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'And the pool was filled [again] with water out of sunlight'

Northrop Frye, in his essay "The Archetypes of Literature," states that every poet has his 'private mythology' and implies that dramatists and novelists also have their 'private mythology.'

The three novelists discussed in this paper - John Fowles, Lawrence Durrell, and Philip Roth - are very much aware of the power of literary and mythological tradition. They also understand that in order to achieve freedom and authority over the realities of the world around them, a return to tradition is a difficult, but profitable, strategy. A return to literary tradition, myth, the supernatural and the occult helps them escape the aggression of reality against their creative ambitions. But they consider a return without conditions a very dangerous move because they insist on their uncensored authority over their fictional world, and as a result they construct their 'private' authority over tradition, their intentional reinterpretation of reality, literature, legend, myth and the occult. This attempt leads to an astonishing plurality of forms and functions that serve several fictional and metafictional experiments which do violence to both the 'realistic' elements involved and to much of the accompanying traditional elements in order to achieve their ultimate aim, which is their author's salvation through the myth of the Almighty Author.

This strategy seems to indicate the revival of a much older tradition discussed by Matthew Arnold in *Culture and Anarchy*.¹ Arnold states that Paganism, Hellenism and Hebraism should be handled as stations of man's development and adds:

¹Arnold: "Hebraism and Hellenism.", pp. 86-96

the lesson must perforce be learned, that *the human spirit is wider than the most priceless of the forces which bear it onward*, and that to the whole development of man Hebraism itself is, like Hellenism, *but a contribution*.²

Furthermore, when Arnold sets forth his critique of Puritanism, he envisages a 'modernist' strategy designed to escape chaos:

In all directions our habitual courses of action seem to be losing efficaciousness, credit, and control, both with others and even with ourselves; everywhere we see the beginnings of confusion, and we want a clue to some sound order and authority. This we can only get by going back upon the actual instincts and forces which rule our life, seeing them as they really are, connecting them with other instincts and forces, and enlarging our whole view and rule of life.³

T. S. Eliot is less liberal in this respect. His critique of Blake's 'private mythology' interpreting 'the actual instincts and forces which rule our life' seems to be of relevance. Blake's was one of the possible attitudes adopted by the Romantics and the artists of the turn of the century which culminated in the works of Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad and continued in new forms in the experimental writings of the first half of the twentieth century, to be further developed by some of our contemporaries. Eliot revises the 'view of life' discussed by Arnold. Eliot, in his essay on Blake⁴, states that the Romantic poet's 'exclusive' philosophy and visions determined him to attach to his 'private mythology' greater importance than he should have done, and this led to his inclination to formlessness. Eliot is searching for much the same 'plenitude,' but he confines himself to Christianity, or more precisely Catholicism, because he is convinced that without the stabilising power of Catholicism any attempt to interpret religion, myth, and visions lacks power. Blake's refusal to accept Christian tradition, in Eliot's interpretation, prevents him from creating 'the vision of the soul.' Eliot's intention is to establish the Catholic faith as the only valid frame that can keep together the gift of understanding human nature and the chaos of feeling, idea and vision. Yet, even Eliot opts for a frame provided by mythology, theology and philosophy.

²Ibid. , p. 93

³Ibid. , p. 96

⁴Eliot: "William Blake." pp. 120-127

Blake's rebellion against any established authority is important from the point of view of the authors discussed in this paper. Blake was convinced that he could escape being enslaved by other interpretations of the universe only if he devised his own 'private mythology.'

The strategy of the artists discussed in this paper is similar to the one proposed by Arnold and very close to Blake's practice: John Fowles, Lawrence Durrell and Philip Roth sense the confusion of the world surrounding them and they construct the myth of the artist who has the power to devise a new 'view and rule of life.' The artist they envisage becomes omnipotent and through his creative act gains the right to rule not only his fictional world but the real one as well.

