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(RE)SIGNING THE SELF: MODERNIST WOMEN AND THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL TRADITION

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of English
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(Re)Signing the Self: Modernist Women and the Autobiographical Tradition

Submitted by Liane Schwarz, for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, obtained from the Graduate Department of English, University of Toronto, 1998

With an historical context that attempts to delineate the problematic relationship between autobiography as an androcentric discourse and female autobiographers who have traditionally been circumscribed by that discourse (both in matters of identity and authorship), my thesis isolates modernism in all of its heterogeneous complexity as a moment in Western consciousness that allows for the destabilization of autobiography's ideological foundation. My primary contention is that modernism, so defined, provides an opportunity for women writers to consciously reassess their roles in relation to the patriarchal mainstream, and for women autobiographers in particular to reveal the fictions of selfhood that had fixed them as subordinates for so many centuries. To demonstrate this point, I employ an analysis of four modernist autobiographies that successfully take hold of the ideological opportunity before them: Virginia Woolf's *Moments of Being* (1907-1940); Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth* (1933); Gertrude Stein's *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933); and Zora Neale Hurston's *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942). A common argument is justified by the fact that all of these texts challenge the received conventions of autobiography, and most especially the androcentric assumption of
subjectivity, by exposing the fictivity that lies at the heart of the
genre. Their separate example is warranted by the slightly different
emphasis each woman places on that fictivity: Woolf on the fiction of
recolletion; Brittain on the fiction of the story; Stein on the fiction
of the implied reader; and Hurston on the fiction of the textual "I".
The final implications of such a study are far reaching, for the
revisionary strategies employed by each of these female autobiographers,
while insisting on more expansive definitions of both autobiography and
modernism, also call for a type of interdisciplinary scholarship that
not only reveals the artificial nature of epistemological categories,
but also the benefit of mutually reinforcing knowledge.
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INTRODUCTION

(Re)Signing the Self: Modernist Women and the Autobiographical Tradition

A woman writer, in the context of mainstream culture, has always been a trespasser in men's territory. And she trespasses at her peril. She is as much at home in men's traditions as is a Third Worlder in the privileged landscapes of European Society. She has no 'natural' place there. She can either create a new place—a woman's subculture, with all the derogations the prefix implies—to which the mainstream need give no serious regard, or she can do battle with men to prove she is worthy to be honoured as one of them.

Gillian Hanscombe and Virginia L. Smyers, Writing For Their Lives, 3-4

Western patriarchal culture has for so long so thoroughly covered women in myth, has so efficiently used gender to conflate all women into Woman, the sexual category of Man, the Other, and the contrast by which a man may know himself as Self, that none of us can yet really know what a woman is. Woman blocks our view.

Nancy Gray, Language Unbound, 11

Since it will be my contention here that the autobiographies of Virginia Woolf, Vera Brittain, Gertrude Stein and Zora Neale Hurston have managed not only to assert the position of the woman writer in a way that successfully eludes the confining options previously available to female authors, but also to expose our view to four very distinctive women conscious of their difference from the cultural myth of Woman, I would like to begin with a discussion of the historical and theoretical
perspectives that allow me to make such a claim. By briefly sketching
the salient aspects of women's problematic relationship to autobiography
as a genre, I hope to accomplish two main objectives: first, a sense of
the discursive imperialism inherent in the genre and conventions of
autobiography; and second, an historical notion of the female
autobiographer as an author who either allows herself to be colonized by
the dominant ideology of the discourse or attempts to establish her own
colony only to discover that her autobiographical island is not so far
removed from the mainland as she might have hoped. From a perspective,
then, that implies the imbrication of history and discourse, I would
like to proceed with the idea that modernism, and perhaps it is better
to say modern consciousness in general, provides an instance in history
and discursive formation that is ripe for change, an opportunity for
women writers to consciously reassess their roles in relation to the
patriarchal mainstream, and for women autobiographers in particular to
reveal the fictions of selfhood that had fixed them as subordinates for
so many centuries.

Having set the stage historically, I will then turn my attention
to four texts which, in my view, have both seized and altered this
modernist zeitgeist: Virginia Woolf's *Moments of Being* (1907-40), Vera
Brittain's *Testament of Youth* (1933), Gertrude Stein's *The
Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933), and Zora Neale Hurston's *Dust
Tracks on a Road* (1942). In this latter portion of the introduction, I
plan to delineate my reasons for choosing these particular works as well
as my proposed methodology. To this end, I would like not only to
highlight those aspects of subjectivity and self-representation in each
text that justify a common argument, but also to look at those elements which set the texts apart and, ultimately, warrant their separate example. From this logical point of departure, finally, I will situate my own critical position vis-à-vis the current revisionary trends in both autobiographical and modernist criticism. Here I hope not only to illustrate the kind of work that is being done by revisionist scholars, but also to show how this particular project will make further contributions to these respective fields of study.

Autobiographical Discourse and the Politics of Female Subjectivity

Etymologically, the term "autobiography" did not appear in English usage until 1797, and did not gain any particular currency until the middle of the nineteenth century (Folkenflik 1; 6). Its history as a scholarly discipline is even shorter, with no genuine interest being exhibited until the studies of Georg Misch and Anna Robeson Burr appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century (Spengemann 178). Yet, as a discursive force, autobiography has had a very long and influential life. In the Western world alone, most historians on the subject would identify St Augustine's *Confessions* (397-8) as the "square upon which the self-consciousness of European man first coalesced" (Bakhtin 135), for as a text that marks the beginning of Christian asceticism, it assumes the importance of the soul's struggles with past sin, and hence the importance of the individual. Moreover, as a text which boasts the distinction of combining "all three of the forms--
historical, philosophical, and poetic—that autobiography would assume in the course of its development over the next fifteen hundred years" (Spengemann xiv), it is truly a universal prototype.

That autobiographical historians have assigned this distinction to St Augustine's *Confessions*, however, has perhaps less to do with the pivotal place it occupies in history and more to do with the fact that it confirms, in retrospect, the accretion of ideas that we have come to know as "autobiography": an "extended and connected" prose "narrative following some kind of chronological, historical, or other clear order", "meant for the public eye", in which its narrator claims to recall his or her past with accuracy, "assumes the reader's interest in 'the life' because of the importance given to introspection or self-analysis”, and, as a consequence, exhibits a certain "literariness" (Kadar 1993: xi-xii). Certainly the same might be said of Rousseau's *Confessions* (1765), which is similarly held up as the modern European version of autobiographical quintessence. We may recognize the claims of self-generated uniqueness, universal importance, and absolute veracity, but it does not necessarily hold that Rousseau's text is the source of these autobiographical conventions. My point, very simply, is that such assumptions are rooted in, and develop with, cultural ideology rather than emerging from particular textual sites. I raise this issue immediately not only because of its importance to the understanding of autobiography as a discourse, but also because I believe that the prototypical school of thought only reinforces a kind of "great man" ideology.
Indeed, the notion of autobiographical history as a collection of "great men" is possibly the single largest ideology contributing to the problematic relationship between women and autobiography, for, as a manifestation of the dominant patriarchal discourse, it is something which influences both the cultural narratives of female identity and the discursive formation of the genre itself. In other words, how women historically perceive themselves as autobiographical subjects is inextricably related to the way in which they are perceived. And this, for a variety of reasons, has never been particularly complimentary, perhaps explaining, in part, women's delayed autobiographical impulse, for it was not until the mystical writings of Julian of Norwich (1373) and Margery Kempe (1436)—some thousand years after St Augustine's Confessions—that women first wrote (or spoke) about themselves in the West. The coincidence of these women's accounts with the medieval revision of Christian anthropology is probably no accident, for, whatever iniquities may have existed in the real world, women under this "new anthropology" were at least assured of "the moral equality of men's and women's souls in the quest for eternal salvation" (Smith 1987: 27). As Kempe would soon discover, however, the quest for autobiographical autonomy was not quite the same thing. Her transgressions into realms of the flesh and spiritual realms still considered the province of male clergy soon marked her as a heretic.

The real heresy, of course, was that Kempe had failed to comply with contemporary standards of female propriety which were, for the most part, dictated by a kind of "scholastic synthesis" that "systematized both the prelapsarian and the postlapsarian inferiority of woman" (Smith
1987: 27). Biblical (and predominantly Pauline) interpretations of Eve, focusing on her subordination to Adam, her betrayal of mankind through the transgressive attempt to gain knowledge, and her final curse to bear children, were taken together with Aristotle's conception of woman as an "essential absence" and Aquinas's notion of woman as "misbegotten man" (Smith 1987: 27-31), and it was seemingly decided that women should be regarded in terms of universal negativity: the malformed other by which man would know himself, the origin of all sin, and the empty vessel of procreation. To the medieval mind, therefore, the "good" woman was almost a contradiction in terms, for being good was simply a matter of maintaining boundaries. As man's subordinate, woman was expected to remain within the domestic sphere of the homestead. As his betrayer, she would forsake her desire for knowledge, speaking as little as possible and confining herself to private concerns. And finally, as the biological entity that would bring forth his children, she would limit herself to the roles of wife and mother. Add to this the remote exceptions of nun and heretic, and one could safely argue that the medieval woman looking for a cultural script on which to base her identity had an extremely narrow margin of choice at her disposal.

With the advent of Renaissance humanism came a slightly altered perception of human ontological status. However, such events as the disintegration of feudalism and new scientific discoveries that gave precedence to individual, inductive truths over universal notions of Truth (Smith 1987: 22-3) did little to change the complexion of women's autobiography, for admitting the importance of human worth or individual knowledge was still tantamount to admitting the importance of
men. Women, still assigned and resigned to their private, domestic roles, had little access to education, and most, in any event, were reluctant to aspire to the very public pursuit of secular autobiography. The only perceptible difference for women of this period was the addition of one more potential script, that of the queen, since the ascensions of Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots, and Catherine de Medici had, if only by virtue of their number, legitimized the idea of female (aristocratic) authority (Smith 1987: 34). But what this meant for the majority of women was very little, for authority in the face of prevailing illiteracy is nevertheless remote. Consequently, the only evidence of female life-writing in this period is aristocratic, and even this is seemingly reluctant, for although these women are accounting for their lives, they are still confining their efforts to the more private forms of diary, letter and journal. In fact, before the English Civil War (1642-1651), it would appear that women's secular autobiography consisted of very little else. The first instance of a "public" autobiography does not appear until 1656, with Margaret Cavendish's A True Relation of My Birth, Breeding, and Life; and here, sadly, we must acknowledge that it is public only by virtue of its attachment to her biography of William Cavendish.

On a visible level, therefore, the ideology of Renaissance humanism did not have any significant impact on the rather inauspicious tradition of women's autobiography. Old notions of divine authority may have given way to ideas of Renaissance self-fashioning, providing an autobiographical margin for some women, but the galvanization of patriarchal primacy that attends this particular ideology did as much to
preclude women from autobiography as any other. And perhaps, for this reason alone, I would argue that less visible influences were responsible for the aggravation of the female autobiographical impulse during this period. By "less visible", of course, I do not mean to imply that these influences were subtle, for certainly the concept of autobiography had been drastically revised under the new ontology, but rather that the ideological inflection of these influences had escaped general notice. In other words, western scholarship may have taken something of an autobiographical turn (Smith 1987: 24), but the fact that autobiography shared the androcentric basis of this scholarship, or that its engendering might have unfairly excluded women, was still an unconscious donnée.

That man now saw himself as the centre of the universe, for instance, contributed greatly to an idea of autonomous selfhood, a philosophy which found its autobiographical translation in the assumptions of self-generation (sui generis) and self-importance (res gestae). Underlying this notion of individual autonomy, however, is the unacknowledged assumption of male privilege, for even abandoning the "Adam's rib" school of female subordination, the idea of a woman free from any claims but her own in a socio-economic climate that still ensured her dependency and domestic reserve might just as well have been a fiction. Few women, save queens and aristocrats, even lived the kind of life that this revision of the genre took for granted. The rebirth, furthermore, of certain classical conventions, such as res gestae, presumed not only a certain level of literacy, but also a level of literariness that was well beyond the reach of most women. Thus, in
spite of the rise in "public" autobiography, corresponding to the rise in public literacy brought about by the invention of the printing press, we are still hard-pressed to find many female exemplars, for the very idea of autobiography as it formed in the Renaissance left only the remotest of possibilities open to women.

For the female autobiographer, then, the assertion in the Age of Reason of an individual's innate freedom and equality\textsuperscript{12} emerged with cruel irony, and especially where her freedom to represent herself on an equal footing with men was concerned. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in fact, women would maintain their rather uncomfortable position in relation to autobiography. Those who chose to write about themselves generally opted for one of two courses: either they would content themselves with the private discourse of their diaries and journals, resigning themselves to a sub-cultural status; or, they would dare to write a public autobiography, usurping the androcentric stage. In terms of female identity, however, both choices are extremely problematic. In the first instance, the female autobiographer is simply reinforcing the fiction of self-representation she has been assigned by the patriarchal dominance of the discourse. She cannot presume to be the kind of self that autobiographical convention has made law, and therefore she inscribes a place for herself that is different, but not equal. And in the second instance, the female autobiographer's necessary transgression into the public discursive realm amounts to a confirmation of patriarchal dominance itself. "She commits herself to a certain kind of 'patrilineal' contract" (Smith 1987: 52), embracing all those aspects of self that form the
androcentric basis of the genre, but overlooking those very aspects of herself that make her uniquely female, and in the process undermining any of "the value and the privileges she can garner as an ideal woman" (Smith 1987: 54). The relative position of women to autobiography, therefore, is not only precarious but double binding, for the available choice, it seems, is between the muted voice of her own private story and the audible voice of her self-effacing transgression.

