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# "A Woman's Face, or Worse": Otto Rank and the modernist identity

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"A Woman's Face, or Worse": Otto Rank and the Modernist Identity

by

Michael L. Shuman

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Department of English  
College of Arts and Sciences  
University of South Florida

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Dedication

In memory of my Mother

Mildred Josephine Shuman

who taught me the immeasurable joy of a great book

and for my Father

Earl Ervin Shuman

who showed me the incomparable power of a gentle spirit

*Live as though you'll die tomorrow;*

*learn as though you'll live forever.*

## Acknowledgments

My research into the life and work of Otto Rank began nearly forty years ago in the undergraduate classroom of Clarence Wolfshohl, and since then I have tried to follow that great teacher's lead in exploring both the logic and whimsy of the passionate intellect. His interest in the diverse accomplishments of William Morris prompted the topic of my master's thesis, and his comments about an obscure machinist-psychoanalyst from Leopoldstadt eventually led to this dissertation. For his continuing inspiration and encouragement, I am humbled and grateful. Dr. Phillip Sipiora, my dissertation advisor, deserves multiple acknowledgments for reading my work and providing encouragement and advice at the most inconvenient of times, but this single thanks alone will have to do. Dr. Silvio Gaggi is remarkably adept at offering invaluable advice at just the right time, and I thank him for his insight and for his propitious instinct. I hope the scholarly enthusiasm of Dr. Gaëtan Brulotte is replicated in this text: his commitment to illuminating a most important aspect of human character persists despite the impediments of economics and publishing houses. Dr. Rick Wilber's intimate knowledge of Irish character not only influenced my chapter on Yeats but, in the telling, captivated me with the warmth and conviction of his speculative imagination. I wish these acknowledgements could be so graciously told. Finally, a special thanks to my wife, Susan, who has proofread nearly everything I've ever written with attention and patience. Gratitude always returns to the hearth.

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“A Woman’s Face, or Worse”: Otto Rank and the Modernist Identity

Michael L. Shuman

ABSTRACT

Otto Rank is a significant but generally overlooked figure in the early history of psychoanalysis, and his work provides an illuminating context for the study of subjectivity and modernist culture. The “modernist identity” of my title is intended to represent, first, the concept of the individual self identified and expressed during this period and, secondly, the unique identity of modernist culture developed by artists through creative acts and emanating as the intellectual ambiance of the era. Through an examination of Rank’s later theories and the work of prominent modernist artists, including Lawrence, Yeats, and Eliot, this dissertation will show that Rank’s expository writings emerge as psychoanalytic and cultural inquiry expressing essentially the same intellectual and social precepts presented by prominent modernist writers in substantially different ways. Rank’s work therefore exists as a cotextual statement of the grand themes of those artists and of that era. I also show that Rank’s perception of the modernist landscape, whether literary, social, or cultural, at once illuminates and refutes the concept of modernism consciously constructed and advanced, as a poetic manifesto, by artists generally associated with the traditional modernist temperament. The diverse voices of modernism, in fact, often represented Rankian irrationality over the Freudian unconscious, a personality capable of reconstructing the fragmented self over one

acquiescing to disintegration, and the spiritual or magical over the rational constructs of a progressively more scientific and technological age.

I will demonstrate that Rank's theories provide not only a method for reading literature but a means for addressing issues critical for our time, including subjectivity, the process of individuation, diversity, and the empowering exercise of creative will. The work of Eli Zaretsky and other contemporary cultural theorists, although never mentioning Rank or his work, presents the duty of criticism and psychoanalysis in our time as remarkably consistent with Rank's notion of psychoanalysis and the place of the individual in culture. Rank's ideas, originally founded upon nineteenth-century science and psychoanalysis, ultimately provide a context for understanding twentieth-century modernist culture as well as a rationale for developing a new concept of humanism and for advancing twenty-first century post-theory literary studies.

## Introduction

Otto Rank, for nearly twenty years one of Freud's closest associates, was a prominent early contributor to the psychoanalytic movement. Rank accepted the first paid position with the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society in 1906 and eventually became the youngest member of the secret Committee established to promote the cause of Freudian psychology. He co-founded *Imago* and *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, two leading early psychoanalytic journals, and published the first book on psychoanalysis not written by Freud himself, a 1907 study of the creative process entitled *Der Künstler*. Rank contributed two chapters to the 1914 edition of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, sharing authorial credit for that monumental work, and was one of the first psychoanalysts to lecture and practice in the United States. Yet Rank's works remain uncollected, some important texts even untranslated, and current research on psychoanalysis generally dismisses Rank with a passing comment, if he is mentioned at all.

Why is such a significant figure in arguably the most important intellectual movement of the twentieth century normally excluded from the discussion of the history and practice of psychoanalysis? The answer is *The Trauma of Birth*, a revisionist work Rank published in 1924 as an attempt to qualify Freud's fundamental notion of the oedipal basis for anxiety in human behavior. Rank's theory viewed birth as the first experience of separation and thus the primary source for personal anxiety. "Birth

precedes weaning, weaning precedes walking, walking precedes the Oedipus conflict,” E. James Lieberman explains in *Acts of Will*, his biography of Rank. “He identified the mother as the original locus both of comfort (the womb) and of distress (birth). Adult conflict about the sex act was ascribed to anxiety centered in and symbolized by the female genitals” (221-22). Rank’s theory at first viewed the source of anxiety solely in the literal process of birth, but he later expanded this concept to include any form of separation in an individual’s life, including the effort involved in developing an autonomous self, creating a work of art, or seeking immortality through creative will. Birth trauma came to indicate the process of individuation, the “birth” process of a person in the creative act of differentiating the self from other human beings. Regardless of Rank’s intent and the eventual evolution of his concept of birth trauma, the notion soon was interpreted by the psychoanalytic community as a transgression against canonical Freudian theory, and Rank was not only ostracized by European professional societies, but rejected by Freud himself.<sup>1</sup>

Rank’s reputation has not recovered from his split from Freud and the ensuing rejection of the psychoanalytic community. Both Lieberman and Esther Menaker, two prominent psychoanalysts, have attempted to acquaint professional and lay readers with Rank’s work through new translations and evaluations of his theories unclouded by academic or economic prejudice, with mixed results. Ernest Becker’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Denial of Death* (1973) similarly presents Rank’s ideas concerning individuation and love in the context of Kierkegaard’s work, in language accessible to a general audience, and Becker insists upon the logical rigor of Rank’s ideas. “Rank made

complete closure of psychoanalysis on Kierkegaard,” Becker maintains, “but he did not do it out of weakness or wishfulness. He did it out of the logic of the historical-psychoanalytic understanding of man. There is simply no way for the critic of Rank to get around this” (175). The Otto Rank Association, a distinguished scholarly venture devoted to examining and promoting Rank’s ideas, was established in 1965 but disbanded in 1982 as its membership moved into retirement age; its scholarly publication, *Journal of the Otto Rank Association (JORA)*, generated thirty-one issues with important articles and conference notes related to Rankian scholarship and remains an invaluable, if somewhat elusive, source for research in the field.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Rank’s obscurity is such that most psychoanalytic professionals know of his work only from the period of his close association with Freud, and generally misunderstand even that. Menaker laments in *The Freedom to Inquire* that Rank is best known for *Trauma* due to its catalytic effect in his split with Freud, and views it as a work that should be considered as

the beginning of Rank’s concern with separation and individuation, and therefore as the beginning of psychology of the will and of his understanding of ego process from a perspective that differed from the then current psychoanalytic one. Instead, the book is misunderstood as Rank’s final theory of anxiety, rather than as a phase in the development of this own thinking. Its implications for ego psychology have been utterly disregarded. (106)

Peter L. Rudnytsky, a current psychoanalyst who examines Rank’s theories with caveats and caution, is a good example of Menaker’s characterization. In *Reading*

*Psychoanalysis*, Rudnytsky credits Rank with two enduring achievements, namely shifting the focus of psychoanalytic theory and practice from oedipal to pre-oedipal concerns, thus alleviating the disproportionate stress on the father-child bond, and having “the courage to risk opprobrium by defying Freud and taking him to task at once on intellectual and personal grounds” (93). At the outset of his analysis, however, Rudnytsky repudiates Rank’s later theories. “I have never been able to muster much enthusiasm for the writings of Rank’s final period,” he writes. “If the prodigious labors during his first two decades in Freud’s circle are limited by what can now be seen to be excessive orthodoxy, those of this final twelve years are, in my view, even more limited by his repudiation of the entire Freudian tradition” (86). Rudnytsky criticizes Rank for casting aside basic Freudian concepts of the unconscious and of genetic explanation, suggesting that these tenets have survived the demise of Freud’s libido theory and phallogocentric construction of sexual difference, but in doing so misunderstands Rank’s notion of will as a conscious, artistic reaction against social forces. Rank was not so much rejecting a Freudian notion of the unconscious, but maintaining, as he states in 1929’s *Truth and Reality (TR)*, that an undue emphasis upon the unconscious displaces the preeminence of the conscious mind: “This enthroning of the conscious will upon its natural rights,” Rank maintains, “is no backward step from psychoanalytic knowledge, but a necessary step forward and beyond it to include the psychological understanding of the psychoanalytic world view itself” (27).

The continued obscurity of Rank’s writings in both psychoanalytic and literary circles leaves an intellectual black hole for any researcher interested in applying his

theories to literary works. Indeed, researching Rank in presumably-relevant works of psychoanalysis and literary criticism encourages a list of absences rather than a list of references. Lieberman has effectively outlined Rank's marginalization in a section of the Translator's Introduction to *Psychology and the Soul (PS)* entitled "A Missing Influence." "For decades, psychoanalysts would not cite a defector except to damn him," Lieberman writes. "Thus we find major innovators who were either unaware of Rank or who kept their distance despite having much in common with him: Carl Jung, Erik Erikson, Erich Fromm, Franz Alexander, Karen Horney, and Viktor Frankl are some examples" (xxiv). Lieberman continues in this vein to cite Julia Kristeva and Arthur Koestler, both presenting Rankian theory in their works without referencing Rank himself, and Weston La Barre, who writes a significant book on the psychology and anthropology of religion without mentioning Rank's seminal work on the subject. Lieberman's evaluation of Rank's obscurity is extensive and persuasive, and I will not duplicate that ground here. "Histories of psychology, works on the borderline of philosophy and psychology, and even writers on the will show little or no awareness of Rank," Lieberman maintains (xxv). Rank's ideas clearly remain in a vortex of misunderstanding and neglect.

Most existing literary criticism employing Rankian theory, scarce as it may be, similarly is predicated upon early-and middle-period studies by the psychoanalyst, with a few studies employing ideas from *Art and Artist (AA)*, first published in English translation in 1932 and thus a later-period book. Rank's later work nevertheless provides the most comprehensive and mature statement of his ideas of culture, creativity, and the

development of a collective and individual identity. Rudnytsky and other contemporary psychoanalysts may ignore this body of Rank's work, as they have generally with all of his output, but Rank's theory seems to become more appropriate to literary and cultural analysis as its acceptance in traditional psychoanalytical circles and application in clinical use diminishes. As Jack Jones writes, Rank's theory of birth trauma is transitional at best, causing general misunderstanding of Rank's major contribution to the psychoanalytic profession, and therefore "should be immediately dropped into the garbage pail. It has at best only a metaphorical relationship to Rank's later and actually characteristic ideas, of whose existence few are aware even now" ("Five" 62).<sup>3</sup>

The work of Eli Zaretsky, James Donald, and other contemporary cultural theorists, although never mentioning Rank or his ideas, presents the duty of criticism and psychoanalysis in our time as remarkably consistent with Rank's notion of psychoanalysis and the place of the individual in culture. "Do our new insights into race, nation, and gender obviate the need for individuals to understand their own unique individuality?" Zaretsky asks rhetorically in his 2004 book *Secrets of the Soul*:

Does our wish to be more attentive to "difference" mean that we no longer need a common notion of what it means to be a human being, or even a common language with which we can discuss the questions? If so, we are facing a drastic impoverishment. . . . We risk congratulating ourselves on knowing our own minds at the very moment when we are being most effectively manipulated into compliance and assent. (344)

My intent is to follow Zaretsky's notion of effective literary and cultural analysis for a new millennium by investigating the shared cultural sensibility of high modernist artists as expressed in Rank's later psychological writings, taking into account sexual and cultural differences in the development of a modernist subjectivity. I will show that Rank's theoretical works reflect an unconscious intellectual ambiance informing early twentieth-century Western culture and the prominent modernist authors reacting to society and the events around them. Aside from any meaning Rank's work may have as medical or scientific theory, the work stands as clinical theory expressing the same social and cultural precepts experienced by prominent artists of the modernist era, and expressed by them in substantially different ways. By examining works of Rank's later period in the context of modernist fiction and poetry, I will show Rank's significance to the twenty-first century, post-theory context of literary studies by analyzing his theory in terms of the significant issues of our time, including subjectivity and the process of individuation and the empowering exercise of creative will in an increasingly technological culture.

*Beyond Psychology (BP)*, published posthumously in 1941, is perhaps his most mature and concise exposition of cultural theory related to subjectivity, and therefore is the primary Rankian text used in this study. Rank actively began writing the book in 1936, while practicing in New York and lecturing at the Pennsylvania School of Social Work, but the development of his ideas has a long and circuitous history. Despite the book's publication date, a timeline of the ideas presented indicates that Rank's theories are concurrent with the major works of modernism I will deal with in this study. As Rank

explains in his Preface, ideas expressed in *Beyond* were developed beginning in 1929 as he worked on other projects “which had already carried me beyond individual psychology to the appreciation of the influence ideologies exert upon human behavior in determining the destinies of people.” In those earlier projects, as well as finally in *Beyond*, Rank attempted to show that “collective ideologies of the specific period of civilization determined the individual’s efforts to develop beyond himself or to create something beyond this given natural self” (11). This is also the only book Rank wrote in English, and as I suggest, this linguistic task contributed to the development of his theories of creativity and language.<sup>4</sup>

I also rely extensively upon Rank’s later American lectures, delivered in English throughout the United States between 1928 and 1938 and collected as *A Psychology of Difference (PD)*; *Truth and Reality*, a major statement of Rank’s clinical theory; *Art and Artist*; and *Psychology and the Soul*, an important source for Rank’s vision of the individual and social development of the human spirit.<sup>5</sup>

The “modernist identity” of my title is intended to represent, first, the concept of the individual self identified and expressed during this period and, secondly, the unique identity of modernist culture developed by artists through creative acts and emanating as the intellectual ambiance of the era.

One of the primary missions of the modernist movement was to comprehend and explain a change in the nature of individual identity that modernists perceived as taking place in society. The idea of a unified self, rarely if ever questioned prior to the Renaissance, was giving away to the notion of fragmented identity in a culture of

alienation and decay. According to Robert Langbaum, Descartes was “the last philosopher to take the unity of self as axiomatic,” and the Renaissance began to question the integrity of personal identity as institutionalized religion started to wane. “As long as men believed in a soul created and sustained (continuously known and seen) by God, there could be no question about the unity of the self. It is significant that identity is first used to mean personal identity by the empiricist philosophers Locke and Hume, who use the word identity to cast doubt on the unity of the self” (*Mysteries* 25). Dennis Brown sees the unified self represented in literature and cultural discourse continuing until the advent of modernism, much longer than Langbaum suggests, but both critics agree that the conception of subjectivity changed radically at the beginning of the twentieth century. Brown connects this change with the revelations of science and technology: “As the classical atom, which had been the foundation of traditional physics, dissolved into its mysterious parts, so the unitary self, which had been the final hero of post-Renaissance literature, began to dissolve and disintegrate” (6). Michael Bell significantly complicates this view of subjectivity by noting that, from the eighteenth century through the beginning of the modernist period, “the importance of the individual, in increasing contrast to that of the social order, continued to rise to the point where society might be valued in so far as it serves the fulfillment of the individual rather than the other way around” (184).

The concept of the individual self, then, underwent a process of change arguably between the time of Descartes and the modernist period. More fundamentally, the very nature of identity also was changing in response to the transformation of the social order

from a religious system predicated upon royal authority and kingship to a more egalitarian order willing to accept or at least to tolerate the expression of individual thought. The relationship between the individual self and collective culture consequently assumes a position of primary importance and interest, and indeed Zaretsky maintains that any definition of a cultural epoch must include a conception of the interaction of the individual self with culture (“Psychoanalysis” 155). As the intent of this dissertation is to show the various and significant ways that Rankian theory illuminates both the identity of the individual self and the identity of modernist culture, Zaretsky’s statement of the importance of the intersection of subjectivity and culture consequently is central to our task.

The collective, cultural sense of modernist identity, as we shall see, is predicated upon Rank’s notion of the individual act of creative will influencing culture, and the synthesis of acts performed by a multitude of diverse artists leads to the intellectual ambiance of modernism, a cultural landscape that Rank in turn assesses and describes in his own psychoanalytic work. Zaretsky is careful to define his notion of culture, whether modernist or postmodernist, and the term for him exclusively represents the interaction of the subject with culture. “Not culture,” he explains, “in its anthropological sense: family, religion, everyday life, food, sex, material objects; nor artistic innovations such as film, abstract art, or the stream-of-consciousness novel” (“Psychoanalysis” 155). Williams makes a comparable distinction, identifying three “general categories” of culture, including “the ‘ideal’, in which culture is a state or process of human perfection, in terms of certain absolute or universal values.” The essence of this definition of culture is

evident in human lives and works, “of those values which can be seen to compose a timeless order, or to have permanent reference to the universal human condition,” and as such may be construed as similar to the “intellectual ambiance” I identify in my study. Secondly, Williams describes “the ‘documentary’, in which culture is the body of intellectual and imaginative work, in which, in a detailed way, human thought and experience are variously recorded”; this concept is equivalent to the writings of Lawrence, Eliot, Yeats, and Rank forming the basis of my investigation. Williams finally defines a third sense as the “‘social’ definition of culture, in which culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour” (41). This last definition represents the daily life of the individual living in modern times, the notion of culture put aside by Zaretsky yet represented in literature of the period as the subject of art. This dissertation, of course, will discuss the modernist expression of all three cultural types defined by Williams, with emphasis upon how the “social” conception of culture, expressed in the “documentary,” is illustrative of the “ideal” culture of the times that Rank observed and described. This discussion ultimately provides insight into the interaction of the self with culture, and thus to ramifications of Zaretsky’s more exclusive definition of a cultural era.

Bell makes perhaps a more useful distinction by identifying two different meanings for the word “modernism.” “It usually refers not to modern literary consciousness at large,” he maintains, “but to the more specific and self-conscious avant-garde movements associated with such writers as Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce,

Wyndham Lewis and Virginia Woolf” (179). My intent, restated in Bell’s terminology, is to show how Rank’s perception of the more spontaneous “consciousness at large,” whether literary, social, or cultural, at once illuminates and refutes the concept of modernism consciously constructed and advanced, as a poetic manifesto, by the artists generally associated with the traditional modernist temperament. The diverse voices of modernism, in fact, often represented Rankian irrationality over the Freudian unconscious, a self at least striving for integrity over an Eliotic self of fragmentation, and the spiritual or magical over the rational constructs of a progressively more scientific and technological age. Modernism as a cultural era, we find, is substantially different from modernism as an artistic movement or agenda.

My selection of three artists to represent the diverse nature of modernism easily could have expanded to thirty-three if the concerns of scope and time did not intervene. My intent was to choose figures working within the context of high modernism, the period when Freudian psychoanalysis had a sustained impact upon culture because of its revelatory sense of innovation. This also represents the period roughly between the First and Second World Wars when Rank was actively providing an alternative set of psychoanalytic ideas. Lawrence’s *The Rainbow* (1915) tests the lowest note of this scale, with work on the novel occurring in the early- to mid-teens, while the poetry of Yeats and Eliot fall squarely within the period under examination, both artists arguably creating their most significant works in the 1920s and early 1930s. The temporal connection is explicit: of the five principle subjects of my study, three of these—Yeats, Freud, and Rank—died in 1939, and although Freud and Rank technically lived to see Germany’s

September invasion of Poland, only Eliot survived long enough to witness the implications and extent of that historic event. Eliot also represents canonical modernism as an intellectual movement, being one of its primary architects, while Lawrence and Yeats not only provide alternative views of modernist culture but also published, in addition to their literary art, expository works examining the individual consciousness and the nature of identity. The artists selected, I believe, consequently provide representative insight not only into the literature and psychoanalytic theory of the period, but also into the nature of modernism both as a cultural epoch and as an artistic movement. Lawrence's and Yeats's alternate views of the age, compared with traditionally modernist artists, are similar in import and intent to Rank's own position as a critic of the prevailing Freudian discipline. As Bell observes specifically of Lawrence, the artist was "not just outside this, partly retrospective, grouping of modernists, he was engaged in a parallel project, both creatively and critically, which is vital to the proper appreciation of these other writers" (179). Much the same could be said of Yeats and of Rank, as well as the majority, perhaps, of the other modernist artists on my hypothetical list of candidates for possible inclusion in this study. As a multitude of alternative voices join to expand and even refute the dogmatic modernist agenda created by figures such as Pound and Eliot, their message assumes a persuasive timbre that deserves equal if not preeminent attention, and indeed these voices are critical for understanding the era they helped to define and describe.

Dealing as I am with the juxtaposition of Rank's psychoanalytic theory with modernist literature and culture, some discussion of what my methodology does *not*

entail may be of value. This study makes no assumptions about the validity of psychoanalysis as a clinical tool, nor will it make any claims about the appropriateness of applying traditional psychoanalytic theory to literary explication. Similarly, I make no conclusions about the validity of Rank's theories, although his identification of creative personality types has undergone controlled statistical analysis with positive results.<sup>6</sup> Although I am examining literature in light of non-literary text, I do not employ the precepts of New Historicism or Cultural Materialism. My intent is not to defamiliarize the text in order to analyze any given social or cultural structure of power, nor to analyze the text to recover a subtext of any given theory of political or social dynamics. I do not employ the intertextuality advocated by Kristeva, nor the extratextuality of Kukács and Goldmann. In the most specific sense, intertextual analysis would be fruitless as most of the modernist artists I examine were unfamiliar with Rank's work, and extratextual inspection, in my opinion, places inappropriate emphasis on the social unconscious of the text for the intent of this study.

More than any other theoretical methodology, the approach of this study is *cotextual* in nature, examining Rank's psychoanalytic writings as text existing on the same cultural plane as the works of the artists examined. Indeed, a case may be made that Rank's intent was to create art in the context of his psychoanalytic literature, and that he approached his work with the same attitudes and assumptions as the major poets and authors of his day. As Rank writes in the Preface to *Beyond*,

This book is an attempt to picture human life, not only as I have studied it in many forms for more than a generation, but as I have achieved it for

myself, in experience, beyond the compulsion to change it in accordance with any manmade ideology. Man is born beyond psychology and he dies beyond it but he can *live* beyond it only through vital experience of his own—in religious terms, through revelation, conversion, or re-birth. (16)

Examining Rank's cultural theories as works of art existing in a cotextual space with that of early twentieth-century authors brings a wide range of benefits to modernist studies. Not only does this dissertation intend to demonstrate the independent and pervasive nature of collective ideologies unique to the modernist era, but it also provides new readings of works by Lawrence, Eliot, and Yeats based upon Rank's theories, thereby providing a model for similar readings of other modernist artists. This study additionally means to extend the definition of the modernist era, following guidelines suggested by Zaretsky and other cultural theorists, as a cultural and aesthetic phenomenon predicated upon changes in the structure of subjectivity, particularly in terms of the relationship of the self to the surrounding culture. Finally, I will offer Rank's theories, consistent as they are with the goals of mature culture studies, as a new starting point for post-Freudian, postmodern literary and cultural understanding, and demonstrate that Rank's theories provide not only a method for reading literature, but a means for addressing issues critical for our time.

Chapter One examines Rank's place in psychoanalytic history, describing his theories and explaining the reasons for the continued neglect of his writings. I will explain the relevancy of Rank's theories to contemporary literary criticism, concentrating on his later work involving artistic creation and the exertion of individual will to fabricate

a personal identity and, indeed, an immortal soul. I will also establish the goal of demonstrating how Rank's theoretical writings reflect the intellectual landscape of the early twentieth-century modernist movement, providing a cotextual expository tool for examining the literary shape and substance of those works. In addition, I outline my attempt to extend the definition of modernity using an interpretation of culture study by Donald and recent theoretical work by Zaretsky. Through examination of Rank's theories and the work of significant modernist authors, I will show throughout this dissertation that "modernity" is a duplicitous term denoting both an artistic movement and a cultural epoch, and that understanding the era means examining the ways that individual identity interfaced with culture, provoking changes both in subjectivity and in culture itself. Rank's theories are relevant in the context of a post-theory twenty-first century environment, for they not only connect with the scientific, deterministic origins of the psychoanalytic movement, but also provide a context for reading literature emphasizing the individuality and autonomy of human beings while emphasizing a will to empowerment, much in contrast to the Freudian thought that dominated theory and criticism of the past century.

Chapter Two discusses Lawrence's interest in psychoanalytic theory and examines *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, two lay works written by Lawrence on the emerging new theories of the unconscious. Lawrence essentially rejects Freud's approach toward understanding the unconscious, often in aggressive terms, and his attraction toward mythology and the collective conscious naturally places him closer to Rank than to Freud in the study of the individual's

underlying mental processes. The chapter will analyze the use of mythology and the sense of collective conscious in *The Rainbow*, a book Lawrence originally conceived in conjunction with *Women in Love*, and will examine the relevancy of Rank's approach to gender identification and social order. In *Beyond*, Rank maintains that men subconsciously refuse to accept a collective self and the certainty of mortality, and in so doing inevitably distance themselves from women by fabricating a distinctively masculine social environment. I will discuss Lawrence's fictional depiction of this situation in the novel, and further interpret feminine rebellion against the masculine social construct, represented in the character of Ursula, as a fictional representation of Rank's theories of the position of women in society. Rank views women as a source of generation and as such acceptant of the cycles of birth and death, mutation and change that men invariably reject; women also naturally conceal their own feelings in a masculine society, completely revealing themselves only in the act of actually living their daily lives. Again, I will discuss Lawrence's feminine characters as fictional representations of these notions of gender response. Rank also maintains that men, in their rejection of procreation and death, inevitably shy away from women psychologically, viewing them primarily as objects of sexual release and control, and I will analyze Lawrence's characters of Skrebensky and Tom as representations of this masculine attitude. Finally, I will look at the personalities presented in *Rainbow* in their relation to Rank's theories of creative will and of guilt, the end result of existence in a repressive social order, and show that Lawrence's fiction provides a comprehensive

statement of Rank's later theories, in a different context and apparently without prior familiarity with Rank's work.

The study of T. S. Eliot in Chapter Three concentrates on subjectivity and the creation of self through analysis of the narrative voice of major poems such as "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "Little Gidding," and *The Waste Land*, and further considers voices in Eliot's poetry conspicuous because of their scarcity. The potentially rich voice of woman, for example, is obscured behind Eliot's masculine poetic persona. Rank's notion of language both illuminates this linguistic slight and aligns his thought with contemporary theories of expression. Similarly, the legitimate voices of Jews are unheard in Eliot's poetry, the Jewish presence consistently reduced to avaricious, stereotypical caricatures. This marginalization of sex and race, along with the poetic voice obscuring them both, is discussed in the context of Rank's theory of clinical practice and his concept of the Double, a narcissistic aspect of self-creation intended to protect core values of the self and to promote immortality by casting off traits perceived as undesirable or conflicting. I also demonstrate that the theory of artistic creation presented in Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1922) actually is a microcosm of Rank's views of the development of culture and the nature and responsibility of the artist. Rank suggests that human beings create culture by changing natural conditions to accommodate the spiritual self, and culture then reflexively is instrumental in shaping the self into various personality types; Eliot parallels this symbiotic process by maintaining that any new work of art alters culture, which in turn changes the medium of creation for any new artistic production. I conclude the chapter by suggesting that Eliot fulfills Rank's

idea of the neurotic rather than the artistic personality type, and maintaining that Eliot fashioned a critical theory that in essence inappropriately projected his own neurotic acceptance of fragmentation and decay onto an emerging modernist culture.

Chapter Four considers mythology and collective culture in the poetry of Yeats in relation to Rank's theory, with specific reference to Yeats's attitude toward women and his longing for immortality. The desire for a changeless world of permanence and immutability, famously presented in poems such as "Sailing to Byzantium" and "The Wild Swans at Coole," reflects Rank's work in a manner similar to that of Lawrence. Yeats's relationship with women also emerges both biographically and poetically as a conflicted attraction equally marked by desire and fear, similar to the depiction of masculine sexuality in *The Rainbow*. The motif of the Double appears in later poetry by Yeats as the manifestation of a positive acceptance of the vicissitudes of life, the result of the poet's eventual affirmation of a personal psychology that is constantly changing, and again Rank's theory illuminates this poetic situation. I discuss Maud Gonne, Yeats's inspiration and a political revolutionary devoted to the Irish cause, as a representation of Rank's notion of the rebellious female, and similarly look at George Hyde-Lees, Yeats's wife, as an embodiment of the second type of feminine reaction to masculine domination in Rank's theories, that of submission to the role assigned to her by a male-oriented society. I affirm that Yeats's experiments in automatic script have implications for understanding both the objectification of women and his affinity for the irrational and spiritual, and I discuss his conception of the gyre and its depiction through geometric figures, described in *A Vision*, as representations of the intersection of subjectivity and

objectivity so important to Yeats biographically and to postmodern culture studies conceptually.

The discussion in Chapter Five makes a case for the relevancy of Rankian thought to the present time. I discuss current ideas concerning the development of individual and cultural identity, and look at Rank's theory in the context of current work in science, culture studies, and literary criticism. I also examine the implications of using psychoanalytic theory to understand art, and recommend Rank's work as a starting point for developing a new concept of humanism and for advancing twenty-first century post-theory literary and culture studies.

The Conclusion summarizes the findings of my study and reviews the relationship of Rank's theories to the work of Lawrence, Eliot, and Yeats. I discuss Rank's dual role as psychoanalyst/artist, exerting his own creative will in the development of expository texts expressing the modernist temperament, work existing in a cotextual space with the poetry and fiction of the era. I reassert my view of Rank's writings as a reflection of the pervading intellectual environment of the early twentieth century, and consider that environment the period's own identity developed through collective cultural will exerted by creative members of society. I reaffirm that the term "modernism" denotes both a formal artistic movement and the early twentieth-century cultural landscape, and that representations of these two entities vary widely in terms of form, meaning, and import. While modernism as a movement emphasizes the unconscious, the fragmented self, and the scientific and rational, modernism in and of culture concurrently adhered to values

associated with the conscious mind, the unified self, and the irrational or spiritual in understanding daily life.

## Chapter One

### Otto Rank: Within Culture

Otto Rank's notion of birth trauma initially did not appear to represent a major transgression against Freud's work. Indeed, Freud had come to a similar conclusion concerning anxiety in his *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926), published almost concurrently with Rank's monograph, and he later began minimizing the Oedipus complex in his own essays. Freud's intent was to modify his concept of anxiety to include a more complex role for the ego in the generation of anxiety: "[Freud's] new theory introduced the participation of the ego in the origin of anxiety," Menaker writes in *Freedom*. "Instead of automatically converting libido to anxiety, the ego used the libido of the to-be-repressed instinctual impulse for the production of anxiety" (107). Rank's theory, by contrast, ultimately emphasizes human interaction rather than the ego as the primary generator of anxiety: participation in an unfamiliar or threatening social interaction is equivalent to the primal separation from the mother at birth. According to Menaker, "For Freud the danger precipitating the anxiety lies in the accumulation of forbidden instinctual impulses that must be repressed; for Rank the danger lies in the loss of a completely protective and satisfying environment later to be perceived as 'mother'" (108).

Despite these differences, Freud initially embraced Rank's theory and was pleased to accept the title of "Creator of Psychoanalysis" on the monograph's dedication

page. As weeks passed, however, Rank's rivals in the Committee gradually convinced Freud, by then suffering from a horribly disfiguring form of cancer, that the book undermined the primacy of the Oedipus complex in psychoanalytic theory and as such represented a challenge to Freud himself. Karl Abraham was perhaps the most vocal critic of Rank's ideas, and he influenced Freud through a series of private letters, maintaining that *Trauma* represented a departure from scientific procedure and a sign of even further transgression to come. Less than a year after praising Rank's work, Freud had rejected it entirely. "With the assistance of the ever-vigilant Abraham," Kramer writes in the Introduction to a collection of Rank's American lectures, "Freud had been forced to see, finally, that Rank's theory implicated fear of the mother over fear of the father in the etiology of neurosis—and thus was a blatant denial of the Oedipus complex" (25). The strained relationship between Rank and Freud approached the breaking point as Freud began incorporating elements of Rank's ideas into his own papers, without crediting Rank as an inspiration, and suggested that he had read only part of *Trauma*.<sup>1</sup> The two men finally parted for good during a meeting on April 12, 1926. Freud's rejection of Rank is clear in a letter to Sandor Ferenczi, one of Rank's most prominent supporters, in which Freud describes their last visit: "Two facts were unambiguous: that he was unwilling to renounce any part of the theory in which he had deposited his neurosis, and that he took not the slightest step to approach the Society here." After praising both his own tutelage and Rank's accomplishments, Freud is adamant. "So quits! On his final visit I saw no occasion for expressing my special tenderness; I was honest

and hard. But he is gone now and we have to bury him. Abraham has proved right” (E. Jones 76).<sup>2</sup>

Rank punctuated his separation from the Vienna psychoanalytic movement by opening a practice in New York, and for the last fifteen years of his life, divided his time between the United States and France, living and working outside established psychoanalytic circles. His chapters in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, along with his co-authorship credit, were omitted without remark from the eighth edition in 1930 and from all subsequent versions.<sup>3</sup> He was dropped from the list of honorary members of the American Psychoanalytic Association, a move prompted by Freudian advocates due to Rank’s unconventional thinking, and he consequently lost his referral base among analysts in training. “Those who had been Rank’s analysands were required to undergo re-analysis with a proper Freudian in order to maintain their professional standing,” Lieberman writes in his Translator’s Introduction to *Psychology and the Soul*. “In that climate, only the hardy or foolhardy would cite, much less translate, Rank” (xix). Indeed, *Trauma* languished for five years before finally appearing in an English translation, the initial sign that Rank’s works would remain little read by professionals and seldom reissued by publishers, a trend that continues into the present day. Freud’s dominance of the profession he created was overpowering in his own time, and his rejection of Rank may be the primary reason for Rank’s continued status as a *persona non grata* in psychoanalytic research.

*Trauma* may have been the most direct cause of Rank’s marginalization in the profession, but the second reason involves his ultimate rejection of the scientific basis for

psychoanalysis. Abraham certainly was correct in accusing Rank of an unscientific research methodology, but Rank came by that bent honestly: Freud originally had cultivated him for his insight into the relationship of myth and history to psychoanalytic study. As Marinelli and Mayer point out in *Dreaming by the Book* (2003), an insightful history of the psychoanalytic movement, “The increasing significance that mythology, literature, and art history were coming to have for Freud, and also for Jung, as confirmation of psychoanalytic theory called for a new kind of nonmedical expert, and Rank was trained for this systematically with financial support from Freud” (191). Nonetheless, Freud’s primary interest in the human mind was scientific in nature, and his justification for psychoanalysis as a medical discipline was predicated upon scientific method. Despite his almost fatherly relationship with Rank during the years of their close association, it is easy to imagine that Freud retained considerable skepticism for Rank’s interests, and that he would eventually disassociate himself from Rank’s theories, just as he had earlier with those of Jung. Lieberman draws attention to this fundamental difference between the two men: “Freud—atheist, neurologist, and former hypnotist—championed a psychology without spiritualism and metaphysics, in order to meet the requirements of the new scientific materialism, and called religion an illusion without a future. Rank respected religion whether or not it was an illusion” (*PS* xviii).

Rank’s skepticism concerning the scientific basis of psychoanalysis matured during this final phase of his life, and he believed that psychoanalysis should be predicated upon the changing mores of culture rather than a deterministic construct of biological origins. “Modern psychology is far from being a generally valid, that is,

absolute science,” he writes in *Beyond*. “Spontaneous developments affecting large groups of the population have shaken considerably the social order from which those psychological theories sprang” (25). Later in that work, Rank makes his criticism personal. Speaking of the Darwin and Marx, Rank maintains that the two thinkers erred by imposing notions specific to their own time and place upon the whole of human nature. “Freud, being psychologically as deterministic as Darwin was biologically and Marx economically, made the less excusable error. By applying both Darwin’s biological and Marx’s social determinism to the personality itself, he deprived it of the very qualities which make man’s life human; autonomy, responsibility and conscience” (34).

