreiner may have wanted to separate this dialogue section from the previous narrations, where Rebekah fantasizes and later virtually realizes the exhibition of her study to Drummond. While the previous narrations depict the couple's common interests in art collection, the separated dialogue shows their shared views on artistic creation. Its exclusiveness, it seems to me, stands for an additional exposition, a further account of the couple's compatibility in minds and souls, so well-matched that they make ideal platonic lovers. If the postlude, in contrast to the prelude's prefiguration, is to provide a final sketch to emphasize the main theme of the work, in other words the central "spirits" articulated in the interludes, Rebekah's dialogue with Drummond at the end of the novel offers a similar echo of Schreiner's utopian dream of an equal, harmonious heterosexual relationship. Intellectually, I would argue, it also opens up a window for the reader to see a continuity of literary rhetoric from the Romantic to the Modern periods in relation to art, life and creativity.

Essentially, the talk is aesthetic because it is mainly concerned with artistic products, artistic process in relation to artists' function. Drummond begins to explore artists' receptivity to others' comments on their works. He compares artists' works in the literary market to one's own children put up for auction. No matter what people's criticisms are, artists always feel insulted, because to sell their artistic products is like eating their own children. Publishers' exploitation of artists' labors without giving them proper material reward is also akin to literary prostitution. To Drummond, any artistic product is unique as it is. The reason why artists create is not for the purpose of pleasing the mass of the people, nor for the sake of money, but

simply because they have to create (FMTM, 445-46). Echoing Percy Bysshe Shelley's concept in "A Defence of Poetry" that poetry is developed out of "the conscious portions of our natures . . . unprophetic either of its approach or its departure" (DP, 788), an inspiration independent of the poet's intention, effort and consciousness, Drummond proposes that artistic creation arises from a spontaneous artistic impulse over which artists themselves have no control. Parallel to Schreiner's own experience in writing the Prelude,⁹³ Drummond uses the image of folded-up pictures to illustrate the special feature of the creative process, characterized by successive quick flashes of thought that come unpredictably and from the artists know not where (FMTM, 447).

The sudden flash of thought is a key concept in the dialogue. To Drummond, it is one's soul out of which one's imagination springs. To Rebekah, it has something to do with one's unconscious intuition, a spontaneous response beyond the artist's control. In Rebekah's opinion, there are three stages to the creative process. The flash of thought belongs to the first one; it is a mind-picture, a blue-print of a certain artistic work in the artist's mind. It is not until the artist's actual involvement in making an external image, which is the second stage of the creative process, that the flash of thought can take its shape in the real world. During this period, unconscious intuition within the artists may urge them to resist outer obstacles, such as sensuous pleasure, or the pursuit of wealth or duty of any kind. The imperativeness of this intuitive impetus, "the desire to incarnate," Rebekah conceives, is synonymous with "the necessity of a woman to give birth to her child

⁹³ In a letter to Mrs. Francis Smith in October, 1909, Schreiner told her friend that she loved the Prelude very much because the piece came to her in a curious way that surprised her to a large extent:

One day . . . I was on the Riviera at Alassio; I was sitting at my dear old desk writing an article on the Bushman and giving a description of their skulls;--when suddenly, in an instant, the whole of this little Prelude *flashed* on me. You know those folded up views of places that one buys; you take hold of one end and all the pictures unfold one after the other as quick as light. That was how it *flashed* on me. (LeOS, 291, emphases in original)

when the full time has come,” so the work of art just proceeds as naturally as birth giving (FMTM, 453). It is at the third stage, when artistic works are completed after the artists’ thorough examination and revision, that artists may depart from their labors, which are now organic entities: “The child is weaned,” says Rebekah (FMTM, 454). As such, any criticisms of the work make no change in the artists’ own estimation of their creations. The artists may also decide at this time how to deal with the works they have created: to sell, to destroy, or to keep, and so on.

To Drummond, art is prophetic because the artist “can paint the actions and emotions of characters in complex conditions in which he never was and of which he knew nothing—and yet life as it passes verifies his work” (FMTM, 450). In response to his viewpoint, Rebekah states,

Is it not . . . because no individual is an isolated nomad? He may be one minute growth of the life of his race, of humanity, of living things on earth. Is an artist not simply a man in whom some of the accumulated life of his race, of the millions of human creatures who have been his ancestors in the ages past, is stored? . . . Is not the curious confidence of the artist that he is right due to the fact that he is working by a curious inborn necessity? (FMTM, 450)

In expressing their individual ideas of art, both Drummond and Rebekah strike similar notions to Jung’s concept of the collective unconscious in the creative process.

