

GRANITE AND RAINBOW:  
QUEER AUTHORITY AND AUTHORSHIP  
IN T. S. ELIOT, W. B. YEATS, AND VIRGINIA WOOLF

by  
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ABSTRACT

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“Granite and Rainbow” argues that queerness is an essential condition for normative creativity to properly function in literary Modernism. Specifically, for the three modernist authors I explore in this project, queerness is at the heart of their literary performances: the private, bawdy, scintillatingly homoerotic Eliot feigning an impersonal, cerebral voice in public; the wounded, traumatized, feminine Yeats desiring for a compelling, masculine mask; and the scared and unsatisfiable Woolf whose strong desire for the maternal and a female tradition of writing is almost always cut short by her simultaneously antithetical craving for a male tradition of writing. This dissertation approaches this issue by attending to how queerness is figured and operative in their individual texts along the temporal or (and) spatial axis.

Two chapters are allotted to each author in the order of Eliot, Yeats, and Woolf. The chapters on Eliot explain the private and public Eliot respectively. The Yeats chapters deal respectively with the poet’s early and later poems in terms of the plethora of ways his changing gender performances relate to the questions of queer temporality. The chapters on Woolf each

focus on *Mrs. Dalloway* and *Orlando*, novels written around the same time, to trace how the novelist's vacillation along the gender continuum comes across as issues with gender space and queer spatiality. Ultimately, this dissertation aims to show the similarities between what I see as queer in these modernist writers' authority and authorship and the textual manifestations of queerness or queer time and space.

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To Yongsoo  
with all my heart

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## Introduction

### Preface

Whenever I am asked of the critical moment that led me to study Modernism, I return to the moment in which I was writing a paper for an undergraduate course on Modernism. I was struggling to address in the paper whether, to paraphrase Derrida's terms, modernist texts are constituted by concealment or revelation. I felt then that beyond the outwardly reactive, elitist framework of Modernism, there is something pathological at work that needs unearthing. I read, for instance, the strikingly evident lack of romance narratives and attractive female figures (both physically and emotionally) in T. S. Eliot's poems<sup>1</sup> as concealment of a fear of the feminine in general. In my view, where there is silence, there is agitation.

I had carried my desire to explore Eliot further through my graduate studies because I believed that there was definitely more to say about his work than just a cultural fear of women and the feminine in general, perhaps a craving that is vehemently suppressed but occasionally erupts through the main narrative. Fortunately, during the period between my undergraduate years at Ewha Womens University and my completion of the master's program at the same school (late nineties and early two thousands), scholars on literary Modernism had just started to talk about this strange desire operative in Eliot's as well as a handful of other modernist writers' texts. Colleen Lamos' brilliant late nineties work entitled *Deviant Modernism: Sexual and*

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<sup>1</sup> T. S. Eliot's early work is famous for its feminized male and masculinized women characters whereas his later work is characterized by a male speaker seeking for salvation through a Beatrice-type lady's mediation.

*Textual Errancy*, for example, is a thorough study on the unresolved tensions and deviant impulses visible in the texts of canonical modernist authors like Eliot, Joyce, and Proust, tensions and impulses sporadically breaking out through a yearning for masculinity and straight order. Although not explicitly describing these tensions and impulses as a queer desire, Lamos' construction of the modernist canons as something located in between "their coherent programs and their vagrant practices" had helped me to identify in my master's thesis how Eliot's seemingly polarized women figures characterized by "either the lady up there" or "the lady down there" can relate to the question of queerness in the poet's authority and authorship (6).

My interest in this sort of gender doubleness notable in Eliot's work has continued through my doctoral studies. I saw then that it is Eliot's unstable position as an American expatriate poet, his desire for everything British that is mainly responsible for this doubleness. Indeed, it is not solely Eliot who sought after Britishness heatedly, as exemplified by the large wave of American modernist expatriation that began at the turn of the twentieth century and continued through the First and Second World Wars. Describing his native land as of "wide lawns and narrow minds," Ernest Hemingway, for instance, inexorably left his home country in his search for the signifiers of what he saw as something authentic and real (Oakes 158). Alongside this psychological state in which the grass looks greener on the other side of the fence, what struck me most about these writers was the way in which the strongly desired Britishness (Europeanness) is almost always coupled with masculinity whereas the intensely detested Americanness is linked to femininity within their texts. I had thus compiled a list of Transatlantic modernist authors that I could read with Eliot for my preliminary exam with the intention to

focus on the intersection between Transatlantic Modernism and gender doubleness and performativity.

Between the completion of my preliminary exam and the submission of my dissertation proposal, I made an important discovery that would require some reworking of my project. While rifling through Eliot's diaries, letters, and less-known essays side by side with his widely-known high modernist works, I hit upon the poet's private, homoerotically-charged bawdy poems that had only recently come to light with the publication of the poet's notebook in a thickly annotated volume entitled *Inventions of the March Hare* in 1996. What was specifically exciting about this discovery was that, shockingly different in form and content from his canonical poems, these suppressed poems form part of an extensive cycle that Eliot continued to write throughout his life and shared privately with a homosocially, if not homoerotically, arranged coterie of male writers including Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, and Conrad Aiken. Also, in his strong desire for publicity in his early years, Eliot had almost risked publishing them.

If Eliot was simultaneously writing these homoerotically-charged, scintillatingly bawdy poems in private while working on "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "Portrait of a Lady," "Preludes," and *The Waste Land* in public, the poems that firmly established his reputation as one of the major high modernist authors in the twentieth century, viewed holistically, his literary edifice, far from a vanguard of conservative elitism and monolithic masculine values, is a repository rich with queer energies that would demand a radical reconceptualization of modernist authority and authorship. This discovery was especially exciting because there had been few major articles, journals, or book-length researches dedicated to Eliot's bawdy poems, although the readings of his canonical poems as a site of unresolved struggles and queer energies were

already in existence. This meant that in examining the poet's private bawdy poems side by side with his public canonical poems, I could add to the often contentious scholarship on Eliot and Modernism in general. I firmly believed that Eliot's homoerotically-charged, bawdy poems could indeed be a clue with which to understand a sudden outburst of a queer desire at work in his canonical poems, along with the issues of feminized males and masculinized females and of habitually feminized Americanness and masculinized Britishness.

This discovery was also personally meaningful as it was connected to what I had been experimenting with my own writing around the same time. I, myself an expatriate, was then writing, out of a desire to write and connect, for Internet communities whose users consist either of Koreans or of expatriate Koreans and Korean Americans. I had four different pen names under which I touched upon various topics with different voices and gender identities and in different languages. Retroactively thinking, what struck me as most difficult in this experimentation was to deal with the occasional eruption of my desire to be tough and flamboyant where I needed to be soft and feminine as my audience believed me to be. Although seemingly unrelated to and detached from what I had been doing for my project, this experience helped me to formulate a key premise for my dissertation, a premise that a literary text might be a failed execution of a carefully calculated gender performance. Indeed, however much suppressed in his canonical work, there are nonetheless inextricably disruptive moments, for instance, in which Eliot's "Hydean" persona emerges through the civilized performances of its "Jekylllean" counterpart.

As I was going through my preliminary exam reading list to sort out authors revealing similar issues like Eliot's, I noticed that, although I named my first area of focus "Transatlantic Modernism," there were few modernist authors included on my list whose nationality was purely

British. Indeed, in conjunction with American expatriate modernist writers, it was a group of Irish modernist authors – W. B. Yeats, James Joyce, and Samuel Beckett – that constituted a major part of my first area of focus. It was obvious that I saw British Modernism as mainly shaped and performed by expatriate writers or writers who sensed themselves as permanently in exile. This realization made it possible to consider Irish modernist authors within the scope of my research project.

Ultimately, I chose W. B. Yeats who is British by virtue of the Act of Union of 1801 in alignment with Eliot. His struggle with Anglo-Irishness, which often manifests itself as a conflict between masculinity and femininity in his work, I believed, could be an interesting counterpart to what I saw as the voluntary (or involuntary) rejection of American identity in a strong desire for Britishness in Eliot, which occasionally comes across as feminized Americanness and masculinized Britishness in his major work. Additionally, Yeats believed that a fulfilled and compelling self must be deliberately reconstructed, viewing his instinctively feminine authority – epitomized by the wavering, meditative feminine rhymes and the fairies and their land as a dominant theme in his early works – as something that can (and must) be complemented and masked by strong masculinity, a belief he diligently put into practice. Indeed, the masculinity and impersonality characteristic of his middle period poems onwards can be legitimately claimed as a performative product of such ceaseless, unflagging efforts on Yeats' part. If Eliot's gender performances arguably occur across private and public spatial poles, Yeats' can be said to be occurring along the temporal axis.

As is the case with Eliot, however, the struggle with gender authorities in Yeats is not a simple matter. Even before the excavation of Eliot's private bawdy poems rich with homoerotic

desire, scholars had made sense of something queer at work in his canonical poems. Similarly, Yeats' lifelong effort to mask his feminine voice with its masculine counterpart is almost always contested with his antithetical desire to recuperate it. Indeed, his craving for masculinity and masculine affiliation is almost always marked with some sort of hesitation. This lifelong vacillation between masculinity and femininity in Yeats expresses itself as a strange longing-disavowal mechanism in his poetry where the speaker longs for a different bodily and temporal state and then reverses the direction of the longing once that alternative is explored, either fully or imperfectly. Although Yeats is the author that modernist scholars have least pursued in terms of queerness, the way he musters up his authority definitely illustrates some sort of queerness precisely due to this lifelong wavering along the gender continuum <sup>2</sup>.

I had believed, from the time I was writing a proposal for my preliminary examination, that I would exclusively write about male modernist authors for my dissertation. The centrality of female figures or the feminine amid an intense desire for homosocial and even homoerotic affiliation as a theme in the texts of such male modernist authors as Eliot, Yeats, and Joyce, to name a few, whether they are imagined either as positive or negative, was the most exciting and attractive issue that I saw as relevant to the study of the queer authority and authorship in British modernist authors. Whenever asked to articulate my ideas about queer authority and authorship

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<sup>2</sup> The gender continuum is an extension of the gender spectrum to include various forms of gender identities. The traditional gender spectrum (itself an extension of the limiting gender binary) is linear, from pure male to pure female, with various states of androgyny in between. A continuum is multidimensional, allowing agender or genderless, as well as many other ethnic, national, racial possibilities and combinations. For more detailed information about the gender continuum, refer to "Reexamining Masculinity, Femininity, and Gender Identity Scales" co-authored by Kay M. Palan, Charles S. Areni and Pamela Kiecker.

in relation to modernist literature, however, I was repeatedly led to Virginia Woolf and her concept of an androgynous authority.

Although herself not an expatriate writer in a literal sense, Woolf is the author who keenly sensed herself in conflict with the masculinist, heteronormative climate of the British Empire and as permanently in exile. Indeed, a renowned feminist writer who has more recently also come to be labeled as a queer author, Woolf has much in common with Eliot and Yeats. Her work, for instance, often reveals the same kind of queer desire for same-sex bodies and subjectivities as Eliot's. Her desire for maternal affiliation was as strong and intense as Eliot's yearning for paternal affiliation; her most famous remark in *A Room of One's Own* is "we think back through our mothers if we are women" (99). Yet, her simultaneous withdrawal from such desired maternal affiliation and a female tradition of writing in favor of an androgynous authority and a male tradition of writing demonstrates the kind of longing-disavowal mechanism that is also symptomatic of Yeats' authorial performance.

I found it especially striking that Woolf's ceaseless vacillation between masculinity and femininity occasionally comes across as a conflict between spaces or conflicted spatiality. Indeed, the author often depicts her life as spatially split. The absurd contrast between the social life into which Woolf and her older sister Vanessa Bell were being forced by their step-brothers and her private, reclusive study as an aspiring woman author, for instance, is notably marked by spatial metaphors: "The division in our lives was curious. Downstairs there was pure convention; upstairs pure intellect" (*Moments* 171). In *A Room of One's Own*, the author's sense of herself as physically excluded from the realm where her male counterparts would have been given free rein is also dramatized as the female narrator's spatial invasion of a lawn at the fictional Oxbridge

campus and her being chased away from it by a Beadle in the next moment. In texts like *Mrs. Dalloway* and *Orlando*, the author's struggle with masculinity and femininity emerges as more complicated, expressing itself either as a spatial clash between heteronormativity's straightness and queerness' zigzag, circuitous trajectories or as a pocket of space neither masculine nor feminine. It is for this very doubleness that ceaselessly manifests itself as a spatial issue that I found Woolf queer and thus befitting to my project along with the aforementioned male authors. In examining the author's fictional works together with her nonfictional essays, diaries, and letters, I thought I could piece together the question of queer space and the issue of modernist authority and authorship which is irreducibly marked with queerness.

### **Queer Authority and Authorship, Queer Modernism**

To conceive of a work that theorizes modernist writers' queer performance through the individual queerness operative in their texts feels like a daunting project; it is like creating a new type of biography or a new method of reading a literary work. Fortunately, scholars in various fields have covered a lot of ground to make this project possible. First, there has been much work touched upon by the scholars whose primary interest is the intersection between Modernism and theories of authorship. In *Improvised Europeans*, for instance, Alex Zwerdling focuses on how American male expatriate modernists performed gender to achieve reputations in European countries as well as in their own. Zwerdling specifically notes the remarkable ways these authors construct their writerly selves as feminized while configuring Britishness as masculine to flirt with their English audience. Lisa Rado's *The Modern Androgyne Imagination*, which was

published a year later in 2000, is another work that explores how modernist authors play with genders in response to a crisis of empowerment and authority. Part of what stands out most in Rado's reading of modernist authors' performance is the centrality of an androgynous trope that authors like Woolf, Joyce, H. D., and William Faulkner employ as a means to authorize their work, a means that she sees as ultimately bound to fail. At the heart of these works by Zwerdling and Rado is a desire to challenge heteronormative models of authority and authorship in reading modernist authors, models that customarily see poetic production as occurring primarily through the interaction between a male author and a female muse.

Intriguingly, these critical achievements coincided with the emergence and development of the theories of performativity and performance. As an emerging discourse in the late twentieth century, the former field started out building upon some scattered remarks left by J. L. Austin in his founding work on the theory of speech acts entitled *How to Do Things with Words*. Austin's work is mainly a detailed discussion of the conditions for a successful (felicitous) performative. Yet, scholars of performativity have picked up a few passing remarks where Austin mentions that performative utterances might fail to take effect because, as "utterances, our performatives are. . . heir to certain kinds of ill which infect all utterances, the kind of ill in question here being the capacity to be cited, quoted, or otherwise used non-seriously" (21). James Loxley's *Performativity*, a work that attempts to piece together Derrida, John Searle, Stanley Fish, and Paul De Man under the umbrella of the title notion, pays special attention to these contingent ways in which Austin suggests a performative utterance can fail. His reading of Derrida's conception of performative iterability specifically notes how the ideal or proper structure of the

standard performative in effect is tightly interlocked with flaws, breakdowns, ruptures, and absences because of the possibility in which it can malfunction (81).

Indeed, among the many concepts that Loxley discusses in his work, it is Derrida's performative iterability that provides the sound foundation to what I believe I am doing in my project. In so far as "felicitous performatives are marked by the same kind of hollowness or derivativeness as Austin seeks to ascribe only to abnormal performatives," as Derrida argues in *A Derrida Reader*, through the exactly same logic, authors' canonical texts can be said to be marked by the same kind of flaws, ruptures, hollowness, breakdowns, or evaporations as those noticeably visible in their minor works, unfinished texts, or private writings (98-102). One cannot thus simply draw a line between serious and non-serious performatives, between fictional and nonfictional writings, or between heteronormative and queer literary products, on the ground that the former is fully meaningful or intentional, while the latter is merely "a citation at a distance of such meanings, an empty copy cut off from that fullness" (Loxley 75). Elsewhere in the same text, Derrida further contends the validity of performative iterability not only for the orders of sign and for a language in general, but even, beyond semiolinguistic communication, for the entire field of what philosophy would call experience, that is, the experience of Being: so-called presence (92). This latter argumentation is particularly exciting as it offers the grounding for understanding modernist writers' vexed authority and authorship, gesturing towards the sorts of performative failures that escape clear awareness and control on their part as well as readers' expectation. That some critics find Eliot extremely masculine where others see him as effeminate or queer, for instance, evidences the existence of these sorts of authorial performative failures, failures that are essential components for modernist writers' creative process.

While Derrida's framework of performative iterability, along with a handful of other theoretical concepts covered in Loxley's work, provides a brilliant primer for thinking about issues of queer authority and authorship in literary Modernism, the notion of gender performativity developed by Judith Butler makes it possible to identify both normalized and disturbing gender performances peculiar to individual modernist authors. Butler uses Derrida's framework of performative iterability to show how gender always "proves to be performative," how "the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence" (*Gender Trouble* 24-5). At face value, the performative norm for Butler seems therefore a form of regulation and repression, enforcing constant repetition of certain gendered acts to protect the very identity the repetition has created. At the same time, however, she also sees performativity as offering an efficient opportunity to disrupt its own operation. For instance, Butler argues elsewhere in the same text in passing that there exists a kind of "gender performance" that will "enact and reveal the performativity of gender itself in a way that destabilizes the naturalized categories of identity and desire" (140). This possibility to produce the abnormal, that is, something that falls outside the realm of proper gender identity that Butler opens up in the space of regulatory practice dictated by repetition particularly serves as a useful framework in which to examine modernist authors' gendered performances and their consciously and unconsciously articulated and enacted desires.

Approximately around the same period as the emergence of the theories of performativity, a group of scholars within the emerging discourse that they called Performance Studies became interested in the study of performance in any of its various forms. Indeed, with its multiple origin narratives, its scope is as broad as can be, ranging from rituals, games, and the performance of

everyday life to artistic and aesthetic performances. Although the field has been challenged for being too broad in scope and instability, what I see as valuable about Performance Studies is its very capacity to benefit the studies of authority and authorship, precisely because it includes not only the performance itself but also the performer as an object of its study. Richard Schechner's *Performance Studies* and Jon McKenzie's *Perform or Else*, for instance, generate new readings of the postmodern sense of the efficacy that marks every performance, "efficacy that, regardless of its performer(s)' will and awareness, arises from within the very forces of power whose arrangements of presence and absence it seeks to challenge" (McKenzie 43). This observation is especially thrilling because it reveals by analogy a peculiar relation that the author has with his or her own text. If performance in its efficacy operates somewhat independently from performers and thus does not merely constitute a simple imitation or reproduction, as Schechner and McKenzie argue, by exactly the same logic, performative repetition in any of its forms in literary work can be not only the way that a specific authority is constituted and cemented, but also the way in which it breaks with the historicity to which it is in thrall.

This framework of performance without performers, this reading of performance as a site for anomalies outside of established and recognized practices was, in fact, echoed by a group of theorists invested in authorship about five decades earlier. Roland Barthes, for instance, in his 1967 essay entitled "The Death of the Author," questions the traditional literary practice of incorporating the intentions and biographical context of an author in an interpretation of a text from the poststructuralist perspective, constructing the reader as a site that "holds together" "all the traces by which the written text is constituted" (148). Two years later, as a response to Barthes' work, Michel Foucault published an essay on the subject of authorship entitled "What is

an Author?” There, he even breaks up not only the concept of the author as a function of discourse but also what Barthes describes as the reader as a stronghold of meanings and argues instead for a radical proliferation of meanings, where the author/text becomes a fluctuating function almost always operative with other functions in a larger discursive field (107). Different in their theoretical groundings as they may be, both Barthes and Foucault attempt to dismantle the privileged status of the author by revealing that a text and its author are unrelated.

Although their approach is somewhat different from my take on authorship, their readings are of much help in identifying what I see as queer in modernist writers’ authority and authorship. Specifically, Foucault’s historicist configuration of the author as “an ideological figure by which one marks the manner in which we fear the proliferation of meaning” gestures to how the heteronormative framework functions in a discursive field, within which the issues of queer energies, male hysteria, and feminine identification that ceaselessly surface in modernist texts and their creative process are vehemently suppressed in advocacy for heteronormative poetic production and monolithic phallogocentrism (120). Additionally, Barthes’ prioritization of the reader-critic over the author as a “space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost” helps to reveal the centrality of queerness in modernists’ authorship by gesturing towards what modernist texts and practices inadvertently express beyond what their writers outwardly say they perform, that is to say, the queer desires and trajectories that radically swerve from the heteronormative aesthetic norms modernist authors passionately intend to promote (148).

In conceiving of queerness as an indispensable element in modernist authorship, this dissertation also homes in on a few key concepts explored by Eve Sedgwick. In *Touching*

*Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, and Performativity*, Sedgwick conceives of periperformatives as certain aggregates that cluster about or around a performative proper, responding to scholars exclusively focusing on temporal aspects of performatives. Sedgwick suggests, for instance, that “when Butler draws on the notion of drag in her explication of the performative,” “the ecological attention to space collapses in favor of a temporal emphasis on ‘stylized repetition’ and ‘social temporality,’” and that, with the loss of spatiality, “the internally complex field of textural iterability and drag performance suffers an unavoidable simplification and reification” (9). That is, what passes unnoticed by Butler and a handful of other theorists, in Sedgwick’s view, is the significance of the spatial dimension of drag. Indeed, beyond the temporal aspect, there are several more spatial elements that render drag productive and subversive, such as the performer’s constant interaction with the stage setting, different staff members, other performers, audience, and even with other drag stages (9). Within Sedgwick’s framework, it is this very peculiar spatial aspect of drag, its powerful energies that often “warp, transform, and displace the supposed authorizing centrality” of an established performative that is much more of significance (75).

Specifically meaningful with regard to Sedgwick’s concept of periperformativity is its immense usefulness in her imagining such marginalized affects as shame, craving, or obsession as a way to challenge the heteronormative sense of authorship in their very spatial position vis-a-vis the much desired creative inspiration, an attribute exclusively depicted as initiated by “a strike of a heavenly [female] muse” (Gass 270). Indeed, one of Sedgwick’s most powerful analyses of periperformatives emerges when she describes the peculiar relation between Henry James’ present writing subject and his own “inner child,” which is remarkably dramatized in his preface dedicated to the New York edition of his works, a twenty-four-volume consolidation and

revision. According to Sedgwick, what is extremely intriguing in James' preface where the old writer contemplates what he sees as his most important novels and stories to date, is the pederastic terms the author employs in describing his writing subject's "bond with the unmerged but unrepu'diated 'inner' child," as a way to dramatize and integrate the potentially paralyzing affect of shame that the latter constantly evokes in the former (44). It is only through this seductive queer bond between them, Sedgwick contends, that "the writing subject has an integrity at all, a spatialized integrity that can be characterized by absorption" (44).

Indeed, if creation occurs from the haunting need to integrate the shame the inner child ceaselessly evokes in a writing subject, to rephrase Sedgwick, the heteronormative model of authorship grounded upon a male agent-a female muse relationship demands radical reconceptualization. Particularly, Sedgwick's emphasis on the erotic relation between the writing subject and his inner child in foregrounding James' authorship as queer, and her focus on shame's peripformative force to complement the traditional heteronormative sense of creativity are of much use to unearthing a variety of ways modernist authors perform queer performances, amid their characteristically heteronormative performances. Indeed, if we look closely, we can see the connection between the way in which shame functions in James' authorship within Sedgwick's analysis and the ways in which same-sex desire, obsession, guilt, and craving are figured as a kind of spatial buoys drifting along in the flow of the normative authorial performance enacted by certain key modernist writers. In my view, it is only through examining these marginal, queer affects side by side with such characteristically masculinized traits as inspiration and imagination that what Sedgwick terms a "spatialized integrity" of modernist authorship can be more fully and productively explored.

Indeed, in Eliot, something similar to the homoeroticism that runs throughout James' preface for the New York edition of his work constantly surfaces in the poet's private bawdy poems exclusively written for and circulated within male members of his coterie, as a way to keep the poet inspired. Even in Eliot's canonical work, albeit less explicitly visible, an abiding desire for the same-sex body and subjectivity ceaselessly comes across, as evidenced by the myriad of borrowings of masculine forms and allusions to the male authors' texts, by means of which the poet authorizes his own work and constructs a self-sufficient literary genealogy. In displaying this sort of homoeroticism strikingly marked by both guilt and pleasure, Eliot is not alone. Although not explicitly classified as queer texts, Yeats' poems, specifically his middle period poems onwards, are also pervaded with some sort of a desire for a homosocial affiliation as a way to complement and masculinize his instinctively feminine voice. In the same way in which homosocial affiliation is depicted as a required condition for creation ever to occur for both Eliot and Yeats, for Woolf too, a Sapphic relation with other women is figured as a necessary condition for a proper operation of what the author believes to be ideal creativity.

Precisely because these authors' homoerotically-charged performances are struck with guilt and shame as much as with pleasure, however, they are mostly enacted in secret, revoked, or stopped short of fulfillment. Indeed, as I mentioned earlier, Eliot's bawdy queer performances are rigorously restricted to what the poet believes is a safe playground of the private letters for his close friends. In Yeats and Woolf, a desire for same-sex affiliation reveals itself almost with the same intensity that Eliot demonstrates but is primarily pursued in their literature through the aesthetic investigation into variously gendered times and spaces. What is so exciting about Yeats' and Woolf's exploration with these differently gendered times and spaces is the continuous

dramatization in their work of some sort of lingering hesitation that is ultimately destined to interrupt, pause, or cancel the strongly desired exploration into those different realms. Aside from their often homoerotically-charged desire for the same sex body and subjectivity, it is precisely due to this strangely ceaseless vacillation along the gender continuum that I see these authors and their texts as queer.

In theorizing how this sort of queer performance manifests itself in these authors' texts, my work is also indebted to a few theoretical concepts accomplished by such prominent psychoanalysts as Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, and Carl Jung. In fact, the notion of the "inner child" Sedgwick brings into her discussion when queering James' authority is traced back to Jung's conceptualization of the child archetype whose presence ranges from childish to childlike longing for the innocent and comprises such sub-archetypes as "wounded child," "abandoned/orphan child," "nature/divine child," "eternal child," and "innocent child" (*The Archetypes* 161). Indicating the childlike, usually hidden part of a person's personality that is characterized by playfulness, spontaneity, and creativity usually accompanied by anger, hurt, or anxiety, the notion of inner child is indeed of much use, for example, in investigating the inner child persona upon which early Yeats' feminine authority is firmly grounded and Woolf's lesbian characters who are depicted as permanently and agonizingly split between their antithetical desires for femininity and masculinity.

Additionally, the key psychoanalytic concepts such as the life/death drives and repetition compulsion so brilliantly theorized by Freud offer a fundamental framework through which to articulate the strange longing-disavowal mechanism operative in the texts of all the aforementioned modernist writers. Indeed, what stands out most in Eliot's texts is that certain

urges like Freudian life/death drives and repetition compulsion are consistently at work, given that the much desired masculinity usually associated with life drive is almost always renounced at the last minute by the antithetical desire to reenact the much detested femininity within himself, which is tightly coupled with death. In Yeats' early work as well, the idealized feminine fairyland that is resolutely pursued over and over again by the feminine, wounded child persona is complemented with some sort of masculinity or refused at the last moment, precisely because femininity is figured as equivalent to death. Also, what makes Woolf's work open to feminists' criticism is, in my view, the nature of its narrative trajectory, which is almost always structured to restore the much hated heteronormative paternal order over the strongly desired and treasured bond between women.

Aside from these psychoanalytic concepts, my work also owes a great deal to the key ideas about the operations of desire and the unconscious first conceived by Freud and further expanded by Lacan. Specifically, Lacan's brilliant argumentation that desire can only find sublimated, oblique expression in fantasy or fetishism is remarkably applicable to the discussion of the myriad ways in which an insatiable desire for the same-sex body and subjectivity that haunts these modernists' texts periperformatively finds its way out through what seems to be the characteristically heteronormative performance in the same texts (*Four Fundamental* 48). For instance, in these writers' texts, there are numerous instances of what Lacan theorizes in his discussion of the stages of child development as the "object a," that is, as "the object that causes desire" (Lacan 67-119). According to Lacan, in an attempt to grasp what remains essentially indecipherable, and thus becomes intensely desired in the Other's desire – what Lacan calls the unknown – a child finds his own desire; the Other's desire – constructed upon lack – functions

as the cause of the child's desire (Fink 59). In theorizing the intersection between queer aspects of authorship in Eliot, Yeats, and Woolf and the individual queer trajectories notable in their texts, this concept of the "object a" is extremely productive, precisely because it gestures to some sort of anxiety for something lacking within these authors, that is to say, either masculinity or femininity which is mandated to be highly sought after by the heteronormative, paternal order.

It is worth noting that, in building upon Freud's notion of desire, Lacan focuses on its structure, its spatiality. Indeed, Lacan's theorization that desire can only find sublimated, oblique expression in fantasy or fetishism constructs desire as diagonalized, as askew rather than as straight. This aspect of obliqueness, zigzagginess in desire in its relation to the Other is in fact much similar to certain aspects of queerness explored by numerous scholars working on the question of space. In *In A Queer Time and Place* published in 2005, for instance, Judith Halberstam, after her close analysis of club kids, HIV-positive barebackers, rent boys, sex workers, homeless people, and the unemployed in the city space, namely those who exist outside what is considered the normative time and space, concludes that such people could productively be called queer subjects in terms of the ways they live (deliberately, accidentally, or of necessity) during the hours when others sleep and in the spaces (physical, metaphysical, and economic) that others have abandoned, and in terms of the ways they might work in the domains that other people assign to privacy and family (10). Halberstam's formulation of this queer subject constructs its mode of living as visible and, in a sense, meaningful only in its askew, diagonal relation to heteronormative time and space. Indeed, it is through this queer subject's creation of temporal and spatial havoc that different temporal and spatial stories can touch and brush up against one another.

Remarkably, Halberstam's queer subject is analogous to the "spiv" figure more recently uncovered by Richard Hornsey in his brilliant work entitled *The Spiv and the Architect*. Within Hornsey's analysis, the spiv, as he first emerged during the late nineteen forties in newspapers as a street-corner inhabitant in the city of London, was viewed as an insistent affront to normative bourgeois codes of public comportment and sexual discretion, precisely because of his queer modes of living (7). He openly affronted the reproductive futurism mandated by the interwar and postwar welfare state of Britain by remaining marriageless and childless. He transgressed the heteronormative bourgeois manner of consumption by spending lavishly on his clothes and hairstyles and thereby constructing his body as an urban spectacle that defies the functional sensibilities of good civic-mindedness. Most importantly, he revealed himself as "disquietingly out of place and an obvious form of cosmopolitan disorder against the imperial splendor of London's landmark district," meandering through the countless city corners without a clear functional purpose (104). Hornsey's figure of the spiv, together with Halberstam's queer subject, is of much use in theorizing many of the characters in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* such as Peter Walsh, Miss Kilman, and Elizabeth Dalloway in their similarly aimless meandering through a number of gendered spaces of the city of London.

Aside from Halberstam's and Hornsey's memorable works on queer time and space through their investment in the queer urban figure, my work also draws upon the critical achievements of those who question the normative notion of space. Aaron Betsky's *Queer Space* specifically explores the intersection between sexuality and queer Modernism. Betsky's argumentation that queer spaces are not specific, concrete places but a bundle of bodily, symbolic, and(or) psychic places that exist along or around what is considered as the normative

route of trades, commerce, or pilgrimage is productively applied to close analysis of the link between Woolf's desire for feminine affiliation, which is strangely often at odds with her simultaneous desire to withdraw from it, and the physical and symbolic trajectories of the urban dwellers in her texts, whose desired homoerotic moment of connection is almost always abruptly cut short by the heteronormative will to straighten it (44).

I also find Michel De Certeau's concept of "spatial stories" useful to my project. Arguing that "every story is a travel story – a spatial practice" and that "all stories traverse and organize places," De Certeau conceives of spatial stories as a resistance practice of urban life through the focus on walks in the city and travels by rail in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (115). De Certeau's aim there is to demonstrate "the forms of resistance to such powers not embodied in grand political strategies or projects but in the quotidian activities of the ordinary person" (Thackers 30). In De Certeau's analysis, spatial stories constitute the very forms of innumerable subversive practices by means of which users re-appropriate the space constructed by pedagogical sociocultural practices and contest the various forms of power in their daily lives (xiv). De Certeau's formulation is useful in investigating the correlation between Woolf's authorial struggle along the gender continuum and the various trajectories of her ambiguously gendered city dwellers in their perpetual resistance to and negotiation with the masculinist, oppressive, and heteronormative British climate.

Needless to say, the issue of space is inseparable from the issue of time, as demonstrated by Halberstam's and Hornsey's projects on the urban queer subject whose mode of living is grounded outside of the temporal and spatial mandates of heteronormative order. Therefore, as much as authorial queerness can come across as a form of queered space or queer trajectories in

modernist texts, it can come across as a form of queer temporality. Indeed, Yeats' oeuvre, which is ostensibly all about an exploration of such different spaces as the fairyland or Byzantium, is inextricably entangled with a vexed desire for different temporal and bodily states so intriguingly epitomized by the occult realm. Thus, in examining the correlation between Yeats' authorial queerness and queer temporality, I find certain key notions recently configured by scholars of queer temporality indispensable. Strikingly, for instance, the same kind of the "nonsequential forms of time (. . . unconsciousness, haunting, reverie, and the afterlife)" that Elizabeth Freeman illuminates in her 2010 work entitled *Time Binds* runs across Yeats' early and later poems that I explore in my work (xi). Also, the twisted temporalities that Halberstam constructs in *In a Queer Time and Space* as performed by some queer subcultures and transgendered bodies that exist outside of such paradigmatic markers as birth/death, maturation/aging, and marriage/reproduction remarkably echo the vexed temporal, bodily issues faced by Yeats in dealing with his inherently feminine authority in a jarring relation to characteristically masculine, straight British colonialism.

In examining the ways in which what I see as queer in the authority and authorship of Eliot, Yeats, and Woolf relates to these queer spatial and temporal issues in their individual texts, what I also find thrilling is the heightened link between the question of authority and authorship and the hyper-gendered, spatialized racial issue in these authors' works. Therefore, my dissertation also homes in on certain critical discussions sparked by postmodern and postcolonial critics such as Marianna Torgovnick, Caren Kaplan, and Homi Bhabha, to name a few. Analyzing specific versions of the primitive created by such prominent modernists as Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, Pablo Picasso, Ezra Pound, and Eliot in her in-depth work entitled

*Gone Primitive*, Torgovnick, for instance, contends that for modernists, the trope of primitive is “a convenient locale for the exploration of Western dullness or degeneracy, and of ways to transcend it,” that it “responds to Western needs, becoming the faithful or distorted mirror of the Western self” (153).

Torgovnick’s critique of this modernist preoccupation with the primitive is echoed by Caren Kaplan’s concept of “imperialist nostalgia” she sees at work in modernist expatriates’ psyche. In her thorough work *Questions of Travel*, Kaplan tellingly notes that at the core of Euro-American modernist theories of authorship as exile is a deep-rooted longing for the nonmodern or premodern, that is to say, a longing to reconnect with what they have destroyed or lost within themselves and then “museumize” it “in ritualized or static form” (34-59). Elsewhere in the same text, Kaplan argues in the same vein that the unanimous romanticization of exile as a radical deterritorialization from culture, politics, gender, and the social among expatriate modernist artists out of their belief that travel without a clear objective in mind speeds up the evaporation of meaning actually “deploys metaphors of exploration and heroism that position the [artist in exile] as nomad par excellence,” while constructing the Other – the other gender, other races, and other nations – as primitive and less desirable (70-4).

Torgovnick’s and Kaplan’s articulations of the modernists’ paradox revolving around the primitive-civilized binary will be tremendously useful in identifying how the gendered authority of the writers I explore in this dissertation relates to the racial issue. Indeed, in the case of Eliot, in his private poems, the poet’s bawdy persona finds release as sexual fantasies of insatiable Spaniards and Caribbean blacks with gargantuan genitals whereas this persona is vigilantly suppressed or comes across in less obscene terms in his public poems where his civilized,

heteronormative, masculine voice prevails. Yeats' queen of Sheba that emerges in his later poems is also a racialized embodiment of the poet's feminine, sexual, occulted, and othered voice. Apart from Eliot's "black queene" and Yeats' "queen of Sheba," both of which are imagined as queer collaborators in procreative and creative senses, in Woolf's *Orlando*, the androgynous title character's struggle between masculine and feminine authorities is also almost always colligated with the issue of race, mostly expressing itself as a contention between Englishness and Russianness or between Englishness and gypsies' mode of living. Indeed, these primitive tropes visible in the texts of Eliot, Yeats, and Woolf demonstrate that their authority and authorship are formed in the queer space where the civilized and the savage meet and brush up against each other.

In reading *Orlando*'s ceaseless authorial struggle along the gender continuum that largely manifests itself as his (her) similarly vacillating queer trajectories across different racial realms, I also find certain notions of time and space that emerge amid a postcolonial discussion of nation and people by key postcolonial critic Homi Bhabha particularly productive and helpful. Bhabha theorizes the "nation" as a narrative construction that arises from the tension between the pedagogical and the performative in *The Location of Culture*. In his formulation, the pedagogical is imagined as a process of identity constituted by Eurocentric historical sedimentation whereas the performative, as the loss of identity in the signifying process of cultural identification (153). The former thus relates to the linear, sufficient, and complete master narrative and the latter, the supplementary and temporal minor one. Bhabha's emphasis on performative, contingent, and unruly time, a temporality of splitting, ambivalence, and vacillation in his construction of the nation-space as a narrative is useful, for instance, in reading Woolf's attempt at establishing

purely androgynous subjectivity largely as a failure in *Orlando*, precisely because, like nation-space, androgyny is a narrative construction where pedagogical and performative repetitions are in fierce confrontation with each other. Indeed, the title character's ceaseless oscillation across the hyper-gendered racial spheres reveals any effort to sediment his (her) androgyny as futile.

Part of my aim in this dissertation is to identify the various ways in which what I see as the queer child within Eliot, Yeats, and Woolf is operative across their texts that I explore when they attempt to muster up authority. In doing this, the trope of the "queer child," theorized of late by three prominent scholars of queer temporality, is extremely helpful. In *No Future*, Lee Edelman contemplates how queerness is figured as a narcissistic, antisocial, and future-negating drive within a child that survives through adulthood and how it is positioned as an intolerable threat to "reproductive futurism," a term Edelman coins to describe a temporality that constructs the child as a possibility for the future. (50-1). A few years after the publication of Edelman's *No Future*, Kathryn Bond Stockton's version of the queer child "growing sideways instead of up" came into light with the publication of her work entitled *The Queer Child*, a child "narcissistic, retrospective, occulted, and almost always linked with death" (16-22). James Kincaid's trope of the child brutalized and queered as "innocence" also emerged around the same time. Kincaid argues that certain aspects that we want to see in children – innocence, immaturity, and purity – are purely negative inversions of adult attributes such as "guilt, sinfulness, knowingness, experience, and so on" and that hidden in this version of the small or innocent child is in effect the grown-up's desire to project the erotic in their blank body (10).

Within the three modernist authors I explore in this dissertation, I somehow see the same queer child so extraordinarily analyzed by Edelman, Stockton, and Kincaid: the private, bawdy, scintillatingly homoerotic Eliot; the wounded, traumatized, feminine Yeats; and last but not least, the scared and unsatisfiable Woolf whose strong desire for the maternal and the feminine is almost always cut short by her simultaneously antithetical craving for the masculine. These three versions of the queer child trope also bear a striking resemblance to certain child characters or the child speaker often conceived of as one of Yeats' preferred masks in his early years, a speaker who almost always portrays himself as sick, hyper-narcissistic, and longing for a different bodily and temporal state, as it were, as a socially maladjusted body or subjectivity that must be ultimately transcended or disavowed. This queer child is also vividly alive within a character like Miss Kilman in her suffocatingly tenacious obsession with such seemingly antithetical realms as the sacred and the secular in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and in a certain sense within Peter Walsh, when I see it emerging during his daytime stalking escapade in London, which is marked with pleasure, guilt, and anxiety.

The very point I have made in the previous paragraph, that the queer child is alive both in the authors I explore and in the characters or speakers they create, discloses the periperformative relation that my dissertation has with New Criticism. Indeed, in dealing with the correlation between the question of queer authority and authorship in Eliot, Yeats, and Woolf and how their queerness is figured and operative in their individual texts, my work is tremendously indebted to the remarkably thorough, detailed works accomplished by some such prominent biographers of modernist authors as Peter Ackroyd, R. F. Foster, Richard Ellmann, Hermione Lee, to name a few, as well as the letters, diaries, essays, and autobiographies written by these authors. However,

their enormous contribution to my work would mean being subject to a certain degree of criticism from New Critics who emphasize close examination of a text with minimum regard for the biographical or historical circumstances in which it was produced. Yet, in exploring how authorial queerness expresses itself in a work of literature, my work does not focus on one-on-one identifications between certain facts from the author's life and certain aspects noticeably visible in his or her texts. It instead focuses on the various ways performative aspects of authority and authorship as queer in Modernism and textual manifestations of queerness are brought into conversation, in perpetual tension and negotiation with each other. In the sense that a creative process is a performance, it is charged with the same kinds of riddles and metaphors that mark literature.

Aside from the aforementioned issue, my project further aims to reveal how Eliot and Yeats deploy women or metaphors of the feminine in their texts as a conduit of a homosocial relationship that serves as an essential basis for the proper operation of a heteronormative patriarchal society. In doing this, Gayle Rubin's concept of "the traffic in women" is tremendously productive and helpful. The concept "traffic in women" emerges when Rubin, in her illuminating essay entitled "The Traffic in Women," discusses heteronormativity as an "instituted process" in which gender is created within the exchange of women by men in a kinship system (180). She argues there that it is indeed certainly "not difficult to find ethnographic and historical examples of trafficking in women. Women are given in marriage, taken in battle, exchanged for favors, sent as tribute[s], traded, bought, and sold. Far from being confined to the primitive world, these practices seem only to become more pronounced and commercialized in more civilized societies" (175). Rubin, for instance, takes the Oedipal

complex to tellingly argue that what is really circulated through the circulation of women is the phallus. In other words, the circulation of women in interfamily exchange makes it possible for the phallus to be circulated in intrafamily exchange (191-2).

I see something similar to Rubin's "traffic in women" operative in a number of places of Eliot' and Yeats' texts, specifically when these two poets attempt to muster up their masculine authority. Eliot, for instance, had written homoerotically-charged bawdy poems and sexual ribaldry (where he himself is imagined as feminized) and circulated them within his coterie which was exclusively comprised of his close male friends throughout his life. It was as if this private performance had been a sort of required ritual the poet had to perform in order for what he deems proper, heteronormative creation to become possible. This trafficking in women is also dramatically visible in the narrative structure of the poet's work, where the ubiquitous presence of women is almost always ultimately geared towards an affirmation of the homosocial relationship either between his male contemporaries and himself or between his literary forefathers and himself, the only relationship the poet views as ideal. In trying to establish a homosocial relationship through the exchange of women or the feminine, Eliot is not alone. In his later life, Yeats' use of a woman (mostly his wife George) as "medium," as transmitter rather than originator of arcane occult masculine knowledge is notoriously well-known (G. M. Harper xvii). In his literature, the poet deploys a number of metaphors of the feminine including the fairyland and the secularized temporality to ultimately satisfy his desire to place himself in an Irish masculine literary genealogy he deems authentic. It is precisely for this reason that I see these authors' works as a dramatic embodiment of what Rubin terms as male "traffic in women."

## Organization, Key Terms, and What is at Stake

My dissertation consists of six chapters in total and covers three British canonical high modernists: T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, and Virginia Woolf. To conceive of a project that theorizes a correlation between these authors' queer authority and authorship and how queerness is operative in their texts, a thorough tracing through their works and authorship along the temporal or (and) spatial axis is necessary. Two chapters are thus allotted to each author in the order of Eliot, Yeats, and Woolf. The chapters on Eliot explain the private and public Eliot respectively. Chapter One explores how the poet's ribald voice finds its way out in his homoerotically-charged private poems whereas Chapter Two focuses on his genteel performance in his canonical public poems. The Yeats chapters deal respectively with the poet's early and later poems in terms of the plethora of ways his changing gender performances relate to the questions of queer temporality. The chapters on Woolf focus, respectively, on *Mrs. Dalloway* and *Orlando*, novels written around the same time to trace how the novelist's vacillation along the gender continuum comes across as issues with gender space and queer spatiality. By organizing my chapters this way, I am able to show the similarities between what I see as queer in these modernist writers' authority and authorship and the textual manifestations of queerness or queer time and space.

My first chapter, for instance, focuses on Eliot's intensely homoerotic, scintillatingly bawdy poems that the poet had written from as early as his undergraduate years until his death and shared only with his privately chosen male friends, to identify the poet's queerness within his own creativity, a creativity which has been regarded as intensely masculine, almost inexorably intellectual and impersonal. What is so exciting about these poems is the disclosure of

the other side of such creativity, which is almost always coupled with excremental elements and male procreativity and requires some sort of initiation and support by the same-sex agent to properly, productively function. Indeed, it almost seems as if in some ways, these bawdy poems had to precede in order for Eliot to be able to compose his public poems. Aside from the poet's bawdy poems, this chapter also deals with Eliot's scattered minor poems he wrote for publication in the first place but about which he later changed his mind when he considered himself as established because of their homoerotic elements. In reading these poems in terms of artistic gender performance and, in a broader sense, artistic queer performativity, this chapter aims to recharge the ways we see recurring gender tropes in Eliot's canonical edifice, by revealing their much more capacious periperformative dimensions.

Indeed, Eliot's private bawdy poetry functions as a key to what was left unexplained in its public counterpart, which has been arguably discussed lately as riddled with queer energies and desires, given its bizarre form with countless allusions to other literary works, works exclusively written by the poet's male predecessors and contemporaries. Indeed, viewed together with the poet's private poems, his public work seems to be a performative site in which the author's queer energies and desires materialize themselves only in less offensive, obscene terms. My second chapter thus focuses on how the poet's attempt to mask his effeminacy and homoerotism and instead command an impersonal, masculine authority characteristic of heteronormative poetic production in his public work can still be a failure. It seems to me that what makes Eliot's canonical poetry public, compared with his closeted bawdy poems, is simply the cited authority of the paternal literary texts of his choice. Yet, this seemingly clever strategy of borrowing paternal authority is not successful as he wished, given that the poet's public poetry

is marked with the same kind of desire for the same-sex body and subjectivity that he demonstrates for his male literary coterie in his private, bawdy poetry. In other words, Eliot's canonical work reveals a stubbornly perverse craving for the past male authors, instituting an occult sense of living with or keeping in touch with same-sex ghostly bodies at the moment he was writing.

Like Eliot, Yeats, an inherently feminine poet, frequently locates his authority in a hyper-gendered relation between the present moment in which he is writing and the past and even future times, revealing in the process the same kind of queer desire that Eliot demonstrates for male authors earlier. For instance, Yeats constructs the present time as wounded and feminized in his early occult work, craving for more masculinized temporalities. Although seemingly feminine, his much desired, idealized fairyland is a queer land with lots of masculine elements and masculinized fairies. My third chapter thus explores how the poet's authority that almost always requires some sort of strong masculinity corresponds to how differently gendered temporalities meet in his occult, supernatural early poems. Part of what is so exhilarating about the poet's desire for masculinity includes its instability, its fickleness that admirably expresses itself as a ceaseless vacillation between the gendered temporal poles in his early occult poems. Indeed, most of Yeats' speakers are strictly operative in the (psychic) mechanism in which one initially longs for a different bodily or temporal state and then reverses the direction of the longing, once that longing is fulfilled or explored. Examining the poet's early occult work in terms of these issues allows us to see the hidden queer aspects of his authority that would later blossom as his masculine high modernist poems and mask theory, which is grounded upon turbulent yet fulfilling contact between opposing genders.

Indeed, Yeats' poems from his middle period onward have been arguably discussed as much more masculinized than his early occult poems where the conflict between the poet's feminine authority and his desire for a masculine mask comes across as a see-saw motion between different, hyper-gendered temporalities. However, as I argue in my fourth chapter, even in his later poems, a sort of masculine anxiety or self-doubt as intense as the poet's blusteringly masculine performance ceaselessly surfaces, often finding its way out in the form of radically disrupted temporalities. Chapter Four thus shows how Yeats' deliberate attempts at making his later poems more masculine are still at odds with his instinctively feminine authority through the focus on the ways such temporal markers as birth, life, death, and rebirth are delineated in his later poems. This chapter also attempts to show how the poet's unstable gendered performances there that emerge as a result of the poet's similarly vexed longing for and retreat back from the feminine realm come across as the issues of temporal heterogeneity or disorientation. For instance, the wild wicked persona that Yeats occasionally wears in his later poems is oftentimes visibly thrown off all of a sudden by the same persona's belated knowledge of his own longing for the feminized secular, bodily realm at the very moment of his eventual transcendence into the much desired masculine occult, sacred realm for artistic and religious consummation.

Alongside these agonizingly repeating queer trajectories across different spheres that are noticeably dramatized in both Eliot and Yeats, Chapters One through Four also deal with a remarkable similarity that plays out in these authors' texts – the use of women or the feminine as a conduit of a homosocial relationship. Eliot's bawdy and minor poems, for instance, occasionally employ the gang rape of women as a theme, where the poet-speaker imagines himself as a sterile woman longing for a gang rape or as an effeminate immature male craving

for male penetration. The famous Eliot-Pound collaboration during the creation of *The Waste Land* is also another remarkable example of the systematic operation of a male homosocial bonding through the use of women or the feminine as a symbolic medium of exchange in a larger sense, given both poets' mutual imagination of Eliot as a female unable to conceive or give birth and Pound's depiction of himself as a midwife performing a cesarean operation on a female body (*Letters of T. S. Eliot* I: 626). Rubin's remark that it is actually "the phallus" that "passes through the medium of women from one man to another" is indeed tellingly appropriate in this context of homosocial collaboration between the two poets, precisely because what is really circulated here through the deployment of women or the feminine as a narrative exchange is in fact creative inspiration, a masculine value which is highly treasured and sought after in heteronormative, male-centered society (192).

Likewise, in my view, Yeats' lifelong authorial prevarication between masculinity and femininity can also be seen in a broader sense as an expression of his desire for a male homosocial society in which males are the real partners through the medium of women. Indeed, although Yeats' poems are pervaded with feminine elements, his desire to place himself in an Irish masculine literary genealogy he deems authentic by constructing the idealized masculinized sphere and temporality imagines a feminine temporality as something that is required at the present moment and yet must be transcended eventually. The idealized feminine fairyland in his early occult poems, which is passionately desired and sought after in the first place, is also almost always depicted as a space that must be complemented with some sort of masculine agent whose aid the speaker needs for his proper maturation. In other words, Yeats' feminine fairyland is a kind of a field in which younger males are initiated, educated, and guided by older males for

proper maturation. An exploration of this repeatedly surfacing desire for male homosocial alliance amid the habitual use of women and the feminine as narrative elements in Yeats, in conjunction with the aforementioned issues, exposes, in my view, the vexed closeted moment of the operation of male modernist authority and authorship as queer, which requires femininity as a prerequisite for its proper, productive functioning in a heteronormative setting.