In addition to his rejection of biological determinism, Rank developed his theory of the creative will, or the individual’s ability to develop a personality apart from social convention that is at once life-affirming and the source of personal immortality. Rank is careful to distinguish his conception of will from similar terminology adopted by Nietzsche, Adler, and especially Freud, and defines his own meaning of will as “an autonomous organizing force in the individual which does not represent any particular biological impulse or social drive but constitutes the creative expression of the total personality and distinguishes one individual from another” (*BP* 50). Menaker sees Rank’s concept of will as not only another intellectual departure from Freudian psychoanalysis but an indication of a primary emphasis upon individuation and personal aspiration as well. “An important concomitant of this change,” Menaker writes in *Separation, Will, and Creativity*, commenting on Rank’s shift from a father-centered system of psychoanalysis to one based upon relationship with the mother, “was another shift:

namely from an emphasis on the instincts as primary for development of the individual—in which case ego development was derivative—to an awareness of the primacy of ego and self development” (34-35). Rank thus further undermined Freud’s insistence that psychoanalysis is a “science” that can systematically trace anxiety as the effect of causality, the accumulated impact of an individual’s past experiences, and suggested that the creative will, a conscious act of self realization, is a powerful human impulse that introduces an element of unpredictability into the process of causation. Rank later related this concept to the formulation of an individual personal and cultural soul, an identity construct ultimately providing continuation for a given culture and effective immortality for the individuals bound to its social order.

Rank’s notion of society as a mutable atmosphere in which individual psychology reacts and develops through force of individual will is a central concern of his later research, and in this respect he further reacts against the deterministic, Freudian view of human beings limited by biological and environmental influences. Nor was Rank averse to using the history of psychoanalysis as a foundation for his own attack against that discipline’s scientific basis: “Psychoanalysis showed us that the soul, believed lost, still exists; but we have to resist the way in which psychoanalysis attempts to demonstrate it scientifically. By its very nature this demonstration could only fail, concluding that the soul’s existence can no more be proved than that of God, with which it is identical. In the process of verification the soul evaporates like precious matter in the alchemist’s retort: instead of gold, only the base precipitate remains” (*PS* 23). By doubting the scientific basis for psychoanalysis, Rank was in effect undermining that aspect of the new

discipline providing credibility in an increasingly scientific, post-Victorian world. The regular members of the APA, the Paris Psychological Institute, and the Committee itself had good reason to fear such dissent in a field that was, after all, their livelihood.

The psychoanalytic community similarly found it easy to ignore Rank's work since he never fashioned this research into an organized and consistent theory, nor did his published work normally contain the customary case histories found in the psychoanalytic writings of other practitioners. This intellectual waywardness is a third reason for the continued obscurity of his studies. "While there are important central concepts in Rank's thinking they cannot be said to constitute an organized theory," Menaker notes in *Otto Rank: A Rediscovered Legacy (RL)*. "Indeed, Rank was opposed to theory formation in relation to the psychic life of man because it gave the false impression of consistency, whereas the psychic life in actuality is in flux—in a process of continuous change" (3).

Rank's theories may be scattered among his published works over a period of nearly three decades, but *Beyond* represents Rank's final attempt to explore the cultural and social implications of his work in succinct form, and as such emerges as the text most representative of his overall thought. Rank's foremost task in this, his final book, is to demonstrate the fallacy of Freudian psychology as clinical "cure" for an individual's behavioral issues. Freud's application of evolutionary biology to a notion of personal development, while ostensibly giving his theories a scientific basis, ultimately resulted in a deterministic view of human nature that accepted bourgeois values as objectively normal. The established practice of psychoanalysis, in Rank's mind, thus is based upon

the precepts of the prevailing social order, and as such serves to indoctrinate patients into mainstream culture rather than to identify individual characteristics and talents outside the norm. One of Freud's major errors, Rank maintains, was to interpret "fundamental drives in the human being in terms of a therapeutic ideology which justified the psychology of a then successful type with its social and moral standards" (BP 28). Rank similarly believed that psychoanalysis had influenced modern educational theory, resulting in pedagogy emphasizing conformity to the existing order rather than encouraging personal development. "Instead of adjusting the individual to a social order continuously shifting, hence, threatened in its foundation," Rank writes, "progressive educators proclaimed the individual's capacity to change as the main goal of present day-education. They thereby tacitly declared the bankruptcy of traditional education, which, by its very nature, can only serve to indoctrinate and thus maintain collective ideologies but cannot foster the development of individual selfhood" (BP 19). Rank's *Modern Education* (1932) is a book-length exposition of this theme.

Freudian psychology thus represents for Rank an intellectual attempt to identify the spontaneity of everyday events as irrational and consequently unacceptable to reasoning human beings, and thereby to establish control over the environment by conceptualizing human action as rational. In fact, Rank maintains, human existence is overwhelmingly irrational in its essence, and psychoanalysis and modern educational theory merely promote neurosis by forcing the individual to deny the irrationality of daily life. "While on the one hand," Rank writes, "the development of neurosis on a large scale indicates that man has over-reached himself in his attempt to control his nature, the

neurotic type, at the same time, rebels against becoming a victim of over-rationalization. The dual rôle which his conflict forces him to play makes the neurotic personality appear irrational to himself and to others” (*BP* 49).

Rank’s response to both irrationality and individual neurosis remains one of his most striking intellectual characteristics, and presents a clear distinction between his own notion of psychoanalysis in a modern context and that of Freud. While Freud’s perceptions and motivations depend upon a nineteenth-century commitment to science as a means of solving complex human problems and relieving the pain of everyday suffering, Rank’s theory suggests that neurosis is an incurable condition of existence in modern society, and that understanding the inevitability of unease and isolation may itself provide comfort. Freud essentially intended to exert the human intellect in an effort to control nature and make it conform to artificial design; Rank wanted to understand humanity’s condition and thereby establish a psychoanalytic situation that would conform to the natural order. He supports the logic of his choice in *Beyond*: “That Freud’s psychology, being an interpretation rather than an explanation of human nature, was not valid for all races, Jung pointed out; that it did not apply to different social environments, Adler emphasized; but that it did not even permit individuals of the same race and social background to deviate from the accepted type led me *beyond these differences in psychologies to a psychology of difference*” (29; Rank’s emphasis). His theory of psychoanalysis views individual personality as a struggle for individuation and creative expression in the midst of restrictive social and cultural forces, and is predicated upon an

understanding of the process of individuation through creative will and an acceptance of the chaotic causality of human events.

In *Truth and Reality*, Rank specifically outlines the development of identity within modern culture as a process of “ideal formation” involving “the setting up of one’s own moral norms.” This process depends to a large extent upon the individual’s attitude toward the exercise of creative will and the extent to which will is acknowledged as a positive expression of the personality. People with a negative attitude toward the expression of will believe that their actions are influenced primarily by forces outside their own conscious, while those with a positive attitude toward will accept its expression as natural and even inevitable. “The whole difference lies in the fact that this force as an external cannot be borne and causes the will to react negatively as denial,” Rank writes. “But if this outer force becomes inner, then there arise two possibilities, the one of which leads to neurotic reactions, the other to [the development of] ethical standards” (54).

Rank identifies three unique personality types representative of the development of identity. “In the sphere of consciousness,” he explains, “we see these various levels of development toward ideal formation comprehended in three formulae which correspond to three different ages, world views and human types” (60). The first is the average or adapted type, a “duty conscious” individual who “needs external compulsion” (57, 58). “The first level,” Rank maintains, “is oriented to the external world, corresponds to the adaptation of the ego to it; in this the individual takes over the social and sexual ideals of the majority for his own, and this is not only a passive identification but an effort of will which certainly ends in a submission of will” (57). Rank relates this stage to the

Apollonian world view with a credo of “know thyself in order to improve thyself” (in terms of universal norms),” and the goal of self development primarily is to become integrated into the social order by adapting its prevalent ideals and morals without expressing opposing or independent thought (60). The majority of human beings, needless to say, adhere to this category and do not develop an ethical sense beyond what is socially prescribed.

The second personality type is the neurotic, an individual who asserts an independent identity but cannot accept the expression of will as ethically justified. This type is “guilt-conscious” and “defends against every kind of external or internal compulsion” (57, 58). The neurotic therefore is incapable of directing the force of will toward positive, constructive creation because the compulsion for conformity impedes the creative process. As Rank explains, the neurotic is conscious of the rejection of will and aware of this impediment to creation. The neurotic suffers not only from this awareness “but also from insight regarding it which, according to the degree of insight, manifests itself as consciousness of guilt or inferiority feeling. He rejects the self because in him the self is expressed on the whole negatively as counter-will and accordingly cannot justify itself ethically, that is, cannot reform and revalue itself in terms of an ideal formation” (60). Rank believes this stage of development is consistent with the Dionysian world view as it inclines toward “estatic-orgiastic destruction,” and the motto “be thyself” is appropriate as the neurotic insists upon self expression even though non-creative in nature. “The longing of the neurotic to be himself,” Rank maintains, “is a form of the affirmation of his neurosis, perhaps the only form in which he can affirm himself.

He is, as it were, already himself, at any rate far more than the others and has only a step to take in order to become wholly himself, that is, insane” (61).

The third personality type is the artist, a person who acknowledges the validity of individual will and “accepts himself and his inner ideal formation and seeks accordingly to adjust the environment and the fellow man to himself.” This type is “self-conscious” in the sense of being aware of inner values and is able to “overcome compulsion through freedom” (58). The artist successfully has resolved conflicts related to the expression of personal will and the compulsion for social conformity, and confidently and forcefully uses will in the creation of cultural artifacts, whether social, political, or artistic. “On the third ethical level,” Rank suggests, “there are no longer the external demands or norms, but the own inner ideals, which were not only created by the individual out of himself but which the self also willingly affirms as its own commandments” (57). Rank relates this stage of development to the Kantian Critique of Reason, “determine thyself from thyself in the sense of a true self knowledge and simultaneously an actual self creation” (61).

Rank uses these three personality types both as criteria for evaluating individual identity in the social order and as an indication of developmental levels in the context of his clinical practice. While most people attain a specific personality type and express the characteristics of that type throughout their lives, Rank also believes that will therapy can effectively assist the individual, through stages of self-recognition, to eventually acknowledge the expression of creative will. With the analyst’s guidance, Rank maintains, individuals can develop the system of inner values and ethics that Rank sees as crucial, particularly in a modernist culture emphasizing the social codification of values

in religious and political institutions. Rank warns that the process neither is planned nor straightforward, “but a continuous struggle against outer forces and a constant conflict with inner ones, in which the individual must live through for himself all stages of his evolution.” The struggle itself is important, Rank suggests, “for just this living through and fighting through constitute the valuable, the constructive, the creative which does not inhibit the will but strengthens and develops it” (55).

Rank’s view of personality types and the essential irrationality of existence emerges from his extended study of the primitive social order. The first sign of culture, Rank maintains, developed from a primitive need for spiritual immortality, and early humans fulfilled this need by identifying an individual’s shadow or reflection as a second self or immortal soul. This primitive concept of the Double, moreover, is confusing to modern logic as it interprets the Double as a representation of the individual both living and dead. Rank notes that early humans had different names for each representation, generally designating the soul of the living individual as “the vehicle of vital and often of the conscious life,” while the soul of the dead was regarded as the individual’s essence living on in perpetuity, the immortal self” (*BP* 73). The implications of this early belief in the duality of the soul are important to Rank, for he sees in this concept the origin of modern society’s attempts to preserve the self: “From the belief in a soul of the dead in one form or another sprang all religions; from the belief in the soul of the living, psychology eventually developed” (*BP* 74). Primitive soul belief expressed in the Double eventually evolved into myths of twinship, with the Grecian Castor and Pollux and the Roman Romulus and Remus becoming fabricators of civilization, and thereby the notion

of the creative hero came to support a belief in human immortality. This notion in turn developed into the concept of kingship and royal succession, with the ritual killing of the divine king by his successor taking the place of the earlier myths of twin murder.

Regardless of the mythic context, Rank maintains, each ancient concept represented a method for the eternal preservation of the soul, and thus culture evolved as an artificial construct ensuring eternal life. Culture eventually emerges in Rank's writings as "an expression of the irrational self seeking material immortalization in lasting achievements." As he explains in *Beyond*, "culture serves a dual function: it preserves the old spiritual life-values in a more permanent form, independent of the seasonal re-creation, and at the same time provides a more direct and permanent participation of the average group member in the creation and maintenance of its symbols" (84).

The primary way an individual may contribute to the fabrication of culture, Rank suggests, is by actively resisting accepted social norms and creating works of artistic, scientific, or political expression that at once signify the creator's personality and help move the existing culture into a new direction. The early manifestation of this creative personality was the hero, an individual with preternatural insight and abilities who rebelled against the current order and constructed a new society reflecting the hero's knowledge and insights. Creative individuals in modern society are comparable to mythological heroes, Rank suggests, for they possess the courage to suffer the trauma of separation from the comforts of accepted social convention and develop new expressions of the self. Rank's concept of the will, the personal creative force behind individual expression, is the primary method of establishing a unique personality and therefore

became the central concern of his philosophy and practice of psychoanalysis. “Even if human nature and man’s behaviour are absolutely determined,” Rank maintains, “man’s belief in his free will, ability to choose and individual responsibility would still be his ‘psychology’ and the real object of human psychology” (*BP* 34).

Desire for immortality and the exertion of individual will may be prominent themes in Rank’s theory, but he nonetheless recognizes that the existence of immortality objectively cannot be proven with tools in the physical universe. The extraordinary faith in continuance of the soul expressed individually and collectively emerges in Rank’s writings as both the essence of human culture and yet another example of the pervasiveness of irrationality. As Jack Jones suggests, Rank “was declaring that the primary human motive is not anything tangible, material, biological, economic or objective, but a psychological intangible, which was, moreover, illusory,” but the insubstantial nature of that motive in no way diminishes its impact or centrality, nor has that faith “ceased to operate upon the advent of the post-religious, rational consciousness. It then merely assumes various rational guises, and sometimes those of psychoanalytic theory itself” (“Five” 64). Similarly, Rank understands that not every human being can fulfill the creative role of the artist, and suggests that a normal person expresses will by adopting prominent aspects of current culture and subsequently affirming the validity of those aspects, while others may attempt to transcend the boundaries of cultural and social order through insanity, criminality, or modes of artistic creation that simply repeat existing forms. “All mass psychology,” Rank maintains, “. . . is shaped after the outstanding individual as an ‘inspirational’ self. Thus the personality-type of a certain

time and age is patterned between the outstanding type of the leader and the average man who through magical or spiritual participation is striving towards this ideal” (*BP* 163). Jack Jones once again clarifies Rank’s meaning by emphasizing that, unlike art in Rank’s theory, “neither ‘individuality’ nor ‘creativity’ as such can serve as any absolute criterion of value” as its expression is so varied in society (“Five” 66). Art provides just such an absolute measure for value, and as Williams’s notion of “ideal” culture suggests, thus serves as the moral and spiritual reservoir for the artist and the common individual alike. The neurotic, unable to participate fully in the social order nor capable of producing art, remains on the fringes, resisting conformity and suffering the artist’s inherent sense of isolation without the corresponding assurance of spiritual continuity.

The development of culture thus provides most human beings with a social structure promising eternal life through creative will but, according to Rank, the struggle to conform to an artificial social construct not only causes neurosis, but also directly leads to a fundamental conflict between the sexes. Primitive men rejected the procreative aspects of sex in an attempt to emphasize immortality through totemistic ritual, Rank maintains, and this peculiarly masculine perception persists into modern times in a way that disrupts natural relationships between the sexes. Men continue to reject the notion of their own mortality and have constructed an essentially masculine culture in order to ensure eternal life; they reject women as the embodiment of their mortality, but at the same time have sexualized women to be instruments of erotic desire. Women generally accept their own mortality and their procreative role as mother, but find themselves promoting the irrational elements of life while surrounded by a rational and masculine

social landscape; they react either by becoming more masculine and aggressive in an attempt to counter the essential maleness of society, or they submit to men's wishes and become the sexualized individuals men desire. Rank in fact rejects Freudian notions of the primal scene and environmental trauma, presenting instead the development of a masculine culture as the cause of modern sexual inhibition and dysfunction. Sexual disorder, for Rank, is the modern manifestation of "originally positive expressions of an irrational ideology invented by man to save his ego from the ultimate destiny of sex: death. In this way he built up a sexual self which finally lost its positive function when the cultural climate in which it was meant to function, namely, the magical world-view with its will to immortality, was replaced by a rational philosophy of life" (*BP* 233-34).

Rank's analysis of sexual conflict provides a unique context for understanding attitudes toward gender in modernist writing. Freudian advocates such as Lionel Trilling recognize the masculine priorities of traditional psychoanalysis and see Freud as the emblem incarnate of masculine dominance. "Freud's concern for the preservation of what James calls 'the masculine character,'" Trilling notes in his lecture "Freud: Within and Beyond Culture," ". . . has been made a point in the reproach directed at Freud that he displayed a masculine chauvinism, and, what is more, that, for all his overt preoccupation with love, he was yet more preoccupied with power, with aggression and personal force, or, at the best, with achievement" (86). Stephen Frosh similarly recognizes this masculine intellectual posture of Freud in "Psychoanalysis in Britain: 'The Rituals of Destruction,'" an essay joining Trilling's in an attempt to overlook, trivialize, or even affirm the value of Freud's masculine approach. According to Frosh, the "rationalist project of

modernism, with its science-nature opposition and the search for mastery of a resistive other, is wrapped around a highly gendered structure in which what is central is the idea of the male master placing order on feminine chaos—that is, mind conquering the body” (118). Rank, having rejected the rationalistic basis of Freudian psychoanalysis, would have similarly rejected the validity of a rationalist goal in modernist culture and would have interpreted the analogy of masculine and feminine conflict more literally than Frosh might allow. Indeed, Rank perceives that women exist beyond the reaches of psychology and express themselves in opposition to the masculine social order through the very act of living, an inherent display of the irrational. “Woman seems to have a resistance to revealing her own psychology,” Rank maintains,

first, because it is her last weapon against the man, the last refuge of her crushed and submissive self; second, because, as has often been said, her psychology is a mystery not only to the man but to herself, a secret which, by her very nature, she is never tempted to penetrate or to give away—which can never be grasped by psychological knowledge but only by human understanding. (*BP* 249)

Perhaps because of the psychological obscurity of woman, and perhaps equally because of the cultural dominance of masculine ideology, critical readings of the literature of the era traditionally have privileged male artists, presumably with masculine attitudes and intent. Only comparatively recently has attention shifted to other voices resonating throughout the period. Barratt and Straus, in “Toward Postmodern Masculinities,” question the continued reliance upon Freudian Oedipal theory in the

definition of masculinity, and therefore provide support for Rank's theories of birth trauma and sexual difference, although nearly sixty years after *Trauma* and without mentioning Rank in the text. "Early psychoanalytic literature tends to take certain traditional and conventional mythologies of masculinity as its implicit and explicit standard," the authors suggest. "It is somewhat embarrassing that even by the end of this discipline's first century, only a few psychoanalytic practitioners have undertaken to scrutinize the operation of this critically" (37). While Rank's view of masculinity may contain its own conventional mythologies, albeit supported with extensive anthropological and historical evidence, he at least perceives the dangers of the oedipal construct and shifts attention to a new sphere of reference perhaps more useful in defining masculinity in postmodern times. Whatever credibility this critical environment may provide to Rank's notion of a masculine-centered culture, Rank nevertheless intends his assessment of the essential maleness of the era to be a criticism of the existing social order and an attempt to alter psychoanalytic practice with the goal to embrace difference, perhaps most of all the difference represented by the perspective of women. Indeed, Rank's work provides a context for understanding themes of gender present but traditionally overlooked in modernist literature, and not only supports feminist readings of text but encourages a new perception of modernism as a period eminently concerned with gender issues in society and culture.

To illuminate the current relationship between the sexes, Rank once again turns to anthropological research and finds that early humans existed in a predominantly female-oriented society, with women communally caring for children and providing physical and

spiritual nurture for the tribe. As he writes in *Beyond*, “Not only were children of different age and sex confined to separate groups but—and in this, primitive society is to be clearly distinguished from all conceptions of society in modern times—the place held by woman was given special significance” (203). This significance was obscured, Rank maintains, with the advent of a masculine culture, and human beings lost effective access to primal knowledge of the spirit resonating within womanhood. Freudian psychology, as an exponent of the masculine social order, inevitably assists in the subterfuge: “From the point of view of man’s rational psychology,” Rank writes, “‘feminine’ traits of emotionalism appear ‘irrational,’ whereas in reality they represent human qualities of a positive nature. Since modern psychology is not only masculine but derived from our neurotic type of man, a great deal of its terminology originated from a misinterpretation of woman in terms of man’s sexual ideology” (*BP* 241).

In Rank’s interpretation, language itself developed in a manner that excludes the supernaturally intuitive and validly irrational psychology of woman, a degradation of the communicative process that continues to impede discussion of gender issues. Language originally consisted of “a free expression of the natural self,” Rank maintains, but “gradually developed into a rational means of communication voicing the predominant ideology. Thus, in contrasting masculine ideology and feminine psychology we have to guard against becoming involved in the intricacies of linguistic confusion inherent in human speech” (*BP* 242). Modern attempts to define the feminine personality inevitably fail due to this linguistic corruption, and indeed an understanding of the psychology of

either gender, for Rank, is unreachable through Freudian analysis due to the restrictions of terminology and a failure to appreciate the unique causality of human existence.

A fulfilling life for Rank is a conscious process of exerting will to create an individual personality and consequently to alter culture; a Freudian psychoanalytic process emphasizing examination of past events and the unconscious mind as supposed therapy is untenable. “Freud’s therapeutic method aims at making the individual merely conscious of his irrational self,” Rank maintains, “thereby convincing him that it had been rightly suppressed and should now be rationally condemned. Thus originated the famous theory of the ‘unconscious,’ a term designating the most vital force of human behaviour as a mere absence of consciousness” (*BP* 38). This position, if widely adopted by critics, would appear to shift the emphasis away from the importance of the unconscious in modernist writings and toward an understanding of the irrational forces in daily existence. Rank specifically identifies as folly the attempt to express the unconscious in works of art. “In their extremely conscious effort to reproduce what they call the ‘unconscious,’” he writes, “modern painters and writers have followed modern psychology in attempting the impossible, namely to rationalize the irrational” (*BP* 13).

The centrality of irrational forces in human existence, as they are represented by the suppressed voice of women as well as the neurosis caused by rejecting these forces, becomes an overriding concern for Rank in his later work. Along with his concept of creative will, the appreciation of irrationality supplants Freudian notions of the Oedipus complex and the unconscious in Rank’s form of psychoanalysis. Frosh offers that articulating irrationality may be an inadvertent and perhaps peripheral benefit to Freudian

psychoanalysis. “This might actually be one of [psychoanalysis’s] modernist features,” he writes, “that it aspires to conquering the irrational but in so doing gives it voice, so widening the scope for facing conflict and contradiction, and thence for deepening human experience.” Frosh goes so far as to use an example of Freud giving rational structure to a female patient’s hysteria, “creating a space in ‘science’ for the voice of the irrational. . . . Freud listens, reflects her speech back to her, makes it visible and meaningful. What she says is not mad any more, it makes sense, it is worthy of respect” (119). Rank of course would give preeminence to the expression of the irrational through living, and would resist any attempt to either dominate a female patient by presuming to explain her psychology in masculine terminology or to “conquer” the irrational through psychoanalytic tools. Indeed, Frosh’s depiction of Freud’s interpretative function provides a personification of Rank’s notion of the modernist artist attempting to simulate the unconscious through highly-constructed and rational intent. Freud in effect becomes the anti-artist of the period, one who assimilates all of the cultural artifacts leading to the compromised spiritual state of modern human beings and produces a neurotic, unredemptive product that reflects a disintegrated moral state without recognizing its import or offering a viable alternative.

So we are presented in Rank’s later writings with a modernist landscape affirming irrationality and rejecting the therapeutic abilities of Freudian psychoanalysis as well as the validity of analyzing or expressing the unconscious mind. Issues of sexual conflict and gender identification become crucial for understanding the modernist social structure and culture, and an active participation in the process of individuation and creativity is

essential for the advancement of that culture. This is a landscape skewed, we must remember, not by early twenty-first century revisionist theory and criticism but by Rank, a contemporary participant in the times and one close to the elements composing what we define as the modernist temperament. Just as importantly, Rank emerges as both a significant psychoanalyst in an era transformed by new theories of the mind and as a writer concerned with the creative act as an expression and transformation of culture. But just how appropriate are Rank's theories as tools for comprehending modernist literature, and perhaps more importantly, how consistent is Rank's analysis of the early twentieth-century social order with current models of culture studies?

Rank's emphasis upon creativity and the cultural function of the artist may provide answers to both crucial questions. Certainly any convincing theoretical work concentrating on the genesis and evolution of creativity should be attractive to literary critics, and if that work is offered by a psychoanalyst practicing in the early twentieth-century, it should be particularly relevant to modernist studies. Indeed, literary critics who give Rank more than passing thought generally confirm the appropriateness of his theories for literary explication, and perceive Rank's advantage over Freud in describing the creative process as it interacts with and affects culture. Maxwell Geismar, author of *Writers in Crisis* (1961), an influential study of American post-war authors, describes his own progression from Freudian to Rankian critic in his essay, "Freud and Rank in American Literary Criticism." Freud's psychoanalytical theories provided the basis for Geismar's work in *Crisis*, as well as for his later studies of Crane and James, but ultimately seemed to Geismar ineffective when applied to a study of Mark Twain. The

critic discovered Rank's theories in the essays of Jack Jones, and immediately found a tool to illuminate Twain's writings. Rank's study of the *Doppelgänger* seemed particularly useful in analyzing Twain's "double soul," a characteristic not necessarily so bleak as Freudians would allow, and Geismar later employed Rank's theories of artistic creation in studies of Melville, Crane, and Whitman. "Rank had shown so early and so devastatingly," Geismar writes, "why the Freudian schemata could never get at the essence of art and the artist," and he maintains that contemporary Freudians had written papers on the creative process, "trying to 'understand,' without avail, something their own psychological system could never let them understand!" (19). Perhaps unwilling to undermine his earlier Freudian criticism, Geismar stresses that he is a "post-Freudian" rather than an anti- or non-Freudian, but concludes that "Rankian esthetics offers a range of insights—and particularly that of psychology and art *within* culture and society—that the Freudian rationale can never match" (20).

More recently Brown demonstrates the relevancy of Rankian thought to contemporary literary criticism in his consideration of Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, an essay not only emphasizing the validity of applying Rank's theories to literary studies but exemplifying the potential of Rankian theory applied to literary critique. Brown effectively quotes from *Art and Artist* to demonstrate the inadequacies of Freudian criticism and to support the application of Rank's theories to Proust's novel. "*Art and Artist*," Brown writes, "embodies a far more sophisticated and comprehensive analysis of the origins and effects of the creative impulse than the purely biological hermeneutic applied by Freud. Rank's theories assign more agency to the creative will in overcoming

trauma than the deterministic theories of Freud, Jung, and Adler” (90). Brown goes on to examine the notion of Proust’s sequential epiphanies, the “little phrase” of the essay’s title, in terms of artistic creation and fulfillment, and notes that “Proust not only develops the intimacy of Sapphic desire and artistic production, of damnation and redemption, but provides a case study on the origins of the creative impulse: one that dramatically illustrates the theories of Otto Rank” (112). Geismar and Brown, as with most critics attracted to Rank’s work, may be guilty of adopting the earlier and less characteristic manifestations of Rank’s thought, but nevertheless both critics validate Rank’s theory as a literary tool and demonstrate the necessity for further critical application of his notions of the creative act and his work in general.

Rank’s involvement in the development of psychoanalysis and his observation of the early twentieth-century social order similarly make the application of his theories to an understanding of modernist culture especially relevant, and his notions of creativity provide a context for understanding the social and literary concerns of an era inherently difficult to characterize. Indeed, Rank comprehends the extent of the social and political crisis in the decades following World War I, and explains the consequences for an individual living in those times without losing sight of cultural forces originating eons earlier. Human beings have an innate moral sense comparable to the motivations for self-preservation and self-expression, Rank suggests, and religion originally developed to provide a collective standard for assessing degrees of conscience without imposing belief on the individual. If human beings lose sight of the genuine moral self, as Rank implies happened in the early decades of the century, social laws arise to enforce the

communalized standard, but the results are devastating to the individual conscience and further complicate the effects of existing in a culture that erroneously celebrates objectivism and rationality. People living in modern times not only suffer from the confusion of participating in irrational events in the context of a supposedly rational social system, but further have no innate moral sense to assist them in the attainment of a sense of immortality through the creative act. Socially-imposed moral standards, moreover, only approximate fully-realized individual morality, and the individual thus is left attempting to attain a degree of moral perfection impossible in collective society. “The individual is caught in all the intricacies of an ideal of perfection which separates him from his real self without giving him the satisfaction of personal improvement or real achievement,” Rank maintains. “This ‘disease of perfection’ . . . is the moral evil par excellence of modern man. It not only prevents the individual from doing his best and thereby achieving whatever he can at any given moment; it creates the neurotic feeling of inadequacy and inferiority, in a word, moral badness.” In addition, the individual’s attempt to attain moral perfection in a social order imposing a collective morality ultimately leads to a saturnine sense of responsibility infecting the individual conscience: “This morbid conscience, from which the neurotic type suffers in our time, appears as a cancerous overgrowth of the moral self natural to man. In this sense, the morbid conscience of modern man appears to be an individualized moral self, collective by its very nature” (*BP* 199).

Freudian critics thus are using the wrong tool to understand literature and, indeed, even the literature of the early twentieth-century, infused as it is with Freud’s sensibility.

While Freud's theories helped form the culture of modernism, they were an artificial construct predicated upon the emerging position of science to derive credibility for their own substance. Freud's work may be used as a tool to understand artists directly influenced by his theories, but his insights into the human condition do not translate into a valid interpretation of literature as an expression of human creativity, aspiration and desire. Rank supplants Freud by providing a set of theories more sensitive to the dynamic nature of culture and more receptive to diversity of the human spirit, and therefore more useful in understanding the output of any literary era.

Rank's centralization of individual creativity similarly adheres to the current paradigm for culture studies, and consequently his perception of the modernist social order and culture should withstand critical inspection. Creative expression for Rank is a faculty available to every human being, regardless of artistic inclination, and represents the exercise of will to transcend culture while at the same time benefiting from its ideals and values. This process of individuation in turn interacts with culture to effectuate change, and the "artist" then uses the newly-realized sense of self, along with the altered cultural landscape, to further advance both personality and the social order. "The individual will," Rank writes, "using impulse and environment alike for the fulfillment of personal desire and social needs, creates an inner causality of its own. Such creative exercise of impulse upon environment automatically leads beyond a mechanistic causality, which separates the individual from his culture, to a dynamic causality of the will, determining the personality as well as its specific culture" (*BP* 53).

This intersection of Rankian psychoanalysis and the culture of high modernism exemplifies the precepts established by Donald in his essay, “On the Threshold: Psychoanalysis and Cultural Studies.” Donald’s statement relates to a series of talks delivered at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London between January and March, 1987, and predicated upon examining cultural issues through psychoanalytic insight. According to Donald, such a task should no longer involve simply applying psychoanalytic theory to cultural conditions in an attempt to trace a supposed “real” meaning in cultural trends. Donald cites the work of E. P. Thompson and Raymond Williams, and notes that each conceived of culture studies as an intellectual commitment to define identity based upon “the experiences of everyday people in the texture of everyday life” (4). In order to fulfill this commitment, Donald reiterates, culture theory must emphasize “the historical importance of collective subjects like ‘the people’ or ‘the working class,’” and at the same time, perceive that “individual consciousness is social in the sense that it derives from the shared experiences that produce these collective identities” (4). Williams in particular sees generational as well as class determinations at the heart of collective identity, and in *The Long Revolution* (1961) describes shared experience in terms of “meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt.” Later, in *Marxism and Literature* (1977), Williams proposes a similar definition, “but now underline[s] the inherently social nature of experience even when it appears ‘private, idiosyncratic and even isolating,’” a qualification explicitly including idiosyncratic work such as the occult writings of Yeats, examined later in this study. While establishing a new direction for culture studies, Donald repeats Thompson’s and Williams’s beliefs that

“a shared social and historical experience produces a common sensibility which is the stuff of individual consciousness; hence its concern with questions of identity and that apparent tautology ‘lived experience’” (5). Thompson and Williams, however, fail to integrate a concern for sexual and cultural difference into their studies, and Donald suggests that compensating for this neglect is the duty of any new effort in culture studies. “Now, in contrast to that claim that ideology can get the measure of subjectivity, the key question for any cultural theory (including psychoanalysis and/or cultural studies) is the *failure* of ideology. The starting point for investigation is that a perfect fit between culture and subject, between social relations and psychic reality, is an impossibility” (7).

Rank’s theory of psychoanalysis lends itself to such a methodology by the very nature and effect of its ideology. In *Beyond*, Rank maintains that individual psychology is determined by collective cultural forces originating beyond the self, a fair anticipation of Thompson’s and Williams’s statement of shared experience producing a common sensibility affecting the individual consciousness. Personal psychology is an expression of the collective culture, Rank maintains, and self-understanding therefore requires a comprehension of deeply rooted cultural beliefs. “By re-discovering in our own life lost or disguised spiritual values, which still have to give meaning to our biological and social existence,” Rank writes, establishing the pretext for *Beyond*, “. . . both the individual personality and his culture emerge from the same need for immortalization” (64). Rank further extends his theory by integrating concern for creativity expressed as sexual and cultural difference, the major stumbling block Donald observes in the work of Thompson and Williams. Indeed, Rank’s notion of a “psychology of difference” celebrates

individuality with the same level of enthusiasm that Freudian psychoanalysis appears to constrict it: “there really is no psychology of the neurotic as against normal psychology,” Rank writes, “but only a psychology of difference, that is to say, the neurotic’s psychology is only pathological from the rational point of view prevalent in a given civilization. This difference in psychology is essentially a difference between experience and understanding, that is, between the acting and the thinking type, or between spontaneous living and intellectual control of it through will” (280). Moreover, Rank adheres to Donald’s precepts by asserting the failure of Freudian ideology to explain subjectivity and by basing his own theories upon the interaction of individual psychology with the shifting plane of culture. Political, educational, and psychological ideologies, according to Rank, claim to have found the truth, but are “actually only expressing temporary needs and desires of one side of human nature, thereby forcing the other frustrated side to assert itself alternately in violent reactions. Hence we have the eternal cycle of changing ideologies, in the face of which we still cling to the faith in an absolute solution” (23).

Trilling’s observations on the relationship of literature, psychoanalysis, and culture in his celebrated lecture on Freud, revised and reprinted in the collection *Beyond Culture* (1965), ironically adds further credibility to Rank’s own perception of culture by identifying implications of Freudian psychology that at times exceed the perimeters of logic. Are we really to believe, as Trilling suggests, that Freud’s egregious acceptance of his patients’ fabricated fantasies demonstrated his belief in the selfhood of these patients

rather than the alternative, left unspoken by Trilling, that Freud believed false stories because they contributed positively to his pre-constructed theory of behavior? (82).

Do we further accept Trilling's notion that Freud, by emphasizing the influence of family upon the individual, really "made it plain how the culture suffuses the remotest parts of the individual mind, being taken in almost literally with the mother's milk"? (91). According to Jack Jones, culture is "first created outside the family, in the adult social world," and "simply reproduced in the course of infantile and familial experience." The family, Jones maintains, "is the crucible of culture only in this secondary ontogenetic sense" ("Five" 60). If we accept Trilling's comment perhaps in the way it is intended, to show that the process of considering Freudian family relationships makes us aware of the influence of culture by implication, then Trilling is celebrating our own analytical powers as much as Freud's value as a cultural theorist.