According to Jung, the collective unconscious is universal, not individual: “it has contents and modes of behaviour that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals.”⁹⁴ It manifests itself through the primordial image called “archetype,” the function of which, as I have indicated earlier in the Introduction, is to represent ancestral experiences shared by communities of people and which serves to elicit intense emotional and psychological responses. Linking psychology with

⁹⁴ Carl Gustav Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” *CWCGJ*, 9.1: 3-41, 4.

literature, Jung thinks it necessary to define two different kinds of artists with different modes of creative process. One type creates a work of art based on his/her artistic treatment, material and purpose; the other type is someone who

is overwhelmed by a flood of thoughts and images which he never intended to create and which his own will could never have brought into being. . . . He can only obey the apparently alien impulse within him and follow where it leads, sensing that his work is greater than himself, and wields a power which is not his and which he cannot command.⁹⁵

Using Schiller's classification, Jung says that the former artist is *sentimental* and their artistic work *introverted*, while the latter artist is *naïve* producing *extraverted* works of art.⁹⁶ In Jung's own distinction, it is a contrast between *psychological* and *visionary* modes of creation. The psychological creative process is designed by the artist's conscious will and thus bound by the artist's personal life experience. The work of art produced from it often draws readers' attention to the psychology of the artist rather than to the psychology of the work itself.⁹⁷ The visionary creative process, on the contrary, is motivated by the artist's collective unconscious, "an autonomous complex" to create a suprapersonal work of art, which builds up "bridges thrown out towards an unseen shore."⁹⁸ The work of art produced from this process exists in its own right and expresses a genuine primordial experience.⁹⁹ It is precisely in this visionary creative process that Jung proposes the idea that the artist, by activating an archetypal image and shaping it into his/her work, translates the image into the language of the present, so as to pave a way for the reader to confront the deepest and most enduring ideas.¹⁰⁰ It is also the very process that

⁹⁵ Carl Gustav Jung, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology of Poetry," *CWCGJ*, 15: 65-83, 73.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Carl Gustav Jung, "Psychology and Literature" *CWCGJ*, 15: 84-105, 89-90, 83.

⁹⁸ Jung, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology of Poetry," *CWCGJ*, 15: 75-76. An emphasized quotation here, see also Part II, p. 243.

⁹⁹ Jung, "Psychology and Literature," *CWCGJ*, 15: 93-94.

¹⁰⁰ Jung, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry," *CWCGJ*, 15: 82. See also Introduction, p. 30 for the social functions of art and artists in Jung's mind.

both Drummond and Rebekah refer to with regard to the artist's uncontrollable impulse to create a work of art.

Artists' fidelity to their original intuition gives shape to the mind-pictures of their works of art.¹⁰¹ These objects of beauty are reflections of a truth beyond the limits of time and space, an aesthetic akin to the suggestion of John Keats's "Ode on the Grecian Urn" that a work of art "captures moments of intense experience [of the artist] in attitudes of grace and immobilizes them in marble" to retain its "permanence in a world of change."¹⁰² Using the Hercules statue that used to be Drummond's but is now her possession as an example, Rebekah exclaims:

to me the glory is that—after all these hundred, perhaps almost thousands, of years it has lain buried, while the man, whose being it first lived in, has for ages been Italian dust or rooted trees and plants on a Greek island—[the statue] has sprung out into life again—here, on the opposite side of the earth, after all those ages; with the joy, the comprehension of it, that throbbed in his brain when he saw it, beating here again in mine—the same, alive; it is *not* dead. When I finger it and feel its beauty, the throb in him lives, across all the centuries, as an actual throb in me. . . . You feel and touch it—your fellow life—from across all the countless ages; and all life seems to be knit together even across boundless time. (FMTM, 455-56, emphasis in original)

Spatiality and temporality, in other words, cannot limit the works of truth and beauty. When artists have their works in their final form, they preserve the moment of "a peculiar emotional intensity,"¹⁰³ the intuition that struck them. The works they produce are tokens of immortality, linking the artists' mind to the perceivers of their

¹⁰¹ In a letter to her husband on October 18, 1898, Schreiner talked about her idea of being a writer and her principle of creating a work of art following her own original intuition:

When you look at my hand when I am dead, you will be able to think that that hand never set one dot or one stroke on paper for the sake of money, and that, of all I have given to the world (poor as it is), there is not one word that stands there, which, if it had been in my power to better it, would not have been bettered. If I feel I have not expressed the exact truth that is in me in any line or sentence or book, it shall be destroyed, I will not give it out. (LeOS, 225)

¹⁰² John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," *NAEL*, 2: 822-23, 822, note 1.

¹⁰³ Jung, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry," *CWCGJ*, 15: 81.

works from the past to the present and presumably to the future as well, if the works are not destroyed. Rebekah's admiration of the Hercules statue testifies to this correlation and resounds with what Keats eulogizes in "Endymion: A Poetic Romance": "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:/ Its loveliness increases; it will never/ Pass into nothingness" (E, 800, lines 1-3), and in "Ode on the Grecian Urn": "'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,'—that is all/ Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know" (OGU, 823, lines 49-50).