Notwithstanding the treachery of discursive prescription, however, the state of women's autobiography during these centuries did in fact undergo a remarkable transformation, particularly in the eighteenth century. The "dichotomy between public passivity and private energy" (Spacks 1976: 89) that seemed to represent the norm for seventeenth-century (aristocratic) women became more of a spectrum in the following century. The reason for this is twofold. The first, and most significant, factor is the drastic change in economics precipitated by the Industrial Revolution. Impoverished social conditions "tended to produce a high proportion of widows, deserted wives, and unmarried mothers, while women's occupations were over-stocked, ill paid and irregular" (Nussbaum 1989: 147). In other words, prevailing economics had not only forced women out of their commonplace marriage roles, but also necessitated their employment and consequent urbanization (Jelinek 1986: 33). And with this new growth in working-class women came an altered sense of subjectivity, one that was marked by an intensification of class consciousness (Nussbaum 1989: xiv) and, in some cases, even a resistance to the old ideologies of gender (Nussbaum 1989: 133-4). Unlike their seventeenth-century predecessors, therefore, female
autobiographers of the eighteenth century are much more varied. Certainly, because of literacy levels, there is still a large incidence of upper (and middle) class women writing privately in their journals and diaries, or publicly in relation to their husbands, fathers or God\textsuperscript{14}, but what we notice for the first time is the emergence of a working-class voice, autobiographies written by women who were forced to make their own way in the world. And it is here that I would note the second significant change in women's autobiography of the period, for with the addition of all these new voices came a marked increase in the "collective sphere of female subjectivity" (Nussbaum 1989: xviii).

Possibly the most notable addition of the time is the female apology or confessional, sometimes called the scandalous memoir (or \textit{Vie Scandaleuse})\textsuperscript{15}, a form that could be distinguished by its "personal and subjective emphasis," its "disjunctive narratives," and its conciliatory attitude towards the reader (Jelinek 1986: 33). Although it was a mode that did not appear until the 1740s (Nussbaum 1988: 151), I single it out because I believe it is the most revealing in terms of the ongoing antagonism between women and autobiography. On one hand, it was an autobiographical innovation, a truly subjective form that "inaugurated psychological self-analysis" (Jelinek 1986: 32). On the other hand, however, it was a form that posed a great threat to the ever increasing ossification of the genre, for unlike the military histories of the res gestae, or any other mode that presumed the narrative objectivity of the autobiographical subject\textsuperscript{16}, it presented itself as a contradiction to the dominant ideology. Therefore, rather than receiving the attention it deserved, it was quickly dismissed as sentimental, dishonest and
libertine (Stanton 6; Schumaker 23-24), a confirmation once again of women's colonized status in relation to the imperial discourse of autobiography.

A case-in-point can be made by *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs Charlotte Charke, Daughter of Colley Cibber, Written by Herself* (1755), a working woman's apology that not only represents a new strain of female autobiography (the disguise narrative), but also stands out as a kind of metaphor for the female position in relation to the patriarchal discourse. Charlotte Charke, daughter of Colley Cibber, a poet laureate and renowned dramatist, was known by virtue of her father's fame and her own career as an actress. The account she gives of her life is of a child engaged in a series of playful impersonations and of an adult who, by virtue of her husband's death and her father's reproach, must dress as a man in order to forge a living. The tone of the autobiography is extremely pleading, almost pathetic, the underlying agenda obviously to regain her father's acceptance and financial support. Generically, then, it is a typical scandalous memoir: shocking, subjective, and conciliatory to a fault. But the fact that it depicts a woman who survives by means of cross-dressing and whose primary concern is the recognition and forgiveness of her father is very telling, for it suggests the essential conflict of the female autobiographer, the choice between writing as a woman and always standing at some remove from the patriarchal authority, or writing as a man, disguising her female body in order to reap the benefits of the metaphysical (androcentric) self.

Therefore, in spite of women's attempts to personalize the genre, to make it more applicable to their experiences, it was the inescapable
association of the female writer with the female body that still returned to haunt them. And at no point in history does this become more apparent than in the nineteenth century, when, at the same time that autobiography is being conceptualized as a genre, Victorian notions of individuality are succumbing to a Cartesian mind/body split, giving rise to codes of propriety that suppress physicality and sexuality almost entirely. In other words, the concurrent development of a genre around the idea of a metaphysical cogito, a nearly Platonic notion of selfhood, and the development of moral codes, such as "Mrs Grundyism" and "The Cult of True Womanhood," did not bode well for the female autobiographer. The priority given to mind over body and reason over sentiment, together with the rigid notion that women's primary virtues were "piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (Welter 21), seemingly rendered the idea of female authorship a logical impossibility as well as something of a mortal sin.

Much to the surprise of the unrelenting Mrs Grundy, however, women of this century seem more determined than ever to locate "the discursive elasticities" (Smith 1992: 85) of the genre, for rather than fixing themselves as "true women" or disguising themselves as "true men", the vast majority of female autobiographers have adopted methods that allow for both their authorship (their assertion of individual selfhood) and their female "goodness" (their attachment to societal codes of behaviour). In most self-portraiture, for instance, we will encounter either a passage of self-denigration, usually an apology for the transgression of the autobiographical act itself, or an unnatural emphasis on the domestic details of the author's life. Both are an
attempt to convince the reader that the female author before them is perfectly compatible with the ideas of society at large. Thus the conciliatory attitude toward the reader that was evident in eighteenth-century women's apologies is here something of a norm. Women appear to go out of their way to construct themselves as exemplary, and therefore to establish an affinity between their life stories and readerly expectations\textsuperscript{21}. Such accommodating methods are especially evident in the resurgence of evangelical narratives\textsuperscript{22}, life-writing that gives precedence to religious example and self-hermeneutics in order to conceal the primary autobiographical motive of publicity.

But perhaps the most unusual product of this accommodating impulse is the Victorian "invention of childhood"\textsuperscript{23}, the prolonged and sometimes exclusive emphasis on childhood years found in many nineteenth-century women's autobiographies. Although this technique is certainly not representative of all autobiographies being written by women, especially those written by lower and working class women\textsuperscript{24}, it is one that seems to dominate the dwindling numbers of women's literary autobiographies, possibly because it is one that still allows for literary or public (and hence transgressive) exemplarity without offending the accepted norms of gender ideology. In other words, these narratives manage to occupy a liminal territory somewhere between the essentialist idea of male selfhood (the autonomous metaphysical "I") and the androcentric idea of female selfhood (the tremulous domestic "I"). Concentrating almost exclusively on pre-adolescent memories, these autobiographies successfully elude the association of the female writer and the female body. They simply end before the woman's body is of any
consequence to the reader. And so, what we have in most cases is a very peculiar dichotomy between the nascent individual and the reticence (conscious or unconscious) of the female autobiographer who would sooner abort her life story in medias res rather than suffer the accusations of impropriety. In fact, this attitude towards autobiography accounts, in large part, for the prevalence of autobiographical masks, such as we see in the novels of George Eliot or the Brontë sisters. Reluctant to relate the intimate details of their lives in the "accountable" genre of autobiography, these women took refuge in the guise of fiction.

Sadly, then, "the cult of domesticity still overshadowed the burgeoning cult of personality" (Gagnier 95) for most nineteenth-century women. Perhaps the only exceptions can be found in the autobiographies of professional women and feminists, but, even so, such narratives do not begin to appear with any frequency until the last two decades of the century. Where one might mark a difference, however, is in the autobiographies of American women. Up to and until the end of the eighteenth century, American women's autobiographies were not much of a radical departure. A strong Puritan tradition had ensured the dominance of religious conversion narratives, and inherited gender codes had similarly coloured early secular attempts with the reserve of a private, domestic discourse. If there was any noticeable difference, it was not one emanating from the situation of the subject in relation to the dominant discourse, but rather one of circumstance, a difference relating to America's colonial status, westward expansion, or the settlement of uninhabited regions. Hence, we discover women writing
unparalleled accounts of pioneer life, travel, exploration and captivity.

In the nineteenth-century, however, these circumstances, now altered by the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery, contributed to more than just a quantitative difference in women's life-writing. One genre, in particular, posed a threat to "The Cult of True Womanhood"—the female slave narrative. For here, as never before, we encounter a mode of female self-representation that is centered on the physical body of the autobiographical subject. Whether relating tales of abuse at the hands of white slave owners or boasting about the female strength that was necessary to be a desirable slave, most of these accounts seem to highlight the body. More transgressive still was the fact that many of these accounts ventured to disclose the sexual violation concomitant with slavery. And so, it was not just the body, but the sexual body, that became the focal point of these narratives. Against a fiction of self-representation that demanded female purity and goodness, this assertion of the self as a "fallen woman" (Smith 1993: 41) and a physical being certainly affronted the dominant ideology attached to the metaphysical "I". What is most peculiar about these narratives, then, is the seeming attempt to remain within the circumscribed fiction of the submissive female, for like many of the nineteenth-century autobiographies penned on the continent, the female slave narratives are just as likely to display an initial modesty or to apologize for the act of writing itself. The contradiction they inscribe (or reinscribe), in other words, is between the white codes of gender that inform the female autograph and the black embodied voice.
which necessarily resides on the margins. Obviously, in spite of feeling
the necessity to "bare" their souls, there is still a very strong desire
to cater to a white authority, if only for the reason that their
perceived readers were northern abolitionists (Culley 13). Therefore,
even in the case of the most "outspoken" examples, "The Cult of True
Womanhood" still stands as a kind of totem in the centre of women's
autobiographical tradition. Those few voices that resist its
prescriptions never quite dismiss its power.

To dismiss such a power, though, would be no easy accomplishment,
for the ideology that served as its foundation, the notion of
"individuality" that had been "turned in the mills of eighteenth-century
enlightenment, early nineteenth-century romanticism, bourgeois
capitalism, and Victorian optimism" had "achieved its fullest, most
finely-tuned shape in [...] the nineteenth century's ideology of
metaphysical selfhood" (Smith 1990: 11). What the female autobiographer
had to confront, therefore, was not simply a fiction of self-
representation, an idea of Woman put forth by the dominant patriarchal
discourse, but the very ideology that had excluded women from the sphere
of subjectivity in the first place. In other words, if the self at the
centre of autobiography had been privileged as male, white, unitary,
metaphysical, and objective, then the burden for the female writer was
first to recognize it as such, and then to problematize its privilege by
rendering it equally fictional—a simple task only in theory, for the
reality would necessitate the overturning of the Western mind, the
dismantling of so many hegemonic structures that had remained sovereign
for so many centuries.
But first and foremost, it was a question of female consciousness, the need for women to actively engage and challenge the gender ideology that had relegated their autobiographical status to the margins for all these centuries. Without recognizing the patriarchal equation between Woman and fiction, there could be no progress, no "dismantling of metaphysical conceptions of self-presence, authority, authenticity, [and] truth" (Smith 1990: 12). The fundamental problem was epistemological. Women's ways of knowing themselves had always been in relation to, and by way of, an androcentric discourse that prescribed the autobiographical self as a free agent whose unitary essence could be known by a process of objectifying the world around him, by assuming that he was the locus of knowledge and that his relationship to language was unproblematic, his mind producing a mirror of himself for readers to apprehend with corresponding ease. Women's exclusion from this agency, from this essence, and from this kind of subjectivity, therefore, had always placed the female autobiographer in negotiation between the "maternal and paternal narratives" (Smith 1987: 56) of selfhood: either she would follow the prescriptions of self set down for her sex by the patriarchal discourse, or she would sacrifice her sexual identity in an attempt to usurp the prerogatives of male selfhood. Either way, she would be made to feel like only half a self, an outsider to her own sex or an outsider to the autobiographical pursuit itself.

With the twentieth century, however, an alternative narrative begins to emerge, one that not only allows the female autobiographer to challenge the assumptions inherent in the genre, but also supplies her with an opportunity to assert a more complete sense of self. That
alternative, I would argue, is modernism—not the modernism of literary historians who fix it in time, quality and gender, but modernism in its most vexing and heterogeneous manifestations, for, as a fabric of multiple and often contradictory ideologies, it presents itself as an opportunity for the destabilization of autobiographical imperialism.

In other words, what had been acknowledged or commonly received as autobiographical convention, notions about the self and "his" relationship to the text, was now called into question by a multitude of new ideas that began to occupy the Western mind. The notion of an essential, unitary self, for example, was no longer stable under a Marxist ideology of class consciousness. Theorizing the inextricable link between the individual and larger socio-economic forces, Marx prevented us from assuming that individuality was simply a matter of self-generation, or that it could ever have been an inviolable force unaffected by materiality. Similar implications arose from Freud's theory of the unconscious, for the consideration of multiple levels of human consciousness effectively disrupted the foundation of thought that informed assumptions of self-presence or agency. The autobiographical self could no longer be regarded in terms of absolute rationality, an objective locus of self-knowledge, because another, potentially subversive level of consciousness might very well give way to thoughts and feelings that would crack the mirror of representation.

Furthermore, representation itself had been greatly problematized by new developments in literature, new philosophies of time, and new ideas about language. If autobiography was a genre predicated on the idea of a self capable of delivering objective or historical realism
(hence privileging a chronological or developmental pattern, and usually progressing in linear fashion towards a point of closure), then modernist ideas of realism and what it was to be "literary" in general certainly revised that habit of thought. As Woolf so eloquently states in "Modern Fiction," "life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end" (rpt. Kime Scott 631). Not that all modern writers necessarily advocated the kind of psychological realism Woolf describes, but one thing is certain: the idea of reality had been irrevocably altered. And so, perhaps while there is no common thread to link them all, it may be said at least that modernist writers succeeded in reflecting the heterogeneous realities of their subjective worlds, whether they were entertaining more inclusive notions of character and plot construction, or experimenting with the very nature of language itself. Old connotations of objectivity, of a "true" and accurate reflection of reality were no more. The subjective thoughts and feelings of a writer may have found a correlation in the objective world, as Eliot suggests, but the idea of a writer in perfect correspondence with that world was gone forever.