Thomas Hardy, whose shadow Fowles cannot escape in his *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, reinterprets the Christian myth against pagan mythology. Hardy acknowledges the power of fate without ever accepting its omnipotence. He reconstructs the concept of divinity without violating the English, or rather the Anglo-Saxon, tradition. There is no trace of arrogance in this 'creative' process, and the divinity thus envisaged becomes intangible, yet challengeable, because traditional religious experience is adjusted to the very nature of everyday human expectations and experience. The concept of departure for the polemics formulated by Hardy is conventional in all the generic cases: God is the source of love and benevolence, man and woman are united in the name of a nearly transcendental love, nature is the signifier of divine harmony between man and the divine, the artist is a creator of beauty, and so on. Hardy does not negate these principles, he rather complements them. Hardy creates a Many-Faced God, and maintains its central position in the 'management' of the universe. Hardy's Many-Faced God is governed by the impersonal Imminent Will endowed with the power of deciding which face of the divine power should be shown to the deserving or non-deserving human beings. The play of personal and impersonal significance added to the divine allows for a new approach: God is not necessarily good, He can also be malignant. The consequences of this interpretation are obvious, for if God is not inherently and incontestably a source of goodness, the objects and persons of his creation are also purporters of this moral and ethical duality. Disharmony between man and woman, among people, between nations, and between man and nature is also a possible reflection of the divine will.

The advantages of this philosophy are clear: definite negation of the divine can be avoided. The disadvantages seem to be obvious as well: monodeism comes to be replaced by a plurality of divinities. Such a reinterpretation seems to

propagate pessimism, since disharmony threatens to deconstruct all traditional structures established by Christianity; therefore Hardy's formula relies heavily on Pagan tradition with all its occult implications. Hardy does not project himself into the role of the Creator, he only offers a modernist revitalisation of pre-Christian mythology. Fowles' ambition is to write the twentieth century variant of the novel of the Victorian Golden Age, but he cannot escape the shadow of Hardy,⁵ as Sarah, the French lieutenant's woman, cannot escape the shadow of Tess and other Hardy heroines⁶

Fowles becomes a twentieth century disciple of Thomas Hardy, George Eliot, Charles Dickens and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and certainly acts as a kind of rival of his Victorian predecessors. The attempt to visit a distant time, acquire a special knowledge, return to reality and dominate it persists in Fowles' works.

In part two of *The Magus*, Nicholas finds an anthology of English poetry with the following passage from T. S. Eliot's "Little Gidding" underlined in red ink:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

In *The Magus*, Nicholas finally comes to interpret freedom in terms of return instead of escape. Maurice Conchis associates himself with Zeus and Prospero. Nicholas notes a resemblance to Picasso and later to Ghandi. Maurice Conchis explains to Nicholas the very principle of his journey over space and time, the metaphorical account of a journey of self-discovery which Maurice Conchis interprets as both external and internal reality. Maurice Conchis defines the point of 'fulcrum' as the moment when one must accept oneself in stasis, not as what one will become, but what one is and will always be. The point of 'fulcrum' introduces the idea of the 'elect,' who have a secret life of their own. Bourani thus becomes a strange world, a manipulated reality in which nothing is altogether credible. As Fowles admits, Maurice Conchis remains for him an experiment, a character employed to interpret God:

⁵Fowles: "Notes on an Unfinished Novel.", p. 171

⁶Allen: "The Achievement of John Fowles.", p. 66

he is really a collocation of abstract ideas, rather uneasily squashed into one.⁷ really he was meant to be stages of the human attitude towards God.

Fowles considers faith in God a human illusion about something that does not exist. He states that absolute knowledge and absolute power don't exist either, and considers the destruction of such illusions an eminently humanist aim. Christian mythology is confronted with the occult in the novel as Maurice Conchis, the Magus - as the epigraph to the novel informs us - is borrowed from the Tarot. The divine is replaced by the occult: Nicholas refers to himself as Conchis' 'fool' or dupe on many occasions. Through the knowledge he acquires, the Fool manages to become a Magus and helped by his knowledge, Nicholas gains self-mastery. The result is that when he acts, Nicholas becomes master over both the real world and the world created by him.

Then in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Fowles the novelist becomes the Magus: his creative act renders him master of his fictional world. Yet, Fowles can only offer his 'private vision' of Hardy's interpretation of the Victorian Golden Age. Hardy's 'private mythology' is also created anew. If Hardy's 'Imminent Will' is impersonal, the artist endowed with creative power can impersonate it, provided he uses a mask to hide his human characteristics.