In line with Drummond and Rebekah, Jung touches on artists' intuition and compares works of art to artists' children, asserting the feminine quality of the creative process.¹⁰⁴ In producing works of art, Jung thinks it inevitable that personal factors of whatever kinds will come into artists' choices as to which materials and forms they use for their work. He believes that the less personal the features, the more it is a work of art, "in its rising above the personal and speaking from the mind and heart of the artist to the mind and heart of mankind."¹⁰⁵ Artists, in Jung's mind, are more like a "nutrient medium," an "instrument" through which art comes out.¹⁰⁶ As Rebekah explicates for the second stage of the creative process, artists' internal forces demand successive revisions of the works created, until they match their original mind pictures. If the artists' function is primarily a tool to give substance to these mind pictures or is, as Joyce Avrech Berkman states, "the vessel of

¹⁰⁴ Jung, "Psychology and Literature," *CWCGJ*, 15: 103. For literary criticisms of the creative process as birth giving, see Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 149-50. See also Susan Stanford Friedman, "Creativity and the Childbirth Metaphor: Gender Difference in Literary Discourse," *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, ed. robyn r. warhol and diane price herndl [*sic*] (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1993), 371-96, in which Friedman places emphasis on the fact that the sex of the interpreter will influence the reading of the childbirth metaphor; Susan Gubar, "'The Blank Page' and the Issues of Female Creativity," *Writing and Sexual Difference*, ed. Elizabeth Abel (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvest P, 1982), 73-93, in which Gubar talks about women's writing as women's giving birth to their creativity.

¹⁰⁵ Jung, "Psychology and Literature," *CWCGJ*, 15: 101.

¹⁰⁶ Jung, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry," *CWCGJ*, 15: 72; *idem*, "Psychology and Literature," *CWCGJ*, 15: 101.

the collective unconscious,"¹⁰⁷ the artists' gender, it could be argued, becomes a matter of unimportance, because what matters is the psychology of the works of art rather than the psychology of the artists (male or female) in the visionary creative process.

In the dialogue, Rebekah repeatedly uses the masculine pronoun for the artist to describe the feminine trait of the creative process. Cherry Clayton regards this phenomenon as Schreiner's strategy to call into being women artists like herself.¹⁰⁸ Heilmann argues that it reveals Rebekah's dual conflicts in two roles: while she is an artist mothering her text, she excludes herself from the art realm which she defines as male.¹⁰⁹ Justifiable as their arguments may be in relation to the gender issue, I think Schreiner's focus here is to explain "the nature of art" (FMTM, 451), its special feature of immortality and the universal responses it arouses in people:

the thing we have loved, that has been so beautiful to us, should live on a little in the love of other souls, though we gain nothing by it and our names are not even known. (FMTM, 457)

. . . .

no man is merely an individual but is a part of the great body of life; the thoughts he thinks are part of humanity's thoughts, the visions he sees are part of humanity's visions; *the artist is only an eye in the great human body*, seeing for those who share his life: somewhere, some time, his own exist. (FMTM, 456, emphasis added)

Just as Schreiner generalizes her novel title as From Man to Man instead of From Woman to Woman to refer to all humanity, so she may just simplify the artists by using the male pronoun to refer to all artists (male, female, and cross-gender), whose function, in her mind, is "only an eye in the great human body" to see "that which [their] race has never seen" (FMTM, 456, 450).

¹⁰⁷ Berkman, The Healing Imagination of Olive Schreiner, 209. Berkman briefly touches on Jung's collective unconscious in relation to Rebekah's identification of the creative process, but she does not elaborate in detail how the two are correlated. See pp. 202, 209, 211.

¹⁰⁸ Cherry Clayton, Olive Schreiner (New York: Twayne, 1997), 17.

¹⁰⁹ Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 149.

always ready to help. It is the recurrence of Fortescue's positive influence that helps determine Hadria to pursue her musical career in Paris. However, as has been indicated, despite the fact that Fortescue appears on many occasions to help Hadria, he is absent at several critical moments that determine her fate. In this respect, therefore, it appears that Caird intends to weaken Fortescue's authority as a wise old man by mis-timing his appearances.

To Hadria, Fortescue is a spiritual wellspring, the only person whose advice she can trust. To Fortescue, Hadria is not only one of the weak that he intends to rescue, but his disciple in whom he wishes to implant the ideals he aims to popularize, something he has not yet achieved. As has been indicated, the wise old man in a female plot is sometimes the heroine's double and vice versa. In Caird's novel, Fortescue sees traits of himself in Hadria, for she has requisite qualities—"instincts, impulse, inspiration" (DD, 200)—that enable her not only to strive for self-development, but which make her, like Fortescue himself, "a knight-errant" to the helpless (DD, 490). At the same time, Hadria's struggles for self-expression coincide with Fortescue's own journey towards the advocacy of his humanistic concerns. Admittedly, both Fortescue and Hadria have to contend with similar conflicts and difficulties since their ideals are not recognized by the public. In Hadria's case, before marriage she is not allowed to pursue her professional ambition and most of the time her mother acts as the enforcer of this patriarchal dictate. In Fortescue's case, his efforts to rescue the weak, the unfortunate and the poor are incompatible with the contemporary societal trend of the survival of the fittest, a force exceeding his ability to fight it. There is no doubt that Hadria as a woman is among the weak, and her self-quest even makes her the weakest of the weak, a double victim, so to speak. If Fortescue is able to achieve his desired humanitarian transformation of society, it is not impossible that Hadria can be set free. Fortescue