Whereas the previous chapters focus on how the two male modernist poets' double desires and queer, wavering authorial performances manifest themselves as queer trajectories across the private and public realms or as temporal issues, the last two chapters focus on Virginia Woolf to examine the ways the novelist attempts to establish her own authority in the hostile early twentieth-century British literary environment dictated by paternal, masculine order and, more importantly, her insistence on an androgynous authority that calls into question heteronormative gender practices. Indeed, Woolf has much in common with Eliot and Yeats. Her work often reveals the same kind of queer desire for same-sex bodies and subjectivities that Eliot demonstrates for earlier male authors. Yet, her simultaneous withdrawal from such desired feminine poetics in favor of a male tradition of writing recalls the kind of longing-disavowal mechanism that is symptomatic of Yeats' authorial performance.

In my own reading, one of the author's works that most remarkably dramatizes this sort of longing-disavowal mechanism is *Mrs. Dalloway*, where the author's struggle with masculinity and femininity or male and female traditions of writing expresses itself as a spatial clash between two opposing gender forces. Chapter Five thus focuses on how the strictly gendered spaces in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* are repeatedly disrupted and (or) reclaimed by the characters' queer relationships or performances out of sync with the heteronormative spatial sensibility and how

their repeated vacillating movements mirror the author's own sense of her authority as split along the gender continuum. The novelist's indignation about the British public sphere and her simultaneous desire to be included in that sphere, for example, often come across as a queer body whose sexual desire is illicitly locked up in her strong desire for the sacred realm or whose trajectories or motions transgress a bourgeois sense of propriety and the spatial logics of the heteronormative order, as the case of Miss Kilman clearly illustrates. Woolf's desire for maternal affiliation in resistance to patriarchy and its heteronormative, masculinist practices, which is ironically permanently at odds with her antithetical desire to break herself free from maternal influence, also remarkably echoes the strange love-hate relation between Elizabeth, Clarissa's only child, and Miss Kilman.

In reading this longing-disavowal mechanism at work in *Mrs. Dalloway*, my fifth chapter also unpacks a certain recurring pattern, a narrative pattern in which a desired homoerotic moment of connection is invariably disrupted and suspended by the heteronormative intervention at its climactic moment as a dramatic embodiment of the author's performative failure in constructing an androgynous authority. The androgynous authority as she initially imagines it through an image of a man and a woman getting into a cab in *A Room of One's Own*, in her strong longing for a more elastic, capacious form of authority in opposition to male-centered poetic production, is such that maleness and femaleness coexist together harmoniously. Yet, creating such authority is ultimately an impossible task, in as much as her authorial struggle with masculinity and femininity, her ambivalence towards both male and female literary traditions remains unresolved.

Despite this apparent performative failure, Woolf's failing investment in an androgynous authority becomes even more intense and explicit, culminating in *Orlando: A Biography*, a travel story by an androgynous title character, who at the start of the novel is a young nobleman and aspiring poet of the Elizabethan period and by the end, after hundreds of years of literary and heroic journeys across nations, is a successful woman poet in the early twentieth century. My sixth chapter specifically examines how Woolf's more intensified and yet still failing effort to construct an androgynous authority closely resembles Orlando's perpetually agonizing vacillations across the hyper-racialized, gendered spaces in *Orlando: A Biography*. Indeed, in my own reading of the novel, an aspect most visible and worth noting is this reliance on race in accomplishing the author's own artistic goal to construct a more elastic, androgynous form of authority. For instance, Orlando's fruitless yet constant attempts at articulating in English the initially desired otherness of his Russian lover Sasha and her resistance to be contained in Orlando's native language express themselves as a spatial conflict between their original languages and between masculine Englishness and primitive, feminine Russian otherness. Although seemingly effective, this strategy further destines Woolf's project of constructing an androgynous authority to fail, precisely because it inextricably creates and reinforces links between racial alterity and femininity or between otherness and queer sexuality, rather than envisioning a wholly androgynous realm.

Beyond this close resemblance between Woolf's queer performance and Orlando's queer trajectories across racial boundaries, Chapter Six also closely reads the same kind of strange narrative structure that underlies *Mrs. Dalloway* as also operative in *Orlando*, a structure in which the heteronormative, paternal order is invariably restored and reaffirmed every time an

alternative realm is either fully or imperfectly explored. Indeed, Orlando's desire for and indulgence in racial and sexual otherness is depicted as something like a stimulus that is required for his own aesthetic maturation, but must be eventually transcended at the final moment. In my view, what is specifically intriguing and in a sense heartbreaking about Woolf's gender performance is its effortlessness in reenacting, restoring heteronormative, masculine order, somewhat similar to the ease and promptness with which male-centered gender hierarchies are reenacted and reclaimed in Eliot's and Yeats' poetry. It is for this very reason that I see her investment in and desire for an androgynous authority as a failure. In my view, however, this failing aspect in Woolf's gender performance is exactly what makes her work so exciting and intriguing, offering a productive framework through which to discuss not only women modernists writers' authority construction but also the significance of the queer desire that runs throughout modernist writers' creative process.

As my readings of these three key modernist authors demonstrate, the way in which I am using the term "queer" within my dissertation is not solely restricted to sexual identity. Instead, I have imagined queerness in exactly the same manner in which Sedgwick theorizes it in her essay "Queer and Now" as "all the ways that race, ethnicity, [and] post-colonial nationality criss-cross with [gender and sexuality] and other identity-constituting, identity-fracturing discourses" (9). In terms of the approach to individual authors within my work, therefore, the term queer or queerness means either a state in which contradicting gendered acts or performances collide in their constant complicity to and negotiation with other "identity-constituting, identity-fracturing discourses such as race, nation, ethnicity, or a state in which the so-called masculinity and femininity are rejected all together within their psyche in their ceaselessly alternating

oscillation.<sup>3</sup> Eliot's queerness, for example, lies where his dual and contrasting gender personas are constantly at odds with each other, whereas Yeats' lies precisely in his impossible task to masculinize his instinctively feminine voice. Last but not least, Woolf's queerness, whether it is androgyny, asexuality, or bisexuality, emerges when her antithetical desire for and ambivalence to male and female traditions of writing fiercely clash, occasionally revolving around racial issues. Aside from this meaning of the term queer, I have also imagined it as a periperformative dimension with respect to normativity (normative creativity), which is charged with same-sex desire, guilt, anxiety, shame, obsession, and craving, that is, as certain peculiar aggregates that cluster about or around normativity proper. Most often, throughout my dissertation, I trace certain queer trajectories that cluster about or around the temporal and spatial axes of normative creativity, trajectories in which heteronormative time and space malfunction and a different order emerges.

In examining how the three key modernist writers' queer performances correlate to the textual manifestations of queerness or queer space and time in this dissertation, I see the opportunity for a productive rethinking of what constitutes their authority and authorship and Modernism in general. In my own reading of their performances and texts, I noticed a number of

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<sup>3</sup> It is not my concern in this project, therefore, to unpack whether at the core of these authors' individual queer performances lies asexuality or bisexuality or whether their queerness comes from a transgression of (normative) boundaries or a disavowal of them altogether. In my own reading, I found all these elements responsible for what I see as queer in these authors' authority and authorship, not to mention same-sex friendship or desire, gay and lesbian sexuality, etc., because queerness itself is a narrative construction where normalized and subversive repetitions are in fierce confrontation with each other. For such readings, though, refer to the first chapter of Lisa Rado's *The Modern Androgyne Imagination*, Christy Burns' "Re-Dressing Feminist Identities," and Karen Kaivola's "Revisiting Woolf's Representations of Androgyny." For further information of these works, see my Works Cited pages.

cases in which queerness is positioned as a necessary condition for normative creativity to properly function. Here, I am reminded of Eliot's recurring trope of excrement in his bawdy poems in its peculiar relation to normative sexuality. Eliot's closeted queer performance and Yeats' and Woolf's ceaselessly vacillating performances along the gender continuum cannot be placed in what we consider some normative literary convention and yet in the same way in which excrement is operative as an indispensable stimulus for proper functioning of the body and sexuality, their performances reveal what is more central than the center itself by periperformatively occurring athwart it.

I have thus named my dissertation "Granite and Rainbow: Queer Authority and Authorship in T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, and Virginia Woolf." "Granite and Rainbow" is a metaphorical phrase that appears in Woolf's review of *Some People* written by Vita Sackville West's husband, Harold Nicholson, a series of half-factual, half-fictional portraits about his experience with public school and diplomacy. There, Woolf uses "granite" and "rainbow" to signify the cold, hard facts of reality and the artful and multi-colored aspects of personality, respectively: "If we think of truth as something of granite-like solidity and of personality as something of rainbow-like intangibility and reflect that the aim of biography is to weld these two into one seamless whole, we shall admit that the problem is a stiff one and that we need not wonder if biographers, for the most part failed to solve it" ("New Biography" 229). The same phrase reemerges in *Orlando: A Biography* when Woolf depicts nature as something that "has played so many queer tricks upon us, making us so unequally of clay and diamonds, of rainbow and granite, and stuffed them into a case (58)." In both cases, "granite" indicates the factual, normative side of all sorts of things whereas "rainbow," their queer, spontaneous, private,

fictional counterpart. In both cases, the phrase is evoked to demonstrate that both granite and rainbow are required for a fuller understanding of things. Indeed, elsewhere, Woolf describes her own creative process in similar terms as a “tunneling process” in which a necessity to “dig out beautiful cave – rainbow – behind her characters” continuously arises “to evade the tyranny of sequence – granite –, [to reshape] time as depth” (*Mrs. Dalloway* 95). “Granite and Rainbow” thus most aptly summarizes what I am exploring in this project, that queerness is an essential condition for the normative creativity to properly function in Modernism, or that both masculine and feminine attributes are at the core of the authors’ creativity that I examine in this dissertation.

Ultimately, I see my project as a way to bring multiple conversations together. Those interested in queer theory have not produced much scholarship that considers the way that modernist authorial performance can contribute to theorizing queerness. Likewise, those who invest themselves in literary Modernism have not fully explored the enormous contribution of queerness to the construction of Modernism. In my view, for a fuller understanding of what is at stake both in queer theory and Modernism, a consideration of modernist writers’ queer performances is necessary, performances charged with such affects as guilt, same-sex desire, narcissism, obsession, and most importantly, pleasure that run through the recent work on queer theory. I also see my dissertation as a productive space in which theorists and practitioners of Performance Studies and literary theorists meet together, given that it considers the way that authors as performers and texts as performances mutually affect each other. This dissertation therefore attempts to carve out a space where scholarship on Modernism and the concerns of queer theory and Performance Studies can be brought together.

## Chapter 1

### **He Do the Police in Different Voices: Eliot's Private, Bawdy Poems**

Perhaps, a few descriptors that immediately come to mind when recalling T. S. Eliot are as follows: a high Modernist poet, dramatist, and literary critic; Nobel Prize in Literature Laureate; author of many renowned literary works. With the publication of the poet's notebook in a thickly annotated volume entitled *Inventions of the March Hare* in 1996, however, the image of Eliot as a canonical high modernist writer has been undergoing radical changes, precisely because of the newly included private bawdy poems in the collection that appear drastically antithetical to the poet's major works. Although an extensive number of early versions and fragments of some of the poet's major works unearthed together with these bawdy poems have fuelled a number of scholars to even more ardently celebrate Eliot in his keen artistic sense and in his painstaking search for the perfect language, the discovery of these poems, so long suppressed and veiled in the literary scene, came as a shock to academia, especially due to the intense "racist and sexual fantasies" that pervade them (Julius 33). Perhaps, one of the most intriguing aspects that captured modernist scholars' attention is the fact that the poet initially wanted to publish those poems in his early years but actively suppressed them when he later considered himself as an established poet, with all his might for fear of their potential harm to his reputation (McIntire 29).

Indeed, just as the nature of Eliot's authorship had to be reconsidered when Pound's enormous contribution to the creative and editing processes of *The Waste Land* was unveiled

with the publication of a facsimile and transcript of the original version of *The Waste Land* in 1974, the publication of *Inventions of the March Hare* more than two decades later has similarly compelled the poet's authority and authorship to be radically rethought, an authority and authorship deemed heteronormative, elitist, and reactionary. Indeed, how and where should we place Eliot's private bawdy poems in relation to the poet's public canonical works? Should we read them, for example, together with Eliot's major poems as part of his high modernist project or should we dismiss them as the poet's secret juvenile scribbles? On one hand, they obviously deviate, given Eliot's entire masculine literary edifice, from what he intended his major works to perform. On the other, given the poet's strong initial desire to publish the poems, the long period of composition that coincided with his most productive years as a poet, and the range of issues they evoke, their existence cannot be simply disregarded.

Fortunately, modernist scholars have recently sparked heated conversations regarding their inextricable relationship to the poet's canonical works. Specifically, in *T. S. Eliot: The Making of an American Poet, 1888-1922*, James Miller offered a first thorough critical reading of these private poems along with Eliot's lesser-known poems. There, Miller consistently emphasizes the significance of the racial and gendered tropes such as "King Bolo's black bastard kween" in these works as a critical grounding for reading recurring racial and gender issues in Eliot's major poems. In "T. S. Eliot's Bawdy Verse: Lulu, Bolo, and More Ties," Loretta Johnson similarly sees Eliot's bawdy poems as inseparable from his major works because of the common themes they evoke, such as the poet's abiding interest in masculine tradition and in "the relationship between the body and the spirit, between thought and feeling" (14). It was not until the publication in 2008 of Gabrielle McIntire's extensive work entitled *Modernism, Memory, and*

*Desire*, however, that Eliot's bawdy, scatological poems, particularly the "Columbo and Bolo Verses," which are considered the most important among Eliot's private poems, were fully explored in relation to his major works. McIntire specifically places equal emphasis on the poet's canonical and private poems, focusing on their recurring turn to the language of desire, sexuality, and the body to render an erotics of memory. In Miller, Johnson, and McIntire, we see their attempts at reconciling the poet's public and private, literary and real-life performances.

Indeed, in order to fully understand Eliot's public modernist performances, a consideration of these private bawdy poems is necessary, poems strongly marked with sexual energies and homoerotic desires. On one hand, that Eliot initially wanted to publish them, together with the fact that he had circulated those poems to only his close male friends throughout his life, reveals his authority and authorship as essentially queer. On the other, that the poet eventually decided to suppress those bawdy poems because he later considered them too offending for publication suggests that Eliot completely understood how his major works were evaluated and the differences between his private, homoerotically-charged poems and their heteronormative, public counterparts. Indeed, what is remarkable about Eliot's bawdy poems is that, exclusively and privately circulated in letters to his close male friends and synchronous with the creation of his public, high modernist poems, they show how the poet's seemingly normative, reactionary authority acts out in negotiation with homosocial and even homoerotic literary performances. In other words, for Eliot, in order for what he deems proper, heteronormative creation to become possible in public, this sort of private, homoerotic performance must precede or happen concomitantly.

In the sense that queerness is a closeted and yet essential component for Eliot's authority and authorship, I view his bawdy poems as sorts of "periperformatives" with respect to his public counterparts, to borrow the term Sedgwick coined in *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, and Performativity*. Indeed, as periperformatives, the poems function as certain aggregates with highly-charged feelings of secrecy and intimacy that cluster about or around Eliot's major poems, warping and displacing their heteronormative performance and supposed authorizing centrality. My own use of the term "periperformatives" to describe the relation of the poet's bawdy poems to his canonical edifice is in fact echoed by McIntire's depiction of the "Columbo and Bolo poems" as a "pornotropic parergon," a term she borrows from Conrad Aiken's memoir titled "King Bolo and Others" (36). Neither entirely outside nor simply inside, but clustering around Eliot's major works with yet unrealized possibilities, these poems "inscribe something which comes as an extra, exterior to the proper field . . . but whose transcendent exteriority comes to play, abut onto, brush against, rub, press against the limit itself and intervene in the inside only to the extent that the inside is lacking" (Derrida *The Truth* 56). Viewed and defined only in relation to Eliot's canonical edifice and yet loaded with subversive power, the poet's bawdy poems indeed operate as a queer "extra ornament in art" that reveals more about what is deemed heteronormative, masculine canonical in Eliot than his public, canonical projects themselves do (McIntire 38).

In my own reading, the poet's bawdy poems also seem to play Hyde to the Jekyll of his published canon, id to ego, simply put. Given that they were composed with publication in mind, the bawdy poems were an exercise in seeing what happens when the brakes become relatively loose, with Eliot standing back to take note of the results. For instance, anal penetration,

excremental performance, and gang rape visibly emerge as major themes in the circumstance where Eliot does not have to worry too much about mustering up his heteronormative, masculine authority. Nonetheless, these bawdy poems are an uncontrolled performance or a controlled performance of not being in control, in a sense that not only Eliot but also the recipients of these ribaldries were repeatedly led back to the same pornotropic fantasies both privately and publicly over and over again in their lifetimes, as if a person with a traumatic experience reenacts the event or puts himself where the event is likely to happen again (Freud, *BPP* 285). For instance, Aiken wrote a witty memoir called “King Bolo and Others” in 1948 and dedicated it to Eliot to celebrate his sixtieth birthday. Although the memoir is mostly a description of how they reveled in the comic strips of “Krazy Kat, and Mutt and Jeff” and in “American slang” during their undergraduate years, his passing references to those poems in the title and in the memoir evidence the sort of compulsive reenactment of the sexually and homoerotically-charged literary performances Eliot and his close male friends had been performing for decades since their initial acts of giving and taking (Aiken 21). Just as id and ego must be considered together for a fuller understanding of the operation of the psyche, reading Eliot’s bawdy poems as playing Hyde to Jekyll vis-a-vis his canonical works will lead to a more concrete grasp of the nature of his authority and authorship, where queerness is positioned as a necessary condition for his normative creativity to properly function.

In my first chapter therefore, I will read these private poems, now labeled as bawdy, scatological limericks,<sup>4</sup> in terms of Eliot’s queer performance. In my view, a figure that most remarkably dramatizes the poet’s queer authority and authorship in these poems is excrement. As

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<sup>4</sup> Eliot’s bawdy poems are included as an Appendix A in *Inventions of the March Hare*.

a metaphor for a (by)product of queer creation, the figure of excrement is indeed ubiquitous in the places I explore in these poems, illuminating that Eliot's performance here cannot be considered as normative in a similar way that anal penetration cannot be considered as normative intercourse. Reading Eliot's bawdy, scatological poetry to identify the poet's queerness within his own creativity, a creativity which has been regarded as intensely masculine, almost inexorably intellectual, impersonal, and heteronormative, will, in my view, not only recharge the ways in reading the recurring racial and gender issues in Eliot's canonical edifice but more importantly will reveal different ways to understand modernist authorship and authority formation in British Modernism.

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Eliot had been writing these bawdy poems since he was an undergraduate at Harvard. Four ballad poems are typically classified as his bawdy poems: "The Triumph of Bullshit," "Ballade pour la grosse Lulu," "Fragments," and finally the "Columbo and Bolo Verses." Among them, Eliot spent by far the longest period of time on the composition of the "Columbo and Bolo Verses," from 1909 to 1929, a two decade span usually considered the poet's most productive years. They are also by far the longest poems, with more than seventy-five stanzas in total, among which only twenty-nine had been allowed publication until very recently.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> This chapter only deals with those stanzas published before the death in 2012 of Valerie Eliot, who had put a hold on Eliot's personal material during her lifetime. Approximately ten stanzas of these remarkable poems were published in 1988 in Valerie Eliot's *The Letters of T. S. Eliot: Volume One, 1908-1922*, seventeen in 1996 in Christopher Ricks' *Inventions of the March Hare*, two in *The Faber Book of Blue Verse* (McIntire 14). More bawdy poems were published after I

Drastically different in form and content from Eliot's canonical poems, with juvenile rhythms and rhyme schemes and overtly queer elements, these bawdy poems would have placed upon Eliot a permanently different mark if they had been published ahead of his major poems because of their preoccupation with anal penetration and excremental performance. Nonetheless, the poems, albeit in queer and self-mocking ways, reveal not only Eliot's authority and authorship as a whole as grounded upon a queer desire but also the inseparableness between his queer and normative personas.

In "The Triumph of Bullshit," a ballad poem that Eliot wrote in Paris in 1910, approximately around the same period he was working on the Prufrock poems, the poet, for instance, seems to test out two antithetical voices. Seemingly, the poem draws its energy from a fantastic display of linguistic cunning with multisyllabic words, almost obsessively exhibiting a comically tumid, misogynic verbal performance remarkably figured as "bullshit" in the title. Each of the first three stanzas is constructed in the same way. The narrator becomes unnerved by his own translation of the disdainful gaze or words of the ladies into a language simultaneously erudite, pompous, and amusing, and then he explodes:

Ladies, who find my intentions ridiculous

Awkward, insipid and horribly gauche

Pompous, pretentious, ineptly meticulous

Dull as the heart of an unbaked brioche

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had completed my chapters on Eliot, with the same recurring tropes and themes such as excrement, anal penetration, and gang rape. There are still more stanzas waiting to be published. Among the Pound papers at Yale, for instance, there are two dozen more Columbo and Bolo stanzas, one and a half on a separate leaf, and the rest on seven leaves with perforated sides from a small notebook (Ricks 321).

Floundering versicles feebly versiculous

Often attenuate, frequently crass

Attempts at emotion that turn isiculous,

For Christ's sake stick it up your ass. (*Inventions* 307)

What is intriguing about the quoted lines above is that “insipid,” “gauche,” . . . “isiculous,” and “versiculous,” the sequence of adjectives that the narrator compulsively claims the ladies addressed appropriate to despise his “intentions” are in fact amusingly his own. Therefore, far from gesturing towards the ladies’ stupidity and incapability, these adjectives, in their abstruseness and pretentiousness together with the disproportionately long syntax, performatively lead back to the narrator himself, to highly self-conscious, fastidious Prufrock, and even to the Eliot revealed in public occasions through various descriptions of friends and acquaintances, satirically at that. On the other hand, the crude, colloquial expression in the final line provides a remarkable contrast to the erudite, pompous verbal performance delineated in the previous lines.

This sudden change in poetic language and tone of voice discloses a vexed moment of Eliot’s authorship in relation to his artistic choice. Eliot here, obviously rehearsing and testing out various gendered voices and roles with the breaks relatively loosened, reveals himself as split between two possible authorial choices, one essentially Prufrockian, serious, hyper-critical, congested with learning, afraid of women, the other self-deprecatingly comic, crude, and queer in its deployment of a metaphor for anal penetration. The poem, for instance, foregrounds or front-loads the attack on the narrator’s own “intentions,” in other words, aura and style very much Prufrockian, in a way that both goes along with the ridicule and objects to it and perhaps

disproves its merit. Interestingly, this fear of ridicule and self-disapproval associated with the Prufrockian authority are enacted through an intense confrontation with what is deemed the feminine, here figured as the “ladies.” It is worth noting here that indeed, J. Alfred Prufrock similarly places himself at war with the feminine, claiming that he is ridiculed and is “pinned and wriggling on the wall” by what he deems the female gaze and voices “that fix [him] in a formulated phrase” (*Collected Poems* 32).

On the other hand, the seemingly triumphant attacks on the ladies are performed with an astonishingly fierce verbal abuse, as the last line of each stanza suggests, and yet the poem at the same time weakens the over-exaggerated performance, given the coarse and colloquial manner in which the performance is conducted and its amusing play with the title, “The Triumph of Bullshit.” Indeed, the word “bullshit” denotes “stupid or untrue talk or writing” such as the crude and colloquial expression of the last line of each stanza, thus gesturing to poetic weakness or impotence. It also implies a measure of respect for language skills in its usage in a very satirical way. A bullshit artist, for example, suggests someone who skillfully boasts incessantly, usually to comedic effect, intentional or accidental, thus relating back to the Prufrockian authority, which is performatively enacted through the repeated use of difficult, pompous adjectives.<sup>6</sup> In its implication of a poor quality literary performance, the comic term “bullshit” in the title of the poem, therefore, renders the poem itself a literary triumph that can never be completely successful and, more importantly, unites the two contradicting voices within Eliot – one, fiercely misogynic, the other, rather passively, highly self-consciously Prufrockian. As a compound word,

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<sup>6</sup> All definitions in this dissertation are taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary Online Edition* or *Urban Dictionary*, unless otherwise noted.

the word “bullshit” also relates to masculine aggression and anal excrement. Neither entirely the fruit of normative sexuality nor completely sterile nothingness, “bullshit” therefore evokes a queer authority that can never be triumphal in a heteronormative sense.

The queer terms in which Eliot’s concern about or anxiety over his own authority and authorship finds its way out in “The Triumph of Bullshit,” in my view, evidence that queerness is an essential component of his authority and authorship. Specifically, the compulsively repeated last line of each stanza, “For Christ’s sake stick it up your ass,” with its ambiguity that emphatically hangs over the pronoun “it,” thrusts ajar the closed door of homoerotic privacy behind which the male modernist authorship had been sheltered unwitnessed. Its antecedent never specifically identified, “it” can be read as anal penetration as both sexual pleasure and insult, as the poem itself as a poor literary outcome, or as “shit” as a byproduct of bodily and mental catharsis. It is worth noting that when Eliot submitted this poem to Wyndham Lewis for publication in *Blast*, Lewis also bluntly remarked on the poem in a letter to Pound in 1915 that “Eliot has sent [him] Bullshit” (*Inventions* 308). Lewis’ pithy configuration of the poem as “bullshit” is indeed a fitting description, specifically bearing in mind the compulsively repeated line that dramatizes the vexed relation between queer elements and a literary performance. Linking the bodily and mentally abjected to the outcome of creativity and describing it as a fetishized gift that can be given by a male writer to another, Lewis’ remark on the poem as such inscribes “The Triumph of Bullshit” as a homoerotically-charged phallus and eroticizes as well the context in which the poem was privately given. The poem thus carries double desires: the desire of the male members of Eliot’s coterie – both to be procreative and creative – and Eliot’s own desire to expose/conceal with regard to his queer performance, the epistemological pairings

of “disclosure/secretcy” and “public/private,” as Sedgwick has argued, being constitutive of cultural and social structures of gay closeting (*Epistemology* 72).

What is also remarkable about this repeated line of the poem is the introduction of the notion that the anal penetration of the final curse is wished upon the female agents – “the ladies” addressed in the poem. Indeed, in Eliot’s model of authorship articulated both in his better and lesser known essays, a young poet is often feminized and his development into a mature poet necessarily happens through a penetration by a more masculine literary precursor’s or a contemporary’s subjectivity. For instance, in “The Education of Taste,” the poet’s early essay discussing the notion of literary influence, a young poet’s relationship to the literary community as a whole is breathtakingly eroticized in queer terms:

The first step in education is not a love for literature, but a passionate admiration for some one writer; and probably most of us, recalling our intellectual pubescence, can confess that it was an unexpected contact with some one book or poem which first, by apparent accident, revealed to us our capacities for enjoyment of literature. The mind of a boy of fourteen may be deadened by Shakespeare, and may burst into life on collision with Omar or Blessed Damozel.

(521)

Here, not only is the poetic intellectual development described in terms that mimics the process of bodily maturation, but also the initiation process in which an individual poet “burst[s] into life” is described in gendered terms, specifically, terms that obviously transgress heteronormative sensibility. In other words, a young poet figured as feminine needs to be in sexual and erotic “collision with” a more mature, more masculine literary ancestor or fellow writer in order to be

properly educated and thus masculinized. Strikingly, the way this erotic relationship between a young poet and his mature counterpart is suggested is very similar to the way the anal penetration of the final curse of the narrator of “The Triumph of Bullshit” is wished upon the feminine. That is to say, given a crude, masculine tone of voice, this curse functions as a penetrating authorization from the more masculine, stronger Eliot to the unpublished, unachieved, thus yet feminine part of himself, who strongly desired a proper penetration, initiation, publicity, and procreativity in the London literary scene.

In “Fragments,” another bawdy ballad poem of Eliot’s, originally included in a letter to Pound, the poet’s desire for literary baptism by a masculine agent is similarly embodied through an image of rape, a rape by a strongly sexed male tinker: “There was a jolly tinker came across the sea/ With his four and twenty inches hanging to his knee (*Inventions* 314).<sup>7</sup> Commonly used to define male members of the European travelling community, “tinkers” were traditionally improvising metal workers who sold their metalwork to make a living. The name “Tinker” is still used for a line of knives manufactured by Victorinox, which was founded in Eliot’s time. In its connection to male sex and metalwork and the historicity embedded in it, tinker is thus undoubtedly a phallic symbol and an embodiment of strong masculinity:

O daughter dear daughter I think you are a fool

To run against a man with a john like a mule.

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<sup>7</sup> Many Eliot critics have pointed out that the origin of “Fragments” went back well before Eliot, that Eliot merely copied out an already existing popular ballad, although Christopher Ricks argued that the numbering of seven couplets and labeling them “Fragments” are undeniably Eliot’s. This in fact explains why “Fragments,” albeit one of the bawdiest of Eliot’s bawdy poems, has been less discussed compared with Eliot’s Columbo and Bolo Verses.

O mother dear mother I thought that I was able

But he ripped up my belly from my cunt to my navel. (314)

Strangely, however, the poem here radically moves its focus from the tinker to the daughter, specifically to the daughter's "ripped" body. This sudden change in focus suggests that Eliot borrows language from a woman's body to describe his own intellectually and emotionally vexed relations and affairs with other writers in connection to his authorship. Just as the daughter is unable to conceive or unable to give birth, the early Eliot thought of himself as similarly incapable of either conceiving or producing what he considered as quality poems. Additionally, the image of a caesarean operation evoked in the last couplet is in effect intriguingly the very same one that Pound appropriates in his poem "Sage Homme" to describe his role in "The Waste Land": These are the poems of Eliot/ By the Uranian Muse begot;/ A Man their Mother was, . . . / If you must needs enquire/ Know diligent Reader/ That on each Occasion/ Ezra performed the Caesarean Operation (*Letters of T. S. Eliot* I: 626). Unlike Pound's poem, "Fragments" is silent about what comes out of the ripped female body, but it evidently exposes Eliot's sense of his own authorial individuality as effeminate and his strong desire to "run against" a masculine subjectivity.

This centrality of queerness in Eliot's authority is also noticeably visible in "Ballade pour la grosse Lulu," also a bawdy ballad of Eliot's, which was written in 1911. Addressing the mediocrity of the press, it is similar, in terms of time of composition, form, and content, to "The Triumph of Bullshit," with four octaves and alternating rhymes. Each stanza begins with "The Outlook gives an interview" and ends with the two lines, "But, My Lulu, Put on your rough red drawers/ And come to the Whore House Ball!"

The Outlook gives an interview  
An interview from Booker T.  
Entitled “Up from Possum Stew!”  
Or “How I set the nigger free!”  
The papers say “the learned horse  
Jim Key, was murdered in his stall.”  
But, My Lulu, “Put on your rough red drawers  
And come to the Whore House Ball!” (*Inventions* 311)

As the quotes above illustrate, an element particularly notable about this poem is the fact that the poet’s anxiety over his authority finds its way out through his investment in the racial other. Indeed, Rachel Blau Du Plessis tellingly notes that Irishness, blackness, and femininity are metonymically linked in the above quoted stanza, given that it originally had, in the place of Booker T. Washington, Edward Bok, editor of *The Ladies Home Journal*, and in the place of the comments about Washington, the lines “Called 50 kinds of Irish Stew/ And ‘How to fill a Christmas Sock’” (152). Du Plessis’ comment discloses that in Eliot, what is notoriously abhorred in his canonical works as the racial and sexual other, that is to say, everything that is somehow unrooted, feminine, and overfertile, and thus uncontrollable – Jews, Irish, black, and female – are all affiliated.

Part of what is particularly intriguing in this part of the poem is that Eliot inscribes his own nickname “possum” in the place where he lampoons the banality of black activism, thereby linking himself to the very features he disavows and satirizing his own writing performance. Usually considered a disgusting and bizarre food, possum stew indicates a soup from the

American south, which is typically cooked with various ingredients and served with drinks and cornbread. In its definition, possum stew therefore alludes to ingredients strewn together in a topsy turvy, disordered manner, just like the various unseasonable racial and sexual identities which are metonymically put together in the poem. Eliot's own identification with these racial and sexual others, which is performatively enacted through the act of inscribing his own nickname in the poem, thus indicates his earlier poetic subjectivity inseparable from them. Obviously, Eliot plays possum here, rehearsing various voices and poetic personas, pretending to be dead or asleep in some occasions and feigning ignorance in other, desiring to find and set free a proper, commanding authority that would lead to popularity and publicity. Radically displacing the title of Washington's autobiographical essay entitled *Up From Slavery*, the "possum stew" as a figure thus functions not as a fulfillment of the poet's ejaculative desire in a proper, normative, desirable sense, but as his mental waste, excess, or excrement in a self-mocking manner.

Another rich moment in "Ballade pour la grosse Lulu" as the poet's performative rehearsal space is when, just as "Fragments" portrays the tinker as a male collaborator in his enormous masculine power and sexual energies, the poem similarly delineates a queer figure named Lulu as someone who grants sexual empowerment and authority. In the last two repeated lines of the poem, "But, My Lulu, Put on your rough red drawers/ And come to the Whore House Ball!" for instance, Lulu is imagined as a jolly partner who invites the poet-speaker to a promiscuous yet lively nightlife away from the conventions of a staid society. Lulu<sup>8</sup> emerges

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<sup>8</sup> Lulu emerges in various forms throughout popular culture – from cartoon strip character to rock star. Frank Wedekind's *Lulu* plays describes Lulu, for instance, as a sexually enticing young dancer who rises in German society through her relationships with a wealthy man but who later falls into poverty and prostitution (Mueller viii). The frank depiction of sexuality and

mostly as a woman figure throughout popular culture, but in Eliot's time, she was best known as the black Lulu in seamen's drinking songs which are largely imbued with homoerotic titillations (Johnson 19). It is most likely that Eliot appropriates this version of Lulu, given that Lulu's gender identity is never fully revealed throughout the poem. In this sense Lulu gestures towards a pronounced sexual and spiritual affiliation among male members of a coterie that extends the tradition of homoerotic comradeship found in sailor fiction, and more precisely in the context of my argument, towards male literary collaboration, itself with long-standing history. Located both inside and outside the poem as a figure, as a fetish given the sexual energies associated with his blackness, and more importantly as a symbolic anus in which the collaborative power of the male members of Eliot's coterie is rooted, Lulu embodies subjectivities that only respond to male influence.

"The Triumph of Bullshit," "Fragments," and "Ballade pour la grosse Lulu" are all undoubtedly rich sites in which the centrality of queerness in Eliot's authority and authorship is visible. It is in the "Columbo and Bolo Verses," however, that the importance of queerness in the poet's creative process is most dramatically legible. What specifically stands out most in the poem is the dramatization of such an issue through the focus on the queer colonial desire for the racial other. Describing the encounter of strongly sexed Christopher Columbus with King Bolo,<sup>9</sup>

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violence in these plays, including lesbianism and an encounter with Jack the Ripper, was a controversial issue at the time of its performance (Willet 73n).

<sup>9</sup> King Bolo might be modeled on a historical figure named King Shamba Bolongongo who died in 1628, "ruler of the Kuba tribes, legendary for the number of widows and children he left (Southam 103). It is also likely that Eliot had a primitive figure from W. S. Gilbert's comedic ballad "King Borria Bungalee Boo" in mind, "a man-eating African swell" with a small quarry of all-male subjects (Ricks *Inventions* 321)

a well-endowed black monarch, the poems disclose European masculine desire for productivity and authority grounded upon and buttressed by queer sexual energies. Indeed, from the very beginning, excremental elements and anal penetration are immediately coupled with European male procreativity and creativity:

One day the king & queen of Spain  
They gave a royal banquet  
Columbo having passed away  
Was brought in on a blanket  
The queen she took an oyster fork  
And pricked Columbo's navel  
Columbo hoistered up his ass  
And shat upon the table. (*Inventions* 315)

In the scene above in which Columbo is summoned by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella to be authorized to leave Spain to discover a new world as chief Atlantic commander, for instance, anal excrement is presented as an expression of gratitude and of promise, since the penetrating prick of the queen's "oyster fork," which performs as a sort of initiation ritual, awakens Columbo from the everyday routine and endows him proper authority, albeit in a queer and wry way.

Just as the penetrating prick of the queen's "oyster fork" and Columbo's subsequent excremental performance is described in connection to the enactment of masculine authority, the "forty tons of bullshit" that Columbo and his envoy proudly carry to the European continent as

the primary colonial cargo is similarly depicted elsewhere in the poems as a productive outcome of enacted masculine authority:

“Avast my men” Columbo cried  
In accents mild and dulcet  
“The cargo that we have aboard  
Is forty tons of bullshit”  
The merry men set up a cheer  
On hearing this reparty. (*Inventions* 319)

That Columbo brings “tons of bullshit” as a trophy from the New World not only envisions excremental element as an expendable form of currency but also discloses colonialism’s masculine authority and victory, and, in a much broader sense, European masculine procreativity, creativity, and authority as grounded upon queer desires and anal fantasies.

Freud argues, in his formulation of the psychic relation between human waste and money in “Beyond the Pleasure Principle,” that baby, penis, gift, money, and feces are all interchangeable in the unconscious, suggestively gesturing to the pleasures, desires, bonds, and forms of eros that have to do with anus (Freud *Character* 204). They all are also metonymically linked as acts of giving and of taking, which often carry erotic and reproductive meanings. Just as it is precisely the repression of the pleasures and desires linked to the anus that turns feces into filth and filth into gold in Freud, it is similarly the conflicted relation between queer desires and literary performance in Eliot, often associated with guilt, that leads to contradictory representations of “bullshit.” Indeed, throughout the “Columbo and Bolo Verses,” anal excrement transforms itself from an expression of homage, into the primal colonial cargo, a

sexual stimulant, and even the substance of a meal. “King Bolo’s swarthy bodyguards,” for instance, excrete upon their sovereign “[lying] down in the shade” as an expression of homage in the same way Columbo excretes upon the table to Queen Isabella from gratitude and as promise (316). Elsewhere in the poems, Columbo rapes the bosun’s wife, stimulated by “a bucket full of cowshit” she carries along the way, which is similar to the manner in which King Bolo and his black queen have sexual intercourse, excreting and “A-sitting on their bungholes” (317). Partly insult and partly sexual exhibitionism, fetish, and even homoerotic flattery, the ubiquitous anal excrement and performance in these poems gesture not only to the European colonial subjects’ queerness but more importantly to the centrality of queerness in Eliot’s authority and authorship.

Here in the “Columbo and Bolo Verses” as elsewhere, Eliot’s desire to make himself more masculine manifests itself most emphatically through fantasies of anal penetration. For instance, in the scene in which Columbo is granted permission from Queen Isabella, the way Columbo is initiated by the queen is described in amusing terms that suggest the process Eliot articulates in “The Education of Taste” by which a young effeminate poet is initiated, that is, through being penetrated by a more masculine precursor. Indeed, with the queer connotations of the word “queen,” the queen’s penetrating “prick” signifies a nurturing anal rape and is evidently a phallic act, since it is homonymically connected to Columbo’s “prick” in the preceding stanza, which is portrayed as something that needs to be cured: “To Benny then Columbo went/ With countenance so placid/ And Benny filled Columbo’s prick/ With Muriatic Acid.” Indeed, just as Columbo needs the queen’s penetrating prick to become properly authorized, his “prick” requires a cure as a necessary preparative step for the colonial expedition. Additionally, it is worth noting that it is the “prick” that usually does the filling of whatever orifice it enters. Therefore, Eliot’s

delineation of the “pricks” as performing dual functions, that is, as something that penetrates on one hand and something that can be filled on the other, embodies how male literary collaboration occurs through an intensely erotic bonding between mature and neophyte poets. Indeed, the way the two pairs -- the queen and Columbo, and Benny the doctor and Columbo -- collaborate mimics the way the poet needed Pound’s penetration into the draft of *The Waste Land*.

What is also worth noting about this male-to-male collaboration visible in the Columbo and Bolo Verses is that, whereas near the beginning of the poems, Columbo is described as someone who desires and requires penetration, as the plot progresses, he transforms himself into someone who is capable of penetrating other males, particularly young boys:

The cabin boy they had aboard  
His name was Orlandino  
A child of upright character  
But his language was obscene-o  
“Fuck Spiders” was his chief remark  
In accents mild and dulcet,  
They asked him what there was for lunch  
And he simply answered “Bullshit”

.....

Now when they were three weeks at sea  
Columbo he grew rooty

He took his cock in both his hands  
And swore it was a beauty.  
The cabin boy appeared on deck  
And scampered up the mast-o  
Columbo grasped him by the balls  
And buggered him in the ass-o. (*Inventions* 317)

Columbo's maturation from a penetratee to a penetrator corresponds in a sense to the way a young apprentice grows into an artist through an intense collaboration and struggle with a skilled master. K. J. Dover's illuminating study on Greek homosexuality articulates this developmental process as a licit educational system widespread in Europe throughout history. Usually, in this master- trainee relationship, which is often imbued with homoerotic titillations and flatteries, the passive role goes to a young trainee, but the assignment of roles is not permanent because the young trainee is destined in turn to grow into a master (91). Thus, the homoerotic intertext inscribed in this relationship has mostly been sheltered unwitnessed and has even been encouraged, masking itself as a nurturing relationship with a highly educational function (91).

The relationship between Columbo the chief commander and Orlandino, a cabin boy, which is cited above, indeed mimics and repeats this intensely erotic nurturing relationship of the apprentice system, with the active role going to the former. "Scampering up the mast-o," the cabin boy obviously looks naïve and clumsy in his handling of the mast and Eliot's homonymic play on the word "mast-o" emphatically brings into focus the boy's desire for and need of Columbo's interference as a necessary step to growth and masculinization. As the boy goes through this sort of maturation and masculinization, he is likely to gain access to privileges from

Columbo, privileges to command the labor of colonial slaves and cargo, and women of any class and race including his own – women he and his fellow crew members acquire through their colonial expeditions as well as “the Spanish ladies swarmed aboard” (*Inventions* 319). Thus, “it would be right for [Orlandino] to perform any service for [Columbo] who improves him in mind and character, as his offering of “Bullshit” for lunch suggestively demonstrates (Dover 91). On the other hand, as chief commander, Columbo does not seem to want to be penetrated as much as he used to. When later in the poems, for instance, “A bullet [comes] along the road/ and up Columbo’s asshole, [he becomes] so angry” (*Inventions* 318). Mimicking stereotypical terms such as “accents mild and dulcet” that are often associated with romantic heterosexual love, the relationship between Columbo and the cabin boy potently discloses and confirms the erotic component of male modernist collaboration and, in a much larger sense, of Western male writers’ collaborative authorship.

Male literary collaboration has a long-standing history in the West. Up until the twentieth-century, authors, patrons, publishers, coteries, and readers, namely, those who make literary production possible, had been almost exclusively males. Indeed, the materials and conventions of literary production – from the material shape of the book such as illustrations, title pages, prefaces, and signatures to peer reviews, peer competition, editing, and transmission of texts within literary coteries – evidence that collaboration among male artists has been a most common and wide-spread form of male collaboration (North 56). In his illuminating work entitled *Double Talk*, Wayne Koestenbaum defines this collaborative process as the title term “double talk” to focus on the homoeroticism involved in it, specifically homoeroticism involved in collaborative writing between two authors. When two men collaborate to create a literary

work, Koestenbaum argues, they indulge in double talk: they rapidly patter to obscure their erotic burden, but the ambiguities of their discourse give the taboo subject some liberty to roam (3). Simply put, men who collaborate engage in a metaphorical sexual intercourse, and the text they balance between them is alternately the child of their sexual union, and a shared woman (3). Indeed, aside from the creation and exchange of homoerotically-charged bawdy poems among the male members of Eliot's coterie, the instance of Columbo and his men cited above, who emerge as partners in their colonial mission, makes the indispensability of male homosocial, homoerotic alliance to literary production vividly legible.

What is also visible is the poem's implication of the significance of the homoerotic bonding among male modernist writers through its focus on European white male colonialists' homoerotic alliance in the colonial, imperialist setting where they are ultimately destined to mate with African blacks and mimic their queer sexual customs:

King Bolo's swarthy bodyguard  
They numbered three and thirty  
A wild and hardy set of blacks  
Undaunted by syphilis  
They wore. . .  
. . . a pair of great big hairy balls  
And a big black knotty penis.  
.....  
An innocent and playful lot  
But most disgusting dirty.

King Bolo lay down in the shade  
His royal breast uncovering  
They mounted in a banyan tree  
And shat upon their sovereign. (*Inventions* 316)

As the scene above demonstrates, King Bolo's and his "filthy" bodyguards' primitivism including their excremental performance replaces Eliot's concern of his own authority and authorship that is largely expressed through a conflict between the masculine and the feminine elsewhere with the issue of a less guilty, but more dichotomous and fantasy-prone racial distinction between European white males and exploitable Third World blacks. However, the seeming obsession with the stereotypical construction of the African blacks as such only masks a desire to define and understand Eliot himself, specifically with regard to his feminine, queer poetic subjectivity and authority. Eliot's depiction of the bodyguards not as having, but as wearing "a pair of great big hairy balls and a big black knotty penis," for instance, represents the poet's desire to wear a more compelling, stronger masculine mask or persona. Yet at the same time, it necessitates an analogy between the Bolovian custom and perverted dressing including transvestism widespread in Western homosexual culture (Torgovnick 116).

Specifically, King Bolo's big black queen, "a breech loader" to borrow the poet's racially and sexually charged description, a drag queen in other words, emerges comfortably as an appetitive stimulant both in procreative and creative senses:

Now while Columbo and his men  
Were drinking ice cream soda  
In burst King Bolo's big black queen

That famous old breech l(oader)  
Just then they rang the bell for lunch  
And served up – Fried Hyenas;  
And Columbo said “Will you take tail?”  
Or just a bit of p(enis)? (*Letters of T. S. Eliot* I: 46)

Apparently, there is a connection between the black queen and the ice cream soda and the fried Hyenas, given that food and sexuality have been historically linked in various cultures and in various ways. As a euphemism for sperm, ice cream soda or whipped cream has often been used for intimate titillation and as a sexual stimulant in homoerotic Western culture (Wertheimer 54). Likewise, animals’ sexual organs are often consumed to increase masculinity and sexual potency in some Eastern and African queer cultures (Frembgen 311). Therefore, Eliot’s association of the black drag queen and the combined queer, dirty traits of the First and the Third worlds marks the queen as a queer collaborator and, in a certain sense, as an invaluable fetish for authorial ejaculative power and gratification. It must be clearly stated that of course, in the cosmology of the African natives, masquerading is not perverted dressing in the usual sense of the word. Available studies suggest that masquerading plays extremely wide roles in the societies we call primitive.<sup>10</sup>

Mariana Torgovnick sagaciously argues in her discussion of modernist Orientalism that the primitive becomes a convenient locale for the exploration of Western dullness or degeneracy, and of ways to transcend it, and thus functions as a symbolic entity and that, as so often in the

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<sup>10</sup> For further Information about this, see pages 200-205 in Richard Schechner’s *Performance Studies: An Introduction*.

West's encounters with the primitive, the primitive responds to Western needs, becoming the faithful or distorted mirror of the Western self (153). Torgovnick's theorization of modernist Orientalism as a mirror for Westerners is remarkably perceptive, precisely because the creation of this specific version of the African blacks in Eliot is largely conditioned by and inextricably implicated with his sense of, anxiety over, disgust towards, or frustration with his own authority:

On Sunday morning after prayers  
They took their recreation  
The crew assembled on the deck  
And practiced masturbation.  
Columbo being full of rum  
He fell down in a stupor  
They turned his asshole S. S. W.  
And he cried "I'll die a pooper!" (*Inventions* 317)

Part of what is specifically notable about the above quotes is the intensity of which Columbo and his crew are anxious to emulate sexual perversion and the excremental ritual that King Bolo and his bodyguards perform, elements that are markedly abhorred and disavowed in his canonical works. Addressed in terms that suggest a closed-door homosocial gathering, in which the chosen male members can "practice masturbation," unhindered, the final goal of which is of course ejaculation, the Christian edifice celebrated in Eliot's major works as transcendental authority, for instance, emerges as a filthy queer site in which Columbo the "pooper" and his men unite with one another. These European white males' preoccupation with these sorts of primitive

customs and homoerotic elements, in my view, mirrors a primitive, obscene, queer side in Eliot, which only finds its way out in racial terms in a private setting.

This centrality of the homosocial affiliation in Eliot instantly recalls the troubled connection between what is deemed feminine in the poet and the question of authority and authorship within himself. I have already argued that a young poet or a poetic subjectivity that needs maturation is usually feminized in Eliot's work, both private and public. In a similar way, the outcome of a young poet's creative effort, in other words, a work that needs progress is often feminized or presented in queer terms as something that requires masculine interference or penetration. In "Fragments," for instance, the tinker's cesarean act of ripping up a woman's "belly from cunt to navel" gestures to "a process of cure to render a [hysterically effeminate poetic] work into a cooperative male" counterpart or a process of birthing a masculine work (Koestenbaum 114). Likewise, when Irishness, blackness, and femininity, the very elements from which the poet wants to distance his canonical work, are thrown together as in a possum stew in "Ballade pour la grosse Lulu," Eliot's own view of his early work as feminized and contaminated also becomes evident. Indeed, Eliot is his own "bullshit" or meager work in progress, which is unable to burst into publication, until he and his work are properly matured and masculinized.

In his letter to James Joyce in 1921, Eliot calls the "Columbo and Bolo verses" his "epic ballad" and further anxiously identifies himself and the poems with King Bolo's big black bastard queen. Eliot grievingly writes, for instance, because the disruptive elements of color and sex are in my poems, no one will publish them; therefore my poems and I are as obscene as the big black queen (*Letters of T. S. E.* I: 562). As this letter evidently suggests, Eliot was often

frustrated about his prospect as a poet in his early years and strongly desired his Bolo verses to be his first burst onto the London literary scene. Eliot was even willing to risk being dangerously flamboyant to find the publicity he desired (Zwerdling 266-9). When Lewis refused to publish the poems because of their obscenity, Eliot bitterly wrote to Pound in exactly the same language he employs in the “Columbo and Bolo verses” to describe the black queen’s mode of performing herself, in order to describe his own mode and pathos of writing: “I fear that King Bolo and his Big Black Kween will never burst into print” (*Inventions* 305). In short, Eliot’s own poems could not “burst” into print onto the London literary scene with the same ease and agility that Bolo’s “big black queen” “burst” upon the obscene party of Columbo and his men. Indeed, alluding to Eliot’s own inability to write and publish and in their circulation only to male writers, all of Eliot’s Columbo poems reveal themselves as feminized in a certain sense, exemplifying a gang rape of women (Sedgwick *Between Men* 124).