Fowles casts himself in the role of the Almighty Author, who as the creator of that particular fictional world, can enter and depart whenever he chooses. In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, he declaredly assumes the right to shape the fates of his characters. He penetrates his fictional material, not once, but on many occasions in several guises. He is so confident that the myth of the author/creator of the fictional world assuming the role of God is real that he deliberately wipes out the difference between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, alternating them according to his will. Malcolm Bradbury, in his "The Novelist as Impresario,"⁸ explains that John Fowles' appearance as an impresario in the novel is an 'intrusion' and the fact that he appears on the stage to set the clock back in order to transform the futures of his two central characters leads to loss of confidence on the reader's part. Bradbury continues by stating that the novel cannot be stabilised: it maintains its right to manifold interpretations. It can be interpreted as a basically Victorian novel, or as a novel about emancipation in which the charac-

⁷Sage: "Profile 7: John Fowles.", p. 37

⁸Bradbury: "The Novelist as Impresario.", pp. 174-190

ters are set free from the formal containments of traditional Victorian fiction. It can also be taken as a pastiche novel showing the impossibility of present invading past. Emancipation, Bradbury seems to suggest, is paradoxical in that it offers both losses and gains. The third possibility set forth by Bradbury is a very exciting one: the novel questions the possibilities of modernist fiction. Bradbury is right in establishing the possibility of manifold interpretations, but the unstable world of the novel refuses coherent interpretation, and we definitely should look for their source somewhere else than in the instability of the novel, since the novel is suspended between the nineteenth and the twentieth century possibilities, just as its author is between the two declared procedures (the Victorian and the Modernist moralities and technicalities). The authorial gesture supported by the 'private myth' underlying it creates the very axis of the novel. The author is granted the possibility of writing the nineteenth century material into a twentieth century piece of fiction, and he uses the opportunity to write it. Similarly, one of the possibilities of the modernist novel is to return to the traditions of the nineteenth century and critically reassess it. This is as valid a starting point as any.

Fowles assumes the role of the 'Imminent Will' and the Creator. This strategy allows for intrusions and escapades in time, making the incredible credible and the invitation of the author to penetrate past with the wisdom of the present tempting. Contradicting his previous statement which referred to the instability of the novel as the source of its manifold interpretations, Bradbury himself reaches a very similar conclusion when he states that the novel lives within itself, because Fowles puts right at the centre of his work a superb generative energy, a history-making gift.⁹ The novel refers back to art: its possibilities and limits and the notions of selfhood and freedom reflect the consciousness of modern history. In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, the artist appears in disguise. He is 'the creator' in possession of truth about the past and future of the fictional present whose search for truth he has the power to direct. As a 'creator,' Fowles gains the right to historical reflections and digressions within an experimental novel by expressing his 'private vision' of both the age of which he writes and the age in which he writes. The reader is invited to accompany the author-narrator on his intrusions into an intimately and accurately evoked nineteenth century, but simultaneously the reader is constantly reminded that he is, after all, merely an observer from a great historical distance. The experiment of the 'creator' takes the reader back to

⁹Ibid., p. 178

the world of Dickens, George Eliot, and Hardy, but it is also aligned with the work of Alain Robbe-Grillet and Roland Barthes.

The French Lieutenant's Woman ends with the final line from Arnold's "To Marguerite." The poem's dominant metaphor compares humanity to many islands in the sea of life, between them ordained always and forever 'the unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.'

The last scene shows what Fowles accomplishes:

Charles now begins to pace, a man behind the invisible gun carriage on which rests his own corpse. He walks towards an imminent, self given death? I think not; for he has at last found an atom of faith in himself, a true uniqueness, on which to build;

(p. 366)

Through this true uniqueness and faith in himself, John Fowles will rule "the sea of life."

Lawrence Durrell's search for truth is of a totally different nature. He favours mythic archetypes and insists upon both Christian mythology and classical Paganism. This strategy provides him with an interpretation which is acutely conscious of the truth about East and West and is reminiscent of Conrad's insistence on the myth of 'civilised' versus 'primitive.' Durrell's aim is to redirect western society and he attempts this by assuming the role of a Magus, a master of assimilation and disguise.