In part, this is due to the naturalization of Freudian psychology, an acceptance of the unconscious mind together with the possibility of multiple and interior realities. But also contributing to the destabilization of realism are modernist philosophies of time that challenge the notion of linear chronology. Whether idealist, pragmatist, or phenomenologist, philosophers at the beginning of the twentieth century were not only entertaining different ways of codifying time, but
also looking at how the subjective, textual "I" had altered our previous conceptions of history or past time. With Benedetto Croce's idea that all history was contemporary history (since the historian's temporal perspective was equally evident in the account), Edmund Husserl's phenomenological "I" (the perceiver's point of view always disturbing the outward appearance of things), Henri Bergson's idea of "duration" (a lived, qualitative time rather than a spatial quantification of time), and William James's notion of "stream of consciousness" (which rendered linear time inconsequential, if not obsolete), the traditional geometric methods of looking at time and history were no longer acceptable. Time was not something with an a priori existence, something we could discover through the process of reasoning; it was something we imposed for the purpose of assigning order, and something that now included an awareness of that imposition. To conceive of autobiographical truth or authenticity as something that could emanate directly from the mind of the autobiographer, therefore, was simply impossible. And to assume that narrative realism was the best way to make that "truth" intelligible to the reader was similarly erroneous, for the only truth that remained was the process itself. No method of presentation, no ordering of events could mitigate the reality of the arbitrary, subjective mind.

Language itself, moreover, had become an unyielding vehicle. Previous assumptions about the transparency of language, the direct correspondence between a word and its meaning, were now giving way to linguistic theories that demonstrated quite the contrary. Ferdinand de Saussure shattered all such thinking with his notion that the relationship between the signifier and the signified was completely
arbitrary, only meaningful within a closed system. In other words, the reality of language dictated the impossibility of direct correspondence, and hence the impossibility of a sovereign speaker, an autobiographer who could relate his or her life without losing anything in the translation. Indeed the very idea of translation had been complicated by Saussure’s revision of linguistic movement, for although language was for him basically sequential, it did not necessarily move in progressive fashion, but could exist on either a paradigmatic or syntagmatic plane. Thus, for the autobiographer, the idea that language could provide a sense of order, reflective of the realism he or she presumed, was a concept that also needed abandoning.

With the patriarchal foundation of autobiography beginning to crack, then, the modernist spirit of the twentieth century provided a fertile ground for female autobiographers who were desperately seeking to escape the "traditional" methods of self-representation, for the challenges issued by the new and various ideologies of the era had drastically altered the complexion of autobiography. At least in theory, the discourse that had reigned imperially for so many centuries could now be regarded as an artificial construct, not something actually practised by autobiographers, but something that had been learned, accepted as truth. To some extent, therefore, it was possible to look at autobiography as a kind of textbook language, the kind of language one might learn in school, but that one soon discovered is never quite spoken in reality. And to be sure, the old patriarchal grammar of the language was still being taught. What was different, however, was the expansion of the Western mind to include an awareness of the idiomatic,
vernacular reality. Autobiography on this level could no longer be regarded in terms of self-history, an authentic documentation of the truth, for every one of its parts of speech, to continue the metaphor, had been infected with a certain mark of fictivity. The assumption of objectivity had been altered by a subjective, potentially subversive memory. The correspondence assumed between the historical being and the autobiographical "I" had been disrupted by the arbitrary nature of language. A process of selection and memory had shattered the correlation between historical reality and textual representation. And finally, the implication of a reader who might apprehend all of this opacity had become an equal part of the fiction at hand.\footnote{40}

Of course, such innovations in thought would not necessarily dispense with the myth of Woman that had plagued women's autobiographical attempts since the time of Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe. In fact, modernism itself, and particularly literary modernism, had been, and largely continues to be, gendered male.\footnote{41} Our lists of prominent writers, thinkers, and scientists are almost always dominated by the names of men. A substantial part of the problem can be attributed to transitional thinking. Old paradigms of periodization or convention were being applied to an astonishingly large and unruly group of new ideas, and probably for no other reason than achieving a sense of order out of what was otherwise quite chaotic. And thus, whether it was a case of bad timing or a case of stylistic incompatibility, a large portion of female production continued to be ignored by the patriarchal machine. However, to suggest that such a paradigm shift might be wholly responsible for the modernist
marginalization of women’s (life) writing is not quite accurate either, for, in spite of patriarchal impositions, modernist ruptures in the old foundation of Western thought provided ample opportunity for female autobiographers to seize the centre of the human stage. The question, at least as I see it, was whether or not women had recognized that opportunity.

Four Revisionary Women: A Resignation for Reassignment

Four female autobiographers who, I believe, both recognized and took that opportunity were Virginia Woolf, Vera Brittain, Gertrude Stein, and Zora Neale Hurston, for all of these women not only challenge and revise the received conventions of autobiography, but also consciously seek to reassign their subject position in relation to that imperial discourse. Emphatically underscoring their own constructedness within the patriarchal prescriptions of the discourse, as well as the fictivity of the genre itself, each one of these writers manages to expose the exclusionary logic of autobiography. The dominant myths of womanhood which had relegated their autobiographical predecessors to the margins of the genre are met, in Woolf’s Moments of Being, Brittain’s Testament of Youth, Stein’s The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, and Hurston’s Dust Tracks on a Road, with versions of selfhood that both engage and denounce the old narrative models. Woolf, no longer content with the patriarchal and Victorian traditions inherited from her father, generates an autobiographical evolution that questions and, eventually, writes her subjectivity out of such confinement. Lamenting the
androcentric "trench" logic of the war autobiography, Brittain asserts a female version of the war which simultaneously invites an expansion of the genre and includes her "unentrenched" subject position. Stein eludes the heterosexual paradigm entirely, putting forth a lesbian alternative of shared subjectivity. And finally, challenging the self-abnegation of both the Afro-American spiritual autobiography and the slave narrative, Hurston constructs a "statue" of herself which refuses to be fixed either in terms of race, gender or autobiographical authority.

Although it does not necessarily follow, given my conspicuous choice of literary autobiographies, that these particular texts are exemplary or in any way constitute an adequate sampling of modernist female life-writing, I have chosen them primarily because they provide four of the strongest examples of women who have managed to capture the modernist zeitgeist and, secondly, because each one succeeds in highlighting a slightly different aspect of autobiographical fictivity. For, as much as each text contributes to the revision of autobiography as a whole, undermining the hegemonic structures of its foundation, each one is also considerably different in its emphasis. Virginia Woolf, through a series of autobiographical reenactments of the same period in her life, reveals the fiction of memory and recollection. Vera Brittain's active revision of the usual plottings and conventions of the World War I autobiography demonstrates the conscious and, hence, arbitrary act of narration. With Gertrude Stein, it is the reader's position that is called into question. No longer able to assume an uncomplicated relationship with the text, the reader becomes part of the fictional entity. And lastly, in Zora Neale Hurston's text, the emphasis
falls on the fictivity of the textual "I", the sign of autobiographical subjectivity. All of this is not to suggest that these areas of emphasis are exclusive, because indeed there are many instances of overlap. What I would underscore is the fact that each text, whether illustrating one, or even all, of these four marks of fictiveness, succeeds in exercising a female consciousness which not only disrupts the conventional ways of looking at autobiography, but also reveals the extent of women's revisionary potential.

In method, therefore, I will approach these autobiographies as both texts and signs of context, since it is my contention that the subject position in each case is not just a matter of pure representation, but rather an intersection of the textual "I" and the conscious human agent who inscribes it. What I am proposing, in other words, is a way of looking at female autobiographical subjectivity without sacrificing identity, for although postmodernism has done its part to challenge essentialist ideologies of all kinds, I believe that the idea of a purely abstract subject is both inaccurate and self-defeating where autobiography is concerned: inaccurate, because the textual "I" is, at the very least, informed by the epistemological inflections of the historical being who authors the text; and self-defeating, because even though the death of the author may abate the totalizing force of autobiographical discourse, the author's inability to cross the enunciational abyss only replaces one form of essentialist tyranny with another. And for the female autobiographer who is interested in establishing a new authority within a discursive realm that has always kept her out, this kind of death is entirely too
convenient. Thus, without involving the complications of authorial intent, I will assert that all four of these women are alive and well in the various forms of self-representation they choose.

In Woolf's case, it is the process of autobiographical evolution that demonstrates this point. The constant relocation of her subject position from her first memoir, Reminiscences (1907), to her last, Sketches of the Past (1939-40), not only foregrounds the shifting attitude of her writing self towards her written self, but also serves as an emphatic reminder of the nature of recollection—that the transcription from event to memory, or from memory to autobiography, is selective, artful, and wholly dependent on the apprehension of the present mind. And indeed, each one of the four autobiographical texts I have chosen to discuss reveals the "presence" or, as Woolf herself would put it, the "invisible presence" of its author. But more importantly, each one, as a kind of revisitation of the same set of memories, illustrates how fundamental that presence is to the autobiographical act itself. Taking note of all the omissions, embellishments, and deliberate patterns of arrangement, we soon discover, as Woolf herself does, that the idea of a mirrored reality is really only a fiction. Realism may reflect and confirm the patriarchal concept of autobiography, but, for Woolf, it is neither a reflection of subjectivity nor of remembrance, because her autobiographical self-revisionings have given her a keen sense of the part she used to play in that fiction. Thus, as Woolf herself comes through the looking glass, so too does the reader.

The consciousness of such fictivity is no less acute in Testament of Youth, although felt a little differently because of Brittain's
subject matter. What distinguishes Brittain from Woolf, however, is a mode of self-representation that begins with the stated intention of revising a particular autobiographical genre. Brittain wants to assert herself as a female exemplar of World War I autobiography. As such, she directs her autobiography quite specifically at the inherent assumptions of the trench memoir: that only an heroic account of the war is worthy of documentation, that the soldier's spontaneous authenticity will supersede the presumed objectivity of historical record, that the facts will speak for themselves, and that the illusion of immediacy must always take precedence over the narrative voice. To this extent, then, the implications of a woman asserting the struggles of a woman's war, and of a female autobiographer asserting her narrative authority, are directed a little more towards the act of telling than the act of recollection, for it is the open acknowledgement of Brittain's narrative voice that not only rewrites the war from another perspective, but also depletes the war narrative of its historical currency. Brittain's exposed selectivity together with the intermingling of past and present voices finally reveals that documentary, like any other narrative form, is a fictional construct.

This, too, would appear to be the project of Stein's autobiography, since her manner of representing the self succeeds in flouting almost every conventionally held idea of autobiography. Presenting herself as subject and object simultaneously, in a narrative governed by lateral association rather than chronological or linear order, and with a conscious effort to distort perspective, Stein explodes the traditional idea of autobiography quite thoroughly. What
remains in its place, however, is something quite different from either of Woolf's or Brittain's autobiographies, for the fiction Stein exposes is that of the implied reader and the notion that autobiography is necessarily a readerly genre. Indeed, Stein's manipulations of readerly expectations on one hand, and her insinuation of more than one potential reader on the other, suggests that she has transformed the genre from readerly to writerly. And this, I believe, is where Stein's presence makes itself most obvious, for rather than writing autobiography for a particular reader or even assuming that such a reader exists, she takes matters into her own hands, allowing unsympathetic readers their disappointment, but, at the same time, taking more open-minded readers on a journey beyond generic boundaries and towards a recognition of their metafictional participation in the textual production of meaning.

And finally, looking at this production of meaning from another angle, or perhaps it is more accurate to say from many different angles, Hurston presents herself in a way that refuses any stable identification whatsoever. Employing several discursive methods (autobiographical, literary, anthropological, ethnic, historical), and never allowing any one to dominate her account, or even to reach a point of closure, she demonstrates that the autobiographical "I" marking her subjectivity is neither fixed nor fixable. She may be a black female author, but the limitations of those categories certainly do not define the whole of her existence. As with Stein's autobiography, therefore, Dust Tracks on a Road directs its reader beyond the limits of the text, for with every voice that we encounter we cannot help but recognize the author who is
orchestrating the whole. And possibly, for this reason, the autobiography itself must eventually give way to a vertical organization, since each chapter becomes significant not as a part of any sequence, but rather as a different inflection contributing to Hurston's slippery and multiple "I", much less a subject position than a challenge to the very idea of essential or metaphysical subjectivity.

Implicit in my approach, therefore, is the precedence of autobiographical practice over autobiographical theory, since my emphasis on the innovative strategies of these four female authors will necessitate a careful reading of each text. However, apart from logical consistency, my reason for adopting such a critical stance is also informed by a desire to mitigate against the tyranny of essentialism. I use the term "mitigate" purposely, for in spite of my attempts to reveal the margin of difference in each text, those things which simultaneously contribute to the distinctiveness of the autobiographical subject and challenge the abstract entity of autobiography itself, I will inevitably find it necessary to call upon theoretical notions of conventionality in order to compare the departures of each text. By referring at times to androcentric tradition or convention, however, I do not mean to imply that men's autobiographies are categorically homogenous, but simply to invoke an historically gender marked discourse.

In terms of the critical spectrum, then, my approach may be seen as an optimistic combination of the two schools of thought which presently dominate the feminist revision of autobiography studies: those critics who, in the name of feminist recovery, posit the existence of a separate tradition of women's autobiography; and those critics who
prefer to recognize individual difference in order to guard against political homogenization and the loss of identity. In refusing to subscribe to an essentialist ideology, I would still recognize the importance of uncovering a female autobiographical tradition, partly because I believe that such archaeological research is a necessary first step (hence my insistence upon an historical retrospective), but largely because the idea of a "fixed" and marginalized tradition facilitates my argument of change. However, by concentrating my efforts on the autobiographical practice of these four women, I would also hope to avoid the theoretical temptation of regarding all women's autobiography as a kind of écriture féminine. In this respect, I am closer to the latter school of thinking, a feminism of difference, for although I recognize a certain consistency in women's troubled relationship to the discourse of autobiography, I would be loath to suggest that their writing is always marked by a similar set of essential characteristics. If there is any similarity to be discovered, it is one arising from socio-economic circumstance and not from biological essence.