Finally, can we agree with Trilling's observation that Freud's naturalistic theories, predicated upon biological determinism, actually implies an individual impulse "that culture cannot reach and that reserves the right, which sooner or later it will exercise, to judge the culture and resist and revise it"? (99). As the Marxist philosopher Leszek Kolakowski points out in his discussion of sublimation as an explanation for individual creativity, "In actual fact, agreement with the genetic explanation of culture in the Freudian spirit renders any other attempts [to explain culture] impossible and claims absolute self-sufficiency" (37). By implication this intellectual restriction would preclude Trilling's arbitrary connection between deterministic psychology and cultural development, regardless of its chimerical fascination. Once we accept the biological basis

of behavior and the corollary notion that culture is constructed to satisfy phylogenetically primary needs, Kolakowski suggests, all other possibilities disappear. Trilling's essay, for all its inspired elegance, ultimately reveals a nearly zealous attempt to connect Freud with culture theory and literary expression, especially after Trilling admits that "Freud's relation to culture must be described as an ambivalent one," and that his impact on literary studies is indirect and derived from "what he says about the nature of the human mind" (92, 79).

We may excuse Trilling's labored logic and excessive enthusiasm: he was, after all, a literary figure invited to present The Freud Anniversary Lecture to a convention of psychoanalysts, and he delivers a lecture satisfying the expectations of both his own discipline and that of his audience. Nevertheless Rank, with his passionate belief in individuality and human diversity, his extended analysis of the interaction of the individual and culture, and his central notion of artistic creativity both transcending and contributing to cultural development, provides a theoretical model that conforms to Trilling's observations without exercising the overt suspension of disbelief that Trilling requests on behalf of Freud, at times directly, throughout his essay.

As Meisel convincingly demonstrates in *The Myth of the Modern*, a 1987 study attempting to redefine conventional understanding of modernism, the conclusion of Trilling's essay furthermore deconstructs under linguistic scrutiny. According to Trilling's assessment, modernism represents an individual search for existence beyond the reach of culture. "This intense conviction of the existence of the self apart from culture," Trilling maintains, "is, as culture well knows, its noblest and most generous

achievement” (102). Indeed, as Meisel points out, culture itself cannot “know” what lies beyond its perimeters just as a human being cannot “know” an event outside personal experience; without reference through symbols, themselves cultural artifacts, Trilling’s anthropomorphized culture would be blind and deaf to anything outside its established domain. “How can culture get beyond itself,” Meisel asks, “if it can know it has done so only as a function of the systems from which it wishes to be freed? Why does Freud, for example, premise his articulation of the primary process—the unconscious—on the precariousness of the oxymoron ‘unconscious mind?’” And later, perhaps more significantly, Meisel wonders “Why, in short, does modern literature permit itself ideals that it disallows in practice?” (2). Meisel’s fastidious analysis of Trilling’s diction may attempt to predicate culture theory on what may have been, after all, simply an imprecise or overly histrionic moment in one of Trilling’s long days of writing. Rank’s notion of the individual will, however, presents itself as an alternative to Trilling’s conundrum by depicting an overtly conscious creative act reaching beyond existing culture to fabricate something new, an expression of individuality that at once enhances subjectivity and alters the cultural environment surrounding it.

In an unfortunate linguistic lapse of his own, Meisel identifies Freud’s impulse to rise beyond culture, imagined by Trilling, as the “will to modernity,” thus employing perhaps in a casual sense the term “will,” a human impulse that Rank spent a lifetime formally defining and analyzing, and that ultimately provides a more accurate expression of modernist aspiration and artistic accomplishment than either Trilling or Meisel comprehend. Were it to appear in an essay on Rank rather than on Freud, no better

summary of Rank's notion of creativity could be written than Trilling's spare words: "The poet's idea of fame is the intense expression of the sense of the self, of the self defined by the thing it makes, which is conceived to be everlasting, precisely because it was once a new thing, a thing added to the spirit of man" (88).

Rank's approach to creativity additionally provides an answer to Donald's primary question concerning the intersection of cultural studies and psychology, although perhaps not in a way intended by Donald's essay. Thompson and Williams assign particular significance to the idea of a complete and achieved identity, Donald maintains, and Freudian psychology subverts this model by "revealing that the *lived* in 'lived experience' begs the question of how the 'outside' of collective experience is supposed to become the 'inside' of individual consciousness" (5, Donald's emphasis). For Donald, simply allowing Freudian psychology to pose such a question apparently is sufficient to establish the precepts for a new phase of culture studies; Rankian psychology, unexamined by either Donald or his colleagues in the *Threshold* project, actually *answers* this pivotal question by revealing the creative interaction of human beings and the cultural artifacts nourishing them. The "outside" of collective experience, Rank would suggest, is assimilated by human beings on a quest for individuation and immortality, and the creative will subsequently alters that collective experience into a new matrix available to every other person seeking identity and everlasting life. The creative hero is "beyond" the psychology of the average human being, and thereby provides a context for non-creative individuals to participate in the search for immortality. "For the average human being," Rank maintains, "the significance of the leader . . . [is] a compromise in that the

leader *saves* the average person the formation of personality, that is, makes it possible through identification” (*PD* 197). Rank substitutes a creative act existing “beyond psychology” for the impossible attempt to exist “beyond culture,” as Trilling would have it, and in doing so validates not only the current model for culture studies but his own perception of the modernist social order as well.

Rank’s work moreover may provide a context and direction for literary and culture studies in our current post-Freudian, postmodern intellectual environment. In his essay “Psychoanalysis and Postmodernism” and his book *Secrets*, Zaretsky not only provides an invaluable resource for understanding the impact of Freudian psychoanalysis on the culture of the twentieth century but offers an intellectually bold direction for the continuation of psychoanalysis into postmodernism and the twenty first century as well. Although Zaretsky does not address Rank in either work, his perception of the requirements for future intellectual investigation into postmodernist literature and the appropriate definition of a postmodernist culture is remarkably consistent with Rankian thought. According to Zaretsky, “a cultural epoch should be conceptualized in terms of changes in the structure of subjectivity, especially in the relation of the individual subject to his or her culture.” He continues to suggest that “[a]long with the question of subjectivity, the redefinition of sexual difference and of the structure of feeling that exists within and between the sexes should be considered intrinsic to any definition of a cultural epoch” (“Psychoanalysis” 154). By employing Rank’s ideas of sexual and cultural differences to understand the development of a modernist subjectivity, we may begin to understand the continuing development and expression of postmodern subjectivity and

culture and, at the same time, promote Rank's mature thought as the critical tool linking the two cultural epochs.

Rank thus provides, in the context of psychoanalytic theory, a model for understanding the development of subjectivity and for accommodating individual diversity in the cultural context of modernism. His notion of art, a medium for personal expression of the desire for immortality, as the primary contribution to cultural development not only describes how non-artistic people participate in the shared consciousness of culture but also affirms his original idea of birth trauma and separation anxiety as a primary condition for artistic creation. Indeed, his emphasis upon art as a conscious, creative act of will undermines the preeminence of the Freudian unconscious in early twentieth-century culture and provides a starting point for developing, as Zaretsky would require, a common idea of human beings that does not lose sight of diversity.

Rank additionally provides a summary of the causes of the fragmented self and the prevailing sense of despair and isolation experienced by human beings living in modern culture, and explains the origins of the modernist temperament expressed in literature and art of the period. He emphasizes the collective nature of the morbid conscious endemic in the modern personality and illuminates why diverse artists of the period, Lawrence, Eliot, and Yeats among them, could independently perceive the cultural forces at work in the modernist landscape and attempt to express the causes and effects of these forces through art. Certainly modernist works examining and revealing the unconscious mind exist as testament of the importance of early twentieth-century

Freudian theory, however misguided that theory ultimately may be judged, but significant artists also dedicated their writings to examining the role of irrationality, sexual discordance, and creative will either without knowledge of Rank's ideas or prior to discovering his works. Rather than attempting to emulate the unconscious, or perhaps "stream of consciousness," in highly-structured art, these writers and poets demonstrate the centrality of the irrational spirit by examining the social and cultural forces attempting to undermine it. Just as woman, for Rank, could express her irrational psychology only through living, so the artist can communicate the prevalence of irrationality only through depicting the cultural confluence responsible for modern dismay and neurosis.

Such a literary approach moreover is consistent both with Thompson's and Williams's conception of the importance of shared experience and Williams's special condition that "lived experience" must form the basis for cultural understanding. The only way to artistically communicate the essential irrationality of existence, Rank would suggest, is to exhibit the social and cultural forces reacting to this irrationality, and to delineate the effects of these forces in everyday life. By examining works of modernist artists adhering to this concept of expression, we may contribute to an answer for Meisel's pivotal query about the inconsistency between modernist ideals and the practice of modern artists. Indeed, Rank very nearly provides a manifesto for modernist creation when, at the conclusion of *Beyond*, he affirms the optimistic foundation of such a conception of art and life: "Granted an acceptance of the fundamental irrationality of the human being and life in general with allowance for its dynamic functioning in human

behaviour, we have the basis for the emergence of everything of which mankind is capable in personal and social capacity for betterment” (291).

As Lieberman summarizes Rank’s thought, “the soul was created in the big bang of irresistible psychological force—our will to live forever—colliding with the immutable biological fact of death. The collision creates a spark in our individual and social consciousness that through history has become both consolation and inspiration: the immortal soul. All ideologies reflect this phenomenon and modify its expression to suit the era” (*PS* xi-xii). Rank’s expository works consequently become cotextual equivalents to creations by artists receptive to the developing identity or “soul” of modernist culture, presenting his arguments in substantially different ways while at the same time believing that an appreciation for the effects of irrationality, rather than resisting its prevalence through rational intellectual structures, ultimately provides respite from the isolation and neurosis of modern being. Lawrence, as we shall see in the following chapter, is at the forefront of those artists.

## Chapter Two

### “The Man’s World”: D. H. Lawrence

Rank may have been the most prominent early member of the psychoanalytic community to reject major tenets of Freud’s theory, but D. H. Lawrence earns distinction for being perhaps the earliest and most vocal lay critic of Freudian notions of the unconscious. Lawrence’s interest in sexual identity and the development of personality led him to write, in the early 1920s, the works *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, two reactionary books refuting both the scientific basis of psychoanalysis and the integrity of the discipline’s founder. Lawrence’s examinations of Freudian theory represent a contemporary artist’s evaluation of developing psychoanalytic research, and both *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* generally consist of polemical refutations of Freud’s notion of the relationship between childhood experience and adult repression, along with an equally severe critique of Freud’s unempirical methodology. Psychoanalytic therapy could destroy society’s perception of an innate moral faculty, Lawrence maintains, thereby giving support for Rank’s own concerns for the loss of an individual moral and ethical center. Grave consequences will ensue if the overly-mechanistic pseudo-science remains unchallenged. “At every step,” Lawrence warns in *Psychoanalysis*, “the most innocent and unsuspecting analyst starts a little landslide. The old world is yielding under us. Without any direct attack, it comes loose

under the march of the psychoanalyst, and we hear the dull rumble of the incipient avalanche. We are in for a débâcle” (8).

Lawrence’s lay position allows him to assume a more sardonic rhetorical stance than Rank’s professional status might allow, and his criticism of traditional psychoanalysis frequently sings with sarcasm. When Lawrence rejects William James’s notion of the stream of consciousness, presumably both as a psychological descriptor and as an artistic device, his words are saturated with derisive irony: “The stream of consciousness! I felt it streaming through my brain, in at one ear and out at the other” (8). His attempt to discredit the Freudian concept of the unconscious, while anticipating Rank’s own rebuttal in *Beyond*, similarly relies upon an invective analysis of the term itself. “The word unconscious,” Lawrence writes, “itself is a mere definition by negation and has no positive meaning. Freud no doubt prefers it for this reason. . . . He wishes rather to convey, we imagine, that which *recoils from* consciousness, that which reacts in the psyche away from mental consciousness” (13). And earlier in the text, Lawrence reveals the inability of Freudian psychoanalysis to provide a conclusive statement of outcomes, again with an irreverent prose style edging into humor: “Once all the dream-horrors were translated into full consciousness,” Lawrence summarizes the psychoanalytic process, “they would sublimate into – well, we don’t quite know what. But anyhow, they would sublimate” (9).

The tone and style of Lawrence’s works on psychoanalysis may contribute to the success of his rejection of the presumed scientific basis of the Freudian canon, but the substance of these books anticipates and reinforces major ideas in Rank’s *Trauma* as well

as later Rankian thought. *Psychoanalysis* was motivated primarily by Lawrence's reading, in November and December, 1918, of the English translation of Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1916). Lawrence essentially rejected Jung's notion of incest but nevertheless retained some aspects of Jung's argument, including emphasis upon the mother as a primary influence in psychological development. However, Lawrence also was familiar with Freud's works and with "The Origin of the Incest-Awe," a paper by the American Jungian disciple Trigant Burrow. Little evidence suggests that Lawrence and Rank were acquainted or directly influenced by each other's work, although Rank certainly was aware of Lawrence's books on psychoanalysis and his controversial fiction and poetry. Lieberman mentions in his biography of Rank that the psychoanalyst, in 1933, told Jessie Taft that he "liked *The Fantasia of the Unconscious* by D. H. Lawrence, calling him the 'greatest psychological philosopher since Nietzsche because more human'" (317). Anaïs Nin, whose first published work was an essay on Lawrence, certainly would have discussed the author with Rank during the years of their close personal and professional relationship from 1933 until 1936. Both Lawrence and Rank thus developed their central ideas nearly concurrently, with *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* appearing in 1921 and 1922, respectively, while Rank's *Trauma* was written and first published in German in 1923.<sup>1</sup>

Lawrence, like Rank, offers a mother-centered psychoanalytic system emphasizing the trauma of separation as the impetus for both individuation and creativity, but he uniquely distinguishes his own theory with emphasis upon the human body as an active component in an individual's psychological profile. The navel, for example,

becomes the primary metaphor of both our maternal connection and our subjectivity. “There at the navel,” Lawrence maintains, “the first rupture has taken place, the first break in continuity. There is the scar of dehiscence, scar at once of our pain and splendor of individuality. Here is the mark of our isolation in the universe, stigma and seal of our free, perfect singleness” (21). Lawrence here reinforces Rank’s theory of separation trauma, and goes on to suggest that the essence of consciousness is based in the body, “in the middle front of the abdomen, beneath the navel, in the great nerve center called the solar plexus.” In a continued refutation of Freudian scientific method, Lawrence maintains that such knowledge is self-evident from the very experience of living. “How do we know?” Lawrence asks rhetorically. “We feel it, as we feel hunger or love or hate” (20).

The development of subjectivity, in Lawrence’s view, moreover begins with the process of separation from the mother but ineffably includes traits unassociated with either parent, qualities connected neither with biological heredity nor with environmental influence. “There is in the nature of the infant,” Lawrence writes, “something entirely new, underived, underivable, something which is, and which will forever remain, causeless. And this something is the unanalyzable, indefinable reality of individuality” (16). And later, in *Fantasia*, Lawrence would acknowledge the contribution of both mother and father to the progress of generations, but would privilege the spontaneous newness of the unique individual. “And so,” he writes, “the blood-stream of race is one stream, forever. But the moment the mystery of pure individual newness ceased to be enacted and fulfilled, the blood-stream would dry up and be finished. Mankind would die

out” (77). Rank, of course, later would extrapolate this process of individuation with cultural and artistic creativity, the formation of something entirely unique through the exercise of creative will, but Lawrence is content to remain more oblique, noting only that “this subjectivity embraces alike creative emotion and physical function” (27), or to associate creativity both with the unconscious mind and with the soul. “For though the unconscious is the creative element,” Lawrence notes, “and though, like the soul, it is beyond all law of cause and effect in its totality, yet in its process of self-realization it follows the laws of cause and effect. The process of cause and effect are indeed part of the working out of this incomprehensible self-realization of the individual unconscious” (18). Significantly, Lawrence relates the “causeless” essence of the infant’s subjectivity to the “cause and effect” of the unconscious as a developmental process, and thus retains the sense of randomness introduced by the human agency suggested by Rank’s notion of irrationality. This is not, we are assured, the deterministic cause and effect evident in the physical universe and described by scientific inquiry.

Lawrence’s work explicitly joins Rank’s in its refutation of Freudian causality and in its emphasis upon a non-scientific relationship between the mind and the soul, but as we have observed, Lawrence is advantageously unrestrained by the professional restrictions in style and content that Rank may have felt compelled to follow. The result is a text more overtly connected rhetorically with religious or spiritual doctrine than with the monographs of the psychoanalytic profession, and indeed Lawrence examines morality with a specificity that Rank, with his emphasis upon the relative values of individuals and cultures, would not entertain. Gordon describes Lawrence’s vision of

human nature as essentially positive, an innocent and pristine essence close to that perceived by Rousseau, and suggests that, for Lawrence, false social morality rather than oedipal struggles of the unconscious actually causes the inner conflict of modern human beings in society. Gordon, while perhaps erroneously suggesting that Lawrence's understanding of Freud was ill-informed and incomplete, nevertheless maintains that the author's psychoanalytic writing resonates with "the explanatory value of strong myth" (84).

Lawrence explicitly relies upon myth in his psychoanalytic writing, especially in *Fantasia*, a work conceived both as clarification of the ideas proposed in *Psychoanalysis* and as an elaboration on his notions of the importance of myth and ritual as an alternative to psychoanalysis in an increasingly scientific and industrialized society. In the Foreword to *Fantasia*, Lawrence maintains that after "the melting of the glaciers, and the world flood," certain unique visionaries continued teaching arcane wisdom in symbolic form. "And so, the intense potency of symbols is part at least memory," he writes. "And so it is that all the great symbols and myths which dominate the world when our history first begins, are very much the same in every country and every people, the great myths all relate to one another. And so it is that these myths now begin to hypnotize us again, our own impulse towards our own scientific way of understanding being almost spent" (63-64). Hinz views the work as Lawrence's statement of artistic intent, and finds Lawrence proposing not only an alternative to psychoanalysis but a revived artistic method. "In myth and ritual," Hinz writes, ". . . will be found the old wisdom, and through myth and ritual the artist is able to make this knowledge available and in doing

so to reveal the ‘inevitable’ repetition of the past in the present” (261). Freud’s work thus is supplanted by the work of artists such as Lawrence, creative minds incorporating myth and ritual into their work in order to remind us of our past.

Rank’s more detailed and professional examination of primitive cultures and the continuing effect of myth on modern existence began with the publication, in 1909, of *Der Mythos von der Geburt des Helden* (*The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*), an extended study of the common elements of hero myths originating in Western culture.<sup>2</sup> Despite its appearance early in Rank’s career, the work exhibits some of the elements of his later thought on individualism and creativity, as he points out in a “Literary Biography” first published in the Rank society’s journal in 1981.<sup>3</sup> Rank acknowledges that the book originated from an idea of Freud’s, and notes that Freud saw the project as an exploration of the hero’s dependence upon the family, along with the ancillary implications of the Oedipus complex, while Rank ultimately emphasized the hero’s quest for independence. In retrospect, Rank maintains, “one might explain the whole legend” of Oedipus as a metaphor for the individual’s separation from the parents and thus the artist’s reaction, necessary for creation, against the endemic social order. “The hero must be free for his task to which he is bound,” Rank writes. “[H]e becomes a hero because he does not want to owe anything to his parents but has to justify this independence by achievements” (6). Rank thus rebelled against his mentor somewhat earlier than the publication of *Trauma*, or at least his memory of the origin of this seminal work on the hero demonstrates the development of his mature thought.

Rank's examination of myth, as we have seen, continued throughout his career and emerges as a major element of individual psychology in his later work, where myth and tribal ritual represent solutions for the individual and social desire for immortality. Indeed, the intellectual foundation of *Beyond* consists of extended examinations of primitive cultures, their myths and taboos, as well as the more recent mythology constructed by the Greeks and Romans. Rank ultimately uses these archetypal stories not only to demonstrate the tendency of the masculine personality to deny the procreative function of sex, thus implicitly denying biological death, but also to show that this obsession with personal immortality is countered by the collective motivation for group survival. The social order consequently promotes a succession of "outstanding personalities, through a kind of selective immortality enacted in the magical creation of leadership. Such collective immortality epitomized in a chosen leader foreshadows the idea of State and Nation, symbols of racial continuity of a special type of man" (202).

Mythology and the motivation for collective continuity emerge in *The Rainbow* during early chapters emphasizing the progress of generations. The Brangwen men are characterized, in language possessing Biblical qualities, as a progression of hardworking and plain-feeling individuals close to nature and to each other. "They lived full and surcharged," Lawrence writes, "their senses full fed, their faces always turned to the heat of the blood, staring into the sun, dazed with looking towards the source of generation, unable to turn around" (10-11). Not much except time separates the early Alfred Brangwen, who marries a woman from Heanor, from the later Alfred Brangwen, lace designer and father of Will. The importance of religion also demonstrates the persistence

of culture, and Will's devotion to church architecture and to Christian ritual reinforces the religious tone and style appropriated by Lawrence throughout the novel. According to Black, this stylistic technique is an important part of the novelist's artistic goal, and the novels inevitably have a religious dimension. "In a century which was moving away from religious affiliations," Black maintains, "Lawrence wanted to identify a continuing spiritual force which was not traditional Christianity, and not the twentieth-century substitute, politics masquerading as religion, but a spiritual sense surviving as undoctrinal feeling and perception, and willing to go on using figures and the words of the old religion where they represent a permanent insight" (40-41). Lawrence's language appropriates metaphor, and the human experience described takes on the quality of a collective memory of birth, death, and the immutability of a spiritual self. Lawrence at once both attributes the persistence of irrational and spiritual forces to his strong masculine characters and implicates his own role as artist and perpetuator of spiritual values in his choice of language and metaphor.

The masculine resistance to accept this collective self and the certainty of mortality, and thus the tendency to distance themselves from women by fabricating a male-oriented social environment, similarly is a theme of Lawrence's work. As Lawrence maintains in *Fantasia*, "[i]t is the desire of the human male to build a world: not 'to build a world for you, dear': but to build up out of his own self and his own belief and his own effort something wonderful. Not merely something useful. Something wonderful. . . . And the motivity of sex is subsidiary to this: often directly antagonistic" (67). Lawrence intentionally excludes woman from the process of social and cultural development, even

as an effective recipient of any supposed benefits from the fabrication, and thus anticipates Rank's notion of the male exclusivity of social constructs. The marginalization of women, according to Rank in *Beyond*, "arises from man's urge to eternalize himself personally, an urge threatened by sexual propagation, of which woman is the representative" (246).

This masculine social order is described throughout *Rainbow*, from Lawrence's depiction of the restrictive practice of education to the social structure of the Church and the glorification of war. The commitment to warfare, although a minor concern in Lawrence's novel, particularly emerges as a masculine construct aimed at dividing women from men. "It's about the most serious business there is, fighting," Skrebensky maintains at one point, only to have Ursula later protest: "I hate soldiers, they are stiff and wooden. What do you fight for, really?" (288-89). Rank views war as a masculine fabrication designed to perpetuate distinct social units, thus providing a collective immortality alleviating the individual man's fear of biological death. Personal immortality always remains uncertain, Rank suggests, and thus "man resorted to a collective immortality originally embracing small units, such as the clan or tribe, and eventually extending to the conception of a nation. Hence, nationalism already represents a form of individualized immortality as compared to the survival of mankind in general" (*BP* 40). Skrebensky verbalizes a similar notion of tribal continuity and affirms his dedication to the masculine social order as he contemplates his military assignment in South Africa. "The good of the greatest number was all that mattered. That which was the greatest good for them all, collectively, was the greatest good for the individual. And so,

every man must give himself to support the State, and so labour for the greatest good of all. One might make improvements in the state, perhaps, but always with a view to preserving it intact” (304-05).

Ursula immediately rebels against these masculine social constrictions when she accepts a teaching position at the Brinsley Street School, an institution in the poor quarter of town seemingly predicated upon intimidation and public beatings. “Why should she give her allegiance to this world, and let it so dominate her,” Lawrence writes, “that her own world of warm sun and growing, sap-filled life was turned into nothing? She was not going to do it. She was not going to be prisoner in the dry, tyrannical man-world” (380-81). Ursula similarly feels separated from the man-made conventions of institutionalized religion, and wonders at Will’s innate satisfaction. “It exasperated her beyond measure,” Lawrence explains. “She could not get out of the Church the satisfaction he got. . . . And in the gloom and the mystery of the Church his soul lived and ran free, like some strange, underground thing, abstract.” Institutionalized religion inevitably separates the lovers from each other. “He was very strange to her, and, in this Church spirit, in conceiving himself as a soul, he seemed to escape and run free of her” (147-48). Ursula seems to long for a purer mythography devoid of social construct, one founded in nature and connected to the “sap-filled life” of birth and death.

Rank similarly sees women as the source of generation, essentially different from men since they are comfortable with their mortality but nevertheless constrained by masculine social convention. He reiterates that the fundamental psychology of men rejects mortality and thereby the dependence upon women, but notes that “[w]oman, on

the contrary, fundamentally accepts her basic self, that of motherhood; at the same time, having taken on the masculine ideology, she needs constant confirmation from the man that she is acceptable to him, and assurance which she can only get by living up to his ideals and demands” (*BP* 249). Lydia exhibits just such tendencies as she contemplates her marriage to Tom Brangwen. She initially relates herself to the nesting bird near her back door, and sees herself as “the mother-thrush upon the nest, . . . the way her wings were spread, so eager down upon her secret.” A moment later she realizes that Tom represents an alien, constricting force, but then gives in to the overpowering need for masculine acceptance. “Her impulse was strong against him,” Lawrence writes, “because he was not of her own sort. But one blind instinct led her, to take him, to have him, and then to relinquish herself to him. It would be safety. She felt the rooted safety of him, and the life in him” (53-54). Lydia’s daughter Anna also exhibits joy in procreative energy, and pregnant with Will’s child, she dances naked and alone as though celebrating the fertility of woman. “Suddenly she realised that this was what she wanted to do. Big with child as she was, she danced there in the bedroom by herself, lifting her hands and her body to the Unseen, to the unseen Creator who had chosen her, to Whom she belonged” (169-70). Her dance also implies a rejection of men and of the masculine social order, as she contemplates her husband Will and resolves to “dance his nullification” (170).

Women in Lawrence’s world also take satisfaction in watching the cycle of life end with death, particularly when it is the death of the male. When Tom dies in a flood mid-way through the novel, Anna views his body as a representation of the unapproachable quality of the male and an affirmation of the cycle of birth and death.

“To Anna,” Lawrence writes, “he was the majesty of the inaccessible male, the majesty of death. It made her still and awe-stricken, almost glad.” Lydia, Tom’s wife, has a similar reaction: “She went pale, seeing death. He was beyond change or knowledge, absolute, laid in line with the infinite. What had she to do with him? He was a majestic Abstraction, made visible now for a moment, inviolate, absolute” (233).

Lydia and Anna never verbalize these sentiments, of course, and according to Rank, women naturally are inclined to conceal their own thoughts and feelings in a masculine society. “In this sense,” Rank writes, “one might almost say that the woman has no psychology at all . . . . As far as we can see now, her real psychology, not the one furnished by man, consists of just that ability to take on any masculine ideology as a cloak for her real self” (*BP* 255). Ursula reveals this feminine tendency to conceal true personality when she accepts her teaching position at Brinsley, a time in her life when she seems irrevocably bound to masculine social institutions. “Wherever she was,” Lawrence writes, “at school, among friends, in the street, in the train, she instinctively abated herself, made herself smaller, feigned to be less than she was, for fear that her undiscovered self should be seen, pounced upon, attacked by brutish resentment of the commonplace, the average Self” (252). Women truly reveal themselves only in the act of living, Rank suggests, a natural process of human understanding rather than of psychological analysis. Men moreover persistently attempt to penetrate the feminine riddle and refuse to allow women a natural role in society:

This real woman, psychologically, can only be described in negative terms, because her reality is irrational (intuitive, sybille). On the other

hand, the woman is not permitted just to be, instead of having to know what she is, because the man wants to preserve her riddle in order to penetrate it. This interference on the man's part with the woman's natural being forces her to react in two extreme ways: she fights the man with his own weapon either by becoming masculine and psychological (sophisticated) as he is, or by so completely submitting to him as to become what he wants her to be. (*BP* 249)

Ursula perceives this situation even as an infant, and understands that all men have contributed to her state: "So very soon, she came to believe in the outward malevolence that was against her. And very early, she learned that even her adored father was part of this malevolence. And very early she learned to harden her soul in resistance and denial of all that was outside her, harden herself upon her own being" (208). Her ultimate reaction, in Rank's terms, is to become "masculine" and compete in the man's world, even to the point of having a sexual relationship with Miss Inger, her teacher. "She was proud and free as a man," Lawrence suggests, "yet exquisite as a woman" (312). Her friend Winifred, however, ultimately abandons her earlier assertion of feminine independence and, by marrying Uncle Tom, becomes part of the masculine order designed to provide a semblance of immortality. Ursula considers the situation:

His real mistress was the machine, and the real mistress of Winifred was the machine. She too, Winifred, worshipped the impure abstraction, the mechanisms of matter. There, there, in the machine, in service of the machine, was she free from the clog and degradation of human feeling.

There, in the monstrous mechanism that held all matter, living or dead, in its service, did she achieve her consummation, and her perfect unison, her immortality. (325)

Men are defined by their involvement in the social order, Lawrence suggests, and are acclimated to their intentional separation from woman and from family life. When Winifred and Ursula visit Uncle Tom Brangwen at the colliery, for example, they are appalled at how the workmen exist as social types rather than as individual human beings. Uncle Tom explains why a widow at the colliery would soon remarry: “Her husband was John Smith, loader. We reckoned him as a loader, he reckoned himself as a loader, and so she knew he represented his job. Marriage and home is a little side-show. The women know it right enough, and take it for what it’s worth. One man or another, it doesn’t matter all the world.” And a bit later: “The women have what is left. What’s left of this man, or what is left of that—it doesn’t matter altogether. The pit takes all that really matters. . . . The pit was the great mistress” (323-24).

Men maintain a distance from women, Rank would explain, to deny procreation and thus to preserve his pretext of immortality. Independence from women is not a function of individual psychology but of collective cultural forces. “Man born of woman never accepted the basic fact of being mortal,” Rank says, “that is, never accepted himself. Hence, his basic psychology is denial of his mortal origin and a subsequent need to change himself in order to find his real self which he rationalizes as independent of woman” (*BP* 248-49). Tom Brangwen expresses this masculine reaction when he first learns that his wife, Lydia, is pregnant. “He knew, and he quivered with rage and hatred,

that she was all these vile things, that she was everything vile and detestable. But he had grace at the bottom of him, which told him, that above all things, he did not want to lose her, he was not going to lose her” (61). When Anna, his daughter by marriage to Lydia, later professes her love for Will, Tom anguishes over growing old: “Now she would say he was finished. She was going away, to deny him, to leave an unendurable emptiness in him, a void that he could not bear. Almost he hated her. How dared she say he was old. He walked on in the rain, sweating with pain, with the horror of being old, with the agony of having to relinquish what was life to him” (112).

Tom’s reaction in both these situations implies an element of control over the women in his life, and indeed Rank suggests that men demand control over women and sexualize women only to the extent that they conform to masculine ideology and are willing participants for men’s erotic desires. Shaw sees this tendency toward masculine dominance as Lawrence’s reaction to the early Women’s Movement and to what he perceived as an inversion of the natural order. Lawrence’s idea of masculine dominance was not fully formed until 1922 with the publication of *Aaron’s Rod*, Shaw observes, but this notion is already forming seven years earlier in *Rainbow*. “Lawrence’s solution,” she maintains, “was to posit, and fictionalize, a masculine renaissance in which male authority and comradeship would assert themselves to restore harmony and naturalness to sexual relations” (25). McHugh observes the same tendency in Lawrence’s fiction, and relates it to the masculine development of ideas and the desire for acquiescence from women. “In Lawrence’s drama of sexual politics,” he writes, “women constitute a sounding board for the masculine metaphysic, against which the transcendent ideas of

Lawrence's men are tried out, all in the attempt to transform the woman's resistance into acquiescence" (90). Anna explicitly senses such control when she becomes pregnant by Will: "Gradually she realised that her life, her freedom, was sinking under the silent grip of his physical will. He wanted her in his power. He wanted to devour her at leisure, to have her. At length she realized that her sleep was a long ache and a weariness and exhaustion, because of his will fastened upon her, as he lay there beside her, during the night" (172).

Lawrence's choice of name for Anna's husband, one of *Rainbow's* central male characters, is perhaps not an accident, but even if so, the serendipitous connection to Rank's central creative concept would be worth noting. Indeed, Lawrence fabricated a concept of will similar to that of Rank, and he identified separate expressions of creative will that compliment and illuminate the essence of Rank's thought. "We don't know what the human will is," Lawrence writes in *Psychoanalysis*. "But we do know that it is a certain faculty belonging to every living organism, the faculty for self-determination. It is a strange faculty of the soul itself, for its own direction." Lawrence proceeds to sketch the idea of a spontaneous will, roughly equivalent to Rank's concept of creative will expressing irrationality and thus contributing to culture, countered by a mechanical will, in effect the effort required for the individual self to acquiesce to the "humiliating and sterilizing process" of prescribed social ideals. Just as Rank's neurotic type hovers just above madness, the individual who expresses Lawrence's mechanical will is subject to the dire consequences for social conformity at the expense of the self. "Sometimes . . . the free psyche really collapses," Lawrence writes, "and the will *identifies* itself with an

automatic circuit. Then a complex is set up, a paranoia. Then incipient madness sets in” (42). For Rank, such madness would include not only the neurosis propagated by social conformity but the resulting impulse, exhibited in the male, to render all women into objective beings intended to satisfy the non-procreative sexual appetite.

Maintaining women as objects of sexual control is endemic to men, Rank maintains, but nevertheless men also harbor an innate fear of sex in the context of the desire for immortality. Rank discusses the transformation of sexual intercourse from a biological battle of nature to a simple source of pleasure, and in so doing reveals a conundrum: “man’s innate resistance to procreation, enforced by his ideological fear of woman as a threat to his immortality, betrayed itself in innumerable tabus imposed on his sex life and that of the woman. Those aboriginal tabus, especially that of the menstruating woman, clearly show that such restrictions, were self-imposed in order to protect the man from his fear of sex” (*BP* 223). Skrebensky struggles with his own sexual impulse when he and Ursula encounter a rustic barge-man and his loving wife and daughter. “Why could not he himself desire a woman so? Why did he never really want a woman, not with the whole of him: never loved, never worshipped, only just physically wanted her” (294). And Tom’s disappointing sexual initiation, early in the novel, reveals both a direct fear of sex and an implied fear of losing the immortality gained thorough masculine cultural constructs: “The disillusion of his first carnal contact with woman, strengthened by his innate desire to find in a woman the embodiment of all his inarticulate, powerful religious impulses, put a bit in his mouth. He had something to lose which he was afraid of losing, which he was not sure even of possessing” (21).

The tension between sexual desire and the fabricated personal and cultural taboos against intercourse inevitably leads to a conflict between the sexes, and *Rainbow* is filled with scenes involving bickering and animosity, emotional discord and outright brutality among the men and women of the novel. Will and Anna, for example, progress through a wide range of emotions following their marriage and Anna's pregnancy. Their actions are as unstable as their personalities, and at times both the outer and inner conflict is extreme. Even the brief moments of reconciliation are painful, and Will at one point feels challenged at the thought of relinquishing his will to hers. "And it was torture to him," Lawrence writes, "that he must give himself to her actively, participate in her, that he must meet and embrace and know her, who was other than himself" (90). And later, Will attempts to resolve an even greater duality as he contemplates the notion of taking a lover. "The only tangible, secure thing was the woman. He could leave her only for another woman. And where was the other woman, and who was the other woman? Besides, he would be just in the same state. Another woman would be woman, the case would be the same" (173).

Lawrence's idea of blood-consciousness accounts for at least part of the motivation for this inter-sexual conflict, and Lawrence would suggest that recognition of the partner's unique subjectivity is essential for compatibility. "No getting away from the fact that the blood of woman is dynamically polarised in opposition, or in difference to the blood of man," Lawrence writes in *Fantasia*. "[Y]et the great outstanding fact of the individuality even of the blood makes us need a corresponding individuality in the woman we are to embrace. The more individual the man or woman, the more

unsatisfactory is a non-individual connection: promiscuity” (186). For Lawrence, men and women who think and act alike would have no compatibility in terms of blood-consciousness, and therefore open conflict inevitably would ensue from a sexual relationship.