On the other hand, in Eliot’s model of a male creative homosocial alliance, where his own poetic body and subjectivity are feminized, characters that respond to real life women are strangely renounced and abhorred. Robin Ryle argues in his discussion of male homosocial alliance that the act of exchanging women among male members through marriage alliances is known primarily for homosocial bonding, through which to effectively control their female counterparts, and that in the whole process of this negotiation, women emerge as completely silent objects (Ryle 324). Ryle’s argumentation about the relegation of women to silent objects in the marriage process is especially fitting in the context of my argument about male modernists’ homosocial alliance in making themselves more masculine, given, for instance, that “The Triumph of Bullshit,” in its circulation only to male writers and in its obsessive narcissistic gaze

on the male narrator, elides any tangible construction of the “ladies” addressed in the poem. It is as if the very moment to which we most look forward in the wedding ceremony, the moment in which we expect to hear the famous performative, “I take this woman to be my lawfully wedded wife” is always postponed until the last moment and ends too short, precisely because of the other formal issues that need to be taken care of, with active roles always going to the male members of the family. The whole poem is thickly engaged instead with exposing the very mode and pathos of a more masculine, stronger agency that the male speaker ardently seeks to activate his potency or creativity.

Intriguingly, even when a heterosexual love relationship is brought into focus in terms of the narrative structure of the poet’s bawdy poems, the male penis or male pre-coital performance is emphatically dramatized. “Fragments,” for instance, strangely focuses more on describing the tinker’s gargantuan penis and its after-effect rather than the actual intercourse itself, which is commonly expected in pornotropic works in terms of their narrative structure, similar to the ways “The Triumph of Bullshit” focuses more on the act of producing “bullshit” than delineating the ladies addressed in the poem. The coital act itself is elided; we only get the before-and-after:

There was a jolly tinker came across the sea  
With his four and twenty inches hanging to his knee  
*Chorus*        With his long-pronged hongpronged  
                         Underhanded babyfetcher  
                         Hanging to his knee.

It was a sunny summer day the tinker was in heat

With his eight and forty inches hanging to his feet.

.....

O mother dear mother I thought that I was able

But he ripped up my belly from my cunt to my navel

With his whanger in his hand he walked through the hall

“By God” said the cook “he’s a gona fuck us all.”

With his whanger in his hand he walked through the hall

“By God” said the cook “he’s a gone and fucked us all” (*Inventions* 314)

The tinker’s performance transgressing yet bypassing the daughter’s body evidences, in a peculiar sense, that Eliot exploits language from a woman’s body to describe his own intellectually and emotionally troubled relations with other male writers, which is required in his authorship, and that the suppression of women is unavoidable. Indeed, in this whole process, the daughter’s desire is muted, her words, unfinished. What she thought she was able and how she felt about her raped body are also not known. Depicted as discontinuous and fragmented, her ripped belly only exposes the vexed site of modernists authors’ intensely homoerotic collaborative attempts at circuitously locating their own (pro)creativity.

To take another example, Queen Isabella, in endowing Columbo with the authority to lead the colonial expedition at the start of the poems, as is already seen, performs as a degendered, more mature accomplice who arouses male procreative energies. That is to say, although apparently a female character, she does not perform a role customarily attributed to

women. Noticeably, however, in the next moment after Columbo has been properly authorized, the queen is misogynically degraded to a “Spanish whore” and is thus placed in direct opposition to the masculine potency that emerges through male bonding among Columbo and his men: Columbo and his merry men/ They set sail from Genoa/ Queen Isabella was aboard/ That famous Spanish whore (*Inventions* 315). In other words, it is precisely when the queen plays an apparently womanly role that her function as a possible impregnator is invalidated and she is relegated to merely an object of exchange or an object that needs to be transcended.

It is important to note that, by corollary, the sexual intercourse between Columbo and the black queen happens after Columbo has been properly authorized by Queen Isabella:

One day Columbo and the queen  
They fell into a quarrel  
Columbo showed his disrespect  
By farting in a barrel.  
The queen she called him horse’ ass  
And “dirty Spanish loafer”  
They terminated the affair  
By fucking on the sofa. (*Inventions* 318)

Given the queerness embedded in her title and appearance – “King Bolo’s big black bastard Kween” – the intercourse between Columbo and the black queen signals not a heterosexual love but a male bonding, but a bonding between equals, rather than the type of bonding between a master and an apprentice. This is obvious when farting, literally an empty and unproductive gesture, is performed to show disrespect to the black queen whereas Columbo’s excreting

performance on the table is required as a form of showing Queen Isabella respect and gratitude. Significantly, Columbo and the black queen treat each other equally and disrespectfully, by quarrelling, by exchanging dirty gestures and jokes, and eventually by “fucking on the sofa.” The fact that only masculinized queens emerge as central and can relate with Columbo, alongside the absence of heterosexual love-making, is in fact necessary in terms of the narrative structure of the poems to dramatize not only the alliance between Columbo and his men more forcefully but also the significance of male bonding in general in mustering up male potency and masculine authority.

In fact, every time an apparently female agency that corresponds to a real life woman is introduced, the “Columbo and Bolo Verses” elaborately move athwart the performative convention of heteronormative sexual relationship and performance:

One Sunday evening after tea  
They went to storm a whore house.  
As they were scrambling up the steps  
Twas then Columbo his got  
Molto vivace [musical direction]  
A great big whore from the seventh story window  
She floored him with a pisspot. (*Inventions* 315)

The great big whore’s pisspot embodies a womb, but a womb dangerously uncontrollable with its devouring sexuality and, in a sense, disturbing hysteria. Where heterosexual erotic intercourse is supposed to take place, there is thus unexpected violence, violence against masculinity, a symbolic castration of male (pro)creativity. As elsewhere in other bawdy poems, we are

repeatedly led to a similar moment throughout the poems, in which the normative heterosexual love relationship is elided. One of the stanzas of “Columbo and the Bolo verses,” for instance, starts with ““Avast my men”” Columbo cried/In accents mild and dulcet” and abruptly ends with “And the band struck up “The Whore House Ball”/In accents deep and farty” (318-9). It is indeed remarkable that where there should be a “Whore House Ball,” nothing really happens. Instead, Columbo’s accents mild and dulcet in his calling his men are given an added emphasis in their contrast to the band’s “accents deep and farty” in their crying out “The Whore House Ball.” Bearing in mind the word “farty” can signify emptiness and nothingness in its association with wind or fart, the evident lack of a heteronormative romance between male and female suggests that here as elsewhere, Eliot’s women figures are simply deployed for male homosocial bonding to become possible.

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Written throughout the poet’s entire life, Eliot’s bawdy poems showed that queerness is an essential component in his authority and authorship. Although testing out various poetic voices and possibilities, the early Eliot largely sees his poetic subjectivity and body as feminine and delineates them as something that needs to be transcended through a proper initiation, almost always figured as male penetration or male rape. Although outwardly in pursuit of a masculine ideal and impersonal poetic voice, the later Eliot had kept composing these bawdy poems in secret and circulating them among his close male friends. However, this feminine, bawdy voice was likely to harm his reputation as a canonical modernist writer, it had to be suppressed in

public. In “The Love Song of St. Sebastian,” the struggle with and disavowal of what Eliot considers as this sort of undesirable poetic self visibly emerge, a poem that is not commonly classified as one of Eliot’s bawdy poems but nonetheless provides tangible insight into Eliot’s puzzling authority. In the first stanza of the poem, the poet-speaker – represented as St. Sebastian<sup>11</sup>, a popular gay icon since Wilde’s days – is depicted as being intent on killing himself in his own imagination, inspired by his passion for a lover in white:

I would flog myself until I bled,  
And after hour on hour of prayer  
And torture and delight  
Until my blood should ring the lamp  
And glisten in the light;  
I should arise your neophyte  
And then put out the light  
To follow where you lead,  
To follow where your feet are white  
In the darkness toward your bed  
And where your gown is white  
And against your gown your braided hair.  
Then you would take me in

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<sup>11</sup> For more information about St. Sebastian as a popular gay icon, read Richard A. Kaye’s “Losing His Religion: Saint Sebastian as Contemporary Gay Martyr.” in *Outlooks: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities and Visual Cultures*. According to Kaye, for instance, contemporary gay men have seen in Sebastian at once a stunning advertisement for homosexual desire (indeed, a homoerotic ideal), and a prototypical portrait of tortured closet case (105).

Because I was hideous in your sight

You would take me in without shame. (*Inventions* 78)

The saint is evidently feminized in the ways he shows admiration to his lover whereas the lover herself is necessarily masculinized in their love relationship. The saint is obviously masochistic: in his own imagination, he attempts to “flog himself until he [bleeds]” in the belief that his lover would only accept him in his “hideous” form, thus defining himself as a passive agent that can only be valued by someone with whom he comes into sadomasochist relation. Additionally, the saint imagines himself as an effeminate “neophyte” in his relationship to his lover, who would lead him “where [her] feet are white,” strikingly the same way early Eliot defines himself as feminine in relation to what he deems masculine literary edifice.

In the second stanza, however, the saint spectacularly transforms himself into a sadist, imagining strangling the lover of his initial passion to death:

I would come with a towel in my hand

And bend your head beneath my knees;

Your ears curl back in a certain way

Like no one’s else in all the world.

.....

I shall remember how your ears were curled.

I should for a moment linger

And follow the curve with my finger

And your head beneath my knees---

I think that at last you would understand. (78)

Seemingly, these imagined acts of loving and of murdering are incompatible (Miller 244). Viewed in relation to the poet's troubled sense of his earlier poetic persona as something feminine that must be eventually transcended, the concomitance of these seemingly contradictory acts makes much sense, however. Indeed, they embody the two faces of a coin in Eliot's psyche. On one hand, because the feminine, masochist side is unavoidably his own, the poet inextricably comes into a narcissistic love relation with it. On the other, because the poet desires to eventually form an organic whole with the masculine tradition, that part of his subjectivity must be hated and be murdered in the most virile, aggressive, violent ways. The coexistence of these contradicting voices – one, essentially Prufrockian, the other Sweeney-like – in Eliot's canonical poems might be understood in this complex context of the poet's own sense of his authority. Of course, this ceaseless confrontation between the feminine and masculine voices within the poet, as I have already argued, gestures to, in its final destination, the celebration of the homosocial relationship between male writers in the creative process and the affirmation of the male tradition of writing. Yet, as we will see in the next chapter, Eliot's performances to muster up masculine authority are doomed to fail, precisely because of the contradictions internally inscribed in his poetic subjectivity, that he denounces feminine elements and yet his language is feminine, and that the poet's disavowal of homosexuality is ceaselessly in conflict with his poetic performance of anal fantasies that are always in need of other male agencies' intrusion.

## Chapter 2

### March Hare's Public Performances: Eliot's Public Poems

Whereas Eliot's private, bawdy poetry is a sort of a rehearsal site in which the poet tests out various voices and personas and comes to terms with his poetic energies in unbridled obscene terms, the poet's canonical poetry, as a public performative space in its entirety, materializes the poet's authority in much more restrained terms. The speaker's voice of the bawdy verse that finds release as fantasies of, for example, insatiable Spaniards and Caribbean blacks with gargantuan genitals, satisfying their sexual desires in any available orifice, is largely repressed in Eliot's public, canonical poems, and an antithetical voice prevails there instead. Most of the male speakers or characters in *Prufrock and Other Observations* are indeed depicted as "congested with learning, hyper-critical, concerned, and self-conscious . . . filled with a sad desiccation" (Ackroyd 39). Gerontion and Burbank, characters who are arguably the most symptomatic of the milieu of Eliot's published second volume of poetry, *Poems*, are also imagined as impaled upon their own lacerating self-consciousness. Above all, caught between conscience and doubt, they are described as incapable of being passionately absorbed in anything and thus of believing in anything. Tiresias, a character who, according to Eliot's somewhat misleading note, unites all the other consciousnesses in *The Waste Land*, is in fact a modern day voyeur, whose subjectivity consists only in "what [he] saw" in the past, not what he does; his will to act seems completely paralyzed and so he remains within his own consciousness (*Collected Poems* 82).

A number of modernist scholars including Van Wyck Brooks and Manju Jain have maintained that such overly feminine, acutely self-conscious, rather passive characters are the very hallmark of Eliot's major public poems (Jain 82-7). In James Miller's historicist reading of Eliot's major poems, these Prufrockian characters are immediately coupled with the Eliot revealed in various descriptions of friends and acquaintances in their shared femininity, self-conscious role-playing, and sober seriousness (75). In his thorough biography on the poet, Ackroyd also tellingly argues that these characters remarkably mirror Eliot's own image of himself as feminine, awkward and pretentious in public, and highly misogynic (44). However, in my view, what makes Eliot's major poems fascinatingly attractive are precisely those marginalized minor characters and tropes located at the other end of the spectrum: the uncultured, barbaric materialist Bleistein, "whose lusterless protrusive eye" registers no feelings even when he sees the highly cultivated artwork of Canaletto; Sweeney, the epitome of the animalistic, sensual man, reminiscent of such characters as the tinker in Eliot's bawdy poems; and Grishkin, whose characteristically sensual and yet dangerous charm is placed in direct opposition to what is deemed the masculine ideal in Eliot (*Collected Poems* 42). Indeed, it is the very existence of such minor characters as Madame Sosostriis, the typist and the clerk, the unnamed lower-class female speaker narrating a story about Lil and Albert, and Tiresias, the voyeuristic androgyne, namely, such impure characters disavowed as "waste" that makes *The Waste Land* fascinatingly attractive and exciting.

At first glance, these trash tropes visible in Eliot's public work look much different from such "bullshit" tropes as the tinker and Columbo in Eliot's bawdy poems, presumably because in creating the former, Eliot employs an impersonality technique to distance his own hated self

from it whereas the latter is mostly a performative outcome of Eliot's direct projection of himself. They differ little in essence, however, only by a neck. That is to say, the homoerotically-charged "bullshit" tropes that pervade Eliot's private, bawdy poems, whose sexual energies and desires hint at Eliot's own desire for male-to-male collaboration, closely resembles the trash tropes in his public work, tropes marginalized and abhorred in their embodiment of femininity, otherness, or queerness. In my view, the differing degree to which the poet projects his own hated self in delineating the trash tropes in his public, canonical poems only serve to mask their immediate closeness. In Eliot's private work, for instance, bawdy characters are largely portrayed as comic, harmless figures because of the poet's rather candid acknowledgement of their shared commonness in his keen sense of himself as a young effeminate poet who needs to be properly initiated and authorized. In his canonical work, however, these almost same tropes are vehemently disavowed as something that must be transcended precisely because of their being a ceaseless reminder of what has to be severed from the public Eliot – femininity and queerness. However, again, they are quite the same in terms of their queer temperament and performance.

Indeed, Eliot intends his poetic voice and authority to become less feminine, less queer and more masculine in his public work. Therefore, the poet begins distancing himself from such bullshit tropes that evoke those qualities, that is, tropes that are overfertile, hysteric, impure, and thus uncontrollable. Women are largely suppressed and Jews, Blacks, and Irish, namely, tropes that are metonymically linked to the feminine, even more so. In conjunction with the suppression of these trash tropes, the poet's desire for a homosocial affiliation is largely sublimated into a desire to be united with what is imagined as masculine order and male tradition of writing in Eliot, and is articulated in terms that do not transgress the heteronormative sensibility. As we

will see in this chapter, however, the fulfillment of the poet's almost foolhardy desire for a masculine authority and of his desire to participate in male literary tradition building are forever delayed, precisely because the poet almost always places himself in the position of the feminine in his erotic, queer relation to the tradition. Additionally, as I will argue in this chapter, a complete disavowal of the trash tropes in his public works in his own embattled sense of the feminine and the masculine is ultimately an impossible project for the very reason that the hated feminine or queer elements in these tropes are necessary conditions for his normative creativity to properly operate.

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In making his authorial voice more masculine and impersonal in his public, canonical poetry, Eliot vigilantly distances himself from the queer aspects that pervade his bawdy poems. As a result, queerness is almost completely muted or surfaces only either as unconditional respect or love for masculine tradition or as cited authority of his literary forefathers. That is to say, the open homoeroticism of the bawdy poems is sublimated into a socially acceptable form that does not transgress the heteronormative sensibility and normative literary practice on one hand. On the other hand, the very queer elements that the poet sees as disturbing, precisely because of the commonness he shares with them, are entirely projected upon women characters or what can be imagined as feminine. Thus, the masculine ideal or wholeness is presented in a much more intense opposition to the poet's own sense of the feminine in Eliot's public, canonical poems; women and the feminine are largely criticized and disavowed for their

pollutedness and fragmentedness, and the tone of brooding dislike or fear of women becomes much more clear.

In “Sweeney Erect,” which was written in 1917 and was first published in *Art and Letters* in 1919, the poet’s experimentation with making his authority more masculine and impersonal is dramatized through the focus on an exploitive relationship between an animalistic male character Sweeney and an unnamed prostitute described as an “epileptic on the bed” (*Collected Poems* 45):

Morning stirs the feet and hands

(Nausicaa and Polypheme),

Gesture of orang-outang

Rises from the sheets in steam.

This withered root of knots of hair

Slitted below and gashed with eyes,

This oval O cropped out with teeth:

The sickle motion from the thighs

Jackknives upward at the knees

Then straightens out from heel to hip

Pushing the framework of the bed

And clawing at the pillow slip. (44)

The above quotes illustrate a heterosexual relationship without a sexual act itself, which is characteristic of Eliot’s poems. Of course, given that, as Eliot himself maintains, “Sweeney Erect”

is an ironic commentary upon the wholeness of the mind and the innate worth of the individual that Western society has idealized through various symbolic and material, institutional and structural devices, it is not entirely surprising that a love story between this couple is not romantic in any sense (Jain 103). Nonetheless, there is evidently something strange in the way Eliot elides the scene of what is supposed to be a heterosexual relationship, if not blissful. The scene above is richly stuffed with phallic symbols such as “root,” “sickle,” and “jackknife.” “The sickle motion,” “straightens out,” “pushing,” and “clawing,” all of which are descriptors for movements, also evoke strong masculinity, in conjunction with the sexual pun in the title. Likewise, the passive forms of the verbs, “slitted,” “gashed,” and “cropped out” suggest masculine violence performed upon women with a phallic knife, especially given that the first two words are slang terms for female genitalia. However, here as elsewhere in Eliot’s bawdy poems, the poem is silent about the sexual act itself.

Circulatively eliding the sexual intercourse between Sweeney and the prostitute, the poem is instead preoccupied with introducing a paternal intertext of homecoming, an aim that, when fulfilled, would verify male potency and procreativity. Indeed, as Burton Blistein argues, in Eliot’s public poems, there is always a lingering yearning for the “return to the home of [his] ancestors or first parents,” simply put, a desire for being united with and included in the masculine order and tradition (120). Odysseus and Theseus, the legendary heroes alluded to in the epigraph and the two opening stanzas of “Sweeney Erect” are in fact eternal heroic travelers questing for Home, an ideal that can never be fulfilled but has been nonetheless ever-present over generations (104). What is intriguing about this quest as a theme in Eliot, though, is an emphasis on a required sacrifice of a mediator, a role which is mostly performed by women.

Indeed, Eliot's cited allusions about Greek heroes gesture towards the women being utilized or sacrificed for masculine goals, figured here as homecoming. Odysseus, for instance, takes advantage of Nausicaa to win her father's confidence and generosity, both material and spiritual, which will bring him back to Ithaca. Likewise, Theseus uses Ariadne to find his way out of the labyrinth after he has killed the Minotaur. Aspasia, originally the heroine of *The Maid's Tragedy*, who evokes the predicament of Ariadne in the first two stanzas of the poem as a speaker, is also a broken-hearted female figure who, like Nausicaa and Ariadne, has been exploited and later abandoned by a male hero. Needless to say, the prostitute in which Sweeney indulges is similarly exploited and then neglected for Sweeney's homecoming, albeit in a wry sense, given that he is compared to Polyphemus, the uncouth Cyclops, not Odysseus or Theseus.

This imagining of women not as ultimate lovers but mostly as mediators, through which to fulfill male characters' homecomings in effect gestures towards a male homosocial desire. Indeed, what is specifically exciting in the following part of "Sweeney Erect" is its emboldened focus on the male character's preoccupation with a post-coital waking-up ritual, which, in my view, embodies the poet's need for a homosocial/homoerotic alliance in constructing his authority as more masculine:

Sweeney addressed full length to shave  
Broadbottomed, pink from nape to base,  
Knows the female temperament  
And wipes the suds around his face.  
.....

Tests the razor on his leg

Waiting until the shriek subsides. (44-5)

In various cultures throughout history, males have collectively aimed to look theatrically impressive to one another, rather than to their female counterparts in various ritual, political, and religious occasions to mark rites of passage to adulthood, to emphasize their rank or status, or to show submission to authority (Schechner 67). In accordance with such needs, diverse techniques of male grooming have been systematically developed and practiced as a sort of collective male performance across cultures, among which shaving has emerged as a primary form. In religious ceremonies in ancient India, for instance, the hair on the chest and pubic area of male participants was shaved every fourth day, and in Roman times the first hair removal of a young male marked the arrival of his masculinity and adulthood (74). In my view, Sweeney's shaving ritual carried out after his intercourse has a similar purpose. Together with his "broadbottomed" morphology, this act of shaving and of "[testing] the razor on his leg" works not towards the heterosexual love act itself, but towards the theatricality of male sexuality, or put differently, male potency and procreativity, through which the genealogy of male members of the society is operative and affirmed and the homosocial/homoerotic bond of its male members, reinforced. Eliot's focus on Sweeney's shaving performance stunningly mirrors the stylized, repeated execution of such make-belief performance that has been collectively attempted by the male members of society over generations.

In a sense, Sweeney evokes the tinker of the bawdy poem discussed in Chapter One, in his command of enormous sexual energy and in his embodiment of callousness and violence exerted upon women. Both poems indeed share a thematic similarity, in their circulative eliding

of the actual intercourse itself that is evidently intended to point elsewhere. For example, “Sweeney Erect” is preoccupied with describing Sweeney’s after-coital performance and the aftereffect of the intercourse performed upon the prostitute in a way similar to how “Fragments” is preoccupied with delineating the tinker’s pre-coital performance with his gargantuan penis and its aftereffect upon the daughter’s body. What makes “Sweeney Erect” the poet’s public poem, though, whereas “Fragments” is among Eliot’s suppressed and closeted bawdy poems is the very existence of the cited authority of the paternal literary texts of his choice, which, in my view, dramatizes Eliot’s desire to be united with his chosen literary forefathers. Indeed, the cited paternal texts in Eliot’s public poems function not only as a means of validating the literariness and authenticity of his own poems but also as a means of constructing what is deemed ideal male literary genealogy by the poet within his own work, just as the private circulation of his bawdy poems only among the male authors of his choice functions as a means of constructing the poet’s own homoerotically-charged literary coterie later known as high modernist writers (Lamos *Deviant Modernism* 68). Indeed, in Eliot the fulfillment of homecoming means not the gratification of heterosexual love and pleasure but the homoerotically-charged unification with the masculine authority, order, and tradition.

In my view, “Whispers of Immortality,” which was written between 1915 and 1918 and first published in the *Little Review* in 1918, closely resembles “Sweeney Erect” in its identical theme of suppressing women and the feminine, revealing Eliot’s need to suppress what is considered as feminine within himself in his strong desire for a more masculine authority. Feelings of brooding dislike or contempt towards the feminine surface when, for instance,

Grishkin appears in the middle of the poem, a loose foreign woman who is described as wearing heavy make-up and dressing in an indecent manner:

Grishkin is nice: her Russian eye  
Is underlined for emphasis;  
Uncorseted, her friendly bust  
Gives promise of pneumatic bliss

The couched Brazilian jaguar  
Compels the scampering marmoset  
With subtle effluence of cat;  
Grishkin has a maisonette;

The sleek Brazilian jaguar  
Does not in its arboreal gloom  
Distil so rank a feline smell  
As Grishkin in a drawing-room.

And even the Abstract Entities  
Circumambulate her charm;  
But our lot crawls between dry ribs  
To keep our metaphysics warm. (*Collected Poems 55-6*)

Grishkin's underlined foreign "eye" and her uncorseted bust only promise ephemeral "pneumatic bliss," not a happy unification between male and female, and her Russianness, read in the sinister political context across Europe of Eliot's time, suggests not erotic otherness but rather, the dangers and corruption that lurk in her brassy friendliness. Additionally, Eliot's ending of each odd line of the first cited stanza with Grishkin's body parts performatively breaks up her body and denies her wholeness. Described only in mutilated bodily and material terms, Grishkin therefore does not fulfill any gratification, either sexual or spiritual. What is visible here instead is the poet's struggle to control and transcend the vulgar attractiveness and corruption that Grishkin embodies in her entirety.

Intriguingly, just like the conflict between the feminine and masculine elements is dramatized in "Sweeney Erect," here, the conflict between Grishkin's feline femininity and what is imagined as ideal masculine authority by Eliot is dramatized through the focus on the deadly hunt between the scampering marmoset and the Brazilian jaguar. Although a number of modernist scholars have pointed out that Grishkin is compared to "the couched Brazilian jaguar," given that they share a "feline smell" in common, it seems to me that Grishkin rather corresponds to the marmoset for the following reasons (Tiwari 46). First, the jaguar's sex is never clearly revealed, and Eliot initially identified it with the male pronoun in the first edition of the poem, which he later neutralized. Second, Eliot distances the subtleness and sleekness of the jaguar from the "feline smell" that Grishkin emits and its natural, "arboreal" cleanness from the rankness of Grishkin's modern luxuries. The jaguar therefore functions as a male collaborator to mute what Grishkin evokes in her entirety, namely, her dangerous sexuality and feminine

potency in a broader sense that are threatening to the wholeness of masculine subjectivity and the cited authority of Eliot's literary and philosophical fathers.

Indeed, "Whispers of Immortality" is remarkably structured to restore the paternal order and masculine authority Eliot strongly desires. It begins with a queer elaboration of the metaphysical poets, John Webster and John Donne, whose unified sensibility is praised elsewhere in his canonical essay entitled "The Metaphysical Poets:"

WEBSTER was much possessed by death  
And saw the skull beneath the skin;  
And breastless creatures under ground  
Leaned backward with a lipless grin.

Daffodil bulbs instead of balls  
Stared from the sockets of the eyes!  
He knew that thought clings round dead limbs  
Tightening its lusts and luxuries.

Donne, I suppose, was such another  
Who found no substitute for sense;  
To seize and clutch and penetrate,  
Expert beyond experience,

He knew the anguish of the marrow

The ague of the skeleton;  
No contact possible to flesh  
Allayed the fever of the bone.

Grishkin is nice. . . (55)

As a critical commentary upon the contemporary dissociation of the intellect and the senses, that is to say, upon the very feature that Grishkin embodies, the paternal intertext about metaphysical poets that opens the poem is transgressed, as the quotes above demonstrate, at first by the radical intrusion of the polluted female Grishkin. Then, as I analyzed earlier in the scene of the deadly hunt between the marmoset and the Brazilian jaguar, after performatively denying Grishkin's wholeness and potency, the poem finally returns back where it begins: "But our lot crawls between dry ribs/ To keep our metaphysics warm." What is indeed especially intriguing here is that the jaguar's "effluence" and its "waste" are simply deployed to restore the paternal order, order that has been established at the beginning of the poem by means of the cited authority of Webster and Donne, in a way strikingly similar to how "bullshit" does so, as primal colonial cargo and sexual stimulant, or as a substance of meal in Eliot's bawdy poems, specifically in the "Columbo and Bolo Verses."

Koestenbaum argues, in his discussion of the queer collaboration between Eliot and Pound on *The Waste Land*, that the two poets can unite because they see the discontinuous poem as a woman in need of a cure (114). He proceeds to argue that "the poem's ailing body stands in for Eliot's body, and for the body of his 'mad' wife, Vivien," that "the poem is a hysteric with whom the two men form a triangle (114). Koestenbaum's interpretation of the poem as Eliot's

and Vivien's ailing bodies seems somewhat misleading, but his analysis of the poem as a hysterical female that can unite the two poets seems to fit the recurring pattern in Eliot's poetry that I discuss elsewhere in Chapter One, a pattern of "male traffic in women" as a way to better locate, make sense of, and work through their allied procreativity and creativity, in order to eventually masculinize their work and restore the paternal order. Indeed, in one of Eliot's earlier major poems entitled "Hysteria," this theme of male alliance as a way to (re)claim the paternal order and masculine authority is embodied as an alliance between the male speaker and an elderly male waiter in their attempt to mute a hysterical female body, so that the former can restore his (pro)creativity and, by corollary, his ability to concentrate:

. . . I was drawn in by short gasps, inhaled at each momentary recovery, lost finally in the dark caverns of her throat, bruised by the ripple of unseen muscles. An elderly waiter with trembling hands was hurriedly spreading a pink and white checked cloth over the rusty green iron table, saying: "If the lady and gentleman wish to take their tea in the garden, if the lady and gentleman wish to take their tea in the garden. . ." I decided that if the shaking of her breasts could be stopped, some of the fragments of the afternoon might be collected, and I concentrated my attention with careful subtlety to this end. (*Collected Poems* 34)

The waiter's repeated words, together with his "trembling" gestures that mimic the hysterical female body, bring the reader's attention away from, to borrow Lamos' terms, "the maternal intertext" to paternal order (*Deviant Modernism* 57). The waiter's will to concentrate on his job undoubtedly facilitates the speaker's will to concentrate on his own, although the poem itself is silent about whether this strategy worked or not in the end. In a certain sense, their alliance

corresponds to the homoerotic titillations and flirtations Eliot was engaged in with Pound and many others in his circulation of the bawdy poems and in the creating process of *The Waste Land* as a way to optimize his ability to create and masculinize his otherwise disordered, feminine poems.

Significantly, Eliot's canonical poems seem mostly to require a feminine agency such as a female body as a poetic substance, or put more correctly, a poetic catalyst that is geared to facilitating the poet's alliance with a different male consciousness, which, in his own imagination, would eventually lead to the masculinization of his own authority and a fulfillment of his creative ejaculative desire in a desirable sense. Eliot's explication of how poetic creation occurs with his much discussed analogy of platinum as a creative catalyst in "Tradition and Individual Talent" seems suggestive in this context of my argument about the literary performance that largely takes place based on male alliance:

I therefore invite you to consider, as a suggestive analogy, the action which takes place when a bit of finely filiated platinum is introduced into a chamber containing oxygen and sulphur dioxide . . . . . When the two gases previously mentioned are mixed in the presence of a filament of platinum, they form sulphurous acid. This combination takes place only if the platinum is present; nevertheless the newly formed acid contains no trace of platinum, and the platinum itself is apparently unaffected; has remained inert, neutral, and unchanged. The mind of the poet is the shred of platinum. It may partly or exclusively operate upon the experience of the man himself; but, the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and

the mind which creates; . . . . The more perfectly will the mind digest and transmute the passions which are its material. (*Selected Prose* 40-1)

Eliot's description of the way poetic creation occurs is essentially queer, precisely because it is described in material and sexual terms and is pervaded with same-sex desires. A simple displacement of the term "platinum" into a female agency could do more to shake the long-standing belief in Eliot's authority as reactionary and homophobic; the excerpt above from "Tradition and Individual Talent" suggests that the mind of a male poet is not in effect "the shred of platinum," but more precisely, the queer agency that can "mix" and mate with the minds of males in a closed "chamber" only in the presence of a female catalyst, with "the newly formed acid" being an embodiment of a queer creative outcome of male same-sex literary collaboration, not the fruit of heteronormative, reactionary subjectivity. Of course, "the shred of platinum" remains silent, like the muted female body in "Hysteria" in this whole transformative process, unattended and neglected.

Eliot's abiding desire for masculinized voice and authority also manifests itself through borrowing masculine forms from the distant past as well. Eliot, for instance, composed the now deleted section of "The Fire Sermon" about a woman named Fresca in the mock-heroic writing style of Alexander Pope, revealing his desire to purify and masculinize what he sees as feminine influence and corruption:

Admonished by the sun's inclining ray,  
The white-armed Fresca blinks, and yawns, and gapes,  
Aroused from dreams of love and pleasant rapes  
.....

Leaving the bubbling beverage to cool,  
Fresca slips softly to the needful stool,  
Where the pathetic tale of Richardson  
Eases her labour till the deed is done  
.....  
Odours, confectioned by the cunning French,  
Disguise the good old female stench./hearty female stench. (*The Waste Land: A  
Facsimile 23-7*)

Evidently, here Fresca is mocked for being both a shallow reader and dime writer. What is specifically interesting about the quotes above, though, is the poem's critique of Fresca through the focus on her preoccupation with her bowel movement. Since she is depicted as doing nothing creative and productive, her excrement, if any, corresponds to unintellectual writing in a manner similar to how bodily excrements figured as "possum stew" correspond to something that needs to go through a maturation and masculinization process in "Ballade pour la grosse Lulu." It is also worth noting that the authors Fresca explores including Richardson are those whom Eliot considers feminized and that the reference to her writing only appears later in the fragment very briefly and in a belittling tone: she "may as well write poetry as count sheep" (27). Eliot hence obviously suggests Fresca's approach to both reading and writing as "soapy" and not intellectual, and as transgressing the masculine authority he intends to emulate, and as something that requires purification and masculinization. Eliot's use of a mock-heroic writing style in constructing the Fresca part, a masculinized literary form, in effect, commonly used for epic and narrative poetry, indeed mirrors Eliot's desire to break from the impure feminine elements,

although it was Pound's removal of this part that ironically made *The Waste Land* more masculine.

However, Eliot's literary performance to masculinize his voice and authority in his canonical poems through a variety of strategies always fails, precisely because of the homoerotic and queer components that cannot be completely separated from his own authorial voice. For instance, in the process where Webster and Donne are discussed in confrontation with Grishkin in "Whispers of Immortality," the poem amusingly evokes erotic imagination and experiences in a way similar to how "Sweeney Erect" gestures to the poet's erotic desire to be united with the masculine order and ideal when addressing Sweeney's post-coital ritual, since the literary practice of the two metaphysical poets by means of which Eliot desires to construct a literary genealogy within his own work are described in bodily and material terms, just like the female character Grishkin. Indeed, "a direct sensuous apprehension of thought, or a recreation of thought into feeling"; and "the ability to [transmute] ideas into sensations," the very qualities that Eliot celebrates in these poets in "The Metaphysical Poets," are suggested in intensely sensuous terms and inseparable from the body (*Selected Prose* 63-66). Additionally, as Colleen Lamos claims, Eliot describes the lust of mind or thought as stronger than the lust of the body, when addressing Webster's metaphysics as "thought clings round dead limbs/ Tightening its lusts and luxuries." It follows then that in Eliot as well as in these poets, "the mind is superior to the body in its capacity for sexual temptation and gratification" (Lamos *Deviant Modernism* 90). "No contact possible to flesh" can bring comparable satisfaction because, in them, sexual desire, "a fever of the bone" is located in the mental, creative realm (*Collected Poems* 55). Illuminating that the fulfillment of desire in erotic possession can be achieved on the level of the mind, the

poem indeed authorizes contradicting desires, at once platonic and bodily, and offers performative momentum by which Eliot's authority reveals itself as inseparable from a queer desire for the body.

At first glance, Eliot's articulation of the metaphysical poets in such erotic and sexual terms seems to fundamentally contradict his own notion of impersonality and of the creative, intellectual ability that the poet intends to borrow from them in order to construct his own masculinized voice and authority. However, it is important to note that they are dead poets. Indeed, the love for dead same-sex ancestors is the only form of homoerotic love that can pass as ideal in a heteronormative society, uncriticized and unstigmatized, a society that cannot imagine and sustain a form of patriarchy that is not homophobic. Thus, Donne knew how "to seize and clutch and penetrate" into the collective masculine senses in the same way Webster "knew that thought clings round dead limbs/ Tightening its lusts and luxuries" (55). Likewise, it is only through conceptualizing the metaphysical theory of poetry in bodily and erotic terms that Eliot can express his own desire "to seize and clutch and penetrate" into the collective male body, often figured as intellectual, spiritual, or divine, itself not a genetic conception, but culturally and politically constructed and thus hyper-gendered. In short, this collective male desire that seems purely incorporeal and spiritual can only be fulfilled through being satisfied on the level of the senses and the body in sexual fantasies. In my view, what constructs Eliot's authority in his major works is the very dynamic relationship between these seemingly different groups of tropes, whose "efficacy arises within the very forces of power whose arrangements of presence and absence it seeks to challenge" (McKenzie 43).

Indeed, sexual and bodily components in the male homosocial alliance including male literary collaboration are the most primal among all symbolic and material bases that link males to males and by which males enhance the status of males and buttress their authority, potency, and procreativity. In Eliot's canonical work, this desire for the male body which is in a sense required to constitute his authority mostly masks as a conscious effort to contribute to the collective masculine tradition and often manifests itself as libidinal creativity and in bodily languages. In "Tradition and Individual Talent," for example, Eliot strikingly places much emphasis upon the bond that a poet needs to retain with his literary predecessors and with tradition as a whole in the following ways:

Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year; and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. . . . . [A poet] must be aware that the mind of Europe—the mind of his own country—a mind which he learns in time to be much more important than his own private mind—is a mind which changes, and that this change is a development which abandons nothing en route.

*(Selected Prose 38-9)*

According to the poet, “[this tradition] cannot be inherited, and if [an individual poet] wants it, [he] must obtain it by great labour.” What is important about this tradition is that, as Eliot argues, the creative consciousnesses of the poet’s contemporaries and of his predecessors must meet not only in the poet’s mind but also in his “bones,” in a way similar to how the sexual desire, at bottom “a fever of the bone,” is inextricably implicated in the creative realm in “Whispers of Immortality,” and that the poet must participate in its construction and consolidation, if he wants to be a part of it. In short, this collective participation in tradition building that is supposed to happen in the mental realm is breathtakingly described in bodily and erotic terms in Eliot. Such a focus on becoming a singular bodily entity in the mental realm, that is to say, on forming an alliance with the collective masculine tradition in constructing a compelling authority in Eliot strikingly resembles, in my view, the gang rape as a theme in his bawdy poems, which is imagined as a required process in a young poet’s proper maturation.

As is clearly demonstrated by Eliot’s almost foolhardy erotic desire and willingness to participate in the masculine literary tradition construction as a strategy to mark his own name and make his voice more masculine, the intensely homoerotically-charged male collaboration that occurs in the poet’s creative process is often masked as “male friendship, mentorship, entitlement, rivalry” (Sedgwick *Between Men* 1). Indeed, homosociality and homoeroticism are located on the same path of orbit, even in the creative realm, whose visibility in our society is radically denied. The intensely erotic component discovered in the collaboration between Eliot and Pound on *The Waste Land*, for instance, is only the tip of the iceberg that evidences homoerotically-charged male collaboration that was widespread in Western society. Apart from the renowned collaboration between William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge on

*Lyrical Ballads*, Joseph Breuer's and Freud's collaboration on *Studies on Hysteria* also betrays a strong desire to unite between males, although seemingly, it masks itself as a collaboration between scientists on female hysteria (Koestenbaum 29). The following letter written by Freud to Wilhelm Fliess about his dependence on male colleagues or friends is revelatory: "but I do not share your contempt for friendship between men, probably because I am to a high degree party to it. In my life, as you know, woman has never replaced the comrade, the friend" (*The Complete Letters* 447).

To return to my discussion of Eliot's and Pound's collaboration on *The Waste Land*, part of what is particularly intriguing about the creating and editing process of the poem is that these two male authors indeed engaged in a homoerotic flirtation and exchange of bawdiness. As I briefly argued in Chapter One, Eliot tried to conjure up his own procreativity and creativity through sending Pound parts of his bawdy "Columbo and Bolo Verses" during the creation process of *The Waste Land*, while Pound affirmed their erotic relationship by sending Eliot back as a response a homosexually charged comical poem entitled "Sage Homme" in which he describes himself as a midwife performing "the caesarean Operation" to Eliot who was the mother of *The Waste Land* and the poem itself as "begot" "by the Uranian Muse" (*Letters of T. S. Eliot* 626). Even the two poets themselves evidently saw *The Waste Land* as a product of homoerotic collaboration.

The now deleted narrative about a sailor and seafaring from *The Waste Land*, which dramatically pairs up with the deleted Fresca part of the poem and was initially planned to come before the Phlebas part in the "Death by Water" section, remarkably dramatizes the very queer

qualities of the poet-trope that comes into existence as a result of the homoerotically-charged maturation and masculinization process that this sort of male literary collaboration necessitates:

The sailor, attentive to the chart or to the sheets,  
A concentrated will against the tempest and the tide,  
Retains, even ashore, in public bars or streets  
Something inhuman, clean and dignified.

.....

Staggering, or limping with a comic gonorrhoea,

From his trade with wind and sea and snow, as they  
Are, he is, with “much seen and much endured”, (2)  
Foolish, impersonal, innocent or gay,  
Liking to be shaved, combed, scented, manicured. (*The Waste Land: A Facsimile*  
55)

The gonorrhoea from which the sailor is suffering signifies his habitual involvement in homosexual relationships. Therefore, he is mature in a sense in his knowledge of and experience in queerness and anal collaboration and the poem describes the sailor’s achieved maturity as a repository of “something inhuman, clean, and dignified,” and as something “impersonal.” Interestingly, these adjectives evoke a sequence of words that Eliot employs to articulate his own erotic conception of male tradition or of a mature poet’s relation to the collective literary edifice. In “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” for instance, Eliot argues that “the emotion of art is impersonal,” that a “poet cannot reach this impersonality without surrendering himself wholly to

the work to be done” (*Selected Prose* 44). Eliot’s discussion of the theory of the impersonal poet in “Hamlet and His Problems” can also be seen as a further development of the erotics of impersonality the poet almost unconditionally praised in what he considered to be true art. Undeniably, the sailor corresponds to a mature poet-trope that often appears in Eliot’s canonical essays; they are both impersonal “with much seen and much endured” and they share the predilection to the symbolic grooming performances of shaving, combing, scenting, and manicuring, through the shared theatricality of which to form and reinforce the bond among male members of society as a whole. Gonorrhea, in this sense, embodies recognition for its members’ distinguished service.

Sailing or seafaring has been a recurring theme in literature across cultures throughout history, with Joseph Conrad’s novels such as *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim* being the most representative in Western British modernist literature. Indeed, inseparable from colonial desires and patriarchal law and institutions, sailing proved to be most instrumental in the development of civilization. Odysseus’ quest for home, for instance, is fulfilled through seafaring expeditions in the same way Columbo’s quest is in Eliot’s bawdy poems. Here in the excised part about the sailor, a similar pattern repeats itself in which male members affiliated with the community attempt to fulfill desires for money, “home”, and women through seafaring:

Thereafter everything went wrong.

A watercask was opened, smelt of oil,

.....

The canned baked beans were only a putrid stench.

Two men came down with gleet; one cut his hand.

.....

So the crew moaned; the sea with many voices  
Moaned all about us, (I) under a rainy moon,  
While the suspended winter heaved and tugged,  
Stirring foul weather under the Hyades.  
Then came the fish at last. The northern (eastern) seas/ banks  
Had never known the codfish run so well.  
So the men pulled the nets, and laughed, and thought  
Of home, and dollars, and the pleasant violin  
At Marm Brown's joint, and the girls and gin. (57-9)

John Mayer argues in his account of the nature of male bonding widespread in Europe that “European traditions of male friendship recognized various kinds of male bonding, as well as different ways of expressing affection between males,” among which there is the queer male bond or comradeship established through seafaring experiences (27). Going through rough passages through the heavy seas together, seamen have indeed developed various ritualized performances and special relationships with one another, which are often abjected and homosexually charged, with the two crew members’ “gleet” cited above evidencing the latter case (Schechner 180). The poem describes “the fish” and “the girls and gin” as a reward for the rough days at sea but the long digression of the narrative and its focus on the togetherness of the crewmen until it reaches its final destination remarkably mimics Eliot’s own writing practice as an outcome of essentially homoerotically-charged collaboration.

It was because of the intervention of Pound who had believed that the long account of the sailor's voyage was an unnecessary digression that Eliot reduced this long section of ninety-two lines to only ten (Perloff 173). Whatever the true reason, with Eliot's eventual deletion of the sailor part, a sort of elegiac feeling for the dead comes to prevail over the covert queer desire for living comrades in the "Death by Water" section of the poem, and with this stylistic and thematic change made upon the poem, the homoerotically-charged mode in which Eliot wrote his bawdy poems was suppressed. Lamos' comments on the mode of *The Waste Land* are worth noting here to understand the difference between Eliot's canonical works and their bawdy counterparts in the ways the poet constructs his authority, that the elegiac mode is a means for Eliot simultaneously to affirm and to repudiate same-sex affection ("Elegiac Homoeroticism" 24). Indeed, Eliot's mode of writing and presenting his published works is largely elegiac. His earlier poetry collection *Prufrock and Other Observations* was dedicated to Jean Verdenal, the poet's intimate friend during his years in Paris, who was killed on the battlefield during World War I. *Poems* and *The Waste Land* are openly and frequently discussed as mourning for the death of European civilization and its values which are imagined as masculine by Eliot. Undoubtedly, together with the love for distant dead ancestors, mourning is the only form of homoerotic relationship permitted under the patriarchal law and a society which is mercilessly heteronormative.

In *The Waste Land*, Eliot is arguably known for disavowing the so-called fringe characters as "waste" as a means of masking the aspects he shares with them in his command of his poetic authority. However, the mode in which these characters are presented is strikingly similar to Eliot's own practice of writing. For instance, Madame Sosostris's mode of performing herself through occult practices mimics Eliot's own mode of writing in a way that sometimes

corresponds to and sometimes contradicts his notion of impersonal poetics, just as the black queen's mode of performing herself in "Columbo and Bolo Verses" gestures to Eliot's inability to burst into print:

Madame Sosostriis, famous clairvoyante,  
Had a bad cold, nevertheless  
Is known to be the wisest woman in Europe,  
With a wicked pack of cards. Here, said she,  
Is your card, the drowned Phoenician Sailor,  
(Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!)  
Here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks,  
The lady of situations.  
Here is the man with three staves, and here the Wheel,  
And here is the one-eyed merchant, and this card,  
Which is blank, is something he carries on his back,  
Which I am forbidden to see. I do not find  
The Hanged Man. Fear death by water. (*Collected Poems* 64)

Eliot's acknowledged source for the name Madame Sosostriis is, according to Jain, a novel by Aldous Huxley, *Crome Yellow*, in which one of the male characters, for a charity fair, dresses up as a gypsy woman to tell fortunes and advertises himself as Sesostriis, the sorceress of Ecbatana (158). Therefore, just as Eliot conceals his same-sex desire through the mask of impersonal writing, Madame Sosostriis conceals her true gender identity in drag. Additionally, the way Madame Sosostriis presents "wicked" tarot cards one by one is exactly the same as the elegiac,

“queer” way Eliot brings past temporal perspectives, cultural contexts, and states of consciousness in *The Waste Land*, all of which are exclusively male based. Indeed, Eliot himself describes his mode of writing as “doing things separately and then seeing the possibility of fusing them together, altering them, and making a kind of whole of them” (*The Art of Poetry* 21). Also, similar to how Eliot himself was not convinced about the unity of *The Waste Land*, Madame Sosostris does not see clearly and cannot “find the Hanged man.” Likewise, just as the blank card represents something she is forbidden to see, Eliot’s poetry also carries forbidden or suppressed or sublimated desires. Finally, the tarot cards are symbolically linked to the lost ancient ritual of initiation into the mysteries of life in the same way that *The Waste Land* concerns European tradition, tradition that was being lost in the plight of Eliot’s generation.

Just as Madame Sosostris’s way of performing her queer, occult practice mimics the way Eliot’s desire for masculine literary legacy is operative, Tiresias’s transsexuality and the way he performs his gender and body corresponds to the way Eliot anxiously and self-contradictingly defines the operation of male artistic subjectivity. Eliot’s note famously describes Tiresias as “the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest,” “although a mere spectator and not indeed a ‘character’” (*Collected Poems* 82). The poet’s note continues, “Just as the one-eyed merchant, seller of currants, melts into the Phoenician Sailor, and the latter is not wholly distinct from Ferdinand Prince of Naples, so all the women are one woman, and the two sexes meet in Tiresias. What Tiresias sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem” (82). It is important to note, however, that Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* describes Tiresias as originally male transformed into female in order to have a sense of what it would be like to live as a woman and then later retransformed to male, but significantly, not the other way around (Jain 174). Eliot’s emphasis of

Tiresias' bisexuality thus only masks men's desire to be a woman to better know women, so that they can better reclaim paternal order with experienced maturity, similar to how "Whispers of Immortality" is designed so in its narrative development. In short, although Tiresias is transsexual in his gender and body or androgynous in the spiritual realm of prophesy, this transsexuality or androgyneity is irrevocably grounded upon male nostalgic experiences of femininity, just as Eliot's impersonal theory of poetry is nostalgically grounded upon the notion of the now lost collective masculine experience.

Ed Madden argues that the body of Tiresias – a heterogeneous and strangely hybrid figure, ambiguously gendered and sequentially sexed, negotiating the cultural – embodies and personifies anxieties about the nature of both sexual and artistic identities (15). I would only like to add to Madden's already discerning argument that Tiresias' mode of performing the body and remembering things amusingly evokes Eliot's own mode of textual performance:

At the violet hour, when the eyes and back  
Turn upward from the desk, when the human engine waits  
Like a taxi throbbing waiting,  
I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives,  
Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see  
At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives  
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,  
The typist home at tea-time, clears her breakfast, lights  
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.

.....

I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dugs

Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest— (*Collected Poems* 71)

Eliot places much emphasis on Tiresias' in-betweenness in terms of his gender identity, but importantly, not on the Tiresias as an asexual figure, but on the Tiresias as a bisexual voyeur somewhat in opposition to his theory of impersonality as is often the case with him. After all, bisexuality implies not the escape of personality but a move closer to personality, according to the definition of the term. Additionally, Tiresias attempts to perceive the arid sexual scene of the typist and the clerk and to "[foretell] the rest," based on the preliminary signs and his own experience of bodily foreshadowing and transformations, revealing himself not in the position of prophetic insight but in the position of material knowledge about the body, just as Eliot performatively places himself in a homosocial/homoerotic tradition in the process of formulating his own poetic theories. More importantly, as an "old man with wrinkled female breasts," a grotesque hermaphrodite, Tiresias points to the categorical crisis of the body, "a failure of definitional distinction," to borrow Marjorie Garber's terms, rather than an androgynous figure of transcendence, just as in Eliot, homosexual desire is in constant negotiation with his sense of masculinity and with his embattled relation to femininity, and often manifests itself as its complete opposite (22). Indeed, Tiresias and Eliot have much in common in terms of their performance.