while Heilmann argues that Schreiner only portrays Drummond as a successful artist, who once gives birth to his brain child,¹¹² I would argue that Rebekah is not an artist *manquée* because she does indeed produce two long pieces of work, albeit not in line with the literary conventional forms: her philosophical journal entry (with her monologue) and her passionate letter to Frank, the profound contents of which my previous discussion has already shown. In another chapter (chapter 7: “Fireflies in the Dark”) where she tells her children a moral allegory, moreover, Rebekah also demonstrates her artistic quality in acting as a story teller, as she had done in childhood to her imagined child in “The Prelude,” transforming the written text into the verbal form, a talk-story literary style similar to Maxine Hong Kingston’s The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts (1977) and Amy Tan’s The Joy Luck Club (1989).¹¹³ While Schreiner displays minutely Rebekah’s journal writing, letter writing, and her talk stories, she does not scrutinize at all Drummond’s writings in the novel. Considered in this light, it may be reasonable to assume that Rebekah is portrayed as an artist more active, versatile and sophisticated than Drummond in managing different literary writing techniques to fulfill her artistic capabilities.

From the perspective of general readers, Rebekah’s talk with Drummond is “dull” as Merryn Williams comments.¹¹⁴ But for two people who share the same interest, their immersion in conversation can be so exclusive that other people might think it merely a jargon hard to grasp. In delineating such a “hard” dialogue, it is evident that Schreiner intends to show her aesthetic conceptions, while throwing into

¹¹² Heilmann, New Woman Strategies, 150. Strictly speaking, Drummond has produced two brain children: one was written in his student time and he gave it to his friend for publication in exchange of money for his medical operation; the other is the writing he wishes Rebekah to take a look at, a work written ten years ago. See FMTM, 445-46.

¹¹³ Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts (1977; London: Picador, 1981); Amy Tan, The Joy Luck Club (1989; London: Vintage, 1998).

¹¹⁴ Williams, Six Women Novelists, 18.

relief how a spiritual union with common interest and common thought can spark intellectual stimulation, as she advocates in Woman and Labor.

As a matter of fact, Rebekah's commonality with Drummond has long been prefigured in the early part of the novel. As if she had found her double, Rebekah takes an interest in Drummond's belongings. She buys from his wife his Hercules statue and his book by Darwin, his marginal notes and comments with which Rebekah couldn't be more familiar, because she has been reading them over and over again and adding her own opinions. When Drummond visits Rebekah, the reader realizes more clearly their shared interests in collecting fossils, examining plants and insects, taking delight in nature's grace, and befriending animals and children. Physiologically, they also bear a resemblance. When Drummond first appears in person in the novel, that is, at the theatre where Rebekah and Frank attend the concert in the penultimate chapter, the first thing that draws Rebekah's attention to him is his hand, a hand, as the narrator tells us, "call[ing] back the sensations of [Rebekah's] childhood and of her past life," a hand, as she comes to realize later, reminding her of her own hand (FMTM, 426): an artistic hand for their respective writings. Suffering from an unhappy marriage to an unfaithful spouse, furthermore, both Rebekah and Drummond have tried to find a way to escape their spiritual agonies: Rebekah invests her spiritual consolation in the farm she buys, and Drummond engages himself continuously in travels and adventures, to such an extent that he is away from home for twelve years.

In depicting their commonality, Schreiner seems to establish, in my opinion, a triple reflexivity between Rebekah's stillborn twin sister, Drummond and Rebekah herself. Just as the child Rebekah in "The Prelude" sees her dead sister as her playmate and like her in appearance, so the adult Rebekah sees Drummond as her soul mate, who not only resembles her physically but more importantly, also shares

her thoughts, interests, and life experiences. Just as the child Rebekah generously offers her precious toys to her dead sister, so the adult Rebekah is eager to show Drummond the beloved treasures in her study, and even gives him the beautiful winged reptile fossil, "the crown of [her] collection" (FMTM, 443). Her earnestness in building a spiritual bond is further shown by her inviting Drummond to come to her study any time he wants. Not only that, Rebekah tells him where to find the keys of the study and the cabinet of her fossil collection inside the room, information open only to her children. This kind of wholehearted, unselfish devotion on Rebekah's part may be prompted by her expectation of a spiritual tie she never fully establishes among her family (her parents, her sister Baby-Bertie, and her husband Frank), a tie springing from a doubleness of some kind to reach a psychic affinity. In aligning the dead sister with Drummond, a contrast is drawn between sterile and living relationships. Since Rebekah cannot revive her dead sister, she might want to activate this tie, and even sublimate its level from that of familial to platonic through her interaction with Drummond, a man who not only offers voluntary help to look for her missing sister Baby-Bertie, but is also liberal enough to set up a man-to-man-like equal relationship with her, a relationship she fails to find with Frank.