Just as in his Egyptian poems of *Cities, Plains, and People*, as in almost all his novels, Durrell remains a magician recreating "real" and "imaginary" places and people. Modern western morality is counterpointed by ancient eastern mythology. The men and women populating the world of *The Alexandria Quartet* are determined by an

interior poetic link with Osiris and Isis, with Ptolemy and Arsinoe - the race of the sun and the moon.

(*Clea*, p. 191)

The ancient myth is invoked to answer contemporary dilemmas regarding mortality and immortality, creativity and intellectual impotence. That Isis had the power to grant immortality to her brother-lover seems a perfect replica to Otto Rank's statements in "Two Kinds of Love":

In a word modern love is no longer Eros or Agape but has become Psyche, that is, basically, not a sexual but a psychological problem experienced in moral terms of good and bad. We have developed in ourselves both tendencies of love, the masculine Eros and the feminine Agape, the simultaneous expression of which makes human relationships into a symbioses of two parasites feeding on each other's 'goodness.' Such relationship revives the primitive twin-conception of an alter-ego which modern man tries to find in the other sex, thereby denying its natural value as a symbol of difference. His ego wants likeness to support his yearning for personal immortalization while his personality needs difference in order to complement the denied part of his natural self.¹⁰

The Alexandria Quartet develops this symbolic reality within the historic present through its references to history, legend and myth. *Justine* takes us to the city which was built on the burial place of Alexander, and the plot, character and imagery reflect the world of Cleopatra. Durrell said once in an interview, "I think Cleopatra was probably something like her."¹¹

In *Balthazar*, Darley feels the cross-hatched typescript left on the table with its questions and answers in different coloured inks

to be somehow symbolic of the very reality we had shared - a palimpsest upon which each of us had left his or her individual traces, layer by layer.

(pp. 21-22)

Balthazar is trying to interpret the nature of truth and the nature of God, and perceives the dual vision of the ideal and real worlds. For Darley the search for the mystic vision of God and Truth seems a continual journey from the ideal to the real, because it is only through myth that one can approach one's present. As myth presides over truth, preserving its different layers in time and space, so the Tarot, the deck of cards invoked by Durrell, imposes its rules on each sequence of the novels so that all the sequels are related to a character or development in *The Alexandria Quartet*.

¹⁰Rank: *Beyond Psychology*. p. 201

¹¹Durrell: "Lawrence Durrell Answers a Few Questions.", p. 158

I'd like to hope that seen from the other end of the continuum my characters seem not just 'people' but symbols as well like a pack of Tarot cards.¹²

The deck as a whole follows the story of the young initiate's striving for manhood, artistry, and the heraldic vision, aided by the Fool seeking wisdom and the Hermit/ Philosopher seeking truth.

As Carl Bode¹³ has pointed out, it is the character of Pursewarden that brings convincingly to life the occult level of *The Quartet*. His conviction is that the artist must catch every scrap of wind and that the object of writing is to grow a personality which in the end enables man to transcend art and aligns him with the Fool. Pursewarden hopes that he might bring resolution and harmony into the dying lives around him. Pursewarden can also be interpreted as Dionysus the Greek god and Osiris the Egyptian and Durrell himself as the master Joker and novelist-god of the *Quartet*.¹⁴ In *Mountolive*, the central topic is the education of a young man to a point of success. Mountolive has to choose between nation or cause and someone loved. His formal British education leads Mountolive to act as Pilate:

'In matters of business a diplomat has no friends,' he said stiffly, feeling that he spoke in the very accents of Pontius Pilate.