While Eliot's troubled sense of his earlier poetic persona as something feminine that must be eventually transcended amusingly comes across, as I discussed in Chapter One, through St. Sebastian's sadomasochistic relation to the woman of his initial passion in "The Love Song of St. Sebastian," in "La Figlia che Piange," the tension between the poet's memory of himself as

feminine and his recollected desire for masculinized authority is breathtakingly dramatized through the love triangle that engages the imperative narrator, a distraught, crying woman, and her lover:

Clasp your flowers to you with a pained surprise—

Fling them to the ground and turn

With a fugitive resentment in your eyes:

.....

So I would have had him leave,

So I would have had her stand and grieve,

So he would have left

As the soul leaves the body torn and bruised,

As the mind deserts the body it has used.

I should find

Some way incomparably light and deft,

Some way we both should understand,

Simple and faithless as a smile and shake of the hand.

.....

And I wonder how they should have been together!

I should have lost a gesture and a pose.

Sometimes these cogitations still amaze

The troubled midnight and the noon's repose. (*Collected Poems* 36)

The narrator enforces a certain powerful protocol of stylized acts upon the woman in order to imagine her being abandoned “As the soul leaves the body torn and bruised” and “As the mind deserts the body it has used.” His feelings over the appropriation of the woman’s misery and “pained surprise” are truly ambiguous. On one hand, he is satisfied, articulating that if the couple had not broken up in this way, he never would have had the opportunity to aestheticize this “gesture” and “pose” in poetry. It is as if to imply that the feminine part in the poet himself needs to be suppressed in order to immortalize his work. On the other, although the narrator enacts strict division between masculinity and femininity, as Eliot’s use of the subjunctive reveals, he is troubled by the idea that his poetic triumph came at the cost of compassion or guilt and that his memory and imagination essentially oscillate between the actual (reality) and the hypothetical (desires). This moment of the conflicted hesitation over his own aesthetic choice indeed mirrors Eliot’s lifetime effort to suppress and transcend the feminine part of his poetic voice and authority that is almost always insufficiently performed, and his desire, at the same time, to make his poetic voice more masculine and impersonal. Evidently, this moment reveals Eliot’s authorial selves still visibly split between the feminine and the masculine, impurity and purity, or the body and the soul, although the poet here employs a more mature technique than he did when composing “The Love Song of St. Sebastian.”

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Unsurprisingly, Eliot’s much conflicted sense of gender, sexuality, and the body that is apparently linked to his mode of poetic performance comes across in his later poems as

unconditional admiration for and complete surrender to the Christian God. *Ash-Wednesday*, for instance, according to the poet himself, is an attempted exploration of “the experience of a man in search of God and the divine goal” (Bush 131). The ladies down here are correspondingly replaced with the ladies up there and the desiring body ceases to exist. What is remarkably intriguing, however, about this thematic change in Eliot is that in *The Hollow Men*, which was completed after *The Waste Land* but evidently before *Ash-Wednesday*, Eliot’s attraction to and grounding upon the physical and the sexual, in short, the very elements abhorred in his psyche, are still depicted as being at odds with his much desired realm of the disembodied:

Those who have crossed  
With direct eyes, to death’s other Kingdom  
Remember us- if at all- not as lost  
Violent souls, but only  
As the hollow men  
The stuffed men.

## II

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams  
In death’s dream kingdom  
These do not appear:  
There, the eyes are  
Sunlight on a broken column  
There, is a tree swinging  
And voices are

In the wind's singing  
More distant and more solemn  
Than a fading star.

Let me be no nearer  
In death's dream kingdom  
Let me also wear  
Such deliberate disguises  
Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves  
In a field  
Behaving as the wind behaves  
No nearer --

Not that final meeting  
In the twilight kingdom (*Collected Poems* 89-90)

Obviously, the speaker of *The Hollow Men* desires to travel to the place and time identified as “death's other kingdom,” a higher spiritual realm than “death's dream kingdom” of a death-in-life existence inhabited by the hollow men. However, a persistent desire and a lingering nostalgia for the body and the physical constantly surface at the same time, especially when the sense-pleasing sensuousness of the rhythms and alliterations and the vividness of the scene are in conflict with what are supposed to be only the earthly counterparts of “the eyes.” Additionally, human souls are themselves embodied as hollow, stuffed men, and yet at the same time, the

Incarnation is similarly described in bodily terms as the “eyes” and the “voices,” that is, as something having the body. The speaker evidently distances himself from what death’s dream kingdom represents, but, he also seems to desire to “wear” such filthy earthly effigies as “rat’s coat,” “crow’s skin,” and “crossed staves in a field” without clearly revealing what it is that he desires to be “no nearer.”

This sort of conflicted moment that surfaces in most of Eliot’s poems in varying degrees has been mostly discussed in terms of the disillusionment that the generation of Eliot’s time shared in common. Prufrock’s inability to articulate his feelings and Gerontion’s inability to wholly surrender to experiences in spite of their awareness of and desire for them are indeed very much products of the milieu of his generation (Gordon 72). It seems to me, however, that Eliot’s canonical poems mostly end without a clear conclusion to this heightened conflict between the body and the soul, the physical and the spiritual, or the feminine and the masculine, precisely because to conclude either way would be to end the act of desiring itself, which corresponds to an act of writing as a death-defying act for authors like Eliot. That is to say, if desire is lack, a separation from the desired object, the hesitation that the narrator of *The Hollow Men* betrays is a desire to go on desiring, which is, in a sense, connected with the desire that Madame Sosostris evokes with her incomplete tarot cards and with the deferred sense of fulfillment that dominates Eliot’s poems, because to cease desiring is to become one with the desired object, which is equivalent to a sort of death. Indeed, Eliot’s canonical works consist of the tension between these contradicting desires, desires of the very forces that the poet can neither clearly affirm nor entirely disavow, forces that form and deform each other in constant conflict and negotiation

with each other. In this often troubled dynamic of the forces that endlessly cancel out each other lie the very productive and creative powers of Eliot's poetry.

## Chapter 3

### **Young Male Poet Desiring for Lost Fairyland:**

#### **Queer Temporality and Gender Doubleness in Yeats' Early Occult Poems**

In Chapters One and Two, I traced how the heteronormative impulses and homoerotic desires that pervade Eliot's private and public poetry alike mirror the poet's queer authority where feminine and masculine elements coexist in constant confrontation with each other. The private Eliot risks being dangerously and flamboyantly homoerotic, even outrageously bawdy to seek the publicity he wanted whereas the public Eliot vehemently suppresses the titillatingly homoerotic voice and desire, devoting himself to establishing highly reactionary modernist poetics instead. What is specifically interesting in this self-revising process is that, as I argued in Chapter Two, dressing up and feigning gentility in public all the time is ultimately an impossible task for Eliot, due to the very fact that the private bawdy persona the poet decided to disavow ceaselessly interrupts the civilized performance of his public persona. That is to say, it is because the same kind of queer desire that pervades his private, bawdy poems, a desire to be penetrated exclusively by the same-sex bodies and subjectivities, is visible in his public work, that Eliot's public performances fail. Established upon the fetishized bodies of the dead male ancestors that the poet perversely desires, Eliot's public poems indeed affirm the homoerotically-charged literary genealogy within his own literary edifice/body, instituting an occult, queer sense of living with or keeping in touch with same-sex ghostly bodies at the moment he is writing.

Like Eliot, Yeats frequently locates his authority in a markedly awkward, hyper-gendered relation between the past moment and the present time in which he is writing, revealing in the process the same kind of queer desire that Eliot demonstrates for authors earlier. Not only does Yeats consistently attempt to revise his authorial position against the backdrop of past male writers but also he puts his artistic endeavors into revising his previous work and making his authority anew, in his aspiration for a more fulfilled and compelling persona. This ceaseless authorial revision that seems to have come out of the poet's "belated understanding"<sup>12</sup> of his own gender authority illustrates, in my view, the intensely vexed, vacillating moments in Yeats' authority. For instance, what is specifically exciting about his autobiographical poetry collection entitled "The Green Helmet and Other Poems" is that it opens with the eerie, suicidal aura and a celebration for feminized death and ends with the quest for masculine fulfillments that avoid self-obliterating, reckless sacrifice. Even at those most fulfilling heroic moments, difficulties in realizing such masculine ambitions are more dramatized than a wish that a carefully constructed masculine mask may prepare him for satisfying artistic consummation. Also, in early Yeats' occult poems, emotion is generally exalted over reason, and wavering, meditative, feminine rhythms over their energetic, masculine counterparts, "as of a man running," and yet at the same time the poet's desire to be masculine ceaselessly comes across as a desire to master the masculine form and his surfacing masculine anxiety (*Essays* 163).

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<sup>12</sup> The term "belated understanding" is traced back to the concept "Nachträglichkeit" that Jacques Derrida considers to "govern the whole of Freud's thought." Translated in English as "deferred effect," "deferred understanding," "afterwardness," or "retrocausality," the term refers to a sort of a "deferred action," whereby events from the past acquire meaning only when rethought through their future consequences (Stockton, 14)

In my view, this ceaseless vacillation between masculinity and femininity symptomatic of Yeats closely resembles how the multiple temporalities collide with one another in his early occult poetry. Indeed, the poet often plays with different bodily or temporal experiences, only to disavow them altogether later. For instance, Yeats' construction of the supernatural world as an idealized, feminine space free from worldly anxiety and sorrow as a way to criticize the normative, progressive mortal world is often contradicted by the poet's belying depiction of ghosts and fairies as masculine and of the heroes lured away by the fairies as going through a lonely, solipsistic exile. This jarring contention between an initially desired feminine temporality of the fairy land and the normative, progressive temporality of the real world is most dramatically suggested in "The Stolen Child" where the sudden change in perspective in the final stanza signals a lingering desire for the real world. Indeed, at the heart of Yeats' occultism, queerness is effectively at work. According to Tok Thomson, the preoccupation with the occult in Irish culture does point to a quest for a suppler, less linear temporality, one that is different from the progressive line adopted by colonizers (345).<sup>13</sup> It also signals a desire to return to a temporality of a before, but a "queer before," where past, present, and future, each hyper-gendered, brush up against each other. In reading the fairy land or the Otherworld in Irish literature as a vessel for multiple temporalities, Thomson is not alone. Indeed, John Carey

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<sup>13</sup> In white male colonial discourse, time is understood as spacialized, something that can be effectively organized and controlled. History is also configured as a linear, uninterrupted progression from a primordial, black degeneracy usually incarnated in women to white male adulthood. Further discussions on the colonial time as masculine can be found in Patrick Williams' and Laura Chrisman's *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory: A Reader* on pages 291-304 and David Harvey's *The Condition of Postmodernity* from Chapter 15 to Chapter 16.

pertinently argues in his article “Time, Space, and the Otherworld” that in the Otherworld of Irish tales where the human race is constructed as “unfallen and immoral,” “all time[s] exists simultaneously in an eternal present” (8). Time in Irish fairy stories as a theme in Yeats’ early poetry hence must be similarly read, in the sense that it is other to regular, normative temporality, or at a queer angle to it.

I thus believe that in exploring the connection between queer time and what I see as queer in Yeats’ authority and authorship, Yeats’ early occult poetry is a productive site. Closely reading this poetry in terms of these issues is especially meaningful in the current critical environment where the occult Yeats is a much avoided topic that is still waiting to be further explored. As Elizabeth Cullingford aptly points out in *Gender and History in Yeats’ Love Poetry*, the perceived irrationality of occult investigation mercilessly marks both its practitioners and critics as primitive and unscientific (6). In a similar vein, Margaret Harper also argues that academic studies of English poetry have authorized something amenable to quasi-scientific methods as a legitimate mode of literary criticism and disavowed literary works with occult resonances as embarrassing, odd, and trivial (146). Harper’s reference to W. H. Auden’s repeated remark on Yeats’ occultism to show the general ambience of academia towards the occult Yeats is indeed telling: “How on earth, we wonder, could a man of Yeats’ gifts take such nonsense seriously” (344)? Of course, it has not been of much help that for a considerable amount of time, relatively little was known about the poet’s involvement with the Hermetic Order or the Golden Dawn, a magical society, for the very reason that they were secret orders. (Fennelly, 285-9).

In my view, however, Yeats’ early occultism is a rich site that allows us to see in advance the poet’s later literary theory on masks that foregrounds turbulent but fulfilling contact between

opposing natures. It also helps us to understand not only the poet's literary poses, voices, and masks deemed undoubtedly modernist but also the very productive tensions that surface out of such competing binaries as private/public, love/hate, art/politics, the interior self/the dramatized mask, faith/doubt, and desire/fulfillment, tensions that are significant in constructing modernists' authority and authorship as queer. The very definition of the occult, indeed, includes the covered, the hidden, the veiled, which is analogous to the way "queer" is limned in connection to the desire for same-sex bodies and subjectivities in modernist literature. Additionally, as a term that refers to supernatural, magical beliefs and practices including séances that allow contact between the present and spirit presences from the past, the occult can also be seen as a temporal crisis, similar to the way in which queer time is considered as a twisted, wounded temporality. Reading the see-saw motion of Yeats' unstable gender performances in connection to how temporalities are gendered and how those gendered temporalities coexist or brush up one another in his early occult poems, therefore, will expose not only the queer moments in Yeats' poetry but more significantly the centrality of queerness that constitutes his authority and authorship.

As exciting as this discovery of the connection between queer authority and queer temporality in Yeats may be, there are still challenges in reading the poet in such a way. While critical approaches to other modernist authors from a perspective of queer authority or queer temporality have not been uncommon, Yeats is the author that modernist scholars have least pursued in their attempts to locate queer energies in relation to modernist authority construction, or to identify an analogy between queer temporality and queer authority and authorship. This is presumably because the poet's unrequited love for Maude Gonne, his lifelong collaboration with women such as Lady Gregory and George Yeats, and the persistent presence of these women in

his poems as Muse have functioned as strong markers that place the poet in the straight, heteronormative space and time. However, Yeats' ever-defensive gesture in relation to his own feminine poetics, his later concern with remaking himself as more "masculine" under Pound's influence, and his late concern with pursuing his own masculine virility betray a gender insecurity or instability that may also have led him to immerse himself in the company of women for a lifetime and to perpetually defer final fulfillment in love, allowing us to queer Yeats' authority and authorship. Indeed, it seems to me that just as for Eliot, a queer doubleness is a mode in which creation ever occurs for Yeats.

Fortunately, recent discussions of queer temporality by prominent scholars have made it possible to explore the link between queer temporality and Yeats' authority and authorship as queer. In *No Future* published in 2004, Lee Edelman demonstrates how the queer is positioned as a temporal crisis with its arrested development, as a narcissistic, antisocial, and future-negating drive against "reproductive futurism," a term he coins to describe a temporality that constructs the child as a possibility for the future. (50-1). Five years later, adding upon Edelman, Kathryn Bond Stockton introduces the notion of the queer child "growing sideways instead of up" in her memorable work entitled *The Queer Child*, a child "narcissistic, retrospective, occulted, and almost always linked with death" (16-22). This figure of the child configured by Edelman and Stockton indeed strikingly mirrors the child character or the child speaker often conceived of as one of Yeats' preferred masks in his early years, a speaker who is almost always portrayed as sick, hyper-narcissistic, and longing for a different bodily and temporal state, as it were, as a socially maladjusted body or subjectivity which is invariably transcended or disavowed later. Also profoundly useful in locating the temporal issues in Yeats' (em)bodied authority as queer is

Judith Halberstam's *In a Queer Time and Space*, published in 2005. The alternative twisted temporalities produced by some queer subcultures and transgendered bodies that she maintains lie outside of such paradigmatic markers as birth/death, maturation/aging, and marriage/reproduction echo, in my view, the vexed temporal, bodily issues faced by Yeats in constructing his authority in a jarring relation to British colonialism. In Edelman, Stockton, and Halberstam, I see invaluable key concepts and methodologies through which to theorize Yeats' authority and authorship as queer.

In conversation with these scholars, in this chapter, I will explore how the poet's oscillating authority between masculinity and femininity relates to the ways temporalities are gendered or the ways those gendered temporalities are affirmed, only to be later disavowed altogether in Yeats' early occult poems. Aside from this remarkable correlation, this chapter also examines how such an authorial prevarication functions in a larger sense as an affirmation to the form called "male traffic in women." For instance, Yeats' desire to enliven the dead and his quest to fulfill a suppler, more feminine, less linear temporal experience different from its progressive, more linear, masculine counterpart through writing about the occult, and the recognition at the same time that this is never wholly possible nor desirable materialize as shortened or disrupted temporalities of the desired supernatural otherworld or as radically ambivalent feelings towards the fairy land. Indeed, as it becomes much clearer in Yeats' later poems, this temporal disruption and the contradicting stances towards the supernatural otherworld evidence Yeats' desire for a masculine voice or mask, often expressing itself as a strong yearning to wed his subjectivity and body to a more powerful, masculine heavenly or earthly other. The female muse and women figures that "trail all about the written page[s]" of the

poet's work that are simply deployed as a narrative device to ultimately promote this homosocial male bonding loom hollow in this self-masculinizing process (*Poems* 50).

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One version of Yeats' collected *Poems* begins with a series of lyrics grouped under the heading of "Crossways," which was revised in terms of content and arrangement from the poet's first major poetic collection, *The Wandering of Oisín and Other Poems*. Among all the other poems in *The Wandering of Oisín and Other Poems*, the very poem that Yeats places first in "Crossways" and for *Poems* in a broader sense is "The Song of the Happy Shepherd:"

The woods of Arcady are dead,  
And over is their antique joy;  
Of old the world on dreaming fed;  
Grey Truth is now her painted toy;  
Yet still she turns her restless head:  
But O, sick children of the world,  
Of all the many changing things  
In dreary dancing past us whirled,  
To the cracked tune that Chronos sings,  
Words alone are certain good. (*Poems* 7)

Although the poem is neither the poet's major modernist work nor one of his well-crafted pastoral poems, Yeats' deliberate choice of the poem as a prelude for his poetic oeuvre shows

how the poet intends his early work to be viewed by his readers and on what temporal realm he desires to ground his early authority. Indeed, given its form, content, and title, the poem is established upon the already faded tradition of pastoral poetry in Yeats' time, a mode of literature set in a timeless landscape populated with innocent, blissful shepherds whose simple singing becomes poetry.<sup>14</sup>

A careful look at the poem reveals, however, that this poem does not strictly follow its customary pastoral convention, betraying a desire for a present time. Although the poem is named a "song," the dominant theme that runs in this poem is that the song established upon the obsolete tradition of Pastoral no longer works in the present moment where simple facts figured as the "Grey Truth" prevail, that it lacks currency. This discrepancy between the temporality of the pastoral "song" in the title and the present time in the body is not the only inconsistency this poem demonstrates. The above quotes clearly suggest that belying the title description of the poet-speaker as "Happy," the shepherd laments the death of the old world, of its dream-like, hypnotic, mysterious powers, placing its "antique joy" and "nourishing dreams" in a jarring opposition to the "Grey Truth" of the now that prioritizes a "painted toy" (7). This masking of

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<sup>14</sup> The theme of pastoral poetry is mostly praise for nature and yet a number of poets since the Greek and Roman eras had drawn upon this mode of literature to sing or lament for lovers, precisely because the demanding aspect of shepherding and rustic chores is withdrawn in the background in the pastoral convention (Alpers 198). As many critics have pertinently suggested, a plethora of poems written in this mode often carry an overtly homoerotic tone. One of the best instances for this is Virgil's second eclogue, a lament about the shepherd Corydon's unrequited love for the handsome Alex (Aldrich 29). As a literary genre, it had faded after the European Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth-century and was thus considered as obsolete in Yeats' time.

sadness as timeless happiness as is imaged in the pastoral tradition and the double attitudes towards the past moment – a stubborn longing for the things past and a desire to break with them, which expresses itself as a discrepancy between form and content – illustrate, in my view, early Yeats’ authority as queer, as split between an ageless temporality of pastoral fantasies and a temporality of the “Grey Truth.”

Yeats’ split authority is further evidenced by the speaker’s unstable argumentation about the “word” that seems, at first glance, to transcend the temporal and material experience yielded by “all the many changing things” (*Poems 7*):

Where are now the warring kings,  
Word be-mockers? —By the Rood,  
Where are now the warring kings?  
An idle word is now their glory,  
By the stammering schoolboy said,  
Reading some entangled story:  
The kings of the old time are dead;  
The wandering earth herself may be  
Only a sudden flaming word  
In clanging space a moment heard,  
Troubling the endless reverie. (7)

Here, the poet-speaker blusteringly dismisses the “warring kings” for the very reason that, for all their word be-mocking, they are unable to stand against the passage of time like all other “changing things”; their bodies age and undergo death with time. Yet, the “word” that the

speaker places in opposition to them is similarly described as something temporally bodied. One definition of “idle” is “not active or in use.” The “word” that becomes idle is thus almost equivalent to the past “glory” of the dead kings, as something necessarily going through birth, adolescence, manhood, obsolescence, and ultimately death, like a body. Additionally, the speaker makes it clear that this word in question is delivered by a “stammering schoolboy” who reads “an entangled story,” in other words, in the context of a classroom where words are imperfectly appreciated. Just as the word of “starry men” that the speaker later renounces as something that needs to be avoided, the “word” here is similarly evoked only to be disavowed later (7).

Specifically notable with regard to this unstable status of the “word” is the speaker’s distinction between an “idle word” and a “sudden flaming word” through the focus on their sexual and temporal differences. Whereas the “idle word” is delineated as something stammered by an immature youngster and is thus linked to prepubescence, the “sudden flaming word,” as a repository for the “wandering earth” as a material for art, is described in terms very similar to those that are used to articulate a sexually aroused male adult body. Both the “flaming word” and a sexually aroused male adult body locate their temporality in their sudden, fleeting moment; just as male ejaculation progress from erection and immediately precedes the death of sexual desire, the “flaming word,” as an important outcome of the writer’s creative arousal and ejaculation, is located in the similar temporality of fleetingness, transience. This tension between the temporality of the “flaming word” as fleeting and masculine and the temporality of the “idle word” as not having yet reached one’s adulthood, in other words, as not having been maturized yet suggests, in my view, the very queerness, the doubleness of Yeats’ authority. Although the

dominant tone of voice in the poem is a timid, passive, feminine echo, the poem also betrays a recognition that words can only be properly enlivened in a fleeting moment which mirrors that of male sexual fulfillment, that only words that are born in that masculinized way “are certain good” and deserve to “die a pearly brotherhood” (*Poems* 8).

Indeed, like Eliot, Yeats often describes his poetic mode and technique in gendered terms or terms that are associated with the material body; like the bawdy Eliot, the poet specifically feminizes his authority and creating process, assigning himself to a position of a woman or a male who needs to be penetrated by a masculine agent. In “He wishes for the Cloths of Heaven” and in “Adam’s Curse,” for instance, Yeats fascinatingly explicates his creating process through a metaphor of sewing, itself a womanly act, and identifies the “heaven’s embroidered cloths” as his own creative outcome. Elsewhere, the poet further describes his production of verse as analogous to female labor: “Man is a woman to his work, and it begets his thought” (*Memoirs* 232). Part of what is exciting about Yeats’ authority is that this feminine self-definition almost always goes hand in hand with a need for a masculine complement. In a letter to Katharine Tynan, for example, portraying himself as a sleeping prince ravished by a female masculinized Muse named Laura Armstrong, a “wild creature driving a “pony-carriage” “alone and without a hat,” Yeats articulates that Armstrong “woke [him] from the metallic sleep of science and set [him] writing [his] first play (*Letters of W. B. Yeats* 117). Donne also affirms Yeats’ feminine authority that requires a masculine complement by writing to the poet that “Our children were your poems of which I was the Father sowing the unrest & storm which made them possible & you the mother who brought them forth in suffering & in the highest beauty & our children had wings” (*Always* 302). Put simply, similar to the way in which early Eliot desires for masculine

penetration for proper maturization, early Yeats desires his feminine, passive authority to be initiated and penetrated by a masculinized muse, a queer muse indeed with a female name.

What is worth noting about Yeats' authority as queer, as something feminine that needs to be complemented by strong masculinity, is the way the poet limns his authorial doubleness as bodied and connects that bodied authority to a similarly hesitant, ever-repeating movement back and forth between the temporality of occultism and that of reality. Indeed, in one of the poet's most famous early fairy poems in "Crossways" entitled "The Stolen Child," Yeats' feminine, suppler authority comes across as a desire for an alluringly fantasmatic, mesmerizing land of the fairies or as a stolen child character, who is both bodily and temporally lured away from human society to the supernatural otherworld. It is worth noting that, aside from referring to the supernatural creature, "fairy" is a term that derogatively indicates a gay male, especially one who is more histrionically flamboyant and effeminate than a woman. The queer term, for example, first used to describe the participants in New York drag balls in the eighteen nineties was "fary" (Norton, 119). According to Rictor Norton, whether fairy lore was an explicit part of homosexual subculture or not still remains uncertain; the recent preoccupation with fairy mythology in a queer angle might be a retroactive interpretation (119). Nevertheless, across the ages and cultures, it has been not uncommon that animal spirits or fairies are constructed as male and as choosing same-sex partners, usually young males or boys. In western fairy lore, fairies are commonly depicted as soliciting sexual relationships with male humans who respond to their advances out of willful perversity (Chauncey 123). Fairies or animal spirits in East Asian cultures are similarly imagined as male and as seeking young males as their partners.

With this relation of fairy mythology to queer sexuality in mind, a connection between Yeats' preoccupation with the land of fairies and his suppler, feminine authority in a queer angle becomes legible:

Where the wave of moonlight glosses

The dim gray sands with light,

Far off by furthest Rosses

We foot it all the night,

Weaving olden dances

Mingling hands and mingling glances

Till the moon has taken flight;

To and fro we leap

And chase the frothy bubbles,

While the world is full of troubles

And anxious in its sleep.

*Come away, O human child!*

*To the waters and the wild*

*With a faery, hand in hand,*

*For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand. (Poems 18-9)*

Indeed, as is suggested in the quotes above, the second stanza of "The Stolen Child" is set at fantasmatic nighttime and in a mesmerizingly remote space, in which all kinds of nonsequential, wicked dreams and illicit bodily alliances are possible. Indeed, the connection between this temporality of "nighttime" and a body here is so strong; the child's physical encounter with a

“faery” happens at night and on the “dim grey sands”/ “Far off by furthest Rosses,” and the temporality of the “moonlight” is bodied and alluringly eroticized. The word “wave” in the “wave of moonlight” is often used to depict the movement of water, itself a temporal metaphor. It also carries an erotic sense both in its definition and in its usage; not only does it denote a movement up and down or back and forth but also it signifies a sudden rise in activity or intensity in terms of senses and desires. “The wave of moonlight” is thus linked, a few lines later, to the erotic bodies “weaving olden dances”/ “Mingling hands and mingling glances” and leaping “to and fro.”

Not only does Yeats’ supple, feminine authority come across as this desire for the alluringly fantasmatic, feminine supernatural otherworld, but it also expresses itself through a wounded child persona who desires different bodily and temporal experiences. Stockton’s construction of an innocent child figure or a child made strange by its “innocence” as queer is illuminating to understand Yeats’ wounded child persona who is split between two temporalities. According to Stockton, an innocent, “not-yet-straight-child who is, nonetheless, a sexual child with aggressive wishes” reveals the ceaseless “toggle between the advance of [normative] time and the states of lingering that through repetitions give the feel of suspension and duration” (25-31). Indeed, part of what is particularly interesting about the quoted passage above is the poem’s construction that the child is tempted into this desired temporality of the bodied “wave of moonlight,” precisely because he is prone to all sorts of wounds and temptations disruptive to the normative individuation developmental process, just as it is the very troubling, traumatizing, hurting moment of the “Grey Truth” that leads Yeats’ happy shepherd to seek refuge in a hypnotizing temporality of “some twisted, echo-harboring shell.” For instance, the mortal world

in which the child dwells in “The Stolen Child” is delineated as “full of troubles,” “anxious,” and “weeping” and it is exactly this great intensity in sadness and shock of the traumatized memory that the child’s body senses and remembers that functions as a cause of temporal disorientation, a cause that enables otherwise impossible, dream-like, erotic encounters with supernatural fairies.

This wounded passive inner child character and his inclination to a feminized supernatural otherworld evidence, in my view, Yeats’ early feminine, supple authority. However, it is worth noting here that the final stanza of the poem is presented in the third person perspective while the first three are directly addressed to the child by the fairies. Indeed, a tremendously exciting moment in the poem in connection to Yeats’ authority is the surfacing opposite desire of the poet, which is most dramatically revealed in this moment of drastic change in perspective. The sudden reversed description of the mortal world and time as warm and peaceful there belies the previous construction of the mortal world by the fairies as negative, illustrating Yeats’ early authority as prevaricating and unstable, an authority, to borrow Stockton’s brilliant and apt phrase, that instead of growing up, “grows sideways” precisely by virtue of its problematization of its own current status quo as something that requires some sort of complementation, of its very tendency to crave the grass on the other side (11):

Away with us he’s going,  
The solemn-eyed:  
He’ll hear no more the lowing  
Of the calves on the warm hillside  
Or the kettle on the hob  
Sing peace into his breast,

Or see the brown mice bob  
Round and round the oatmeal chest.  
For he comes, the human child,  
To the waters and the wild  
With a faery, hand in hand,  
For the world's more full of weeping than he can understand. (*Poems* 19)

Indeed, the quoted passage suggests that the child is tempted by the fairies but as soon as he is with them, the real world and its linear, progressive time characterized by lowing calves, singing kettle, and bobbing mice seem much more attractive. This sort of wavering that explores both ends of the spectrum in its ever-repeating back and forth movements is very typical of Yeats, whose identity is an endless deferral in its ceaseless see-saw motion– the longing and desire for something that is always on the other side of where his persona happens to be – which, in my view, compels the poet to see and write through what Halberstam defines in *In a Queer Time and Place* as the “transgender gaze,” a look divided within itself, a point of view that comes from two places at the same time, one clothed and one naked (88).

Indeed, as an instinctively passive, feminine poet, early Yeats seems to grapple with contradicting desires in performing his authority; the naked Yeats wants to write in the persona of a wounded inner child, that is to say, the egocentric, severed feminine part of a person that is hurt, terrified, and neglected and never allowed to express itself in the normative individuation process, and the clothed Yeats who desires to perform under a masculine guise and to be recognized as such (Jung 113-4). These antithetical desires are occasionally expressed as the poet’s radical wedding of masculinity and femininity in his early occult and fairy poems. For

instance, to complement the feminine element of the fairy land and an effeminate, wounded child figure who grows “sideways,” Yeats’ fairies are constructed as terrible or beautiful, not in the usual sense of beauty ascribed to women, but in the same sense that the poet employs the word to masculinize the Easter Rising and its aftermath in “Easter 1916”; “All changed, changed utterly:/ A terrible beauty is born” (*Poems* 180). This practice of masculinizing fairies in Irish literature is actually traced back to the ancient Celtic era. The Early Celtic poems which became a foundation for Yeats’ fairy poems describe fairies as remarkable in their appearance and formidable in their physical strength; they are primarily limned as arming themselves with phallic weapons decorated with emblems of pale silver, with glittering swords and mighty horns (MacLeod 35). Whatever their origin, the masculinized fairies in Yeats’ imagination, together with his equally feminized, hypnotizing fairy land and his passive, weak child persona, make fitting bedfellows that evidence the poet’s wavering queer authority.

Yeats’ comparatively later fairy poem “The Hosting of the Sidhe” is also consistently faithful to this customary imbuing of masculine traits to supernatural creatures. Regardless of their gender, the poem’s dangerous-looking, horse-riding host of male and female spirits is hyper-masculinized in their wild manner, similar to what we saw in the contrast between the experienced, wilder fairies and the innocent, weaker mortal child in “The Stolen Child:”

The host is riding from Knocknarea  
And over the grave of Clooth-na-bare;  
Caolte tossing his burning hair  
And Niamh calling *Away, come away:*  
*Empty your heart of its mortal dream.*

*The winds awaken, the leaves whirl round,  
Our cheeks are pale, our hair is unbound,  
Our breasts are heaving, our eyes are a-gleam,  
Our arms are waving, our lips are apart;  
And if any gaze on our rushing band,  
We come between him and the deed of his hand,  
We come between him and the hope of his heart.  
The host is rushing 'twixt night and day,  
And where is there hope or deed as fair?  
Caolte tossing his burning hair,  
And Niamh calling *Away, come away.* (Poems 55)*

What is specifically exciting in this passage is the ecstatic eroticization of these masculinized otherworldly creatures, of the encounter between them and the human being. Yeats' fairies are indeed depicted as extremely sensual. Their pale cheeks, unbound hair, heaving breasts, gleaming eyes, and parted lips seem to "awaken" senses and an erotic desire for a body, a haunting desire for a young, mortal body in this particular case. Whereas in Eliot, it is generally a younger author who desires for penetration by a more masculine, mature body or subjectivity for proper maturation, in Yeats, it is surprisingly oftentimes both parties that desire a mesmerizing encounter with each other for physical and esthetical fulfillment. The poem makes it clear that the masculinized fairies enthusiastically respond to the "gaze" of the mortal, in a similar sense in which masculinized Laura Armstrong reaches out to desiring Yeats. The dramatization of this

mutual love between the masculinized fairies and the feminized mortals demonstrates, in my view, the very queerness of Yeats' authority.

In his discussion of the artistic triumph of the poem, David Holdeman aptly points out that its success precisely lies in "bringing to Irish myth the same intoxicating combination of spiritual and erotic passions familiar from the Pre-Raphaelite practice, a homoerotically coded practice, in my view, of representing the male artist's own soul he hopes for in the image of a powerful, energetic, and highly eroticized woman (30). Indeed, the powerful, eroticized fairies' visit to the mortal world out of their hunger for a young body and mind signifies the haunting desire of the dead male authors ahead of Yeats, a homosocially and homoerotically-coded desire to affirm and perpetuate the patriarchal law and system through male bonding. The mortals' rather comparatively passive response represented as a "gaze," however, suggests the poet's own difficulty or hesitation in following the path chosen by those male authors. "To Ireland in the Coming Times," a concluding autobiographical poem of the poet's second collection titled "The Rose," foregrounds the productive tension that comes out of this conflict between the masculine desire of the poet's dead "brother[s]" and his surfacing resistance to them as a poet with a feminine voice:

*Know, that I would accounted be  
True brother of a company  
That sang, to sweeten Ireland's wrong,  
Ballad and story, rann and song;  
Nor be I any less of them,  
Because the red-rose-bordered hem*

*Of her, whose history began  
Before God made the angelic clan,  
Trails all about the written page.  
When Time began to rant and rage  
The measure of her flying feet  
Made Ireland's heart begin to beat;  
And Time bade all his candles flare  
To light a measure here and there;  
And may the thoughts of Ireland brood  
Upon a measured quietude.*

*Nor may I less be counted one  
With Davis, Mangan, Ferguson,  
Because, to him who ponders well,  
My rhymes more than their rhyming tell  
Of things discovered in the deep,  
Where only body's laid asleep.  
For the elemental creatures go  
About my table to and fro,  
That hurry from unmeasured mind  
To rant and rage in flood and wind;  
Yet he who treads in measured ways*

*May surely barter gaze for gaze.  
Man ever journeys on with them  
After the red-rose-bordered hem.  
Ah, faeries, dancing under the moon,  
A Druid land, a Druid tune! (Poems 50)*

The speaker's insistence that he join the ranks of Irish patriotic male poets for singing "Ballad and story, rann and song" "to sweeten Ireland's" miserable history and for bringing beauty that "made Ireland's heart begin to beat" reveals on one hand his desire to emulate his male literary precursors. On the other hand, the tone of voice the speaker takes throughout the poem is importantly defensive, specifically with regard to the ubiquitous presence of women and of the feminine subject matter about which the poet claims he has chosen to write.

By far the most stunning aspect of this ambivalent position vis-à-vis the previous masculine poetic tradition in the passage quoted above is its dramatization through the focus on the fierce contention among multiple temporalities, all of which are hyper-gendered. Indeed, Yeats creates added tension by bringing together the temporalities of the past, the present, and the future connected to his own writing, authority, and authorship, and then by disavowing them all together. The feminized temporality of "the red-rose-bordered hem/ Of her" that Yeats desires to construct in his poetry, "whose history began/ Before God made the angelic clan," for instance, exists from time immemorial and is hoped to seamlessly continue to the future. Yet, this temporality of "from time immemorial" is violently disrupted by something similar to what Paul Gilroy terms "double consciousness," a peculiar way of measuring oneself by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity (134). "Davis, Mangan," and "Ferguson" whom the

poet describes as “true brother[s] of a company” are indeed a placeholder that ceaselessly reminds Yeats of the masculine literary enterprise in which the poet desires to inscribe his own name alongside those of his male predecessors, in spite of his preference for a temporality signified as “from time immemorial.” In a way similar to how the feminized temporality of “from time immemorial” is interrupted, however, the relatively recent masculine enterprise that corresponds to the time of “rant[ing] and “rage” is yet again paused by the poet’s evocation of the temporality represented by “faeries, dancing under the moon” and “A Druid land, a Druid tune” that are desired to be synchronized with the “flare” of the upcoming “Time.”

The violent contention among these gendered multiple temporalities in their attempt to express themselves as a dominant temporality of the poem’s narrative, which remarkably corresponds to Yeats’ lifelong prevarication between masculinity and femininity in performing his authority, is brilliantly summarized in a temporality plurally figured as the “dim coming times:”

*I cast my heart into my rhymes,  
That you, in the dim coming times,  
May know how my heart went with them  
After the red-rose-bordered hem. (Poems 51)*

The “dim coming times” recall at once the poet’s immense predilection for the “twilight” setting and his passionate involvement with the Irish Celtic Revival called the “Celtic Twilight.” Almost always figured as an attractive state linked to reveries and supernatural experiences in his work or as the dawning of a new era of spiritually impassioned art that would eclipse the emphasis on external realities the poet sees as characteristic of British colonialism, “dimness” in the “dim

coming times” marks the poet’s desired future with his feminine, occult poetics. However, the word “dim” also carries negative meanings with it, such as “not shining brightly or clearly” or “not clearly recalled or formulated in the mind,” and therefore by its very definition, the word “dim” renders the poet’s desired future for his feminine, occult poetics forever delayed and disavowed. Additionally, the poem tellingly concludes with an optative sentence, generally used to express a wish, hope, or desire yet to be realized, similar to the way in which the subjective mood in Eliot’s “La Figlia che Piange” operates, dramatizing the gap between the poet’s vision with regard to his feminine, occult poetics and his equally ambitious dream to be accounted “True brother of a company,” a company, in fact, that cannot imagine a form of masculine society that is not exclusively homosocial.

Apart from the fierce contention between masculinity and femininity, which manifests itself as a violent clash among multiple temporalities, what is so exciting about the poet’s early poems is that what we saw as something like Yeats’ feminine authority in relation to the occult and his somewhat negative argumentation about the “idle word” in “The Happy Shepherd” are almost always articulated in connection to the poet’s brooding anxiety over his own death as an author. The fear of death is, in fact, to paraphrase Freud, the fear of a return to the original, inorganic, inanimate default state in an organism, which is none other than the desire for survival, propagation, sex, and other creative, life-producing acts. Indeed, in Yeats’ case, what Freud terms the “death drive” in *The Ego and the Id* stunningly reveals itself as his performance of an instinctively feminine, passive authority whereas his more masculinized performance is almost always explicated in relation to what is considered as the “life drive” in Freud (38-9). For instance, the feminine sad shepherd’s attempts at repeating his traumatized experiences in words

in “The Happy Shepherd” end up as fading, dying echoes. The distraught, weeping child tempted by the supernatural creatures in “The Stolen Child” is similarly destined to die at the liminal moment of migrating into the feminine fairy land. The final stanza of the “The Stolen Child,” in particular, signals that leaving the mortal world of liveliness and peace, which only comes into view at the moment it is left behind, leads to a solipsistic exile, a sort of authorial death.

There is indeed a repeated structural pattern in Yeats’ early poetry. Even the most formidable warring heroes unparalleled in their physical strength and iron will go mad or ultimately die once they undergo feminization. “The Madness of King Goll,” for example, dramatizes a warring king who has given up heroic deeds and bloody mires and has wandered into a feminized space and time of the natural world only to find that being lost in otherworldly experiences results in a narcotic state of exile, or death. King Goll’s madness and the destruction of his “old tympan” specifically signify the death of the Romantic tradition confronted by the happy shepherd. They also evoke the precipitous decline of the Irish language and native Gaelic culture that occurred in the early nineteenth century as a result of repressive British policies and the desolation wrought by famine (Holdeman 10). This connection between feminization and death in Yeats’ occult poetry signifies, in a sense, the poet’s anxiety over authorial death in his investment with the occult, feminine subject matters:

I sang how, when day’s toil is done,  
Orchil shakes out her long dark hair  
That hides away the dying sun  
And sheds faint odours through the air:  
When my hand passed from wire to wire

It quenched, with sound like falling dew

The whirling and the wandering fire;

But lift a mournful ulalu,

For the kind wires are torn and still,

And I must wander wood and hill

*Through summer's heat and winter's cold.*

*They will not hush, the leaves a-flutter round me, the beech leaves old. (Poems*

*17-8)*

The quoted passage clearly shows that the completion of the poems that Yeats desires to create, like the melodies rendered by King Goll's tympan, might momentarily satisfy "the whirling and the wandering fire" of the poet's creative desire for the supernatural world, like the words spoken to "some twisted, echo-harboring shell" in "The Song of the Happy Shepherd," and yet it also necessarily signifies the very moment of a premature death of the part in Yeats which desires a masculine mask and of the creative act itself. Indeed, the connection between Yeats' early feminine, occult poetics and death here is so strong that to imagine being a poet with a supple, feminine voice is immediately coupled with imagining being dead. This link between femininity and death is further bolstered by the poem's performative construction of the death of virility figured as the "dying sun" that a "Formorian sorceress" named Orchil enacts, whom Yeats himself identifies in his note as "a mythological goddess of night and death and cold" (Conner, 139). In Yeats, increased femininity evidently cripples and kills elemental masculinity.

Also particularly interesting with regard to "The Madness of King Goll" is its deliberately well-crafted rhyming structure geared to strengthening this connection between

femininity and death. The poem is comprised of six stanzas, each with twelve lines, and every stanza, as we see above, ends with the two repeated, italicized lines “*Through summer's heat and winter's cold/ They will not hush, the leaves a-flutter round me, the beech leaves old.*”

Interestingly enough, throughout the poem, the concluding line always ends with the word “old” and the previous line almost always ends with a word with the last three letters “o,” “l,” “d.” This preoccupation with the word “old” suggests, in my view, early Yeats’ relation to his troubled authority in a way that focuses on that relation’s bodied temporality. Indeed, although he was a young beginning writer, the last repeated two lines reveal that Yeats was extremely conscious of being deemed obsolete in writing about feminine subject matters and that in a feminine voice; getting old and undergoing death is, to an author, almost immediately likened to being destined to be forgotten or, even worse, not being chosen to be read from the beginning. Just as in “The Stolen Child,” the supernatural lure that comes as apocalyptic is disrupted by the temporality of the mortal world represented by the lowing “calves,” singing “kettle,” and bobbing “mice,” the repeated word “old” and its varying rhyming sounds function as unexpected interruptions to the poet’s initial plan to actualize his feminine, occult poetics (*Poems* 19). This anxiety of being a living anachronism that reveals itself as last summer’s dead leaves that are obsolete and useless but refuse to go away in the poem, in fact, finds a troubling echo in the poet’s later characteristically memorial remark in “Coole Park and Ballylee, 1931” that “We were the last romantics/ chose for theme/ Traditional sanctity and loveliness” (*Poems* 245).

Whereas the temporality of the feminine or a feminine voice is almost always articulated in connection to the death of an author, the very moment in which creation occurs is mostly delineated in masculine terms in Yeats. For instance, “Adam’s Curse” emphasizes the

temporality of a “moment’s thought” that recalls a mechanism in which male ejaculation occurs, just as “The Song of the Happy Shepherd” similarly brings into focus, as I argued earlier, the temporality of the “flaming word” that evokes a sexually aroused male body:

We sat together at one summer’s end,  
That beautiful mild woman, your close friend,  
And you and I, and talked of poetry.  
I said, ‘A line will take us hours maybe;  
Yet if it does not seem a moment’s thought,  
Our stitching and unstitching has been naught. (*Poems* 80)

The opposition between a “moment’s thought” and the act of “stitching and unstitching” in the quoted lines is clear; the process that leads to poetic creation is delineated as duration in time and in feminine terms whereas the moment in which creation itself occurs is suggested as a fleeting point in time that evokes male ejaculation. The latter kind of temporality that refers to creative birthing in Yeats remarkably echoes, in my view, what Freud terms as a “life drive,” in its resistance and fight against a death drive, which is implicitly marked in the feminine act of “stitching and unstitching” that only circularly repeats the same actions. Indeed, for Yeats, words are “certain good” only at this masculinized moment of creation, a fleeting, permanently elusive, uncapturable moment that is gone as soon as it comes into existence.

Although the fear of (premature) death as an author is almost always articulated in connection to Yeats’ feminine poetics and authority while the moment in which actual creation occurs is depicted in masculine terms, the conflict between the two is never easy to settle. This ever-continuing competition between a feminine voice and its masculine counterpart

dramatically comes across as a sort of oedipal struggle between a father and a son in “Cuchulain’s Fight with the Sea,” an epic fairy poem constructed upon the ancient Irish sagas and published in the poet’s second collection “The Rose.” During his heroic missions as a mighty ancient warrior, Cuchulain loses touch with his wife, Emer and falls in love with another woman who is depicted as beautiful and “sweet-throated” (*Poems* 33). Finding out that her husband has been unfaithful to her, angry Emer urges her son to find his father and wreak revenge on him, without revealing Cuchulain’s identity to her son. The son obeys and soon a fight between them ensues. Outweighing his son both in his physical strength and experience at war, Cuchulain fatally wounds the young warrior, his own son. The young warrior reveals his identity at the moment of death. Realizing that he has killed his own son, Cuchulain becomes devastated and benumbed. Fearing that Cuchulain might go mad and turn his wrath on his own men, Conchubar, the king, sends Cuchulain into a doomed assault on the sea, leaving the old warrior with an endless fight with the sea.

Specifically exciting about this combat between father and son is that it foregrounds the father slaying his son and not the other way around. At face value, the death of Cuchulain’s son is a consequence of masculine pride and rivalry in both father and son. Viewed in relation to Yeats’ conflicted sense of his earlier authority as feminine and something that has to be deliberately complemented with masculinity, the deadly fight between Cuchulain and his son can also be seen as an internal battle between two contradicting aspects of the same person: Cuchulain represents the clothed Yeats who is extremely conscious, afraid of his own premature death as an author because of his inclination for the feminine occult subject matters and his

inherently feminine voice, and his son, the naked feminine Yeats armed with an aspiration to acquire a masculine authority:

One went and came.

“He bade me let all know he gives his name  
At the sword-point, and waits till we have found  
Some feasting man that the same oath has bound.”

Cuchulain cried, “I am the only man  
Of all this host so bound from childhood on!”

After short fighting in the leafy shade,  
He spake to the young man, “Is there no maid  
Who loves you, no white arms to wrap you round,  
Or do you long for the dim sleepy ground,  
That you have come and dared me to my face?”

“The dooms of men are in God’s hidden place,”

“Your head a while seemed like a woman’s head  
That I loved once.”

.....

“Speak before your breath is done.”

“Cuchulain I, mighty Cuchulain’s son.” (*Poems* 35)

It is worth noting that the father and son sharing the same name is something Yeats added to the original legend about the death of Cuchulain’s son, who is called Connla in the Irish text (Conner 8). Yeats’ emphasis on the sameness – the same name and the same oath that Cuchulain’s son shares with his father – echoes in a certain sense, a remarkable instance of what Lacan theorizes in his discussion of the stages of child development as the “object a,” that is, as “the object that causes desire” (Lacan *Seminar* 67-119). According to Lacan, in an attempt to grasp what remains essentially indecipherable, and thus becomes intensely desired in the Other’s desire – what Lacan calls the unknown – a child finds his own desire; the Other’s desire – constructed upon lack – functions as the cause of the child’s desire (Fink 59). Indeed, the shared name and oath between Cuchulain and his son functions as this “object a” that causes the desire of the male members of the paternal society, a desire to be an unconquerable, matchless warrior, which is itself a cultural construction, a desire, on Yeats’ part, to obtain a masculine voice, through which to be safely placed in the genealogy exclusively comprised of patriotic Irish male poets.

Indeed, part of this desire is variously represented as a “maid,” “white arms,” and the “dim sleepy ground” throughout the poem, the very things which would only be highly valued in a patriarchal, heteronormative masculine society. Aside from the desire for these material things and their shared name and oath through which they are bound together, Cuchulain also sees something in common. The son’s familiar head that reminds him of the woman he once loved demonstrates that they are also bound to the same woman, that something like what we saw as

“the traffic in women” in Eliot, where women or the feminine are simply deployed as a narrative exchange for male homosocial bonding, strikingly operates here as well. In a sense, this strange but special homosocial relationship between Cuchulain and his son whose foundation is the very sameness of the things they own or desire to own, at the center of which women are remarkably placed, has an educational function for males. By affirming and mimicking each other’s desire, they inherit and perpetuate the patriarchal law and system, whose rules and relations oppress women and relegate women’s status as exchangeable, symbolic property for the purpose of cementing the bonds between men. Part of the political problem of Yeats’ outwardly feminine, occult poetics lies in this very utilization of women among his seemingly heteronormative male characters such as Cuchulain and his son as a “conduit of a relationship” in which the true partner is a man (Sedgwick *Between Men* 26).