It is for this reason as well that I have chosen to look specifically at autobiography rather than any of the other forms which have been colonized under the rubric of life-writing (diaries, letters, journals, travelogues), since the commonly held idea that these forms are essentially female forms simply strengthens an argument predicated on the binary logic of sexual opposition. The fact, moreover, that these "typically" female forms of life-writing are often regarded as silent autobiography, because they are private, domestic or amateur, only reinforces the marginal or sub-cultural status of women. Thus in
accordance with Sidonie Smith, I would argue that "women who do not challenge those gender ideologies and the boundaries they place around woman's proper life script, textual inscription, and speaking voice do not write autobiography" (Smith 1987: 44). This is not to denigrate alternative forms of life-writing, but simply to recognize that the cultural effect of such muted voices is not likely to be great. As much as the recovery of these life stories might bolster the history of women's autobiography, they are not likely ever to change the imperial status of the discourse itself.

Herein lies the primary significance of the four women in this study, for in each one of their autobiographies it is evident not only that these authors are interested in permeating the boundaries which have culturally circumscribed their lives, but also, in doing so, that they are impelled to reassign the position of the female subject to a place of cultural centrality. Unlike the majority of their predecessors, therefore, these women are consciously seeking to erase the boundaries between the mainstream and the marginal, the public and the private. The strategies they adopt both counter and expand the definitional boundaries of autobiography so that the categories of literary versus non-literary or high versus low culture are no longer valid. The old lines of division, the old assumptions which support them, have been exposed as falsehoods. And having finally revealed the fictivity at the heart of this hard discursive nut, these four autobiographers have accomplished far more than a simple blurring of boundaries, for their revisionary efforts are instrumental in altering both the path of female life-writing and the way in which that life-writing is regarded in
literary terms. With the view to female subjectivity potentially cleared of the mytho-cultural idea of Woman, who had for so many centuries obstructed the female autobiographer and the female subject in general, the concept of female authority is no longer a contradiction in terms. A woman may consider herself an autobiographer without feeling either the derogations of identity or the sub-generic status previously assigned to her, since these assignments have now been placed in their proper perspective, as those belonging to the fictional construct of Woman.

Further reaching still are the implications of such discursive transgressions for autobiography as modernist literature. In previous centuries, most forms of life-writing had been excluded from canonical consideration because they were considered secondary or non-literary. At the beginning of the twentieth century, cultural ambivalence towards autobiography shifted its terms ever so slightly. Now, in spite of its content-driven formal aspects, autobiography's quest for self-definition could at least be recognized as a project compatible with modern self-consciousness even if the genre as a whole did not comply with received ideas of experimental modernism. Thus, we encounter the fundamental irony of modernism. While old hegemonic structures were crumbling under the weight of its "newness", its reluctance to surrender old patriarchal prescriptions of what constituted "good" literature would still allow it to turn away one of its own children.

For the female autobiographer, however, this irony was somewhat more complex. If the idea of female authority had already been discounted because women had adopted strategies of self-representation that were considered other or unconventional, then a literary category
which gave privilege to "other" forms presented itself as a kind of unexpected rebirth (Clarke 41). In other words, the very strategies adopted by women in response to patriarchy, and here specifically as a way to counteract its effects, might be regarded as the "avant garde of the avant garde" (Gilbert and Gubar 1986: 1), a kind of modernism by default. Unfortunately, logic and reality do not always coincide. The opportunity for equality had indeed presented itself, but the literary mainstream was nevertheless guilty of employing an exclusionary logic where autobiography was concerned. Autobiography, regardless of who was writing it, was still "over there," because it was still held to be literal and not literary.

To consider the type of generic revision undertaken by Woolf, Brittine, Stein and Hurston, therefore, is not only to recognize that autobiography is equally literary, fictional in all of its aspects, and even capable of the stylistic gymnastics required by male modernism, but also to see that modernism itself is far more expansive than conservative literary historians are willing to allow. And so, even though the impact of these women's autobiographical innovations was not immediate, it carries a force which cannot be ignored, insisting at once on the inclusion of a genre that has always been denied literary access and a perspective complicated by the consideration of gender, ensuring against such oversights in the future. From a late twentieth-century point of view, then, and particularly from the point of view of revisionary modernists, the autobiographical undertakings of these four women is invaluable, contributing to a new understanding of autobiography, modernism, literary history and canonicity combined.
NOTES

1. I have borrowed the terminology here from Lee Quinby, who refers to autobiography's "discursive colonization" in her essay "The Subject of Memoirs: The Woman Warrior's Technology of Ideographic Selfhood" (298). See De/Colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography, eds. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1992), 297-320. The idea itself, however, originates with James M. Cox, who argues that the term autobiography is now "so dominant that it is used retroactively to include as well as to entitle books from the present all the way back into the ancient world" (124). See "Recovering Literature's Lost Ground Through Autobiography," in Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical, ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980), 123-145.

2. Until 1961, the OED had dated the term "autobiography" only as far back as Robert Southey's use of it in 1809. James Ogden's 1961 discovery of an anonymous use of the term in a review of D'Israeli's Miscellanies or Literary Creations (Monthly Review) now dates its first appearance at 1797. Institutional recognition of the word, however, was not in evidence until the late 1820's, when its titular inclusion became more frequent both in works of fiction and in works intended as biographies of the self. See Robert Folkenflik "Introduction" in The Culture of Autobiography: Constructions of Self-Representation, ed. Robert Folkenflik (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1993), 1-20.


4. Unlike Julian of Norwich's Revelations of Divine Love (1373), which was actually written by the anchoress, The Book of Margery Kempe (1436) is a product of dictation and transcription, since Kempe herself was illiterate. The possibility of scribal interference, therefore, and, according to some sources, as many as four such interferences, complicates the issue of authenticity and/or subjectivity. Kempe's reference to herself in the third person, for instance, might simply be regarded as a convention or modesty appropriate to mystical revelation; but, it might also be construed as a distancing device employed by a priest who was fearful of any attachment to this woman accused of heresy. See Marlene Kadar Reading Life Writing (Toronto: Oxford UP, 1993) 16-17.

5. Kempe's foray into the realm of the flesh was not entirely opposed to the late medieval mystical tradition, since it was quite acceptable to speak of the body in reference to, and in imitation of, Christ's
humanity. A discussion of the female body, however, layered as it was with a history of suppression and religious taboos, would have been most unusual. Therefore, Kempe's explicit accounts of her marriage and of her remiscience of sex in connection with her conversion would have been considered quite transgressive. See Karma Lochrie, Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1991), 2-3.


7. The idea that Woman has been assigned a universally negative position in culture is not uncommon in feminist scholarship, but my own invocation here is of Ann Rosalind Jones's distinction between Man as "a subject of discourse" and Woman as "a subject in discourse". See "Surprising Fame: Renaissance Gender Ideologies and Women's Lyric" 79, in The Poetics of Gender, ed. Nancy K. Miller (New York: Columbia UP, 1986) 74-95.

8. Examples of this largely aristocratic output include the diaries of Lady Anne Clifford (1590-1676), Lady Margaret Hoby (1571-1633) and Isabella Twysden (1645-51) which, apart from a few protestant confessionalists written prior to the civil war, accounts for the bulk of women's autobiographical writing in this early portion of the seventeenth century. See Estelle Jelinek The Tradition of Women's Autobiography: From Antiquity to the Present (Boston: Twayne, 1986) 23-24.

9. Margaret Cavendish's A True Relation, distinguished as the first woman's secular autobiography intended for publication, was written in 1656 and published in 1667 as a lengthy appendix included at the end of The Life of the Thrice Noble, High and Puissant Prince William Cavendish, a biography extolling the military virtues of her husband during the English Civil War. In other words, the relational subjectivity of the autobiography is quite apparent. Indeed, Cavendish's position as an author is already inscribed in the extended title of the work. Nearly half a page is devoted to aggrandizing qualifications of her husband, and only a few lines to the qualification of herself.


11. Res gestae literally means "things gestured," and was a classical poetic mode reinvented in this period as a type of autobiography that delivered the "progressive and orderly chronicles" of one's career or great deeds, usually military and quite often exaggerated. The concentration upon the public sphere of influence was most emphatic,


14. I refer here to Mary G. Mason's contention that women's autobiographical beginnings were predominantly relational, which is to say that women were more likely to inscribe their subjectivity in relation to someone else (usually a dominant patriarchal figure--husband, father or God), rather than assuming a unitary or originary subject position. See "The Other Voice: Autobiographies of Women Writers" in Life/Lines: Theorising Women's Autobiography, eds. Bella Brodzki and Celeste Schenck (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988) 19-44.

15. A few of the more notable practitioners here include Laetitia Pilkington (Memoirs, 3 vols., 1748-1754), Teresa Constantia Phillips (The Apology for the Conduct and Life of Teresa Constantia Phillips, 1748-49), and Lady Frances Vane (Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, 1751).


17. Following Francis Barker's argument that the subject of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is "constructed as the bearer of naturalism" and thus "contrasted to an outer world which, although 'social,' becomes for it a kind of nature" (53), we may assume the iniquitous relationship between the androcentric, metaphysical "I" who bears this naturalism (the central subject) and the outer nature or body that confirms this nature (the marginal object). And since the cultural assignment of women has always been that of the Other or contrasting object, her association with the body is also one that logically precludes her from subjectivity (63). See Francis Barker, The Tremulous Private Body: Essays on Subjection (London and New York: Methuen, 1984).
18. By invoking René Descartes here I do not wish to suggest the origin of such thinking (Meditations on First Philosophy 1641), but rather its quality, since the ideology of self is emphatically interiorized during the nineteenth century, with the authorial subject becoming a kind of *deus ex machina* [the ghost in the machine], a mind divested of its body. Accordingly, the autobiographical "I" is one that knows him or herself almost exclusively by way of thought—*cogito ergo sum* [I think therefore I am].

19. Originally a fictional character in Thomas Morton's *Speed the Plough* (1798), Mrs Grundy took on mythic (and ideological) proportion during the nineteenth century as an embodiment of conventional censorship. The phenomenon commonly referred to as "Mrs Grundyism" denotes an ideology of absolute (and hence external) conformity with all codes of propriety. "The Cult of True Womanhood," as it has been coined by Barbara Welter, is then a kind of female-specific form of "Mrs Grundyism," dictating as it does the rigid "piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (21) of the nineteenth-century woman. For the female writer, therefore, such conformity was logically incompatible with autobiography, for the cult of personality simply did not mesh with the cult of domesticity. See Barbara Welter, *Dinity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1976).

20. Testimony to the fact that any such act of female independence would have been regarded as transgressive can be found in the prevailing attitude towards unattached women:

> Women, considered in their distinct and abstract nature, as isolated beings, must lose more than half their worth. They are, in fact, from their own constitution, and from the station they occupy in the world, strictly speaking, relative creatures. If, therefore, they are endowed only with such faculties as render them striking and distinguished in themselves, without the faculty of instrumentality, they are only dead letters in the volume of human life, filling what would otherwise be a blank space, but doing nothing more.


Thus, it was not uncommon for female autobiographers of the time to disguise or make apologies for their perceived acts of egotism. We find examples ranging from Elizabeth Barrett's overt reflection that "to be one's own chronicler is a task generally dictated by extreme vanity" (*Two Autobiographical Essays*, p. 130) to Charlotte Tonna's more discrete opening: "I have given my best consideration to the arguments by which you support the demand for a few notices of events connected with my personal recollections of the past" (*Personal Recollections*, 1842). Equally revealing, however, are the comments of women writers who wished, but never dared, to write their autobiographies. Jane Welsh Carlyle's words in *I Too Am Here* (1843) represent the suppressed desires of many women:
Oh if I might write my own biography from beginning to end--
without reservation or false colouring--it would be an invaluable
document for my countrywomen in more than one particular--but
'decency forbids!' (74).

Literature (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1994), discusses this impulse to
establish an affinity with the reader in terms of a "social contract"
(9) that would affirm the expectations of autobiographical historicity,
or what would more appropriately be called sincerity with omission,
since it was assumed that autobiographers would "conceal...many of the
details of their personal lives and any interior experience that is
irrelevant to their place in society or, more specifically, irrelevant
to previous publicly expressed ideas and res gestae or works--works
usually corresponding to books" (10).

22. The "hermeneutic imperative" in Victorian autobiography (as Linda
Peterson has called it) is largely a product of the marriage between
introspective and morally guarded sensibilities of the time. In contrast
to the secular autobiographies of the period, evangelical narratives put
forth a kind of exemplary self, giving "voice to all the pains and
pleasures of the Christian subject" (Corbett 1992: 75). As documentation
of more private religious experiences, therefore, it was a practice that
"licensed women to think and interpret for themselves, if not wholly
without male mediation, for 'the religion of the heart' invested its
believers with 'the onus of interpreting God's Word'" (75). Examples of
such texts are Charlotte Tonna's Personal Recollections (1842); Mary
Martha Sherwood's The Life of Mrs Sherwood (1857) and Mary Anne
Schimmelpenninck's The Life of Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck, 2 vols.
(1858). See Linda H. Peterson, Victorian Autobiography: The Tradition of
Self-Interpretation (New Haven: Yale UP, 1986); Mary Jean Corbett,
"Feminine Authorship and Spiritual Authority in Victorian Women Writer's
Autobiographies," Women's Studies 18.1 (1990): 13-29; and Mary Jean
Corbett, Representing Femininity: Middle-Class Subjectivity in Victorian

23. Luann Walther's essay, "The Invention of Childhood in Victorian
Autobiography" (Approaches to Victorian Autobiography, ed. George P.
Landow [Athens: Ohio UP, 1979]), puts forth the idea that childhood was
both an historical and a literary invention of the time, "since never
before this period had so many English writers been interested in
recalling their early lives at length within the form of sustained prose
autobiography" (65). What is interesting to note, however, is the
difference between male and female versions of this supposed invention.
Where male autobiographers, in most cases, continue to include their
adult life or some portion of it, women are more apt to end in
adolescence or to severely curtail the account of their adulthood.