Undoubtedly, Schreiner attempts to portray Rebekah and Drummond as the models of the New Woman and the New Man. In Woman and Labor, Schreiner says,

The New Man and Woman do not resemble two people, who, standing on a level plain, set out on two roads, which, diverging at different angles and continued in straight lines, must continue to take them farther and farther from each other the longer they proceed in them; rather, they resemble two persons who start to climb a spur of the same mountain from opposite sides; where, the higher they climb, the nearer they come to each other, being bound ultimately to meet at the top. (W&L, 113, emphases added)

Rebekah's encounter with Drummond happens after her long solitary spiritual awakening and after Drummond's self-exile for twelve years. Their individual experiences equate to their climbing opposite sides of the mountain, and their meeting with each other later amounts to their arrival at the summit. Obviously the dialogue overwhelms Rebekah as she has never experienced a spiritual interaction like this before. Her exultation can be shown in her wish to continue, despite its being quite late at night, their conversation after its being interrupted by her children's bedtime. Her ecstasy, nonetheless, does not completely turn her brain, for she shows her scruples in refusing Drummond's return invitation to see his fossil collection, even though he assures her that it won't interfere with anyone else. Rebekah's declining tells in part her unwillingness to be the third person in Drummond's marriage. It also lays bare her prudence in preventing herself from becoming the butt of gossipers, the very power that had driven Baby-Bertie to prostitution. And her refusal, it could be argued, also foreshadows the novel's ending when Rebekah chooses to leave Drummond forever.

Drummond's marital condition has, in effect, never been indicated clearly in the narrative, except that he once mentions ambiguously that he "had gone through a time of some stress" ten years ago (FMTM, 446). However, from patchy clues, the reader may draw a confident conclusion that his marriage is problematic, clues such as his absence from home for twelve years in ironic contrast to his wife's frequent declaration to people about his care for her by sending gifts and letters every week (FMTM 124-25), his attending the concert alone and the lack of description of his interaction with his wife in contrast to his frequent visits to Rebekah's house, and his unauthorized search for Rebekah's lost sister instead of spending more time with his wife after his return. Although he demonstrates his virility in mastering the world

through adventures,¹¹⁵ virility equivalent mostly to physical force, he shows impotence in the face of his marriage. Here Schreiner seems to echo implicitly Grand's lament over "the man of the moment"¹¹⁶ who lacks "the chivalry, the truth, and affection, the earnest purpose, the plain living, high thinking, and noble self-sacrifice that make a man."¹¹⁷ There is also a resonance of Rebekah's belief in truth in regard to the heterosexual relationship, a truth based on "an almighty sincerity" as "the highest sacrament of love" (FMTM, 159).¹¹⁸ While Frank is portrayed primarily as a debauched husband, Drummond's weaknesses seem to lie in his moral timidity and selfishness. Given that he assures Rebekah, in his voluntary search for Baby-Bertie, of his social privilege as a man to enter the places women have no access to, Drummond abuses this prerogative by traveling around the world, leaving his wife at home for twelve years, behavior no less selfish than that of Frank and Edna's husband Léonce. If he finds no love sustained in his marriage, he could simply divorce his wife rather than suspending this superficial marriage for such a long time. Victorian social regulation surely gives him the advantage of being able to release himself from the marriage contract easily; it is especially so since his wife commits adultery. Instead of taking the initiative to break the marriage, Drummond chooses to escape from it. Thus if there is anything disempowering his New Manhood, I would suggest that it is his irresolution, selfishness, and cowardice, in particular, his leaving his marital problems unresolved for twelve years, without even showing any intention, on his return, to settle them for good and all.

Parallel to Rebekah's poignant marriage with Frank, I think Schreiner presents, albeit circuitously, a counterpart in Drummond's marriage to explore, in addition to

¹¹⁵ Heilmann, *New Woman Strategies*, 150.

¹¹⁶ Sarah Grand, "The Man of the Moment," *North American Review* 158 (1894): 270-76, repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 50-57.

¹¹⁷ Grand, "The New Aspect of the Woman Question," repr. in *SSPSG*, 1: 33.

¹¹⁸ An emphasized quotation, see also p. 307.

the dialogue he initiates with Rebekah, what it should be like to be a New Man. Despite the fact that Drummond holds similar aesthetic views to Rebekah's, a fact testifying to their intellectual and spiritual union, which throws into relief his role as the spirit archetype, his attitude and inaction in dealing with his own marriage prevent him from showing a complete adaptation to the role of the New Man. For, as Schreiner indicates in Woman and Labor, the New Man must change and modify "in at least the same degree [as the New Woman] the moral and social obligation entailed by awakening lifehood" (W&L, 105). In contrast to Rebekah's virile resolution, albeit bound by Victorian norms, to find a way to deal with her marital problems, Drummond, though with considerably fewer social restraints, is yet passive, even cowardly enough not to manage his. The discrepancy between them may foretell, in this vein, the impossibility of their literal union. As Rebekah neither divorces Frank, nor Drummond divorces his wife, their spiritual affair on the platonic plane achieves its best state by reaching the deepest recognition of "the undying love between them" (FMTM, 462).

Cronwright-Schreiner stated in his Introduction to the novel that it was he who edited Schreiner's drafts, fragments, and revisions, "as far as possible, to give it to the world in the form in which Olive left it," the form in which we have it now.¹¹⁹ As he destroyed Schreiner's typescripts and manuscripts, Liz Stanley raises the question of the extent of Cronwright-Schreiner's impact on the novel, asserting that he may have made major changes, along the lines described in the Introduction, to make the novel publishable.¹²⁰ Although Cronwright-Schreiner claimed that the ending he provided was vouchsafed to him by Schreiner, it is not impossible that he willed it to some extent. It is also possible that the ending Schreiner told him was

¹¹⁹ Cronwright-Schreiner, "Introduction" to FMTM, 502.