(*Mountolive*, p. 188)

He speaks with the accents of Pilate; this is his role to play in Durrell's recasting of the Christian myth. As Pilate destroyed the yearnings and strivings of early religious leaders, so does Mountolive destroy the Palestinian hopes for a nation. The idea that there is no answer to the meaning of truth becomes the dilemma of Mountolive, who is "suddenly face to face with the meaning of love and time." (*Mountolive*, p. 281)

Antony and Cleopatra's attempt to control the East and the West comes to be combined with the Christian myth through the Pilate-role Mountolive assumes. The brothers Hosnani become the centre of the plot to aid Palestine. The demon and Christ figure contribute to the interpretation of the Coptic movement as a holy war. Narouz is dominated by his dream in which the divine spirit visits

¹²Moore: *The World of Lawrence Durrell*, p. 157

¹³Bode: "Durrell's Way to Alexandria.", p. 221

¹⁴Cavendish: *The Tarot*, pp. 59-66

him and declares the truth. He is a Christ-figure possessed by violence, evil and the power of his whip. Yet Narouz dies before the sacred thorn tree and is carried home, wrapped in a purple curtain. The Biblical implications are clear: "If he had been able to resort to the old-fashioned magic of the Egyptian fables, of the New Testament, he would gladly have told Narouz to rise." (p. 308) At his death, Narouz invokes Clea, a Delphic priestess to whom Plutarch addresses his opening lines of *De Iside et Osiride*.

Clea, the last volume, moves forward in time through war-torn Alexandria and concentrates on the theme of the growth of artist and man. It is Darley who is telling his story. Darley speaks of beginning to live "in the continuous present, which is the real history of that collective anecdote, the human mind." (*Clea*, p. 14)

The novel intended to be both "classical" and "for our time" is trying to formulate an answer to an earlier question: "Is poetry, then, more real than observed truth?" (p. 30)

Clea marks a movement back towards Justine's world. It then presents in Pursewarden's notes a central critical manifesto, while leading him through the deepest level within the *Quartet*, the myth of Osiris and Isis. Lastly, moving forward into the world of Clea, the "city's grey-eyed muse," it affirms the myth of rebirth. It also gathers within its broad, calm structure some of the most modern - and even contemporary - of approaches, to arrive at a triumphant exaltation of the artist's heraldic universe. Walking the streets of Alexandria, Darley sees the city as "Alexandria, princess and whore. The royal city and the *annus mundi*," (p. 63) container of myth and symbols present and ancient: Antony and Cleopatra, Osiris and Isis, Plutarch and Camus. Darley knows that he must wound to heal, even if the person healed is himself, because the artist must make the "enigmatic leap into the heraldic reality of the poetic life" to find himself, and as Lawrence Durrell writes:

The heraldic reality can strike from any point, above or below: it is not particular. But without the enigma nothing will remain. You may travel round the world and colonise the ends of the earth with your line and yet never hear the singing yourself.

(*Clea*, 154)

Darley used this chance, penetrating the heart of experience where there is coherence and harmony and where love and patience are the passwords to the un-

limited journey in time. It was the harmony of this multi-dimensional life experience Durrell wanted to give form to in *The Alexandria Quartet*:

It took me years to evolve Justine because I was having to work on many levels at once; history, landscape (which had to be fairly strange to symbolise our civilisation), [...] occultism, and finally the novel about the actual process of writing. What I was trying to achieve was a canvas that was both historic and ordinary; to get that I made use of every modern technique go back to the origins: *The Book of the Dead*,¹⁵ Plato, to the occult traditions which are still alive in the East.

That occult traditions and attempts are very much alive in the West as well is convincingly illustrated by Philip Roth in his *Zuckerman Bound*, the trilogy containing *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, *The Anatomy Lesson*, and the *Epilogue: The Prague Orgy*. Zuckerman is a young writer who is trying to find out the truth about art and himself. His insistence on the truth about reality brings about methods of his own making and feeds on literary tradition, legends and myth.

In *The Ghost Writer*, art and reality are set against tradition and the hero's Jewish heritage. The story's characteristic narrative voice is Nathan Dedalus/Zuckerman, the 'autobiographer.' The implications are obvious: Stephen Dedalus is Joyce's young artist who can be associated with Daedalus of Greek mythology and he is also the protagonist of *Ulysses*, where references to Greek mythology and Homer are all too well known. The literary and mythological implications are further complicated through Nathan Dedalus's fictionalised revision of the Anne Frank story. Nathan fleshes out his reinvention of the real into a fully realised chapter, and admits only later that we were offered an artistic speculation, a 'fictionalised recall.' Nathan has been insulted by the Jewish community on account of his book and is in search of a literary father. He imagines Anne Frank alive and ready to defend him against Judge Wrapter's accusations. He feels martyred by the community and fears that the pressure of the community could transform him into a Public Relations man. The idea behind the speculative narrative is reminiscent of the Osiris and Isis myth. A martyr has the right to invoke another martyr, and the sister in martyrdom can help her brother assume immortality.