24. Here I defer to Regenia Gagnier's study, Subjectivities: A History
of Self-Representation in Britain, 1832-1920 (New York: Oxford UP,
1991), where it is noted that one of the more common trends for working
class women autobiographers is a truncated childhood, since most of their earlier recollections would have been marked by the traumas of child labour or other associated abuses, and, furthermore, since the subjects which occupy the upper class narratives (happy parent-child relationships or primary education) are simply not applicable (43).

25. Possibly the best example of such an abrupt ending is Elizabeth Barrett's second autobiographical essay, "Glimpses Into My Own Life and Literary Character" (1820). Luxuriant over the details recalled from ages three to thirteen, she then recalls her fourteenth year by announcing that her character since then has not much changed (Two Autobiographical Essays, 127). Suddenly, after remembering herself as the heroine of the nursery (123) and as someone who might even start her own religion (126), she takes refuge in a discourse of propriety by acknowledging her youthful pride and thenceforth ending the account. Other examples, however, include Anna Jameson's "A Revelation of Childhood" (1854), "Recollections of the Early Life of Sara Coleridge" (1873), and Charlotte Mary Yonge's "Autobiography" (1877).

26. Here I refer specifically to Eliot's Mill on the Floss (1860) as an autobiographical fiction, and more generally to all of the novels written by the Brontë sisters, since their brother, Branwell, is figured quite prominently in each. Jane Eyre (1847) is also one of the earliest novels to carry the subtitle "an autobiography" (Folkenflik 6). Of course, the practice of disguising one's private or intimate autobiographical details in fiction was not exclusive to Victorian women, as we see in the examples of Carlyle (Sartor Resartus) and Wordsworth (The Prelude). However, for many female authors, the additional mask of a male pseudonym seems to suggest the increased social risk attached to a woman making such revelations. According to Mary G. Mason, in fact, Christina Rossetti is one of very few literary women in the nineteenth century to have written "undisguised" autobiography (42).

27. Of the few autobiographies that speak out against the cult of domesticity, noteworthy examples include: Fanny Kemble's Record of a Girlhood and Records of Later Life (pub. 2 vols., London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1890), both of which present a subject fully cognizant of her gender performance, first as a girl in Victorian society and then as an actress in the theatre (See Corbett 1992: 109-111); Harriet Martineau's Autobiography 3 vols. 1873 (rpt. London: Virago, 1983), an account of the philosopher's life that reads as a kind of bildungsroman, but distinctly rejects the usual female models (Christian and domestic) in favour of a "Comptian paradigm of self-development" (Smith 1987: 62); and Emmeline Pankhurst's My Own Story, 1914 (rpt. New York: Source Book Press, 1970), an account which centers on her life as a militant feminist and suffragette. Although this is by no means representative, part of problem lies with the delayed publication of many of these texts. Florence Nightingale's "Cassandra" (1859), for instance, is an equally outspoken autobiographical essay, rejecting the "natural" assignment of women to the sentimental; but, its initial publication in
1928 often prohibits its inclusion in Victorian autobiography. Also, in terms of female suffrage, I would note that American feminists, although producing autobiographical accounts as early as mid-century, are not necessarily feminist in their life-writing. Since many of these women are concerned with maintaining their upper class privileges, their accounts are often tempered by a desire to "counter the public's image of them as 'mavericks' or as 'unladylike'" (Jelinek 1986: 97-98). Consequently, several of these autobiographies follow a pattern more closely resembling the childhood memoirs of nineteenth-century literary women, with the bulk of the emphasis falling on earlier years rather than on professional or political development.

28. Margo Culley's essay "What Piece of Work is 'Woman'?" (American Women's Autobiography, ed. M. Culley. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1992, 3-31) argues that "the dominant tradition of American women's autobiography has its roots in Puritan beliefs about the self and the Puritan practice of conversion narratives; and that even in periods when autobiography has become a thoroughly secular enterprise its form and purposes can be traced to these earlier traditions" (10). Primarily, it is the practice of reading one's self in context, Puritan or otherwise, that Culley sees as dominant, and hence the ambivalence of the subject toward the textual "I" (10). Thus, as with English women's autobiographies, relational subjectivity (the individual always inscribed as part of another or larger community) seems to be the norm.

29. One of the more interesting examples here is Anne Bradstreet's "To My Dear Children" (c. 1660), an account that, if not the first American example of women's secular autobiography, is certainly the first attempt to move away from the extreme brevity of letters and diaries (the logical choice for women with very limited leisure time). Although it is written as a series of fragments in the Puritan tradition of the confessional, it distinguishes itself by virtue of its developmental pattern and the fact that its stated purpose is to relate the events of Bradstreet's life to her children. Thus, to some extent, it serves as a bridge between the purely spiritual and the purely secular. Bradstreet's complete suppression of her professional life as a poet places her firmly within the religious tradition, while her attempt to set down her subjectivity in relation to her father, her husband, and her children places her in an alternate, secular realm of domesticity.

30. By "sexual violation," I refer not only to the rape of female slaves that was seen as a privilege of the slave masters, but also to the reproductive violation involved in the ownership (and selling) of slave children, the fact that women's wombs were not their own.

31. A prime example of this rhetorical self-abnegation can be found in Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861), the preface of which states:

"I have not written my experiences in order to attract attention to myself; on the contrary, it would have been more pleasant to me to have been silent about my own history. Neither do I care to excite..."
sympathy for my own sufferings. But I do earnestly desire to arouse the women of the North to a realizing sense of the condition of two millions of women at the South, still in bondage, suffering what I suffered, and most of them far worse. I want to add my testimony to that of abler pens to convince the people of the Free States what slavery really is (Jacobs 1-2).

Although this initial pose of modesty is a practice common to both male and female slave narratives, one originating with The Life of Olaudah Equiano (1789), it is a practice with slightly different implications for women. In male slave narratives, the apology is usually issued for the absence of literary merit, accentuating the assumption of a white reader (Moody 51). In female accounts, however, the apology also inscribes an assumption of gender, for she anticipates a reader who is both white and male, and hence twice removed from her subject position. Jacobs' explicit address here to a female reader is something of an anomaly, but, by the same token, one that would not have been necessary if the assumption of a male reader were not a given. See Jocelyn Moody, "Twice Other, Once Shy: Nineteenth-Century Black Women Autobiographers and the American Literary Tradition of Self-Effacement," A/B: Auto/Biography Studies 7.1 (1992): 46-61.

32. My qualification of modernism as "vexing and heterogeneous" is meant to invoke an ideological inflection of the term which is distinct from received definitions that tend to regard it either as an historical period (usually falling between World War I and World War II) or as a particular trend in literary and/or artistic production (impressionism, expressionism, imagism, symbolism, dadaism, surrealism, futurism, cubism--in general, anything that complies with Pound's mandate to make it new). In other words, I prefer to adopt a revisionist notion of modernism which recognizes it as a "collection of interlocking institutional, cultural, and philosophical strands which emerge and develop at different times" (Felski 12), even if it may be said in retrospect that such ideological influences began to coalesce at the beginning of the twentieth century (Bradbury and McFarlane 29). My hope in doing so is not only to embrace the plural and often contradictory reality, but also to disengage the idea of modernism itself, since women are usually excluded when other organizing principles are applied to the term (Scott 5). See Rita Felski The Gender of Modernity (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995); Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, Modernism 1890-1930 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976); and Bonnie Kime Scott ed., The Gender of Modernism (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1990).

33. The following argument is modeled on a brief outline which appears in Sidonie Smith's article "Self, Subject, and Resistance: Marginalities and Twentieth-Century Autobiographical Practice," (Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature 9.1 [1990]: 11-24) 12. As a point of clarification, I would also emphasize that the following ideas did not necessarily originate at the beginning of the twentieth century, but rather had gained a certain intellectual currency by this time.
34. See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* [English trans. published 1888] (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967). Part 3, III specifically discusses the notion of a socialist utopia in which Marx postulated that people would behave in accordance with the determination of social forces.

35. Freud's theory of the unconscious is not contained in one particular work (although an essay specifically entitled "The Unconscious" exists), but was established through a series of writings on the subject beginning in the early 1890s and continuing throughout his career. In general, however, Freud used the term "unconscious" to denote a hidden mental realm which could not become conscious under normal circumstances, but which could determine certain patterns of behaviour beyond the control of the conscious mind. In other words, his theory contradicted the idea of the perfectly rational and free mind put forth by the nineteenth-century metaphysicians. See "The Unconscious," Sigmund Freud: *Standard Edition* 14: 166-216 (London: Hogarth Press, 1957).

36. Here again, I would defer to a more inclusive, revisionist conception of modernism (see note #32), since this more accurately reflects what I would call modernist realities.


38. The ideas related in this sentence can be found in Benedetto Croce's *Philosophy of the Practical* (orig. pub. 1908); Edmund Husserl's *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (orig. pub. 1913); Henri Bergson's *Creative Evolution* (orig. pub. 1907); William James's *The Principles of Psychology* (1890).


40. The above discussion is meant to invoke the "four marks of fictiveness": "the fictions of memory, of the 'I', of the imagined reader, and of the story" drawn out in Sidonie Smith's *A Poetics of Women's Autobiography* (Bloomington: Indian UP, 1987) 45.

41. The idea that literary modernism has been gendered male is now generally accepted by both feminist and modernist scholars alike, since the canon of modern literature is still overwhelmingly male authors such as T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, and D.H. Lawrence. Recent attempts to redefine modernism, however, so that it may embrace non-experimental writers, literary midwives, and writers who fall outside of historical prescriptions, represent an effort to expand both the
definitional boundaries and the notion of canonicity such that women writers are not routinely ignored.

42. See note 32.

43. The metaphor is borrowed from Sidonie Smith, who uses a theatrical analogy to explain the complicated relationship between women and autobiography. Since Man and Human are discursive equivalents, he occupies center stage; and since Woman is Other, and hence her autobiography a "transgression of cultural expectations," she enters from a "space beyond the wings" (Smith 1987: 42).


45. I refer more generally here to the assumption of historical objectivity and/or accuracy implicit in the discourse, and as it applies to all four aspects of autobiography: the subject as mirror, the subject as locus of knowledge, the direct correspondence between memory and narrative, and transparent meaning for the reader.

46. Although Roland Barthes is usually accredited with the death of the author, his postmodern views on subjectivity are perhaps not as stringent as those held by Paul de Man. Barthes may insist on destroying the category of the knowledgeable subject or the individual, but he still allows for a notion of self bound up in certain epistemological modes. This idea of the purely abstract subject, therefore, is more in keeping with De Man's conception of autobiography as a genre "subsumed under the trope of 'prosopopeia,' the continual inscription and reinscription of masks which is circumscribed by and which serves merely to remind us of our own mortality" (P. Smith 104). Such a conception, as Laura Marcus observes, actually figures the autobiographical "I" as the mark of "a dead man—though the dead man speaking, addressing the living, also petrifies the living and produces an uncanny reversal of the living and dead" (Marcus 1995: 18). See Paul de Man "Autobiography

47. In Liz Stanley's words, it is a death "articulated by a few white middle class male first world elite self-styled intellectuals. A very convenient death--for them. At the very point when--due to the activities of anti-colonialism, the black movement, the women's movement, the gay movement--'the author,' the authoritative source of all that excludes, is named and has an accusatory finger pointed at him, the author at this very point conveniently dies. This is a suicide that is no suicide at all" (17). See, Liz Stanley, The Auto/biographical I: The Theory and Practice of Feminist Auto/biography (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1992).

48. Although my argument imputes the existence of an historical being who authors the text, I do not wish to invoke an "intentionalist" ideology which suggests that an author's intentions are clearly available to the reader. Rather, to the contrary, I would suggest that any authorial inflection only further complicates what is already textually multivalent.


50. The idea of autobiography as a readerly genre stems primarily from the tacit assumption that the autobiographer will deliver an authentic and truthful version of him or her self, a concept more recently referred to as the "autobiographical pact" (See Philippe Lejeune, "Le Pacte Autobiographique" Poétique 14 (1973): 137-162; rpt. "The Autobiographical Pact," On Autobiography 3-30, trans. Katherine Leary, ed. Paul John Eakin (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1989). The common belief, in other words, is that autobiography is governed by readerly expectations of convention and narrative quality. My use of the terms "readerly" and "writerly", however, is also a deliberate invitation to adopt Roland Barthes's opposition between the kind of text which follows a prescribed narrative structure (readerly) and the kind which makes no pretence either about structural meaning or closure (writerly). See Roland Barthes, S/Z 1970, trans. Richard Miller (London: Jonathan Cape, 1974).
51. Although I suggest that Hurston's shift from horizontal organization (i.e. one continuous narrative informed by linear, temporal logic) to vertical organization (i.e. a collection of organically separate chapters) is logical, I am not inviting a causal interpretation.

52. That feminist revisions of autobiography studies seem to divide along essentialist/difference lines is partly a product of academic infancy. In 1980, when the first book-length studies began to appear, the relative paucity of information available to academics necessitated the kind of recovery and tradition-establishing work that was undertaken by critics like Estelle Jelinek and Mary G. Mason. As information about female life-writing began to accrue, however, revisionist projects became less concerned with archaeology and taxonomy and more involved in theoretical issues, particularly those of identity and subjectivity. Donna Stanton's active questioning of separatist implications in The Female Autograph (1984) begins a slightly different trend which is eventually bolstered by such practitioners as Shari Benstock, Bella Brodzki, Celeste Schenck, Sidonie Smith, Françoise Lionnet, Liz Stanley and Leigh Gilmore (see general bibliography for all references here). Although perhaps it is not quite accurate to portray these developments in binary terms, especially since more recent theoreticians seem to "occupy the middle ground between valoristic and excisory" (Stanley 94), I have done so in the hope of providing some idea of the critical spectrum at hand.