¹²⁰ Liz Stanley, Imperialism, Labour and the New Woman: Olive Schreiner's Social Theory (Durham: sociology press, 2002), 95, 107, note 181.

only what she “considered” at that moment. Just as the novelistic plot differs drastically from that outlined by Schreiner to Havelock Ellis on July 9, 1886,¹²¹ it is possible that if Schreiner had lived longer, she might have wanted to change the ending again. Since the ending is open to some extent, a fact implicative of the likelihood of Schreiner’s miscarriage of bringing forth a finale proper for her utopian vision in the context of the late Victorian era to the early twentieth century, it gives subsequent readers the imaginative space to picture what an ideal New Man would have to be like in order to inhabit the ideal Garden of Eden with the New Woman/Mother.

In a letter to Havelock Ellis on August 7, 1884, Schreiner wrote:

I will explain to you about my style when I see you. I never know *why* I write things in a certain way when I write them, but I can generally find out if I think afterwards. What you mean is what I call “writing ribbed.” I don’t know when I invented that term for a certain style of writing. I am changing a whole chapter of *From Man to Man* from what I call the plain into the “ribbed” style. Sometimes the plain is right, sometimes the ribbed. I *think* I generally write descriptions in the plain and philosophise or paint thought in the ribbed. (You know in knitting there are two stitches, one makes a plain surface and the other makes ribs. Ribbed knitting goes up and down, up and down).¹²² (emphases in original)

This passage gives a clue to Schreiner’s narrative maneuver in From Man to Man: she uses “the ribbed style,” the journal incorporating a soliloquy, to display Rebekah’s philosophical ruminations in the first interlude; and based on Rebekah’s philosophical conclusions, Schreiner goes on to testify to Rebekah’s spiritual and emotional development through her letter writing to Frank in the second interlude. So that a depiction of Rebekah’s self-quest is subtly revealed through these “ribbed” writings. Both the journal writing and the letter writing are deviations from the

¹²¹ For the ending version provided by Cronwright-Schreiner, see his postscript to the novel, pp. 461-63. For the version Schreiner wrote to Havelock Ellis, see OSL, 91-95. See also p. 301, note 14.

¹²² Olive Schreiner’s letter to Havelock Ellis on August 7, 1884, LeOS, 38.

main narrative, but they are the essence of the novel, presenting the process of Rebekah's spiritual awakening to become a spirit heroine, through whom Schreiner intends to envisage a model of the New Woman and the New Mother for her sisters to follow. Such a portrayal also reveals Schreiner's belief in humanism and her expectation of an ideal heterosexual relationship, an ideal vision projected by the postlude, despite the impenetrable aesthetic jargon of its discourse, to cast light on the intellectual and spiritual interaction of the platonic two-souls-in-one comradeship. In her endeavor to throw into relief Rebekah's married prostitution, Schreiner calls for the necessity of women's independence—emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and financially—for the sake of future generations, a concern centralized on the importance of a virile woman/motherhood, similar in part to Grand's civic motherhood. In presenting Drummond as an idealized lover, Schreiner also draws attention to the nature of the New Man, covertly directing her critique to Drummond's flaws in dealing with his own marriage. Thus strictly speaking, Drummond is only a would-be New Man like Arthur in The Beth Book, and this may partially explain why he is portrayed as a platonic rather than a real lover.

Critics have long credited Schreiner's literary achievement in her warmly received work The Story of an African Farm and based their exploration of her feminist polemic on this first New Woman novel. However, it is the product of Schreiner's early twenties and cannot stand fully, in my opinion, for her life philosophy. To get an overall picture of her feminist political thought as molded by her life experience, I would suggest that we focus on From Man to Man, a book she worked on all her life. Although the novel is unfinished, it touches on multifarious issues, profound enough to make it a representation of Schreiner's "epic

enterprise,"¹²³ an enterprise in which she aims to enlighten her readers to go on building the bridge to the new Garden of Eden for the entire human race, as envisioned in "Three Dreams in a Desert" and Woman and Labor.

¹²³ Voss, "From Man to Man," 137.

Conclusion

In "The Psychology of Feminism" (1897), Hugh E. M. Stutfield commented on New Woman fiction:

Self-sacrifice is out of fashion altogether in our modern school of novelists, and self-development has taken its place. This consciousness of the self is of recent growth: it was unknown to our mothers and grandmothers, who, says Mrs. Devereaux, "knew as little about their sensations as a cabbage does about its growth."¹

While Stutfield pointed to the common portraiture of women's self-development in New Woman novels, he overlooked the fact that most of their heroines are impeded in their endeavor for professional pursuit due to the prohibitions placed on womanhood under patriarchy. As my previous discussion has shown, New Woman heroines either are forced to sacrifice themselves to meet societal expectations, as in the case of Hadria in Caird's The Daughters of Danaus, or they have to try to create a space of their own, literally and metaphorically, as an expedient to balance the conflicts between their traditional feminine duties and their personal development, expedients such as Beth and Rebekah resort to in Grand's The Beth Book and Schreiner's From Man to Man. To some extent, this expediency is another form of self-sacrifice, a result of women's compromising their professional calling in order not to incur familial friction or a catastrophe that might especially affect innocent children, if they have any. In saying so, however, women's compromise, it must be noted, does not mean their sacrificing their basic principles, the principles that they affirm in their pursuit of self-development.