In order to see how the dynamics of Yeats’ prevaricating gender authority relates to the traffic in women in a broader sense, the tremendously intriguing narrative structure in which the son resembles Cuchlain’s women requires further investigation; the son’s head looks exactly like that of his mother’s (Cuchlain’s former wife that he left behind) and the “sweet sound” of the son’s bow recalls Cuchlain’s present “sweet throated” mistress (*Poems* 34). Indeed, Cuchlain’s son represents both hyper-masculinity with his strong desire for masculinity, and at the same time, femininity, in his inherent resemblance with these women. The young son, therefore, causes both affection and castration anxiety to the mature Cuchulain. Because the desire to become the mightiest, hyper-masculine warrior is unavoidably his own, the old warrior inextricably comes into a narcissistic love relation with this desire, as is signified in Cuchulain’s initial attraction to his son. Yet, because the son’s feminine appearance and voice causes anxiety,

reminding him of his own instinctively feminine love for “singing” and for the “sweet sound,” that part of the son must be dealt with somehow (*Poems* 35). These conflicting feelings towards the son fascinatingly echoes, in my view, Yeats’ often confused, vacillating attitude towards his own authority, his instinctively feminine inclination that must be left behind for maturation on one hand, and his desire to write in accordance with the masculine, patriotic male members of his nation on the other. That the old warrior eventually kills the young warrior epitomizes the poet’s desire and determination to kill the feminine side of his authority. However, the ending of the poem where Cuchulain is doomed with the eternal fight with the tide suggests that the battle between femininity and masculinity in Yeats will never come to an end, that those contradicting elements are queerly alive together in the poet as a driving force of writing. It is precisely for this reason that I see Yeats’ authority as queer.

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As I showed, the final image of Cuchulain struggling with the tide represents, with its back and forth motion, Yeats in the highest pitch of the battle with his own authority, a desire for a masculine mask on one hand and an instinctively feminine inclination on the other. This ceaseless authorial wavering is, in my view, a hallmark of Yeats’ early poems, which manifests itself throughout his poetry in ways that focus on characters or speakers caught at an ironic moment of yearning to consummate their sexual, creative desires, fearing at the same time that doing so will entail a death-like self-sacrifice, put simply, a moment of longing for self-annihilation and yet a simultaneous desire to withdraw from that longing. This weird temporality

faced by the poet-lover is dramatized in “He Wishes his Beloved Dead,” a poem included in the poet’s third poetic collection entitled “The Wind among the Reeds:”

Where you but lying cold and dead,  
And lights were paling out of the West,  
You would come hither, and bend your head,  
And I would lay my head on your breast;  
And you would murmur tender words,  
Forgiving me, because you were dead: (*Poems* 72)

The contradiction between the feminization of the speaker in the ways he shows admiration for his lover and the speaker’s wish for his lover’s death in the paling hour of the West strikingly recalls what we saw as a dramatic embodiment of St. Sebastian’s desire to come “with a lamp” to flog his lover in “the night” in spite of his love for her in Eliot’s “The Love Song of St. Sebastian” (*Inventions* 78). The “tender words” the speaker’s beloved murmurs, as in Eliot, represent the feminine side of the poet that needs to be renounced or at least partly complemented with masculinity and her death is thus intensely desired and is simultaneously lamented, as is characterized by the speaker’s request for forgiveness. In foregrounding the speaker torn between the antithetical desires, the poem echoes the familiar early Yeatsian conflict between an unconscious wish for a solipsistic self-exile by repeating traumatized, feminine words and a simultaneous desire to break away from that wish, or between the queer desire to pair up a feminized human being with a masculinized supernatural creature in an aspiration for artistic consummation and the recognition that this is never wholly possible nor desirable.

Indeed, it is this duality of the desires so characteristic of Yeats' early poems that largely yields the poet's frequent description of his own art either as a sacrifice offered to the feminine power he associates with Gonne and Ireland or, as his later poems suggest, as a farewell song containing a more emboldened wish to part with such feminine power. "The Cap and Bells," with its castration motif, offers a particularly striking allegory for Yeats' struggle with masculinity and femininity. There, a jester-artist cannot win the affection of his young queen – femininity – until he offers her the emblems of the masculine side of his creativity, the cap and bells. Though this sacrifice enables him to win the young queen's love, the accompanying loss of masculinity requires his death as an artist. Also, part of what is specifically notable in the poet's middle period poem "No Second Troy" is its negative depiction of the speaker's beloved as recklessly violent in teaching "ignorant men most violent ways" and "hurl[ing] the little streets upon the great" and, more importantly, its heightened construction of that femininity's relation to the "pastness of the past"<sup>15</sup> or death:

What could have made her peaceful with a mind  
That nobleness made simple as a fire,  
With beauty like a tightened bow, a kind  
That is not natural in an age like this,  
Being high and solitary and most stern?  
Why, what could she have done being what she is?

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<sup>15</sup> I borrowed this term from Eliot's *Tradition and Individual Talent* where he discusses the haunting presence of tradition. "[Tradition] involves. . . the historical sense," Eliot argues, . . . "and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence" (*Selected Poems* 38). Thus, the term itself signifies obsolescence or anachronism in this particular context.

Was there another Troy for her to burn? (*Poems* 91)

At first glance, it is Helen of Troy to whom the speaker's beloved seems compared because of the remarkably beautiful appearance they have in common. A more thorough reading of the poem reveals, however, that it is the Trojan War and its bloody aftermath that Helen's union with Paris causes and the beloved's violent ways at the present moment that are brought together in comparison. Whether desired or hated, whether depicted as the ideal(ized) Rose or as a secular woman, everything that has to do with the feminine is strikingly delineated in connection to the "pastness of the past," as things obsolete or dead in Yeats. Indeed, from his middle period onwards, the poet begins to even more aggressively distance himself from what is considered as the feminine. As I will further show in Chapter Four, however, in his continuing pursuit of the occult and his ceaseless prevarication with regard to his authority, the masculine poetics the poet aspires to construct is eternally haunted by what is othered by that very poetics. It seems that the very driving force in most of Yeats' work lies in this queer circuit in which femininity and masculinity cripple and resurrect each other in constant conflict and negotiation with each other.

## Chapter 4

### **In Search for a Masculine Mask:**

#### **Queer Temporality and Gender Doubleness in Yeats' Late Occult Poems**

Although in Yeats' early poems, the poet's feminine authority and his desire for a masculine mask are placed in an intense conflict with each other, the dominant tone of voice there is evidently a passive, feminine echo. Yeats' middle period poems, however, undergo radical masculinization and depersonalization. With regard to this change in the poet's commanding authority, Yeats scholars generally agree that the poet's persistent immersion in the esoteric societies, particularly his involvement in the Golden Dawn – whose central emphasis lies in a balanced use of such elemental forces as masculinity and femininity – taught the poet a way to complement his feminine authority with its masculine counterpart (M. M. Harper 154-155). Indeed, it was the principle of gender “equilibrium” that runs throughout the doctrine of the Golden Dawn that initially attracted Yeats into the Order (155). One of A. E. Waite's diary entries reveals how fascinated Yeats was with this idea of “gender equilibrium” when he was first introduced to the concept by MacGregor Mathers, one of the founders of the Golden Dawn (43). “Gender equilibrium,” according to Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabatha Cicero's detailed analysis of the teachings of the Golden Dawn, indicates a state in which things, from nature through the human world to the otherworld, exist in a delicate symmetry between fluctuating masculinity and femininity (177). In Alex Owen's telling reading of Yeats' later occult poems, this “gender equilibrium” so central to the Order's teachings comes across as “forgetting” as a

theme in Yeats' later work both in terms of sexual difference and gender identity, where masculinity and femininity are lost in perfect equilibrium (104).

In the period between 1897 and 1904, Yeats also took on the challenging task of establishing an Irish National Theatre. This new theatrical commitment significantly transformed the poet in a way that masculinizes his authority and his work, by compelling him to master the genre of drama, traditionally deemed masculine with its focus on the public sphere and heroic acts, and to deal with disputes that often put him at odds with much of his public. Yeats, for instance, renounces the sorts of lyrical epiphanies characteristic of his early, feminine "Rose" poems, where layers of symbolism build up one another until climaxing in the speaker's desperate plea to the unresponsive lover and seeks instead for visual and verbal minimalism, thinking that too richly textured language would easily bewilder the audience of the drama specifically when it is spoken by forceful heroes (Holdeman 46). Gonne's marriage to the Catholic nationalist revolutionary Major John Macbride during this period also compelled the poet to discontinue his unconditional celebration of and devotion to the feminine beauty that he associates with the symbol of the Rose and Gonne, foregrounding instead a kind of masculine anger in his work (Howes 2-3).

Many of Yeats' biographers locate Yeats' friendship with Ezra Pound, which reached its most intense phase during this period, as a critical catalyst in the poet's maturation as a masculine modernist writer. In his in-depth study entitled *The Pound Era*, Hugh Kenner argues that Pound effected some transfusion of cold, ironic discipline and imagism into Yeats, compelling him to approach levels not reached at his early phase characterized by a feminine voice and excessive symbolism (154-64). Indeed, although twenty years younger than Yeats,

Pound pushed him to continue the stylistic experimentations he had begun about ten years before, introducing the older poet to Noh Drama (O'donoghue 107). A major form of classical Japanese musical drama developed in the thirteenth century, the genre focuses on the delivery and execution of the codified, impersonal performance of masked actors, instead of an intricate stage and individualized characters, to provide its audience a sense of illusion and impersonality (Hakukani 17). This exposure to a new literary form fuelled Yeats to cut back the layers of symbolism that are typical of his early work and instead to create, to borrow the poet's own words, "such numbness and dullness. . . that all might seem, as it were, remembered with indifference, except some one vivid image" (*Collected Works* 321). Indeed, what stands out most about Yeats' work from this period onwards is that, much like Eliot's public work that is arguably said to be a dramatic embodiment of his so-called impersonal, masculine theory of poetry, Yeats' is a vivid manifestation of the poet's desire to depersonalize and masculinize his authority.

This important transformation in terms of the poet's commanding gender authority culminates in *Responsibilities*, which was published in 1914. The italicized, untitled opening poem of *Responsibilities*, for instance, not only deals with the poet's own masculine ancestral history<sup>16</sup> but also draws its energies from the use of forceful, colloquial poetic language and from

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<sup>16</sup> Yeats' ancestors on both sides were seventeenth-century settlers. As merchants, lawyers, and clerics, they were nowhere near as grand as the Ascendency they served. However, his great-great-grandfather had married Mary Butler, thus linking them with one of the oldest and most powerful Ascendency families, settled there in the twelfth-century. In the original version of the poem, Yeats had romantically imagined his Butler ancestors fighting at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 on the side of the Catholic James II rather than for the Protestant William of Orange. Yeats corrected this in later versions, but the change from imaginary to real allegiances does not seem to have altered his assessment of his ancestors as authentically Irish (Smith 26).

the syntactic and emotional tensions that grow stronger and stronger until they are finally released all of a sudden in the last quatrain. Stunningly, these stylistic, powerful energies summon neither the idealized Rose nor the terrifying, beautiful supernatural creature which dominates Yeats' early poems, but the poet's Anglo-Irish diasporic "old fathers:"<sup>17</sup>

*Pardon, old fathers, if you still remain  
Somewhere in ear-shot for the story's end,  
Old Dublin merchant 'free of ten and four'  
Or trading out of Galway into Spain;  
And country scholar, Robert Emmet's friend,  
A hundred-year-old memory to the poor;  
Traders or soldiers who have left me blood  
That has not passed through any huxter's loin,  
Pardon, and you that did not weigh the cost,  
Old Butlers when you took to horse and stood  
Beside the brackish waters of the Boyne  
Till your bad master blenched and all was lost;  
You merchant skipper that leaped overboard*

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<sup>17</sup> The history of Irish Diaspora is traced back to as early as the seventeen hundreds. Since then, massive number of Irish population fled to all over the world including U.S. and Britain for political, religious, and economical reasons (Gibney 108). Until now, about ten million people born in Ireland have emigrated, which is more than the entire population of Ireland at its historical peak in the eighteen thirties before the Great Famine (Einri 8). The Yeatses were not an exception in this large wave of Irish Diaspora. For detailed information about Irish Diaspora, refer to John Gibney's *The Shadow of a Year* and *The Irish Diaspora* edited by Andrew Bielenberg.

*After a ragged hat in Biscay Bay,  
You most of all, silent and fierce old man  
Because you were the spectacle that stirred  
My fancy, and set my boyish lips to say  
'Only the wasteful virtues earn the sun';  
Pardon that for a barren passion's sake,  
Although I have come close on forty-nine  
I have no child, I have nothing but a book,  
Nothing but that to prove your blood and mine.*

*January 1914 (Poems 101)*

Proudly invoking his male ancestral members from seafaring merchants to selfless scholars to brave soldiers, Yeats praises the masculine attributes of his Anglo-Irish old fathers. Similar to how Eliot includes his chosen literary male forefathers in his work as a means of validating the literariness and authenticity of his own poems and of constructing a homosocial literary genealogy that he hopes for within his own work, Yeats too relies upon the exclusively masculine authenticity of his male ancestors as a means of proving his higher-born, noble blood.

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A closer look into the last quatrain of the poem reveals, however, anxiety or self-doubt as much as it does the poet's desire and determination to situate himself in the noble Anglo-Irish

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<sup>18</sup> The Yeatses were no aristocrats but the (somewhat troubling) reference to "huxter's blood" in the poem – often linked to the poet's later interest in eugenics – suggest a difference between low-born and high(er) born.

masculine genealogy of his own construction. What is specifically exciting, though, about the way this anxiety or self-doubt surfaces is the dramatization of these feelings through the focus on the radically disrupted temporality. For instance, the poem seems to seamlessly march from its exploration of the poet's male ancestral family tree, richly ranging from his artistic to his political forefathers, to the last quatrain where the poet's heirless future all of a sudden interrupts its grand progression. Indeed, the poet's argumentation that he is heirless because of his barren passion, betrays that, contrary to the poet's description elsewhere of his poetic process as labor pains and of its outcome as his own child, the connection between posterity and the "book" the poet claims as the only evidence to prove the link between their "blood" and his is cut short, revealing his uncertainty about the value of his own "words." Here, Yeats seems to dramatize his homebound, feminized position as opposed to the heroic history of Anglo-Irish Diaspora that his forbears demonstrated, by depicting himself as the last heir of that proud lineage in the defensive tone of voice. Recalling the uncomfortable connection between femininity and death that I examined in Chapter Three, the immediate coupling of this defensive gesture to his own feminized position and the theme of disconnected futurity illustrates how death is closely imagined with femininity in Yeats.

In this chapter, I will thus show how Yeats' later deliberate and repeated attempts at masculinizing his poems in his later period are still at odds with his instinctively feminine authority, which almost always manifests itself as the temporal heterogeneity or disorientation in his later occult poetry. For instance, Yeats is arguably known to have composed with a wild wicked persona and to have pursued his own masculinity in both the literal and symbolic sense in his later years. However, the poet's masculinized persona's retreat back into the feminized

secular and bodily realm, like a hungry ghost that cannot completely leave the human world, at the very moment of his eventual transcendence into the much desired masculine occult, sacred realm for artistic and religious consummation reveals the same kind of gender insecurity or instability that I have identified in his early poems. Additionally, the poet's later occult vision of the cosmos as erotics of alternating dominance and submission of opposing principles, which is imagined in his mystical theory on gyres, seems to have come out of the poet's effort to articulate his own wavering authority between masculinity and femininity. Indeed, Yeats' circularly repeating temporal model of masculine dominance and feminine submission that mimics the similarly circulating change of the moon through its phases is, in itself, a remarkable embodiment of the poet's lifelong belief that a compelling mask can and must be ceaselessly reconstructed.

Together with these issues, I will also show why the poet's still unstable later vacillation between masculinity and femininity can ultimately be viewed as an affirmation of a paternal society, a society operative solely through male homosocial bonding in a larger cultural and political sense, through examining the poet's later notions of birth, life, death, and rebirth, all of which are evidently temporal markers. Although later Yeats celebrates the secular, bodily realm and experiences, such affirmation is not always without limitations. Whereas in Eliot's work the secular and the body are almost always discussed in negative terms and in connection to a fragmented female body or a racial other, in Yeats' work, they are associated with a feminized, eroticized temporal state that, if not completely renounced, must be transcended later for final communion with the masculine ideal or what he terms the "Spiritus Mundi" or Universal Spirit (*Poems* 187). Indeed, it seems to me that Yeats' later raucous affirmation of femininity and the

feminine sphere only to later disavow them as part of his occult project, just like Eliot's seeming affirmation of secular Virgin Mary as a means for a more fulfilling communion with the Christian male God, reveals the moment in which a desire for male homosocial alliance through the utilization of women and the feminine as a narrative device becomes legible.

As I argued in Chapter Three, Yeats' oeuvre cannot be discussed without addressing his occultism precisely because the poet's entire work is, to borrow Margaret Harper's words, both "an expression of belief in art and an artistic expression of his religious belief" (146). More importantly, Yeats' ambitious project of re-making himself as a masculine modernist poet was not possible without the literary and theoretical development of the poet's occult ideas. The productive tension that comes out of such competing binaries as femininity and masculinity, body and soul, the secular and the sacred, the interior self and the dramatized mask, and so forth, which became a firm ground for Yeats' occultism, was, in fact, also a key foundation for the poet's much conflicted literary poses and masks evidently deemed modernist and in a larger sense for queer authority and authorship that have recently become a new discourse in literary Modernism. An exploration of Yeats' gendered prevarication in relation to the issues of temporal heterogeneity, wavering, queerness, or disruption, which are characteristic of the poet's occult poems, will thus reveal that Yeats' occult work, just like Eliot's, is a rich site of irresolvable struggles and tensions, whose multiple, productive forces ceaselessly deform or dismantle a desire for a monolithic masculine entity.

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Whereas early Yeats primarily imagines death in connection to the feminine or the feminization of the male hero and in negative terms, later Yeats often articulates it in masculine terms. In his first major political poem entitled “September 1913,” for instance, Yeats laments for the death of the high-spirited Irish revolutionaries epitomized by John O’Leary through contrasting their sacrificial deed and lofty vision with the God-fearing, apolitical nature of the rising Irish middle class:

What need you, being come to sense,  
But fumble in a greasy till  
And add the halfpence to the pence  
And prayer to shivering prayer, until  
You have dried the marrow from the bone;           5  
For men were born to pray and save:  
Romantic Ireland’s dead and gone,  
It’s with O’Leary in the grave.

Yet they were of a different kind  
The names that stilled your childish play,           10  
They have gone about the world like wind,  
But little time had they to pray  
For whom the hangman’s rope was spun,  
And what, God help us, could they save:  
Romantic Ireland’s dead and gone,           15

It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Was it for this the wild geese spread  
The grey wing upon every tide;  
For this that all that blood was shed,  
For this Edward Fitzgerald died,       20  
And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone,  
All that delirium of the brave;  
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,  
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Yet could we turn the years again,       25  
And call those exiles as they were,  
In all their loneliness and pain  
You'd cry 'Some woman's yellow hair  
Has maddened every mother's son':  
They weighed so lightly what they gave,       30  
But let them be, they're dead and gone,  
They're with O'Leary in the grave. (*Poems* 108)

What is particularly intriguing about the quoted passage is its dramatization of the temporal notion of death as a means of validating a masculine identity or fulfilling the masculine ideal.

The last stanza clearly imagines past Ireland as feminine, given its adoption of the conventions of

the *aisling*, a traditional Irish literary genre, in which a vision of the nation personified as a woman inspires male members of society to sacrifice themselves to her cause. However, the performative calling out of the names of the dead Irish male nationalists and its repetition of the phrase, “they’re dead and gone/ They’re with O’Leary in the grave” strangely foreground the plight of Ireland’s dead male heroes, not the plight of the woman with “yellow hair.” It is almost as if the excuse of “you” in the final stanza, which dismisses the woman as a kind of pretext for foolhardy bravery down the ages by focusing more on the heroes’ fate than on the cause for which they fought, rebounds on the poem as a whole. This sort of haunting attraction to the Ireland’s past male heroes in Yeats’ poems discloses, in my view, the poet’s longing for masculinity and his desire to situate himself among the political male “forefathers” of his choice, those voluntary, willing “exiles” united through death for the same cause.

Indeed, this surfacing male homosocial desire in the latter half of Yeats’ literary career intriguingly expresses itself in general as the poet’s construction of the Irish revolutionary nationalists’ death that occurred against the backdrop of the Irish Independence Movement as a sort of collective masculine martyrdom. In various cultures throughout history, ranging from pagan, Islamic, and Christian societies to Hindu and Japanese secular cultures, martyrdom has in fact been popularly performed among male members of society as a means for communal bonding (Moss 15). James Frazer’s influential cross-cultural study on primitive fertility cults shows that primitive peoples performed collective rites including martyrdom on a regular basis for various purposes, among which male homosocial communal bonding was the most significant (324). Primitive peoples, according to Frazer, attributed the fluctuations of growth and decay, of reproduction and dissolution of their society, to the marriage, death, and rebirth of

the male god-martyrs (324). They thus believed that by performing the rite of collective martyrdom, they could aid the god in his struggle with death and in his eventual resurrection. The main purpose of seppuku, a highly ritualized form of Japanese suicide by disembowelment, which was practiced on a large scale by the samurai (male warrior) caste, was also to pay homage to their chief male warrior or their fellow soldiers. Japanese soldiers believed that carrying out martyrdom would protect or restore their honor as a warrior, promising them a seat among the honorable brotherhood in the afterlife (Turnbull 47). Needless to say, Christian martyrdom, while geared towards promoting the teaching of the Christ, was also rooted in this same belief in the existence of Christian brotherhood in the afterlife.

In “Easter 1916,” “Sixteen Dead Men,” and “The Rose Tree,” poems that are arguably said to have become more masculine than Yeats’ earlier works, Irish revolutionary nationalists’ sacrifice for the Irish cause is also immediately likened to religious or political martyrdom and dramatized as a means of collective male bonding: “O plain as plain can be/ There’s nothing but our own blood/ Can make a right Rose tree” (*Poems* 183). Specifically, what is noticeably visible in “Easter 1916” is the poem’s construction of these nationalists’ collective death as an inevitable and necessary process through which to bring about masculine beauty and to make the nation’s present moment and upcoming future more masculine:

Too long a sacrifice  
Can make a stone of the heart.  
O when may it suffice?  
That is Heaven's part, our part  
To murmur name upon name,

As a mother names her child  
When sleep at last has come  
On limbs that had run wild.  
What is it but nightfall?  
No, no, not night but death;  
Was it needless death after all?  
For England may keep faith  
For all that is done and said.  
We know their dream; enough  
To know they dreamed and are dead;  
And what if excess of love  
Bewildered them till they died?  
I write it out in a verse --  
MacDonagh and MacBride  
And Connolly and Pearse  
Now and in time to be,  
Wherever green is worn,  
Are changed, changed utterly:  
A terrible beauty is born. (*Poems* 181-2)

Here as elsewhere, affirmations and disavowals ceaselessly recur in jarring conflicts and negotiations with one another and the final judgment about the meaning and value of these revolutionary nationalists' fight for independence remains perpetually deferred in this painful

process. Serving both as a real question and a shrugging off, for instance, the “what if” question in the poem is where the poet’s doubleness about the issue in question most dramatically surfaces. It is particularly worth noting, however, the final part of the poem where the performative calling out of the names of the dead male nationalists strengthens the connection between the present and future temporalities and masculinized nationality. Also remarkable in these final lines of “Easter 1916” is Yeats’ use of the word “terrible” in establishing the emboldened link between these male nationalists’ deaths and the accompanying birth of beauty for “now and in time to be,” the very word that the poet habitually employs to describe the masculinized, eroticized fairies of the supernatural world in his earlier work. Evidently in Yeats’ later poetry, death itself is delineated in immediate connection to masculinity.

As is evidenced in this reversed construction of death as something related to masculinity, what is specifically exciting in Yeats’ later poetry is its disavowal or inversion of the many gendered notions of the poet’s earlier development. Freud’s discussion of “inversion” as one peculiar form of dreamwork comes in handy in understanding this complete reversal of the poet’s earlier performance. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud articulates that, during sleep, what he terms “dreamwork” occurs, a mental activity that translates the latent wish-seeking unconscious material into the manifest imagery that disguises it, and that among the many forms that this dreamwork can take, inversion (transformation into the opposite) is specifically the most favored and versatile method of representation (303-4). That something is represented as completely inverted in dreams (both in content and in temporal order) to disguise the originally dangerous, unacceptable, or traumatic memories or feelings circuitously reveals more about Yeats’ instinctively feminine persona than about the seeming ubiquity of Irish male nationalists

in his later poems in exactly the same way in which it circuitously tells more about private Eliot than about public Eliot in his immersion in male literary forefathers. That is to say, just as public Eliot's raucous creation of the so-called impersonal theory of poetry and his endeavor to masculinize his work as the theory dictates are meant to cover (and secretly code) his own passivity and his homosocial, even homoerotic desire, later Yeats' masculine prowess that often manifests itself through addressing male revolutionary nationalists' sacrifice is geared to disguising his own unstable, feminine authority.

Indeed, later Yeats' desire to become more masculine and his attempt, by doing so, to place himself in the honorable family tree exclusively composed of his own chosen Irish male predecessors and contemporaries fueled him, in my view, to masculinize space and time, even the space and time that were feminized earlier, and to passionately celebrate these realms, almost to the same degree to which earlier Yeats glorifies feminine beauty. However, as is the case with his earlier poems, almost all of these seemingly masculinized later poems disclose the poet's suppressed passive, feminine authority and his desire to resurrect it. In "Sailing to Byzantium," a poem considered as one of his later masculinized modernist poems, Yeats' inclination to the feminine side of his authority consistently comes across:

## I

That is no country for old men. The young  
In one another's arms, birds in the trees  
-- Those dying generations--at their song,  
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,  
Fish, flesh, or fowl commend all summer long

Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.

Caught in that sensual music all neglect

Monuments of unaging intellect.

## II

An aged man is but a paltry thing,

A tattered coat upon a stick, unless

Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing

For every tatter in its mortal dress,

Nor is there singing school but studying

Monuments of its own magnificence;

And therefore I have sailed the seas and come

To the holy city of Byzantium.

## III

O sages standing in God's holy fire

As in the gold mosaic of a wall,

Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,

And be the singing-masters of my soul.

Consume my heart away; sick with desire

And fastened to a dying animal

It knows not what it is; and gather me

Into the artifice of eternity.

## IV

Once out of nature I shall never take  
My bodily form from any natural thing,  
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make  
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling  
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;  
Or set upon a golden bough to sing  
To lords and ladies of Byzantium  
Of what is past, or passing, or to come. (*Poems* 193-4)

At face value, as Yeats articulates in a draft script for a 1931 BBC radio broadcast, the poem is about the aging poet's spiritual journey to Byzantium in order to fulfill his own religious and artistic vision of eternal life: "I am trying to write about the state of my soul, for it is right for an old man to make his soul, and some of my thoughts about that subject I have put into a poem called 'Sailing to Byzantium.' . . . Byzantium was the centre of European civilization and the source of its spiritual philosophy, so I symbolize the search for the spiritual life by a journey to that city" (Jeffares, 217). Elsewhere, the poet similarly describes Byzantium as a final destination he would most wish to visit "if [he] could be given a month of Antiquity and live to spend it where [he] chose." (*A Vision* 279-80). It is worth noting here that the poet's creative impetus for this poem echoes that of Eliot for "Ash Wednesday" in their shared "attempted spiritual exploration of the human feelings in terms of the artistic and divine goal" (Jain 212). Also intriguing about the poem is the similarity it holds with Eliot's "Ash Wednesday" in its majestically progressive move from earthly matters, time, and emotions to the desired spiritual space, temporality, and impersonalized feelings.

A more thorough reading of the poem's structure reveals, however, that, for proper celebration of the privileged masculine space and time figured as Byzantium, its contrary correlative is required, within which not only the earthly matters and temporality, but also matters related to the secular realm and time are necessarily feminized. Indeed, whatever "is begotten, born, and dies," "The young/ In one another's arms" and "The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas," that is to say, "those dying generations" are suggested in jarring opposition to the unaging intellect and the desired holy city of impersonal Byzantium out of nature, in their allusion to and embodiment of Mother Nature traditionally associated with the body, fecundity, sensuality, and femininity. Even the speaker himself is not entirely free from this inclination to feminize the secular space and time, in spite of his strong aspiration to be placed in the very sacred masculine realm and time. One of the particularly interesting moments in the poem is where the speaker's soul is presented in bodily terms, as something having hands, wearing clothes, and singing a song. The loudly singing, clapping soul, even in its "tattered" state, and its desire for songs and for the "singing-masters" even when it arrives at its desired final destination recall the young, living things in this world "Caught in [the] sensual music" of the first stanza in their metonymic connection to femininity which is figured as music and singing. This ironic hesitating moment that comes across at the very moment of transcending feminized mortal desires and temporality suggests the poet's latent feminine authority, authority that is more forcefully drawn to the bodily and the feminine realm than to its disembodied masculine counterpart.

A place also worth exploring in "Sailing to Byzantium" with regard to Yeats' unstable, ambiguous gender authority is the last stanza where, in his agonizing oscillation between the

body and the soul, the speaker of the poem as an agent of the time present brings himself into erotic conversation with the other gendered times such as the time past and the time to come, both of which temporalities are brilliantly marked in Byzantium. Indeed, in the last stanza, the temporality of Byzantium represents something similar to what Homi Bhabha terms “performative time” in his work entitled *The Location of Culture*, a temporality in which the subject of modern ideology is split between the iconic image of authority and the movement of the signifier that produces the image, so that the ‘sign’ of the social is condemned to slide ceaselessly from one position to another” (149). On one hand, as the early medieval lost empire now known as Istanbul, “Byzantium” signifies what is already gone, while with its turbulent history that passed through drastic secularization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it also signifies feminized civilization. On the other hand, as an idealized impersonal masculine time and space that the poet envisions would emerge, free of the turbulence, confusion, and secular femininity of the present time, it evidently embodies some sort of masculine futurity.

Indeed, Byzantium itself represents double, split temporalities. Careful analysis of the poem show that among the things that have to do with Byzantium, the speaker’s artistic vision he wishes to inscribe in Byzantium is futurized and masculinized, whereas every other element evokes the present moment, which is largely associated with femininity and the body. For example, the dwellers of the desired otherworldly Byzantium in the last stanza demonstrate the same qualities attributed to the secularized human beings in their love for song and handiwork. Additionally, although the speaker wishes, in his desired Byzantium, to take the form of “hammered gold and gold enamelling” that evokes masculinity, and to sing transcendently of a unified vision of “what is past, passing, or to come,” the poem captures the speaker entirely

devoid of autonomy in one of the states he would become. Indeed, such an expression as “set upon a golden bough to sing” betrays a sort of passivity that amusingly recalls the effeminate, or even ignoble agency craving for more mature, masculine “singing-masters of [his] soul” in the previous stanzas and, in a broader sense, early Yeats’ feminine authority that is habitually suggested as something that needs to be complemented by masculine supernatural power. It is, however, where the speaker wishes the masculine sages to “come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre” that in fact most tellingly and richly summarizes these sorts of ambiguously gendered, queer moments. As a term that indicates a circular or spiral motion or form, the gyre is more readily associated with a feminine motion or gesture than with a linear, straight masculine movement. With this definition in mind, the sages’ gender is therefore decidedly ambiguous, with their feminine motion or gait. Echoing Yeats’ ever-vacillating authorial move from masculinity to femininity, this imagery of the gyre suggests that, although forceful masculine agency is exactly what the speaker wishes to inscribe in futurized Byzantium, it always escapes from his words at the very moment of representation.

In my view, the gendered temporal heterogeneity that readily comes across in Yeats’ poems functions in a way similar to how Rene Girard’s concept of erotic triangular relationship is operative in paternal society. In his influential work entitled *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, Girard argues that the bond that links the two rivals in an erotic triangle is as intense and potent as the bond that links either of the rivals to the beloved, and that this bond between rivals is more determinant of and influential in actions and choices than anything in the bond between either of the lovers and the beloved (83-7). With Girard’s discussion in mind, what is exciting about the poem is its construction of the vexed triangular relationship among the gendered past, present,

and future in their constant conflict and negotiation with one another. The privileged realm of masculinity and impersonality that the speaker as an agent of the present temporality craves to accomplish in his imaginary Byzantium, which is related to futurity, illustrates, on one hand, a real object of desire constructed upon a collective mimetic desire among members of society. The past, mythic Byzantium, on the other hand, functions as a mediator, somewhat similar to the role that the beloved plays in Girard's erotic love triangle, which ceaselessly reminds the speaker of his own desire for masculinity and his grandiose project of transcending the present earthly realm and thereby fulfilling the masculine ideal. That is to say, in this gendered temporal love triangle, it is the very masculine element marked in futurized Byzantium that the speaker as an agent of present temporality really rivals and desires; the past, mythic part of Byzantium is uncomfortably taken advantage of by the speaker only with the view to forming a vexed homosocial relationship with futurized Byzantium.

This goal to fulfill the masculine ideal and construct the sole masculine community that stands out as the most significant in the gendered temporal love triangle often necessarily enacts homoerotic desire, similar to the way in which Eliot's attempt at acquiring an authentic masculine voice by borrowing the cited authority of Webster and Donne in "Whispers of Immortality" performatively enacts an erotic craving for their bodies and subjectivities. In "Sixteen Dead Men," a poem included in Yeats' middle period collection entitled *Michael Robartes and the Dancer*, the same kind of queer desire for a dead male body that can be found in Eliot markedly surfaces:

O but we talked at large before

The sixteen men were shot,

But who can talk of give and take,  
What should be and what not  
While those dead men are loitering there  
To stir the boiling pot?

You say that we should still the land  
Till Germany's overcome;  
But who is there to argue that  
Now Pearse is deaf and dumb?  
And is their logic to outweigh  
MacDonagh's bony thumb?

How could you dream they'd listen  
That have an ear alone  
For those new comrades they have found,  
Lord Edward and Wolfe Tone,  
Or meddle with our give and take  
That converse bone to bone? (*Poems* 182)

The speaker of the poem angrily dismisses the British apologists who argued for dialogue, pointing to the sixteen dead men executed by Britain as evidence of British brutality and of the impossibility for compromise. What stands out particularly here is the moment in which the dead revolutionaries' conversation is suggested in inextricable relation to the body. Just as the realm

of thought is delineated as inseparable from “the fever of the bone” in its inclination to “[cling] round dead limbs/ Tightening its lusts and luxuries” in Eliot’s dead metaphysical male poets of “Whispers of Immortality,” the bodily and mental realms are here suggested as inseparable for Yeats’ dead Irish revolutionaries who had worked for the same cause (*Collected Poems* 55). The expression “Bone to bone” specifically evokes an erotic feeling in their physical proximity to each other and in their implication of physical contact (touching). Indeed, nothing can be queerer, eerier, and more erotic and passionately “boiling” than ghastly conversations between bones.

What is so intriguing in Yeats’ later occult poetry is its stylized narrative pattern in which femininity or a feminized temporality is constructed as a necessary stage that must be passed through in bringing out masculine beauty or ideal, precisely because transcendental masculinity requires its opposite concept of secular femininity as a ground for its existence. Indeed, the notion that the sole transcendental masculine sphere can only be accomplished through the noble death of male members of society necessarily demands that the present temporality be imperfect, secular, fragmented, or traumatized, all of which are the terms used to, in varying degrees, refer to femininity in their metonymic connection to disintegration. This sort of premise firmly rooted upon oppositions or “contraries” which sharply manifests itself in Yeats’ later occult poems was not actually new to the poet’s occult thinking. Yeats had long believed that creation embodies a continual war of opposite gender characteristics emanating from a single universal soul, which is precisely a tenet of Theosophy, a magical sect in which the poet took an active part in the late eighteenth hundreds (Holdeman 18). Yeats was also one of the dedicated heirs of the Blakean notion that “Without Contraries is no progression” from early in his artistic career (Blake 1). Retroactively viewed, Yeats’ ceaseless authorial vacillation between masculinity and femininity

which had started as early as his poetic inauguration can also be traced back to his notion of femininity as a necessary, transitional state in fulfilling the masculine primal oneness.

“An Image from a Past Life” is a specifically interesting site in which the poet’s queer authority that requires both masculinity and femininity as a ground for its existence expresses itself as a dialogue between a male lover and his beloved. At face value, as many of Yeats’ biographers have articulated, this poem centers on the poet and his wife George haunted by the presence of Gonne; indeed, the poem focuses on the competition between the two rival muses represented as “She” (George) and a ghost from the past life (Gonne) to gain “He”’s attention, given “She”’s agitation and restlessness that come out of her anxiety about being defeated by “He”’s past female muse. However, bearing in mind the poet’s lifetime conflict with his own unstable authority that ceaselessly wavers between masculinity and femininity, the poem can be seen as a continuation of the poet’s deliberate attempt to articulate and understand his queer, double authority:

She.

A sweetheart from another life floats there

As though she had been forced to linger

From vague distress

Or arrogant loveliness,

Merely to loosen out a tress

Among the starry eddies of her hair

Upon the paleness of a finger.

He.

But why should you grow suddenly afraid

And start—I at your shoulder—

Imagining

That any night could bring

An image up, or anything

Even to eyes that beauty had driven mad,

But images to make me fonder.

She.

Now she has thrown her arms above her head;

Whether she threw them up to flout me,

Or but to find,

Now that no fingers bind,

That her hair streams upon the wind,

I do not know, that know I am afraid

Of the hovering thing night brought me. (*Poems* 178-9)

Specifically worth noting in the quoted passage is the emboldened emphasis on the dependence of masculinity upon femininity. Indeed, the poem's construction whereby it is only through "She"'s ability to communicate with the spirit presences from the past that "He" can be "stirred" and inspired is tremendously intriguing, mirroring Yeats' queer authority that mostly requires heated conversations between the masculine side of his authority and its feminine counterpart as

well as the poet's queer authorship of occult poems, which was entirely dependent upon George's automatic writing (178). Additionally, "He"'s confession that the past image(s) with whom "He" came to stay in contact through the aid of "She" "made [himself] fonder" configures femininity as necessary where creation occurs, rather than something that must be renounced or disavowed.

In "Solomon and the Witch," a similar idea is dramatized through its focus on Solomon and the queen of Sheba at the moment of their verbal foreplay. Of course, as is typical of Yeats' poems, the final judgment about whether femininity is a requirement in the creative process never comes easily and is ceaselessly postponed until the last moment where the queen cries out "O! Solomon! Let us try again" (*Poems* 178):

And thus declared that Arab lady:  
'Last night, where under the wild moon  
On grassy mattress I had laid me,  
Within my arms great Solomon,  
I suddenly cried out in a strange tongue  
Not his, not mine.'  
Who understood  
Whatever has been said, sighed, sung,  
Howled, miau-d, barked, brayed, belled, yelled, cried, crowed,  
Thereon replied: 'A cockerel  
Crew from a blossoming apple bough  
Three hundred years before the Fall,

And never crew again till now,  
And would not now but that he thought,  
Chance being at one with Choice at last,  
All that the brigand apple brought  
And this foul world were dead at last.  
He that crowed out eternity  
Thought to have crowed it in again.  
For though love has a spider's eye  
To find out some appropriate pain --  
Aye, though all passion's in the glance --  
For every nerve, and tests a lover  
With cruelties of Choice and Chance;  
And when at last that murder's over  
Maybe the bride-bed brings despair,  
For each an imagined image brings  
And finds a real image there;  
Yet the world ends when these two things,  
Though several, are a single light,  
When oil and wick are burned in one;  
Therefore a blessed moon last night  
Gave Sheba to her Solomon.'  
'Yet the world stays.'

‘If that be so,  
Your cockerel found us in the wrong  
Although he thought it worth a crow.  
Maybe an image is too strong  
Or maybe is not strong enough.’  
‘The night has fallen; not a sound  
In the forbidden sacred grove  
Unless a petal hit the ground,  
Nor any human sight within it  
But the crushed grass where we have lain!  
And the moon is wilder every minute.  
O! Solomon! let us try again.’ (*Poems* 176-8)

That Solomon represents masculinity, the queen, femininity, is clear not only from their opposite gender status but also from their connection to different religions. It is publicly recognized that historically, Christianity has stressed the need for energetic evangelism in combination with the ideal of vigorous masculinity while othering and feminizing pagan cultures and religions in the process, so that as a result, Christianity itself came to represent hyper-masculinity (Aronson and Kimmel 32). Biblical depictions of Solomon, the King of Israel and the queen of Sheba also make it clear that whatever Sheba represents, given the queen’s Arabic origin and the enormous amount of riches she carries along, it is associated with secularity and is put in jarring contention with the sacred spirituality that Solomon represents with his blessed wisdom and promised prosperity (*The Holy Bible*, 1 Kings. 10. 1-13).

Indeed, "Solomon and the Witch" is dedicated to dramatizing the intense contention between the opposing gender traits and is structured to eventually affirm feminine primacy; it starts out with the queen's speech that betrays her sexual candor and concludes with her dismissal of Solomon's sophistry about chance and choice that, united together, would result in the apocalyptic end of the present world. What is remarkable here, though, is the poem's dramatization of this narrative structure through its focus on the way in which these contending gender traits relate to different temporalities. Indeed, almost every argumentation that Solomon makes is associated either with the mythic (Biblical) past or with the future temporality yet to be realized, similar to the way in which the imaginary masculine sphere signified as Byzantium is established upon the city's mythic past in "Sailing to Byzantium." For instance, as the quotes clearly show, Solomon's speech is full of biblical allusions such as "the Fall," "the apple tree," and "the cockerel" and the end of this world he imagines through these biblical reminiscences evokes some sort of futurity, given its desired apocalyptic destruction of the present temporality. On the other hand, the queen's speech centers on the carnal desire of the present world and its connection to the natural, eroticized setting such as the "wild moon," the "grassy mattress," and "forbidden sacred grove." Her final argumentation that far from being overthrown, the present world remains as before, in opposition to Solomon's claim that the lovers' real and imagined images, when perfectly united, will bring the world to an end, seems a deliberate attempt to bring the poem's inclination to masculine temporalities back to the present moment where femininity prevails.

This affirmation of femininity in Yeats' later work exemplifies, in my view, one moment in the circular movement of subjectivity and objectivity through the lunar phases that the poet

theorizes in his later occult poems and *A Vision*. Yeats saw aspects of human beings, moments in time and history, and any actions or events that occur in time as locatable in twenty-eight incarnations analogous to the phases of the moon, and understood history, either of individuals or of nations, as cyclical, governed by larger oscillations between feminine subjectivity and masculine objectivity. According to the poet's occult vision revealed in his later poem entitled "The Phases of the Moon," the full moon of Phase Fifteen represents pure subjectivity where the body and soul become one perfectly beautiful and self-sufficient form, whereas the invisible moon of Phase One symbolizes pure objectivity where a being's essential element is demolished into the "primal dough" in preparation for a new cycle. Between these two extreme states, a being moves through a series of material incantations (*Poems* 163-7). Viewed from the poet's theoretical vision, the shift of Yeats' attitude to femininity and whatever femininity signifies in "Solomon and the Witch," which reverses his earlier negative stance, can be seen as a dramatization of one moment in this ebb and flow of the subjective, feminine force and its objective, masculine counterpart.

Yeats' biographers have articulated that the sexual candor and bravado that the poet expresses through characters such as the queen of Sheba as well as the poet's affirmation of femininity stem from the poet's personal struggles with his own aging, impotence, and femininity (Cullingford, 262). Indeed, the struggles with aging, impotence, and femininity in Yeats ironically resulted in a manifest inversion in his later work. What is especially exciting here is that because almost everything is inverted in Yeats' later poems, most characters Yeats creates in this period are heavily armed with queerness or a sort of androgynicity regardless of gender. Indeed, the idea that a male poet can communicate with the past spirits only with the

female medium's assistance belies reversed gender dynamics that endows much power, masculinity and queerness to the female character while feminizing her male counterpart. For instance, with all their accomplished wisdom and knowledge about the universe, the "He" in "An Image from a Past Life" and Solomon in "Solomon and the Witch" are in essence passive and feminine, given their firm reliance upon a female medium's ability to mediate between spirit and human realms. On the other hand, the queen's sexual candor and initiative which outrun Solomon's verbal sophistication in the latter poem, where it is she who holds him in her arms rather than the other way around, betrays a sort of masculinity marked in her as well as her active role in Solomon's intellectual and sexual life.

These queer characters that pervade Yeats' later poetry illustrate, in my view, later Yeats' occult notion that such contraries as masculinity and femininity must be equal partners in never-ending processes of cosmic and creative conflicts. However, part of what is specifically intriguing and, in a sense, problematic in this later inclination in Yeats is, as I showed in my earlier discussion of the emboldened link between the queen of Sheba and the present temporality in "Solomon and the Witch," the projection of filth and the body onto femininity, in which femininity is inextricably coupled with the bodily realm and temporality. Indeed, just as public Eliot projects sexual energies and desires onto such figures that are marginalized in terms of gender, race, and sexuality or class in the process of masculinizing his public work, later Yeats dramatically sexualizes whatever relates to femininity in the process of affirming the polarized realms of both masculinity and femininity. In her telling discussion of the inextricable relation between femininity and the primitive in *Gone Primitive*, Marianna Torgovnick argues that "the familiar tropes for primitives, whether global, historical, social, personal or

psychological, become the tropes conventionally used for women.” For instance, by placing the ego (the Ich, the I) at a point that mediates between the civilized masculine super-ego and the “primitive” feminine libido, Freud’s map of the psyche implicitly participates in this troubling gender politics (17-21). Likewise, Roger Fry’s primitivism implicates itself with this polarized sexual politics by othering and feminizing primitives (17-21). I would only like to add to Torgovnick’s already apt and penetrating argument that in Yeats’ case (and Eliot’s as well,) among those tropes conveniently associated with femininity is the secularized present temporality, and that by establishing a link between those two, the poet’s occult vision strengthens and promotes a social structure firmly rooted on the gender dichotomy.

The seven “Crazy Jane” poems are specifically rich sites in which whatever is evoked by femininity is invariably coupled with the nowness and spontaneity of the secular present temporality. Based on a woman known as “Cracked Mary,” these poems have been claimed to be Yeats’ intended resistance against Irish sexual Puritanism and the Free State’s official censorship.<sup>19</sup> For instance, “Crazy Jane on the Day of Judgment” clearly affirms the secular realm and experiences through the voice of this old female character whose sexual candor and desire for the body echo Yeats’ later view about the necessity of “drinking one’s fill from excrement” before attempting to escape from samsara, the eternal cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, and obtaining permanent bliss and sweetness:

‘Love is all

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<sup>19</sup> After the pro-treaty party seized power after concluding Ireland’s War of Independence by signing a treaty with the British, the new parliament named the Dail Eireann catholicized the state at a rapid pace based on the Catholic conceptions of Irishness. Part of the legislations enacted by the Dail Eireann included making divorce impossible and instigating censorship against materials deemed sexually indecent (Nally 77, 111).

Unsatisfied

That cannot take the whole

Body and soul’;

And that is what Jane said.

‘Take the sour

If you take me

I can scoff and lour

And scold for an hour.’

‘That’s certainly the case,’ said he.

‘Naked I lay,

The grass my bed;

Naked and hidden away,

That black day’;

And that is what Jane said.

‘What can be shown?

What true love be?

All could be known or shown

If Time were but gone.’

‘That’s certainly the case,’ said he. (*Poems 257*)

Jane's claim that "Love is all/ Unsatisfied/ That cannot take the whole/ Body and soul" in "Crazy Jane on the Day of Judgment" epitomizes later Yeats' thinking that only by fully appreciating sex and other aspects of physical and secular life while they are alive can human beings eventually achieve evanescent glory. Similar affirmations of bodily desire come across in many other Crazy Jane poems through her insight, for example, in "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop," where she cries that "Fair and foul are near of kin, / And fair needs foul," and concludes that "Love has pitched his mansion in the place of excrement" (259).

Specifically worth noting in the quotes above are, however, the dramatization of the contention between masculinity and femininity that are each associated with different temporalities and, more significantly, their inherent structure designed to ultimately affirm masculine primacy. For instance, "Crazy Jane on the Day of Judgment" takes the form of a conversation between Jane and an unidentified male character. Amusingly enough, the same gender fault line that divides the conversation between Jane and "he" remarkably applies itself to the very line that separates the secularized present temporality from the sacred afterlife. The performative repetition of "'That's certainly the case,' said he," which is spoken by the impersonal, aloof male speaker in the even-numbered stanzas not only disrupts Jane's audacious emphasis on the carnal love of this life but is also particularly responsible for her own surfacing doubt in the last stanza about that kind of love and desire grounded upon the present temporality. Indeed, Jane's final argumentation that "All could be known or shown/ If Time were but gone" betrays a sort of anxiety about the inexplicability and uncertainty of the future time, which is summarized in the temporality of "that black day" in the third stanza. Additionally, the terms "grass" and "sour" that are suggested in connection with Jane in the poem and other analogous

expressions elsewhere such as “dark and dawn,” “blasted oak,” “foul,” “excrement,” and so on, in their allusion to Mother Nature or dissolution, remarkably echo those that are employed to describe the feminized fairyland in Yeats’ early occult poems or those that are used to reinforce femininity’s inextricable relation to disintegration (*Poems* 255-9). As I have argued several times earlier, of course, associating the feminine with the body has been in effect one of the favored strategies employed by male authors systematically and on a large scale in their attempts to build the performative link between femininity and finitude or secularity that the realm of the body evokes.

As is typical with Yeats’ poems, however, in “Crazy Jane on the Day of Judgment,” there is also a moment characteristically queer. The last stanza where Jane disavows her own argument does not in fact necessarily affirm masculinity, either, given that neither Jane nor the unidentified male speaker imagines what the future will be like after “the black day.” This ambiguous, double moment, in my view, illustrates the impossibility in Yeats to choose between an inherently feminine voice and a masculine mask, which is also brilliantly inscribed in his occult notion of escape from samsara. In his discussion of the phases of the moon in “The Phases of the Moon,” Yeats depicts Phase 27 as a possible site where an escape from the painful cycle of birth, death, and rebirth can take place for good. According to Yeats, in order to make the escape from samsara successful, the person passing through Phase 27 must renounce both feminine subjectivity and masculine objectivity altogether (*Poems* 166-7). In my view, this possibility for desired escape from samsara the poet envisions in “The Phases of the Moon” strikingly corresponds to Yeats’ disavowal of both gender traits altogether in negotiating with his own authority, which occasionally manifests itself as his complete disavowal of the temporal

heterogeneity that he himself constructs in the Crazy Jane poems as elsewhere. Holistically judging, Yeats' impossible attempt at remaking himself as more "masculine" throughout his life and his vigorous effort to pursue his own masculinity produced an unexpected result, bringing diverse, opposing elements into endlessly productive tension.