Rank, for his part, suggests that in the modern era the masculine social order consequently has developed two separate ideas of love to rationalize this conflict. “The solution he found,” writes Rank, referring specifically to the modern male, “by dividing the two kinds of love—represented in Eros and Agape—between the two sexes led to our sexual psychology created from man’s need to justify himself and uphold his age-old prejudices” (*BP* 187). Thus modern men are bound by social contract to interpret love primarily as the satisfaction of a base and domineering form of sexuality, while modern women are seen as the embodiment of a spiritual love attributed in previous centuries to the religious impulse. For Rank, the appropriation of either type of socially-mandated love inevitably assimilates the individual even further into the artificial, masculine-dominated cultural order and denies us the benefit of developing a valid and innate inner morality. Much of the angst and disorder of the modernist age, Rank maintains, is produced from this false identification with these two kinds of love and the associated conflict between the sexes. “This confusion of personalized love and individual morality makes for failure in both spheres,” Rank writes, “and precipitates that utter sense of despair which has been termed psychologically a feeling of ‘inferiority’ . . . . In reality, this inferiority indicates the lack of true inner values in the personality, which he then has to find in others while blaming his own inadequacy on competitive grounds.” Rank goes

on to relate this depleted moral condition to the modernist age, noting that “[s]uch loss of inner values which are basic to human nature becomes at times epidemic” (*BP* 197).

Lawrence would agree with such an assessment, and like Rank would perceive Freudian psychoanalysis as one modernist cultural institution attempting to sustain an imperfect notion of love in place of individual morality. Noting that psychoanalysts have taken up the role of both priests and medicine men in the modern world, Lawrence considers the very existence of Freudian thought a moral issue, and accuses the discipline’s founder of intentional complicity in the effort to supplant individual morality with a set of rules developed to rationalize the unconscious mind. Lawrence is unequivocal on this point: at the very beginning of *Psychoanalysis*, as we have seen, he proclaims that psychoanalysis, “under a therapeutic disguise,” was poised “to do away entirely with the moral faculty in man” (8). Lawrence additionally anticipates Rank’s notion of the modern, secularized Eros and Agape by identifying two distinct types of love—in his terminology, planes of the conscious mind representing the sympathetic and separatist impulses—and relating our inability to properly understand and regulate these two types of love with the decadence of the modern spirit. “A soul cannot come into its own through that love alone which is unison,” he writes in *Psychoanalysis*, maintaining that the desire to become one with the beloved must be tempered with a similar impulse for separation and identity. “It is the absolute failure to see this, that has torn the modern world into two halves, the one half warring for the voluntary, objective, separatist control, the other for the pure sympathetic. The individual psyche divided against itself

divides the world against itself, and an unthinkable progress of calamity ensues unless there be a reconciliation” (36).

In his position as a lay researcher and psychoanalytic mystic, Lawrence is able to offer, if not a prescription, certainly a vision of the ultimate reconciliation of the two types of love. By attaining at once a sense of unity with the beloved and a comprehension of the essential separation from the beloved, an individual may establish a psychological equilibrium close to revelation. “Through the mode of dynamic objective apprehension, which in our day we have gradually come to call *imagination*, a man may in his time add on to himself the whole of the universe, by increasing pristine realization of the universal.” Cryptic this may be to the modern reader of *Psychoanalysis*, but then Lawrence would expect nothing less; our failure to fully comprehend either his rhetoric or his message is the result of our own entrenchment in the modern social order. And there’s more, as Lawrence’s obscurity compounds in the very next sentence. “This in mysticism is called the progress to infinity—that is, in the modern, truly male mysticism. The older female mysticism means something different by the infinite” (36). Although Lawrence never clearly defines his notion of female mysticism, either in this book or elsewhere in his *œuvre*, for a better understanding we might turn to Rank’s depiction of the primitive, female-centered group situation emphasizing Totemism and the expression of irrational values. That Lawrence felt compelled to mention this idiosyncratic concept of infinity predicated upon gender distinction at all in his discussion of love further aligns his thought with that of Rank by emphasizing the masculine basis of modern society, along with a whispered criticism that Rank would later amplify into a crescendo.<sup>4</sup>

Both Rank and Lawrence ultimately relate the human emotion of guilt to the individual's separation from other people and from the social order compelling its members to conform, rather than to the sexual consequences of the oedipal struggle, as Freud would maintain. Menaker summarizes Rank's thought on this matter in *Otto Rank*: "[g]uilt arises not through identification with a forbidding father but as a precipitate of ego formation through separation from the mother. But the inhibition of the biologically given oral sadistic impulses results also in the need for some discharge of these hostile impulses toward the mother, and they are turned against the self in the form of the need for punishment" (53). Lawrence's description of the process of individuation following birth implies a similar sense of infantile struggle and guilt. "Even in sucking," he writes, "[the infant] discovers its new identity and power. Its own new, separate *power*. . . . The child is screaming itself rid of the old womb, kicking itself in a blind paroxysm into freedom, into separate, negative independence" (*Psychoanalysis* 23; Lawrence's emphasis). The guilt associated with maternal separation later extends to other relationships and to the impulse to conform to established culture, and in a highly-developed social order similarly is bound to the individual's expression of will and the transgression necessary to contribute to the fabrication of culture. Lawrence acknowledges that human relationships exist outside the natural order of cause and effect, and the irrational causality of human emotions inevitably leads to conflict and to the guilt instigated by our desire for integration into culture tempered by the awareness of separation from others. "The stars know how to prowl round one another without much damage done," Lawrence writes in *Fantasia*. "But you and I, dear reader, in the first

conviction that you are me and I am you, owing to the oneness of mankind, why, we are always falling foul of one another, and chewing each other's fur" (72). Rank sees such distortion of human relationships as a violation of self, the failure of contemporary human beings to develop a valid personal morality amid the pressures for cultural conformity. "All the guilt with which modern man is filled," he writes in *Beyond*, "springs not so much from the necessary failure of such use, or rather, misuse of the other person, but in a deeper sense from willing against the self and the natural fulfillment of it within the realm of a given civilization or community" (169).

Sexuality is connected with guilt, Rank suggests, only to the extent that the masculine temperament avoids complicity in the procreative act due to its signification of mortality. The female expression of guilt extends from an innate need to give and receive love only to have that need thwarted by the male's compulsion to objectify woman as mere implements of sexual gratification. The modern era exacerbates even this convoluted matrix of motivation and emotion by externalizing morality, emphasizing cultural definitions of good and bad rather than contributing to the development of an individual moral sense. "The evil in the man is more of an active badness," Rank maintains, "springing from the will-ful Eros and manifesting itself as guilt (for willing); whereas in the woman the feeling of badness arising from not being wanted (loved) takes on the form of shame" (*BP* 201). Lawrence's male and female characters thus bicker and battle among themselves not because of superficial life events, but because modern civilization has infused the process of individuation with the guilt resulting from the

expression of creative will and the corollary shame of not conforming to society's restrictions.

Human beings respond to feelings of guilt in remarkably different ways, and Rank accounts for this diversity of symptoms in the context of the personality types he identified through his clinical practice. The reaction to guilt, Rank maintains, is connected with an individual's concept of a perfect self and with the imaginary expression of will, either suppressed or eventually attempted, that could lead to the creation of identity. In *Truth*, Rank calls these imaginary expressions of will "phantasies," and outlines how individuals deal with these conceptions. The adapted type, or the "average" individual who obeys authority and society's moral code, conceals these phantasies from others, deeming them evil and inexpressible to society, and consequently has guilt feelings toward others; the neurotic type, who resists internal and external domination but are unable to create an alternative to the existing order, conceals phantasies not because they are considered evil but because the expression of will is seen as evil, and consequently has guilt directed toward the self; and the productive type or artist, who successfully creates an independent identity and expresses phantasies through creative will, but thereby experiences guilt in the very act of expression. According to Rank, in this instance "guilt arises toward others to whom he opposes himself through his individualization, but also there is guilt toward himself which persists in the justification of this individual will expression." The artist consequently must continue the creative act as a means of atonement, contributing to culture for the good of others as well as for the good of his own psychological composure: "The creative type must constantly make

good his continuous will expression and will accomplishment and he pays for this guilt toward others and himself with work which he gives to the others and which justifies him to himself" (TR 67).

Although Will, the character, maintains artistic aspirations and attempts to impose his desires upon other people, most notably the novel's women, he nevertheless emerges as a neurotic type, an artisan at best and at worst an example of the masculine expression of mechanical will that Lawrence later would condemn in his psychoanalytic monographs. He is incapable of taking risks or envisioning social change, and can only dream of creating a world as artists do, his "phantasies" left unexpressed:

. . . for his own part, for his private being, Brangwen felt that the whole of the man's world was exterior and extraneous to his own real life with Anna. Sweep away the whole monstrous superstructure of the world of today, cities and industries and civilisation, leave only the bare earth with plants growing and waters running, and he would not mind, so long as he were whole, had Anna and the child and the new, strange certainty in his soul. Then, if he were naked, he would find clothing somewhere, he would make a shelter and bring food to his wife. (179)

If Will were able to implement his fantasy, the creation of a masculine social order would begin anew and Lawrence's world would remain a landscape hostile to both women and to the self-creative impulse of every human being.

*The Rainbow* may not have an artistic hero, either in Rank's terms or in the commonly accepted sense of literary criticism, yet Ursula ultimately approaches artistic

fulfillment by expressing the irrational and the randomness of causation in her own life. Yet she is forced, as a woman, to use the masculine tools available to her in her expression of an artistic self, and eventually fails in the process. At the close of the novel, she is a woman fighting insurmountable social and cultural obstacles, gradually regressing into the neurotic personality type amid personal trauma and visions of wild horses pursuing her in a phantasmal landscape. Rank would suggest that Ursula's failure was not only inevitable but beyond the comprehension of current psychology: "The woman can only express her personality—professionally or otherwise—in the thwarted form of neurotic symptoms which, though easily explained, cannot be 'cured' by the further interpretation of a masculine psychology" (*BP* 268). Lawrence's nightmarish description of her encounter with the horses ultimately emerges as a pure expression of feminine irrationality, a form of conscious self-expression inexplicable in the context of rational society.

For all his emphasis upon the conscious processes of the creative mind, as opposed to the artistic appropriation of a "stream of consciousness" or narrative expression of the unconscious self, Lawrence remarkably does not shy away from using the term "unconscious" as a psychological descriptor. In this respect he differs from Rank's continual avoidance of the term as a means of emphasizing the importance of the conscious expression of personal will. "As soon as we restore to the will its psychological rights," Rank maintains in *Truth*, "the whole of psychology becomes of necessity a psychology of consciousness, which it is anyway according to its nature, and the 'psychology of the unconscious' unveils itself to us as one of the numerous attempts of

mankind to deny the will in order to evade the conscious responsibility following of necessity therefrom” (26). Nevertheless, as we have seen, Lawrence the mystic has a distinctly non-Freudian interpretation of the term “unconscious,” one that precariously embodies at once the process of living, the expression of creative will, and the essence of the soul. “Thus it would seem that the term *unconscious* is only another word for life,” Lawrence writes in *Psychoanalysis*. “But life is a general force, whereas the unconscious is essentially single and unique in each individual organism; it is the active, self-evolving soul bringing forth its own incarnation and self-manifestation. Which incarnation and self-manifestation seems to be the whole goal of the *unconscious* soul; the whole goal of life” (38). Rank would emphasize, first, that woman can truly express herself only through the act of living, and second, that the expression of irrationality in any form is more valid than an attempt at art constrained by a masculine culture. Ursula’s fantastic encounter with the horses emerges as a genuine expression of her existence, the process of her life outside the restrictions of a masculine social order.

Lawrence, unlike Rank, may not fully explore the relationship of individuation with creativity, perhaps because his definitive examination of the artistic process already had been accomplished in his unpublished essay on Hardy. Yet he ultimately defines the unconscious in a manner not only consistent with Rank’s later theory, but in terms that extend the implications of Rankian thought to the development of the physical body and, indeed, to the prescience of the soul itself. The unconscious, according to Lawrence, “is that active spontaneity which rouses in each individual organism at the moment of fusion of the parent nuclei, and which, in polarized connection with the external universe,

gradually evolves or elaborates its own individual psyche and corpus, bringing both mind and body forth from itself.” Lawrence emphasizes that the unconscious generates “not only consciousness, but tissue and organs also. And all the time the working of each organ depends on the primary spontaneous-conscious center of which it is the issue—if you like, the soul-center. And consciousness is like a web woven finally in the mind from the various silken strands spun forth from the primal center of the unconscious” (38). Lawrence later would develop his notion of the relationship between the unconscious mind and the body into his theory of blood-consciousness, an “active physical consciousness of the night” that Lawrence associates with sex, “the first and last knowledge of the living soul: the depths” (185). Blood-consciousness unabashedly relates the unconscious mind with the soul, and in fact at one point Lawrence explicitly equates the two. The “essential unique nature of every individual creature,” Lawrence maintains, is by nature inconceivable. “And being inconceivable, we will call it the unconscious. As a matter of fact, soul would be a better word. By the unconscious we do mean the soul” (17).

Lawrence ultimately depicts life as process, a continuing attempt at self-expression leading to the creation of a personal soul and thus contributing to the bloodline infusing the collective conscious of humanity. In this respect, at least, Lawrence employs his voice to accommodate the world view of Rank’s adapted type of personality, attempting to represent life as it actually is lived by the average individual in society. “The human being to a large extent is one with himself and with the surrounding world,” Rank explains, qualifying his concept of the adapted type, “and feels himself to

be a part of it. He has the consciousness of individuality but at the same time also the feeling of likeness, of unity which makes the relation to the outer world pleasant” (*TR* 56). Torgovnick identifies this impulse specifically in Lawrence’s treatment of sexuality, suggesting that of all modern writers Lawrence comes closest to presenting the sexual experience as it actually is lived by human beings. “Oddly enough,” Torgovnick notes, “sexology is often incapable of *narrating* sex, and by ‘narration’ I mean the ability not just to tell a story and to create characters but . . . to render those aspects of a situation which might be captured by mechanical instruments, such as a tape recorder or a camera, as well as those which could not” (47).

Reading Lawrence’s fiction in relation to Rank’s theory, or indeed simply reading Torgovnick, has given Lawrence’s work more of a sense of order than either Lawrence or Rank would approve. By narrating not just sex but life itself, Lawrence actually transcends Torgovnick’s specific observations about his treatment of sexuality. Above all else, *Rainbow* is about a certain randomness of events, an interrupted logic that leaves the reader at times puzzled and angry. Anna and Will argue, make up, argue once again, and again reconcile without an obviously fresh motive or prompt; events segue this way and that without an apparent attention to fictive theme; both emotions and events somehow conspire without intent and eventually recede only when the characters as well as the reader are exhausted. All of this, Rank would maintain, is evocative of what he means by “irrationality”: a random causation of ideas and events that somehow is indicative of the spirituality of our pre-civilized ancestors, an utterance of irrationality that provides the only insight into the individual soul available on our particular plane of existence.

Lawrence's fiction has the aspect of work not really plotted, but simply in the process of *becoming*, just as Rank would envision life. Rather than artificially attempting to impose disorder onto art in an attempt to render the unconscious or the stream-of-consciousness, Lawrence represents the process of living simply by showing it in the most effective way possible, given the limitations of language and the restrictions of culture, and thereby reflects the ambiance of the modernist era in a way unequaled by his contemporaries. Lawrence does not attempt to conquer the irrational and in the process give it voice, as Frosh suggests; he verbalizes the uncompromising power of irrationality while acknowledging its centrality.

Early reviews assumed Lawrence's work was that of a woman, and Lawrence no doubt would have approved. Just as woman reveals herself only in living, as Rank would have it, so does Lawrence reveal the essence of the modern individual and cultural identity in a fiction that is always simply becoming, without plan or overt agenda, its characters seemingly beyond psychology.

## Chapter Three

### The Shadow Explorer: T. S. Eliot

T. S. Eliot remains one of the foremost poets describing the personal isolation and fragmented psyche identified by the modernist movement. The neurotic self-consciousness described by Rank in his monographs and portrayed by Lawrence in his fiction ultimately emerges in Eliot's poetry through a hodgepodge of characters, each possessing a unique perception of the modern world. Malamud describes these diverse voices as Eliot's poetic poses, and argues that their language at once exhibits a decaying personality and a mannerism sublimely confident in the persistence of the self, regardless of the state of personal or social order. The language of Eliot's poetry, Malamud suggests, portrays a multiplicity of insubstantial characters, but nevertheless is "yoked together in the singleness of one overarching linguistic enterprise: to find, out of the array of chattering poses, one enduring modern voice" (73).

Yet the narrative voice of *The Waste Land* remains enigmatic more than eighty years after the poem's original publication in 1922. The work itself has moved from the world of letters to the critical laboratory, there to be viewed and reviewed, analyzed and dissected, but the nature of the poetic speaker remains elusive after all that critical vivisection. Eliot's own spoken word performances of his work, histrionic and apparently owing more to an emulation of his contemporary, Yeats, than to any personal revelation of his poetry, provide few clues to the intent of his poetic voice.<sup>1</sup> And Eliot undermines

any supposed biographical interpretation by insisting, in “Tradition,” that the personality of the poet has no place in a contemporary work of art, that “the poet has, not a ‘personality’ to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in particular and unexpected ways” (32).

So who is the “I” halting Stetson in the street to inquire about a regenerative corpse? Who cautions Lil to get her story straight about those still-missing teeth? Who, finally, sits upon the shore, land in disorder, fishing?

Rank’s mature conception of the clinical psychoanalytic process has much to do with his idea of the artist as creator, and consequently an understanding of Rank’s professional practice may illuminate the construction and implications of the modernist poetic voice in general and of Eliot’s in particular. According to Menaker, “Psychic reality in Rank’s view is grasped not so much through interpretative knowledge as through experience. Therefore, therapy is less a process of acquiring understanding than of experiencing one’s own functioning in the context of a new relationship.” The patient must not only affirm the individual will, Menaker explains, but also use that will to affirm the uniqueness and autonomy of the self. Conversely, Freudian psychoanalysis, “by describing the impulses as unconscious and universal, has given the individual a justification for them by declaring them universal, thus absolving the individual from responsibility for them” (*RL* 103). In a lecture delivered in 1927, Rank further emphasizes the importance of verbalization during the psychoanalytic process, and notes that patients tend to resist talking about their feelings, primarily revealing themselves

through emotional reactions. Psychoanalysis only can be successful, Rank suggests, if the patient admits feelings “not only emotionally but also verbally. In doing so, at the same time, he cancels the blocking of his emotions, which he learns to express at least verbally. The therapeutic significance of this emotional release lies in the fact that the patient learns to express feelings without having them reciprocated, just as a means of self-expression” (*PD* 157). Eliot’s poetry resists self-expression in favor of a more consciously-fabricated work ostensibly representing the impersonality of the times, while Lawrence’s fiction, as we have seen, consists of an extended verbal representation of spontaneity and therefore conforms to Rank’s concept of the psychoanalytic process.

Rank implicitly links his unique process of psychoanalysis to the creative act by emphasizing the centrality of self-expression in the clinical process, and elsewhere explicitly points to this relationship in provocative terms. The therapeutic experience “is only to be understood from the creative,” Rank points out in *Truth*. “For the patient is also a creator, but a miscarried negative one and his powerful identification with the therapist arises from this, that at bottom he is the same and would like to possess creative power positively also” (82). Rank emphasizes that a patient must not only affirm individual will in the psychoanalytic process but also come to accept the analyst as “the different one, the other” (*PD* 157). The psychoanalyst ultimately emerges as a creator in the clinical setting, and Rank concludes that “the creative man is thus first of all his own therapist . . . but at the same time a therapist for other sufferers” (*TR* 81). Rank, a rogue psychoanalyst developing his theory in the context of high modernism, appropriates the traditional notion of the artist as healer and extrapolates that notion into healer as artist,

all the while underscoring the importance of verbalization in the process of individuation and self-discovery.

Eliot's criticism and poetry ironically illuminates Rank's idea of the psychoanalytic and creative situation by presenting a concept of artistic personality more akin to Rank's notion of the neurotic than to that of the self-fulfilled artist. Despite Wordsworth's seminal proclamation, Eliot maintains, poetry does not consist of powerful emotions recollected in tranquility, nor should it express elements of the poet's own personality. "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion," Eliot famously writes, "but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality" ("Tradition" 33). Eliot thus denies the validity of verbally uttering emotion in the poetic process and perhaps even repudiates the artistic recognition of emotion in any form; Rank observes that denying feelings is "one of the most conspicuous characteristics of the emotional life, particularly of neurotics," and relates this reticence to the neurotic's unacknowledged attempt to identify with others. "As the feeling is an attempt to establish within oneself an externally lacking identity with another," Rank maintains, "then we can understand why one is so much ashamed of one's feelings and therefore wants to hide them not only from the other but even from oneself" (*PD* 156). The neurotic's tendency to not only disavow emotions but to conceal the self is reconstructed in Eliot's essay as a critical dictum, a description of the poetic voice that Eliot would cultivate throughout his career. Rank's notion of a patient's verbalization of feelings, with the consequential acknowledgement of emotions, would appear to be a proper prescription for any neurotic under the influence of Eliot's essay and aspiring for a

creative life. Instead, Eliot's work emerges as a verbalization of the *absence* of emotion, an extended poetic gesture projecting a sense of hollowness, decay, and death. Eliot attempts to use this voice as the representation of a social order in ruins, but ultimately his poetic recitation may have more to do with the poet's persona itself rather than with any supposed atrophy of the cultural landscape.

Similarly, Eliot's desire to "escape from personality" is symptomatic of the neurotic shame associated with the fundamental need to connect with other, different individuals, a need thwarted by the neurotic's own fear of separation and reticence to reveal the self. "This seems to me to explain . . . why so many neurotics feel ashamed when there is no apparent reason for it," Rank says, "shame being an emotional reaction to recognition and admission of feelings that are one-sided. In other words, one is ashamed of having feelings at all if they are not reciprocated, the unpleasant feeling of shame again being an emotional reaction to realization of difference, of separation." The patient in Rank's analytic practice "learns to accept the fact that not everything is the ego [*nicht alles Ich ist*], that there is also a Thou or other egos whom he has to accept without wanting to destroy or devour them" (*PD* 156, 157). Thus Rank presents a system designed to allow individuation and identity through the verbal expression of emotion and, at the same time, an acceptance of the significance of other personalities, be they colleague, lover, or perhaps the analyst listening to us speak. "Psychology is self-interpretation through others," Rank maintains, "just as physics is self-interpretation through nature. In this way psychology as knowledge of others is self-affirmation, self-assertion . . ." (*PS* 128).

Eliot indeed invented companions for his poetic speakers, frequently addressing them as a narrator might address a reader, sometimes whispering to them as though partners in crime. “Let us go then, you and I” (1), Eliot invites at the beginning of “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” compelling his companion to join him in a late night, fog bound walk through London. The poet speculates on the journeys of a friend in “Little Gidding,” cautioning that travel always results in the same conclusion, “And what you thought you came for / Is only a shell, a husk of meaning” (30-31). And in *The Waste Land*, Eliot’s persona confesses to an obscure friend “The awful daring of a moment’s surrender / Which an age of prudence can never retract” (404). The sense of connection between the speaker and companion never is clear, however, with words uttered seemingly rhetorically with no answer either forthcoming or expected. Malamud attributes this disjunction as being representative of social fragmentation, an intentional creative move by Eliot to reveal the personal isolation of a modernist wasteland. “The language of social fragmentation,” Malamud writes, “generally draws upon two different voices, each revealing a speaker’s values and prejudices, and each incompatible with the other. Paradigmatically, one voice may be grounded in the manners of a conventional social encounter, while the other is composed out of the critical thought of the person rebelling against these manners” (91). But in fact these companions are given voice through the narrator’s thought and interaction, rarely speaking yet nevertheless involved and complicit in the intellectual exploration underway. In effect, both Eliot’s poetic persona and these silent companions recreate the behavior described by Rank, with the neurotic suppressing emotion for fear of being ignored, and the companions remaining

silent in a perverse fulfillment of the neurotic's original fear. Any appearance of dysfunctional interaction, as interpreted by Malamud, emerges as a situation with therapeutic potential in Rank's practice, yet Eliot never submits his poetic self for analysis, and consequently never incorporates into his psychology the other selves populating the modernist landscape.

Twenty-first century readers perceive other voices outside the poem's edges, voices suppressed by the poet, or ignored, or marginalized nearly to extinction. These voices emerge as separate identities with qualities Eliot's persona intuitively recognizes as lacking in the self, but that the self is incapable of acknowledging or accepting. The voices of women in *The Waste Land*, for example, are present but almost never represent Eliot's persona or express poetic insight. The hyacinth girl's lines in the poem's first part, "The Burial of the Dead," are contained in quotation marks, an attribution with little authorial responsibility, while Madame Sosostris's reading of the Tarot deck a few lines later is printed without quotation marks but nevertheless introduced as her words: "Here, said she, / Is your card, the drowned Phoenician Sailor" (46-47). The passage spoken by Lil's presumably female admonisher is separated from the poet's own persona through tone and dialect, and in the second part, "A Game of Chess," another implicitly female voice pleads for a verbal dialogue and for participation in intellectual exercise:

'My nerves are bad to-night. Yes, bad. Stay with me.

'Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak.

'What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?

'I never know what you are thinking. Think.' (111-14)

The tone contains an element of hysteria and urgency, and expresses symptoms of a person trapped in a situation at once hostile and repressive. The voice could be that of one woman constricted by an insufferable marriage, or the sounds of all women recognizing society's gender restrictions and struggling against them.

Virginia Woolf addressed both of these repressive situations in *A Room of One's Own*, first published in 1929, just seven years after *The Waste Land's* original appearance. Indeed, Woolf's contemplation of the condition of women in modern society provides an effective language for the voice of women obscured in Eliot's poem, and remains perhaps the best expression of independent women's thought of Eliot's era. Woolf maintains, in prose now a hallmark of feminist assertion, that women exist in literature primarily as objects of masculine attention and are rarely if ever valued for their own innate creative abilities. She worries about books unwritten due to the social repression of female creativity, and points to the marginalized representation of women in literary works written predominately by men. "The splendid portrait of the fictitious woman," she writes, "is much too simple and much too monotonous" (83). The masculine identity is excessively prominent in literary works, she suggests, and eventually overwhelms any reasonable representation of modern woman. Woolf analyzes an imaginary novel by a male author, and concludes that the personality of women emerges only as a shadow of the masculine self. "After reading a chapter or two," she writes, "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.'" She concludes: ". . . 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" (99-100). Eliot may give voice to a wide range of characters, Woolf might suggest, but after all the potentially rich voice of woman is obscured behind an equally wide range of poetic masks, all of them worn by the pervasive "I" that is Eliot's singularly masculine persona. Ironically, Woolf's own Hogarth Press, a small imprint co-operated with her husband Leonard, published an early edition of *The Waste Land*, and she painstakingly set the volume's type, including Eliot's illusive first person singular; curiously, Woolf was instrumental in one of the work's first public utterances, although woman's "I" remains a shadow throughout Eliot's meticulously printed pages.

Rank reiterates these observations concerning the obliterated personality of woman nearly concurrently with Woolf and, curiously, in terms sharing the imagery and essence of Woolf's own expression.<sup>2</sup> While discussing the development of human speech, Rank maintains that "man's utter egocentricity" is revealed through origin myths depicting man first naming the parts of his own body, and then dividing "the visible universe, as it were, into two categories, the 'I' and the 'not-I.' The things he accepted, liked or needed he classified as belonging to the I-class, relegating everything else to the not-I class." Woman predictably became an element of the not-I class due to her representation of birth and physical mortality, and thus "all not-I things, which later formed the neuter class in European language, were first considered feminine" (*BP* 246-47). Both Rank and Woolf thus depict woman as an unrecognized other, relegated by

man to a shadow existence behind the preeminent masculine “I,” but Rank further extends the import of this observation into the realm of language and signification.

According to Rank, language gradually has deteriorated from its original foundation, emphasizing the religious, spiritual, and irrational elements of human experience, to a secularized medium supporting the prevailing masculine culture and containing little of the essence of its earlier meaning. “The change in the meaning of words epitomized the gradual condemnation of irrational terms expressed in language and their replacement by the rational,” Rank writes. “Since any positive designations for the irrational elements in human nature are lacking, woman’s psychology, which still preserves those irrational elements, is non-existent because un-describable. Hence, civilization means increasing rationalization whereby man’s importance and power is augmented at the expense of woman’s right to herself” (*BP* 248). Rank maintains that men and women use two fundamentally different types of language, and that woman’s voice remains unheard due to her marginal status in society and her natural reticence to reveal herself in such oppressive circumstances. “There actually are two different languages characteristic of man and woman respectively,” Rank writes, “and the woman’s ‘native tongue’ has hitherto been unknown or at least unheard. In spite of her proverbial chattering, woman is tacit by nature; that is, she is inarticulate about her real self. Man, in his creative presumption, took upon himself the task of voicing her psychology—of course, in terms of his masculine ideology” (*BP* 243).

Rank’s criticism of the masculine precepts of Freudian psychology leads him to suggest that traditional psychoanalysis is as much a victim of sexualized language as

women themselves: “No wonder that Freud could explain human behaviour and the history of mankind from a patriarchal point of view; the world has been sexualized by man’s interpretation of it, but the real psychology is man’s need for interpretation of the world in his terms, on the one hand, and woman’s nature freed from this superstructure of masculinization on the other” (*BP* 255). Freudian psychoanalysis, by developing a language and apparatus predicated upon a masculine culture, is guilty not only of self-validation but of describing the irrational psychology of woman in rational terms. “The fallacy of such an undertaking,” Rank remarks, “betrays itself in the vicious circle created by man who first named things in his own language, only to use the same language afterwards by which to ‘explain’ them” (*BP* 242).

Rank calls for a specifically irrational language, a new form of expression with a new vocabulary intended to express what is now, in our civilized and thus masculinized culture, inexpressible. The linguistic inability to express the irrational verbally, and thus to communicate feminine thought, remains a consequence of the human attempt to live simultaneously in the natural world and the artificial world fabricated by masculine will: “Man in his development of civilization has practically made over the universe, or at least the earth, in terms of his self only to fail, finally, in making this self over in terms of the world he has created. Therefore, we actually need two kinds of words for every thing in order to differentiate between the natural and the ‘Ersatz’-thing made by man” (*BP* 13).

Eliot attempts to reproduce the language of irrationality by including verbal fragments and nonsense in his poetry, gibberish not only emulating the inexpressible but invoking ancient languages and cultures representative of a past more spiritual and

magical than the present, yet still corrupted by modern sensibilities. The quasi-bawdy homage to the soldier's ballad celebrating Mrs. Porter and her daughter in *The Waste Land*, perhaps the most direct expression of a secularized and profaned language, is followed immediately by confounding lines open to irrational yet similarly erotic speculation: "Twit twit twit / Jug jug jug jug jug jug / So rudely forc'd. Tereu" (203-06); the flowing of the Thames finds echo in the refrain of "Weialala leia / Wallala leialala" (277-78), a sound with almost sexual repetition; the inexplicably lyrical nonsense words "la la" (306) precede a lone reference to St Augustine's *Confessions*, and to a section of that work dealing with erotic experience. Even the discourse between the Sibyl and some young boys, *The Waste Land's* opening excerpt from the *Satyricon* of Petronius with dialogue printed in Greek, invokes a language with mythical implications far exceeding that of the language available today.<sup>3</sup> Eliot thus attempts to develop an irrational discourse but remains mostly thwarted by the disintegrated language of his times, as the more pristine shelter in simply transcribing the Sibyl's and boys' ancient words might imply.

Rank, for his part, struggles to define this new irrational language, and perhaps unpersuasively suggests developing a different spelling of each word to denote the separate rational and irrational representation of an action or thing. Presumably as a psychoanalyst rather than an artist, however, he resigns himself to accomplishing only an approximation of this essential task: "meanwhile, not presuming to take the liberty of the artist, I have to be content if I succeed in using the available medium of communication to give a mere impression of the irrational which cannot be expressed directly save in a

new kind of artistic creation” (*BP* 13). Although Rank minimizes the implications of writing *Beyond* in English, his first attempt to convey his ideas, in print, in a non-native language, the reader is left wondering if Rank’s ruminations on linguistic limitations were not provoked, at least in part, by the actual task of composing in a foreign tongue. And for all the repudiation of his presumed role of psychoanalyst-artist, the subtext of Rank’s work gives the impression of an artist at work, creating in expository prose a compliment to the literature of an age attempting to comprehend a new order. Indeed, Rank describes *Beyond* as “a creative experience of its own, which ultimately crystallized into words“ (*BP* 12). Whether Rank is being needlessly coy or pervasively unaware of the implications of his own work, or perhaps a combination of the two, is a moot issue. In either case he has expressed, in the medium of psychoanalytic discourse, much of the speculation and theory related to language that started in his own time and continues into ours.

Indeed, Rank’s early attempt to define an irrational language consistent with revealing the voice of woman finds contemporary maturity in the work of Kristeva. In *Revolution in Poetic Language* (1984), Kristeva presents her own notion of a dualistic language with the intent to illuminate and to explain modern ideas of subjectivity. In Kristeva’s terms, the *symbolic* consists of the referential aspect of language, a means of expression bound to the social order and dependent upon rational rules allowing signification of a thing apart from itself. Grammatical syntax and thus “all linguistic categories” exist, for Kristeva, as “a social effect of the relation to the other, established through the objective constraints of biological (including sexual) differences and

concrete, historical family structures” (29). The other aspect of language is the *semiotic*, a term Kristeva uses in a highly idiosyncratic way to denote language predicated upon the prelinguistic presence of the mother and representing a form of irrational expression that may, at times, puncture the membrane of the symbolic to express both the mother’s influence and the speaker’s own body. Kristeva describes the semiotic in terms of Freudian psychoanalysis, noting that “[d]rives involve pre-Oedipal semiotic functions and energy discharges that connect and orient the body to the mother” (27), but her emphasis upon the maternal presence and nearly supernatural energy associated with the process of birth would appear to align her thought more with Rank than with Freud.

Rank’s idea of the existing social order, a masculine fabrication predicated upon rationality and the perception of woman as a sexual object, furthermore is consistent with Kristeva’s concept of the symbolic form of language, while his notion of a complimentary irrational language conveys much of the essence of Kristeva’s semiotic if little of its formal articulation and complexity. Kristeva specifically attempts to understand subjectivity and the creative process in her analysis of linguistic construction, and again this intent aligns her thought with Rank’s own motives for pursuing his distinctive form of psychoanalysis. While Rank’s concept of creative will explains the articulation of the individual self and the creation and re-creation of culture, Kristeva provides an analysis of the linguistic dynamics supporting such a concept of creativity. The process of signification, Kristeva theorizes, involves the dynamic interaction of the symbolic and the semiotic, and artistic creation provides the impetus for the semiotic to break the bounds of the prevailing rational symbolic form of expression. The thetic stage,

“that crucial place on the basis of which the human being constitutes himself as signifying and/or social,” for Kristeva is the site provoking cultural transformation and is “the very place textual experience aims toward. In this sense, the textual experience represents one of the most daring explorations the subject can allow himself, one that delves into his constitutive process.” As with Rank, however, the creative process can lead to a variety of expressions challenging the social order, from madness and murder to poetic creation, but all these responses are the result of a developing individuality and recognition of separation from the existing culture. In the positive, artistic sense, Kristeva maintains, “textual experience reaches the very foundation of the social—that which is exploited by sociality but which elaborates and can go beyond it, either destroying or transforming it” (67).