¹⁵Durrell: *The Big Supposer: Lawrence Durrell, a Dialogue with Marc Alyn*, p. 62

The disappearing¹⁶ texts of *The Ghost Writer* are counterpointed by the visions that penetrate the plot and clearly add to its significance. Nathan Dedalus fights the urge of the community to subdue his interpretation of the truth about the world to their demands and chooses to go back to the actual instincts and forces that rule the life of the Jewish community. He is convinced that the artist is 'elect' due to his superior knowledge of the truth about the world and that art can express truth better than life. Anne Frank becomes the prototype of Nathan Dedalus's own erotic object: she appears as Lonoff's possible lover, thus sharing Nathan Dedalus's admiration for the established writer. Nathan Dedalus brings Anne in as an outsider, who is not so much the object of sexual desire as the subject of a desire to subdue the other to his own sexual, artistic, and reevaluated cultural power. The process has far-reaching implications since Nathan Dedalus sees his own self reflected in Anne Frank, although she belongs to another sex and another time. Nathan attempts to achieve freedom in terms of returning to the source of the instincts of his community instead of trying to escape. Anne is chosen because she is a Jewish saint and a possible Isis of the mutilated Osiris, who is Nathan Dedalus/Zuckerman, the assimilated Jewish American writer torn by the doubts of his double standing within the world of the assimilated and non-assimilated Jews of late-twentieth-century America. But the mundane invades the extramundane, the saint comes to be desanctified. Anne Frank is revealed to be not the martyr purveyor of Jewish tradition, but a disoriented young woman who is begging for love in the secluded house of an ageing writer.

The Anne Frank of Nathan Dedalus/Zuckerman's creation desires to be purged of her Jewish martyr values, but she renounces meeting her father for the sake of remaining a Jewish martyr. Deconstruction touches the limits of the obscene and the incredible: Anne Frank makes sexual advances to an ageing married writer, then she marries Nathan, later she proves to be just an ordinary American girl, and finally she disappears without a trace. The martyr is revealed to be a human being: it remains to be seen whether this means that the real human being has assumed the dimensions of a martyr.

Lonoff is the Magus who knows the power of myth too well, but he is not potent enough any more to penetrate the world of myth. Anne Frank's attempt at being a great master's lover proves to be Nathan Dedalus's narrative abuse of reality. The literary father is revealed to be ineffective in the context of

¹⁶The definition is taken from Patrick O'Donnell's essay dedicated to the analysis of the narrative techniques in *The Ghost Writer*.

the 'fictional recall.' When Nathan's fictional reinvention of Anne Frank ends, there is no possibility for the liberated Anne to free Nathan Dedalus/Zuckerman.

The young artist attempts to achieve authority over his art and his interpretation of Jewishness through returning to his literary father and taking that literary father further back to the source of his view of life and art. Nathan Dedalus, the young artist, remembers his visit of some years ago, when he played about with the idea that Anne Frank was still alive and appeared to him in a vision. This 'return' helps him formulate the truth about his community: Nazi persecution will only end when Jews will discard their burdensome and divisive traditions and behave as well as to be regarded on a par with everyone else.

The Ghost Writer, with the help of a return to literary and historical aspects of the past, attempts to reveal the truth about the defectiveness of the real. Legend and myth are shown as unquestionably dominating reality. It is myth, not the understanding of it, that helps formulate the truth about reality. This is why Nathan Dedalus creates Anne:

Oh, marry me, Anne Frank, exonerate me before my outraged elders of this idiotic indictment! Heedless of Jewish feeling? Indifferent of Jewish survival? Brutal about their well-being? Who dares accuse of such unthinking crimes the husband of Anne Frank?