54. The feminization of "private" autobiographical forms (diary, journal, letters) has, in part, to do with early practice, since women's social and educational limitations usually restricted them in time and ability. However, eighteenth-century derogations of sentimentalist ideology, concurring with the female invention of "sentimental" autobiography (most notably the vie scandaleuse), also gave rise to the idea that such "feminine" forms were less than literary. The effect of such thinking is still evident in the "pervasive decoding of all female writing as autobiographical" (Stanton 4) and the division of autobiographical forms in terms either of high and low culture or mainstream versus marginal. The gendering of private autobiographical forms, however, is not without its problems. The canonical diaries of Samuel Pepys or the letters of John Keats, for example, suggest that it is more a matter of who wrote them than a simple matter of the forms themselves. See Suzanne Clarke, *Sentimental Modernism: Women Writers and the Revolution of the Word* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1991); and Donna Stanton ed., *The Female Autograph* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1984).
55. William C. Spengemann suggests that "the modernist movement away from representational discourse towards self-enacting, self-reflexive verbal structures and critical theories that have been devised to explain this movement conspire to make the very idea of literary modernism synonymous with that of autobiography" (Spengemann xiii). My own emphasis here would be on the word "conspire," since the discursive intersection of autobiography and modernism does not extend much beyond this point, and because reality largely "conspired" against their equivalence.

56. The patriarchal exclusivity of modernism, although largely a product of androcentric canonical practice, was greatly exacerbated by the effects of World War I. Extending from the myth of the lost generation, logic dictated that such an incredible loss of life must necessarily mean an incredible loss of genius. With the literary spectrum greatly reduced, the critics' tendency was "to turn literature into Literature," perceiving their task as that of "goldminers washing away the dirt to discover a few grains of precious metal, genuine Literature" (Priestly 327). The end result was a sort of critical absolutism, a very elitist notion equating "good" literature with intellectual esoterica, and one that was necessarily patriarchal, since the categories of genius and woman had been rendered mutually exclusive.
CHAPTER ONE

Through the Looking Glass: The Autobiographical Evolution of

Virginia Woolf

With Woolf, perhaps more so than with any other autobiographer I have chosen for this study, the presumed boundary between autobiography and fiction is difficult to locate. So much of Woolf's fiction is autobiographical and so much of Woolf's autobiography is fictional that one must almost entirely abandon the notion of distinct literary genres. To arbitrarily isolate Woolf's memoirs—"Reminiscences" (1907), her Memoir Club contributions (1920-36), and "A Sketch of the Past" (1939-40) is no less problematic, for the subject position (or discursive map) and the mode of self-representation in each of these autobiographical sketches is vastly different, in part because all of them were written at different times in Woolf's life, but also because Woolf's conception of autobiography had itself changed over time. She begins in 1907 with far more traditional notions of autobiographical convention and ends in 1940 with something quite experimental, something which not only departs from the norms of Victorian autobiography, but also questions the very basis of those norms. And it is this aspect of Woolf's memoirs, I would like to argue, this autobiographical evolution, that distinguishes Woolf as an author both acting in and acting upon modernism.

That Woolf's writing career is strangely bracketed by "Reminiscences" (1907), her initial attempt at memoir writing, and "A
Sketch of the Past" (1939-1940), her final autobiographical piece, does, of course, conveniently lend itself to the demonstration of such an evolution. But the fact that the Memoir Club contributions are the only autobiographical offerings of the intervening years may render this convenience something of a deception, not only because of the brevity of these pieces, but also because of their implied audience. One advantage, however, does exist in the fact that two of these autobiographical essays ("22 Hyde Park Gate" and "Old Bloomsbury") do not extend much beyond the events of the first and final memoirs. In other words, the subject matter in all four of these sketches is not remarkably different. What has been altered is the relationship between the inscribing self of the present moment and the self inscribed in the past, and the way in which the inscribing self has chosen to represent the scene. If only for this reason, then, the possibility of efficiently tracing the discrepancy between a fairly stable subject matter and an altering subject position, I have chosen to concentrate on these four autobiographical works.

To illustrate how these four texts differ in terms of subjectivity and self-representation, and, in turn, how this particular evolution affects Woolf's relationship to autobiography, therefore, will be the primary objectives of this chapter. My approach, as the introductory section suggests, will rely heavily upon a hybrid notion of the subject as both a discursive intersection in the text and an historical being whose reality informs the textual self. Thus, in terms of arriving at a notion of Woolf's subjectivity (and its evolution), I have chosen to focus on dominant discursive strains, particularly issues of gender and
genre, as well as various interpenetrations. By imposing these limits, I do not wish to suggest that Woolf begins and ends with these ideological influences, only that I must begin and end somewhere. From this point of departure, then, I would like to observe what happens when all of this intersects (or possibly collides) with the discourse of modernism. To this end, I will look specifically at those elements which contribute to the notion of literary modernism, and especially at those aspects which pertain to a revisionary notion of realism. These limitations, once again, are not meant to suggest a narrow circumscription, for my conception of modernism, as I have already mentioned in the introduction, is highly vexed and, most certainly, heterogeneous. It is only because my interest here is specifically related to autobiography as a literary genre that I do not wish to cast my net any further. My purpose, after all, is to reveal the quality of the intersection between Woolf's autobiographical subjectivity and modernism, and how this intersection ultimately compares with Woolf's autobiographical foremothers.

*Reminiscences: A Portrait of the Artist as Everyone Else*

In "A Sketch of the Past" (1940), Woolf refers to her mother, Julia Stephen, as one of the many "invisible presences" which "play so important a part in every life" (Woolf, 1976: 80). Moving from the particular to the general, she continues to discuss these "presences" in terms of socio-economic forces, and concludes that "if we cannot analyze
these invisible presences, we know very little of the subject of the memoir; and again how futile life-writing becomes" (SP 80). Though Woolf herself, in spite of her familiarity with the concept of persona¹, would not have had the vocabulary to conceive of subjectivity in discursive terms, her notion of "invisible presences" seems, interestingly enough, to anticipate discourse theory and its socio-cultural emphasis. More interesting still is Woolf's idea that the absence of such an emphasis should make for an impoverished form of life-writing, for it suggests not only that she is something of a memoir connoisseur, but also that her own memoir writing may have evolved to a point where, at least, she is able to make such an observation.

Certainly her first attempt at life-writing, "Reminiscences" (1907), would not measure up to these stringent standards, for nowhere in this brief document does Woolf discuss the larger socio-cultural nexus which impressed itself upon her life. Her life, in fact, is hardly evident, since this memoir, in true Victorian fashion⁵, is written as a series of portraits or vignettes which treat the lives of those people with whom she is most intimate. The ostensible subjects are Vanessa (Stephen) Bell, Julia Stephen, and Stella Duckworth (although Woolf includes lesser portraits of Leslie Stephen, Jack Hills and George Duckworth). Even the dedication, in keeping with a sort of Victorian protocol, draws attention away from Woolf as the author of the piece, addressing instead the unborn child of her sister Vanessa, presumably Julian Bell who would be born in February of 1908, a few months after she had begun this life-writing project.
Nevertheless, Virginia Woolf's invisible presence in the text is very telling, for even in the absence of any obvious self-disclosure, she reveals many of the "invisible presences" which would have influenced her at the time of its writing. The Victorian autobiographical conventions, for example, reveal both the direct and indirect influence of her father, Leslie Stephen. Looking at the striking similarities between "Reminiscences" and Leslie Stephen's own memoir, *Mausoleum Book* (1895), the direct influence of the paterfamilias makes itself apparent: both texts are addressed to the next generation; both texts are a "series of portraits held together by the first-person voice of their author, whose relation to the various figures portrayed is the real focus of the work" (Dahl 181); and both texts, finally, seem overly concerned with death. And looking at the patrilineal literary heritage of the Stephen family in general, with nearly every male member for three generations writing some form of autobiography and with Leslie Stephen's additional involvement in *The Dictionary of National Biography* (begun in 1882, the year of Virginia's birth), one cannot discount the indirect influence of this presiding patriarch either; for, whether or not Woolf had an intimate knowledge of all her forefathers' texts, it cannot be denied that she was born into a literate household.

The insinuation of this literate environment is most clearly evident in Woolf's style. Unlike later autobiographical efforts, "Reminiscences," perhaps because it is the first, is extremely formal. From the linearity of its chaptered format to the highly metaphorical language of its prose, Woolf demonstrates her literariness, even to the
point of excess. The overblown language she employs, for instance, in her description of the family as drifting "together like ships in an immense ocean" (REM 29), or later, after Stella's death, as functioning "like some creaking old wagon" (REM 44), is so poetically euphemistic that it is difficult to penetrate the meaning. Equally wanting are those brief instances of apparent originality which are unfortunately "cut short by hasty retreats into the safety of conventional formulas" (Schulkind 15). Her portrait of Julia Stephen is perhaps the best example of this tentative approach. Woolf begins by idealizing Julia as "pure love and beauty" (REM 32), and as a woman whose marriage to Leslie Stephen constituted one of the "pinnacles of life" (REM 38). Then, Woolf ventures to discuss Julia's "quick temper," the fact that she was "a little imperious," and how she "had come to attach a desperate importance to the saving of time" (REM 39). The idyllic portrait is broken down by a certain amount of complexity. But finally, Woolf does not follow through with this potentially interesting point, and retreats, instead, to her use of metaphor, telling us that her mother "sank, like an exhausted swimmer" (REM 39)--a line which, quite significantly, would acquire fictional resonance in her portrait of Mrs Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*. The closest she comes to suggesting that her father's tyranny and over-dependence may have been responsible for the "sinking" of Julia Stephen is when she mentions in passing that Leslie was not a very perceptive man.

These extremely veiled revelations are, in fact, a distinguishing feature of this memoir. Almost all of the portraits contained in the memoir suggest that something more lies beneath the surface of this
Victorian literary propriety. Vanessa is not just another inhabitant of the maternal void left by the death of Julia Stephen, or the "Saint," as she is teasingly called; she is also a woman with a passion for art (REM 29), and a woman with a sexual appetite. But this is only given to us as a hint at the end of the memoir when Woolf discusses how much Jack Hills came to appreciate "the mass" of "Vanessa's endeavour" (REM 59) to help him cope with the death of his wife (her step-sister), Stella Duckworth. George Duckworth, likewise, emerges somewhat ambiguously. Ostensibly, he is the hero (REM 57), a little stupid, but always "good natured" (REM 57). However, Woolf's passing mention of his "voluble affections" (REM 57) and of the irrational instinct which often kept him "swimming in a sea of racing emotions" (REM 58) scratches at a surface that she would not pierce until 1920 with the final blow delivered by "22 Hyde Park Gate," the fact that "George Duckworth was not only father and mother, brother and sister to those poor Stephen girls; he was their lover also" (HPG 177).

However, here, in "Reminiscences," no such revelation exists. What we receive instead is a subject whose position can only be determined by inference, since very little else is given in addition to these brief character sketches. The information we receive about Woolf's life, and only as it pertains to the general atmosphere of 22 Hyde Park Gate, is somewhat impressionistic, again revealing her artistic apprenticeship. We are told, for instance, that life seemed "to divide itself into two large spaces" (REM 28), the nursery and Kensington Gardens, and, furthermore, that these spaces were "not crowded with events" (REM 28). And we discover, as well, that several more divisions mark the Stephen
household: the division between the Stephen children and the Duckworth children, "the others" (REM 29) as Woolf calls them; the division between the strange "state of anxious growth" (REM 30) which typifies life in Kensington and the "pure enjoyment" (REM 31) of St Ives, their summer home in Cornwall; the division between the "old life" (REM 46) and the new life which follows Julia Stephen's death; the division between the "immature world" (REM 46) of the nursery and the realm of adulthood; and, lastly, the implicit division between the foregrounded matriarchal inhabitants (Julia, Stella, and Vanessa) and the patriarchal figures who occupy the background (Leslie, Jack Hills, and George Duckworth).

We may gather from this catalogue of divisions either that Woolf's childhood was, as she claims, "ordered with great simplicity and regularity" (REM 28), or that she has deliberately chosen to represent it as such. In either case, we might question why Woolf has portrayed her life as a series of binary oppositions (once again relying on an inherited patriarchal logic): us versus them, anxiety versus enjoyment, city versus country, old versus new, children versus adults, and women versus men. The answer, in part, may lie in the fact that Woolf has constructed her subjectivity in almost exclusively relational terms, through a collection of loosely connected biographical sketches. If she is using "the others" as a basis of comparison and contrast, then it seems only natural that she should ally herself with one side over the other in all of these binary pairings. But a certain amount of significance may be attached specifically to the fact that this memoir intends Vanessa as its primary subject, for it suggests not only that
she and her sister have formed a kind of alliance against which all of
the opposing forces may be contrasted, but also, by virtue of the bond
itself, an attempt to dwarf those other relations. This particular
identification, more than anything else, gives us a more complete notion
of Woolf's subjectivity in "Reminiscences."

Indeed, to reread Vanessa's portrait from this angle of vision is quite enlightening, for to a considerable degree her position in the
Stephen family is not unlike Virginia's. Born in 1879, and hence only
three years older than Virginia, she is the closest sister to her in age. Therefore, even though she functions in a maternal role, she is a
more appropriate confidante than Stella Duckworth (REM 46). This, of
course, may not be a product of age, since Woolf does not hold Stella in
very high esteem, thinking her stupid and, unfortunately, "suppressed"
(REM 42) by Victorian gender codes. However, expectations of domestic
femininity do not escape Vanessa either, for after Stella's death she
too must occupy the role of angel in the house, suppressing her passions
"beneath the serious surface" (REM 29). Nevertheless, Virginia describes
Vanessa, and not Stella, as a "central figure" (REM 53), possibly
because her own artistic attempt here is similarly suffocated by
Victorian formality, but more likely because Vanessa is a Stephen sister
who, like herself, has been thrust into forced intimacy with "the
others." An important distinction is made between the ever sympathetic
manner of Stella Duckworth and Vanessa acting "as though she had her
lesson by heart but did not attach much meaning to it; to George she
would be devoted and submissive; to Gerald affectionate; to her father
helpful; to us protective" (REM 54). The full implication of this
statement would not be realized until much later, in the Memoir Club contributions and "A Sketch of the Past," but here, at least, we are able to deduce that Woolf, if only by virtue of her alliance with Vanessa and her ability to recognize her sister's artifice, distances herself from the patriarchal expectations of the family.