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In a broader cultural and political sense, Yeats' project of making himself more masculine, which generally expresses itself through a reversal of what he initially saw as feminine temporal markers such as aging, death, and transcendence in his later work evidences how patriarchal heterosexuality deploys "women [or the feminine] as exchangeable, perhaps symbolic property for the primary purpose of cementing the bonds of men with men" (Sedgwick *Between Men* 25-6). Indeed, in his later life, Yeats' use of a woman (mostly his wife George) as medium, as transmitter rather than originator of arcane occult masculine knowledge has been notoriously well-known. In his literature, the poet's desire to place himself in an Irish masculine literary genealogy he deems authentic by establishing the idealized masculinized sphere and temporality necessarily construct other temporalities as feminine that are required at the present moment and yet must be transcended eventually. Also, the poet's occult idea that only the complete exhaustion of bodily cravings in the present secular time frees human beings from the earthly existence and any kind of karmas accumulated from the past life, granting a possibility to escape from otherwise permanently repeating cycle of samsara essentially inscribes femininity, in its uncomfortably close relation to the secular and the body, as merely a transitional path to the

purgation that must be undergone in the larger cosmic process before masculinized blessedness is finally achieved. In other words, as a believer in Blakean contraries, Yeats clearly affirms the necessity of feminine power as a complement for masculinity, similar to the way in which the feminine yin is required to complement the masculine yang for ultimate cosmic harmony in East Asian philosophy. However, Yeats' delineation of femininity as something that must be eventually transcended for a more fulfilling contact with masculine spirits or the masculine ideal apparently confirms that what we saw as the male trafficking through the deployment of women as expendable property at work in his early poetry strikingly operates here as well.

Indeed, the poet's desire to place himself in the Irish masculine tradition becomes ever stronger as he ages, even fueling him, for example, to depict himself as a speaker who directly communicates, without the aid of a female medium, with the spirit presences already dead in "All Souls' Night" or as an aged speaker whose primary interest is either to discuss his own death or to build a relationship between himself and the "Honey of generation" in, for instance, "Byzantium" and "Among School Children." Luce Irigaray's conclusion after her detailed discussion of the relation of heterosexual to male homosocial bonds, that "male homosexuality is the law that regulates the sociocultural order," and that "heterosexuality amounts to the assignments of roles in the economy," is indeed salient to understanding the political problem underlying Yeats' lifelong preoccupation with remaking his authority as more masculine (107-10). Because of the polarized gender structure that eventually favors masculinity over femininity inherent in his occult thinking, Yeats' ever-wavering authority that moves back and forth along the gender continuum which encompasses multiple temporalities is in effect always slanted towards its masculine side. Nonetheless, the poet's performative attempts to remake himself as

more masculine almost always end in failure, precisely because feminine elements and voice never cease to infiltrate into what Yeats himself, as an instinctively feminine poet, envisions as an exclusively masculine sphere.

It is for this reason that I see Yeats as a queer modernist along with a handful of other male authors like Eliot, most of who, faced with a crisis of authority, consciously and unconsciously queered their poetic production as an erotically-charged interaction between a male artist and a male muse or collaborator. Indeed, in my view, Yeats' entire work is marked by the same kind of queer productive tensions between masculinity and femininity, love and hate, privacy and publicity, the interior self and the dramatized mask, and bravado and anxiety as those visible in Eliot, that is to say, tensions that were significant in constructing Eliot's queer authority and authorship. Even in his most occult work *A Vision*, these queer tensions come across as ceaseless contentions between opposing binaries such as objective/subjective, factual/symbolic, ugly/beautiful, and masculine/feminine, which continually invade each other in the peculiar arrangement the poet calls a double gyre. It is indeed telling that Yeats himself saw Modernism as a failure to some degree on the ground that its artists unanimously show a "grotesque floundering between realistic and mythic/hallucinatory elements" (Albright 66). In my view, the poet's own work reveals the same kind of floundering between irreconcilable binaries as is typical of Modernism. It is for this very floundering, vacillating that I see Yeats' authority and authorship as queer and as particularly appealing at the same time.

## Chapter 5

### **Spatialized Gender Trajectories in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway***

Throughout Chapters 1 and 2, I showed how for Eliot, queerness is figured as a prerequisite for the proper functioning of his normative creativity. I specifically attempted to reveal how the poet's antithetical desires and voices – a flamboyantly and dangerously homoerotic voice that comes across in the poet's private work on one hand, and a restrained, impersonal, transcendental voice in his public work on the other, which is often critiqued for being highly conservative and reactionary – are in fact two sides of the same coin. What is indeed tremendously intriguing about Eliot's authorial performance is that, since these seemingly antithetical authorial voices are inherently rooted in the same yearning for same-sex bodies and subjectivities, the anal elements and a homoerotic desire noticeably visible in his private poems that the poet wanted to suppress as he worked on his canonical work are ceaselessly surfacing against his authorial will. These sort of double desires and queerness ubiquitous in the poet's work evidence, in my view, not only Eliot's own desire to construct a homosocial literary genealogy of his own choice within his literary edifice but also the vast significance of queerness in his authority and authorship.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I traced how the same kind of queerness identified in Eliot are acted out in Yeats' earlier and later occult poetical work. Although Yeats has not traditionally been classified as a queer author, the way the poet musters up his authority is definitely queer, constantly floundering along the gender continuum. My third chapter specifically tried to show

how a constant wavering along the differently bodied and gendered temporalities as a theme in his early occult work echoes the ceaselessly alternating longing-disavowal mechanism in his psyche, where the poet's desire for masculinity that he believes can complement his instinctively passive, feminine authority is constantly at war with his simultaneously emerging desire for the feminine. My fourth chapter explored how the poet's growing masculine anxiety and his persistent effort to remake himself as more masculine in his later occult poems are still at odds with his inherently feminine authority, through the focus on the poet-speaker's double stance towards death, afterlife, and gyre, all of which are, importantly, temporal markers. In both chapters, I intended to reveal that the poet's ceaseless seesawing authority, unable to stabilize itself either as masculine or as feminine, functions in a way that eventually affirms phallogocentric notions of gender, just as Eliot's repeated deployment of the feminine as a narrative exchange is ultimately geared towards an affirmation of the patriarchal law and the masculine ideal.

While the previous chapters dealt with the key male modernist authors' queer, wavering authorial performances, I plan to linger on Virginia Woolf hereafter to examine how the novelist attempts to establish her own authority in the hostile early twentieth-century British literary environment dictated by phallogocentrism and, more importantly, to identify her queer authorial performances that call into question heteronormative gender practices. Indeed, a renowned feminist modernist writer who has more recently also come to be labeled as a queer author, Woolf has much in common with Eliot and Yeats. Her work, for instance, often reveals the same kind of queer desire for same-sex bodies and subjectivities that Eliot demonstrates for authors earlier. Her most famous contemplation in *A Room of One's Own* is "we think back through our

mothers if we are women” (99). Yet, her simultaneous withdrawal from such desired feminine poetics in favor of an androgynous mind and a male tradition of writing recalls the kind of longing-disavowal mechanism that is symptomatic of Yeats’ authorial performance. Indeed, like Yeats, the issue of establishing authority in Woolf is constantly faced with something similar to what leading postcolonial critic Homi Bhabha theorizes as “a double temporality” in his discussion of the hybridity of colonial identity and consciousness – a moment in which colonialism’s histories and cultures of the past intrude on the present moment. In other words, something like a ceaseless oscillation between the feminine part of her authority regulated by “Eurocentric, masculinist, and patriarchal historical segmentation” and the disavowal of and resistance to that authority in “the signifying process of gender identification” is constantly at work in Woolf’s psyche and work (153).

As my argument of the similarities between Woolf and Eliot and between Woolf and Yeats above demonstrates, however, discussions of literary Modernism have been mostly centered on temporal aspects, presumably because temporality is an immediately noticeable theme that plagues modernist writings – from Proust’s meditation upon memory to Woolf’s and Joyce’s employment of the stream of consciousness narrative technique, or from Eliot’s obsession with tradition to Yeats’ occultism. Indeed, the most heated and fruitful discussions on Modernism in the twentieth-century emerge as critics discuss its peculiar relation to time. Marshall Berman’s critique of modernity and Modernism in his celebrated work entitled *All That is Solid Melts into Air*, for instance, exclusively revolves around the notion of moral and social progress necessitated through the experience of modernity. Berman specifically utilizes Goethe’s *Faust* as a critical grounding for conceptualizing modernization as the processes of dreaming,

loving, and developing and for making visible the ironic doubleness concerning the forward movement of progress, exerted by the figure of Faust: “The reeling whirl I seek, the most painful excess. . . Let my own self grow. . . Till I, too, am shattered” (40). With regard to this preoccupation with time among modernist authors and scholars, David Harvey tellingly notes that, since Modernism and modernity are about the experience of progress through modernization, modernist authors’ writings and writings on Modernism and modernity have tended to emphasize temporality, the progress of becoming, rather than being in space and place (25).

Although the terms Modernism and modernist themselves imply a certain temporality, in my view, there is a lot more to say about their relation to space and spatiality. Indeed, as Andrew Thacker pertinently argues, the stream of consciousness narrative technique developed by modernist authors, for instance, with its characteristic emphasis on free movement from internal to external reality, from one space to another, can be fruitfully discussed together with symbolic, material, and psychic spaces in modernists’ literature (5). In addition, the conflicted double, queer desire readily visible in many modernist works, which importantly fuelled its authors to write under antithetical masks, can in fact be likened to an edifice with spatial dimension, given that it shapes the varied social, cultural, and gender relationships, in a somewhat similar way in which Lacan’s unconscious has a structure like a language where meaning is produced not only by the temporal relationship between the signifier and the signified but more crucially by the spatial position of signifiers in relation to other signifiers (*Ecrits* 691). Indeed, the numerous juxtapositions of the seemingly unrelated images or thoughts taken from a handful of different male authors from different periods in Eliot’s *The Waste Land* not only show how textual spaces

can be freshly remade into a queer textual body but also offer an opportunity to understand (and resist) the way in which the masculinist logic of visualization operates as a metanarrative in the place where male gaze spatially dominates over any other senses (Lefebvre 287).

Likewise, the techniques and themes like gender employed by Woolf cannot be faithfully discussed either, without a consideration of the issue of spatiality. Indeed, Anna Snaith and Michael Whitworth pertinently point out that it is through discourses of space – from questions of women’s relationships to national space in *Three Guineas*, to intellectual space in *A Room of One’s Own*, to artistic space in *To the Lighthouse*, that Woolf articulates the exclusions and boundaries that regulate women’s bodies and minds (2). Fortunately, Woolf scholars working on the intersection between space and gender have covered some ground in spite of the critical environment that privileges discussions of temporality with regard to Modernism. In “Flights of Fancy: Spatial Digression and Storytelling in *A Room of One’s Own*,” Tracy Seeley analyses the female speaker’s narrative digression caused by her forced spatial digression through various places of London in *A Room of One’s Own* not only as an obstacle for female creativity but also as a characteristically feminine narrative strategy to resist a masculine straightforward writing style (32). Seeley tellingly argues, for instance, that this digressive narrative strategy is employed by Woolf to ultimately foretell the emergence of Mary Carmichael, a woman novelist trope in modern London who creates by circuitous route a space within which women can gather, women whose commonality does not elide their specific and varied creativity (41). This spatial digression as a narrative strategy is envisioned as a spatial interruption in Helen Southworth’s “Women and Interruption in *Between the Acts*.” Viewing the first appearance of the female protagonist Isa, who has just married into the Oliver family, as a spatial arrestment of the

characteristically masculine living room discussion of the history and geography of England, Southworth contends that for Woolf, spatial interruption is imagined as one of the most powerful resistance to patriarchy (57). Southworth aptly adds that it is through this sort of spatial interruption enacted by women characters that the “retention of the problem of space” rather than the “establishment of a fixed boundary” is made possible (57).

In conversation with these scholars, in this chapter, I will attempt to examine how questions of space and spatiality can relate to Woolf’s queer authority and authorship. In my view, part of what is tremendously intriguing about Woolf’s construction of space includes not only its gendering but also the heightened correlation between recurring spatial trajectories across gendered spaces and the author’s literary performances that ceaselessly vacillate between masculinity and femininity. The novelist’s indignation about women’s exclusion from the British cultural, political, and economic spheres and her simultaneous desire to be included in those public realms, for example, often manifest themselves as a queer body whose sexual desire is illicitly locked up or whose trajectories or motions transgress the spatial logics of the heteronormative order, as the cases of Julia Craye in “Moments of Being: ‘Slater’s Pins Have No Points’” and Miss Kilman in *Mrs. Dalloway* overtly illustrate. Resistances to patriarchy and its heteronormative, masculinist practices are also occasionally figured in spatial terms in Woolf’s fictional and nonfictional works, particularly through the ambiguously gendered outsider-figure who insistently violates normative bourgeois codes of public comportment and sexual discretion by wandering through myriads of gendered city spaces outside of the prescribed time or without a clear purpose in mind.

Indeed, Woolf views her authority as divided between masculinity and femininity and identifies her divided selves with the strictly split public and domestic spheres in the city of London. One is the part of herself that is authoritative, classical, and analytic, derived from her readings of her father's work and her arguments with Thoby, her older brother, while the other is the part of herself which is whimsical, digressive, and fluid, formed by her private, intimate relationships with women (Lee 166). What I see as particularly interesting and queer about Woolf's perception of her artistic self as split, however, is that she often goes into the love-hate relationship with those split selves and voices while strongly desiring to unite them. As a result, her stance towards and portrayal of the paternal and maternal traditions remain oscillating and ambiguous for her lifetime. While she abhors the oppressive paternal presence, both literary and real-life, and the masculine writing style dominated by the letter "I," she expresses her immense love for the Shakespearean authority (*A Room* 131). While she hopes for a distinctively female literary tradition and a language and literature shaped by and for women, the theme that dominates her novels from *The Voyage Out* through *To the Lighthouse* to *The Waves* is that of matricide. In my view, the author's view of her authority as divided between masculinity and femininity and her desire to either reconcile with or entirely disavow gender oppositions ultimately manifest themselves in her work as a constant war between two antithetical desires – a desire to create strictly gendered spheres and a desire to tear them down altogether, which amusingly yields different levels of queer spaces, moments, and trajectories. Indeed, Woolf's oeuvre is grounded upon her lifetime struggle with those antithetical desires along the gender continuum. One example that most memorably dramatizes this authorial struggle is the often

cited queer image of a man and a woman getting into a cab in *A Room of One's Own*, that is, two sexes and subjectivities entering/coming together in one body/space.

In reading the correlation between what I see as queer in Woolf's authority and authorship and individual queer trajectories across gendered space visible in her work, the recent discussions of queer temporality and space and of the intersection between queer space and Modernism developed by prominent scholars will be of much help. In *In A Queer Time and Place* published in 2005, Judith Halberstam, after her close analysis of club kids, HIV-positive barebackers, rent boys, sex workers, homeless people, and the unemployed in the city space, namely those who exist outside what is considered the normative time and space, concludes that such people could productively be called queer subjects in terms of the ways they live (deliberately, accidentally, or of necessity) during the hours when others sleep and in the spaces (physical, metaphysical, and economic) that others have abandoned, and in terms of the ways they might work in the domains that other people assign to privacy and family (10). Halberstam's formulation of the "queer subject" provides a rich framework within which to explore an intersection between Woolf's queer authority and her fictional characters' trajectories in the city space, which is characterized by aimlessness and obliqueness rather than purposefulness and straightforwardness.

Also, about a decade earlier, Michel De Certeau, in his influential work called *The Practice of Everyday Life*, introduced the notion of spatial stories as a resistance practice of urban life, arguing that "every story is a travel story – a spatial practice" and that "all stories traverse and organize places" (115). In De Certeau's analysis, these spatial stories constitute the innumerable subversive practices by means of which users reappropriate the space constructed

by pedagogical sociocultural practices and contest the various forms of power in their daily lives (xiv). De Certeau's formulation is useful in investigating the correlation between the author's struggle with masculinity and femininity and the various trajectories of her ambiguously gendered city dwellers in their resistance to and in negotiation with the masculinist, oppressive, and heteronormative British climate. Aaron Betsky's *Queer Space* also specifically explores the intersection between sexuality and queer Modernism. Betsky's argumentation that queer spaces are not specific, concrete places but a bundle of bodily, physical, symbolic, psychic places that exist along routes of trades, commerce, or pilgrimage can be productively applied to close analysis of the link between the author's desire for feminine affiliation, which is strangely often at odds with her simultaneous desire to withdraw from it, and the physical and symbolic trajectories of the urban dwellers in her texts, whose desired homoerotic moment of connection is almost always abruptly cut short by the heteronormative will to straighten it (44).

In this chapter, I will thus explore how the strictly gendered spaces in Woolf's work are repeatedly disrupted and (or) reclaimed by the characters' queer relationships or performances out of sync with the heteronormative spatial sensibility and how their repeated pendulum movements mirror the author's queer authority. *Mrs. Dalloway* is a rich site from which to launch this investigation. Indeed, the daily routine of the characters in the novel seems firmly anchored within a heteronormative spatial logic, but the moment most exciting that insistently keeps surfacing at war with the prescribed spatial trajectories is the one that depicts the same-sex peer partnership between Clarissa and Sally Seton. This sort of homoerotic moment of connection is, in my view, a dramatic embodiment of Woolf's desire to construct strong female literary tradition through feminine affiliation. Nonetheless, the fact that this strong longing for

homoerotic bonding between women is almost always cut short by the heteronormative order demonstrates the author's desire or need for a male literary tradition.

In addition to the aforementioned issue, this chapter also attempts to show how Miss Kilman's obsession with Elizabeth, which is at odds with her simultaneous desire for the transcendental God can be seen as queer, through tracing her trajectories in the gendered city spaces of the department store and the cathedral and how her constant back and forth motions along the gendered spaces mirror Woolf's struggle with masculinity and femininity. Amusingly enough, the tension between those two antithetical realms in Miss Kilman's psyche – the secular, feminine, carnal realm on one hand and the masculine, heteronormative, transcendental realm on the other – comes across as a tension between competing spatial binaries such as verticality and laterality. For instance, Miss Kilman's zigzag trajectories in the department store<sup>20</sup> that represent her unfulfilled desire for femininity and the same-sex body, and her simultaneous antithetical aspiration "above" the bodily and material realm are ceaselessly brought into stinging contrast. This spatial clash between the opposing realms seems to echo, in my view, Woolf's own conflicting view of her authorial identity as insecure and divided between masculinity and femininity. Exploring how these sorts of queer relationships and trajectories out of sync with the prescribed heteronormative spatial sensibility can be linked to Woolf's vexed authority and

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<sup>20</sup> From the outset, the link between the original department stores and femininity was obvious. Not only were the goods intended for women's consumption such as clothes, cosmetics, and food, but also the space of the stores was feminized to appeal to female consumers. It is indeed telling that one of the mottos the early department stores promoted in general was "a safe and comfortable place for women to shop" (Hudson, 148). For more detailed explanations about this, see Ray Hudson's *Economic Geographies: Circuits, Flows and Spaces*, pages 146-155 and Joanne Hollows' Chapter 6 of *Feminism, Femininity, and Popular Culture*.

authorship will not only offer new ways in which questions of gendered space and spatialized bodies and relationships can be used to discuss modernists' authority construction, but also allow us to see the vast significance of the buried queer desires in modernists' authorship.

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*Mrs. Dalloway* seems to be strictly split into what Clarissa Dalloway, the female protagonist in the novel, sees as the masculine/public and feminine/domestic realms. Indeed, part of what Woolf intends to show throughout the novel is how those seemingly separate realms are intended by the patriarchal, heteronormative order to instill, in complicity with each other, in ordinary male and female Londoners spatial gender sensibility, a purposive appreciation of their city that will propel them into an ongoing mode of active participation in maintaining their fixed gender roles. The sound of Big Ben, with masculinity embedded in its name itself, for instance, dictates how Clarissa spends her time, hour by hour, as a "perfect hostess," not allowing for a single thought outside of the ordered routines. "Big Ben was beginning to strike, first the warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. . . The sound of Big Ben flooded Clarissa's drawing-room, where she sat, ever so annoyed, at her writing-table; worried; annoyed" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 300). The immediately following passages show how the bell of Big Ben, marching straight ahead, redirects Clarissa's meandering recollections about her youth at Bourton into domestic subjection: "It was perfectly true that she had not asked Ellie Henderson to her party; but she had done it on purpose. Now Mrs. Marsham wrote 'she had told Ellie Henderson she would ask Clarissa—Ellie so much wanted to come'" (300).

However, the characteristic feminine spatial fluidity of Clarissa's youthful memory is in perpetual tension with heteronormative masculinity's oppressive, rigidity characterized by the bell of Big Ben. Indeed, Clarissa's youthful memory constantly resurfaces, for instance, while she is preparing for the party. "But this question of love (she thought, putting her coat away), this falling in love with women. Take Sally Seton; her relation in the old days with Sally Seton. Had not that, after all, been love" (222)? What is specifically intriguing and visible here is a comment on Clarissa's routine work which is importantly put in parentheses. Used to mark off an interjected explanatory or qualifying remark or thought, a parenthesized comment usually functions as a supplement to the main narrative. Therefore, that Clarissa's routine domestic work which is actually being performed retreats itself into parentheses while her thought of Sally erupts itself as the main narrative suggests a rupture or crisis in narrative, revealing the feminine fluidity's subversive move to turn away from the heteronormative masculinity's ruthless enforcement of the straight order.

This sort of the fierce clash between masculinity and femininity or between the heteronormative and non-heteronormative order, which is persistently visible in the space that seems strictly bifurcated by the gender fault line,<sup>21</sup> mirrors, in my view, Woolf's conflicted sense of her own authority and authorship. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the novelist views her authorial voice as divided between masculinity and femininity, that is to say, into the authoritative voice inherited from her readings of male authors on one hand and the whimsical,

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<sup>21</sup> In its very definition, the gender fault line requires the limiting gender binary (male/masculinity and female/femininity) for its existence. Across this dissertation, I use the term "gender continuum" in case authorial performances show a variety of gender forms besides the aforementioned forms whereas I use "gender fault line" to simply mean a line that divides what is generically imagined as male/masculinity and female/femininity.

personal, and digressive voice formed by her private, intimate relationships with women on the other (Lee 166). The author also similarly finds her early life spatially split and depicts it in spatial terms. The absurd contrast between the social life Woolf and her older sister Vanessa Bell were being forced into by their step-brothers and her private, reclusive study as an aspiring woman author is notably marked by spatial metaphors. “The division in our lives was curious. Downstairs there was pure convention; upstairs pure intellect” (*Moments* 171). In *A Room of One’s Own*, the author’s sense of herself as physically excluded from the realm where her male counterparts would have been given free rein is also dramatized as the female narrator’s spatial intrusion of a lawn at the fictional Oxbridge campus and her being chased away from it by a Beadle in the very next moment.

What is also as notable as Woolf’s split sense of her authority, however, is her ceaseless attempt to reconcile the feminine and masculine sides of her authority, which expresses itself as a number of symbolic and material queer spaces in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Indeed, a close look into the characters’ footprints reveals a space that can be legitimately claimed as queer. For instance, whereas Clarissa’s husband Richard’s routine walk to the parliament barely transgresses the realm other than public and masculine, his visit to the jewelry shop located on Conduit Street with Hugh Whitbread, Clarissa’s old pompous friend who holds a post in the British Royal household, on their way back from Lady Bruton’s luncheon party evokes some sort of queerness, not only because of the immediate closeness between femininity and homosocial shopping, but also because of the very illicitness marked in the place. Indeed, befitting the very definition of its name – a connective channel between the gendered spaces –, Conduit Street is an anxious site geographically located in the in-between, between Westminster, customarily thought of as public,

masculine, and official, and Bond Street, a feminized commercial street<sup>22</sup> in London where Clarissa goes on shopping errands in place of her maid on the day of the novel, and is thus only authorized as “a connective tissue that is traveled through at specific moments within its citizen’s day” (Hornsey 103).

The presence of this very queer space amid the strictly bifurcated masculine and feminine spheres in *Mrs. Dalloway* echoes, in my view, Woolf’s own authority as constantly vacillating between femininity and masculinity, between female literary influence and its masculine counterpart in her attempt to reconcile them. Indeed, the author’s attitude towards both the male and female traditions of writing is oftentimes self-contradictory. In her discussion of the difficulties that the nineteenth-century women novelists faced in *A Room of One’s Own*, for example, Woolf argues for the need to create a language and literature shaped by and for women, since “[women]” think back through [their] mothers” (99):

Whatever effect discouragement and criticism had upon their writing— and I believe that they had a very great effect— that was unimportant compared with the other difficulty which faced them (I was still considering those early nineteenth-century novelists) when they came to set their thoughts on paper— that is that they had no tradition behind them, or one so short and partial that it was of little help.

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<sup>22</sup> A stratagem often contrived worldwide by phallogocentric, masculinist societies in the Victorian era in order to maintain the existing rigid gender dichotomies and distinctions is a construction of a strong link between consumerism and femininity (Shaheen 74). In line with the masculinist logic that whoever is in firm control over production controls society, women were encouraged to consume, but discouraged to produce. The only desire allowed and encouraged for women in relation to production was that of reproduction.

For we think back through our mothers if we are women. It is useless to go to the great men writers for help, however much one may go to them for pleasure. (99)

In “A Sketch of the Past,” an autobiographical essay written much later, Woolf similarly associates her writing with moments of consciousness from childhood which revolve around the maternal figures significant in her childhood, at the very center of which is always her own mother Julia Steven (*Moments* 67). When the author discusses the writing of an invented writer named Mary Carmichael in *A Room of One’s Own*, however, she sounds much slanted towards androgynous creativity. “She [Mary Carmichael] wrote as a woman, but as a woman who has forgotten that she is a woman, so that her pages were full of that curious sexual quality which comes only when sex is unconscious of itself” (120). Elsewhere in the same text, Woolf even critiques women writers for their emotional expressiveness and verbosity in favor of masculine impersonality and calmness.

This equivocal, wavering stance vis-a-vis maternal and paternal influences makes sense, given the author’s vexed relation to literary tradition in general. As an aspiring woman author, Woolf’s desire for female literary predecessors was immense almost to the same intensity with which Eliot was obsessed with male tradition. However, where Eliot was spoiled for choice, Woolf had to grapple with the absence of a strong female tradition, since the only tradition available for her to take in was a patriarchal one. In this sense, Harold Bloom’s model of a strong male poet who tries to “challenge and distort his predecessors to clear an imaginative space for himself” in a well-stocked tradition is not applicable to a discussion of Woolf’s authority and authorship whereas Eliot’s and Yeats’ can neatly fit in the model (9-10). For a woman writer bemoaning the lack of even an intermittent female tradition between Sappho and Jane Austen,

the Oedipal estrangement that Bloom claims is required for a male writer would mean exclusion and was a problem that had to be solved, not a condition to be consciously cultivated. Woolf's vulnerable position in terms of literary tradition simply explains why she wishes to see the female artist as "an inheritor as well as an originator" (*A Room* 143).

Aside from her troubled relation to literary tradition exclusively constructed by male authors, Woolf also had to deal with her double desires in terms of her feminine legacy, the desire to carry on the mother's values and the desire to kill the same mother to break fresh ground since the mother's complicity with patriarchy is so tight and strong. Indeed, in "Profession for Women," Woolf defines the Angel in the House as a major threat to female art, specifically addressing her inclination to please (286). In one of her diary entries, the author similarly writes of the need to perform a symbolic matricide: "if I had not killed her in *The Pargiters*, she would have killed me (*The Diary IV* 56). Indeed, perhaps an aspect most markedly notable in Woolf's fictional oeuvre is the absence of mother-daughter relationships or a stubborn presence of the theme of matricide. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, for instance, Clarissa's mother is mentioned for the first and only time at the party scene and her relationship with her own daughter Elizabeth is far from intimate. Needless to say, one of the dominant themes in *The Voyage Out* and *To the Lighthouse* is matricide.

Woolf's attempt to deal with these antithetical desires revolving around the mother, in my view, manifests itself as a spatial issue of constructing a same-sex peer relationship in *Mrs. Dalloway*, which recalls a "close conspiracy" between the author and Vanessa who strongly longed to build a "private nucleus," a "standing place" for their own point of view and their own desires in a world of "many men" (*Moments* 157). Among these same-sex peer relationships, the

bond between Clarissa and Sally Seton is perhaps the most dramatic embodiment of the author's attempt to construct a nurturing feminine space beneficial to female creativity. Indeed, the kiss between her and Sally is still remembered as "the most exquisite moment of her whole life" by Clarissa herself more than three decades later (*Mrs. Dalloway* 225):

Peter Walsh and Joseph Breitkopf went on about Wagner. She and Sally fell a little behind. Then came the most exquisite moment of her whole life passing a stone urn with flowers in it. Sally stopped; picked a flower; kissed her on the lips. The whole world might have turned upside down! The others disappeared; there she was alone with Sally. And she felt that she had been given a present, wrapped up, and told just to keep it, not to look at it—a diamond, something infinitely precious, wrapped up, which, as they walked (up and down, up and down), she uncovered, or the radiance burnt through, the revelation, the religious feeling!  
(225)

Particularly worth noting about the passage above is that the kiss with Sally functions as a spatial interrupter of the dominant narrative of inculcated patriarchy where her father leads the way, Peter Walsh and Joseph Breitkopf go on about Wagner, and Clarissa and Sally fall behind. Indeed, Clarissa remembers the moment as an experience that turns the world in its heteronormative ordering "upside down" and makes its inhabitants disappear, in other words, as an experience of spatial disorder by which her pseudo-transportation to the Sapphic world alone with Sally is possible. The deeply homoerotic romance inscribed in the kiss indeed rushes in to fill the spatial void left by its absent heterosexual counterpart in the novel, mocking the heteronormative conception of courtship and its customary representations – the giving and

receiving of flowers and the accompanying kiss or the endowing of a diamond ring and the concomitant confession of undying love and the proposal and acceptance of marriage.

However, precisely because the kiss between the two women violates heteronormative sensibility and mars the customary narrative structure of the genre “romance,” it cannot endure long and must be quickly straightened. It is indeed telling that, as Dirk Schulz points out, their kiss is terminated by old Joseph and Peter right away, “whose biblically mythologized names alone insinuate a phallogocentric rectification of the blasphemous behavior” (130):

—when old Joseph and Peter faced them: ‘Star-gazing?’ said Peter. It was like running one’s face against a granite wall in the darkness! It was shocking; it was horrible! Not for herself. She felt only how Sally was being mauled already, maltreated; she felt his hostility; his jealousy; his determination to break into their companionship. All this she saw as one sees a landscape in a flash of lightning—and Sally (never had she admired her so much!) gallantly taking her way unvanquished. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 225)

It is important to note that the unpleasant suddenness of masculine intervention is here emphasized typographically by a long dash. Also notable here is the narrative focus on the agility and ruthlessness of the patriarchal law working towards the restoration of the prescribed heteronormative order, which is suggested in spatial terms and metaphors. Clarissa reads Peter’s intrusion as “running one’s face against a granite wall,” itself a spatial metaphor that is often used to indicate ruthless masculine intervention with women’s desire for political and intellectual exposure in the author’s nonfictional work. The rudeness and suddenness of old Joseph and Peter’s intervention are also strikingly marked in such spatial expressions as “star-gazing” and “a

flash of lightening,” expressions that evoke unwavering directness of a male gaze and heteronormative order’s characteristic verticality.

Recent discussions about this scene among a number of feminist and queer critics tend to focus more on the significance of this kiss between Clarissa and Sally as a victorious sapphic moment of bonding rather than on this strange narrative structure in its retreat back to a heteronormative ordering. Tracing the connection between Clarissa’s passion for Sally with Sappho’s homoerotic desire in “Virginia Woolf’s Greek Lessons,” Colleen Lamos argues, for instance, that Woolf describes the Clarissa-Sally relationship, not to mention their kiss, in ways that align them with the Hellenic homoerotic ideal in their association with purity, integrity, and disinterestedness (“Virginia Woolf” 158). In *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson*, Joanne Winning similarly reads the sensual epiphanies of the kiss between Clarissa and Sally as a dramatic embodiment of insistent lesbian desire and identity in resistance to patriarchy (4). More recently, Kathryn Bond Stockton and Kate Haffey read this kiss as a significant queer delay or pause within the relentless forward motion of women’s reproductive time from birth through adolescence to marriage and childbirth (Stockton 96).

Apart from their pertinent and penetrating close readings of the kiss scene, however, given Woolf’s desire for and idealization of the homoerotic moment of connection between Clarissa and Sally, it strikes one as quite strange that the kiss is so quickly disrupted and terminated, although part of Woolf’s intention is to criticize the paternal order for such a ruthless intervention. Indeed, by allowing the much hated paternal order to become almost immediately restored and reconfirmed, this strange narrative structure unwittingly articulates the very terms through which the queer female bond has already become constituted as a threat, as an inability

to respect the spatial and temporal orders through which heteronormative civic peace and harmony are being pursued. This narrative structure ultimately geared to avowing the masculine, paternal order in its entirety, rhymes, in my view, with Woolf's intense conflict between masculine and feminine realms in terms of constructing and commanding her authority, and in a certain sense, her limitation in which an ideal moment of feminine affiliation can only be momentarily articulated and that through the suggestive binary gender opposition.

Although not a female-to-female bond, it is worth taking a moment to speculate on the relationship between Septimus Warren Smith, a World War I veteran and his wartime officer and close friend Evans who dies in Italy just before the armistice, specifically because their relationship neatly follows the same pattern as that between Clarissa and Sally in terms of its development and waning. Indeed, both relationships begin in a traumatic moment: Clarissa's bond with Sally develops when she is at intense war with oppressive patriarchy in her rebellious youthful years and the Septimus-Evans relationship develops while they are fighting against the Allied forces during World War I. Also, in the same way Clarissa's desire for the homoerotic moment of connection is initially interrupted by Peter and is constantly so by heteronormativity's will to straighten it, Septimus' stubborn desire to linger on his hallucinations with Evans is cut short by Mrs. Smith in the first place and then by the unsympathetic doctors who hold firm faith in "proportion," put simply, by the same heteronormative discourse that works to inculcate a certain spatial sensibility that will regulate its inhabitants' perceptual relationship to society:

But he dared not look. Evans was behind the railings!

"What are you saying?" Said Rezia suddenly, sitting down by him.

Interrupted again! She was always interrupting. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 215)

After all, constantly hallucinating about the memory of the wartime same-sex friend would mean a challenge to the attempts to reorganize symbolic and material space and time within interwar London, their foundational importance to dominant projections of social order.

Time and time again, however, one of the most visible aspects in the overall structure of their relationship, viewed together with Clarissa's relationship with Sally, is the strikingly similar restoration of the masculinist, heteronormative order, which occurs so quickly and mercilessly. Of course, while the novel does not explicitly state that Septimus' relationship with Evans is homoerotic, the increasingly repeated and emboldened references to their relationship as his wife Rezia and the doctors attempt to treat him in their own ways hint that such might be the case:

He developed manliness; he was promoted; he drew attention, indeed the affection of his officer, Evans by name. It was a case of two dogs playing on a hearth-rug; one worrying a paper screw, snarling, snapping, giving a pinch, now and then, at the old dog's ear, the other lying somnolent, blinking at the fire, raising a paw, turning and growling good-temperedly. They had to be together, share with each other, fight with each other, quarrel with each other. (271-2)

Given that their relationship is suggested as overly intimate and resembles the sexually and emotionally fulfilled moment of the kiss between Clarissa and Sally, it comes as quite strange that the final terminus of their relationship is Septimus' death, although it is a gesture to keep his enduring memory with Evans against the masculine, heteronormative will to wipe it out. Time and time again, this recurring narrative structure in *Mrs. Dalloway*, a structure in which an exploration of the intensely desired feminine or queer realm is revoked all of a sudden by the

much hated paternal, masculine order, evidences Woolf's eternal vacillation between gendered realms when it comes to her authority and authorship.

Another notable aspect about Woolf's authorial struggle along the gender continuum is its dramatization through the focus on the vexed relation between the body and creativity. It has been, in fact, almost unanimously claimed that for Woolf, the baseness of the body and its lusts are placed in opposition to the "sacred androgynous realm" (Rado 164). Indeed, the author's estrangement from her physical self is a recurring theme in her literary career. Many of her comments insist upon the incompatibility of female biology and creativity. In one of her diary entries, for instance, Woolf describes menstruation as sapping and detrimental to her creativity: "I had thought to write the quickest most brilliant pages in Orlando yesterday – not a drop came, all, forsooth, for the usual physical reasons, which delivered themselves today. It is the oddest feeling: as if a finger stopped the flow of the ideas in the brain: it is sealed" (*The Diary III* 175). This diminishing attitude towards her body immediately calls up the emboldened triad of femininity, nature, and death I have earlier identified in the chapters on Eliot and Yeats. Indeed, given that the masculinist phallogocentric cultural conception at the time authorizes a strong link between male creativity and ejaculation while ironically disavowing female creativity as incapable of transcending the physical realm in its inextricable relation to the body, it is not entirely surprising that erotic descriptions of coupling between lovers or the body are completely missing in Woolf's work (Rosenman 57).

Nonetheless, it is intriguing that Woolf here alludes to writing or creative inspiration – "not a drop came" – in terms of the language of flowing or fluids, the very thing that she views as preventing her from writing. What is indeed worth addressing in terms of the author's

portrayal of this bodily realm is that it is only when the body is related to the heteronormative convention that it is resolutely repressed or disavowed whereas its connection to the creative realm is emboldened when depicted in relation to same-sex peer love. Indeed, the way the kiss between Clarissa and Sally is delineated is closely coupled with the way in which creativity is customarily operative in the intellectual realm. In the passage quoted above, for example, the bodily pleasure accompanying the kiss is figured as the “radiance burnt through,” “revelation,” and “the religious feeling” (*Mrs. Dalloway* 225). This link between the body and creativity is even more tightly established when Clarissa contemplates her friendship with other women:

Yet she could not resist sometimes yielding to the charm of a woman, not a girl, of a woman confessing, as to her they often did, some scrape, some folly. And whether it was pity, or their beauty, or that she was older, or some accident. . . she did undoubtedly then feel what men felt. Only for a moment; but it was enough. It was a sudden revelation, a tingle like a blush which one tried to check and then, as it spread, one yielded to its expansion, and rushed to the farthest verge and there quivered and felt the world come closer, swollen with some astonishing significance, some pressure of rapture, which split its thin skin and gushed and poured with an extraordinary alleviation over the cracks and sores! Then, for that moment, she had seen an illumination; a match burning in a crocus; an inner meaning almost expressed. (221-2)

Along with a heightened link between the bodily and aesthetic realms through the focus on their shared pleasure, also specifically visible in the quotes above is their spatialized relation. Indeed, like in the case of the kiss, the movement from the words that depict sexual pleasure to the words

used to delineate aesthetic pleasure – from “what men [feel]” to “revelation,” from “revelation” to “tingle,” “blush,” “quivering” to “rapture,” from “alleviation” to “illumination” – is so fluid and free that those pleasures and experiences are ultimately indistinguishable. Evidently for Woolf, the desire for artistic creation is equivalent to a desire for the same-sex body while artistic fulfillment is imagined as homoerotic bodily consummation.

What is so exciting about this close link between the homoerotic bodily consummation and creative rapture is that it occasionally materializes itself in Woolf’s work as a queer form of material space that is inextricable from a creative realm. For instance, when Woolf devises a metaphor for a younger generation of women setting out on their professional lives in “Professions for Women,” it is famously of a room. Amusingly enough, this modern room takes the form of a small bed-sitting room that used to be a male student’s room in college. At the same time, however, it does not quite break itself free from the old rooms women used to occupy in the past such as drawing-rooms, nurseries, and kitchens, because the room is given empty and new generations of women must bring their own furniture from their old ancestral rooms or houses (63). Although referring to a creative space for women writers, its queer material form closely resembles something similar to what we can see in contemporary British painter Jenny Saville’s epic-scale oil paintings of scarred and surgically altered transgender bodies from her collection *Territories*, put simply, queer or mutant bodies with female and male organs strewn together. In exactly the same way in which the liveliness of Saville’s paintings resides less in their representation of “before” and “after” modes but more in staging “in-betweenness” – the transgender stage – of bodily alteration, the liveliness of this queer creative space lies, in my view, in bringing masculine and feminine sides of creativity together (Halberstam, 112).

Aside from this fact that Woolf's imaginary material space for modern women writers has not only feminine but also masculine elements, that Woolf's version of bodied creativity retains both masculinity and femininity illustrates the very queerness in Woolf's authority. It immediately evokes Eliot's and Yeats' effeminate authorities that always require a strong masculine agent for their proper operation. Indeed, something similar to this gender dynamic can be identified in Woolf too. I have already noted that in *Mrs. Dalloway*, it is particularly when Clarissa reflects upon herself in relation to other women that Woolf not only exclusively employs the terms that recall a creative act or a moment that leads to creation but also effortlessly evokes the emotional condition that she claims is necessary to facilitate creation. What is remarkable with regard to Woolf's portrayal of Clarissa's relationship with other women is that one party is masculinized whereas the other party is feminized. In the earlier quoted scene that depicts Clarissa's attraction to other women, for instance, it is Clarissa that is masculinized in terms of age, experience in life, and maturity; not to mention the employment of such terms as "swollen," "gushed," and "poured," which are evocative of male ejaculation, in delineating Clarissa's feeling, it is clearly stated that "Clarissa [does] undoubtedly feel what men [feel] when younger women confess "some scrape, some folly" to her (*Mrs. Dalloway* 221).

It is surprisingly the other way around, however, when it comes to Clarissa's relation to the old lady next door. The seething hatred Clarissa feels towards Elizabeth's history teacher Miss Doris Kilman, driven by the idea that Kilman is taking her daughter away, is mollified by the old lady's appearance at the opposite window:

"And she watched out of the window the old lady opposite climbing upstairs. Let her climb upstairs if she wanted to; let her stop; then let her, as Clarissa had often

seen her, gain her bedroom, part her curtains, and disappear again into the background. Somehow one respected that — that old lady looking out of the window, quite unconscious that she was being watched. There was something solemn in it — but love and religion would destroy that, whatever it was, the privacy of the soul” (308)

Aside from the striking similarity between Clarissa’s antipathy to Kilman here and the younger women’s “scrape” and “folly” earlier in their established proximity to feminine immaturity, what stands out in the above quotes is the fact that the old woman is notably degendered in the same way Clarissa is degendered, even masculinized in her relation to younger women. Specifically, Clarissa’s thought that there is something solemn about how the old woman does what she does without minding the public eye recalls Woolf’s description of her imagined author-figure Mary Carmichael’s androgynous creativity in *A Room of One’s Own* I have discussed previously: “She [Mary Carmichael] wrote as a woman, but as a woman who has forgotten that she is a woman, so that her pages were full of that curious sexual quality which comes only when sex is unconscious of itself” (120).

The same old woman miraculously reappears towards the end of the novel in Clarissa’s similarly turbulent emotional moment when she is struck by the news of Septimus’ death. Similar to the way Eliot’s “Sweeney Erect” is preoccupied with introducing a paternal intertext of homecoming, an aim that, when fulfilled, would verify male procreativity and creativity, the following climatic scene reveals the significance of the ceremonial movement of this lady in opening Clarissa up to new scenery and in introducing a sort of maternal intertext of how feminine creativity is operative:

She parted the curtains; she looked. Oh, but how surprising! – in the room opposite the old lady stared straight at her! She was going to bed. And the sky. It will be a solemn sky, she had thought, it will be a dusky sky, turning away its cheek in beauty. But there it was—ashen pale, raced over quickly by tapering vast clouds. It was new to her. The wind must have risen. She was going to bed, in the room opposite. It was fascinating to watch her, moving about, that old lady, crossing the room, coming to the window. Could she see her? It was fascinating, with people still laughing and shouting in the drawing-room, to watch that old woman, quite quietly, going to bed. She pulled the blind now. The clock began striking. The young man had killed himself; but she did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three, she did not pity him, with all this going on. There! the old lady had put out her light! the whole house was dark now with this going on, she repeated, and the words came to her, Fear no more the heat of the sun. She must go back to them. But what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him — the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away. The clock was striking. The leaden fun. But she must go back. She must assemble. She must find Sally and Peter. (363)

In contrast to Peter's earlier sudden jealous intrusion, the woman's going-to-bed ritual is described as so supple, calm, and embracing as to stretch into Clarissa's consciousness in a non-intrusive but more potent, capacious way, similar to the way Sedgwick's performatives<sup>23</sup> are

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<sup>23</sup> In *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, and Performativity*, Sedgwick theorizes performatives as certain aggregates that cluster about or around a performative proper. She

more potent than the performative proper in their spatial attentiveness to the pathos of uncertain agency, as I have already discussed in Chapter One (*Touching* 76). To paraphrase Sedgwick's terms, while the masculinist, heteronormative performative logic tends to treat the performer's agency as self-evident and his or her pathos as self-explanatory and monolithic, its non-obtrusive, multi-dimensional periperformative counterpart does not occlude emotions that are not capable of making their way out to the main narrative. Indeed, clustering around the narrative inclination towards the straight "clock" time that is meant to urge Clarissa to return to the party, the lady's omnidirectional ceremonial movements across the room that do not seek for attention encourage Clarissa to bring a number of heterogeneous emotions together – disillusionment, solemnity, fear, pleasure, gratitude, and so forth that seem incompatible but nonetheless are coexistent here – not into a polarized contention but into a queer embrace. It is precisely because of the presence of the old woman that Clarissa finds the striking clock "leaden fun" rather than intruding, somewhat similar to the way Woolf compares creation to stitching together "pain and pleasure" or "the solidity of granite and the evanescent rainbow" (Whitworth 151).

This need for a kind of abstract, degendered foremother in facilitating a creative state in which to retain numerous heterogeneous emotions in a non-competing way, in my view, mirrors Woolf's need for masculinity in her imagining of the ideal androgynous authority and at the same time her vexed relation to male literary influence. Indeed, as I have previously discussed, Woolf's conflict with male literary tradition is as intense as her struggle with its female counterpart, and thus cannot be readily settled down and is ceaselessly resurfacing. In *A Room of*

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argues that the power of periperformatives precisely lie in their ability to warp, transform, and displace the supposed authorizing centrality of the performative.

*One's Own*, this vexed relation vis-à-vis male literary tradition fuels her to praise Shakespeare's androgynous authority while at the same time fiercely renouncing the selfish, demanding mode of male writing dominated by the letter I:

It was so direct, so straightforward. . . One had a sense of physical well-being in the presence of this well-nourished, well-educated, free mind, which had never been thwarted or opposed, but had full liberty from birth to stretch itself in whatever way it liked. All this was admirable. But after reading a chapter or two, a shadow seemed to lie across the page. It was a straight dark bar, a shadow shaped something like the letter "I". One began dodging this way and that to catch a glimpse of the landscape behind it. Whether that was indeed a tree or a woman walking I was not quite sure. Back one was always hailed to the letter "I." One began to be tired of "I". Not but what this "I" was a most respectable "I"; honest and logical; as hard as a nut, and polished for centuries by good teaching and good feeding. I respect and admire that "I" from the bottom of my heart." But— here I turned a page or two, looking for something or other—the worst of it is that in the shadow of the letter "I" all is shapeless as mist. Is that a tree? No it is a woman. (129-30)

Notably, while admiring the novel written by Mr. A., the narrator is uncomfortable about Mr. A's self-revealing writing style.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, this kind of intense love-hate struggle with male literary tradition characteristic of Woolf's authority and authorship expresses itself as masculinized Miss Kilman's ceaseless vacillation between masculine and feminine realms. A number of Woolf

critics have noted the sexual and gender doubleness marked in Miss Kilman. Heather Levy argues that Miss Kilman's large body is symptomatic of her sexual and racial otherness (153). This sexual doubleness in Miss Kilman is also explored in detail by Ruth Hoberman through her focus on the discrepancy between Miss Kilman's obsession with the commodities in the department store and her simultaneous avocation for women's independence (449-552). Indeed, with her German origin and unstable social, racial, and gender status, Miss Kilman represents, in my view, Woolf's very sense of her othered authority. She lost her teaching job at school during the war due to her German ancestry and her inability to mask her sympathetic attitude towards the Germans. She works as a private tutor in the place where others have their family life. She seeks privacy and personal comfort at church in her attempt to transcend her desire for the body, yet is ultimately unable to do so. She is a spinster bemoaning the lack of male attention, but her sexual orientation is definitely queer; her obsession with Elizabeth suggests masculinity and her very name (kill-man), misandry. In short, she is so othered and repressed and yet so egotistic and jealous, so turned off by the body and yet so obsessed by it.

With Miss Kilman's othered queerness in mind, her decision to visit the Army and Navy Stores with Elizabeth, her buying a petticoat and drinking tea and eating a chocolate éclair can be seen as lack of femininity and a gesture to complement it, which mirror, in a sense, Woolf's desire to construct a strong female tradition through feminine affiliation. Part of what is specifically interesting in this scene is that the queerness in Miss Kilman is dramatized through the spatialized relation she has with the commodities in the store in the same way Woolf's vexed relation to the masculine and feminine sides of her authority is dramatized through the spatial relation she has with the material space. Indeed, before Kilman enters into the store, her gait is

described as focused and “straight,” that is to say, masculine. Her plan there is similarly described as clear and straight; she intends to head directly towards the petticoat department. Almost immediately after she walks into the store, however, Miss Kilman is lost and starts to “abstract” (*Mrs. Dalloway* 311). She makes a poor choice “in her abstraction” and the serving girl thinks her mad (311). What is so markedly dramatized here is a strong connection between Kilman’s queerness and diagonal, abstract movements through a narrative equation of those movements with madness.

This strong link between queerness and diagonality is further evidenced, a paragraph later, when Miss Kilman is eyeing a pink cake a child next to her is eating (311):

Elizabeth rather wondered whether Miss Kilman could be hungry. It was her way of eating, eating with intensity, then looking, again and again, at a plate of sugared cakes on the table next them; then, when a lady and a child sat down and the child took the cake, could Miss Kilman really mind it? Yes, Miss Kilman did mind it. She had wanted that cake - the pink one. The pleasure of eating was almost the only pure pleasure left her, and then to be baffled even in that! (311)

Here, her glance is limned as neither direct nor straight, but as diagonal in desiring not her own food but the food owned by the other customer. This askew yet intense desire for the feminine food indeed embodies her uncomfortable, poignant relation to femininity. It might be of help to note here that the desire for femininity and the desire for food are also structured not as horizontal, but as diagonal, according to Lacan’s discussion of the structure of desire. Lacan argues that desire can only find sublimated, oblique expression in fantasy or fetishism, precisely because it is grounded upon a primordial absence yet committed to an endlessly futile quest for

what is lacking (*Four Fundamental* 48). Fantasies or fetishes are therefore always figured as insufficient forms of what is considered as lacking and are thus always in a diagonal, oblique relation to one another.