In the novels under consideration, we see feminist New Woman writers' different attitudes towards women's self-sacrifice, implicit in their presentations of

¹ Hugh E. M. Stutfield, "The Psychology of Feminism," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine 161 (1897): 104-17, 110, repr. in LVMQ, 5.

the Child and the Spirit archetypes. While Caird forcefully attacks women's sacrifice, condemning those, including women, who encourage or foment this system to persecute women, she also ironically presents ineffective sisterhood, motherhood and parent-children relationships. Without doubt, Hadria's futile attempt at a musical career is attributable to her sister's selfish abandonment and her mother's injunction of daughterly duty, but Hadria herself also needs to bear responsibility for her own weak, indecisive character and her self-imposition of filial piety. In her chafing against marriage, Hadria neglects the fact that she uses marriage to escape from, rather than braving on her own, the familial burden, notwithstanding that her innocence makes her a prey to be tricked into a loveless union. While she bitterly criticizes institutionalized motherhood, we do not see her absolute rejection of marriage as legal prostitution, showing the same persistence (albeit for different causes) as Evadne's in resolutely maintaining her marital abstinence in Grand's The Heavenly Twins. Unable to choose their parents, Hadria's children become the innocent victims of the system their mother despises and hates and are forced to suffer Hadria's indifference to them. In her endeavor to renovate a new mother-daughter bond, Hadria's immaturity is shown in her using the adopted girl as a tool for her wish-fulfillment, given that she herself has experienced similar suffering as a daughter, who is forced to meet her mother's wishes no matter what. Once it becomes apparent that the girl is not going to become the instrument of Hadria's vengeance on men, she loses her function and Hadria is irresponsible enough to push her away to the father who had previously abandoned her. Thus, although Caird presents an abandoned child in Hadria who expresses discontent at women's sacrifice and the general lack of sisterhood, she also pictures, albeit covertly, those children who are mercilessly abandoned by Hadria, who fails to offer constructive mothering (and sisterhood in some sense), and whose weak character

relies on spirit figures like the Wise Old Men to give her strength, albeit with limited effect, for her self-development.

In depicting Hadria's story, Caird asserts, in the fourth epigraph I listed in the Introduction,² that she means to "present with fidelity to life the inner nature of the situation which every woman's history, in some degree, embodies," but I would have to concede that her presentation of "a woman of great power and large heart" is, in some respects, contradictory. Given that "the forces of tradition and prejudice" Hadria faces are tremendous, what we see is not so much how she uses her qualities ("great power and large heart") to confront those who block her way, as her hesitation, eschewal, frustration, and resentment. Of course, this can be a demonstration of just how powerful the societal forces are, but it also suggests that Hadria is a counter example, showing what women as constricted by the patriarchy generally lack and need. It could be argued that Caird's radical feminism is an appeal from without to within. It demands women's full existence as equal to men, seeing it as a prerequisite for the formation of well-developed women, who then can provide constructive mothering, if society truly cares about children's healthy development.

Compared to Caird, Grand and Schreiner's New Womanism is an emphasis from within to without. Despite the fact that they both are essentialist in affirming the idea of a natural difference between the sexes, Grand and Schreiner transform women's femininity (including maternity) into a powerful weapon. In their work, women's self-sacrifice is no longer a resentful, pathetic but glorified quality for the betterment of the nation, the race, and the world. In The Beth Book Grand infuses religious philanthropy into woman's moral superiority, manifested in Beth's

² See p.1. The epigraph is quoted from Mona Caird, "Letter to Prof. Viëtor," on December 5, 1896 in Ernst Foerster, Die Frauenfrage in den Romanen Englischer Schriftstellerinnen der Gegenwart (Marburg: N. G. Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1907), 52-54, repr. in LVMQ, 5.

unconditional sacrifice in nursing Arthur in the manner of a (K)night(ingale). The combined vision of feminine philanthropy is further shown in Beth's later devotion as a Holy Mother to preach and help those in poverty and in need. In From Man to Man Schreiner arms Rebekah's sacrifice with a mission of reformative motherhood to nurture better generations. In line with the ancient Teutonic womanhood, this "virile" motherhood also bears a resemblance to Grand's concept of civic motherhood, because both express a concern for the continuation of the British Empire. Because of the sanctification of women's self-sacrifice, the New Woman and the New Mother that Grand and Schreiner present are feminine but also resilient, tolerant, courageous, and strong-minded, synthesizing the virtues of the Old and the New Womanliness, and this is manifested in part by the heroines' strategic use of the spaces they create for themselves. This explains why Beth and Rebekah are portrayed as spirit figures who exert a positive influence. In saying so, I am not suggesting that essentialism is to be celebrated, but that Grand and Schreiner are strategic in re-conceptualizing women's "situated" conditioning for their feminist purpose. It is a subtle tactic, an apparent step back that makes your opponents lose their antagonism against you, while all the time you are actually using what they favor as a weapon against them.