Where, then, do we locate Woolf's subject position, for clearly it is fraught with contradiction? The conventions she employs to write her memoir are both Victorian and patrilineal, and yet the contents of the memoir itself are predominantly matrilineal and express, however implicitly, a rejection of Victorian codes of behaviour. Even the fact of her writing at all is an implicit rejection of these codes. However, we cannot overlook Woolf's absent body, the fact that her presence in "Reminiscences" is felt only in the narrative strategy which ironically diffuses her own centrality. Does this simply represent Woolf's adherence to Victorian autobiographical protocol, or can we read this as an unconscious acceptance of "The Cult of True Womanhood," an acceptance of the idea that a woman's body, her very self, could have no place in an autobiography? And what, in this event, can we make of the fact that Vanessa occupies the central place in this memoir, or that Clive Bell (Vanessa's husband, as well as the intended editor), possibly more so than the unborn Julian, is the implied reader of the text? Is Vanessa's presence meant as an adequate substitute for her own body? Is Clive the looming patriarchal authority?

To be sure, "Reminiscences" gives its reader very little determinate information. Woolf's descriptions of her home and family life undeniably place her in an upper middle class milieu, and her
demonstration of literary prowess reinforces this seat of privilege. But beyond these material signposts, we are left with the uncomfortable tensions which exist between the private discourse of Victorian domesticity and the public discourse of literature, between the androcentric conventions of Victorian autobiography and the proto-feminist suggestion of a shared subjectivity, and, most of all, between the self we may deduce from the first-person narration and the others who dominate this autobiographical account. At best, we might speculate on the way in which Woolf seemingly occupies the boundary of contradiction, a boundary we usually associate with feminist resistance. But whether or not this occupation is deliberate, whether it actually represents an attempt on Woolf's part to blur the lines of demarcation, we cannot say for sure.

The Memoir Club Contributions: A Gradual Unveiling

No less difficult to negotiate are the autobiographical essays which make up Woolf's contribution to the Memoir Club, particularly "22 Hyde Park Gate" and "Old Bloomsbury." Written for an informal audience of friends and acquaintances who were interested in publicly sharing their private lives, these essays are noticeably different in tone and style. The informality strikes one immediately. "22 Hyde Park Gate," for example, opens with the phrase, "As I have said" (HFG 164), suggesting not only that Woolf is continuing something she had spoken about on a previous occasion, but also that she is speaking in a casual
environment. The beginning of "Old Bloomsbury," likewise, signals that she is among friends, with its teasing reference to the fact that she has written this piece at Molly McCarthy's "command" (OB 181). Obviously, there is a substantial difference between this audience and the implied reader of "Reminiscences." But how much one can attach to the fact that "Reminiscences" is intended as a documentation of family history to be passed down to the next generation (Julian Bell) is not certain, for, clearly, Woolf also intended it as a work of literary and artistic merit, otherwise she would not have sought the advice of Clive Bell. Surely the difference between the intended readers may account for the formality of the earlier memoir and the conversational air of the Memoir Club essays; but, ultimately, one must question whether or not this discrepancy will affect the substance of Woolf's life-writing, in other words, whether or not it will affect the public/private balance of the facts she has chosen to divulge, or how much she augments or detracts from the stories she has already told.

It is in Woolf's process of selection, in fact, that I would locate the greatest difference between the two autobiographical efforts, for despite the fact that the Memoir Club had theoretically agreed upon "absolute frankness" (Schulkind 161), a marked contrast to the veiled truths of "Reminiscences," the group did not agree to tell absolutely everything. Thus, it is quite revealing that "22 Hyde Park Gate" only recounts "George Duckworth's disastrous régime over the Stephen girls" (Lee 120) during the social seasons of 1903 and 1904, just prior to Leslie Stephen's death. The subject matter, for one, is much more narrowly circumscribed. And unlike the domestic concentration of
"Reminiscences," this particular essay ventures into the social sphere, giving us a more complete sense of the societal pressures which imposed themselves on the upper middle class female of the time\textsuperscript{11}: "coming out" at eighteen, attending various dances and parties in order to find a prospective husband, and learning the art of conversation, the proper balance between silence and loquacity.

Indeed, the discourse of class in "22 Hyde Park Gate" almost dominates the essay, for in addition to the trials and tribulations of the upper class female, Woolf places a great deal of emphasis on the fact that George Duckworth is a pretentious young man with an "inborn reverence for the British aristocracy" (HPG 169). We are told quite plainly that he is a snob (HPG 169). But more than this, we recognize that George's obsession with keeping up appearances is very near the point of tyrannical, first for Vanessa who can no longer tolerate her function as "an ornament for any dinner table" (HPG 170) and must eventually resist George Duckworth's invitations altogether, and then for Virginia who feels obliged to replace her sister, lest her "immaculate" half-brother "be forced into the arms of whores" (HPG 172).

Undoubtedly, this later version of George Duckworth is considerably different from the version which is set down in "Reminiscences," in part because we receive more information, but also, and more importantly, because Woolf supplies certain details with the express purpose of rendering them ironic. As in "Reminiscences, for example, we are given a rather positive view of George, almost exaggeratedly so, since here he is more than simply heroic; he is "Christlike" (HPG 166). He is the "immaculate George Duckworth" (HPG
172), both good and pure we presume, especially when we learn that Leslie's cancer has forced George to function as "father and mother, sister and brother in one" (HPG 168). However, when we deduce from Woolf's careful detailing that George is far from being a "gentle" man, and, in the end, when we discover that there is a huge gulf between what "the old ladies of Kensington and Belgravia" knew and what the Stephen's sisters knew, that "he was their lover also" (HPG 177), Woolf's idealizing language is completely exploded.

Possibly more intriguing than the revelation of George's malefaction, however, is the manner in which Woolf has landed her blow. On one hand, she has drawn George Duckworth as a representative of upper class society, as a man so totally inured by aristocratic convention that he does not even recognize himself as a snob. On the other hand, she has rendered George the straw man, the target of broad satire, ironizing both the idea of society and the highly inflated Christian language she has used to describe his character. In terms of discourse, therefore, Woolf not only undermines the upper class social façade, but also, specifically, negates the chivalric ideal attached to George in the earlier memoir. And she does this by exposing for the first time the domestic and sexual reality that existed for her at 22 Hyde Park Gate:

Sleep had almost come to me. The room was dark. The house silent. Then, creaking stealthily, the door opened; treading gingerly, someone entered. "Who?" I cried. "Don't be frightened", George whispered. "And don't turn on the light, oh beloved. Beloved--" and he flung himself on my bed, and took me in his arms (HPG 177).
At this moment, more so than at any other point in the essay, we are acutely aware of Woolf's audience, of the fact that "22 Hyde Park Gate" was originally delivered as a speech for the benefit of her Memoir Club. Woolf has not only chosen her narrative order carefully, suspending the truth about George Duckworth until the very last moment, but she has also reinforced the impact of the revelation by building up to it in a very dramatic and suspenseful way. And this, I believe, constitutes an important departure from her earlier memoir, for it significantly alters the relationship between autobiography and fiction by introducing the possibility that Woolf has deliberately embellished her story in order, perhaps, to shock or surprise her audience. Certainly one would not need much more than a revelation of quasi-incestuous sexual abuse to sufficiently shock an audience of the day; however, Woolf's fiction of arrangement (not of substance) ensures that this particular truth will have a lasting effect. The strategy is markedly different; rather than attempting to suppress the "truth" under a veil of metaphor and formality, Woolf has chosen instead to expose it and artistically enhance it. The presumption of objectivity which, in "Reminiscences", stood apart from the literary device is now a presumption of subjectivity which is inextricably linked to its fictionality.

What this implies, furthermore, is that Woolf has broken with her earlier and more stringent literary pattern. In fact, she has forsaken Victorian autobiographical convention in more ways than one: first, and most obviously, by asserting herself as a central presence; secondly, by moving beyond the narrow bounds of the domestic realm; thirdly, by introducing her own sexuality, in spite of its horrific beginnings; and,
finally, with the "story" of George Duckworth's abuse, by suggesting that absolute truth and reliability are not always given priority, that sometimes the process of selection and arrangement can be equally important. Certainly, all of these factors are remarkable, especially as they compare with Woolf's initial autobiographical attempt, for they are changes which suggest not only the relocation of Woolf's subject position, but also an implicit rejection of the older, androcentric conventions which insinuate themselves in "Reminiscences."

That Woolf's rejection of these conventions might be more than simply a suggestion is confirmed by "Old Bloomsbury," the following memoir which begins its narrative by recounting the final events of "22 Hyde Park Gate", but not quite in the same way. Here Woolf reverts to the evening she and George had spent with Lady Carnarvon. In "22 Hyde Park Gate" she describes this evening much more extensively, contextualizing the disgust and discomfort she experienced at the sight of nudity and copulation in a French play all of them had seen, such that her relief to be home in the comfortable surroundings of her Greek dictionary could well be understood. She also describes how she felt herself "in a confused whirlpool of sensation" (HPG 177), mixing thoughts of "diamonds and countesses, copulations, the dialogues of Plato, Mad Dick Popham [another guest] and the "Light of the World" [the title of the Holman Hunt painting she had viewed that evening]" (HPG 177). In "Old Bloomsbury," the prelude to the abuse is somewhat condensed, presumably because Woolf is taking it for granted that her audience will remember the details from the previous memoir. But beyond this, Woolf has also chosen to alter the way in which she recounts the
events surrounding their attendance of "the most indecent French play" (OB 181). Unlike the first version of the story, Woolf now makes light of her reaction, describing how they left the performance "like a flock of partridges at the end of the first act" (OB 181). She also includes a detail about Mrs Popham which does not exist in the earlier telling, that after the play this woman had expressed some concern over the possibility that Virginia might lose her virginity (OB 181).

However, more disturbing than any omission or addition is the completely different setting of the act of abuse itself. In "22 Hyde Park Gate" Woolf recalls retiring to her room and reading her Greek; here, she is reading Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*. In the former, she has already extinguished the light when George steals his way into the room and smothers her with embraces; in the latter, the light is still on when George knocks and

fling[s] himself on [her] bed, cuddling and kissing and otherwise embracing [her] in order, as he told Dr Savage later, to comfort [her] for the fatal illness of [her] father--who was dying three or four storeys lower down of cancer (OB 182).

As Phyllis Rose states in her biography of Woolf, this kind of variance may seem trivial, "but the effect is more sinister" (Rose ix). For my part, I would agree, since the later rendition of this event not only attempts to depict George as something less than an abuser, but also as having perfectly sound reasons for overstepping the bounds of a good half-brother.
But from another point of view, this attempt to rescue George's reputation is much more than simply an act of *post hoc* justification, for it reinforces the possibility that Woolf is rejecting the traditional authorial role, one which stipulates that the autobiographer is synonymous with the historian, and, in the case of Victorian autobiography, with the biographer as well. By focusing on the immediacy of the story-telling rather than the accuracy of the details, Woolf implicitly resists this role which had become her patrilineal inheritance in "Reminiscences." Moreover, she effects this resistance not only by refusing to adhere to Victorian convention, but also by generating another source of literary authority—namely herself; for rather than adopting the pose of an autobiographer who sees herself as the locus of objective truth, Woolf opts instead to cast herself as the locus of subjective truth(s), blending together the voice of her inscribing self with the voices which emerge from her own diaries. It is as though the move from 22 Hyde Park Gate to 46 Gordon Square marks both an autobiographical and a personal turning point for Woolf, because no sooner does the narrative of "Old Bloomsbury" disclose this event than it begins to rely upon the entries of her 1904-1905 diary.

As an autobiographical technique, the use of one's personal writings to either verify or justify the autobiography proper is not new, especially where women are concerned. Victorian women in particular quite regularly employed their diaries as a private form of historical or documentary evidence, providing a rather efficient way of authorizing their own writing without appearing to overstep the bounds of their "true womanhood" or the domestic sphere to which they had been
relegated. But contrary to the Victorian norm, Woolf does not seem especially interested in using her diary as an evidentiary source. The entries are not there to verify the rest of the text. In fact, she relates the contents of these entries without very much interpretation at all, almost as though she has simply copied them from her journal. The most we receive is her statement of regret that the "diary ends just as it might have become interesting" (OB 186). If anything, she seems to provide these alternative accounts as a type of formal substitution, for the essay and diary portions of this memoir do not mutually reinforce one another, but rather supply two different narratives.

Moreover, it does not seem likely that Woolf is attempting to maintain the appearance of a private, domestic female, since the very openness of the subject matter would contradict any such notion. Moving from the molestation of George Duckworth to the "buggers" (OB 194) of Bloomsbury and to the Thursday evenings in which "sex permeated [the] conversation" (OB 195-6), one could hardly conclude that Woolf has taken on the role of the conservative female. If there is any residual influence from Leslie Stephen and his Victorian stranglehold, it exists in the fact that Woolf's description of the members of Old Bloomsbury resembles a biographical catalogue, not unlike the succession of portraits she rendered in "Reminiscences," only here much briefer and far more candid. Otherwise, the patriarchal insinuation would appear to have ended, for, in spite of such "reminiscent" touches, the majority of this memoir is surprisingly informal. The narrative, though linear, is not highly structured. Rather, it is six narratives loosely connected by chronology: George's abuse just prior to Leslie's death, the move to
Gordon Square, Old Bloomsbury's formation, Thursday evenings, Virginia's discovery of the "buggers" and the beginning of sexual frankness in the group, and, finally, a self-conscious segment which questions the boundaries of Bloomsbury itself, a subject which Woolf decides to reserve for another memoir. And so, clearly, between the subject she treats and the form she adopts, Woolf has all but disposed of Leslie Stephen's influence.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Woolf's disclosure of how these Thursday evenings spent with her brother's (Thoby's) Cambridge friends provided her and her sister with an enormous sense of intellectual freedom:

From such discussions Vanessa and I got probably much the same pleasure that undergraduates get when they meet friends of their own for the first time. In the world of the Booths and the Maxses we were not asked to use our brains much.