Miss Kilman's uneasy relationship to femininity similarly diagonalizes her relationship with Elizabeth. Earlier in the scene where Elizabeth contemplates her previous conversation with Miss Kilman, she remembers that Kilman's knowledge and experiences in society, as well as her humble background, make her "so small." That Miss Kilman's tutoring makes her feel small rather than more mature recalls something analogous to James Kincaid's trope of the child queered by "innocence." Kincaid reveals the brutality of the ideal of the innocent, arguing that "innocence and purity are purely negative inversions of adult attributes" such as "guilt, sinfulness, knowingness, experience, and so on" (10). Hidden in this version of the small or innocent child, therefore, is the grown-up's desire to project the erotic in their blank body (10). Indeed, throughout the scene, the more erotic and obsessive Miss Kilman's feelings towards Elizabeth become, the more intensely Elizabeth's feminine smallness is put in contrast with Miss Kilman's masculine large body:

Like some dumb creature who has been brought up to a gate for an unknown purpose, and stands there longing to gallop away, Elizabeth Dalloway sat silent.

Was Miss Kilman going to say anything more?

"Don't quite forget me," said Doris Kilman; her voice quivered. Right away to the end of the field the dumb creature galloped in terror.

The great hand opened and shut. Elizabeth turned her head. The waitress came.

One had to pay at the desk, Elizabeth said, and went off, drawing out, so Miss

Kilman felt, the very entrails in her body, stretching them as she crossed the room, and then, with a final twist, bowing her head very politely, she went. (*Mrs.*

*Dalloway* 314)

Here, Elizabeth's feminine smallness is compared to the smallness and vulnerability of a "dumb creature" who desires to gallop away through a "gate." Indeed, during her trip with Miss Kilman, her motions and thoughts are sharply cut short by her repeated bewilderment at Miss Kilman, which is summarized in this recurring phrase, "Elizabeth rather wondered. . . ." (311).

On the other hand, as is shown in the description of Miss Kilman's large hand above, her largeness is tightly coupled with masculinity characterized by oppressiveness and self-revealing egotism. The opening and shutting motions of her "great hand" intended to keep Elizabeth as exclusively her own specifically recalls the letter I's masculine will that Woolf critiques for making a woman behind it shapeless, small, and "without a bone" with its oppressive, self-revealing presence in *A Room of One's Own*. It also recalls Peter's earlier jealous intrusion to the most exquisite moment in Clarissa's life. In short, to borrow Elizabeth Abel's terms, Kilman's acts and will closely resemble a "revised Oedipal" complex, in which a jealous male attempts to rupture the exclusive female bond or desire, or hinder the woman's will to pave her own path to freedom and independence (32-3).

Miss Kilman's unlovable queerness that expresses itself in such misandrist terms admirably mirrors, in my view, Woolf's difficult position in terms of male literary influence and mentorship. Indeed, Woolf herself was famously insecure when it came to the critical reception of her work from her male readers and admitted her need for praise and acceptance by her literary society primarily composed of males (Sellers 110). Lee's work on Woolf reveals that the

novelist's early literary discussion with Thoby was always marked with her alternating admiration for his insight and a simultaneous anxiety over her own critical opinions (142). Later in her life, it was primarily due to her anxiety over having to send her work to outside publishers for their review that Woolf and her husband Leonard ultimately founded the Hogarth Press in 1917 (Goldman 6). Woolf is also known to have occasionally consulted with her Bloomsbury group male members, specifically with Clive Bell and her husband Leonard on the early drafts of her novels, valuing their literary mentorship while oftentimes being anxious and even furious about their critical judgments (10).

This difficult position Woolf retains with regards to male literary mentorship and tradition, in conjunction with her simultaneously vexed relation to its feminine counterpart, evidences, in my view, what I see as queer in Woolf's authority and authorship, simply put, her ceaseless authorial oscillation between masculinity and femininity. A place that summarizes this authorial vacillation in *Mrs. Dalloway* is perhaps where Miss Kilman strives to make her way out of the department store in a torment of frustrated desire after Elizabeth has left her:

She blundered off among the little tables, rocking slightly from side to side, and somebody came after her with her petticoat, and she loses her way, and is hemmed in by trunks specially prepared for taking to India. . . through all the commodities of the world, perishable and permanent, hams, drugs, flowers, stationery, various smelling, now sweet, now sour she lurches; see herself thus lurching with her hat askew." (*Mrs. Dalloway* 314)

Particularly intriguing here is the heightened link between Miss Kilman's diagonal, zigzag trajectories and her desires split between femininity and masculinity. Indeed, Kilman's

expressive, zigzag wandering amid a number of feminized commodities which lacks a clear functional purpose marks the ceaseless eruption of her desire for femininity that will never be entirely fulfilled. At the same time, however, it is also telling that here Kilman stumbles into “trunks” meant for India. Repeatedly evoked in connection to Peter’s colonial mission and to his othered, hyphenated “Anglo-Indianness” vis-à-vis the English upper class as well as to Mother Nature throughout the novel, ironically inscribed in India are both the masculine ambition of the British empire and femininity in its close link to otherness and material secularity. Miss Kilman’s stumble into the trunks intended for India here, therefore, marks not only the sudden eruption of her masculinity but also her eternally split gender identity, just as Woolf’s own difficulty with her gender authority similarly expresses itself as an occasional narrative disruption that impedes her seamless portrayal of her ideal vision of authority.

Another thing worth noting about Miss Kilman’s askew relationship to Elizabeth and the store commodities is that Kilman’s queerness is quickly straightened by a heteronormative intervention, just as Clarissa’s kiss with Sally is almost immediately terminated and erected by Peter and old Joseph. Indeed, where Kilman is headed after she finds her way out of the store is noticeably the tower of Westminster Cathedral, “the habitation of God in the midst of the traffic,” that is to say, the very place that embodies paternal, masculine, heteronormative order (*Mrs. Dalloway* 315). Richard Hornsey’s telling argument about the intensity of the inter-war and post-war London reconstructionists’ desire to control urban queer behaviors is useful to understand Miss Kilman’s suddenly reversing trajectory. According to Hornsey, these reconstructionists firmly believed that urban queer behaviors were customarily attached to the forms of temporal and spatial disorder, violating the codes of spatial citizenship that adheres to the programmed

circuits of the heteronormative environment and thus disavowed alternative trajectories as a threat that needed to be quickly corrected (105). Given this cultural atmosphere with regard to urban homosexuality at the time, this narrative need for the heteronormative masculine intervention in *Mrs. Dalloway* is not entirely shocking. At the same time, there is still something strange at work here, though, in this recurring narrative retreat back to the paternal order in *Mrs. Dalloway*, something similar to Freud's death drive at work, namely, "the bodily instinct to restore an earlier state that precedes birth," which is equivalent to the return to the paternal order or legacy for Woolf (*Beyond* 45-6). Clearly then, the notorious femininity-death connection established and reinforced over centuries by masculinists is not entirely applicable to the discussion of Woolf's authority and authorship.

However, Woolf's struggle along the gender continuum in terms of mustering up and commanding her authority is too persistent an issue to be neatly resolved with its convenient return back to the heteronormative masculine order. Miss Kilman's arduous yet failed pursuit for God in her attempt to transcend her carnal and material desires, which is so well dramatized in the following scene, is indeed a vivid embodiment of this sort of ceaseless authorial struggle:

But Miss Kilman held her tent before her face. Now she was deserted; now rejoined. New worshippers came in from the street to replace the strollers, and still, as people gazed round and shuffled past the tomb of the Unknown Warrior, still she barred her eyes with her fingers and tried in this double darkness, for the light in the Abbey was bodiless, to aspire above the vanities, the desires, the commodities, to rid herself both of hatred and of love. Her hands twitched. She

seemed to struggle. Yet to others God was accessible and the path to Him smooth.

*(Mrs. Dalloway 315)*

Particularly interesting here are Miss Kilman's antithetical desires that express themselves as a spatial clash between verticality and laterality. While she "[aspires] above the vanities, the desires, the commodities," for instance, her hands are described as laterally twitching as if revealing a difficulty to do so. Likewise, the short coupled sentences "Now she was deserted" and "now rejoined" create a spatial tension with their emphasis on alternating opposing movements.

This spatialized clash between the desire for God and the desire for the bodily and material realm in Miss Kilman echoes Woolf's ceaseless oscillation along the gender continuum, her authorial struggle between paternal and maternal influences. Aside from this fierce conflict between antithetical desires, however, what is also remarkable in this scene is the much highlighted discrepancy between other people's view of Miss Kilman and her own image of herself:

Mr. Fletcher had to go. He had to pass her, and being himself neat as a new pin, could not help being a little distressed by the poor lady's disorder; her hair down; her parcel on the floor. She did not at once let him pass. But, as he stood gazing about him, at the white marbles, grey window panes, and accumulated treasures (for he was extremely proud of the Abbey), her largeness, robustness, and power as she sat there shifting her knees from time to time (it was so rough the approach to her God—so tough her desires) impressed him, as they had impressed Mrs.

Dalloway (she could not get the thought of her out of her mind that afternoon), the Rev. Whittaker, and Elizabeth too. (315)

Indeed, in contrast with Miss Kilman, who views herself as “ugly” and “clumsy” and tries to transcend the bodily and material realm, shielding her gaze in the “tent” of her hands, Mr. Fletcher, along with a handful of others, notices precisely her “largeness, robustness and power.” What is also visible here is that just as the conflict between Miss Kilman’s desire for God and her antithetical desire for the bodily and material realm manifests itself as a spatial clash between verticality and laterality, this discrepancy between others’ image of her and her own sense of herself similarly finds its way out as a tension between the main narrative that depicts her favorably and the parenthesized comment that reads, “it was so rough. . . so tough her desires.”

This discrepancy between Miss Kilman’s self-image as ugly and clumsy and other people’s contradictory assessment of her as robust and powerful immediately calls up the earlier scene in which Kilman sees herself as if in a mirror as she tries to find her way out of the department store when Elizabeth has left her: she “[saw] herself thus lurching with her hat askew” (314). Indeed, both the scenes, representative of her self-hatred or lack of self-belief, indicate Miss Kilman’s sense of herself as divided by her own glance, which stunningly mirrors Woolf’s own sense of her authority as split and insecure and her need for affirmation and praise in her creative process. What is also intriguing here is that the last words that send Miss Kilman off from the scene are tellingly “Rev. Edward Whittaker and Elizabeth too,” a strange pair whose constituent parts represent, for her, an antithetical, irreconcilable desire – the desire for God, masculine, transcendental, and impersonal on one hand and the desire for the profane and feminine on the other. This split state characteristic of Miss Kilman is perhaps the most dramatic

epitome of Woolf's comment on her own writerly authority as essentially vacillating along the gender continuum, between her desire for feminine affiliation and her inextricable need for masculine mentorship and influence, between her desire to explore the masculine, public realm and her simultaneous desire to withdraw from it. It is precisely for this reason that I see Woolf's authority as queer.

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In my previous discussion of Eliot's authority and authorship, I claimed that the ubiquitous presence of "the ladies down there" in his earlier poems up until *The Waste Land* and "the ladies up there" in his correspondingly later poems are simply the two faces of a same coin, that these seemingly antithetical women figures that pervade his work are just manifest embodiments of his desire for the same-sex body and subjectivity, a desire, in fact, to construct an exclusively homosocial literary genealogy within his own work. Intriguingly, something similar is fervently at work in Woolf's oeuvre. Her affirmation of the spaces strictly bifurcated between masculinity and femininity, both symbolic and material, and her simultaneous disavowal of those gendered realms in search for an androgynous creative realm are in effect placeholders for her vexed relation to masculinity and femininity. Indeed, although *Mrs. Dalloway* is structured to ultimately affirm the strictly gendered spaces, there clearly exist constantly surfacing queer irregularities and disorder that nonetheless transgress the spatial logics of the heteronormative order. The famously quoted scene, for instance, in which Elizabeth takes an omnibus tour to the yet unexplored city space of the Strand after her walk with Miss

Kilman ends not in the heart of the City of London, but with her getting on the bus back home. At the same time, however, it is through Elizabeth's trajectories that cover many of London's public spaces that Woolf explores a possibility for androgynous creativity. The final part of this chapter thus briefly lingers on Elizabeth's bus travel to see how Woolf's imagining of androgynous creativity is ultimately an impossible work, precisely because of the repeatedly surfacing struggle with masculinity and femininity.

Whereas Elizabeth's walk with Miss Kilman is described in symptomatic terms that evoke claustrophobia, her bus travel, albeit mixed with anxiety and pleasure, is generally depicted as breaking her free like a "pioneer, a stray." That Woolf attempts to envision through Elizabeth a model of the next generation of women authors in this scene is clear. Just as Woolf's fictional figure Mary Carmichael is mindless of public gaze, Elizabeth is mindless of the people praising her beauty. Just like Mary Carmichael attempts to explore a yet untrodden path for women authors, Elizabeth seeks to explore a masculine realm yet unknown to her. What is the most prominently visible in her travel scene, though, is, in my view, the sensuousness enacted by the inexplicably queer unification of the feminine human body and masculine machine body:

The impetuous creature. . . started forward, sprang away; she had to hold the rail to steady herself, for a pirate it was, reckless, unscrupulous, bearing down ruthlessly, circumventing dangerously, boldly snatching a passenger, or ignoring a passenger, squeezing eel-like and arrogant in between, and then rushing insolently all sails spread up Whitehall. . . She was delighted to be free. The fresh air was so delicious. It had been so stuffy in the Army and Navy Stores. And now it was like riding, to be rushing up Whitehall; and to each movement of the omnibus the

beautiful body in the fawn— coloured coat responded freely like a rider, like the figure-head of a ship, for the breeze slightly disarrayed her; the heat gave her cheeks the pallor of white painted wood; and her fine eyes, having no eyes to meet, gazed ahead, blank, bright, with the staring incredible innocence of sculpture. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 316-7)

Thacker argues that it is precisely at this point in this bus travel scene that Elizabeth's delight in her travel into the various city spaces extends into a more sensuous realm, where body and technology are united (169). Building upon Thacker's keen analysis of this scene, in my view, the sexualized interaction between the bus and Elizabeth indeed evokes something similar to what Halberstam terms the technotopic body, a body situated in an immediate and visceral relation to the technologies that have marked, changed, imprinted, and reconstructed it, in ways conducive to make new fleshly production possible (116-7). In her discussion of the similarity between the technological and artistic transgender experimentations with human tissues, experimentations intentionally designed to effect a flawed balance between maleness and femaleness, Halberstam argues that in producing spare body parts with no practical use, both the surgeons and artists eschew the logic of the perfectible body offering instead the body as a mutant form (113).

Halberstam's argumentation of the "technotopic body" is apt to understanding the queer elements inscribed in Elizabeth's bus travel. The bus evidently represents masculinity both in its association with technology and its impetus and bold motions. In a certain sense, Elizabeth's feminine motion of holding its rail to steady herself signifies her incongruity to the machine, just as the transplanted female organ is hyper-unnatural and excessive to the male body as

Halberstam maintains. At the same time, however, in its capacity to house and dislodge passengers with heterogeneous impulses, not only does the bus remap its body as fluid and hybrid but also charges its passengers with different erotic bodily potential. Indeed, unlike the customary male gaze and Miss Kilman's palatal desire I have examined earlier, Elizabeth's pleasure is less dependent upon visual or palatal experience, but more upon tactile sensation, which echoes the near tactile orgasmic pleasure Clarissa feels through her friendship with women. With regard to the sort of experience that technology and the human body can yield together, Leena Schroder pertinently argues that in the sense that sitting in a moving car is "at once to be passive in, and actively propellant of, space and time," it is an experience with apraxia that allows its passengers to practice both feminine and masculine bodies/subjectivities (135).

This sort of queer condition Woolf envisions in Elizabeth's omnibus travel scene, in my view, signals Woolf's attempt to construct and pursue androgynous authority amid her lifelong struggle with masculinity and femininity, with the male tradition of writing and its female counterpart. Indeed, Woolf evidently claims both masculinity and femininity as necessary for an androgynous mind. In *A Room of One's Own*, she argues, for instance, that to be androgynously creative is to consciously inhabit one's own moment-to-moment amalgam of masculinity and femininity:

And I went on amateurishly to sketch a plan of the soul so that in each of us two powers preside, one male, one female; and in the man's brain, the man predominates over the woman, and in the woman's brain, the woman predominates over the man. The normal and comfortable state of being is that when the two live in harmony together, spiritually co-operating. If one is a man,

still the woman part of the brain must have effect; and a woman also must have intercourse with the man in her. Coleridge perhaps meant this when he said that a great mind is androgynous. It is when this fusion takes place that the mind is fully fertilised and uses all its faculties. (*A Room* 128)

However, what is notable in the quotes above is that Woolf's imagining of such mind is suggested through her spatial metaphors of a male body with a female brain or of vice versa. Indeed, evoking something like Halberstam's "technotopic body," whose disparate body parts resist looking either perfect or permanently natural, this spatialized model of an androgynous mind in fact inevitably reveals a flawed balance between masculinity and femininity. The author's attempt to construct androgynous authority with harmonious coexistence of maleness and femaleness becomes more notably visible and fierce in her next novel *Orlando*, but as I will argue in Chapter 6, it still productively fails, precisely because of her authorial struggle that ceaselessly oscillates across the gender continuum.

## Chapter 6

### **Failing Search for an Androgynous Authority in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*: Queer Space, Androgyny, and Questions of Race**

In the previous chapter on Woolf, I examined how the novelist's authorial wavering along the gender continuum comes across as the similar pendular trajectories across the gendered city spaces of London in *Mrs. Dalloway*. As I have argued, Woolf's desire for feminine affiliation and a female tradition of writing in opposition to the oppressive, male-centered literary climate of early twentieth-century England was strong. Yet, at the same time, this desire was ceaselessly contested with an antithetical desire for matricide and a male tradition of writing within her psyche. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, this see-sawing authorial conflict in Woolf, this queer doubleness somewhat akin to the longing-disavowal mechanism operative in Yeats largely manifests itself either as a spatial clash between strictly gendered realms or as a desire to tear them down altogether. It was precisely for this constant authorial and textual vacillation between masculinity and femininity that I read Woolf's authority and authorship as queer and her attempt to construct an androgynous authority with a perfect symmetry between maleness and femaleness throughout the novel as ultimately a failure.

In this chapter, I will show how the author's more intensified, almost agonizingly fierce desire to break fresh ground for women writers fueled her to imagine an androgynous authority in *Orlando: A Biography* and how that project can still be viewed as a failure. *Orlando* is a kind of bildungsroman, where an English nobleman named Orlando becomes a successful

androgynous poet after a sex change and after hundreds of years of literary and heroic contacts with people of different races, genders, and classes. Although seemingly effective in terms of envisioning her idea of an androgynous authority, this strategy, in my view, is also unsuccessful for the following reasons. First, Orlando's unending struggle with masculinity and femininity reveals his (her) gender identity as permanently split. Second, like *Mrs. Dalloway*, the novel itself is strangely structured to affirm the heteronormative, masculine order. Last but not least, as I will further discuss later in detail, that Orlando's androgyneity requires race as its grounding inextricably creates and strengthens the links between racial alterity and femininity and between heteronormative Englishness and masculinity, rather than envisioning a wholly androgynous subjectivity. Put simply, Woolf's version of androgyneity is located in the very unlocatable space where such contradicting elements as masculinity/femininity and Englishness/otherness are in constant conflict and negotiation with each other.

Together with *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Orlando* is indeed an apt place to see literary manifestations of Woolf's ongoing struggle with masculinity and femininity. It is worth briefly comparing here Woolf's gendered literary performance with those performed by Eliot and Yeats. As I argued previously, Eliot struggled throughout his life to separate his inherently bawdy, scintillatingly queer private persona from its impersonal, public, masculine counterpart. For Yeats, feigning a masculine authority was a lifelong issue to mask the poet's inherently feminine voice. In the case of Woolf, although the novelist struggled with masculinity and femininity throughout her lifetime like the aforementioned male authors, her visible attempt to resolve the issue through an exploration of androgynous authority was focused during the relatively short

period between 1925 and 1929, culminating in 1928 with the publication of *Orlando*<sup>24</sup>. Indeed, closely resembling the author in her own desire for a suppler literary climate than that offered by patriarchal, heteronormative masculine England, the title character Orlando traverses across different times, spaces, and sexes in search for a more malleable literary form and language to express himself as an aspiring novelist. Born an Elizabethan, he lives through the Jacobean period, the Enlightenment, the Nineteenth Century, and into the Twentieth. Not only does he wander back and forth from England to Turkey but also oscillates from low to high classes and from male to female identities.

In my view, part of what stands out most in *Orlando*, though, is the fact that Woolf's vexed relation to masculinity and femininity finds its way out in racial terms and through the investment in racial issues. Indeed, as many Woolf critics have noted, race and empire are major themes that revolve around gender in Woolf's oeuvre. In "Race, Empire, and Ireland," Anna Snaith argues that from *Voyage Out* and *Orlando* to *The Years* and *The Pargiters* and from *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*, Woolf's oeuvre explores the links between the drive to control women and colonial subjects through the focus on the material culture of empire, as well as the construction of Englishness around the notions of cultural superiority and conquest (207). Snaith's most daunting examples come from her analysis of *Three Guineas*, *The Years*, and *The Pargiters*, where she argues the author explores a possibility for women to remain outside such

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<sup>24</sup> Woolf's explicit exploration of androgynous creativity began to take shape in 1915 with the publication of *Mrs. Dalloway* and visibly ended with the publication of *A Room of One's Own* in 1929, which was composed upon a series of lectures she delivered at Newnham and Girton Colleges at Cambridge University in 1928. *Orlando* was published in between these two works.

oppressive paradigmatic systems as patriotism, imperialism, and sexism fostered in the bourgeois home, the public school, and the professions (207-9).

In theorizing the intersection between race/empire and gender in Woolf, Snaith is not alone. After thoroughly tracing anonymous Indians in *The Waves*, Peter Walsh's "dark, adorably pretty" Anglo-Indian lover Daisy in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Lily Briscoe's little Chinese eyes in *The Lighthouse*, and Turkish Gypsies in *Orlando*, Urmila Seshagiri, in her book-length study entitled *Race and the Modernist Imagination*, contends that Woolf draws on race to bridge her political interests and her aesthetic goals. Through her investment in race, Seshagiri pertinently notes, Woolf achieves sexual and social liberation for herself as a woman writer (147). Seshagiri's argumentation with regard to the connection between the recurring racial tropes in Woolf's work and her authority and authorship is in line with Abby Bardi's exploration of the gypsy trope as a symbol of liberation in her article "'In Company of a Gipsy': The 'Gypsy' as Trope in Woolf and Brontë." Like Seshagiri, Bardi maintains that Woolf's representation of the Gypsies as exotics who exist outside of the parameters of European culture offers Orlando a respite from the confines of both aristocratic society and gender and an opportunity to explore his (her) artistic self (42).

Snaith's, Seshagiri's, and Bardi's argumentation that Woolf draws upon race to explore her artistic self as a woman writer as well as gender and sexual issues provides a useful framework in investigating Orlando's oscillating trajectories across different racial and gendered realms in this chapter. Indeed, what is specifically intriguing about *Orlando*, in my view, is the fact that the author's ongoing struggle with masculinity and femininity comes across as a spatialized tension between the primitive feminine other and civilized heteronormative

Englishness. For instance, Orlando's fruitless yet constant attempts at articulating in English the initially desired otherness of his lover Sasha, a Russian princess who visits the court of King James I, and her resistance to be contained in Orlando's native language express themselves as a spatial conflict between their original languages and between masculine Englishness and primitive, feminine Russian otherness. Another place in the novel in which this sort of authorial struggle with masculinity and femininity explicitly manifests itself as a spatial collision between racial realms is where, after a sex change, Orlando contrasts in gendered terms the English landscape as an idealized masculine space, and its Turkish counterpart as a feminine and primitive space,<sup>25</sup> which is strongly coveted in the first place. In short, in my view, the version of androgynicity imagined in *Orlando* requires race as its grounding.

In reading Woolf's attempt at constructing a purely androgynous subjectivity as a failure due to her constant wavering between racialized masculine and feminine realms, the postcolonialist critiques of the Eurocentric masculinist production of the gendered subject-object binaries come in handy, in conjunction with the notions of queer space and spatiality developed by prominent theorists such as Sedgwick, Halberstam, De Certeau, and Betsky that I have introduced in the preceding chapter. In "The Politics of Translation," Gayatri Spivak, for

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<sup>25</sup> As I argued in my chapters on Yeats, for modernist authors, "the familiar tropes for primitives, whether global, historical, social, personal or psychological, become the tropes conventionally used for women" (Torgovnick 17-21). In Eliot, the tropes conveniently associated with femininity include not only secularized temporality but also a secularized primitive trope. In Conrad and in Yeats, there are plenty of axiomatic identifications of primitive landscape with the female body. The same set of associations is also prevalent in Freud, given that the mother's body is seen as the locus of a primitive lack of the infant's sense of self that must be suppressed for maturation whereas the law of the father is almost always coupled with civilization and modern city-state (Torgovnick 205-75).

instance, urges the first-world feminist to somewhat erotically surrender to the third-world text by learning their language, arguing that what seems resistant in the space of English may be reactionary in the space of the original language, and that the notion of gendering developed by the Eurocentric feminists who internalize sexism as normality may thus be totally meaningless in the third-world setting (186-8). Her theorization of translation as an erotic act rather than an ethical one opens up a space in which Orlando's vexed subject position vis-à-vis the gendered cultural other and his or her erotic gesture to embrace it are brought into performative tension in their spatialized embodiment.

Additionally, Bhabha's thoughtful attention to the conflict between the pedagogical and the performative central to his concept of the nation is quite valuable in unpacking Woolf's strongly sought-after androgynous realm in *Orlando* as ultimately unreachable. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha imagines the "nation" as a "narrative construction" that emerges from the fierce tension between the pedagogical – a process of identity constituted by historical sedimentation – and the performative – the loss of identity in the signifying process of cultural identification (153). The pedagogical thus relates to the linear, sufficient, and complete master narrative and the performative, the supplementary, temporal minor one. Although Bhabha's theorization of "nations" here is intended to question the Eurocentric notion of the people and the nation, his focus on the contingent and unruly time and space, a temporality or a space of splitting, ambivalence, and vacillation in his exploration of the nation-space serves as an efficient vehicle to investigate how the version of androgynous authority created by Woolf closely mirrors Orlando's hybrid gender identity that can be aptly summarized as queer in their eternal vacillations along the gender continuum. Indeed, just as nationhood is a narrative construction

that emerges in the contest of narrative authority between the pedagogical and the performative, what Woolf imagines as androgynous authority and Orlando's hybrid gender identity is a cultural construction that emerges from the productive collision between the pedagogical and the performative (148).

This idea that like nations (nationhood), gender is a cultural construction is in fact echoed by Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble*. Indeed, in revealing Woolf's project of constructing androgynous subjectivity as a failure, Butler's concept of "gender performativity" is enormously useful. Just as Bhabha positions the nation in the space between the pedagogical and the performative, Butler similarly theorizes gender as produced and instituted in the space where normalized and subversive repetitions are in fierce confrontation with each other (24-5). In my view, it is precisely due to the presence of this space, a space imagined by Bhabha as "split between the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative" or a space imagined by Butler as cracked open between normalized and subversive repetitions, that Woolf's experiment with an androgynous authority through her investment in Orlando is failing (145). Indeed, the harder Woolf grapples with Orlando's gender identity in her search for a more complete androgynous form, the more her task exposes its own limitations because of this ceaselessly emerging space eternally split between the pedagogical and the performative and between normalized and subversive repetitions.

Aside from the theoretical formulations configured by these theorists, the recent critical works on the connection between the issue of space/spatiality and modernist authority and authorship will be of much use in analyzing how Orlando's space travel back and forth closely resembles Woolf's authority that requires both masculinity and femininity in their racialized

embodiments for its proper functioning. Caren Kaplan's influential work entitled *Questions of Travel* specifically explores the intersection between travel/displacement and modernist aestheticism and elitism. In Kaplan's formulation, travel was deemed amongst modernist authors as a privileged aesthetic voyage – a way for them to distance themselves from crass commercialism and to find fresh subjects, affordable living, and a location of sufficient strangeness (otherness) to encourage concentration through isolation and a way to reconfirm that their own nation had every attribute they had been taught to admire in other cultures (42-48). Given that Orlando is depicted as an aspiring artist in exile, whose eventual homecoming affirms heteronormative masculine Englishness in a larger sense, Kaplan's construction of travel can offer a nuanced tool for identifying the longing-disavowal mechanism operative in the novelist's psyche with regard to the feminized, othered and masculinized English realms.

In what follows, I will read how Woolf's authorial performance closely resembles Orlando's constant oscillation across masculine and feminine realms and his or her androgyny that requires racial otherness as its prerequisite. Indeed, Woolf's authorial struggle with masculinity and femininity strongly mirrors the strange longing-disavowal mechanism operative in Orlando's psyche where his (her) longing for different languages, landscapes, and racial elements is at fierce war with his (her) own internalized heteronormative masculine Englishness. Needless to say, the androgynous trope Orlando in the novel was intended by Woolf as a means by which to authorize her work and herself as an aspiring woman writer. As I will discuss later in detail in this chapter, however, her project of establishing an androgynous subjectivity is failing precisely because, to paraphrase Bhabha's terms, it is, like other identities, also a cultural

construction that emerges in the very unlocatable space where normalized and subversive repetitions are productively in constant renegotiation with each other.

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In theorizing the way in which Woolf's struggle with her authority along the gender continuum resembles Orlando's queer trajectories across gendered, racialized spaces in *Orlando*, it may be useful to examine first the critical debates about the novel's genre. Although officially classified as a novel, *Orlando* is considered "the longest and most charming love letter in literature" (*The Diary III* 131). Dedicated to Woolf's close friend and lover, the aristocratic poet and novelist Vita Sackville-West, *Orlando* was initially inspired by the tumultuous family history of Sackville-West who at the start of the book is a young nobleman and aspiring poet of the Elizabethan period and by the close, after a few hundred years of heroic adventures and contacts with various cultures and races as well as key literary figures in English history, is married, and a successful woman poet. The novel can thus be also viewed as modeled upon the narrative tradition of Empire building and English travel writing (Seshagiri 168). Indeed, most of the exotic landscape of the East dramatized in the novel comes from Vita's travel stories with her husband Harold Nicolson, an English diplomat who worked for the British Empire. As the full title of the novel *Orlando: A Biography* demonstrates, however, Woolf intends it to be a mock biography as well; it is arguably her most amusing depiction of a history of English literature in

satiric form. Also considered one of the in-depth studies of the psychology of the androgyne,<sup>26</sup> *Orlando* has sparked rich conversations among scholars of gender and transgender studies as well as among feminist critics.

*Orlando*'s ambivalent status in terms of genre that teeters between "the granite and rainbow," to borrow Woolf's own expression, is, in my view, one of the literary manifestations of what I see as queer in Woolf's authority and authorship. Indeed, while Woolf wished to celebrate Vita through Orlando's androgyny, she also needed to mask her homoerotic desire; Woolf was highly concerned that too much implication of sapphism in *Orlando* would lead to the same unfortunate path as Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* had trodden, which was under obscenity trial around the same time she was composing *Orlando*. Such a concern over the genre of the novel repetitively surfaces in the author's private notes: "I am writing Orlando half in a mock style very clear & plain, so that people will understand every word. But the balance between truth & fantasy must be careful" (*The Diary III* 162). A letter written to Vita also reveals Woolf as burdened with a concern for Vita's permission, as the public narrativization of Vita as an androgyne would mean that the homoerotically-charged relationship they had in private would come to light: "Suppose, I say, that Sibyl next October says 'Theres Virginia gone and written a book about Vita' and Ozzie [Dickinson] chaws with his great chaps and Byard [of Heinemann] guffaws, Shall you mind? Say yes, or No" (*The Letters III* 429).

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<sup>26</sup> Responding to radically changing gender roles and the literary marketplace, many male and female modernist authors were attracted to the notion of a third-sexed, or androgyne imagination in their search for new inspiration and empowerment. The term androgyne refers to the almost hermaphroditic nature of the concept of androgyny in modernist usage, which was developed by the scholars of modern sexology and psychoanalysis (Rado 12). It is widely known that Woolf read their texts extensively to construct the figure of Orlando.

Indeed, as is the case with Eliot, whose homoerotically-charged voice is only allowed to find its way out through the form of a letter privately written to his close male friends, whereas his masculine, impersonal, and intellectual voice is what the poet intends to be the dominant tone of his public poetry, Woolf's play with *Orlando*'s genre is also closely wedded to a play with gender. It is worth noting that tellingly, the terms "gender" and "genre" are traced back to the same Latin word "genus" in their etymology, which means "kind," "type," or "sort." Sam Slote's analysis of genre as a gendered mask in his keen reading of Aristotle's *Poetics* further reveals the close link between genre and gender. According to Slote, in the Greek era, a poet was encouraged to select a specific genre most suitable to his own nature; a poet was believed to write a comedy in accordance with his witty nature whereas a writer with a gloomy personality was believed to be a poet of a tragedy (30). From then on, genre has been thought of as a mask that an artist wears for his performance. Precisely because it is a mask, however, a need-based choice by the artist has been always possible (30-1). Specifically in terms of performing arts, since women artists were rarely in existence, a male artist with a more feminine trait was likely to assume a female persona as needed.

Along with the same etymology shared by the terms genre and gender, Slote's argumentation that genre can be deployed as a sort of a gendered theatrical mask, in my view, constructs Woolf's play with *Orlando*'s genre and her queer experimentation along the gender continuum in and out of the novel as related. Indeed, Woolf's desire to publicize her memorialization of Vita in the form of a novel or of a mock biography and her antithetical desire to keep their shared homoerotic moment private were, as I mentioned previously, synchronously emerging. Also, her desire to express her love for Vita openly in *Orlando* in resistance to

heteronormative literary practice and patriarchal censorship, and her simultaneous anxiety over being mocked by masculinist, heteronormative readers by doing so are all entangled with her play with *Orlando*'s genre. Indeed, one of her diary entries reveals that, being anxious about being attacked for sapphic elements in the novel, Woolf deprecates *Orlando* as a "joke," as "not important among [her] work" (*The Diary III* 184-5).

These sorts of double attitudes towards her gender performance are echoed in the opening scene in the novel, in which young Orlando is caught in "the act of slicing at the head of a Moor which swung from the rafters" (*Orlando* 11):

He – for there could be no doubt of his sex, though the fashion of the time did something to disguise it – was in the act of slicing at the head of a Moor which swung from the rafters. It was the colour of an old football, and more or less the shape of one, save for the sunken cheeks and a strand or two of coarse, dry hair, like the hair on a cocoanut. Orlando's father, or perhaps his grandfather, had struck it from the shoulders of a vast Pagan who had started up under the moon in the barbarian fields of Africa; and now it swung, gently, perpetually, in the breeze which never ceased blowing through the attic rooms of the gigantic house of the lord who had slain him. . . . But since he was sixteen only, and too young to ride with them in Africa or France, he would steal away from his mother and the peacocks in the garden and go to his attic room and there lunge and plunge and slice the air with his blade. Sometimes he cut the cord so that the skull bumped on the floor and he had to string it up again, fastening it with some chivalry almost

out of reach so that his enemy grinned at him through shrunk, black lips triumphantly. The skull swung to and fro. (11-2)

Orlando, in this act of slicing the Moor's head, seems to embody the vigorous, manly, and colonial impulse and masculine chivalry of the Elizabethan period. A close look into the quoted passage above reveals, however, an anxiety of masculinity which is symptomatic of an effeminate colonial subject. Indeed, despite his outspokenly histrionic masculine gesture, Orlando's femininity is facilely identifiable with his attire in which "the fashion of the time" makes it impossible to tell his maleness.

In a certain sense, Orlando's play with the already dead Moor's skull even after it is reduced to little more than "an old football" also betrays him as permanently split between a desire for paternal heroism and a desire for the maternal. The "Fort/Da (forth/here) game" that Freud utilizes as a way to theorize what he terms as "the death drive" in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* offers an insight to understand this spectacle of the Moor's repeated demise at the hands of England's young heir. In that essay, Freud elaborates the game played by his eighteen-month old grandson, who would stage and re-stage the distressing disappearance of his mother and even himself (13-4). Although viewed as a way of working out the child's anxiety about his mother's absence, of preparing the child into the symbolic masculine order in Freud's framework, this game nonetheless also makes visible an urge to reenact the mother in its cyclic repetition, or what Julia Kristeva terms as the infantile feminine oceanic state (278). Put simply, the game itself reveals the child divided between a desire for the masculine and a desire for the feminine.

Orlando, in his repeated enactment of this fake slaughter, reveals himself similarly divided between double desires for the masculine and the feminine. On one hand, it is a rite of

passage into masculinity. On the other, his making the Moor's head rise again and again demonstrates his deep-seated urge for precisely what he wants to suppress – his inherent femininity. It is also worth noting that the “Fort/Da game” emerges as Freud theorizes what he terms “the death drive.” Observing that the child's repeated restaging of the mother's disappearance gestures to an urge to reenact the mother, Freud names it a death drive, an urge in organic life to restore an earlier state of things – the inorganic state from which life originally emerged (13-4). In Freudian configuration, therefore, a desire for the maternal is closely linked to the death drive and a desire for the paternal, the life drive. Indeed, in the passage above, aside from Orlando's oscillation between masculinity and femininity, an element also noticeably visible is an emboldened connection between the maternal (femininity) and death. Orlando is depicted as having to “[steal] away from his mother and the peacocks in the garden and go to his attic room” in order to perform his slaughter ritual “with his blade.” In figuring the mother and the garden as some certain state from which to escape to fulfill the masculine ideal, the passage above strikingly repeats the Freudian gender dualism where the mother is always already lost or dead whereas the law of the father is figured as a drive of life that a child must pursue for its proper maturation. In other words, the same uncomfortable link between femininity and death seen in Eliot and Yeats is noticeable in Woolf's seventeenth-century male Orlando.

Perhaps, an even more disturbing element in this scene, though, is the way Orlando's struggle with femininity and masculinity flirts with a vexed colonial desire for and repulsion towards the primitive. Indeed, bearing in mind Torgovnick's remark that those familiar tropes for primitives such as African masks, gypsies, wild landscape, and black bodies are in fact tropes used for women in Modernism, described as “gently” swinging “to and fro,” the Moor's head is

immediately coupled with the feminine in its resemblance to a supple, woman-like movement (17-21). Indeed, Orlando's repeated act of slicing and tying the skull back up can not only be seen as a way to deal with his masculine anxiety but also as an embodiment of anxiety at the heart of the colonial enterprise itself, given that no matter how hard Orlando tries to subdue the Moor, it always rises again to be slain in the next moment. In either case, the Moor's head represents what he himself considers as an impure element within himself – femininity and primitivity. Of course, this appropriation of the Moor's head undeniably questions the very terms that valorize Orlando's colonial impulse as a masculine national ideal and functions as a tool to endow the otherwise monotonous narrative of Orlando's gender performance with a subversive force rich with heterogeneous meanings. Nonetheless, drawing upon race for the purpose of accomplishing the author's own artistic goal to construct Orlando's androgyny evidently creates an uncomfortable link between racial alterity and femininity.

Contrary to public belief, Woolf's interest in the issues other than gender and the world outside the West was immense and her exposure to the cultural discourses on race was wide-ranging. While Woolf's great-grandfather James Stephen was an abolitionist in the West Indies, her grandfather Sir James Stephen was a founding member of Queen Victoria's empire (Lee 58). Although not directly involved in the colonial mission, her father Leslie Stephen also demonstrated his zealous devotion to the ideals and bureaucracy of the burgeoning British Empire by completing the first version of *Dictionary of National Biography*, where he memorializes empire builders (Lee 9). Undoubtedly, this colonial mission was carried over into Woolf's own generation, many of whom ardently served for the Empire as overseas missionaries and colony administrators. Under such familial influence, Woolf herself was also passionate in

crossing geographical and intellectual boundaries alike, sojourning to Portugal, Spain, Turkey, and Greece as a literary critic, social activist, and independent thinker.

These experiences with the cultural and racial other undeniably compel Woolf to question in *Three Guineas*, her most famous book-length political essay published a decade after *Orlando*, what she saw as the inevitably oppressive results of the overseas conquest that is often likened to masculinist, patriarchal gender oppression. Contrary to her critical stance towards the twin problems of imperialism and patriarchy, however, Woolf seems to have been permanently split between the two gestures – a desire to resist the oppressive masculinist structures of the British Empire on one hand and a totalizing and generalizing gesture in delineating the racial, cultural other from the very perspective she herself internalized as a citizen of that Empire on the other. Indeed, Woolf’s mixed views of the racial other ceaselessly surface from her earlier work. Her Constantinople travel journals which were composed during her visit to the city in 1906, for instance, betray a marked uneasiness about the city and its inhabitants, an uneasiness that in effect fuelled her contemporary male writers to produce either “an idealized version of the primitive trope as a pre-capitalist romantic” or a secularized version in which the same trope is immediately wedded to sexual availability, promiscuity, and criminality (Torgovnick 9-10):

You also realized that life was not lived after the European pattern, that it was not even a debased copy of Paris or Berlin or London, & that, you thought was the ambition of towns which could not actually be Paris or any of those inner capitals. As the lights came out in clusters all over the land, & the water was busy with lamps, you knew yourself to be the spectator of a vigorous drama, acting itself out

with no thought or need of certain great countries & something ignominious – for an English lady at her bedroom window. (*Passionate Apprentice* 348)

Woolf's expected audience addressed as "You" here refers to the populations she considers normative and empowered – European, white, literate, of or above the middle class. As Torgovnick pertinently suggests in her discussion of the Western anthropologists' classifying desire, the "we" in Woolf's rhetoric indeed denotes the "we" that imagines a primitive "them" and a civilized "we" that often overlaps with her conceived audience, which is figured here as "an English lady." This division between the East and the West or between the primitive other and civilized "we" stunningly comes across, almost two decades later in *A Room of One's Own* as a division between her European female authors and audience and the black and "coffee-colored inhabitants" "swarming" out there in the British colonies, when Woolf speculates upon the ideal androgynous creativity for upcoming generations (147).

In my view, part of what makes Woolf's furthered attempt to construct an androgynous creative mind in *Orlando* a failure is this ceaseless reliance upon a racial dichotomy, where Englishness is instantly coupled with masculinity whereas racial otherness, with femininity. In other words, as the previously mentioned Woolf scholars Snaith, Seshagiri, and Bardi pertinently and unanimously argue, Woolf deploys tropes of racial otherness here as a means to provide *Orlando* with an artistic freedom and to explore women writers' subjectivity. However, this strategy unwittingly exploits the Moor's skull as a conduit through which to link between femininity and primitivity and between masculinity and imperial, more civilized Englishness. Along with this polarized racialization of masculine and feminine realms, also strikingly visible in the above scene is the fact that the tension between these racialized gender realms materializes

itself as a spatial clash between straightness and pendulum motions. Either horizontal or vertical, the act of striking the Moor's head from his shoulders and tying it back up again indeed illustrates a characteristic masculine straightness or straightforwardness whereas, in tandem with the Moor's triumphant grin that refuses to go away, his "perpetually" swinging head embodies subversive femininity, femininity that resists an oppressive heteronormative, masculinist will to straighten it.

It is also worth noting that the head is delineated as having been "struck from the shoulders of a vast Pagan who had started up under the moon in the barbarian fields of Africa." Depicted in relation to a time and a space that enable all kinds of illicit alliances in their embodiment of dreamlike, distant, exotic unfamiliarity, the Moor epitomizes queerness that must be dealt with somehow, being at odds with the prescribed order of respectable Christian English white male citizenship. It is indeed telling that Orlando's practice with the Moor's skull occurs in his stately mansion during the daytime, not in some uncertain illicit place at night. Also, what is tremendously interesting in the scene is the narrative focus on the whiteness and neatness of Orlando's slim "handsome body" right after its investment in the Moor: "Those who like symbols, and have a turn for the deciphering of them, might observe that though the shapely legs, the handsome body, and the well-set shoulders were all of them decorated with various tints of heraldic light, Orlando's face, as he threw the window open, was lit solely by the sun itself. . . Orlando, to look at, was cut out precisely for some such [glorious] career. The red of the cheeks was covered with peach down; the down on the lips was only a little thicker than the down on the cheeks. The lips themselves were short and slightly drawn back over teeth of an exquisite and almond whiteness" (*Orlando* 12). Undoubtedly, the emphasis on Orlando's whiteness and

neatness in the quotes is so strong in their habitual association with “light” and “sun.” Also, those adjectives employed to depict Orlando such as “shapely,” “well-set,” “cut out,” and “exquisite” demonstrate the controlledness and containedness of heteronormative Englishness, which is placed in direct opposition to the uncontrolledness and uncontainedness of the Moor’s vast unruly black body.

This intense tension between the feminized or queered primitivity and heteronormative masculine Englishness reveals, in my view, a vexed moment in Woolf’s authority and authorship where a craving for masculinity and a male tradition of writing and an antithetical desire for femininity and a female tradition of writing are in fierce confrontation with each other. Indeed, part of what is notable in Woolf’s gender performance is that the much hated masculinity elsewhere is occasionally coupled with publicity and is strongly sought after. In fact, often figured as a male ejaculative desire and a life drive, publicity itself is fetishized and racialized among many male modernist authors. As I discussed earlier, Eliot’s thirst for publicity, for instance, compels him to wear a dangerously flamboyant, homoerotically-charged bawdy persona flirting with a “black queene” whereas this same craving for fame and success fuels Yeats to address his determination to masculinize his poetic voice and to appropriate the racial other in the process, as the example of Queen of Sheba demonstrates. Although Woolf was highly sensitive about the critical reception of her work, she also desired public recognition with almost the same intensity as that exhibited by these male writers. In one of her diary entries about Lytton Strachey’s success of *Queen Victoria*, for example, Woolf probes her desire to be popular: “people should be interested & watch one’s work” (*The Diary II* 106-7). She also fears the sort of solipsistic self-enclosure that male modernist writers are arguably said to pursue for

their artistic consummation, thinking that whatever is written under such a condition will be itself valueless (Zwerdling “Coterie” 8).

In *Orlando* too, this masculine desire for publicity ceaselessly surfaces as the writer’s hunger to publish. Orlando’s Victorian period poem entitled “The Oak Tree,” for instance, expresses to its author its desire to be read by “shuffling and beating as if it were a living thing” (*Orlando* 272):

The manuscript which reposed above her heart began shuffling and beating as if it were a living thing, and, what was still odder, and showed how a fine sympathy was between them, Orlando, by inclining her head, could make out what it was that it was saying. It wanted to be read. It must be read. It would die in her bosom if it were not read. For the first time in her life she turned with violence against nature. Elkhounds and rose bushes were about her in profusion. But elkhounds and rose bushes can none of them read. . . She rang the bell. She ordered the carriage to take her to London at once. (200-1)

Part of what is remarkable in this passage includes not only the heightened link between a desire to be read and a life drive but also the way the former is suggested as diametrically in opposition to feminized “nature.” “Elkhounds and rose bushes” “in profusion” indeed evoke femininity in their embodiment of fecundity while a desire to be read is instantly coupled with masculinity in its characteristic “violence.” It is also telling that, described as a solipsistic feminized space into which Orlando retreats for seclusion whenever offended by society, Orlando’s country estate, although stately and magnificent, is suggested as being in an intense confrontation with London, a place where prominent English male writers from Donne and Shakespeare to Pope and Dryden

are ardently assembled to get their work published. The opposition between this publicity-creativity-masculine Englishness triad and a seclusion-impotency-femininity triad is even more markedly visible in the scene where the seventeenth-century poet Nick Greene decidedly returns to his bustling London home, terrified by the loss of his creativity at his delayed stay at Orlando's luxurious mansion where sumptuous food, the "softest and smoothest pillows and sheets" greet him every day, thinking that "unless he could hear the drays roar upon the cobbles of Fleet Street, he should be smothered," "he would never write another line" (45).

At the same time, however, this desire to be read and recognized by the public, which dramatizes Woolf's inclination to masculinity or male literary tradition, is also fervently contested by her simultaneous longing for feminized obscurity. Calling her desire for publicity "male vanity," Woolf indeed occasionally strives to distance herself from it. Several diary entries from the early twenties written before she considered herself a successful novelist, are revealing: "I have made up my mind that I am not going to be popular, &so genuinely that I look upon disregard or abuse as part of my bargain. . . My only interest as a writer lies, I begin to see, in some queer individuality" (*The Diary II* 168). In *Three Guineas*, the same aspiration for fame is similarly associated with a desire for male-dominant education and professions that are ultimately intended to support gender oppression, imperialism, international wars, and Fascism abroad and is thus considered as something that must be disavowed. Her desired experimental, adventurous college for future generations, where "not the [masculine] arts of dominating other people; not the arts of ruling, of killing, of acquiring land and capital" but "the arts of understanding other people's lives and mind and the little arts of talk, of dress, of cookery that

are allied with them” are taught, is indeed a dramatic embodiment of her wish for a new form of feminine authority characterized by feminine obscurity (*Three Guineas* 118-9).

In *Orlando*, this thirst for obscurity or what Woolf terms “queer individuality” as strong as a desire for masculine publicity also markedly expresses itself, specifically when Orlando, sick of public duty and English society, retreats back to his country estate and speculates under the oak tree how obscurity performs in nurturing and facilitating the peaceful, generous mind necessary for creation:

Fame is like. . . a braided coat which hampers the limbs; a jacket of silver which curbs the heart; a painted shield which covers a scarecrow. . . While fame impedes and constricts, obscurity wraps about a man like a mist; obscurity is dark, ample, and free; obscurity lets the mind take its way unimpeded. Over the obscure man is poured the merciful suffusion of darkness. None knows where he goes or comes. He alone is peaceful; he alone is truthful; he alone is at peace. So he sank into a quiet mood, under the oak tree, the hardness of whose roots, exposed above the ground, seemed to him rather comfortable than otherwise. . .the delight of having no name, but being like a wave which returns to the deep body of the sea; thinking how obscurity rids the minds of the irk of envy and spite; how it sets running in the veins the free waters of generosity and magnanimity; and allows giving and taking without thanks offered or praise given; which must have been the way of all great poets, he supposed (thought his knowledge of Greek was not enough to bear him out), for, he thought, Shakespeare must have written like that. (*Orlando* 76-7)

Although the hardness of the oak tree is undeniably a phallic symbol, the dominant imageries in the quotes are of the free-floating mist and water. Indeed, evoking the supple, calm, and embracing way in which the old lady's going-to-bed ritual stretches into Clarissa's consciousness and soothes her troubled mind in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the feminine obscurity characterized by "mist" and "wave" in the above passage is depicted as traversing in so potent, "ample," "free," and capacious ways as to foster the type of creativity demonstrated by Shakespeare. It is noteworthy how the above passage contrasts masculine fame and feminine obscurity through its focus on the spatial, tactile differences in the ways they operate. Compared to "a braided coat," "a jacket of silver," and "a painted shield" that "hamper" the body and mind, fame embodies masculine intrusiveness and penetration uncomfortable and unnatural to a mind while obscurity is described as enveloping the mind and the body with femininity's characteristic generosity and magnanimity that conflate all kinds of sensory experiences. Indeed, through the use of the free-flowing water images – images of gushing out of "the deep body of the sea" and of running "in the vein" – in depicting how obscurity is operative, a link between feminine creativity and a female body is immediately established. It is intriguing how this description of obscurity closely resembles Woolf's metaphoric perception of the womb as the source of a glib, gushing style. When Woolf comments upon Vita's prose as "too fluent," for instance, she tellingly states that "[her] writing makes my pen run. When I've read a classic, I am curbed & — not castrated, no, the opposite, I can't think of the word at the moment" (*The Diary III* 126).