Both Kristeva and Rank thus emphasize the centrality of a suppressed, extra-natural component to artistic expression, and one both potentially constructive and destructive, depending upon the medium and the ability of the creative personality. Rank, perhaps the less systematic of the two psychoanalysts, would call the impulse irrationality while Kristeva would call it the semiotic, but both conceptions relate to maternal influence, gender identification, a projection of the self and to artistic expression and the recreation of culture. Chris Weedon directly relates Kristeva’s semiotic to the irrational impulse in human beings, albeit without reference to Rank’s own work on the subject, and in doing so explicitly questions the validity of Kristeva’s theory and implicitly devalues Rank’s. According to Weedon, “Kristeva links symbolic language to masculinity and semiotic language to femininity, and argues that both aspects of

language, the feminine and the masculine, are open to all individuals irrespective of their biological gender. The effect of this theoretical move is to break with the biological basis of subjectivity.” The problem, according to Weedon, is one of intent, for “in making femininity and masculinity universal aspects of language, rather than the particular constructs of specific historically produced discourse, Kristeva’s theory loses its political edge.” Rank might argue that the biological basis of our concepts of subjectivity must be eliminated, thus promoting self-conception that is androgynous in the most positive sense, and Kristeva would agree; Rank alone might argue that, indeed, gender is an aspect of language identified with a specific historical period, but that period extends from the collapse of totemistic group living in the pre-primitive past right up to the present day. But Weedon continues the offence: “to equate the feminine with the irrational,” she writes, “even if the feminine no longer has anything to do with women, is either to concede rather a lot to masculinity or to privilege the irrational, neither of which is very helpful politically” (86). Again, Rank would suggest that masculinity deserves fabulous concessions not because it is superior but because, in culture, it is oppressively prevalent, with all the negative consequences enumerated in his work. He would also maintain that privileging the irrational is precisely the goal of art and, indeed, the ideal aspiration for psychoanalysis, for its embodiment in woman is the last refuge for a universal impulse suppressed by the male in his fear of death and his desire for immortality. And “privileging” any political goal over an honest recognition of the state of the modern human being, as Weedon would require, ironically acquiesces to the dictates of a political order that itself is masculine. Weedon’s task of promoting a

feminist conception thus self-destructs, a victim of the very forces both Rank and Kristeva describe.

Woolf ultimately affirms both Kristeva and Rank's perception that masculine identity must be tempered with a feminine counterpart, and warns that art cannot last without this androgynous perspective. "It is fatal to be a man or woman pure and simple," she maintains, "one must be woman-manly or man-womanly. . . . And fatal is no figure of speech; for anything written with that conscious bias is doomed to death. It ceases to be fertilized" (104). Woolf points to Romantic figures such as Keats, Coleridge and Shelly as ideal artists, partially because of their androgynous qualities and their willingness to express emotion, while Eliot, in "Tradition," rejects the Romantics for nearly the same reasons. Eliot nevertheless seems to understand the creative impulse of androgyny by giving voice to Tiresias, "throbbing between two lives, / Old man with wrinkled female breasts" (218-19), but the poet undermines any androgynous creative effect by endowing him with a decidedly masculine gaze. Tiresias, though blind, voyeuristically observes an evening tryst between a reluctant young typist and her excited lover, and woman once again becomes an object of male observation and possession rather than an expressive creative force.

The masculine relegation of women to the Not-I class, as we have seen, promotes this sexual objectification of women in the social order and is a direct outcome of the male rejection of women, as representative of the cycles of birth and death, in pursuit of immortality. In order to sustain a masculinized world, Rank maintains, men "had to change woman according to his masculine ideology, that is, to sexualize her in his own

image. Although this resulted in making her a willing instrument of his erotic desires, it was not primarily aimed at that but sprang from man's basic psychology which is contrary to that of women" (*BP* 248). The corresponding sexualization of language emerges as an attempt to assume "the parenthood of everything" by "bringing sexual connotations into its nomenclature. This sexualization of language is itself, then, a metaphorical way of expressing a 'just-like'; that is, it gives name-forms to everything that man creates, 'just as if' they were produced by him as the child is" (*AA* 244).

If the words of woman are obscured in Eliot's poetry, the voices of Jews similarly are unheard in his work, the Jewish presence consistently reduced to a silent, dark smudge denoting avarice and bad motives. The extent and nature of Eliot's anti-Semitism remains a topic of critical discourse, prompting a full-length study by Julius and a pivotal section of *T. S. Eliot and Prejudice* by Ricks. Julius is particularly incensed by Eliot's cultural prejudice, but the tone of his criticism makes the reader wary of his judgment. "Eliot had the imagination of an anti-Semite in the highest degree," Julius maintains. "He was alive to anti-Semitism's resources, insensitive to Jewish pain. Anti-Semitism did not disfigure Eliot's work, it animated it. It was, on occasion, both his refuge and his inspiration, and his exploitation of its literary potential was virtuouse" (173). Textual evidence of Eliot's anti-Semitism is slight, however, consisting of a few passages of moderate to ugly representations of Jews cited by critics again and again. Eliot's prejudices also appear to have mollified over the years. He deleted a passage of undeniably caustic anti-Semitic sensibility from *The Waste Land* and publicly separated himself from Ezra Pound's prejudices in 1940. Nevertheless, Eliot persisted in printing

the word “Jew” in lower case through early editions of his poetry, and the questionable passages, though small in number, obscure the power of Eliot’s words as would ink blots upon the page. In “Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar,” Eliot uses parallelism to draw an inappropriate comparison of rodents to Jews: “The rats are underneath the piles. / The Jew is underneath the lot” (22-23). “Gerontion” portrays a Jewish character as a smarmy landlord, leaning into the poet’s life with overt menace and somehow responsible for the crumbling state of modern existence:

My house is a decayed house,  
And the jew squats on the window sill, the owner,  
Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp,  
Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London. (7-10)

The deleted passage from *The Waste Land* entitled “Dirge,” extant from the fair copy edited by Valerie Eliot, may have been excised not because of Elliot’s second thoughts on anti-Semitism but because the stanzas are just flat out bad poetry.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, in these lines Eliot reveals perhaps the most convincing evidence of his prejudice:

Full fathom five your Bleistein lies  
Under the flatfish and the squids.  
Graves’ Disease in a dead jew’s eyes!  
When the crabs have eat the lids.  
Lower than the wharf rats dive  
Though he suffer a sea-change  
Still expensive rich and strange (1-7)

Eliot imagines Jews as distasteful in all these passages, associating them with disease and decay, greed and thoughtlessness, their bodies either buried beneath the ground, or squatting inexplicably or submerged, dead, under the ocean. Eliot buries his Jews in situation just as he buries them textually in his poetry, not only refusing them voice as he does with his women characters but also maliciously distorting their very being.

Rank comments on the similarity of the status of woman and Jews in modern culture by directly connecting the two in his work, maintaining that neither group has social privilege nor is comprehensible through Freudian psychoanalysis. “As little as there is a real psychology of the woman in the Freudian system,” Rank writes, “so one would seek there in vain for a psychology of the Jew, who after all must have a specific psychology different from the non-Jew.” Rank explains that Jews not only share the subjugation and repression experienced by women, but similarly are viewed as the original source of evil, ultimately becoming the scapegoat and “inventing the first psychology as an explanation of the evil in the human being” (*BP* 285).<sup>5</sup> Jews nevertheless have developed a distinctive ability to survive adverse situations, Rank suggests, and their lack of an organized political state actually contributes to their continuation. “Remarkably adaptable,” Rank writes, “Jews fit best within sexual-era ideology, sacrificing state for family, surviving through millennia by ‘multiplying like the sands of the sea,’ while other peoples perished through hypertrophy of the state” (*PS* 53). This adaptability, Rank suggests, is the real motivation for other peoples, bound by a state generally suppressing individuality, to express hatred toward Jews, for the essential Jewish heartiness and the ability to accommodate to any adopted political order

ultimately is seen as a threatening stance: “Thus, anti-Semitism is not so much a racial hatred as it is a resentment of a certain type whose disadvantages turn out to be advantageous to the extent of providing a realistic basis of permanent survival, that is, real immortality” (*BP* 285). With a spiritual belief centered upon the family as opposed to the state, and upon the present life as opposed to the hereafter, Judaism may emerge as a more viable means not only of retaining integrity in a presumably fragmented modern culture but of attaining the masculine goal of immortality as well.

Rank’s work consequently suggests that Eliot may have marginalized Jews in his early poetry because of their essential immunity to the social and psychological effects of a modern wasteland, not only in spite of but because of the horrendous persecution they endure. Just as importantly, Eliot’s supposed anti-Semitism may have been influenced in part by the same personal impulses leading to his famous conversion from Unitarianism to Anglo-Catholicism in 1927, for as Rank points out, Christianity and Judaism are diametrically opposed in terms of their belief in immortality and the continuation of the soul. According to Rank, the two religions “represent the opposite extremes of soul-belief” or “this life versus the next”: “Judaism forfeited a worldly state, clinging to the ideology of familial sexual immortality codified as a religious ideal, while Christianity became a worldly power that . . . was based on the soul-immortality ideology centered on a state in the hereafter” (*PS* 54). Eliot, following Rank’s profile of modern man, may have looked for personal morality, ethics, and indeed immortality in the confines of a rational social institution—in this instance, the church—rather than locating the source of these qualities in the irrational self. Women as the embodiment of irrationality, and Jews

as the representation of an earthly soul, thus remain unexpressed in Eliot's poetry because of the threatening types they signify rather than any positive subjective qualities.

Martin Buber was a Jew decidedly different from those depicted by Eliot, and the voice of this Hasidic scholar may fill the valleys of Jewish silence in Eliot's poem. Buber's most accomplished philosophical statement, *I and Thou*, was published in 1923, one year after *The Waste Land*'s first appearance. Almost biblical in tone and presence, Buber's text considers the self's relationship with other human beings in the context of a comparable relationship with the physical world and with God. Buber maintains that human beings normally relate to things in the external world as separate from the self and distant, elements of the environment inexorably restricted by causation and event. This "I-It" relationship also defines the self's relationship with other people much of the time: we treat each other as objects, things to be observed and manipulated. A more appropriate interaction with other human beings is the "I-Thou" relationship, Buber suggests, a conscientious dedication to dialogue involving the complete emotional and spiritual being of each partner. For Rank, this interaction would approximate the clinical process of analysis, with the patient finally acknowledging the validity of the other, the analyst, as a subjective being worthy of empathy. Such dialogue exists for Buber as a reflection of the human relationship with God, and through the I-Thou interaction human beings may initiate a dialogue with the creator regardless of the immeasurable chasm separating humanity from the divine. The I-Thou dialogue, according to Buber, is an assured method of achieving physical and spiritual peace:

The unlimited sway of causality in the It-world, which is of fundamental importance for the scientific ordering of nature, is not felt to be oppressive by the man who is not confined to the It-world but free to step out of it again and again into the world of relation. Here I and You confront each other freely in a reciprocity that is not involved in or tainted by any causality; here man finds guaranteed the freedom of his being and of being. (100)

Rank once again emulates the terminology of a contemporary by illustrating his theory of creative will using an I-Thou paradigm. “The ego needs the Thou in order to become a Self,” Rank maintains, “be it on the individual plane of human relationship or on the social plane of a foreign group-ideology, or on the broadest basis of one civilization needing another one for its development and maintenance.” Reinforcing his notion of the guilt associated with creative assertion, however, Rank also notes that the “tragic element in this process is that the ego needs a Thou to build up an assertive self with and against this Thou” (*BP* 290). The hysterical feminine voice pleading for dialogue in *The Waste Land* thus becomes more poignant in the context of Buber’s and Rank’s notions. Her emotional refrain, “Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak” (112), emerges not only as a request for participation in the creative act, but an awareness of her own objectification in an I-It relationship and the spiritual abandonment in a wasteland with little chance of peace or redemption. Eliot’s Jews no doubt would chant a comparable refrain if Eliot only would let them speak.

As though invoking a common totem, both Buber and Woolf employ the image of a tree to signify objectification of human beings, Woolf in her vision of woman absorbed into the environment through the masculine gaze, and Buber in his discussion of the essential I-It relationship between human beings and nature, a relationship emulated much of the time in the relationships between our selves and others. "I contemplate a tree," Buber writes. "I can dissolve it into a number, into a pure relation between numbers, and eternalize it." And finally: "Does the tree then have a consciousness, similar to our own? I have no experience of that. But thinking that you have brought this off in your own case, must you again divide the indivisible? What I encounter is neither the soul of a tree nor a dryad, but the tree itself" (57-59). Lawrence would assert the tree's fundamental consciousness: "Trees, that have no hands and faces, no eyes. Yet the powerful sap-scented blood roaring up the great columns. A vast individual life, and an overshadowing will. The will of a tree. Something that frightens you" (*Fantasia* 86). Eliot, for his part, appears to understand the divisive nature of objectification just as he understands Woolf's androgynous creative sensibility, but again he stops short of employing this knowledge to inform his poetry or to integrate the self with others. In "Ash Wednesday," for example, Eliot appears to accept the isolated and divided self by using a tree of his own. And here even the word "united" expresses isolation and division rather than elemental accord:

Under a juniper-tree the bones sang, scattered and shining  
We are glad to be scattered, we did little good to each other,  
Under a tree in the cool of the day, with the blessing of sand,

Forgetting themselves and each other, united  
In the quiet of the desert. This is the land which ye  
Shall divide by lot. And neither division nor unity  
Matters. This is the land. We have our inheritance. (89-95)

Eliot makes no room for an I-Thou relationship in this passage, and thus provides a fitting metaphor for his objectification of women and Jews, companions forever consigned to silence and obscurity. In fact, Eliot's neurotic rejection of personality types inconsistent with his own assumes even broader implications than discussed here. As one standard reference points out, the geography depicted in *The Waste Land* includes detailed descriptions of the streets of London, references to ballads from Sydney, Australia, and even events unfolding in the tundra of the South Pole, yet excludes any mention of the United States, Eliot's birthplace and country of citizenship until he formally became a British subject in 1927 (Harmon 332). Eliot seems determined to obliterate all thought of the people ostracized, for one reason or another, from his social and intellectual experience.

Eliot's shadow companions, the poetic embodiment of personalities obscured or distorted by Eliot's text, in fact are invoked most explicitly in *The Waste Land's* stanza depicting a phantom polar explorer. "Who is the third who walks always beside you?" Eliot asks,

When I count, there are only you and I together  
But when I look ahead up the white road  
There is always another one walking beside you

Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded

I do not know whether a man or a woman

---But who is that on the other side of you? (360-66)

Eliot's note indicates that the passage is inspired by Sir Ernest Shackleton's 1920 expedition to South Georgia, and the exhausted explorers' delusion "that there was *one more member* than could actually be counted" (75; Eliot's emphasis). The rational function of counting does not reveal the shadow explorer, just as Buber's assignment of a number to his tree does not in itself reveal the tree's essence. The cultural and thus eternal nature of the tree is communicable only through the poet's subjugation of rational personality to the irrational expression of art. The spectral companion to Eliot's poetic "I" recalls the poet's reference to Baudelaire in *The Waste Land's* Unreal City, "Où le spectre en plein jour raccroche le passant" (71n) or the Double, perceived as the reader, in the final line of Part I, "The Burial of the Dead": "You! Hypocrite lecteur!—mon semblable,—mon frère" (76). Eliot similarly gives voice to the shadow self in "Little Gidding," as his persona engages "the sudden look of some dead master" (92) curiously both familiar and unidentifiable:

So I assumed the double part, and cried

And heard another's voice cry: 'What! Are *you* here?'

Although we were not. I was still the same,

Knowing myself yet being someone other—

And he a face still forming; yet the words sufficed

To compel the recognition they preceded. (97-102)

Rank deals extensively with the psychological and social implications of such a double self both in a 1925 monograph and, perhaps more maturely, in a pivotal chapter of *Beyond*. In the earlier study, Rank relies upon a Freudian notion of narcissism as the explanation for the individual's perception of a double self. "[T]he first self projects outward in the form of the second self that which threatens his self-love," Walsh explains. "He feels threatened by anything that suggests his own human limitations, especially thoughts of death. Ironically, his attempt to rid himself of something he does not wish to recognize in himself only takes a new form outside himself which continues to threaten him and against which he reacts in fear and revulsion." Anything relegated to the Not-I category therefore would become a candidate for expulsion from the personality and possible recreation as a threatening personal Double, and women and Jews consequently become Eliot's shadow selves, representations of an aspect of humanity Eliot would prefer to exclude from his universal model. "At the same time," Walsh continues, "the Double is not only a symbol of the rejected self but also a symbol of the very self-love that created it because the first self has also projected his narcissism about which he feels uncomfortable. This projection accounts for the attraction which the first self feels for his Double. The effect of the conflicting projections is the creation of a Double who reflects the complexity of the first self's character" (69-70). In this context, destruction of the Double would appear to be suicidal, a manifestation of a criminally neurotic rather than creative personality, and therefore the Double emerges in Eliot's poetry as a persistent, silent companion, an elusive reminder of an ignored aspect of humanity. Menaker reinforces this interpretation of eerie companionship by explaining

the limitations of translation from German to English. “Double is inevitably an inadequate translation of Doppelgänger, which contains a somewhat mystical meaning. It is compounded with the German verb ‘to go’ (literally, ‘double-goer’), and therefore implies a more active quality than the English noun ‘double’ can convey” (RL 91).

Rank’s later analysis of the Double in *Beyond* places the motif in the context of his mature thought. Indeed, his emphasis on the importance of ritual and myth in the development of the Double both as a phenomenon and as a literary motif is comparable to the approach of two of Eliot’s primary sources for *The Waste Land*, Weston’s *From Ritual to Romance* (1920) and Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* (1922), a work specifically mentioned in Rank’s text.<sup>6</sup> The manifestation of the Double, for Rank, is a consequence of the masculine desire for immortality and the rational cultural structures created in order to supplant ancient spirituality and provide continuation of the self in the natural world. The irrationality of the individual, compressed into restrictive rational confines, lead to psychic pressures that effectively can split the over-civilized ego into two halves, resulting in the physical emanation of the Double and its representation in art. The phenomenon of the Double, as we have seen, has encouraged radically different interpretations as culture developed through the centuries, and continues to be interpreted differently by individuals depending upon their particular personality type. Rank outlines the cultural transformation of the concept as an interpretation shifting as society developed. “Originally, the double was an identical self (shadow, reflection), promising personal survival in the future,” Rank maintains, and “later, the double retained together with the individual’s life his personal past; ultimately, he became an opposing self,

appearing in the form of evil which represents the perishable and mortal part of the personality repudiated by the social self” (*BP* 81-82). Menaker further summarizes Rank’s mature idea of the Double by placing it in the context of his theories of the individual creative process and of his later clinical practice:

In other words, the spiritual self (the double) which creates culture is in turn evaluated by it and the nature of this evaluation determines the extent to which it becomes an integral part of the self. A positive evaluation creates the building up of the prototype of personality from the self; a negative evaluation—a conception of the Double as the symbol of death—results in disintegration and is symptomatic of the conflict of many modern personality types. (*RL* 96)

In his discussion of personality development in *Truth*, Rank emphasizes that the neurotic personality has options unavailable to the adapted individual, and that the neurotic’s attitude “depends on what position the will takes toward the moral and ethical standards originally called in by it or self created, after they have once been called into life, or have even achieved power” (56). Rank explains that the neurotic personality “goes to pieces” and “shatters not only on the incapacity to bear external pressure, but . . . the inability to subject himself to any pressure whether it be inside or out, even the pressure of his own ideal formation” (61, 58). Eliot, whose theory precluded incorporation of his own personality into art, would have been unusually susceptible to the rational social pressures causing self-fragmentation. By refusing expression of the

personality through artistic creation, Eliot further exhibits neurotic symptoms and presents a morbid conception of the world around him.

Woolf's warning about the fatal consequences of exclusive expression, privileging one gender over another, ultimately comes true in poetry that sees only death as a final reward. *The Waste Land's* opening epigram from Petronius not only relates the myth of the Sibyl and her imperfect attainment of immortality, but also establishes the tone of mutability and loss so prevalent throughout the poem. Eliot restates the inevitability of death just a few lines into the poem, as he expresses the individual's fear of death in the context of a shadow self, a Doppelgänger inexorably connected to every human being:

There is a shadow under this red rock,  
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),  
And I will show you something different from either  
Your shadow at morning striding behind you  
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;  
I will show you fear in a handful of dust. (25-30)

The shadow remains prescient of death regardless of its regenerative properties, coming and going with the movements of the sun, and Eliot consequently expresses a Freudian death instinct rather than a Rankian will to live.

Although Rank would object to Eliot's theme and message, his own view of the nature and responsibility of the artist is consistent with the notions Eliot outlined in

“Tradition.” Eliot’s creative world in fact is a microcosm of Rank’s, for personal and cultural development becomes one inseparable unit:

Man creates culture by changing natural conditions in order to maintain his spiritual self. On the other hand, culture and cultural patterns are instrumental in shaping this self into various personality types. This simultaneous growth and mutual development of personality and culture is not merely valid for the understanding of man’s past history, the culture we inherited, but is a living process underlying the creation as well as the maintenance of any given civilization. (*BP* 64)

This symbiotic process parallels Eliot’s analysis of the development of art in the context of poetic tradition, and additionally indicates that masculine culture requires participation by its subjects and in turn shapes individual psychology far more than Freudian theory would allow. Eliot suggests that any “new” work of art is inseparable from the culture containing it. “The existing order is complete before the new work arrives,” Eliot suggests, “for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the *whole* are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new” (50; emphasis Eliot’s).

Rank further suggests that the literary Double can be a manifestation of the creative mind’s perpetuation of primal and mythic irrationality in creative work. “This cultural function,” Rank maintains,

which I have always considered the main distinction of the artist, is borne out in the treatment of the Double-motif as it was developed in the works of prominent authors. There can be no doubt that it is the same exaggerated fear of death threatening the destruction of the Self which the artist has in common with the neurotic. Yet the creative type, in dealing with this fundamental problem of the Self, achieves his personal justification by performing his cultural function—to revive the spiritual values of irrational forces for his generation and thus promote their continuity. (*BP* 77)

Eliot is similarly confident in the social function of the artist in *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (1933), although the goals he announces are somewhat less crucial than the cultural manipulation suggested by Rank. Here, Eliot employs his own concept of social responsibility to discuss the dramatic persona of the artist, but implies that the artist's task is more vaudevillian than operatic: "Every poet would like, I fancy, to be able to think that he had some direct social utility," Eliot maintains, but qualifies that role to exclude "the tasks of the theologian, the preacher, the economist, the sociologist or anybody else." The poet should simply "write poetry, poetry not defined in terms of something else. He would like to be something of a popular entertainer, and be able to think his own thoughts behind a tragic or a comic mask" (154). Such a simplistic mission appears to conflict with Eliot's actual poetic practice, which includes the overt appropriation of myth and symbol to embody the malaise of a generation. Once again Eliot seems to ignore his own advice, and to create self-conscious poetic theory

inapplicable to his actual artistic output, thus validating Meisel's accusation that modernist artists create ideals that are unrepresented in their art. Although Eliot's work may appear to fulfill Rank's notion of the social function of the artist, creating culture through a reconsideration of myth and humanity's ancient irrational foundations, ultimately his act may have more to do with the illusions of a magician rather than the rough-hewn tasks of a cultural hero, and may be more the output of a neurotic than the sincere work of a dedicated artist. Eliot not only trivializes the task of the poet, "fancying" social usefulness, but may have been responsible for projecting his own neurosis on a social order captivated by Freudian theory and thus ready to believe that one man's illness is the world's.

Could Eliot's most enduring poem be the work of a neurotic, in the Rankian sense, rather than the inspired cultural tool created through the forceful will of a genuine artist? Could the hand of the better craftsman, Pound, be responsible for the artistic transcendence of the work, despite his own resonant prejudice? Indeed, the wasteland envisioned by Eliot may be more personal than cultural, an expression of his own moral limitations and fragmented self rather than the embodiment of a morally corrupt and shattered period in human history. Meisel suggests as much by maintaining that Eliot's goal was "to insure his own apparent originality by constructing the most influential modernist myth of all—that modern life is itself a wasteland, projecting onto the world a state that really inheres largely in the history of imagination alone." Pound's meticulous editing, Meisel insists, transformed an essentially "Browningesque satire" into "an efficient and coherent Romantic quest poem of a high order" (89), but not the erudite

representation of a new century that Eliot, aside from his theory, would want us to believe. Ultimately, Eliot's appropriation of myth and symbol emerges as the neurotic's only access to artistic artifacts: rather than synthesizing myth into a valid expression of the values of an age, he repeats existing forms created by a multitude of better hands.

Could Eliot similarly have overstated the condition of modernist culture by fabricating his own critical tools to assess that culture, and then using them to justify his preconceptions? If so, then his method and mission is as thoroughly invalid as those of Freud, who Rank insists improperly developed rational tools in a masculine language intended to "prove" the validity of his own intellectual enterprise. On this point Malamud, at least, is concessionary: "While Eliot may be liable to attack for having created what turns out to be, in fact, a subjective brand of modernism—not the augustly sacrosanct tradition in which he wanted to believe—he was not dissembling about the integrity of this modern language itself. The language is the tool with which he built his modern literary empire; while the empire itself may be questionable, the tools are nevertheless vitally sincere . . ." (77).

Eliot's manuscript title for *The Waste Land*, "He Do the Police in Different Voices," is a reference to Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* and to Sloppy's idle boast of a talent for impersonation; Eliot successfully retained the methodology of ventriloquism if not the mediocre title. Nevertheless, by withholding voice from women and Jews, Eliot creates a poetic wasteland that reflects society's comparable toleration of prejudice and misunderstanding. The shadow explorers representing these marginalized characters haunt Eliot's poetic expression, following the text of *The Waste Land* as representations

of death from beginning to end; they represent the poet's acceptance of the negative interpretation of the Double, death, and the consequential disintegration of the poetic personality. Due to Eliot's poetic ostracism, the work's subtext is equally as clairvoyant as Madame Sosostris in its anticipation of the holocaust of World War II and the women's movement of the last decades of the twentieth century. Woolf's warning about the danger of misperceived gender, an error leading to death, is fulfilled, as is Lawrence's alert concerning the displacement of personal morality. If Eliot's persona indeed describes a modern wasteland rather than projects a personal vacuity onto his surroundings, he nevertheless contributes to the decay of society not only by reflecting society's mistakes but also by embracing them.

Eliot seems aware of both the transgression surrounding his shadow companions and his moral responsibility for their obscurity as he describes a companion in "Preludes," "soul stretched tight across the skies" (39). This shadow self—perhaps a Jew or a woman?—becomes an object of ineffable yet imprecise sympathy, an emblem of poetic guilt, perhaps, but an object still:

I am moved by fancies that are curled  
Around these images, and cling:  
The notion of some infinitely gentle  
Infinitely suffering thing. (48–51)

Eliot may have developed a single voice of modernism, as Malamud suggests, but it is the voice of the modernist movement rather than a harmony of diverse voices representing the essence of early twentieth-century Western culture. Eliot reduced

“modernism” to an artificially-constructed and self-conscious organization with a restricted membership, a project more akin to commercial promotion than to perceptive artistic production. By failing to accept the diversity of society, Eliot’s art contributed to a collusion of denial that eventually led to the emergence of social activism and to the literary and cultural theory that, predicated upon political agenda, attempts to acknowledge the needs of marginalized groups in the twenty-first century. Eliot also theoretically refused to invest his own personality into his art, thereby fulfilling Rank’s concept of the neurotic rather than that of the artist, and he subsequently projected that neurosis onto the surrounding culture. Rather than embodying the artistic hero, Eliot the poet seems lost in an underworld fabricated from the shards of his own existence instead of the fragments of a dissipated era.

## Chapter Four

### “A Woman’s Face, or Worse”: William Butler Yeats

William Butler Yeats was a contemporary of both Rank and Freud, all three born in the mid- to late-nineteenth century and dying in 1939. Yeats’s concern for the nature of identity and the concept of self led him to develop, in *A Vision* and less formally in his autobiographical works, the system of classification assigning each of the people around him to a specific psychological category. Despite this temporal and intellectual affinity to the great minds of psychoanalysis, Yeats seemed unaffected by the advancement of this new discipline and generally was quiet on the clinical analysis of the human mind.<sup>1</sup> For all its consideration and import, *A Vision* remains more an exploration of human spiritualism and historical consciousness than the formal response to psychoanalysis that Lawrence had produced in the preceding decade. Yeats’s interest in automatic writing and dream transcription nevertheless brings together his belief in spiritualism and his concern for understanding the mental process. The extended set of experiments he and his wife, George, began in 1917 consisted of contacts with spiritual “instructors” providing insight and direction to their earthly counterparts, and eventually the notes from these communications lead to the publication of the first edition of *A Vision* in 1926.

Critics have suggested that the youthful and insecure George instigated automatic writing as a deception intended to distract Yeats from his overwhelming attraction to

Maud Gonne, and extensive biographical evidence supports this interpretation of her motivation. Other scholars have suggested that Yeats was aware of George's ruse but chose to embrace even a false manifestation of spiritualism because it so perfectly embodied his beliefs. The publication beginning in 1992 of *Yeats's Vision Papers*, however, demonstrates that both Yeats and George ultimately believed not only in the revelations of their experiments but in the validity of the automatic writing as a method as well.<sup>2</sup> According to George Mills Harper, editor of the exhaustive transcription of occult documents, Yeats "conducted what is possibly the most extensive and varied series of psychological researches ever recorded by an important creative mind. Not only did Yeats believe in the validity of his method, he also believed himself to be the divinely elected transmitter of his discoveries" ("Unbelievers" 15).

Yeats identified, with the ostensible help of his spiritual instructors, twenty-eight different personality types, all predicated upon the relative proportion of subjective to objective characteristics exhibited by specific individuals. The more subjective personality types, represented by phases nine through twenty-one, are committed to introspection and self-revelation, to exploring the inner self and to expressing personal insight through artistic utterance; the more objective personality types, represented by phases two through seven and twenty-three through twenty-eight, are inclined to relate to the external world and to social and cultural events, to interact with other people and to express their experience of those exterior forces with which they have a natural affinity. Phases eight and twenty-two represent a balance of objectivity and subjectivity, while Yeats's idiosyncratic representation of the poetic mask represents this synthesis by

incorporating multiple personality types and metaphorically implying self-expression.

“The more subjective individual finds authority in his imagination,” Ronsley summarizes, “the more objective in empirical evidence. Emotion is generally associated with subjectivity, intellect with objectivity; both are necessary to wholeness or unity, but the greatest difficulty rests in the individual’s ability to discover his inner self imaged in the mask, a discovery for which the strength of personal assertion in the predominantly subjective individual is necessary.”

That each personality type corresponds to a particular lunar phase reveals the occult origins of Yeats’s system. The poet nevertheless has developed a methodology of psychological categorization comparable in method and intent to that of Freud, with his representation of the id, the ego, and the superego as components of personality, or more directly to that of Rank, with his identification of the adapted, the neurotic, and the artist types predicated primarily upon the creative impulse. Yeats’s system, too, implies a continued process or movement more similar to Rank’s, without implication of advancement or evolution, than to the more rational and finite idea of Freud, and individual personality becomes the expression of conflicting subjective and objective impulses as they interact in different proportions and configurations throughout life. “To oversimplify,” Ronsley writes, “the system prescribes that people pass through all the other phases during the course of their lives, but that their personalities are classified according to their most dominant traits during the time of their productive maturity” (58-59). John Millington Synge, for example, is presented in the *Autobiographies* (1955) as “a man of the twenty-third Phase; a man whose subjective lives . . . [are] over; who must

not pursue an image, but fly from it, all that subjective dreaming, that had once been power and joy, now corrupting within him” (263).

Yeats further develops in *A Vision* the geometrical construct intended to explain the movement of internal emotion and external experience from one extreme to another. The intersection of two opposites, “Concord” and “Discord” in his first illustration, becomes Yeats’s idiosyncratic notion of the gyre, and the concept obviously helps the poet comprehend the nature of artistic and personal struggle. “If we think of the vortex attributed to Discord as formed by circles diminishing until they are nothing,” he writes in a section entitled “The Principal Symbol,” “and of the opposing sphere attributed to Concord as forming from itself an opposing vortex, the apex of each vortex in the middle of the other’s base, we have the fundamental symbol of my instructors” (68). The resulting diagram resembles two intersecting cones, one shaded and one unshaded, with the apex of each touching the base of the other. Yeats calls these opposing cones “tinctures,” and Adams points out that Yeats is “adopting an occult term employed by Jacob Boehme meaning a quintessence, the spirit or soul of something” (71). As Yeats observes, Concord diminishes as its lateral surface nears the base of Discord, and vice versa. Our experience in the external world, including our own biographical events as well as human history, persistently oscillates from one extreme to the other, as does the interior experience of thought and emotion.

Yeats specifically relates his diagram of cones and the movement of the gyre with the conflict of interiority and subjectivity with exteriority and objectivity. “My instructors used [a] single cone or vortex once or twice,” Yeats writes, “but soon changed it for a

double cone or vortex, preferring to consider subjectivity and objectivity as intersecting states struggling one against the other” (71). The poet’s conical diagrams significantly assume the dimension of time as an expression of subjectivity and of space or distance as the expression of objectivity. “A line is a movement without extension, and so symbolical of time—subjectivity—Berkeley’s stream of ideas—in Plotinus it is apparently ‘sensation’—and a plane cutting it at right angles is symbolical of space or objectivity. Line and plane are combined in a gyre which must expand or contract according to whether mind grows in objectivity or subjectivity” (70). Yeats allows that the identification of subjectivity with time, and by implication, objectivity with distance, “is probably as old as philosophy” (71). Indeed, Rank makes similar comparisons in *Truth*, where he describes time as the “element whose quantitative aspect is not only determining for the feeling of happiness and redemption, but in general represents the central factor of consciousness itself and therewith of spiritual life as such.” Rank continues to describe the oscillation of consciousness in terms similar to Yeats’s description of the subjective/objective gyre, but without the singular complexity of graphics and terminology. “With all so-called psychic mechanisms,” Rank maintains, “we have to do ultimately with the shortening or prolonging or psychic states; to shorten to the point of nothingness, as, for example, denial does, or to prolong to infinity as in the belief in immortality” (88).

Yeats, of course, was not the first to attempt a geometrical representation of psychic states in order to understand the workings of the mind. In “Geometry and Abjection,” part of Donald’s Thresholds project, Burgin discusses Brunelleschi’s

construction of a “cone of vision,” a sort of camera obscura designed in reverse so that an observer, peering into a cone leading to a small hole punctured in the rear of a painting, actually views the reflection of that painting on a mirror stationed in front of the apparatus. Burgin maintains that Brunelleschi was the first to intersect such a cone with a plane, thus arriving at the first practical demonstration of the concept of perspective. Burgin goes on to relate Brunelleschi’s construction to Lacan’s psychoanalytic models, to Kristeva’s contributions to the conception of the mirror stage, and finally to the notion of *abjection*: “As a concept, the ‘abject’ might fall into the gap between ‘subject’ and ‘object’. The abject, however, is in the history of the subject, prior to this dichotomy; it is the means by which the subject is first impelled towards the possibility of constituting itself as such—in an act of revulsion, of expulsion of that which can no longer be contained.” For Kristeva, this abject is the pre-Oedipal mother, and later by extrapolation all women, “as perpetually at the boundary, the borderline, the edge, the ‘outer limit’” and “viewed as either saintly or demonic—according to whether they are seen as bringing the darkness, or as keeping it out.” Once again we have a fair postmodern representation of Rank’s thoughts on the intersection of masculine ideology with feminine psychology, a restatement of Rank’s themes that becomes even more obvious with Burgin’s summary of this manifestation of the abject: “The woman’s body, that is to say, reminds men of their own mortality” (20-21). Later, he expands this notion to include the obliteration of the masculine identity: “It proves, finally, to be not woman *as such* who is abjected, but rather woman as privileged signifier of that which man both fears and desires: the extinction of identity itself” (22; Burgin’s emphasis). Burgin ultimately agrees with

Kristeva that all identity becomes moot in a postmodern period where “the very notion of identity is challenged,” and calls for a new idea of literary and cultural responsibility: “I do not believe that it is a time when an art/theory which thinks of itself as ‘political’ should admonish, or exhort, or proffer ‘solutions’. I believe it is a time when it should simply describe” (23).

Rank certainly would applaud Burgin’s disinclination to impose ideology upon literary or cultural studies, just as he objects to imposing ideology in the clinical analytic situation, and he would appreciate yet another postmodern validation of his thought, albeit without attribution. Yeats would approve of the conical representation of psychic states in a postmodern era, a continuation of his experiments into the relationship between the subjective and the objective in the course of an individual’s life. When language is unequal to the task, both men would agree, the surfaces of geometry well may be the last resort for the expression of the mind and of existence itself.

Yeats extended his own geometrical models to represent not only the life of the mind but the aspiration toward a changeless world of permanence and immortality. True to both Rank’s and Kristeva’s models, Yeats’s desire for immortality incites a corresponding rejection of procreative sex, a desire to consider woman solely as a means of satisfying the masculine sexual urges, and therefore to relegate women to the role of the Other, the Not-I, as an aspect of objective reality apart from subjective being. “There exists a fundamental dualism in the masculine sex-impulse,” Rank writes, “highly estimated as a pleasurable function of the ego while simultaneously rejected as a coercion to propagate—hence, feared as a symbol of man’s mortality” (*BP* 213). Consistent with

Yeats's notion of the intersection of subjectivity and objectivity, then, women exist at some distance from the masculine subjective self; in effect, women become the external "Thou" objectified by both Buber and Woolf in the image of a tree.