At a time when the New Woman was greatly caricatured, feminist New Woman writers certainly applied some narrative strategies to promote their ideals. Of all the strategies I have discussed, I cannot overemphasize the significance of the fact that Caird, Grand, and Schreiner all appropriate the medieval concept of chivalry to elaborate their utopian cosmopolitanism.³ As the nature-child, the Red-Cross (K)night(ingale) and the Holy Mother, Beth performs chivalrous deeds to lead people

³ "Victorian cosmopolitanism" will be the conference theme for the Northeast Victorian Studies Association (NVSA) in America in 2007.

towards the spirit of comradeship without any distinction of class, race, or gender. Although Rebekah's maternal virility is domestic, it is actually a nationalistic project, a "'domesticated' politics"⁴ to nurture capable descendents in the long run. Her "missionary maternity"⁵ in adopting the illegitimate black orphan Sartje also demonstrates her humanitarian concern irrespective of race and ethnicity. Compared with Beth and Rebekah, Hadria is a relatively weak character; but Caird endows her at the end of the novel with the same mission Grand and Schreiner prescribe for their heroines: Professor Fortescue expects Hadria to be a knight errant to help the helpless, humans and animals. Given that Caird conceives femininity as social and historical determinism rather than as a product of natural difference, she shares Grand and Schreiner's prospect of the New Woman as an Amazon equipped with all the gallantry of chivalry to promote a global ecology.

Medieval romance emphasizes the superiority of the knight who rescues the poor lady; the inequality of the sexes is never to be shaken off. New Woman writers reincorporate this convention by having the New Woman Amazon strive for a feminist utopia, where egalitarianism and cosmopolitan fellowship can be found. Courtly love is by no means a necessity in this kind of plot but something to be anticipated on condition that the sexes are equal and that men are as moral, resilient, and courageous as women. In the world of the New Woman's land, insofar as the novels under consideration are concerned, there is no New Man, only a would-be New Man with limited influence and distinct drawbacks. This imperfection reflects the need for the New Woman to help in the formation of the New Man, leaving the feminist New Woman writers room for maneuver in their mapping out of a new

⁴ Angelique Richardson, Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003), 69.

⁵ Laura Chrisman, "Empire, 'Race' and Feminism at the *Fin de Siècle*: The Work of George Egerton and Olive Schreiner," Cultural Politics at the *Fin de Siècle*, ed. Sally Ledger & Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 45-65, 59.

world.

Another point worth emphasizing is that the New Woman's feminist utopia of cosmopolitanism appears to have something in common with British Romanticism and American Transcendentalism, and by extension, postmodern ecofeminism. In the novels I study here, all three feminist New Woman writers coincidentally make reference to their Romantic predecessors across the Atlantic as they elaborate their feminist ideologies. Caird attacks Emerson's ignorance of women's collective, unequal "fate," which, in her assertion, is socially rather than biologically determined. Although the hereditary discourse is implicit in her novel, Caird overlooks Emerson's faith in the power of human character in resisting circumstance, given his awareness of hereditary factors. Grand obviously portrays the nature-child Beth in line with the Romantic/Transcendental spirit. The pre-intellectual Wordsworthian child is conceptually transformed into an Emersonian-Thoreauvian type in an attempt to politicize a proto-ecofeminist utopia. Emerson's acknowledgement of women's susceptibility and leadership, furthermore, is fittingly incorporated into Grand's essentialist valorization of femininity as the means of moving forward towards the ideal world. Ostensibly, Schreiner's Romantic heritage lies purely in the artistic realm, but she manages to enlarge the scope to include the social function of art, in which the eternal values of truth and beauty that artists endeavor to convey are directed towards an ultimate pacifism and the manifestation of a universal oneness without hierarchy.

As has been mentioned, the archetype can only be manifested by the image/pattern. As the archetype is not fixed, neither is the archetypal pattern, in the concept of which the element of culture is a prerequisite in the presentation and modification of the archetype. Thus, in adapting Jung's notion of the archetype but directing it toward the cultural and feminist rather than psychoanalytic aspects, this

thesis studies the archetypal images (the Child and the Spirit) as symbolic forms, examining the ways in which they reflect women's collective experience in New Woman fiction. And as my discussion has shown, this experience tells of a plethora of issues, concerning sisterhood, motherhood, heterosexual relations, and comradeship in its broadest term. Just as the New Woman is a mobile figure, so are the Child and the Spirit. They have their cultural significations at the *fin de siècle* and remain shifting terms and signifiers for us to (re)interpret the New Woman.

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<http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/jesusandwomen/marymartha.stm>

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For concise information on cicadas, see

<http://www.amonline.net.au/factsheets/cicada.htm>

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For a brief knowledge of the nature of mimosa, see

www.weeds.crc.org.au/documents/wmg_mimosa.pdf

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For the Theosophical Society, see <http://www.theosociety.org/>

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For the meaning of the Arabic/Hebrew word “azrael,” see

<http://www.sarahsarchangels.com/archangels/azrael.html>

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For a brief biographical account of Florence Nightingale, see

<http://www.agnesscott.edu/lriddle/women/nitegale.htm>; and

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/REnightingale.htm>

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For the definition of the term “geopolitics,” see

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geopolitics>

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