(p. 148)

Patrick O'Donnell has written of *The Ghost Writer* that the "ghost writers" from whose writings Philip Roth's novel derives "generate texts over which they disclaim authority"; their "very act of originating generates the seeds of erasure and denial."¹⁷ Patrick O'Donnell is right in many respects, yet the different narrative layers identified by him suggest an interpretation based on the Tarot principle so much favoured by Durrell. Stephen Dedalus' implied presence foreshadows the emergence of Anne Frank from European legend into American present.

Stephen Dedalus' allegiance with Leopold Bloom, the Hungarian Jew converted to Catholicism, repeats the attempt of the individual to transcend the religious and ethnic barriers imposed on him. The wanderings of Ulysses forecast the hardships the young writer will encounter in his attempt to find home. The mythological dimensions of Dedalus clearly bear reference to the creative act cen-

¹⁷O'Donnell, p. 374

tral to both rebels in each case: Nathan and Stephen Dedalus refuse to serve something they don't believe in.

However chaotic the presence of so many possible elements of the past might seem, it is clearly Roth's intention to return to all aspects of the mythical, religious, occult, and literary tradition to provide the young artist with a knowledge that could establish his authority over his art and life.

Nathan Dedalus also mentions Joyce, Flaubert and Wolfe, in order to defend his refusal to justify himself to his elders:

Hadn't Joyce, hadn't Flaubert, hadn't Thomas Wolfe, the romantic genius of my high-school reading list, all been condemned for disloyalty or treachery or immorality by those who saw themselves as slandered in their works? As even the judge knew, literary history was in part the history of novelists infuriating fellow countrymen, family, and friends. To be sure, our dispute hadn't achieved the lustre of literary history quite yet, but still, writers weren't writers, I told myself, if they didn't have the strength to face the insolubility of that conflict and go on. But what about sons? it wasn't Flaubert's father or Joyce's father who had impugned me for my recklessness - it was my own. Nor was it the Irish he claimed I had maligned and misrepresented, but the Jews. Of which I was one. Of which, only some five thousand days past, had been millions more.

(pp. 66-67)

Next, Nathan Dedalus - to gain the 'inches' that could help him overhear, that is, to create a fictional scene - kneels to 'insert' between his feet and Lonoff's desk a volume of stories by Henry James, and he states that 'James would understand' his desire to write and to 'invent as presumptuously as real life.'

The silent presence of Flaubert, James and Joyce is also meant to demonstrate the young artist's knowledge of literary tradition and its implications. In Philip Roth's *The Ghost Writer*, although the meanings created by the speculative narratives seem to displace one another, they also add to one another. Nathan clearly is yearning to be master of his own meanings added to reality, a drive that could be illustrated by his pseudo-prayer in the closing lines of the second chapter:

Oh, if I only could have imagined the scene I've overheard! If only I could invent as presumptuously as real life. If one day I could just approach the originality and excitement of what actually goes on! But if I

ever did, what then would they think of me, my father and his judge?
 How could my elders hold up against that? And what if they couldn't, if
 the blow to their sentiments was finally too wounding, just how well
 would I hold up against being hated and reviled and disowned?

(p. 91)

The hermit writer acknowledges the authority of the initiate: the Philosopher and the Fool exchange their roles. Lonoff goes on turning one sentence into another, without even noticing that he failed to understand the proximity of myth. The reader knows more about the sources of his permissiveness than Lonoff himself. Reader, writer and fictional writer share the truth about Lonoff's fate when the literary father encourages Nathan to use what had transpired that morning in one of his stories. Nathan, this time the dutiful son, begins making "feverish notes." (p. 108)