Yeats, an artist committed to personal reflection and revelation in his work, also presents convincing support for Rank's ideas in the events of his daily life. The poet's biography becomes a laboratory for Rank's research just as his art becomes an alternate expression of the psychoanalyst's major mature theories. That Yeats throughout his life maintained an erotic obsession for Maud Gonne, a woman unattainable and guaranteed to reject his many proposals of marriage, would be intriguing to an analyst of either Freudian or Rankian persuasion, and it's unfortunate for posterity that Yeats did not avail himself of the professional couch.<sup>3</sup> His unconsummated desire for Maud was so extreme, in fact, that it provided a convenient excuse for avoiding sexual contact of any kind. "The temptation Yeats glimpsed all around him proved to be no temptation at all," notes Coote, quoting the poet's *Memoirs*. "'At Hammersmith I saw a woman of the town walking up and down in the empty railway station. I thought of offering myself to her, but the old thought came back, 'No, I love the most beautiful woman in the world.''" According to Coote, "idealism was the armour with which to ward off experience, just as poetry would become the means to explore his frustration" (107). Webster similarly notes the poet's compulsory masturbation, an escape he also used to justify his devotion to Maud Gonne and his sexual rejection of other women, as well as his fascination with castration, perhaps the most assured method of avoiding mature sexual relations (56, 101-2). The innate impermanence of the sexual experience, too, troubled Yeats and provided another

subconscious reason to avoid sexual intercourse. The poet frequently cites sexual consummation as an indication of mortal change and decay, and in “Two Songs from a Play,” he notes that “Everything that man esteems / Endures a moment or a day. / Love’s pleasure drives his love away” (9-11). The “Chambermaid’s Second Song,” a short poem ancillary to “The Three Bushes,” is more sexually graphic in its depiction of intercourse as a consumptive act providing a reminder of death and decay:

From pleasure of the bed  
Dull as a worm,  
His rod and its butting head  
Limp as a worm,  
His spirit that has fled  
Blind as a worm. (1-6)

Yeats’s relegation of woman to the objective role of Other understandably has drawn the attention of modern critics, most of it negative, of course, but ranging variously from polite indulgence to outright critical disdain. Spivak sees Yeats’s rhetoric, particularly his uncharacteristic use of Latin in “Ego Dominus Tuus,” as a conscious obliteration of woman’s presence in the poem, a technique that “allows him to keep the woman out, to occlude, to neutralize, and thus to continue that entire history of the sublation and objectification of the woman” (82). Despite such harsh treatment, Yeats’s objectification of women nowhere approaches that of Eliot, and indeed Rea specifically acknowledges this obliquely-favorable comparison, noting the diversity and complexity of women expressed throughout Yeats’s work. “Yeats is not ‘anti-woman’ as he displays

varying degrees of beauty, intelligence, and power in his women, but ultimately he cannot allow women to partake equally with men without distorting how he presents women. In this, he keeps the woman as object, as Other, in order to maintain the privileged status of the man, the One” (10).

Yeats further feared that sexuality and his relationship with women would detract him from the creation of art and thus from attaining immortality, and consequently he transforms Rank’s notion concerning the masculine avoidance of women into an artistic credo. The poet consistently searches for the supreme resolution of external attractions with the internal events of the artistic mind. “Brown Penny,” the concluding poem in Yeats’s 1910 collection *The Green Helmet and Other Poems* (1910), expresses this fear by depicting the poet trapped by a woman’s beauty, “looped in the loops of her hair, / Till the loops of time had run” (13-14). A comparable view of women appears in “To a Young Beauty,” when the poet announces that avoiding romantic love and its distractions will finally allow him to “dine at journey’s end / With Landor and with Donne” (17-18). Yeats confronts a similar fear in “All Things can tempt Me,” only this time adding Irish patriotism to his list of diversions: “All things can tempt me from this craft of verse: / One time it was a woman’s face, or worse – / The seeming needs of my fool-driven land” (1-3). Yeats continues by saying that poetic creation has become an “accustomed toil” (5) not subject to interruption, and seems to depict writing as a repetitive process, a form of daily labor not requiring thought or emotion. He mentions the poetry of his youth, and notes that he once valued only verse of commitment and passion written by young men with “a sword upstairs” (8). He appears to value his new poetic state since it is productive

and automatic, and concludes by longing for a creative spirit that is “Colder and dumber and deafer than a fish” (10).

Rank agrees that sexual relationships, in particular, can impede the artist’s task and thus implicitly validates Yeats’s concern. As Rank suggests, the relationship with woman (or to the opposite sex, as Rank parenthetically notes) is for many artists “a disturbing factor, one of the deepest sources of conflict, indeed, when it tends to force or beguile him into closer touch with life than is necessary or even advantageous to his production. To make a woman his Muse, or to name her as such, therefore, often amounts to transforming a hindrance into a helper . . .” (AA 59). Distance from the external world, for Rank, eventually transformed into the struggle to rebel against the political and social norm, and in so doing to fabricate not only the self but a changed cultural order as well.

Yeats’s later poetry thus struggles with the genuine problem of both embracing the source of inspiration and being separated from it, the element of distance represented by *A Vision*’s conical structures. Yeats recognizes that the two concerns he mentions in “All Things can tempt Me”—beautiful women and political involvement—are not only everyday distractions but also the two primary subjects of his poetry and the source for much of his creative production. The necessity of experience for poetic creation is clear in “The Three Bushes,” a verse from *New Poems* (1938) published just prior to Yeats’s death. Here a lady offers herself to her lover, telling him that

‘None can rely upon  
A love that lacks its proper food;  
And if your love were gone,

How could you sing those songs of love?

I should be blamed, young man.' (2-6)

Yeats presents a similar view of poetic inspiration in "Reconciliation," an earlier poem celebrating the renewal of his relationship with Maud Gonne following the separation caused by her marriage to John McBride:

Some may have blamed you that you took away

The verses that could move them on the day

When, the ears being deafened, the sight of the eyes blind

With lightning, you went from me (1-4)

Yeats suggests that separation from Maud robbed him of his creative inspiration, allowing him to write only traditional poems employing stock notions about chivalry, "Helmets, and swords, and half-forgotten things / That were like memories of you" (6-7). He is clear that their relationship was responsible for his originality and creative fire, and he laments that "since you were gone, / My barren thoughts have chilled me to the bone" (11-12). His need for inspiration through political involvement, too, is obvious in "The Municipal Gallery Re-visited," a work from *New Poems* celebrating the heroes of the Irish independence movement. Roger Casement, Arthur Griffith, Kevin O'Higgins, Lady Gregory and John Millington Synge all appear in the poem, their personal and political sacrifice underscored by the breathless pace of the narrative. Yeats wonders if similar champions of the Irish Republic will emerge, and maintains that political action and poetic inspiration alike come from an immersion in Irish culture and an appreciation for

its traditions: “all that we said or sang / Must come from contact with the soil, from that / Contact everything Antaeus-like grew strong” (42-44).

Yeats’s objectification of women, and his inability to relate to them in the empathic way suggested by Buber, is consistent with Rank’s idea of masculine ideology in the modern social order. As we have seen, Rank maintains that man’s psychology “is constantly adapted to the changes brought about by his man-made civilization; hence, is better fit to cope directly with his environmental reality than woman, who merely follows in the wake of masculine civilization.” Men consequently deny their irrational self and attempt to control women, using them as objects of sexual release, while women are compelled to repress their own irrational being in order to conform to a cultural order they did not assist in creating. “From this results neurosis precipitated in woman by the blocking of her irrational self; in man, through expansion of the will-full control blocking the natural life-force. Hence, the woman is much more extreme in her attitudes and reactions because she can only go the whole way: either totally accept herself as woman or completely resist it with a will-ful drive adopted from masculine psychology” (*BP* 258).

Most of Yeats’s significant female associations curiously follow Rank’s notion of the rebellious woman assuming a masculine persona and rejecting traditional roles. As Yeats observes in his late poem “Hound Voice,” “The women that I picked spoke sweet and low / And yet gave tongue” (8-9): Maud Gonne was a political revolutionary, Constance Markiewicz was a social bohemian, Eva Gore-Booth was a trade union organizer, and Florence Farr was an actress. Cullingford, noting this apparently

contradictory situation, calls Yeats's attraction toward forceful women "a striking split between theory and practice" (247-48). All of these women nevertheless were crucial to Yeats's development as a man and as a poet, yet Yeats understood the conflict that inevitably results when powerful and rebellious women interact with a masculinized culture. In "Michael Robartes and the Dancer," for example, Yeats develops his verse as dialogue between "He" and "She," and consequently emphasizes the division and conflict between the masculine and feminine principles in the social order. A beautiful woman, Yeats suggests, could lead a life of happiness and repose with the man who loves her only if she "Will banish every thought" (48) and be content with a nurturing home life. "I have heard said / There is great danger in the body" (37-38), the woman succinctly maintains, thus rejecting a life devoted to cultivation of maternal instincts and gratification of masculine sexual desire. Ultimately, Yeats depicts the conflict between the sexes by presenting a knight who

Loved the lady; and it's plain  
The half-dead dragon was her thought,  
That every morning rose again  
And dug its claws and shrieked and fought. (5-8)

Maud Gonne's singular personality, Yeats might readily agree, fulfills Rank's notion of the aggressive, "will-ful" woman who has appropriated masculine psychology in order to resist its cultural effects. Yeats first met Maud Gonne, actress and ardent Irish nationalist, in 1889 through the arrangements of Yeats's mentor and Fenian leader John O'Leary, and the twenty-three-year-old Yeats was equally captivated by Maud's beauty

and annoyed by her passionate revolutionary rhetoric. This combined attraction to beauty and dismay over political ideology would infuse Yeats's poetry for the rest of his life. Yeats rarely referred to Maud by name in his poetry, but "He tells of the Perfect Beauty," an early work in a series addressed through the persona of a lover-poet, ardently expresses Yeats's attraction to women and arguably reflects his love for Maud. The expressive power of art is no match for a woman's beauty, Yeats implies, and poets who attempt "To build a perfect beauty in rhyme / Are overthrown by a woman's gaze" (3-4). Similarly, "He wishes for the Cloths of Heaven" communicates the young poet's creative self-image and his dedication to a beautiful woman: "I, being poor, have only my dreams; / I have spread my dreams under your feet; / Tread softly because you tread on my dreams" (6-8). Although Maud had a great appreciation for Yeats's poetry, in fact she trampled his personal and artistic dreams by rejecting his 1891 proposal of marriage and, in 1903, by accepting a proposal from the roguish and abusive McBride.

The poet's dismay with his unsettled relationship with Maud Gonne is communicated in "Adam's Curse," a poem from *In the Seven Woods* (1904), published the year following her marriage. Yeats equates the creation of poetry with the world's real labor of scrubbing kitchen floors or breaking stones for pavement, and he suggests that attaining harmony between the sexes is equally difficult. He presents images of twilight and a waning moon, and regrets that his attempt to attract a beautiful woman through artistic powers, the "old high way of love" (36), had failed: "it had all seemed happy, and yet we'd grown / As weary-hearted as that hollow moon" (37-38). Adam's fall leads not only to unending toil for man, Yeats implies, but to the inevitable separation

of the sexes requiring concerted effort for men and women successfully to mend the physical and psychological divide. Yeats's conflicting emotions also inspired "No Second Troy," and again he acknowledges a great woman's beauty in the context of anguish and destruction. Maud is equated with the astonishing Helen, and the poet is explicit about the personal and cultural disruption Maud has caused: "Why should I blame her that she filled my days / With misery, or that she would of late / Have taught to ignorant men most violent ways" (1-3). Yeats's rhetorical question is met with an equally rhetorical answer, as the poet suggests that "beauty like a tightened bow" (8) is unnatural in modern society, and that Maud's actions simply are a manifestation of her singular character, "being high and solitary and most stern" (10). Maud's ageless beauty and noble soul cause her to support violence in the name of Irish nationalism, Yeats implies, and similarly to rebuff his proposals of marriage. No further explanation is necessary: "Why, what could she have done, being what she is? / Was there another Troy for her to burn?" (11-12).

Yeats thus adopts a traditionalist's view of woman's place in the social order, and he follows Rank's profile of the male as cultural adjunct by outlining in his poetry and other writings the specific tenets a woman should follow in her life. As Rank reiterates, man develops his social self and personality through interaction with masculine culture, while woman "has first to be made a woman—by the man; not only physically through defloration, but also emotionally by being loved and wanted, not temporarily but once and for all, that is, possessed and dominated" (*BP* 254). In two related poems, "To a Child dancing in the Wind" and "Two Years Later," Yeats assumes the persona of a

teacher justifying a child's ignorance of consequence but warning her to avoid developing the willful character of her mother. The poet invites Iseult, Maud Gonne's daughter, to dance carelessly upon the shore, for "Being young you have not known / The fool's triumph, nor yet / Love lost as soon as won" (6-8). Here Yeats directly refers both to Maud's acceptance of violence as a political tool and to her rejection of his proposal of marriage, and he suggests that Iseult, with no comparable experience of political or personal tragedy, is free to express her youthful exuberance. The conclusion of the poem is nearly an echo of the rhetorical question closing "No Second Troy": "What need have you to dread / The monstrous crying of wind?" (11-12). Yeats would like to offer advice to an older Iseult in "Two Years Later," but he finds that the separation of youth and maturity is just as pronounced as the separation between woman and man expressed in "Adam's Curse." "Has no one said those daring / Kind eyes should be more learn'd?" (1-2) Yeats asks at the beginning of the poem. "I could have warned you; but you are young, / So we speak a different tongue" (5-6). The poet laments that Iseult probably will assume her mother's character and, finally, "Suffer as your mother suffered, / Be as broken in the end" (9-10).

Yeats expresses a similar attitude toward strong feminine opinion in "A Prayer for my Daughter," another cautionary verse addressed to a young child. Here the poet addresses the infant Anne, his daughter with George Hyde-Lees, amid images of the sea and of dancing reminiscent of his earlier poem to Iseult. "May she be granted beauty and yet not / Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught" (17-18), Yeats writes, further hoping that Anne will never lose "The heart-revealing intimacy / That chooses right, and never

find a friend” (23-24). The reference to Maud’s passionate nationalism and disappointing personal choice is clear, and again Yeats compares Maud to Helen of Troy and laments that her relationship with McBride caused her “much trouble from a fool” (26). Feminine willfulness and opinion appear as a disruption of personal and social space, and Yeats presents his most angry and direct criticism of Maud near the end of the poem:

Have I not seen the loveliest woman born  
Out of the mouth of Plenty’s horn,  
Because of her opinionated mind  
Barter that horn and every good  
By quiet natures understood  
For an old bellows full of angry wind? (59-64)

Yeats concludes by envisioning his daughter on her wedding day, following a traditional youth of custom and ceremony without regard to the personal arrogance and political hatred found on the streets of Dublin. “How but in custom and in ceremony,” Yeats asks, “Are innocence and beauty born?” (77-78). In Yeats’s hope for the future happiness of his daughter, we see a reflection of his regret for the traditional domestic life he would never enjoy with Maud.

George Hyde-Lees, in contrast with Maud Gonne, represents the second type of feminine reaction to masculine domination in Rank’s theories, that of submission to the role assigned to her by a male-oriented society. Yeats found his decision to marry George anguishing, as he still considered Maud Gonne the great love of his life. He believed he had betrayed both Maud Gonne and Iseult—a Maud surrogate to whom Yeats also

proposed—by marrying George, and gradually he revealed his anguish to his new bride. “The first days of marriage,” Coote writes, “was a trial of her strength and subtlety, and it was characteristic that she should marshal both—which played so great a part in her fostering of her husband’s genius. The occult and the practice of automatic writing especially had once brought them close, and George now wondered if she should fake a sentence or two to calm her husband’s distress” (395). Although Yeats and George shared a sincere interest in the occult and wholeheartedly believed in their mutual experiments, George no doubt was gratified that the sessions of automatic writing diverted her husband both from the anguish of his decision to marry and from his attraction to other women. George as the transcriber of Yeats’s spiritual perception appears to obscure her self in the script of masculine utterance just as Woolf, typesetter to Eliot, obscures her feminine psychology beneath the print of that slim volume. As we shall see, George’s concealment differs with that of Woolf in terms of implication, but in any case she seems to adhere to Rank’s observations concerning women’s tendency to hide their true selves in a male dominated world. “[I]nterested readers might be forgiven for assuming that the . . . publication of *Yeats’s “Vision” Papers* will allow at last a clear glimpse of the least famous of the women in the poet’s life: his wife,” Margaret Mills Harper writes, but then continues: “Not so. Georgie Hyde-Lees retains a tight hold over her privacy even in the thousands of pages which comprise the most intense speculations of her and her husband’s lives” (35). George’s apparent self-obliteration adds a second dimension of gender struggle—that of the scorned woman—to the already-complex intersection of

feminine psychology and masculine ideology in Yeats's life, and this complication makes her example all the more lamentable.

Lady Gregory, Yeats's constant supporter and benefactor, exhibits both the dominating attitude of Maude Gonne and the subservient aspect of George Hyde-Lees, yet ultimately acknowledges a masculinized culture in her own writings. Yeats attempted to rationalize Lady Gregory's patronage by following the guidelines of Castiglione's *The Courtier* in his references to her assistance, thereby promoting the mutual advantages of patronage. "[W]hile the artist gains the leisure needed to create," Pethica writes, "the patron, whose assistance is nominally inspired by high-minded idealism, benefits both by inclusion in a creative milieu, and by earning a certain equivalency with the artist as a factor in the emergence of the work" (169). Critics generally emphasize the maternal elements of Lady Gregory's support, perhaps sidestepping oedipal concerns by ignoring sexual implications of the relationship, but Yeats nonetheless appears to have sensed that his masculinity was threatened by her tireless contributions of money and even intellectual material for his work. "[I]n recognizing that in her purchases of curtains and furniture Lady Gregory was doing for him 'things that I should do for myself,'" Pethica notes, "Yeats evidently felt he was in some sense being 'unmanned' by her gifts" (175). Accepting support and comfort from women may have been the norm in our primitive past, Rank would suggest, but our modern, masculinized culture infuses feminine patronage with elements of emasculation and, even more importantly, an awareness of human mortality.

Lady Gregory's desire to promote Irish culture led her to compile a substantial folio of national folklore and legend, and in doing so she further threatened Yeats's masculine persona as artist and political adjunct. "The collecting of this material enthralled Lady Gregory and opened her eyes," remarks Coote. "It was, she wrote, 'the small beginning of the weighty change'. She had found a way of uniting her literary and patriotic instincts and, in so doing, discovered what she could think of as the soul of Ireland" (165). Yet even while performing a creative act with satisfying political implications, Lady Gregory maintained that, after all, such tasks should be undertaken by men. "Lady Gregory makes it ironically clear that she believes she has undertaken man's work in translating the Irish epic," McCurry suggests in her essay on Lady Gregory's translation of the Deirdre story. McCurry cites Lady Gregory's Dedication to *Cuchulain of Muirhemne* and its indictment of the Dublin dons for not promoting Irish folklore in halls of their own intellectual institutions: "And indeed if there was more respect for Irish things among the learned men that live in the college at Dublin," Lady Gregory writes, "this work wouldn't have been left to a woman of the house, that has to be minding the place, and listening to complaints, and dividing her share of food" (5).

Lady Gregory thus relates the feminine social role as distinctly domestic and traditional, and tacitly undermines the representation of a forceful feminine spirit. Just as importantly, she transforms the aggressive and passionate Deirdre of Irish legend into a subservient woman committed to following male expectations, all the while maintaining that she altered the legend but little. "I left out a good deal I thought you would not care about for one reason or another," she writes, "but I put in nothing of my own that could

be helped, only a sentence or so now and again to link the different parts together” (5). In fact, Lady Gregory transforms Deirdre into a passive woman meekly accepting the advances of her lover, Naoise, rather than the willful feminine suitor of the original tale who literally assaults Naoise to gain his attention. Similarly, Deirdre’s death in Lady Gregory’s telling is not a courageous act of independence, as related by the bards, but a surrender to the will of her male companions. “In order to be successful in countering turn-of-the-century attacks made on the ‘barbarous’ language and literature of ancient Ireland,” McCurry suggests, “Lady Gregory completely de-feminizes the Deirdre story,” and consequently the male folklorists following her example, Yeats and Synge included, continued to excise examples of feminine accomplishment and will from their retellings of Irish legend (34). Indeed, Lady Gregory ultimately gave her typewritten manuscript of folklore to Yeats for his own use, rationalizing that he was more in need of the resulting income than she. “It was a gesture typical of her magnanimity,” writes Coote, “and also of that subtle blend of pride and sometimes excessive self-effacement with which Lady Gregory conducted her life” (165). Lady Gregory may accomplish a political task by perpetuating Irish myth, but ultimately she obscures the independent face of woman, as well as her own artistic accomplishments, to fulfill the masculine precepts of modernist culture.

Yeats depicts his understanding of the feminine tendency for psychological disguise and obscurity in “The Mask,” an early poem presenting a dialogue between lovers as one attempts to reveal the essence of the other. “Put off that mask of burning gold / With emerald eyes,” (1-2) demands one lover. “I would but find what’s there to

find, / Love or deceit” (6-7). The masked lover responds that external appearance makes no difference: ““O no, my dear, let all that be; / What matter, so there is but fire / In you, in me?”” (13-15). The poem actually was written to Maud in 1910, but it clearly indicates Yeats’s interest in masks as a means of both obscuring and defining identity. A sense of the mask as concealment and deception also pervades “The Three Bushes,” a later poem emphasizing psychological disguise. Here a virginal lady, fearing loss of her lover if she does not agree to sexual intercourse, implores a chambermaid to assume her identity in the dark bedchamber:

‘So you must lie beside him  
And let him think me there,  
And maybe we are all the same  
Where no candles are,  
And maybe we are all the same  
That strip the body bare.’ (22-27)

The implication that women’s bodies are indistinguishable in a sexual situation, particularly Yeats’s conventional, bawdy assumption of genital likeness, further objectifies the female characters of the poem. By including such conventional assumptions in his poetry, Yeats inevitably opens the floor to the range of critical voices disparaging his attitude toward women and the female position in society. Nevertheless, this work, along with the six following verses in the *New Poems*, outlines the trinity of possible roles in Rank’s social order. The man, supreme in his fabricated culture, is capable of convincing the woman to follow his dictates concerning proper social action

and, especially, to gratify his non-procreative sexual needs. The chambermaid represents the rebellious and aggressive woman, reacting to male dominance by emulating a man's sexual interests and promiscuity. And the lady becomes Yeats's ideal, a chaste and moderate woman withholding sex for procreation and the expression of her traditional maternal role. All of these representative characters join in a poetic endeavor that not only illustrates Rank's idea of gender conflict but hints at Yeats's concept of emotional resolution. "In his journal," Coote writes, "the mask was a means of discovering the antithetical personality, a way of avoiding 'the infinite pain of self-realisation' and embracing in its place a joyous and creative sense of psychological release" (312).

Webster, in her psychological study of Yeats, further emphasizes the mask as a mechanism for capturing and uniting disparate aspects of the personality, and points to the element of creativity prevalent in Yeats's concept of individual psychology. An early drama, *The Player Queen* (1919), for example, "illustrates the way Yeats tried to exploit his models of bard and hero as anti-selves that must somehow be joined to the self, to use the mask to assimilate a whole new set of qualities to the self, which is the real subject of poetry" (105). Yeats's struggle to find harmony between the subjective, or psychological and intellectual accomplishment, and the objective, or human relationships and external events, emphasizes life as synthesis and process rather than fragmentation and evolution, and in this respect his work reacts against the traditional notions of modernism as a formal literary and cultural movement. Eliot may proclaim the personality of the poet outside the bounds of artistic expression, while Yeats, unwilling to reject the influence of Romanticism, maintains that subjective expression is central to all creativity. As he notes

in “A General Introduction for my Work,” “A poet writes always of his personal life, in his finest work out of its tragedy, whatever it be, remorse, lost love, or mere loneliness” (509). Later in the same essay, Yeats scolds modernist artists who find inspiration in the objective realities of politics and the rational implications of the sciences rather than the subjective inclinations of the human heart. “The young English poets reject dream and personal emotion,” he complains, “they have thought out opinions that join them to this or that political party; they employ an intricate psychology, action in character, not as in the ballads character in action, and all consider that they have a right to the same close attention that men pay to the mathematician and the metaphysician” (525). The tone of Yeats’s essay, an exasperated frustration for modernist poetic credo, is similar to Rank’s impatient rhetorical attitude toward the rational basis of Freudian psychoanalysis. Both men react against a self-fulfilling intellectual structure, whether it is Eliot’s projection of neurotic fragmentation upon an emerging cultural order, or Freud’s prescription of an absolutist rational psychology for the diverse individuals living within that culture. Creativity is promoted by attaining a harmony of the soul and by encouraging a similar unity in fellow human beings, Yeats and Rank would suggest, not by analyzing or describing, with some intellectual arrogance, the supposedly fragmented spirits of the modernist landscape. “If the will is affirmed and not negated or denied,” Rank maintains, “there results life instinct, and happiness, like salvation, is found in life and experience, in the creation and acceptance of both without having to ask how, whither, what and why” (TR 97).

Both Rank and Yeats, in fact, predicate their conception of individual psychology upon will and creativity, and each identifies and describes personality types based upon involvement with the creative act. Rank, of course, especially describes creativity in terms of will, and in *Truth*, as we have seen, he expresses an early notion of the guilt inevitably experienced as an artist resists cultural conformity to accomplish lasting achievements. He also emphasizes time as a factor in the creative consciousness, and again presents a concept similar to that of Yeats:

Consciousness shows itself as a time problem in the sense that time represents the form of consciousness and by means of this time factor makes the different contents pleasurable or painful. Will as the constant driving force strives accordingly to prolong its pleasurable perceived affirmation through consciousness, to make the feeling of happiness lasting, that is, redeeming. Insofar as this prolongation succeeds, it is perceived as painful because compulsory and thus the individual wants again to get free of the spirits which he himself has called up. (89)

The artist over time gathers the will to rebel against the existing cultural order, creates a valuable addition or modification to that culture, and then gradually experiences a recession of will as guilt becomes stronger and eventually overcomes the creative consciousness. As Menaker summarizes, “the creative urge is self-assertive; the experience of aesthetic pleasure is its opposite, i.e. self-renunciation, in that the individual loses himself in the enjoyment of a communally affirmed creation” (“Creativity” 6). Yeats, for his part, expresses this creative phenomenon as a gyre, and

similarly employs a concept of will similar to Rank's. Time becomes a line without movement, while space becomes a bisecting plane:

As *Will* approaches the utmost expansion of its *antithetical* cone it drags *Creative Mind* with it—thought is more and more dominated by will—but *Creative Mind* remains at the same distance from its cone's narrow end that *Will* is from the broad end of the *antithetical* cone. Then, as though satiated by the extreme expansion of its cone, *Will* lets *Creative Mind* dominate, and is dragged by it until *Creative Mind* weakens once more. As *Creative Mind*, let us say, is dragged by *Will* towards the utmost expansion of its *antithetical* cone it is more and more contaminated by *Will*, while *Will* frees itself from contamination. (74-75; Yeats's emphasis)

Yeats's description may be abstract in conception and troublesome to read, but his conviction and intent, at least, are clear. For Yeats as for Rank, personality is formed through a creative struggle that inevitably fluctuates from pure creativity to complacent conformity, with every individual's creative locus at any given time probably somewhere between the two extremes, but perhaps not "balanced" by an equal expression of will and conformity. Yeats's notion of identity and the development of personality stages restates, in occult terms, Rank's clinical process of encouraging a patient to reach a stage of harmony between the subjective need for creation and the objective feeling of guilt associated with the creative process, although that synthesis may be brief in duration.

Understanding the creative act consequently helps us comprehend or even restructure our notions of subjectivity, both Rank and Yeats would agree, and the

intersection of their concepts of creativity has implications to notions of identity and language. Langbaum suggests that Yeats developed his idea of the Daimon, or the external self communicating through automatic writing and other spiritual contact, as a means of comprehending the internal struggle leading to artistic creation and selfhood. Yeats's goal, Langbaum maintains, was to solve "the problems of the divided self and solipsism—the claustrophobic fear that the struggle played out within the prisonhouse of self has nothing to do with external reality. By adding the concept of the Daimon, Yeats could assert that the conflict was actually with an external force and therefore connected with external reality" ("Exteriority" 588).

While Langbaum's observations helps us understand Yeats's creative issues as a struggle between internal and external forces, Margaret Mills Harper maintains that the very act of creating automatic script questions and extends conventional ideas of identity. Harper's view therefore encourages a conception of the automatic script as perhaps representative of a postmodern notion of subjectivity exhibiting sexual and cultural diversity rather than our common conception of identity as a discrete and singular entity. Describing the spiritual experiments conducted by Yeats and George as "personal searches" imbedded in automatic script, Harper suggests that their efforts also possess elements of "abstract searches for a reconfiguration of the concept of identity itself." Wondering about "the extent to which any of the selves involved or discussed should be considered a single identity rather than essentially part of one or more of the others," Harper presents implications for Yeats scholarship that are thoroughly consistent with new modes of literary and culture studies. "Using a different model of human behavior

and creative endeavor than many of the prevailing assumptions about individuals and authors might lead the Yeatses to expect,” Harper writes, “the [automatic script] leads into new territory in its charting of the nature of selfhood. It rejects the sanctity of the discrete person and the preeminence of the controlling author of a text, concepts which were seldom challenged from the Renaissance to the twentieth century” (35, 36).

George’s initial motivation may have been to span the emotional divide within her marriage, and her response to that interpersonal dynamic may have been self-concealment. Yet regardless of intent or reaction, the resulting union of personalities becomes both a model and a metaphor for Yeats’s concept of the creative self.

In conjunction with automatic writing, the distinctive use of metaphor in *A Vision* aligns Yeats, directly in terms of artistic procedure and perhaps indirectly in terms of accomplishment, with André Breton, René Daumal, and other French Surrealists working concurrently with Yeats in the early decades of the modernist era. Indeed, Yeats’s reliance upon the physical description of cones as a representation of human consciousness is predicated upon metaphor, arguably the defining feature of Surrealist expression. Gibbs and Bogdonovich, in a series of psychological studies directed toward a more clinical understanding of poetic comparison, identify two distinct types of metaphor and specifically relate these types to Surrealist poetry. *Conceptual metaphors* “reflect the mapping of conceptual knowledge from one domain of experience to a dissimilar domain,” allowing the observer to employ complex knowledge of one thing in the understanding of another, while *image metaphors* generally eschew the application of conceptual knowledge and instead invite direct comparison of two concrete images. The

metaphors in one line of Breton's poem "Free Union," for example, directly relate the hair of the poet's wife to a brush fire and thus "express the specific mapping of detailed, concrete mental images from a source domain (e.g., *brush fire*) to better structure a different target domain (e.g., *hair*)" (39, 38).

Breton may have emphasized image metaphors in his art, but Daumal appears more receptive to constructing conceptual metaphors as a means of resolving difficult issues regarding Surrealist theory. According to Powrie, Daumal views text resulting from automatic writing as a working conceptual metaphor for the human mind. "Individual consciousness is a constraint for Daumal," Powrie writes, "[and] it is also an illusion, since it is merely the vehicle which universal consciousness requires to know itself." Automatic writing, Powrie suggests, is one medium allowing access to a collective conscious, and Daumal made this assumption while formulating his own theory of expression. "The task of the text," according to Powrie, "is one of reification: the text is seen as a metaphor for the individual consciousness (thesis) which is reified in the act of writing (antithesis), thus allowing the possibility of a transcendent Hegelian super-consciousness (synthesis)" (178). In this respect Daumal, at least, validates Yeats's metaphor of intersecting cones as a way of employing geometric knowledge to understand the more abstract, ineffable mysteries of human experience and consciousness. Daumal moreover signifies automatic text both as a conceptual metaphor for subjectivity and as a representation of collective experience, the combined identity of multiple scriptors.

Breton, interpreting Hegelian transcendentalism as a violation of the Surrealist manifesto, encounters difficulties with automatic writing that are insurmountable within the context of his vision of the Surrealist movement. “The faster he wrote, the less the writing was controlled by the rational mind, and the closer Breton approached what he felt could only be described as madness,” Powrie explains, noting that terminating the process would result, Breton felt, in simple cliché rather than complex script (179). While both Rank and Yeats may applaud such revelation of irrationality as a representation of something spiritual rather than merely chaotic, Breton rejects both the expression of irrationality and any transcendental explanation on essentially political grounds. “To create a metaphysical framework for Surrealist research required a theological reevaluation of metaphysical vocabulary,” Powrie writes. “This was treading on dangerous ground at a time when Breton was attempting to present Surrealism as a more clearly revolutionary movement” (182). Committed to image metaphor, Breton was unable to extend his understanding of physical things as representations of the mystical; devoted to the political success of his movement, Breton similarly was determined to “make it new,” as Pound might suggest, and therefore was unable to appropriate existing intellectual concepts to resolve his conundrum.

Daumal, more willing to accept the application of conceptual metaphor and less dedicated, perhaps, to political goals, ultimately arrives at a solution for the apparent chaos of automatic writing by accepting the transcendental implications of the scripting process. Rather than restricting collective authorship to the natural and supernatural authors involved in writing, as Yeats and George might have done, Daumal hypothesizes

the involvement of readers in the creative task. “The reader mirrors the act of the poet,” Powrie maintains, “not only by the reconstitution of the activity of the text, but by the hypothetical, indeed magical incorporation of the writer’s individuality, and therefore, by sleight of logic, participates in a ‘dialogue’, as it were, whose function is the negation of the individual consciousness of the writer” (188). Daumal thereby constructs a theory emphasizing the unification of authorial personality, and in so doing not only illuminates Yeats’s own process of automatic script but edges closer to an understanding of the collective artistic thought pervading Rank’s milieu and advanced in Rank’s work. The process of *becoming*, so important to both Yeats and Rank, metaphorically if not actually emerges in Daumal’s resolution. “Taken to its logical conclusion,” Powrie writes, “Daumal’s discourse implies that both individual consciousness and text in theory disappear at the same time as they appear; indeed, they appear so as to disappear” (190).

The written documents of the Yeatses psychological experiments, rather than obscuring George’s feminine psychology, consequently emerge as an attempt to incorporate diverse voices into text, to assimilate aspects of the self that have been previously avoided, rejected, expelled, or marginalized through social interaction. That the two researchers employed spiritualism and the occult in an attempt to express not only marital union but a synthesis of diverse psychological components indicates just how strongly each believed in the power of primitive irrationality. By joining George in automatic writing, Yeats demonstrates his belief that only primitive spiritual impulses could unite a modernist soul already fragmented and corrupted by a masculine culture, and thereby confirms Rank’s affirmation of irrational forces in everyday life. This

attempt at unification significantly includes incorporation of feminine psychology into artistic creation, an act edging into the ideal, advanced by Woolf, of the combination of masculine and feminine consciousness in art. In effect, Yeats obscures his own voice in the text just as George's own personality recedes into shadow. Eliot's Madame Sosostriis, a patently shifty card reader intended to poetically criticize alternative spiritual quests in the twentieth century, becomes both George and Madame Blavatsky, the spiritual teller mentioned in Yeats's *Autobiography*, who together represent voices of feminine irrationality providing point and counterpoint to Yeats's poetic utterance (154).