Aside from the focus on the gendered difference with which fame and obscurity are at work, what is even more notable in the quoted passage above includes the colorization of obscurity. Orlando views obscurity as "dark," the color of which instantly evokes racial

otherness. Referring to the state of unknown, inconspicuous, or unimportant or a thing that is unclear or difficult to understand, “obscurity” is indeed a gendered and racial term customarily used to describe both feminine and racial otherness and their unrepresentability. It is also telling that Orlando’s self-seclusion to his country estate in his pursuit of obscurity after he gets sick of his ostentatious social life culminating in his scandal with Sasha and then of his society with Greene takes the form of consuming foreign goods. He is depicted as indulging in furnishing his estate with foreign, exotic goods from Eastern and African countries. Given the strong connection between femininity and consumption discussed earlier in the previous chapter on *Mrs. Dalloway*, the focus on the detailed list of his purchase – a lacquered cabinet from a Moor, rugs and chest from Persia, and bears from Malaysia – establishes and underpins an obscurity-femininity-racial otherness triad, directly contesting the cerebral English masculinity and publicity represented earlier by Nick Greene (*Orlando* 81).

This fierce opposition between a desire for feminized obscurity almost always coupled with racial otherness and a desire for masculinized publicity symptomatic of Englishness reveals, in my view, what I see as queer in Woolf’s authority and authorship. Indeed, what is so amusing in *Orlando* is this ceaseless emergence of this sort of queer authorial vacillation along the gender continuum which is colligated with the issue of race. Perhaps another place in which this gendered authorial oscillation is deeply entangled with the racial issue is where the Elizabethan Orlando finds himself at a loss with his double desire for his Russian lover, Sasha:

Orlando. . . beheld, coming from the pavilion of the Muscovite Embassy, a figure, which, whether boy’s or woman’s, for the loose tunic and trousers of the Russian fashion served to disguise the sex, filled him with the highest curiosity. The

person, whatever the name or sex, was about middle height, very slenderly fashioned, and dressed entirely in oyster-coloured velvet, trimmed with some unfamiliar greenish-coloured fur. But these details were obscured by the extraordinary seductiveness which issued from the whole person. Images, metaphors of the most extreme and extravagant twined and twisted in his mind. He called her a melon, a pineapple, an olive tree, an emerald, and a fox in the snow all in the space of three seconds; he did not know whether he had heard her, tasted her, seen her, or all three together . . . A melon, an emerald, a fox in the snow — so he raved, so he called her. (27-8)

The quoted passage shows that Sasha's gender ambiguity is attributed to her "loose tunic and trousers of the Russian fashion" which make it impossible to tell one's "sex," recalling Orlando's similarly androgynous attire in the opening paragraph. That is to say, it is Sasha's very Russian foreignness that endows her with a status of an androgynous muse and drives Orlando mad with an insatiable desire to possess her in his own language initially. Given that in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Clarissa's creativity is mostly aroused by the women with whom she enters into a homoerotically-charged relationship, it is not surprising that Orlando's imagination is excited by a gender ambiguity that designates racial alterity as its prerequisite. Although Sasha's racial otherness specified by her Russian attire is quickly dismissed as something less important than her "extraordinary seductiveness" in its functional aspect, a detailed focus on it in the first place clearly suggests its significance to what Orlando sees as Sasha's androgyny.

However, as is the case with other elements in the novel that eternally vacillate along the gender continuum, Sasha's androgyny that revolves around racial otherness is swiftly

straightened in order to make it sensible to the heteronormative logic, precisely because it mars the customary romance narrative structure as their affair unfolds. Indeed, the more their relationship develops, the more apparently Sasha's femininity is revealed. At the same time, the racial otherness initially attached to Sasha's androgyny as an essential component to arouse Orlando's creativity is immediately coupled with feminine seductiveness, promiscuity, and wildness, and is fervently disavowed. It is, for instance, meaningful that Orlando names Sasha after a white Russian fox he had kept as a pet, "a creature soft as snow, but with teeth of steel, which bit him so savagely that his father had it killed" (33). This practice of employing a foreign animal trope to signify female cunning and slyness has not been uncommon in male literary convention. As I mentioned earlier in my chapter on Eliot, Eliot similarly appropriates the "scampering marmoset" to highlight Grishkin's Russian otherness and her dangerous feminine seductiveness in "Whispers of Immortality."

Likewise, in *Orlando*, whenever Sasha's feminine slyness, seductiveness or infidelity are addressed, her Russian origin is irretrievably evoked together. For instance, Orlando mostly views Sasha's silence with suspicion and associates it with the sly and savage manners of Russian people, which would, in an English lady's case, undoubtedly be considered as a feminine virtue: "[T]hough she answered readily enough, an awkwardness would come between them. He suspected at first that her rank was not as high as she would like; or that she was ashamed of the savage ways of her people, for he had heard that the women in Muscovy wear beards and the men are covered with fur from the waist down; that both sexes are smeared with tallow to keep the cold out, tear meat with their fingers and live in huts where an English noble would scruple to keep his cattle" (35-6). The wild habits and landscape of Russia are even more

tellingly evoked a few paragraphs later, when Orlando thinks of the means for making Sasha “irrevocably and indissolubly his own”: “[Sasha] was determined to live in Russia, where there were frozen rivers and wild horses and men, she said, who gashed each other’s throats open. It is true that a landscape of pine and snow, habits of lust and slaughter, did not entice him. Nor was he anxious to cease his pleasant country ways of sport and tree planting” (36-7).

It is worth noting that in the first quotes, Sasha’s racial otherness functions as an indicator to her possible low class. This link between foreignness and lowly status is further emboldened elsewhere in the novel when Sasha’s indecent, seductive manners and tone with which she flirts with the “tawny wide-cheeked” Russian sailor reminds Orlando of a scene a few days before in which Sasha secretly gnawed “a candle end in a corner,” a pink candle “from the King’s table which she had picked from the floor” (38). Orlando then suspects her lowliness, thinking that there might be “something rank in her, something coarse flavoured, something peasant-born” (38). Aside from this femininity-racial alterity-lowliness triad so effortlessly established, a strikingly visible element in both quotes is the spatial positioning of Englishness vis-a-vis Russianness as its much superior masculine counterpart. Indeed, in both quotes, after the detailed depiction of the Russian customs of wearing tallow for protection regardless of gender, of eating without utensils and living in huts, of their lust and slaughter, and of their rich yet wild, untended landscape as primitive and repulsive, virtues such as civility, nobility, and sophistication that Orlando thinks of as characteristic of Englishness are so facilely evoked as their more superior and culturally decent counterparts.

This repeated narrative structure in which asymmetrical race relations are utilized to ultimately affirm the unbreakable sovereignty of heteronormative white masculine Englishness

illustrates, in my view, Woolf's authorial need for masculinity and her desire to draw upon a male tradition of writing as a means for authorizing her work. Perhaps, a place where these asymmetrical race relations are tellingly employed to affirm heteronormative masculine Englishness and, in a sense, to reveal the author's desire for male literary legacy, is where the contention between Orlando's Englishness and Sasha's Russianness and (or) between Orlando's masculinity and Sasha's femininity manifests itself as a spatial clash between two different languages. It is stated, for example, that the couple carries out their conversation in French, a language foreign to both of them, since both are unable to understand each other's native tongues. Although this seems to be a fair ground for the couple upon which to start out their relationship, the contact zone of their choice – the French language – is in fact spatially adjacent to Orlando's own England, taking into account that their conversation occurs in England where none other than Orlando speaks or understands French, not to speak of Russian. Indeed, Sasha's fluency in French helps neither to develop a favorable feeling towards English people and England in general nor to make herself readable to Orlando.

Additionally, Orlando thinks the English language as “too frank, too candid, too honeyed a speech for Sasha” (35). While this thought emerges amid his desire for “another landscape and another tongue” beyond his own, the stress on its directness, straightness, precision, and civility vis-à-vis its Russian counterpart immediately weds the English language with heteronormative masculinity. As is evidenced in the passage that immediately follows, the Russian language, on the other hand, is coupled with femininity or queerness, precisely due to its often “obscure,” “unfinished” sentence structure: “But Sasha who after all had no English blood in her but was from Russia where the sunsets are longer, the dawns less sudden, the sentences often left

unfinished from doubt as to how best to end them” (34). This is not entirely surprising, given that both racial otherness and femininity or queerness<sup>27</sup> are customarily linked to uncertainty, inaccessibility or incompleteness due to their unrepresentability and prolonged or unending immaturity from the Western heteronormative masculine perspective. Conrad’s and Picasso’s versions of African women and Eliot’s black queene all demonstrate this sort of an emboldened link between those racial and sexual others. It is needless to mention of course that here in the quotes, the focus on the similarly feminized Russian climate in its lingering, “less sudden” ways more forcefully dramatizes the Russianness’ close relation to femininity or queerness.

What is so intriguing about this closeness between the Russian language and femininity or queerness is again its metaphorical expansion to primitivity. For instance, when Orlando’s suspicion of Sasha’s alleged indecency with a Russian sailor reminds him of a scene some days earlier in which Sasha gnawed the candle tallow, the Russian language’s primitive inferiority is invariably evoked: “Yet when they were going down the ship’s side, lovingly again, Sasha paused with her hand on the ladder and called back to this tawny wide-cheeked monster a volley of Russian greetings, jests, or endearments, not a word of which Orlando could understand. But there was something in her tone (it might be the fault of the Russian consonants) that reminded Orlando of a scene some nights before, when he had come upon her in secret gnawing a candle end in a corner, which she had picked up off the floor” (38). Although it is not explicitly stated here that Sasha’s manner and tone are seductive, the performative linking through the

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<sup>27</sup> When I conflate the terms femininity and queerness, it is when their shared commonness become explicitly visible. Evidencing Bhabha’s passing remark in *The Location of Culture* that the most individuated is the most oppressed, femininity and queerness are often considered as something that needs to be transcended in the heteronormative framework (190).

parenthetical comments on “the fault of the Russian consonants” that bridges Sasha’s implied indecency (as to her flirtation with the sailor) and primitivity (in terms of gnawing the tallow) substantially establishes a Russian language-feminine seductiveness-primitivity triad. After all, exchanging lewd remarks with a sailor suggests an uncontainedness of primitive hunger or a lack of self-control so important in its contrast with the image of the stiff British upper lip.

In my view, this conflation between primitivity and femininity or queerness points to one of Woolf’s performative failures which might have resulted from the author’s undue reliance upon the racial issue in constructing an androgynous subjectivity, to pander to the cultural and literary climate of the time dominated by male authors. There is also a promising moment, however, in which, armed with its characteristic subversive power, this racialized femininity or queerness makes its way out to the main narrative and disrupts the heteronormative white masculine order. Indeed, throughout the first chapter of the novel, Orlando’s difficulty in representing Sasha’s racialized femininity ceaselessly surfaces despite his tireless attempts to possess her in English: “But at length the ice grew cold beneath them, which she disliked, so pulling him to his feet again, she talked so enchantingly, so wittily, so wisely (but unfortunately always in French, which notoriously loses its flavour in translation)” (34). Here, Sasha is depicted as so freely traversing between three systems of expression – Russian in terms of her bodily expressions, French in terms of the language she literally speaks, and finally English in terms of Orlando’s own representation – as to ultimately fail Orlando’s representation.

Sasha’s feminine, racial otherness that manifests itself as such free-floating queer motions across varied systems of expressions and refuses to be contained in the straightforward masculine English language gestures, in my view, to Woolf’s own creative struggle to construct

a new form of feminine authority. Indeed, Sasha's transgressivity ceaselessly surfaces as either complete silence that drives Orlando even madder with his desire to possess her or his repeatedly surfacing doubt that she is hiding something from him:

She was like a fox, or an olive tree, like the waves of the sea when you look down upon them from a height; like an emerald; like the sun on a green hill which is yet clouded – like nothing he had seen or known in England. Ransack the language as he might, words failed him. He wanted another landscape, and another tongue. English was too frank, too candid, too honeyed a speech for Sasha. For in all she said, however open she seemed and voluptuous, there was something hidden; in all she did, however daring, there was something concealed. (34-5)

Aside from a noticeably highlighted link between her feminine otherness and Russianness, what is particularly worthy of noting with regard to Sasha's transgressive queerness in the quoted passage is its free-floating movement through multitudinous metaphors, which refuses to stay still in one specific place, ceaselessly sliding from one position to the other and expressing itself as a rupture in the space of the English language, a language considered as straight, direct, heteronormative, and masculine.

In a sense, Sasha's free-floating queerness which is depicted as eliding the masculine, straight English language recalls Spivak's discussion of the conflict between rhetoric and logic accompanying the act of translation (333). In her essay titled "Politics of Translations," Spivak argues that "the ways in which rhetoric or figuration disrupts logic themselves point at the possibility of random contingency, beside language, around language," that "such a dissemination cannot be under our control" (333). Spivak continues, "Yet in translation, where

meaning hops into the spacy emptiness between two named historical languages, we get perilously close to it. By juggling the disruptive rhetoricity that breaks the surface in not necessarily connected ways, we feel the selvedges of the language-textile give way, fray into frayages or facilitations” (333-4). In other words, in Spivak’s formulation, it is precisely where these selvedges of the two different languages somewhat intimately and erotically touch, wearing each other down that a truly fair exchange between the self and the other becomes possible. Orlando’s desire to represent Sasha, his attempt to redirect her zigzag, free-floating traverses from metaphor to metaphor in an orderly manner closely resembles what Spivak views as logic’s relentless will to straighten out the possibility of random contingency that disruptive rhetoric or figuration of Sasha’s feminine Russian language brings about beside and around the English language. Yet, against his wish, Sasha’s transgressive otherness ceaselessly and somewhat erotically touches the heteronormative masculine English language, functioning as a spatial marker for the uncontrollable queerness that the English language itself cannot cross out entirely.

However, as if reflecting that Woolf’s desire to construct an androgynous authority is almost always followed by a simultaneously emerging desire for masculinity and a male tradition of writing, precisely because Sasha’s queer trajectories across varied languages threaten the representational stability of the English language due to their unwillingness to yield to the English language’s spatial order, they are quickly dealt with. Indeed, as already foreshadowed in an episode about Orlando’s beloved Russian white fox that his father later had to kill due to its “teeth of steel” and wild temperament, Orlando’s struggle with Sasha’s inaccessibility that drives him mad with “frenzy” eventually transforms itself into a need to kill her, which is so well dramatized as he is watching a performance of *Othello* (*Orlando* 33):

The main press of people, it appeared, stood opposite a booth or stage something like our Punch and Judy show upon which some kind of theatrical performance was going forward. A black man was waving his arms and vociferating. There was a woman in white laid upon a bed. Rough though the staging was, the actors running up and down a pair of steps and sometimes tripping, and the crowd stamping their feet and whistling. . . [Still] the astonishing, sinuous melody of the words stirred Orlando like music. Spoken with extreme speed and a daring agility of tongue which reminded him of the sailors singing in the beer gardens at Wapping, the words even without meaning were as wine to him. But now and again a single phrase would come to him over the ice which was as if torn from the depths of his heart. The frenzy of the Moor seemed to him his own frenzy, and when the Moor suffocated the woman in her bed it was Sasha he killed with his own hands. (42-3)

Orlando's empathy towards the Moor in his need to kill the "woman in white laid upon a bed" in a theatrical performance he comes across in the street indicates his anxiety of masculinity and, in a sense, Woolf's authorial struggle against a maternal influence. Indeed, as I noted in the previous chapter, while Woolf desired to inherit her maternal legacy and to construct a strong female literary tradition, she also wanted to detach herself from explosive feminine feelings and the gushing, free-floating writing styles customarily associated with the female body. Her double attitude towards Vita's writing is indeed revelatory. When commenting upon Vita's "full-breasted," "pearl-hung" writing styles elsewhere in her diary, Woolf, for instance, imagines a "hysterectomy" as a way to free herself from the womb's too-fluent effusions – despite her own

acknowledgement that Vita's very fertile and fluent writing styles were precisely the virtues which she incorporated into her own writing during the period of their close relationship (*The Diary III* 59). What is so striking in the quotes above is, representing the very racial and female uncontained flow, how closely the "sinuous melody of the words" "spoken with extreme speed and a daring agility of tongue" that drives Orlando mad resembles the fertile, fluent writing styles of Vita's, which both attract and repel Woolf. It is also worth mentioning that these meandering, undulating, "wine"-like words are cut short by a "single phrase" precisely because they transgress contained male rational Englishness.

Apart from the similarities between Vita's fluent, gushing writing style and the "sinuous melody of the words" that drive both Orlando and the performing Moor mad, so remarkably expressed in this scene is Orlando's close resemblance with the Moor in their shared "frenzy." This shared frenzy seems ironic, given Orlando's earlier repulsion to the same Moor trope that emerged in his slaughter performance. That is to say, whereas the Moor in the opening scene must be dealt with somehow precisely because it signifies something – primitivity and femininity – that is much hated within his own psyche, here, Orlando allies with the Moor to enact the very hated primitive act towards his own beloved woman. In a certain sense, Orlando's irony – such fervent loathing precisely because the Moor has something in common that is much hated within himself and such an unwonted situation in which the very hated commonness becomes the ground upon which to unite himself with the Moor and to perform femicide – demonstrates that among all types of oppression, oppression towards the feminine is the most intense and inexorable. Indeed, in killing or imagining killing a woman, this femicide instantly evokes Othello's murder of his beloved wife Desdemona. It is worth noting that Orlando's imaginary

femicide is inspired by the Moor in performance in exactly the same manner in which Othello's murder is inspired by the plot of his trusted but unfaithful ensign named Iago. With Othello's blackness/Desdemona's whiteness and Orlando's Englishness/Sasha's Russianness in mind, it is clear that femicide through a male to male bond or through an emboldened masculinity is a theme that runs through the Western authors' work, male and female alike.

However, the struggle with masculinity and femininity in Orlando, which finds its way out in such racial terms, is never easily settled down and ceaselessly resurfaces. Indeed, with Orlando's intense desire for Sasha in mind, it is critical in terms of the novel's narrative structure that his sex transformation takes place in Constantinople when he is in a strange coma and the British embassy is in danger during the Turkish uprising. As I have already discussed in my previous chapters on Yeats, Constantinople itself is marked with both secularity and sacredness and with centuries of numerous religious and imperial histories. Indeed, originally founded as one of the Greek colonies named Byzantium during the seventh century B.C. after the Trojan War, it was a capital city of Rome, the Latin, and then the Ottoman empires. Embodying not only femininity in its metonymic link to secularity but also queerness which is radically different from the seamless masculine genealogy that Englishness represents, Constantinople was indeed an apt place to be conveniently utilized by modernist authors like Yeats and Woolf in their exploration of an androgynous realm.

As I noted earlier, in *Race and the Modernist Imagination*, Urmila Seshagiri argues that "freed from its dominant association with colonized subjects," racial alterity in Woolf's world functions as a gateway into disruptive or subversive cultural possibilities," an argumentation echoed by Snaith and Bardi (146). In a sense that Orlando's gendered vacillations are almost

always entangled with Western heteronormative masculine versions of the primitive, Seshagiri's argumentation that Woolf's primitive trope is given exemption from the dominant cultural trend that associates it with a colonized subject is not entirely persuasive. Nonetheless, her idea that Woolf strategically avails herself of the primitive trope in order to explore a subversive possibility sounds tangible, given that in *Orlando* an androgynous or feminine realm capable of turning the world in its heteronormative masculine ordering upside down is explored solely through yoking feminine or queer elements to a primitive realm.

Indeed, alongside the city of Constantinople figured as a queer place that makes a sex change possible in the novel, the gypsies with whom Orlando stays after the sex transformation represent some sort of queerness as well. As I briefly mentioned earlier with regard to Eliot's tinker trope in my explication of the poet's early poem entitled "Fragments," the gypsy or tinker is marked with some sort of queerness in modernist psyche where its epistemological association with metalwork evokes masculinity whereas its closeness to nature and its idle, nomadic way of life are immediately coupled with femininity (Bardi 42). It is also worth noting here that Woolf names Rustum, the old leader of the gypsy tribe in Turkey who helps Orlando escape Constantinople, after the warrior from the tenth-century Persian epic *Shahname* or *Book of Kings*, who by a quirk of fate, comes into a deadly battle with his long-lost son named Sohrab and kills him without knowing that the young warrior is his own son. (Sackville-West *Passenger* 105). Closely resembling the tragic Yeatsian warrior Cuchulain in his unconscious desire to kill his own son to keep his masculinity intact, Rustum is marked by the same kind of queerness as Cuchulain's, precisely because although a fearless warrior, he too is constantly threatened by his own femininity that he thinks is reactivated with his son's presence.

In a sense, Orlando's initial attraction to Constantinople and to the immediately following Gypsies' nomadic life signifies Woolf's desire for a refreshed feminine realm that she believes can be fully imagined solely through exposure to a different language and landscape, exposure so bitterly bemoaned as lacking for women authors in *A Room of One's Own*. Indeed, in that book-length essay, her longing for such a realm that she thinks will foster and profit an androgynous creativity repeatedly expresses itself as a desire for travel. Her fictional gifted character named Judith Shakespeare, for instance, is imagined as heading to London in her strong craving for travel that she hopes will provide her with ample intellectual experiences and a variety of acquaintances (61). The repeated emphasis on the five-hundred pounds per year that Woolf argues in the same work women writers must have in order to see them "write a better novel in one of these days" is in fact to grant them exposure to the sorts of experiences through travel that will make their pen dance with fire (123). Woolf's longing for the world outside of the modern West was also intense and keeps surfacing in her correspondences to Vita during the latter's travel to the East; "Teheran is exciting me too much. I believe at this moment more in Teheran than in Tavistock Square. I see you, somehow in long coat and trousers, like an Abyssinian Empress, stalking over those barren hills. But really what I want to know is how the journey went, the 4 days through the snow, the caravan. Shall you write and tell me" (Sackville-West *The Letters* 81)? With regard to these correspondences in which the two aspiring women writers exchange exciting ideas about the limits of perception, time and space, and cultural alienation, Leonard tellingly remarks, "Woolf's affair with V. S-W should enable [her] to write with authority" (338).

In a large sense, Woolf's strategy to employ a primitive trope to construct an androgynous realm fails due to its unwitting complicity with the heteronormative masculine Western versions of the primitive. Precisely because the heteronormative male tradition of writing that is responsible for such a production is exactly what she wants to challenge in order to break fresh ground for a female literary tradition, however, Woolf's racial other is also marked with subversive queerness and a transgressive force. In *Orlando*, for instance, the gypsies' free-floating, nomadic life and their claim of a premodern genealogy makes Orlando increasingly critical of what she has believed to be the seamless, straight racial legacy of the British Empire and the immense riches enabled by its imperial desire; Rustum's assurance that Orlando "need not mind if her father were a Duke, and possessed all the bedrooms and furniture that she [describes]," that "they would none of them think the worse of her for that" when Orlando shows off her familial wealth and noble genealogy instantly makes her "seized with a shame that she [has] never felt before" (109). Also, the gypsies' dress code and cultural customs that do not distinguish gender enable Orlando to freely masquerade from female to male and to daringly explore into the utmost sexual and racial margins, which remarkably mirrors the old lady's similarly free, capacious trajectories across her room without minding public eyes in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

The same racial terms that depict these sorts of queer subversive trajectories by Orlando and the gypsies alike are employed to describe what she deems an ideal woman's writing, a writing undoubtedly marked with some sort of queerness. Indeed, the narrator of *A Room of One's Own* argues that a novel created by an androgynous mind has "a structure leaving a shape on the mind's eye, built now in squares, now pagoda shaped, now throwing out wings and

arcades, now solidly compact and domed like the Cathedral of Saint Sofia at Constantinople” (92). This queer-looking church-turned-mosque form is, in my view, symbolic of what I see as queer in Woolf’s authority and authorship, authority and authorship marked by a rupture of subversive feminine otherness within the subjectivity operated by patriarchal, masculine British heteronormativity, a rupture cracked open by the ceaseless contention between what Bhabha terms the pedagogical and the performative. It is needless to say that here as elsewhere, the racial and religious components of the Christian church and the Islamic mosque are facilely deployed as a means to each signify male and female traditions of writing.

With these emboldened connections between racial otherness and femininity and Englishness and masculinity in mind, the argumentation made almost unanimously by feminist critics that Orlando’s sex transformation in Constantinople signifies not only the radicalization of gender and literary form but also the modernist undoing of patriarchy and realism alike sounds compelling in the first place (Froula 175-89). Given Orlando’s constant traversing along the gender continuum even after the sex change, however, this is an overly simplified view. Indeed, during Orlando’s voluntary exile to Turkey as an ambassador, Orlando’s struggle with masculinity and femininity becomes even more noticeably visible. Time and time again, this continued struggle almost always revolves around the race dichotomy. In a certain sense, Orlando’s departure for Turkey prior to his change in sex signifies his choice of the feminine realm over its masculine, heteronormative English counterpart. Yet, strangely, Orlando’s determination to completely immerse herself in the Turkish culture after the sex transformation is repeatedly challenged and halted by her simultaneous longing for and celebration of England’s characteristic heteronormative masculinity.

Part of what stands out with regard to this abiding queer vacillation in Orlando after the sex change is its dogged manifestation of itself as a spatial clash between different landscapes and languages, somewhat similar to the way in which Orlando's difficulty with Sasha and her very unrepresentability come across as a spatial collision between English and Russian landscapes and languages:

Sour odours, made from bread fermenting and incense, and spice, rose even to the heights of Pera itself and seemed the very breath of the strident and multicoloured and barbaric population. Nothing, he reflected, gazing at the view which was now sparkling in the sun, could well be less like the counties of Surrey and Kent or the towns of London and Tunbridge Wells. To the right and left rose in bald and stony prominence the inhospitable Asian mountains, to which the arid castle of a robber chief or two might hang; but parsonage there was none, nor manor house, nor cottage, nor oak, elm, violet, ivy, or wild eglantine. There were no hedges for ferns to grow on, and no fields for sheep to graze. The houses were white as eggshells and as bald. That he, who was English root and fibre, should yet exult to the depths of his heart in this wild panorama, and gaze and gaze at those passes and far heights planning journeys there alone on foot where only the goat and shepherd have gone before; should feel a passion of affection for the bright, unseasonable flowers, love the unkempt, pariah dogs beyond even his elk-hounds at home, and snuff the acrid sharp smell of the streets eagerly into his nostrils, surprised him. (*Orlando* 89-90)

Recalling the wild habits and untended landscape of feminized Russia, which is evoked to be ultimately disavowed in favor of the much desired English heteronormative masculinity, Turkey's uncultivated nature, outcast animals, and unmapped terrain, along with its barbaric customs and multicolored population, are similarly evoked to be disavowed later. Of course, in his strong desire for a different landscape, which is tightly coupled with femininity through its shared elemental otherness, Orlando seems to "exult to the depths of his heart in this wild panorama" and in the possibility that he himself might be of the same dark blood as that of the Turkish people. However, a close reading of the quotes also reveals that what in fact gains an added emphasis is the vertical and horizontal "bareness" and uncontainedness of the Turkish wild landscape, which is put into an intense conflict with its highly stratified, contained, and adorned English counterpart characterized by "parsonage," "manor house," "cottage," "oak," "elm," and so forth.

It is worth noting here that in Western philosophical thinking, the less intricate, refined, and specialized an internal or an external structure, whether it is of a social construction or of a living organism, the more likely it is wedded to femininity. The psychoanalytic theory, for instance, in its imagination of a pre-oedipal phase as a child's experience with wholeness associated with the mother before it enters into the symbolic and becomes a speaking subject, inextricably binds an undifferentiated infantile pre-oedipal phase with femininity (Kristeva 157). An oedipal phase, on the other hand, where a third term of the phallus mediating between the mother and child is introduced is considered a more mature, developed form and is thus instantly linked to masculinity (157). Indeed, amid Orlando's desire for a feminine realm different from his own heteronormative, masculine England and amid his determination to be a member of the

Turkish society, a sort of ironic doubleness with which Orlando belittles the Turkish landscape and its wild cultural custom in favor of its refined English counterpart is ceaselessly surfacing. A climactic moment in which this ironic doubleness is mostly visible is when Orlando has a panoramic vision of an English summer, autumn, and winter and of “the roofs and belfries and towers and courtyards of her own home,” which are placed in direct opposition to Turkey’s uncontained, abandoned “blazing hill-side which a thousand vultures [seem] to have picked bare” (*Orlando* 111):

Now she saw a heavy cart coming along the roads, laden with tree trunks, which they were taking, she knew, to be sawn for firewood; and then appeared the roofs and belfries and towers and courtyards of her own home. The snow was falling steadily. . . The smoke went up from a thousand chimneys. All was clear and minute that she could see a daw pecking for worms in the snow. (111)

Here as elsewhere, such characteristics as “clear[ness]” and “minute[ness]” are invariably attributed to England’s landscape whereas the uncontained, untamed primitivity, to its Turkey’s counterpart. It is not entirely surprising, therefore, that after such detailed descriptions of England’s landscape, Orlando is seen as heading back towards the heteronormative masculine imperial center of England.

This completely antithetical move Orlando takes post sex transformation, which expresses itself as a spatial tension between the unmediated, undeveloped feminine Turkish scenery and its intricate, tended masculine English counterpart, is visible in the following scene where Orlando stands on the ship to England in wonder at the magnificent sights of London’s soaring landmarks:

She thought now only of the glory of poetry, and the great lines of Marlowe, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Milton began booming and reverberating, as if a golden clapper beat against a golden bell in the cathedral tower which was her mind. The truth was that the image of the marble dome which her eyes had first discovered so faintly that it suggested a poet's forehead and thus started a flock of irrelevant ideas, was no figment, but a reality; and as the ship advanced down the Thames before a favouring gale, the image with all its associations gave place to the truth, and revealed itself as nothing more and nothing less than the dome of a vast cathedral rising among a fretwork of white spires. "St Paul's," said Captain Bartolus, who stood by her side. "The Tower of London," he continued. "Greenwich Hospital, erected in memory of Queen Mary by her husband, his late majesty, William the Third. Westminster Abbey. The Houses of Parliament." As he spoke, each of these famous buildings rose to view. (122)

What stands out most in the above passage is the fact that Orlando's wonder at the panoramic view of the London landmarks follows right after her celebrated contemplation upon the simultaneously magnificent intellectual monuments accomplished exclusively by England's male authors such as Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Jonson. That is to say, a link between male creativity and the space of England is performatively drawn through a textual linking of them together here. It is particularly in the "as if" clause where the phallic pen is immediately evoked by "a golden clapper beating against the golden bell in the cathedral tower" in Orlando's imagination that the space of England- masculinity-creativity triad is sufficiently effected.

Another element that further dramatizes this Englishness-masculinity-creativity triad here is the “image of the marble dome.” Indeed, in Woolf, a poet’s head is oftentimes likened to a monumental dome in London. For instance, although disappointed with and puzzled by Mr. Greene’s mediocre appearance, Orlando mentions in his first meeting with Greene that he is impressed by the poet’s “rounded forehead” (63). Much later in the novel when alone with Mr. Pope in the chariot, Orlando is similarly impressed by the round shape of the poet’s brow, and associates it with “genius, wit, wisdom and truth,” even though that impression is mistakenly forged by “a hump on a cushion” in the darkness (150). In *Jacob’s Room*, when Julia Hedge, a character constructed upon a real-life figure with the same name – a shabby, earnest feminist with whom Woolf never felt comfortable in her life – bemoans the exclusion of George Eliot and Emily Bronte from a glorious public realm while gazing up at the gilt-lettered ring of names surrounding the dome of the British Museum reading room, the Englishness-masculinity-creativity triad is tellingly evoked through the focus on the male authors’ names inscribed in the dome (144-5). Put simply, England’s close relation to male creativity is ceaselessly affirmed in Woolf’s work through a performative linking of its material and intellectual cultural assets together.

This emboldened Englishness-masculinity-creativity triad above gains an added emphasis through its heightened relation to the verticality of London’s architectural landmarks. Indeed, similar to the way in which Miss Kilman’s desire for the transcendental masculine realm of the divine is dramatized through the repeated narrative focus on verticality of St. Paul’s Cathedral in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Orlando’s desire for masculinity and his authorial wish to be included in a glorious male literary genealogy come across through nearly the same highlighted verticality of

London's soaring monumental constructions. Perhaps, what strikes most in the quotes above is that the "dome" of the same "vast cathedral rising among a fretwork of white spires" is textually figured as the final destination of the considerably lengthy circuitous lines thick with metaphors and figurative images that are allotted to elaborate Orlando's reflections upon the memorable English male poets. Indeed, suggested as an antithesis of the horizontal bareness and uncontainedness of the feminized, othered Turkey's landscape, this vertical straightness of London's packed landmarks is evoked whenever the focus of the novel turns back to an English male tradition of writing or to Orlando's desire for masculine authority.

Given Orlando's ultimate choice of England over Turkey, her repudiation of the gypsies' language as structurally less intricate is not entirely surprising, as is the case with her earlier rejection of the Russian language as unfinished and thus unbearably obscure compared with its English counterpart:

One evening, when they were all sitting round the camp fire and the sunset was blazing over the Thessalian hills, Orlando exclaimed: "How good to eat!" (The gypsies have no word for 'beautiful.' This is the nearest.) . . . How good to eat! How good to eat! (For it is a curious fact that though human beings have such imperfect means of communication, that they can only say 'good to eat' when they mean 'beautiful' and the other way about, they will yet endure ridicule and misunderstanding rather than keep any experience to themselves.) (*Orlando* 105-7)

It is worth noting that the instance given by Orlando to back up her thought that the gypsies have an imperfect means of communication is "How good to eat." Here again, the link between primitivity and femininity is effortlessly evoked through the focus on the lack of intricacy and

richness in gypsies' expressive means where everything is connected to their eating habits or culinary customs, habits or customs customarily considered as feminine, as I mentioned in detail in my previous chapter on *Mrs. Dalloway* with regard to Miss Kilman's obsession with food. Indeed, notwithstanding their language, as Orlando becomes more and more inclined to Englishness, she increasingly disavows Turkey as less refined and uncultured where "there is neither ink nor writing paper, neither reverence for the Talbots, nor respect for a multiplicity of bedrooms" (110). In short, as is often the case with Woolf herself, the very subversive femininity characterized by boundlessness and malleability which is initially so desired by Orlando is condemned in her strong desire for masculinity and is placed in direct opposition to a masculine desire to write: "Oh! if only I could write!" (107).

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It is precisely because of this sort of ceaseless vacillation along the gender continuum that is almost always colligated with the race dichotomy that I see Woolf's furthered attempt to construct an androgynous mind with a balanced maleness and femaleness in *Orlando* as a failure. Indeed, even after Orlando restores Englishness, her struggle with masculinity and femininity that revolves around the race dichotomy never fades away and surfaces ceaselessly. Orlando, for example, finds herself still haunted by Rustom and arguing with the old gypsy when she leans out of her country estate window, hearing a fox "bark[ing] in the woods" and "the clutter of a pheasant trailing through the branches" (130):

‘By my life,’ she exclaimed, ‘this is a thousand times better than Turkey. Rustum,’ she cried, as if she were arguing with the gipsy (and in this new power of bearing an argument in mind and continuing it with someone who was not there to contradict she showed again the development of her soul), ‘you were wrong. This is better than Turkey. Hair, pastry, tobacco-- of what odds and ends are we compounded,’ she said (thinking of Queen Mary’s prayerbook). What a phantasmagoria the mind is and meeting-place of dissemblables! (130)

What is first visible in the passage above is Orlando’s desire to see her soul “developing” after her celebrated homecoming. This desire is in effect exactly echoed in Orlando’s similarly recurring thought that she feels herself “growing up” as an author when contemplating upon the poets’ duty a few passages earlier, a duty to “make the vehicle of [their] message less distorting” and to shape their words and thoughts clear, straight and “divine” (128). Part of what is so interesting in both quotes is that through the performative yoking of the poetic progress and certain terms that evoke Christianity such as divinity and Queen Mary’s prayerbook, a poet’s maturation is instantly coupled with a heteronormative concept of growth, a growth achieved through straightening up unruly, “distorting” contours of words and arguments. However, as if to mock Orlando’s own self-consolation that life in England is much better, Rustum is constantly evoked in the main narrative. It is also intriguing that whenever Rustum hauntingly emerges in the main narrative, everything that is related to Christian Englishness is put in parentheses, that is to say, in a spatial position where relatively less attention is demanded in their conventional usage. In other words, Orlando’s desired poetic growth in the heteronormative Christian setting

of England is repeatedly challenged by Rustom even after she decidedly chooses England over Turkey.

Indeed, the more intense Orlando's ongoing vacillation between masculine and female traditions of writing, the fiercer and the more habitual Orlando's imaginary combat with Rustom becomes. Intriguingly enough, what is so vehemently detested and disavowed in Rustom as Orlando becomes more and more nostalgic about England during her stay in Turkey is passionately sought after again when she returns back to the patriarchal heteronormative setting. For instance, when caught by an urge to die in the hostile heteronormative climate of imperial England where marriage and bearing children are indiscriminately mandated to women, Orlando is immediately reminded of what she was told by the old gypsy in Turkey years ago: "I shall dream wild dreams. My hands shall wear no wedding ring,' she continued, slipping it from her finger. . . 'I have sought happiness through many ages and not found it; fame and missed it; love and not known it; life – and behold, death is better. I have known many men and many women. . . none have I understood. It is better that I should lie at peace here with only the sky above me – as the gipsy told me years ago. That was in Turkey'" (182).

It is due to this permanent vacillation between racialized masculinity and femininity that never ceases to perish in *Orlando* that I see Woolf's authority as queer and her project of constructing a purely androgynous realm with balanced maleness and femininity as a failure. Although seemingly unrelated, Bhabha's telling remarks on the nation as a "narrative construction that emerges in the narrative authority between the pedagogical and the performative" is useful to further understand why I see Woolf's authority and authorship as queer. In his attempt to dismantle the Western historicist configuration of the nation as a cultural

force in *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha describes all kinds of narratives about the people and the nation as the “shreds and patches” that elide cultural fixation precisely because designations of cultural difference interpellate forms of identity which, because of their continual implication in other symbolic systems, are always incomplete or open to cultural translation (142-163). To Bhabha, therefore, the nation emerges in the fissure cracked open in the ground in narrative struggles, in a contentious, performative space of the perplexity of the living in the midst of the pedagogical representations of the fullness of life (157).

Just as the nation is a narrative patchwork whose seeming components are in fact gleaned up from everywhere, androgyny as a form of gender identity is also a narrative construction, a sort of “phantasmagoria” whose essence ceaselessly elides cultural fixation and grasp. Indeed, part of what stands out most in the quoted scene above about Orlando is the focus on the very inexplicability of her gender that expresses itself as an unending contestation between the primitive, feminine Turkey and the civilized, masculine England. This sort of struggle along the gender continuum is, in my view, typical of Woolf, which is remarkably epitomized in the following quotes from *A Room of One's Own*:

All who have brought about a state of sex-consciousness are to blame, and it is they who drive me. . . to seek it in that happy age, before Miss Davies and Miss Clough were ‘born, when the writer used both sides of his mind equally. One must turn back to Shakespeare then, for Shakespeare was androgynous; and so were Keats and Sterne and Cowper and Lamb and Coleridge. Shelley perhaps was sexless. Milton and Ben Jonson had a dash too much of the male in them. So had Wordsworth and Tolstoi. In our time Proust was wholly androgynous, if not

perhaps a little too much of a woman. But that failing is too rare for one to complain of it, since without some mixture of the kind the intellect seems to predominate and the other faculties of the mind harden and become barren. (*A Room* 135)

Here, it is clearly revealed that much of what is articulated in *A Room of One's Own* as an example of an androgynous creative mind is in effect slanted towards either masculinity or femininity and inextricably relates to the bodily realm, a realm disavowed elsewhere as detrimental to creation by Woolf herself. Shelley's authority, for instance, is depicted as "sexless," the very term customarily used to categorize and classify a biological third-sex in the field of sexology at the time (Rado 14). Additionally, while a completely balanced mixture of masculinity and femininity is celebrated in terms of Shakespeare's androgynous creativity elsewhere in the text, here Proust's authority that leans more towards femininity is described as more desirable than its more masculinized counterpart. Given these heterogeneous versions of queerness in *A Room of One's Own* as well as in *Orlando*, Woolf's attempt to construct an androgynous creativity appears to have failed, precisely because her version of queerness is located in the very unlocatable space where normalized and subversive repetitions are productively in fierce confrontation with each other. It is because of this perpetual oscillation along the gender continuum in the author in her unfulfillable attempts to create a more perfect form of androgynous authority that I find Woolf queer and her work special and exciting.

## Conclusion

Across this dissertation, I have examined numerous instances in which queerness is positioned as a necessary condition for normative creativity to properly function in literary Modernism. In my first and second chapters, we saw this in Eliot's homoerotically-charged bawdy poems and sexual ribaldry that were simultaneously written with his major public work but initially circulated within a coterie exclusively comprised of his close male friends. What was most exciting and striking about these bawdy poems was that the poet there was almost always imagined as a feminine author who needs to be initiated and authorized by a more mature, masculine author's anal penetration. It was as if the poet, since he sensed his own authority as feminine, had to conduct this private performance to conjure up a more masculine, impersonal, and intellectual voice for his public performance. Precisely because femininity and queerness are embedded in his poetic subjectivity, Eliot's high modernist project to make his authority more fittingly masculine in his public work largely ends in failure. Put simply, he denounces the feminine in public and yet his language is feminine and his disavowal of homosexuality is still at odds with his poetic performances that are always in need of other male agencies' intrusion.

In Yeats, the connection between queer and normative poetic productions became legible as I showed the way in which the poet's ceaseless vacillation along the gender continuum in mustering up his authority resembles numerous temporal trajectories along the same gender continuum in his work. As I demonstrated in my third and fourth chapters, the poet's lifelong effort to mask his feminine voice with its stronger, more masculine counterpart was almost always contested with his antithetical desire to recuperate it. What was most fascinating about

this lifelong wavering between masculinity and femininity in Yeats was its dramatic manifestation as a strange longing-disavowal mechanism in his poetry where the speaker longs for a different bodily and temporal state and then reverses the direction of the longing once that alternative is explored. In his earlier work, it most vividly came across as the poet-speaker's back and forth movement either between feminine temporality of occultism and its masculine counterpart of normative time or between his captivation by the feminine realm and a simultaneously surfacing antithetical desire to complement it with masculine elements. In his later work which has been arguably said to have become more masculine, it still came across through a sort of self-doubt as intense as the poet's blusteringly masculine performance, occasionally expressing itself as a disruption of the normative temporal trajectories or as an inversion of the many gendered temporal notions of the poet's earlier development. Put simply, the way Yeats commands authority demonstrated some sort of queerness.

As I showed throughout my last two chapters on Woolf, both queerness and heteronormativity are also imagined as essential components of her authority. Apart from her insistence on an androgynous authority that fueled the radical rethinking of heteronormative literary production solely grounded upon a model of collaboration between a male author and a female muse, her desire for the same-sex influence and female tradition of writing was immense. Nonetheless, her work was also struck by the same kind of ceaseless authorial vacillations along the gender continuum that were visible in Eliot and Yeats, which came across as queer spatial trajectories back and forth along the same gender continuum. As we saw, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, this queer authorial vacillation in Woolf became most clearly legible as there emerged a spatial disruption (disorientation) or a spatial clash between opposing gender realms. In *Orlando: A*

*Biography*, where the author's desire to construct an androgynous authority surfaces more intensely, it still found its way out through Orlando's perpetually agonizing wavering across hyper-racialized, gendered spaces or through a desire for an androgynous realm. It is precisely for this reason, for the author's ceaseless oscillation along the racialized gender continuum that I read her project of constructing a purely androgynous authority largely as a failure.

This discovery of the significance of queerness in the aforementioned modernist writers' authority and authorship was specifically exciting because it made visible and explicable a queer desire spontaneously emerging in their works amid their characteristically heteronormative performances. Although the scope of this dissertation is restricted to three major British modernist authors for want of space, I clearly see the same kind of connection between queer authority and queer literary moments in the literary performances of other modernist authors such as James Joyce, E. M. Foster, Ezra Pound, and Gertrude Stein, to name a few: a connection, in effect, between guilt, same-sex desire, narcissism, obsession, and most importantly, childlike pleasure that made major contributions to these writers' authority and authorship and their individual literary embodiments. Indeed, as Heather Love asks whether "queer modernism [is] simply another name for modernism" in her 2009 article entitled "Introduction: Modernism at Night," queerness is at the heart of Modernism (744). Yet, as I close this dissertation, I would like to add to her already pertinent, penetrating argument by asking whether queerness is simply another name for creation. In that sense, my dissertation about queer authority and authorship in Modernism offers a vehicle through which not only the texts of all modernist authors but also the texts across history and cultures can be reread as the product of queer performance.

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- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Letters of W. B. Yeats.* Ed. Allan Wade. London: Hart Davis, 1954.
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## CURRICULUM VITAE

Heejoung Shin

Place of Birth: Seoul, Korea

### Education:

**Ph.D. in English**, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI, May 2016

Dissertation: "Granite and Rainbow: Queer Authority and Authorship in T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, and Virginia Woolf." Advisor: Jose Lanters

**Certificate for Teaching Korean as a Second Language**, Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea, 2016

**M.A. in English**, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea, 2005

Thesis: "T. S. Eliot's Representation of Women." Advisor: Joon-Hwan Kim

**B.A. in English Literature, American Studies, and Multimedia Studies**, *magna cum laude*, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea, 2003

Department Top and Dean's List (Junior and Senior)

Exchange Student with Full Funding, Thiel College, Greenville, PA

### Research Experiences:

#### Publications:

"Multiple Perspectives and Cultural Diversity: T. S. Eliot's *Prufrock and Other Observations*." Ewon Journal. 2. Seoul: Ewha Womans UP, 2004.

#### Conference Presentations:

Presenter, "T. S. Eliot's Gender Doubleness." Midwest Modern Language Association, St. Louis, MO, November 2016. (Accepted)

Presenter, "In a Search for an Androgynous Authority in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*: Queer Space, Androgyny, and Questions of Race." Midwest Modern Language Association, St. Louis, MO, November 2016. (Accepted)

Presenter, "Queer Authority and Gendered Spaces: Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*." Midwest Modern Language Association, Detroit, MI, November 2014.

Presenter, "Commenting as a Performance." English Composition Instructor Conference, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, December 2011.

Presenter “Anne Sexton’s *Transformations*: An Invitation into a New Fairy Tale World.”  
YES (Yonsei-Ewha-Seogang Universities) Graduate Conference. Seoul, Korea,  
November 2004.

**Panels Chaired and Moderated:**

Chair, “Queerness as a Border State I & II.” Midwest Modern Language Association, St.  
Louis, MO, November 2016. (Accepted)

Moderator, “Gender and Global Digital Divide II.” Women’s Worlds 2005: The 9th  
International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women: “Embracing Earth: East-  
West/North-South,” Seoul, Korea, June 2005.

**Teaching Experiences:**

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI, 2011-2012

Instructor, English 101 (both online and offline), Department of English, 2011-2012

Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea 2003-2005

Teaching Assistant, Korean Aesthetics (course taught in English), online, 2004-2005

Teaching Assistant, Modernism and Postmodernism (course taught in Korean), 2004-2005

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Korean Literature (course taught in English), online,  
2003-2004

**Related Professional Experiences:**

Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea 1998-2005

Writing Center Coordinator, English Program Office. 2004-2005

Research Assistant for ESL Course Development, English Program Office. 2004-2005

Writing Center Tutor, English Program Office. 2002-2003

Stage Director/Cast/Staff, Shakespeare Drama Club, Department of English. 1998-2002

– List of Performances Put on Stage: *Tempest*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and *Twelfth Night*, alongside numerous English, Irish, and Korean modern and contemporary dramas.

– Received Grand Prize for *Midsummer Night’s Dream* in Seoul Shakespeare Festival in 2000.

Langenheim Memorial Library, Thiel College, Greenville, PA 2001-2002

Research Assistant, Digital Humanities Project. 2001-2002

**Fellowship, Honors, and Awards:**

Travel Award, UWM. 2014  
Teaching Assistantship, UWM. 2011-2012  
NRTR (Non-Resident Tuition Remission) Award, UWM. 2006-2008  
Research Grant, Ewha Womans University, 2004  
Graduate School Fellowship, Ewha Womans University, 2003-2004  
Thiel College Honors Scholarship (declined), Thiel College, 2002  
Kathleen Crane Memorial Scholarship, The International Foundation for Ewha Womans University, 2001-2002  
Ewha Honors and Highest Honors Scholarship, Ewha Womans University, 2000-2002  
Scholarship for Shakespeare Drama Club Member, Ewha Womans University, 2000

**Research and Teaching Interests:**

Transatlantic Modernist Literature, Queer, Feminist, Gender Theories. 20th-century English Literature, 20th-century Korean Literature and Pop Culture. Psychoanalytic Theory. Performance Theory, Question of Authority and Authorship, Question of Temporality and Space, Postmodernism, and Postcolonial Theory

**University and Community Service:**

Volunteer, Promiseland (Children's Ministry) at Willow Creek Community Church, Chicago, IL, 2015 to current  
Volunteer English Teacher, Yonsei University Social Welfare Center, Seoul, Korea, 2004-2005  
Volunteer for Children with Disabilities, Ewha Womans University Social Welfare Center, Seoul, Korea, 2003  
Secretary, International Student Organization, Thiel College, Greenville, PA, 2001-2002  
Class President, English Department, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea 1998-1999