Stepping onto, and perhaps into Henry James' novel, Nathan overhears the conversation between Amy and Lonoff and obviously extends his authority over this secret material, since it comes to be described in the first layer of the novel. Lonoff, on the other, hand acknowledges the fact that he is to become a textual object, so his reaction is in fact that of the objectified character under authorial control. Nathan accepts the offer and retains a final authority, because the narration of Nathan's visit to Lonoff's house will be Nathan's version of the events. Thus Nathan gains immortality with the help of literary tradition and the mythical and occult filters through which Philip Roth, the Magus, creates him. Philip Roth thus tests his aesthetic interest both against social reality and fictional reality. Through its realistic illusion, this strategy gives way to the occult and mythic dimensions already noted. In the symbolism of the Greater Arcana, each of the twenty two cards represents a power, a law, or a principle of the cosmos. The first (or last in some systems), numbered zero, is the Fool; the second, Roman numeral one, is the Magus. Arthur Edward Waite in his *The Pictorial Key to the Tarot* tells us that the Magus is the human reflection of God, the man who possesses the knowledge and power to manifest the cosmic truth on earth. The Fool is the spirit in search of experience and also signifies the flesh, the sensitive life. Nathan Dedalus/Zuckerman passes through the experiences suggested by some of the other symbols of the Great Arcana in order to become a fictional Magus. He repeats Lonoff's fictional career, but unlike Lonoff, he dominates and understands Anne Frank, alias Amy Bellette, who can stand for the 'naked dancer' whose image is the last, number XXI, of the Great Arcana. The Fool car-

ries the magical symbols of the wand, cup, sword, and pentacle, but he has no understanding of their meaning and power. Nathan gains understanding over these symbols and thus gains self-mastery; through his creative act the young artist becomes master of his world. Lonoff does not understand the power of the symbols he carries, but Nathan Dedalus/Zuckerman does. Like Fowles and Durrell, Roth attempts to construct the image of the artist as the creator.

In the works of these writers' earlier experimental writing 'comes back,' and offers a mixture of fantasy, realistic narrative, and self-consciousness. Lawrence Durrell, John Fowles, and Philip Roth's qualifications, reversals, and denials of traditions which predate their narratives demonstrate their writing's indebtedness to both the modernists' developments in form and technique and to philosophical, theological, and aesthetic thinking and strategies which are earlier than the twentieth century. They try to escape from what Lawrence Durrell calls 'the serial form of the conventional novel: the time-saturated novel,' and reconstruct instead a belief in 'pattern and eternity' by amending the traditions to which they return. Their reaction is determined by a reality defined by B. S. Johnson as discouraging direct reflection of reality in art:

Present-day reality is markedly different from nineteenth-century reality. Then it was possible to believe in pattern and eternity, but today what characterises our reality is the probability that chaos is the most likely explanation.¹⁸

The general fragmentation and absence of 'pattern' of the modernist and post-modernist age direct the novelists discussed in this paper to focus more or less on art, reflect on their own methods, and formulate a new responsibility for the artist. The artist is projected into the position of the Creator, who can offer a 'pattern' which helps him represent and shape the real world not through escapism, but by dominating the chaos of the end of the second millennium.

Myth, the occult and literary tradition alongside realism are the constituting elements of a modern adventure into the realm of truth: they stand in a complex relation to one another and should be interpreted as two halves of a whole. The major intention behind these novels is to represent reality and recognise artistic difficulties. Since access to the real without a mediating factor seems impossible, they invite the 'ghosts' of times past as if they wished to be ruled by them.

¹⁸Johnson: *Aren't You Rather Young ...*, p. 17

The aim of this strategy is to get rid of their burdensome responsibilities by way of transfer. The gains for the 'creator' are obvious: the myth provides protection, and since it entered into the rarity of that fiction due to that artist's will, it seems clear who the master is. The attempt is clearly to formulate twentieth century man's desire to regain his long lost authority over truth through myth. The myth of his own creation is purporter of particular and universal meanings in itself and is perceived as inclusive of both the real and the ideal.

Fowles, Durrell, and Roth are a long way from T. S. Eliot, who tries to chart the timeless perfection and fulfilment in human life in the poems included in *Four Quartets* through his quest for divine love. Eliot is searching for the stillness of the divine revelation intersecting the present moment, that is, the meeting of mortality and immortality, the transient and the everlasting. In Eliot's philosophy, these momentary intersections are visions of divine fulfilment, and they express the harmony of the universe while offering a glimpse of divine love. Eliot suggests that only divine love can offer these timeless moments, these momentary visions when 'the pool is filled with water out of sunlight.' The writers discussed in this paper construct the myth of the artist as the creator and declare their right to 'fill the pool with water out of sunlight' themselves.

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