Incorporating feminine psychology into the creative act is important not only as a means of advancing culture beyond its masculine restrictions, but also implies selection of the proper tool for attaining personal unity. According to Rank, woman's nature naturally encourages conservation and unification. Rank specifically says that irrationality, the human being's spiritual and even magical impulse, is

associated with the unknown, indeed, finally is identical with the unseen, that is, with what is going on inside the woman. In this sense, woman's psychology as a whole can be designated as insiderness, in contradistinction to man's centrifugal outsiderness. While she takes in, keeps and only coercively forced pushes out, the man scatters, wastes and creatively puts out. (*BP* 250-51)

Rank struggles with a rationalized, masculine language to understand the irrational psychology of woman and, indeed, of every modern human being, failing (or perhaps not even really attempting) to structure a new irrational linguistics expressive of both man-

made and natural things; Yeats attempts, directly in *A Vision* and indirectly through his poetry and drama, to develop a new symbolic order expressive of a primitive spirituality similar to Rank's concept of irrationality. Yeats suffers, as does Rank, by the necessity of communicating his project in an existing, rational language, and Rank's complaint that *Beyond Psychology*, as a creative endeavor, necessarily was communicated in "words which proved inadequate to express this very experience" (12) no doubt conveys the frustration that Yeats must have felt in the production of his own idiosyncratic book. Yeats may have been less affected by this linguistic restriction, as *A Vision* is at once perhaps more personal than Rank's work and less committed than his poetry and drama to effectuating specific changes in intellectual thought. Therefore Yeats seems content to find a metaphor for his concepts once again in the discipline of geometry and in the visual arts. He reacts to imaginary questions about his description of the movement of historical periods in terms that may comprise a description of his entire method in *A Vision*: "now that the system stands out clearly in my imagination," Yeats writes in his Introduction, "I regard [historical periods] as stylistic arrangements of experience comparable to the cubes in the drawing of Wyndham Lewis and to the ovoids in the sculpture of Brancusi. They have helped me to hold in a single thought reality and justice" (25). Yeats reaches for the expression of visual rather than linguistic art as a means of communicating the import of his spiritual experiences, and in doing so illustrates the inability of traditional language to communicate a sense of irrational experience.<sup>4</sup>

Just as both Rank and Yeats imply the restrictions of formal linguistic structures to communicate irrationality, both, too, maintain that the individual personality is subject to the same external forces as the social and political order. Rank specifically sees the dynamics of personality and of culture expressed in similar ways, and his identification of developmental stages with “three different ages, world views and human types” in *Truth* makes this association explicit (60). The Apollonian, Dionysian, and Critique of Reason categories, while at best indistinct as historical descriptors, nevertheless demonstrate the extent to which Rank visualized the connection between personality and history. “In personality development we can detect the same dynamic cycles within the individual’s life which we have found operating in the ‘dialectical’ movements of history,” Rank writes. “We find anarchy, hierarchy, bourgeoisie corresponding to the impulsive, neurotic, creative type of personality determining the individual’s reaction to his environment, which, however, is no longer a natural one but epitomized in the man-made social order prevailing at the time” (*BP* 169). Yeats associates the workings of the human mind with the movements of history in *A Vision*, and as Louise Blakeney Williams points out, “made it clear that his view of history, although not one of exact repetition, was strictly cyclic” (200).

Rank also believed that significant crises can precipitate a change in human events. “The common assumption that history repeats itself,” Rank maintains, “seems to spring more from our emotional need for likeness than from factual observation. Far from repeating itself, history does not even seem to move in evolutionary cycles but rather manifests itself in and through crises.” Rank further ascribes the movement of history to

the perpetuation of cultural myth and artifact: “What does repeat itself, though, is a traditional pattern handed down in ritual cult and mythological tradition; a pattern which, clashing at different times with different realities, produces new and unique events” (*BP* 127).

The relationship between individual psychology and historical patterns further has implications toward the intersection of creative will and cultural mythology. Rank’s theory of myth, as we have seen, effectively addresses Donald’s question about the conditions allowing the “outside” of collective experience to become the “inside” of individual consciousness, and Yeats would appear to suggest a similar answer involving primitive symbol and myth. In *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, Rank relates myth to dream, and in so doing counters the prevailing opinion of early twentieth century comparative mythologists.<sup>5</sup> Rank’s study of the similarities of hero myths, among diverse cultures and throughout history, reveals a “cycle of myths” that “entirely justifies the interpretation of myth as a ‘mass dream’ of the people . . .” (6). In primeval times the heroic act was represented in myth as a deed committed by united brothers, Rank suggests, but in modern culture the mythical heroism is experienced when

the average individual bourgeois ego . . . asserts, through identification with the hero, its old claim to the culture-building primeval act. Thus the hero myth serves to acknowledge and admire the mythically exalted hero in a merely illusory way, while actually allowing the myth creators’ entire people to perceive itself as heroic (national hero). In the hero myth each

individual among the collective people—every son, as it were—can again lay claim himself to the primeval deed. (83)

True to Rank's idea both of the culturally-integrating authority of myth and of the function of the artist in society, Yeats attempted to perpetuate the collective ideology of the Irish people in poetry and drama throughout his career, thus offering this powerful mythological heritage to Irish citizens in the present day. "The English movement, checked by the realism of Eliot, the social passion of the War poets, gave way to an impersonal philosophical poetry," Yeats maintains in his radio address on "Modern Poetry." "Because Ireland has a still living folk tradition, her poets cannot get it out of their heads that they themselves, good-tempered or bad-tempered, tall or short, will be remembered by the common people. Instead of turning to impersonal philosophy, they have hardened and deepened their personalities" (506).

Rather than appropriating ancient myths of other cultures to accentuate the wasteland of modern existence, as in Eliot's most famous work, Yeats cultivates and even builds upon myths of his own homeland in an effort to promote cultural unity. Yeats pursued his interest in Irish myths with the encouragement of O'Leary, and he explicitly believed that a renewed appreciation for myth could impassion citizens and contribute to a collective Irish spirit. "What Yeats was discovering in O'Leary's library," writes Coote, "was the call of a homeland where shared myths, shared history and a shared culture could give a sense of solidarity and renewal—a sense of belonging to an albeit repressed community possessed of a glorious if largely unrecognised past which might yet lead to an equally glorious future" (53). Yeats recognized the power of collective culture on the

psychology of the individual, and in the early poem “Who Goes with Fergus,” he announces the prevailing dominance of Fergus, represented as a poet-king in the Ulster Cycle of tales, over the thoughts and actions of his Irish subjects. Yeats instructs Ulster’s young men and women to

no more turn aside and brood  
Upon love’s bitter mystery;  
For Fergus rules the brazen cars,  
And rules the shadows of the wood  
And the white breast of the dim sea  
And all disheveled wandering stars. (7-12)

Fergus ruled his Irish subjects wisely and completely, Yeats implies, just as shared mythology defines and directs individual psychology. Lovers under Fergus’s rule need not concern themselves with the nature of their attraction, nor do the twentieth-century Irish people need to worry over their own psychology or sexual identity since the prevailing culture defines it for them. “Our mythology, our legends, differ from those of other European countries because down to the end of the seventeenth century they had the attention, perhaps the unquestioned belief, of peasant and noble alike, Yeats writes, “. . . [and] even to-day our ancient queens, our mediaeval soldiers and lovers, can make a pedlar [sic] shudder” (“General” 516).

By appropriating Irish myths and by fabricating idiosyncratic myths of his own, Yeats attempts to come to terms with his own mortality and, consequently, with the division between feminine psychology and masculine ideology suggested by Rank.

Noland uses the Freudian concept of synthesis ego to represent the kind of resolution Yeats attempts to discover, and maintains that any psychoanalytic theory of literature needs such a concept of synthesis in order to remain relevant in a postmodern world. All great literature, Noland maintains, is “the confluence of three psychodynamic forces: a repressed infantile wish, a defense against that wish, and a synthesis ego (a preconscious process) which . . . seeks adaptation both to internal realities (that is, to the past and present facts of the individual artist’s development) and to external realities (that is, to all cultural patterns, including literary, or their absence)” (38). Working within the context of a book review rather than a critical article, Noland makes a proclamation that appears out of place and undeveloped, wrapped in Freudian terminology consistent with his review topic and not necessarily conducive for understanding Yeats in the context of Rank’s theory. Yet the concept of ego synthesis, at least, is comparable to the kind of struggle between interior and exterior forces, between the subjective and objective elements of modern existence, represented by both men. The final agreement between the self and the external world, Yeats might counter, is more of a comprehension of eternal movement unrelated to the concept of evolution or development, certainly with no permanent point of stasis, and therefore not really a static synthesis of forces at all. Rather, Yeats’s consolation consists of a comprehension and acceptance of the process of a moving gyre, the relationship of its elements more consistent with Rank’s idea of *Realisierungsprinzip* than with any naturalistic Freudian concept. Rank maintains that *Realisierungsprinzip*, in contrast to Freud’s concept of the reality principle or *Realitätsprinzip*, “has a dynamic significance inasmuch as it views reality, not as

something given once and for all to which the individual adapts himself more or less, but as something which had come into being, yes, is continuously becoming.” Rank notes that the term “has no suitable equivalent in English,” and means “a making real, a literal ‘realizing’ in contradistinction to the static ‘reality principle’” of Freud (*TR* 84-85).

Freud’s concept of the reality principle also implies that the artist’s original motivation for artistic creation is a rejection of instinctual satisfaction and consequently a denial of the real world, rather than the more active rebellion against the social order and the assertion of creative will described by Rank’s theories. Rank, too, recognizes that subjectivity and objectivity are expressed in relativistic rather than absolute terms in individual psychology, and explicitly criticizes Freudian thought for simplifying a persistently complex and changing process. Freudian psychology, according to Rank, “is purely individualistic, aims at knowledge of I, of the internal, but also uses in its material data concerning the external—reality, Thou. Thus it is in essence a science of relations [*Beziehungswissenschaft*] which easily runs into the danger of overestimating either one or the other factor, instead of dealing with the *relationship* between the two” (*PD* 235).

Despite the abundance of terminology, both Rankian and Freudian, applicable to Yeats’s interaction between subjectivity and objectivity in the final years of his life, Yeats’s ultimate conception of such process may be described most effectively by the word *apsis*, a term adopted from astronomy and thus consistent with Yeats’s interest in heavenly bodies as a metaphor for the movement and intersection of the elements of psychic continuity. Apsis describes the point of greatest or least distance of a celestial body from its center of attraction, usually the dominant element of a planetary or solar

system, as it moves in an elliptical orbit around that center. By describing both the farthest and nearest excursion of an entity from its primary attraction, but by privileging neither, *apsis* conveys the sense of an eternal process that, occasionally, reaches a point of ultimate stasis, only to begin the process once again. The term also conveys a sense of *becoming*, a continuation of movement unconnected with evolution or quantifiable progress, and therefore is consistent with both Yeats's and Rank's view of life.

The perfect culmination of *apsis* represented by phases eight and twenty-two, along with the continuous oscillation between subjectivity and objectivity, also resembles nothing less than a dance, and indeed Yeats would use dance as a metaphor for the process of thinking and living throughout his work. From the complexity of dance as metaphor represented in "Among School Children," through the theatrics of *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921) to the simplicity of "Sweet Dancer," a late poem evoking his homage to Iseult published twenty-four years after "To a Child dancing in the Wind," Yeats employs the movement and grace of dance to communicate the essence of the gyre and of life's essential change. Spencer similarly relates Rank's notions of timelessness and change to the act of dancing, blithely noting that Rank, who could not dance, confined himself to the two-step even in his psychoanalytic theory. "The two, which so deeply occupied Rank, is associated with echo, reflection, conflict and counterpoise or contraposition with the momentary stillness of forces in equilibrium," Spencer writes. "Since it connotes the shadow, it is often regarded as ominous. Naturally, the two suggests the two sexes, the bisexuality of all things, and the condition of dualism." Dance appropriately communicates the sense of sexuality, perhaps even the repression or

disguise of sexuality, bound to the process of living, an implication implicit even in Spencer's critical prose: "The rhythm of the two is an oscillation, an altering beat of equal stresses. Oscillation is movement without progression; it is a swinging movement to and fro between fixed points; it is motion without advance" (29).

The poet ultimately recognizes the inevitability of apsis and attempts to work within the structure of the creative gyre—to comprehend its movements and thus to benefit from the propitious intersection of subjectivity and objectivity—and therefore more readily to possess the elusive nature of poetic inspiration. "All Things can tempt Me," a poem written before Yeats's spiritual encounters and the thought processes leading to *A Vision*, appears to be a poetic rant against the interruptions of the external world. The mature Yeats, however, might read that same poem as manifestation of the individual will as it ebbs with the corresponding effects of the creative mind, a natural abeyance of artistic accomplishment inevitably leading to regenerated powers of creation in the future. In "The Circus Animals' Desertion," a verse published in *Last Poems* (1938-1939) just after his death, Yeats employs his mature insight to discuss inspiration, this time represented by toy animals missing from a circus play set. Once again he laments that he only can repeat old themes rather than create new expression, a turn within the gyre leading him back to the creative malaise experienced during Maud Gonne's absence. "It was the dream itself enchanted me," he realizes:

Character isolated by a deed  
To engross the present and dominate memory.  
Players and painted stage took all my love

And not those things that they were emblems of. (29-32)

Yeats understands that he has perceived objective reality outside the context of his subjective being and without integrating his experiences into poetry expressive of eternal themes. Freudian theory might consider Yeats's resolution, as Noland implies, in terms of ego synthesis. Lawrence might point to the psychological equilibrium of two types of love and maintain that the poet achieves a subjective sense of unity with his beloved, Maud, while tempering that sense with the knowledge of an individual's objective distance from others. Yeats himself might express his psychology through the metaphor of the mask, as Ronsley suggests, and see his resolution as one between the subjective emotion and the subjective intellect. In our own terminology, Yeats recognizes *apsis* as the essential condition of life, and embraces the personal gyre that leads from objectivity to subjectivity and back again. Yeats in any case finally resolves to view people and events of everyday existence within their proper context as representations of eternal truth, regardless of his current position in the numeric scheme of his occult vision. "Now that my ladder's gone," he maintains, "I must lie down where all the ladders start / In the foul rag and bone shop of the heart" (38-40).

Yeats's mature revelation concerning the relationship between the inner and outer aspects of being places him, in terms of the personality types Rank identifies in *Truth*, unequivocally in the category of the artist, "the highest integration of will and spirit" (57). The process of attaining self-realization and the identity of the artist, Rank maintains, "goes beyond the mere affirmation of force, either outer or inner, to its constructive evaluation, that is, positively as ethics in ideal-formation" (54). Rank

characterizes the artist as an individual “at one with himself, [and] what he does, he does fully and completely in harmony with all his powers and his ideals,” and notes that the artist “has created an autonomous inner world so different and so much its own, that it no longer represents merely a substitute for external reality (original morality) but is something for which reality can offer in every case only feeble substitute so that the individual must seek satisfaction and release in the creation and projection of a world of his own” (56, 57). Thumbing through *A Vision* perhaps is proof enough of Yeats’s suitability for Rank’s description: the synthesis of voices remains at once a personal mythology and a representation of the transformation of identity within modernist culture.

Yeats’s attempt to integrate disparate segments of the self into a creative personality emerges not only in his use of the mask, a metaphor of the recombinant social and psychological identity, but in his extensive reliance upon the Double in his poetry as well. “In order to pursue the reciprocal and dynamic relation between life and work,” Harwood suggests, “it is necessary to speak at times, as Yeats variously does, in terms of opposing selves. . . . They are as it were zones within a single being; when one is lit up, the other is normally dark, but in the moment of vision the two become one, looking out from the still centre to the storm outside” (14). In Yeats’s earlier poetry, the Double emerges both as an indication of the poet’s recognition of the fragmentation of the social self and a representation of his need for a concatenation of personality types, the beginning of the process of unification prompted by Yeats’s spiritual communications. “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen,” for example, presents the solitary soul as a swan, a

mirror image of the essence of a human being. This is a satisfying image to Yeats, especially “if a troubled mirror show it, / Before that brief gleam of its life be gone, / An image of its state” (62-64). In “Ego Dominus Tuus,” Yeats develops a dialogue between “Hic” and “Ille,” Latin pronouns for “this” and “that” and perhaps non-gendered emanations of the “He” and “She” of “Michael Robartes and the Dancer” published just two years earlier. Here Yeats implies that the conversation occurs between two aspects of his own being intent upon self-discovery. “By the help of an image / I call to my own opposite, summon all / That I have handled least, least looked upon” (7-10). Yeats’s intent is to comprehend his most fundamental, obscured motivations and impulses, and he views the task as one countering his social self, his public mask, against his unrevealed and disguised inner psychology:

I call to the mysterious one who yet  
Shall walk the wet sands by the edge of the stream  
And look most like me, being indeed my double.  
And prove of all imaginable things  
The most unlike, being my anti-self (70-74)

Yeats extends the Doppelgänger motif and the search for self-discovery in “A Dialogue of Self and Soul.” Here the dialogue occurs between the two aspects of his being through alternating stanzas leading up to one long soliloquy by the soul, apparently lamenting his devotion to Maud Gonne and “The folly that man does / Or must suffer, if he woos / A proud woman not kindred of his soul” (62-64). The Double provides insight into the poet’s own life choices, but due to the overpowering effects of the collective social order,

he is unable to resist his attraction to Maud and therefore find psychological and sexual resolution.

Unlike Eliot, whose own expression of the Double exemplifies fragmentation and marginalization of unwanted personality types, Yeats finally uses the Double to imply coalescence and wholeness of the individual self, a retreat into a more primitive emanation of the Double as shadow implying its older, pre-social notion signifying the self both the living and dead. "It seems inconceivable for modern man, brought up with the ideal of a unified personality and trained in rational thinking, that a contradictory meaning should be simultaneously given to one and the same phenomenon," Rank writes.

Yet the double in its most primitive form, the shadow, represents both the living and the dead person. Accordingly, the shadow is protected from injury like the real self, the death of which, however, does not affect the shadow surviving it. Strangely enough, the latter seems to have been endowed not only with an independent life of its own but is considered the most vital element of the human being, the soul. (*BP* 71)

In "Byzantium," a poem from Yeats's later collection *The Winding Stair and Other Poems* (1932), Yeats envisions the concatenation of both the living and the dead self as a superhuman shadow, incorporating otherwise horrendous images into a singular vision of immortality:

Before me floats an image, man or shade,  
Shade more than man, more image than a shade,  
For Hades' bobbin bound in mummy-cloth

May unwind the winding path;  
A mouth that has no moisture and no breath  
Breathless mouths may summon,  
I hail the superhuman;  
I call it death-in-life and life-in-death. (9-16)

By fabricating an image at once terrifying and curiously comforting, Yeats reaches for the unity of spirit his persona earlier requests in “Sailing to Byzantium” from *The Tower* (1928), where the poet implores the “sages standing in god’s holy fire” (17) to harmonize the elements of his soul “and gather me / Into the artifice of eternity” (23-24).

Both in his occult experiments and in his poetry and drama, Yeats exhibits the same insistent belief in spirituality and the soul that Rank would promote while engaged in a discipline steadfastly committed to scientific principle and rationality. Rank and Yeats also held similar theories concerning the interaction of the subjective with the objective, both believing that a proportionate combination of the two is necessary for a human being to attain a self-fulfilling state of understanding, or Yeats’s comprehension of the apsis of eternal psychological process. Menaker suggests as much while offering Rank’s theories to a presumably skeptical audience: she warns that Rank’s psychoanalytic theory may seem “drearily repetitious” for readers “who find it difficult to grasp the constant interaction of the objective with the subjective and whose anxiety leads them to long for a sharp cleavage between them.” Nevertheless, she recommends Rank’s thought as rich text artistically provocative “for those able to eschew the comfort of objective reality perceived as absolute truth, who can tolerate relativism and

indeterminacy, and who can affirm the ongoing movement of life's symphony" (*RL* 10). The dance between the subjective self and the objective world may indeed be a simple two-step, but both Yeats and Rank emphasize the complexity of its form when practiced, in various ways, by the multitude of dancers comprising humanity.

Lieberman remarks that Rank respected religion whether or not its existence was an illusion, and his observation equally could be applied to Yeats. George may have faked the first few sentences of automatic writing and Yeats may have suspected the ruse, yet the awareness of George's benevolent deception never impeded his wholehearted belief in the persistence of the human spirit. Indeed, even Maud Gonne's romantic brush-off may have been benevolently rather than maliciously duplicitous. Maud chose Irish nationalism over domestic life with Yeats, and in doing so may have contributed to the intellectual power of his work by remaining a distant romantic ideal rather than the captured perfect image. She was attracted to his poetry and loved the poet, if not the man, with a singular passion.

Yeats, near the end of his life, had more moderate choices to make than in his youth, but even in 1926's "The Tower," still pondered the imponderable. "Does the imagination dwell the most," he asks, "Upon a woman won or a woman lost?" (113-14). The irony, of course, is that Maud Gonne may have been both of those women.

## Chapter Five

### Otto Rank: Beyond Theory

Investigating the concept of individuality perceived by early twentieth-century artists, as we have seen, is only the first step toward understanding modernism as an intellectual and social phenomenon. We further must assess the relationship of the individual subject within modernist culture in order to more successfully comprehend the period as an artistic and social movement, and therefore to relate its particular successes and failures to our own postmodern intellectual tasks. Zaretsky suggests that the very definition of a cultural epoch is predicated upon the relationship between the individual subject and the culture surrounding that subject, and that charting the changes of an era's notion of subjectivity, as well as the changes in subjectivity itself as it interacts with that culture, is imperative for furthering postmodern psychological and culture studies. The task is complicated, Zaretsky suggests, because both the notion of a changing subjectivity "and thus the idea of a cultural epoch itself, are quintessentially modern" ("Psychoanalysis" 154). Rank, confining himself to discussing the effectiveness of psychoanalysis as a tool for investigating the intersection of subjectivity and culture, agrees that the effort is difficult and incomplete. "We have not as yet progressed so far with the analytic process of attaining knowledge as to understand ourselves in relation to the culture that we have created," he comments in a lecture, "or even to withdraw ourselves from its pressure, sometimes unbearably. So far we have gained only the first

insight in this direction, from which may develop a kind of psychological theory of relativity which will teach us to recognize and avoid the subjectively conditioned sources of error in our attitude toward the world” (*PD* 92-93). Trilling, in his lecture on Freud delivered nearly a half-century before Zaretsky and a good fifteen years after Rank, appears to agree with Zaretsky’s assessment of the modern nature of culture, and further intimates the validity of Rank’s implicit notion of a “cultural personality” developed through the expression, by artists working within that culture, of a common outlook and sensibility. “The idea of culture, in the modern sense of the word, is a relatively new idea,” Trilling writes. “It represents a way of thinking about our life in a society which developed concomitantly with certain new ways of conceiving of the self. Indeed, our modern ideal of culture may be thought of as a new sort of selfhood bestowed upon the whole of society” (90).

Trilling here becomes playful with his audience, assuming an ironic stance overlooked by Meisel in his linguistic deconstruction of Trilling’s essay. Although Meisel’s observation concerning Trilling’s language remains secure, in fact Trilling suggests a level of involvement between the individual and culture that Freud persistently denied: just a few minutes later in his address and in gracious language obscuring his import, Trilling suggests that Freud maintained an “illusion” of the individual’s separation from culture that profoundly affects both our notion of subjectivity and that of culture itself. “For Freud this separateness was a necessary belief,” Trilling says. “He needed to believe that there was some point at which it was possible to stand beyond the reach of culture. Perhaps his formulation of the death-instinct is to be interpreted as the

expression of this need. 'Death destroys a man,' says E. M. Forster, 'but the idea of death saves him.' Saves him from what? From the entire submission of himself—of his self—to life in culture" (93). Trilling once again offers faint praise for Freud's methods by suggesting that, as a scientist, Freud would support illusion over empirical reality. The will to believe something unsupportable or unproven, as with Rank's belief in the power of religion and Yeats's belief in spiritualism, is perhaps excusable given the non-deterministic nature of those two thinkers. For Freud to accept unverifiable statements as true simply because they are intellectually convenient actually undermines his entire empirical rationale. Rank would insist, of course, that the notion of death and the desire for immortality is precisely the impetus for 'man' to construct culture, especially if Trilling's use of the term connotes a masculine sensibility, and therefore he would object not only to Freud's illusion of cultural disconnection but to his presumed salvation from the thought of any connection at all. Zaretsky similarly affirms that Freud believed in the separation of an individual from culture, noting that traditional psychoanalysis conceives of the unconscious as a tool that receives and reconstitutes social or cultural experience in order to give it personal and idiosyncratic meaning, and thus there is "no direct or necessary connection between one's social condition and one's subjectivity." Zaretsky's tone implies impatience with this conception, and thereby he unknowingly gives contemporary voice to Rank's implicit criticism of the Freudian idea of a subjective/objective impasse. "The idea of the unconscious," Zaretsky writes, "marked a lived sense of disjuncture between the public and the private, the outer and the inner, the sociocultural and the personal." Freud's major accomplishment was theorizing that

disjuncture, Zaretsky continues, and Freud suggested that “the inner lives of modern men and women were organized through symbols and narratives that were idiosyncratic and apparently devoid of socially shared meaning. For that reason he insisted that, although the internal worlds of individuals could be interpreted and understood, they could not be reintegrated into any previously existing whole” (*Secrets* 6).

Zaretsky observes that this perception of the division of the self from culture, probably prompted by Freud’s experience with the Dora case, represents a shift of belief from the collective nature of primitive societies, and that “the idea of a *personal* unconscious was new. In traditional societies, healers were effective insofar as they mobilized symbols that were simultaneously internal *and* communal” (*Secrets* 6; Zaretsky’s emphasis). By implication, Freud would have maintained that the individual similarly had no access to the symbolism and meaning of mythology, and thus while providing a rationale for the idiosyncratic symbols of Yeats, takes away the context and authority of Yeats’s system.

Dennis Brown similarly sees a shift in the nature of subjectivity during the rise of modernism and the development of psychoanalysis. Brown’s study of the self “presupposes some kind of pre-existent unity which is in the process of being broken down. That unity constitutes a model of selfhood which is autonomous, integral and continuous. . . . The Modernist discourse of selfhood is haunted by the ghost of some lost self which was once coherent and self-sufficient.” Brown cites the character of Hamlet, the poems of John Donne, and the self-sufficiency of Robinson Crusoe as models of a

consistent self as transcendent as the old Christian self sustained by God, and maintains that “it is precisely this self which Modernism sought to explode” (2, 4).

A change in both the perception of subjectivity and, indeed, of subjectivity itself thus began as modern individuals started working and living in an era of increasing industrialization and a more global distribution of capital. Sexual and gender differences would seem to be important elements of this shift, and therefore the expression of sexuality and characteristics of gender should provide clues into the nature of a given social order. Indeed, Zaretsky maintains that “[a]long with the question of subjectivity, the redefinition of sexual difference and of the structure of feeling that exists within and between the sexes should be considered intrinsic to any definition of a cultural epoch.” But as Zaretsky points out, the modernist idea of gender was surprisingly minimal, simply indicating sexual object choice and not addressing gender differences in relation to a cultural context. “To [the modernists] whether one was a man or a woman was terribly important in the sphere of sexuality,” Zaretsky writes, “but supposedly almost negligible, especially in ‘advanced’ circles, in the rest of life.” Citing Freud’s resistance to defining gender, Zaretsky maintains that Freud had no interest in pursuing gender issues and that “[n]owhere does Freud describe masculinity and femininity as psychological traits. Instead, he talks of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ as being associated with nongendered psychological currents such as activity and passivity” (“Psychoanalysis” 154, 155, 162).

Rank would suggest that the reason for Freud’s insensitivity to differences in gender and, indeed, to his rejection of any connection between individual psychology and

the cultural order rests with Freud's deterministic mission and his conviction that social values were somehow objectively valid and applicable to every personality type, regardless of background or considerations of gender. As a premier advocate of individuality, Rank would offer his "psychology of difference" as an alternative to Freudian insistence on homology of human psychology and the supposedly objective values of the existing social order. As we have seen, Rank further not only discusses gender issues with a courage and conviction perhaps unique in his time, but thoroughly defines his notion of feminine psychology in a masculine ideological order. Zaretsky, with a blind spot characteristic of theorists dealing with the history of psychoanalysis, disappointingly credits Lacan rather than Rank as the first psychoanalyst criticizing Freud both for developing a system predicated upon prevailing social and moral values and for initially addressing the differences between the sexes. "Lacan's point," Zaretsky notes, ". . . was that all schools of analysis presupposed a value-saturated, and ultimately biologically based, idea of the subject." Zaretsky thus ignores Rank's earlier and perhaps more direct criticism of Freudian social objectivism, and compounds the slight a few pages later by citing Lacan's concept of sexual difference instead of Rank's, even though Zaretsky's description replicates Rankian thought in both content and import. "Lacan addressed the feminism of his time by suggesting that the phallus was the 'master-signifier' that governed the symbolic order. The result was a logical absurdity according to which culture and even language was 'masculine,' and women were somehow outside both" ("Psychoanalysis" 163, 165). Critics even casually familiar with Rank's later theories would see the relationship between Zaretsky's characterization of Lacan's

theories and Rank's own thought, and students of Rank will perhaps forgive, as unsupported, Zaretsky's insistence that the notion of a masculine-centered symbolic and cultural order is somehow logically flawed.

Zaretsky further credits Lacan for opening the psychoanalytic dialogue concerning gender issues, once again in terms unavoidably evoking Rankian discourse: "Lacan, and those who followed him in this, made such statements as 'woman' does not have an unconscious, she is the unconscious. Lacan opened the way for analytic discussions of gender . . . ." Advocates of Rankian analysis might wish that Rank's thought, preceding that of Lacan, equally had been noted so that his legacy similarly could have been identified as "mixed," perhaps a better overall assessment than "ignored." Zaretsky's failure to acknowledge Rank's notion of gender issues and his criticism of Freud becomes even more significant when he suggests that a "meaningful history of postmodernism might assign relatively more attention to Lacan" ("Psychoanalysis" 164-165, 168). By implication, then, Rank's theories of the interaction between masculine ideology and feminine psychology become a benchmark for postmodern gender studies, and further provide a starting point, perhaps in conjunction with Lacan, for assessing the intersection of subjectivity and culture in a discourse intended to understand the nature of self both in a modern and in a postmodern context.

Rank's psychoanalytic work, with its emphasis upon subjective acts of creativity contributing to the development of the self as well as the modification of culture, further is situated uniquely to provide a context for literary criticism and the elucidation of artistic work of all kinds. His theory of self expression is particularly applicable to art

created relatively recently, during a period when philosophy began recognizing a unique concept of subjectivity and documenting the interaction of the self with the social order and with culture. Rank's studies in effect provide an expository representation of the grand themes expressed by artists of his time, and are especially applicable to literary works created during the era of high modernism when his discipline, psychoanalysis, was beginning its revolutionary inquiry into the nature of the self. Not only do artists such as Lawrence, Eliot, and Yeats independently express Rank's perceptions in their work, but at least one artist, Rank's analytic subject and paramour Anaïs Nin, intentionally crafted her fiction and biographical work to embody Rank's thought.<sup>1</sup> Jason, writing of Rank's influence upon Nin, emphasizes Rank's indefatigable research into mythology and his illumination of myth as it structures and influences artistic creation. "Much of Rank's work, old and new, had to do with art and mythology," Jason observes. "No one was better prepared, in the early 1930s, to treat the psychic woes of a myth-living and myth-generating artist-in-the-making than Otto Rank" (13).

Even if we use Rank's theories to understand modernist literature and culture exclusively, we find that modernism both as a movement and as an era resists definition and impedes agreement upon how the self relates to the culture of which it is a manifestation. Freudian psychology, perhaps the preeminent intellectual influence of the period, emphasizes the unconscious, psychic fragmentation, and a scientific desire to find the likeness among all things. As Trilling would suggest, Freud's construction of the death-instinct imposed a morbid sensibility upon his generation and exacerbated the *fin de siècle* malaise pervading late-Victorian and early Edwardian culture. Rank relates this

morbidity to Freudian determination and causality, insisting that traditional psychoanalysis thus is bound to celebrate death instead of living. “As it is,” he writes, “Freud’s causal interpretation of the analytic situation as repetition (chiefly in recollection) of the past—instead of an emphasis on it as a new experience in the present—amounts to a denial of all personal autonomy in favor of the strictest possible determinism, that is to say, to a negation of life itself” (*BP* 278).

Rank, while objecting to the continued influence of Freudian absolutism, nevertheless understands the historical causes of the morbid cultural attitude presented by Freud and expressed in canonical modernist art. “The collapse of the ideology on which the social structure of Western civilization was built,” Rank maintains, “occurred simultaneously in the political, economic and psychological sphere. The breakdown of the institution of kingship in the World War, followed by class struggle and disintegration of the family, led to the present chaos with its moral bewilderment and economic insecurity” (*BP* 127). Nevertheless, the questions of magnitude and response present themselves. Were the social and historical conditions leading to the wasteland of modernism as a cultural milieu really more demoralizing to the social order than similar instances of upheaval documented throughout written history? Was World War I really more devastating to humanity than, say, the Crusades a thousand years earlier or perhaps the worldwide pandemic of the Black Plague? Does the expanding global landscape, with a fundamentally different approach to distribution of capital and the interaction of human beings, make problems of a similar kind more pronounced because of their magnitude? Or is the response of literary modernism perhaps the *result* of a previously non-existent

concept of subjectivity and an invention of the notion of culture, developments leading to a sensitivity of spirit more susceptible to devastating historical occurrences and thus more likely to be expressed in literature and art? Finally, is the angst of literary modernism at all justified by human events, or does it exist primarily as proof of a new sense of subjectivity and culture, and an attempt to integrate the two into a whole meaningful to the human experience?

Rank's insistence that a collective spirit pervades both individual identity and culture aligns his thought with current theory of cultural transmission, and although he rejected the tenets of scientific method relative to his own profession, the sciences today provide his theories with a validation withheld by the contemporary psychoanalytic community. Just as MacKinnon clinically has verified Rank's concept of personality types, so have scientists such as Dawkins and Dennett provided support for Rank's idea of a collective cultural conscience and the perpetuation of individual psychic traits through cultural artifact and process. Dawkins, an evolutionary biologist, advances his idea of *memes* in the 1976 book, *The Selfish Gene*, where he describes a meme as a unit of cultural transmission. "Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs," Dawkins writes, "so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation." Dawkins provides examples of memes, including "tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches" (192). The concept provides an intellectual model for understanding the phenomenon of cultural change or evolution, and like the genetic unit for which they were named, memes

act independently of human beings in order to promote their own replication and continuation. Memes therefore may be seen as thoughts repeated from one person to another through some form of cultural expression, and the process follows Rank's model of individual acts of creative will changing culture only to be changed, themselves, by the culture they have affected. As Rank maintains, "The soul, and ideology born of belief in immortality, produces new ideologies in order to maintain soul belief. In this way the soul is creative" (*PS* 61). Indeed, Rank's description of the soul contains much of the essence of Dawkins's notion of the meme as a self-seeking, self-replicating entity independent of the motivations or intentions of its human agents.

Dawkins's concept, like psychoanalysis itself, has suffered criticism in scientific circles, in Dawkins's case because the existence of memes cannot be verified empirically nor observed in a controlled research setting. His work nevertheless continues to influence such researchers as Dennett, a philosopher and cognitive scientist whose book *Breaking the Spell* (2006) provides a rationale for the propagation of religious ideals constructed in a meme-like fashion. Dawkins significantly indicates that the individual author of an idea may be removed from the process, thereby demonstrating the collective nature of religion as a human construct and the independent essence of culture as a whole: "[C]ultural transmission can *sometimes* mimic genetic transmission," Dawkins suggests, "permitting competing variants to be copied at different rates, resulting in gradual revisions in features of those cultural items, and *these revisions have no deliberate, foresighted authors*" (78; Dennett's emphasis). The theory provides a model of cultural continuity most provocative when discussing Rank's notion of artistic creation

and the type of intellectual ambiance we have observed in the modernist period. With its emphasis upon the insecure state of authorship following concatenation of multiple contributors, Dennett's idea also reminds us of the Yeatses' automatic script and of Margaret Mills Harper's claims for its authorial ambiguity.

Contemporary observers such as Roche further believe that the artist's contribution to collective culture is particularly important in a technological society in which ethics and values may become ill-defined or not internalized by members of a social order. "When literature is conveyed to many," Roche writes in *Why Literature Matters in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2004), "it contributes . . . to forming collective identity and common values beyond the multiplicity of private interests. . . . Collective identity tends to be ignored or disparaged by many contemporary critics, but if literature and art do not play roles here, the vacuum will be filled by a collective identity defined by marketing and consumption." Roche goes on to suggest that collective identity actually legitimizes support of the arts, and therefore the notion provides validity for "those artworks that meet simultaneously our expectations for high and popular culture" (213). Terry Eagleton, an unabashedly partial critic with roots in the Marxist movement, agrees in *After Theory* (2003), identifying one important contribution of culture theory as being "to establish that popular culture is also worth studying" (4). Both Roche and Eagleton thus provide a context for the artist to contribute to the ever-expanding popular culture of technological society, and therefore to promote the development of individual values that they as well as Rank see as being so crucial to the maintenance of personal identity and to the identity of the social order as a whole. In today's technological society, the Internet

nearly has become the collective consciousness of our world, not just as metaphor but in the very real sense of maintaining, in a form eminently addressable by nearly every human being, the knowledge, images, and thoughts of our species. As a repository for both legitimate knowledge and values as well as for the most questionable opinions and moral perspectives, the Internet uniquely is positioned as a source for the development of personal ethics in the decades to come. The Internet, in effect, has become the representation of all the political and social inequities that literary and cultural theory has attempted to repudiate intellectually over the last several decades.

The current consensus, however, indicates that even postmodern literary and cultural theory has run its course by ultimately supporting political agendas that are outside the realm of effective scholarship. In doing so, observers now say, theory actually has contributed to supporting the dominant power structures it often intends to repudiate. Rank's identification of Freudian psychology as a discipline imposing a masculinized, rational order upon society is a case in point, and the current movement against theory appears to have similar goals to the objections of Rank toward Freudian psychoanalysis in the modernist era. Rank surely would perceive the imposition of ideology on any human endeavor, especially artistic creation, as replicating the process of masculine ideology forcing rational structure upon the inherently irrational. Burgin, as we have seen, called for the effective end of theory in the context of the Thresholds project as early as 1991. Eagleton, speculating that perhaps "the style of thinking known as postmodernism is now approaching an end," goes on to maintain that, at the very least,

theory “cannot afford simply to keep recounting the same narratives of class, race and gender, indispensable as these topics are” (221, 222).

Similarly, a 2003 symposium sponsored by the journal *Critical Inquiry* overwhelmingly indicates that postmodern theory has failed to promote changes outside academe, and that critics should now turn to analyzing literature and culture with the intent to make moral and ethical values more accessible to members of general society. Fish, in his address at the symposium, notes that practitioners of postmodern theory adopt political agendas and subsequently attempt to impose these agendas upon works of art or upon culture, but counters that “[p]olitics does not need our professional help, texts do.” Through a process of self-justification, Fish maintains, theorists generate a situation giving them “an extra-academic assignment all too readily accepted by many, the assignment of going out into the world and exposing constructedness—read hegemony, power, illegitimate authority (there is no other kind)—wherever it is found, and because the initial move is to replace essence with history it will be found everywhere” (377). Davis and Womack, writing in *Postmodern Humanism in Contemporary Literature and Culture* (2006), view the current state of theory as a cacophony of intellectual voices contributing to disharmony rather than dialogue. At present, they maintain, “we have far too many scholars dismissing one another because theory has become the *essential* and *essentializing* text within our profession” (xvi; Roche’s emphasis). Roche, with his focus at once upon the intrinsic moral value of literature and upon the work of art as an end in itself, offers a simple solution: “Critics should attend to works that integrate such

neglected virtues as courage, acceptance, and humility, and they should attempt to embody for others precisely those virtues that otherwise seem to be neglected” (257).

Such a project seems curiously close to a return to New Criticism, with its attention to text as a primary element of literary concern, and the affinity of Roche’s position to the enterprise of New Humanism similarly appears unmistakable. Rank, of course, may be excused for having no opinion on New Criticism, a project just starting in the literary community at the time of his death, but he objects to humanism as an approach to existence celebrating the similarities of individuals rather than their differences. “In neglecting the human value of such realistic psychology of difference,” Rank maintains, “Freud revived Rousseau’s sentimental conception of natural man’s fundamental likeness, a humanistic ideology which has set the pace for social experimentation since the French Revolution. The basic fallacy of this political theory of equality lies in the psychological presupposition that we are also born alike.” Later in the same work, Rank elaborates on his own notion of equality: “Will people ever learn . . . that there is no other equality possible than the equal right of every individual to become and to be himself, which actually means to accept his own difference and have it accepted by others?” (*BP* 30, 267).<sup>2</sup> Critics such as Davis and Womack nevertheless suggest the advent of a postmodern humanism that is more consistent with Rank’s view of subjectivity and the human striving for freedom from absolutes. Maintaining that “the most significant difference between modern and postmodern humanism is the transparency of postmodern humanism,” the authors suggest that

postmodernism feigns no assurance that ‘truth’ may be founded on the knowledge of providence or science or any other grand narrative that wishes to establish itself as the essence or center on which discourse may be grounded. The differences between modern and postmodern humanism finally boil down to the issue of essence: one believes in a fixed, essential reference point while the other, dismissing this notion, offers only an operational essentialism, a working faith in the preservation of all forms of life, not just human life.” (xxii-xxiii)

Yarbrough, with the comparable intent to identify a new spirit of humanism in the postmodern environment, also appears to remove Rank’s objections concerning the deterministic nature of traditional humanism. “To understand themselves,” Yarbrough maintains in *Deliberate Criticism* (1992), “contemporary humanists need, first of all, to dispel the commonly held assumption that humanism always expresses a belief in the idea of a fixed ‘human nature,’ in the idea that the telos of human activity has been determined a priori, and particularly in the idea that human nature is that of the *animal rationale*” (23-24).

Rank’s theory indeed provides a context for the continued maturation and relevancy of humanism in a postmodern intellectual environment, an era in which the predominance of technology increasingly threatens our safety, individuality, and autonomy. “The humanist has four leading characteristics,” Forster writes in *Two Cheers for Democracy*, and they are “curiosity, a free mind, belief in good taste, and belief in the human race” (233). Forster the ironist and social critic here sets aside his usual skeptical

pen: the definition at once captures succinctly much of the spirit of humanism and provokes us to consider what qualities of humanism remained, unexpressed, in the author's notes. Certainly a Rankian form of humanism would emphasize individual freedom and self-determination, and would point to humanity as the ultimate arbitrator of all moral systems and values. Humanism can be a replacement for religion, Rank might offer, for its uncompromising belief in humanity suggests that we have the ability to accept the essential irrationality of our physical existence through powers of love and acceptance, and perhaps to control, god-like, the details of our creative or adaptive experience. Davis and Womack emphasize the importance of spanning the divide between human beings in any new landscape of humanism, employing language and an acceptance of others to dispel the guilt inevitable in human interaction. The resulting philosophy is explicitly Rankian in conception and intent. "If postmodern humanism points toward a healthy and helpful means of negotiating the void," the authors maintain, "then we must begin with the embrace of the other, and such an embrace, tellingly, must often navigate the waters of forgiveness, the past that bears up our complicity in the wronging of others, as well as the ways in which we have been wronged" (159).

The humanistic notion of language therefore is intimately connected with the self, and with the self's expression of freedom, values, and the universality of human nature. Barry suggests that traditional liberal humanism asserts an essential idea of the "transcendent subject," the belief that "the individual ('the subject') is antecedent to, or transcends, the forces of society, experience, and language" (18-19). The transcendent subject—the creative self—can effectively employ the human qualities of curiosity, logic,

and proper morals and values (Forster's "good taste") to communicate the essence of a thing in the material world. Language assumes an empirical value, expressing an external world that is true to our sensory perception and consistent with our intellectual understanding of reality. Barry notes that "sincerity (comprising truth-to-experience, honesty towards the self, and the capacity for human empathy and compassion) is a quality which resides within the language of literature" rather than a fact or intention behind the work. "When the language achieves these qualities," Barry continues, "then the truly sincere poet can transcend the sense of distance between language and material, and can make the language seem to 'enact' what it depicts, thus apparently abolishing the necessary distance between words and things" (19).

Kristeva, as we have seen, theorizes a comparable separation between signifier and signified, but points to biological and social forces that both create language and obstruct its expression. For Kristeva, "the symbolic—and therefore syntax and all linguistic categories—is a social effect of the relation to the other, established through the objective constraints of biological (including sexual) differences and concrete, historical family structures" (29). The tension between the symbolic and the semiotic in language, according to Kristeva, results in a subversive disruption of signification and the social order, producing new cultural meanings and questioning the prevailing notion of the self and the nature of subjectivity. The individual is dependent upon biological and social conditions—an idea that Lacan would qualify—but ultimately language is divorced from its referent. As Kristeva suggests, "multiple constraints—which are ultimately sociopolitical—stop the signifying process at one or another of the theses that it traverses;

they knot it and lock it into a given surface or structure; they discard practice under fixed, fragmentary, symbolic matrices, the tracings of various social constraints that obliterate the infinity of the process” (88).

Rank presents a similar view of the separation between word and thing, but advances his ideas in terms curiously close to traditional humanistic ideals. All members of a particular culture, Rank suggests, share a common set of myths and collective consciousness created by the artistic members of society, and consequently can find solace in this essential identity. The separation of words from things occurs when the individual attempts to rationalize immortality, a fundamentally irrational concept, and is further exacerbated since humanity has been too successful in the rational task of ordering the universe: the masculine culture created in the search for immortality inevitably clashes with the natural order, and consequently expressing the human condition adequately would require two sets of words for everything, both the natural and the man-made.

If we accept psychoanalytic theories as valid interpretations of the individual self and of the nature of human language, we must believe, if we adopt Freud, in the preeminence of the unconscious, or if we adopt Rank, in the expression of will in the construction of self. In either case we must accept the failure of language to call forth an external reality. Our teaching and criticism must emphasize either the unconscious mind or the creative will and identify the revelation of psychoanalytic situations in the actions of literary characters, in the author’s tendencies and techniques, and in the text itself. Individual psychology must be emphasized above social and political concerns. We must

become literary “analysts,” examining language and literature in much the same way that psychoanalysts examine their patients.

But how does the acceptance of either Freudian or Rankian psychoanalysis as critical theory intended to explicate text impact our professional integrity as literary teachers and scholars? From the outset we must put aside an essential tenet of our profession—the necessity of proving our own intellectual hypothesis and of expecting similar proof from the theoretical texts we employ. We are, after all, a lay audience for psychoanalytic research, not trained psychologists. We must accept the notions of Rank, Freud, Lacan and Kristeva as justified by their peers and without the necessary professional experience to promote our own psychoanalytic judgments (however tempting and inevitable the prospect). At best we provide validity to psychoanalytic concepts by observing them through the screen door of our own intellect, itself nurtured in an essentially liberal-humanist academic environment. Without the credentials necessary to validate the tools in use, we must be willing to make the intellectual and professional compromise necessary for such a venture.

If we subsequently embrace psychoanalytic theory, specifically Freudian theory, and use its precepts to illuminate the significance of literary text, we also must be aware that, secondly, we are using the tools of clinical analysis for an entirely different purpose than the original intent. Freudian psychoanalytic models primarily are clinical methods designed to understand the unconscious and to allow the individual to comprehend psychological forces contributing to the composition of personality. Instead, literary and linguistic scholars employ the same tools to understand text and to allow a wide audience

to appreciate the creative forces informing a work. We “cure” an intellectual audience just as the Freudian psychologist might hope to cure an individual patient, or we allow an audience to become aware of the validity of the other and the import of the creative will just as a Rankian psychologist might hope to incite that awareness in their own patients. We must realize, however, that removing psychoanalytic tools from the analyst’s office, regardless of the theoretical method, may affect the nature of their application and the extent of their success.

A third caveat compels us to question our very motives in embracing Freudian psychoanalytic theory as a means of discovering unconscious motives related to literary text. With shelves full of biographical, historical, and liberal-humanist examinations of literature, is our profession finally seeking justification and authority by adopting the tools of another discipline based, at least in part, on medicine and science? The formulas outlining the relationship between the symbolic and natural order presented by Lacan (and to some extent his structuralist ancestor, Saussure) certainly add a superficial note of scientific credibility to otherwise dense text. Society is becoming increasingly reliant upon technology and science, and academe continues to deemphasize the humanities while students believe that reading and writing is a functional rather than intellectual endeavor. Is the impulse to lean in the scientific direction of society perhaps a bit too seductive?

Acceptance of psychoanalytic theories as tools for literary analysis puts enormous import upon our profession and gives us a great moral and intellectual responsibility. If Lacan is correct in his suggestion that the unconscious mind is the true source of self and

is structured very like a language, or if Rank is correct that language is missing half the words necessary for a complete expression of identity, then linguistic study becomes central to the understanding of the nature of humanity and its place in the universe. Literary research and language instruction assumes a relevancy far beyond the science whose tools we appropriate. In this context linguistic study “isn’t rocket science,” if I may borrow a popular phrase normally used to assert simplicity: indeed, it is more significant and more complex than rocket science as it deals with the very essence of humanity itself.

Or does it? As Rank might suggest, psychoanalysis is widely propagated in Caucasian, Western society and normally available only to the wealthiest members of that restricted community. Does psychoanalysis reveal the motives and desires of just that small segment of humanity? Similarly, if we accept the tenets of psychoanalysis are we doing so at the expense of other, equally valid methodologies such as feminism, post-colonialism, and other postmodernist thought, as exhausted as these approaches now seem to be? Are we rejecting Roche’s affirmation of confining our study to the moral and ethical implications of the text itself? We must be careful to see psychoanalytic theory not as a totalizing idea but as the foundation for studies reflecting the variety and extent of our experience as human beings.

Rank’s work, by contrast, is especially appropriate for literary study if we accept Donald’s mission to use psychoanalytic theory to analyze the dynamics of cultural trends rather than simply to discover and explicate psychoanalytic symptoms in literary text. And by considering Rank’s writings as cotextual works evaluated side-by-side with other

literary expression, we avoid the imposition of theory upon art and therefore the concerns, advanced by Fish, Eagleton, and other contemporary observers, about the role of theory in postmodern studies.

“In order to appear rational,” Rank maintains, “psychology had to deny the very existence of its parent, the belief in the soul, and rationalize man’s desire for immortality in terms of psychological equality or likeness, which in turn precipitated the willful assertion of difference, economically, politically and racially, from which we are suffering now” (*BP* 61). Rank effectively describes the cultural factors leading to the development of theory. Literary critics employing tools adopted from other disciplines and intended to “explain” their textual subjects should be mindful of Rank’s admonition.

## Conclusion

One of modernism's major projects was to comprehend and express individual identity, and artists of the period approached that task in diverse ways. Lawrence particularly concentrated upon the role of gender and sexuality, and was sensitive to the tension between masculine and feminine values as they were expressed in daily living, while Yeats was alert to the intersection of primitive magic and spirituality, and understood the necessity of reasserting the irrational element into individual conscience. Eliot, by contrast, responded to the challenge by not only refusing to consciously reveal elements of his own personality through his art, but by restricting the field of accepted personalities to those few psychological types within his own sphere of experience. By maintaining this distance from his characters, Eliot may have revealed as much about modernist psychology as Lawrence and Yeats, and, indeed, somewhat more about his own character than he ever intended to expose through his art. Rank, by relating psychoanalysis to the particular concerns of artistic creation and, not insignificantly, by reacting against the rationalistic and deterministic construct of Freudian psychology, provides a context for studying the nature of modernist identity as it is represented in literature of the period.

Questions concerning the legitimacy of modernism as a self-conscious artistic movement remain unanswerable, of course, but in any case the morbid psychology of Freud and modernism remain, and they emerge in Eliot as an interpretation of the

Double as death rather than everlasting life, and as personal and cultural fragmentation rather than unity of society and of spirit. Just as importantly, Eliot denounces any attempt to saturate literature with the presence of the artist's personality, thereby agreeing with Freud that subjectivity is divorced from culture and that social values are somehow objectively justified regardless of its subjects. Due to the wide dissemination and acceptance of his work, however, Eliot ironically projected his own neurosis onto a culture already intellectually receptive to such an outlook because already influenced profoundly by Freud and his followers. Rank identified both the source and the nature of this psychic manifestation by noting that Freud "thought to explain neurotic symptoms as an exaggeration of normal behaviour, whereas in reality the psychology of civilized man is at present 'neurotic,' which means, distorted by the battle of irrational forces against their suppressor, reason" (*BP* 171).

Regardless of any justification for modernist morbidity and neurosis, significant artists of the period defied prevailing notions of a "modernist" temperament and created works celebrating the differences of all things and striving for life, unity of spirit, and a process of becoming. These legitimate artists, Lawrence and Yeats among them, persistently saw the value of expressing the self in artistic creation and thereby directly and consciously influencing culture, as Rank would suggest, rather than influencing culture unconsciously and in spite of any artistic theory developed to celebrate impersonality, as with Eliot. Lawrence in particular depicts the "becoming" nature of existence, the "lived" part of lived experience, and is doing so replicates Rank's concept of masculine/feminine conflict and its implications for understanding both the human

attraction to immortality and the conscious rather than unconscious nature of the creative act. Yeats, for his part, illuminates the fundamental irrationality of human existence, poetically and within a similar context of masculine/feminine struggle, by interpreting the Double as an aspect of life and by examining the pre-social irrationality of magic and spirituality in a modernist environment, thereby affirming Rank's notion of the importance of myth and symbol in the cultural order. The intersection of subjectivity and objectivity demonstrated by Yeats through intersecting cones, whether or not such demonstration was prompted by spiritual adjuncts, ultimately is representative of a conscious process rather than an unconscious expression, just as Rank's idea of creativity is predicated upon the conscious act of creative will rather than upon any unconscious or stream-of-consciousness workings. In depiction as well as implication, the gyre is closer to Pound's and Lewis's concept of Vorticism, with its attempt to signify movement within a static context, than the constructs of any of the more traditionally modernist artists, Eliot included, published within the pages of *Blast* during its short run. Pound, ironically, directly assisted Eliot in creating a pervasive work of neurosis that has become the hallmark of modernist literature, while his influence upon *A Vision*, more expressive of Rank's idea of irrationality rather than the unconscious as the essential component of humanity, has been minimized to the point of dissolution.

The artists examined in this study demonstrate that a specific intellectual ambiance existed in the early twentieth-century that was not traditionally "modernist" in the sense of emphasizing the unconscious and fragmentation of the self, but celebrated irrationality and unity of spirit, thereby validating and giving artistic voice to Rank's

psychological theory. This intellectual ambiance moreover demonstrates a collective conscious at work during the modernist period, thus similarly verifying Rank's notion that individual acts of creative will manifest themselves in culture and subsequently lead to new cultural expression. Just as conscious will promotes integrity of the individual self, so does it instigate the development of a collective cultural identity, the prevailing emotional and intellectual substance of an era. Rank's theories of the collective conscience in effect are validated by the very process of examining the shared culture of the modernist era.

Trilling, while providing an erratically valid and provocatively duplicitous account of Freud's idea of the relationship between subjectivity and culture, at least perceived that such a cultural self is possible, despite Freud's implicit objections. Even Eliot's work, with its depiction of sexual strife and the mercurial and diverse representation of personalities, replicates elements of this shared cultural conscious, although perhaps with the wrong interpretation of modern experience. For Eliot, individual diversity is fragmentation, elements evocative of life essentially illustrate their implication of death, and unity can be found primarily in cultural structures such as church and state rather than in the more subjective development of an individual ethical stance.

Rank's rejection of Freudian psychology, and with it the values expressed in Eliot's poetry, ultimately provides a biographical analogy to theories of creative will and the formation of the self through meaningful acts affecting culture. Rank exerted his own will by splitting from his mentor, Freud, and by noting the ultimate failure of rational

psychology to express an inherently irrational modernist temperament. The process of individuation, Rank asserts, is propelled by an overly conscious act rather than an exploration of the unconscious.

Rank in effect assumed the attitude of the artist in his psychoanalytic studies as well as in his life. Lieberman sees the work devoted to *Art and Artist* as the beginning of Rank's incorporation of his artistic theory into his own existence. "Rank saw the artist as the last in a historical sequence of individual and collective solutions to the problem of mortality," Lieberman writes. "The next stage entails the creation of one's own life—within the limits imposed, and the possibilities granted, by the givens of biology and society. The creative type becomes the creator of a self. Rank would devote his energies to forming his own life" (AW 302). Taft, Rank's personal friend and first biographer, agrees that Rank followed his own advice. Rank's primary concern, she maintains, "was to realize himself, to find an outlet for his tremendous urge to create, to explore to the limit the nature of art and the artist and to discover his own place in the only world he could accept as his. Whatever the external conditions, he never doubted for long that he belonged to the group he called 'artist'" (271). Menaker observes the unique paradox of his situation: as an artist working within a field seeking the status of a science, Rank offers the "scope, richness, and elemental cosmic quality of his perceptions" not as scientific answers to the questions of life but as provocative discourse intended to engage and challenge the reader. "His creative formulations are indeed statements," Menaker maintains, "just as the creation of a melodic theme or of a composition on canvas are personal and universal statements of the artist." As a result, his work is uncharacteristic

of the psychoanalytical discipline and therefore either ignored or viewed with distrust and suspicion among his peers. “One can but wonder,” Menaker speculates, “what gods had to be appeased, what fears allayed, that so rich a legacy has remained so long entombed” (*RL* 22,139).<sup>1</sup>

Rank’s thought, as we have seen, addresses the issues that mature culture studies considers crucial for understanding the nature of a cultural epoch, and thereby provides not only insight into modernist culture but direction for postmodern literary and cultural theory. Rank’s emphasis upon shared cultural sensibility in conjunction with a defined sense of personal identity demonstrates that we do not need to abandon personal independence to benefit from collective accomplishments and thought; while Williams’s cultural theory emphasizes the shared nature of our experience, Zaretsky would insist that our individuality also remains inviolate. Rank’s theory of personal will, a conscious psychological motivation, similarly describes how subjects living within culture develop a unique self yet also fabricate works of art that inevitably influence other individuals as well as culture as a whole. The individual will is important as an indication of exactly how the self interacts with culture in order to transform, from one cultural epoch to another, not only our concept of self but the very nature of personal identity.

This notion of the transforming self, according to Zaretsky, is central to understanding the essence a cultural epoch, and Rank’s own examination of this phenomenon facilitated our inquiry into the nature of modernism. Indeed, Rank’s identification of the average, neurotic, and artist personality types not only implies the prominent characteristics displayed during an individual’s life but also illuminates the

transforming process of an individual's interaction with the external forces of society and with culture. While Descartes, Locke, and Hume show us that personal identity is a relatively recent concept, the notion of subjectivity developing as secular culture emerged, so does Rank show us how individual identity develops within culture, specifically the modernist social order of his day. By reading Rank's writings in a cotextual environment with literary works of the modernist period, we have followed Williams's notion of the "social," the "documentary," and "ideal" aspects of culture and thereby have confirmed Bell's observation that the term "modernism" denotes two separate concepts, both the self-conscious artistic movement advanced by artists such as Eliot and Pound and the prevailing intellectual atmosphere of the times. In doing so we have found that there is a distinct rupture between the two: while modernism as a movement emphasizes the unconscious, the fragmented self, and the scientific and rational, modernism in and of culture concurrently adhered to values associated with the conscious mind, the unified self, and the irrational or spiritual in understanding daily living. These values were presented, revealingly, in the modernist "parallel project" of literary works by Lawrence and Yeats and in the psychological writings of Rank.

By addressing issues considered significant by contemporary cultural theory, Rank also places his work squarely within the center of postmodern literary and culture studies. Rank insisted that cultural edicts, the rationality and methodology of Freudian analysis among them, should not be imposed upon the individual, and consequently he would have objected in spirit to the formal dictates and mission of postmodern literary theory, and would have supported the return to reading literature for its own intrinsic

benefits, including, as Roche would request, the understanding and internalization of moral and ethical values necessary for individual autonomy in a technological era. Similarly, Rank's emphasis upon identification with the Other and with the simple human values of love and forgiveness provide a context for the development, suggested by observers such as Yarbrough, Davis and Womack, of a new humanistic project for our times.

Finally, I hope this dissertation will in some way encourage further attention to Rank and his theories, and that my readings of Lawrence, Eliot, and Yeats will promote further studies of Rank's relationship to both modern and postmodern culture. That Rank approached his psychoanalytic theory from the standpoint of the artist allows us to view his work in a cotextual fashion alongside other artists of the period. As we have seen, creative individuals of the era restate Rank's grand themes in fiction and poetry, and thereby subvert the common notion of what it means to be a modernist artist, and of what it takes to construct a viable identity in a restrictive social order. Rank, secure in his own self-conception yet always apologetic about his particular artistic aspiration, is characteristically modest about his accomplishments. "I have not set out to convince or to convert," he writes, "nor to divert anyone from his own pursuit of personal happiness. I have no panacea to offer, nor any solution to our human problems which seem to me to be part of man's life on this earth. We are born in pain, we die in pain and we should accept life-pain as unavoidable,—indeed a necessary part of earthly existence, not merely the price we have to pay for pleasure" (*BP* 16).

Rank's objective, unlike Freud's, appeals both to the intellect and to the heart, and thus provides a starting point for a new era of literary and culture study emphasizing the conscious over the unconscious, and predicating the irrationality of daily living over the rational social structures intended to provide an illusion of immortality, only to cage our souls.

## Chapter Notes

### Short Title List

AA = Rank, *Art and Artist* (1932)

AW = Lieberman, *Acts of Will: The Life and Work of Otto Rank* (1985)

BP = Rank, *Beyond Psychology* (1941)

JORA = *Journal of the Otto Rank Association*. 17 vols. 31 issues (1966-1983)

MBH = Rank, *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* (1922)

PD = Rank, *A Psychology of Difference* (1996)

PS = Rank, *Psychology and the Soul* (1998)

RL = Menaker, *Otto Rank: A Rediscovered Legacy* (1982)

SWC = Menaker, *Separation, Will, and Creativity* (1996)

TR = Rank, *Truth and Reality* (1936)

### Notes to Introduction

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Esther Menaker's description of the evolution of Rank's theory of birth trauma, especially as she portrays it in *SWC*. Her discussion on pages 32-38 is particularly insightful.

<sup>2</sup> My acronym for this journal, as with most other title abbreviations in this study, follows the convention originated by Lieberman in his biography of Rank.

<sup>3</sup> Jones is unabashed in his assessment of Rank: “Over a decade ago, in an informal first impression of Rank (*Commentary*, Sept. 1960) I suggested that he might ‘turn out to have been the best mind psychoanalysis contributed to intellectual history.’ One might have supposed this remark to be sufficiently provocative, but it was received in sullen silence. My own opinion remains unchanged” (“Five” 62). Jones is the author of journal articles related to philosophy and culture and an early proponent of ecological psychology; his biography of Rank appears in *The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*. Lieberman, in *AW*, effectively uses Jones’s article to support the significance of Rank’s later theories.

<sup>4</sup> Lieberman further points out that parts of *BP* were incorporated from an unfinished project in social psychology began in Paris in 1931, and that Rank’s writing continued through 1937 (*AW* 306). By this time, however, he was feeling the physical effects of aging and had developed cataracts, and therefore his energy for the project had diminished (*AW* 382). Rank completed his draft of the work in September, 1938, and wrote the Preface just a few months before his death on October 31, 1939. Rank in fact incorporated, word for word, important passages from his earlier work into *BP*, as he would do also with his American lectures. In effect, *BP* becomes more of an explicit summary of his life work than is generally understood. The result leads to occasional serendipitous instances, such as the appearance of his definitive paragraph on the masculine tendency to relegate women to the ‘Not-I’ class appearing on page 246 of both the American edition of *AA* and *BP*, published nearly a decade apart. Robinson, one of the “Friends and Students of the Author” responsible for financing and coordinating the

first, privately-printed edition of *BP*, provides an engaging overview of the work's origins and publication in her article, "The Making of a Book." The Dover trade paperbound edition of *BP*, licensed from Rank's wife Estelle and published as a facsimile of the scarce original, has been in print continuously since its issue in 1958 and therefore is widely available.

<sup>5</sup> Rank's lectures on "Psychoanalysis as a Cultural Factor" (1924), "Love, Guilt, and the Denial of Feelings" (1927), "Social Adaptation and Creativity" (1927), and "Beyond Psychoanalysis" (1928) from *PD* are particularly relevant to this study. *PS* was originally published in German as *Seelenglaube und Psychologie* (1930) and first translated into English in 1950 by William D. Turner. A new translation by Lieberman and Richter was published in 1998, and I rely upon that text.

<sup>6</sup> MacKinnon, a psychologist at the University of California at Berkeley, collected data on architects and categorized his subjects into Rank's three personality types, the average, the neurotic, and the artist. Personality tests and self-assessments correlated with Rank's description of the three types, as did the family and developmental characteristics reported in life histories. Lieberman recounts these tests in his biography of Rank, and notes that "Any theory of personality and creativity that can find experimental validation receives an enviable boost, and MacKinnon did that for Rank" (404). See MacKinnon, 273-81, for a complete description of the experiment.

## Notes to Chapter One

### Otto Rank: Within Culture

<sup>1</sup> Lieberman provides a lively account of the disintegrating relationship between Rank and Freud in *AW* (208-60).

<sup>2</sup> Freud's final, dramatic brush-off of Rank in his letter to Ferenczi is nearly a biographical ritual in Rankian studies. Although originating from Ernest Jones's biography, the anecdote is mentioned in practically every recent published account of the two psychoanalysts' feud, including Lieberman's biography (260) and Kramer's Introduction (36-37).

<sup>3</sup> The two chapters, "Dreams and Poetry" and "Dreams and Myth," are reprinted in Marinelli and Mayer (191-237).

## Notes to Chapter Two

### "The Man's World": D. H. Lawrence

<sup>1</sup> See Bruce Steele's Introduction to the Cambridge volume of Lawrence's psychoanalytic works for further background on the composition and publication of Lawrence's books. Lieberman's biography presents an insightful overview of Rank's composition of *Trauma* and its subsequent reception by those inspecting the manuscript (201-11).

<sup>2</sup> Rank's investigation into the hero motif was translated into English in 1914 as *MBH*, and a revised and expanded second edition was published in 1922. An English

language translation of that version did not appear until Lieberman and Richter's edition of 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Rank's notes on his work are taken from the original manuscript and apparently never intended for publication. The title "Literary Biography" is taken from Taft's designation on the folder containing the manuscript.

<sup>4</sup> In his notes to *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia*, Steele calls this reference "[o]ne of DHL's more enigmatic remarks," and maintains that, in this passage, "the male conception is linked to mental consciousness as against the 'unconscious' consciousness of the lower centers. In a broader sense it is modern science against the older intuitive science of the ancients which, DHL claims, has been lost to modern man" (214n36:21). Again, Lawrence's idea is a fair approximation of Rank's notion of the decentralization of irrationality in contemporary society.

### Notes to Chapter Three

#### The Shadow Explorer: T. S. Eliot

<sup>1</sup> Paschen and Mosby's book *Poetry Speaks*, with its companion CDs containing audio recordings of Eliot reading "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "La Figlia Che Piange," is a widely available source for assessing the poet's spoken word performances. Eliot's reading of *The Waste Land* is accessible at the Internet Multicasting Service/Media.org HarperAudio Website.

<sup>2</sup> Rank was familiar with Woolf's work, mentioning her specifically in *BP* as a champion of the women's movement. His first expression of the masculine "I"

presumably occurs in *AA*, originally published in English translation in 1932, and therefore Woolf may have been an influence on his thought.

<sup>3</sup> Eliot's notes on *The Waste Land* are valuable for tracing the origin of many of these obscure references; the always-illuminating notes from the Abrams-edited *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* in its many editions are less respectable as a citation but perhaps more useful for elucidation, and therefore deserve to be mentioned here.

<sup>4</sup> The poem is reprinted in two different manuscript stages in Valerie Eliot's edition of *The Waste Land's* original drafts (118-21). The fair copy, from which I quote, is printed on page 121.

<sup>5</sup> Klein's book, *Jewish Origins of the Psychoanalytic Movement*, includes a chapter on Rank (103-37). Although any positive attention directed toward Rank's contributions to psychoanalysis is gratifying, the chapter unfortunately not only is pedestrian in its treatment of Rank but misleading in its characterization of Rank's attitude toward Jewish culture.

<sup>6</sup> Rank's mention of Frazer, however, does not exhibit the effluent praise of Eliot's own note on his sources. Frazer characterizes the primitive, supernatural world as "a dark chronicle of human error and folly, of fruitless endeavor, wasted time and blighted hopes"; this is juxtaposed with Freud's comparison of primitive magic to neurotic behavior, an intellectual act which, Rank says, "merely brought to light the survival of irrational forces in modern man and thereby proved the inadequacy of rational

psychology to explain primitive man's world view" (*BP* 62-63). Needless to say, Rank holds neither Freud's nor Frazer's position in high regard.

#### Notes to Chapter Four

"A Woman's Face, or Worse": William Butler Yeats

<sup>1</sup> Coote suggests that Yeats was at least cursorily familiar with Freud's work predicated upon passages in some of George's automated scripts (400). Langbaum agrees, based upon a reading of *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* (1917): "Although we have no documentary evidence of Yeats's reading in Freud and Jung, it is obvious from his allusions that he was aware of their work." But Langbaum similarly suggests that if Yeats read psychoanalytic literature at all, "he read it sparsely" ("Exteriority" 588).

<sup>2</sup> McDowell maintains that Yeats's acceptance of automatic writing, given hints that George's efforts were fabricated, reflects negatively on the poet's character: "There is ample evidence in the Automatic Script of a more-than-willing suspension of disbelief, so that one is left with the impression that for much of the time Yeats displayed all those qualities which caused Ford Madox Ford to label him 'a gargoyle, a great poet but a gargoyle': so intent on his own preoccupations, so willfully blind, so mediaeval, that he wasn't aware of how he must appear to others" (167). McDowell remains skeptical concerning George's initial motivation in assisting with automatic writing, but agrees that George finally had sincere interest and noble goals: "George Yeats's intentions at the beginning of this experiment may have been to distract W. B. Yeats from dwelling on

whether he had made the right decision in marrying her, as Ellmann, Harper and others have emphasized; but her role was more proactive than this scenario might suggest, and her motives were not entirely selfish, in that the wellbeing of her husband seems to have been paramount” (165).

<sup>3</sup> Webster’s book at least attempts to provide a Freudian analysis of the poet and his writings, postmortem, with results constricted only perhaps by the choice of psychoanalytic discipline.

<sup>4</sup> The second edition of *A Vision*, in the introduction to which Yeats compares historical periods to works of art, appeared in 1937 and was a substantially revised and enlarged book compared to the limited edition of 1926. See Hood’s essay for a comparison of the two editions and a description of Yeats’s process of revision. *Yeats’s Vision Papers*, edited by George Mills Harper, is the standard compendium of the original sources and provides some insights into Yeats’s revision of the text.

<sup>5</sup> Rank specifically points to Max Müller and the Society for Comparative Mythological Research for resisting the connection between myth and dream, presumably due to its moralistic implications. “This readily understandable revulsion naturally prevents the mythologist from assuming that such motifs as incest with mother, sister, or daughter, or murder of father, grandfather, or brother, could be based on universal fantasies . . . . This revulsion is, therefore, only the reaction to the dimly sensed painful recognition of the reality of these impulses, and this reaction impels the myth interpreters, for their own unconscious rehabilitation and that of all mankind, to assign these motifs an entirely different meaning than they originally had“ (*MBH* 7).

## Notes to Chapter Five

### Otto Rank: Beyond Theory

<sup>1</sup> The articles by Sabler and Potts, among other notable Nin scholarship, investigates in greater detail the relationship between Rank's theory and Nin's life and work.

<sup>2</sup> I have seen no evidence to suggest that Rank was familiar with Irving Babbitt's short-lived movement, based upon Matthew Arnold's humanistic thought, staged in the early decades of the century. Nevertheless, New Humanism's emphasis upon the division between human beings and nature, the ethical foundation of experience, and the essential freedom of will suggests that Rank would be attracted to its ideals. See Foerster for one of the few elaborations of New Humanism's position (236-61).

## Notes to Conclusion

<sup>1</sup> Even critics such as Rudnytsky obliquely acknowledge Rank's artistic aspirations. After criticizing Rank's unorthodox attitude toward therapy and scientific analysis of the mind, Rudnytsky takes Rank to task on what appear to be purely artistic grounds. In his discussion of *Eine Neurosenanalyse in Träumen* (1924), a volume never translated and largely unavailable, Rudnytsky complains that "the patient never comes alive for the reader, nor does Rank himself play a dynamic role in his narrative" (96). Lieberman might counter this by regaining perspective, as he does in his Translator's Introduction to *PS*. "It is true that Rank's texts lack case histories and so are relatively dry. That Freud's cases are part fiction seems not to have diminished his impact, which,

ironically, is now stronger in departments of English than in psychiatry” (xxv). Indeed, a standard classroom text on literary theory, *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, includes only two references to Rank, both simple mentions in passing, while Freud has nearly one hundred, including a forty-three page selection from his writings.

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