Here we used nothing else (OB 190).

Though seemingly innocuous, this statement is rich with meaning. The first sentence, for instance, not only expresses pleasure, but also, implicitly, comments on the fact that the Stephen sisters, unlike their brothers, had been excluded from a formal education. The second portion of this statement, likewise, is double-edged, on one hand criticizing the vapidity of the upper class society to which the Booths and the Maxses belonged, and on the other delighting in the stark contrast of these informal intellectual gatherings. These Thursday evenings, then, were more than just a pleasant pastime for the Stephen sisters, for they represent what is obviously a welcome departure from both the rigidly
defined gender roles and the upper class conservatism that had infected 22 Hyde Park Gate for the duration of their adolescence.

In terms of autobiographical evolution, therefore, Woolf has certainly come a long way from her first attempt. The "invisible presences" (SP 80) which in "Reminiscences" could only be drawn out by inference are by this point in Woolf's autobiographical writings quite evident. The nascent feminist of the earlier text is beginning to show herself. The intellectual passions which were suppressed in the young Virginia are now explicit interests for Virginia the adult. Likewise, the domestic emphasis of the earlier document has been supplanted by a more public discourse, a language of ideas and abstractions, a language which engages the mind. But perhaps more importantly, Woolf has introduced her body to the text, not only in terms of making herself present as the subject of the memoir, but also in terms of sexuality. Her open discussion of the predominance of homosexuality in Old Bloomsbury sets a personal autobiographical precedent. Finally, in the act of authorizing her own writing, Woolf not only asserts her position as a writer, but also chooses quite consciously to forsake the literary inheritance of her father. The incorporation of her diary in the fabric of the text represents both a personal and independent voice.

*A Sketch of the Past: Fragments of a Broken Mirror*

Acutely aware of the potential difficulties involved in writing autobiography, Woolf begins this final memoir with a self-conscious
critique of the form itself. Her first concern with recollection is the possibility of forgetting; confronted with so many life-time events, she is not at all certain of her ability to remember them all. Her second concern is with expression; having read so many memoirs, and having written a few of her own already, she is well aware of the different possibilities which exist for her. However, this being said, Woolf does not pursue the matter very much farther, for "without stopping to choose [her] way" (SP 64), she simply signals her intention to begin by assuring the reader that her form "will find itself" (SP 64).

Of course, Woolf's idea that this method of writing is somehow devoid of choice, or that it might emanate from a subconscious level is a little dubious, for even without the guidance of any preconceptions, she is nevertheless in control of her own writing. And so the fact that she has chosen such a tentative beginning is most intriguing. What possible motive could exist? Is it simply a device, perhaps a residual trope of Victorian modesty? Or is it, rather, Woolf's way of finally discarding the formality attached to that literary era? The highly impressionistic quality of Woolf's first memory suggests the latter. Recalling the pattern of her mother's dress, her state of half-sleep, the sound of the waves breaking, and the feeling of "purest ecstasy" (SP 65), Woolf seems more in keeping with her modern contemporaries, delivering a poetic juxtaposition of images instead of a traditional narrative with determinate connections. However, before one even has a chance to confirm these suspicions, Woolf retreats to the pose of the self-conscious author, commenting on her failure to capture the genuine nature of the scene because she has omitted the very thing which would
ensure her success—a description of herself (SP 65). Thus, before
rejoining her earliest recollection of childhood, she launches into a
brief, and somewhat forced, description of who she is, providing the
reader with the date of her birth, information about her family lineage,
and the basic material conditions of her life, that she was "born into a
large connection, born not of rich parents, but of well-to-do parents,
born into a very communicative, literate, letter writing, visiting,
articulate, late nineteenth century [sic] world" (SP 65).

What this demonstrates, however, is not so much Woolf's ability to
redress the initial shortcoming, but rather a tension which seems to
exist between the first mode of representation and this more traditional
way of beginning an autobiography. The first description is inaccessible
to the reader who cannot know what "ecstasy" Woolf would have
experienced, and the second description provides hard facts which allow
the reader to place Woolf in some kind of historical continuum. But the
notion that the latter description should somehow compensate for the
inadequacy of the first is almost ludicrous. These are simply two
competing modes of representation. Why Woolf has placed them in
competition is more to the point, for certainly it is curious that she
should only just now, after all of her previous autobiographical
efforts, mention her birth and its circumstances for the first time.
That she should suggest, furthermore, that such information could
magically supply what is absent, namely the person about whom the
autobiography is written, is more curious still, since it implies that
the convention of beginning at the beginning with a series of public
historical facts does more to provide the reader with a sense of
personality than anything which might derive from the personal thoughts and impressions of the autobiographer.

But here again Woolf fools us, for just as we are convinced that she has given precedence to this very traditional, androcentric mode of beginning her autobiography, we find her once more riddled with doubt:

I do not know how much of this, or what part of this, made me feel what I felt in the nursery at St Ives. I do not know how far I differ from other people. That is another memoir writer's difficulty. Yet to describe oneself truly one must have some standard of comparison; was I clever, stupid, good looking, ugly, passionate, cold--? (SP 65).

Obviously Woolf recognizes the potential inadequacy of her second beginning as well. Simple facts are no substitute for one's being; it is also essential to have some idea of the person's qualities and of the person's relationship to others. And so, seemingly, Woolf is gesturing towards a more private, and what is often considered a more feminine, mode of expression. Her notion that one needs a standard of comparison, likewise, invokes the female autobiographical convention of relational subjectivity, choosing to see oneself in context rather than assuming the pose of a unitary self-made individual. Yet, Woolf does not "choose" this form of expression over the other. She opts instead to end this discursive competition, to strike a compromise between the two modes by searching for an "external reason for the intensity of [her] first impression" (SP 65).

Whether or not she has truly effected this compromise is another matter entirely, since the description which ensues is equally
impressionistic and, hence, just as private or esoteric as the grouping of images she is attempting to explain. She recalls, or so she claims, that the original intensity was due to the fact of her rather unusual perspective, "the feeling [...] of lying in a grape and seeing through a film of semi-transparent yellow" (SP 65). Then, continuing with what purports to be a physical description of the nursery, a hint of something more concrete, she delivers a further catalogue of impressions, a painterly sequence of colours and shapes, a blend of sights and sounds together. She ends almost where she began, describing the sound of the waves, her semi-conscious state, and, finally, the impossibility of mere words to describe the "ecstasy" she felt.

Indeed, Woolf's form seems to have found itself, for the second memory she introduces only gathers impressionistic momentum. Recalling the gardens at St Ives some time later (though not specified), Woolf now discusses this "highly sensual" (SP 66) scene from her childhood in terms of "rapture," all of the shapes, smells and sounds coming together in such a way that "all seemed to press voluptuously against some membrane" (SP 66). Again, it is clear that Woolf attaches some significance to the recalled perspective, her grape-like vision making its second appearance. But here, it is also apparent from her choice of vocabulary that these memories of St Ives are somehow intertwined with a notion of sexuality, for the discourse of eroticism in both of these initial memories, her use of such words as "ecstasy," "rapture," "voluptuously," and "sensual," suggests that this membrane which obscures her vision may be more than simply a grape skin. As Sidonie Smith suggests in her essay "The Autobiographical Eye/I in Virginia
Woolf's "Sketch," this "great grape eyeball" (Smith 1993: 100) may, in fact, be an attempt "to displace that pervasive phallocentric trope of vision" (Smith 1993: 100-101)—namely the penis.

What is problematic about this suggestion, though, is that Woolf never clearly designates the symbolic significance of her grape membrane. Several possibilities exist. The two which carry the weight of Smith's argument take their cue from the sexually charged nature of Woolf's language: first, that the membrane is a kind of hymen, a gynocentric trope of vision; and second, that it is a womb-like space, a displacement of gender identification (Smith 1993: 94-96; 100-102). Both interpretations are somewhat tenuous. For one, the hymen is not at all equivalent to the male penis. It represents the sexually uninitiated; the penis carries no such connotation. For another, the womb does not so much escape gender identification as it acts to temporarily defer it. Another interpretive possibility is one which Smith invokes through her language and yet strangely omits, that Woolf's grape eye functions as another version of Emerson's "transparent eyeball." This possibility carries several connotations of its own: perhaps that Woolf sees herself as something of a visionary, that she sees fit to appropriate this predominantly androcentric trope, or perhaps, quite the opposite, that this appropriation is somewhat ironic, that it represents part of the patriarchal inheritance she struggles to discard.

A third option, however, and one which Smith raises coextensively, is the possibility of the grape eyeball simply representing a non-body, a "disembodied" perspective (Smith 1993: 102). Unfortunately, Smith has her own problems with this interpretation, recognizing that it is
possible to see this grape eyeball as both a feminist "locus of resistance to stable topographies of class and gender" and as yet another manifestation of anonymity which "sustains the baseness of the body" (Smith 1993: 102). To be sure, the potential ambiguity of this disembodied point of view is somewhat disconcerting, for while it suggests, on one hand, that Woolf is claiming her position as woman writer, it suggests, on the other, that she may have reverted to the place she occupied in "Reminiscences," because once again it is possible to see Woolf as the absent autobiographer. But the fact that the "I" which made its debut in the Memoir Club essays is now seemingly synonymous with the "eye" does not necessarily mean that Woolf has dispensed with either the self or its embodiment. She is not, after all, pretending that anyone other than herself is the "present" subject of this autobiography. What has changed, however, is the relationship between the inscribed and inscribing subjects, for this now seems as slippery as the grape membrane itself, in one moment apparently fused through a perspective which is relevant to both past and present selves, and, in another, separated by an acute self-consciousness which underscores the distance between these selves.

This distance between past and present selves, already hinted at in the beginning of the text with Woolf's announcement of the date on which she began to write, now becomes the subject of another self-conscious digression. Woolf's contemplation is catalyzed by the idea that the strength or intensity of her recollections makes them somehow "more real than the present moment" (SP 67), a near-Proustian notion that, at times, she "can go back to St Ives more completely" (SP 67)
than she could to the "present" morning. What this suggests for Woolf is
that certain events may "have an existence independent of our minds" (SP 67). In other words, the past may be a type of avenue, "a long ribbon of
scenes" (SP 67), but what enables us to travel down that road again is
the intensity of the emotion we still carry with us, for we cannot
"listen in to the past" (SP 67) without some kind of a plug to
facilitate our hearing. The process of recollection, then, is something
like eavesdropping. We cannot remember or hear the past unless the
sounds on the other side of the wall are loud enough to be heard.

To illustrate what she means, Woolf provides us with one such
memory—her "feeling about the looking glass in the hall" (SP 67).
Recalling the house at St Ives once more, only now moving ahead to a
time when she was six or seven, she discusses the constant shame and
guilt she associates not only with the looking glass at Talland House,
but also with all of the mirrors she has since encountered. She attempts
two explanations for her "looking glass shame" (SP 68): one connected
with the idea that she was a tomboy as a child and that any form of
vanity "would have been against [her] tomboy code" (SP 68); and the
second connected with the possibility of an inherited "streak of the
puritan" (SP 68) Clapham sect\(^9\) to which her paternal grandfather
belonged. Although in the end Woolf does not seem satisfied with either
of these explanations, realizing she is no longer a tomboy and
acknowledging an opposing family tradition of beauty and cultivated
femininity, she concludes nevertheless that the associated intensity is
what enables her memory of that time.
However, just as Woolf seems to have closed the issue, she relates another memory which could, in fact, be the actual reason for the intensity of her feelings about the looking glass. It is as though Woolf herself has been listening in at the wall of the past and has only just heard the sound which is loud enough to penetrate through to the present moment. That sound is Gerald Duckworth's molestation:

Once when I was very small Gerald Duckworth lifted me onto this [ie. the dining room sideboard at Talland House in St Ives], and as I sat there he began to explore my body. I can remember the feel of his hand going under my clothes; going firmly and steadily lower and lower. I remember how I hoped that he would stop; how I stiffened and wriggled as his hand approached my private parts. But it did not stop. His hand explored my private parts too. I remember resenting, disliking it—what is the word for so dumb and mixed a feeling? It must have been strong, since I still recall it. This seems to show that a feeling about certain parts of the body; how they must not be touched; how it is wrong to allow them to be touched; must be instinctive. It proves that Virginia Stephen was not born on the 25th January 1882, but was born many thousands of years ago; and had from the very first to encounter instincts already acquired by thousands of ancestresses in the past (SP 69).

I have cited this passage at length not only because it seems to be a more sufficient explanation for Woolf's looking glass shame, but also because it opens, as well as re-opens, several issues which bear
discussion. In the first instance, it reinforces the notion that
emotional intensity and memory are inextricably bound for Woolf.
Secondly, it reinvites us to consider her position in relation to both
patriarchy and Victorianism, for the recollection illustrates the
dominance of both: the child expected to remain silent and yielding as
the male authority figure takes what he presumes to be his right.
Lastly, it re-opens the issue of Woolf's body and sexual identity, since
we realize now that her bodily absence in "Reminiscences" may have more
to do with this traumatic rebirth than any prevailing notion of
Victorian femininity.

Looking first at the connection between emotion and recollection,
we observe that Gerald Duckworth's abuse not only forces the reader to
reconsider Woolf's notion of memory, but also causes Woolf herself to
review the process. Immediately following this profoundly disturbing
passage, Woolf returns to the subject of her earlier digression,
commenting almost apologetically that these first few memories "as an
account of [her] life" are somewhat "misleading, because the things one
does not remember are as important; perhaps they are more important" (SP
69). Now, rather than focusing on those moments of unusual intensity,
she shifts instead to what she calls moments of "non-being" (SP 70),
those moments which form "a kind of nondescript cotton wool" (SP 70).
Seemingly, Woolf has found another metaphor to replace the wall at which
the autobiographer attempts to listen in at the past. But the
qualitative difference between a wall and cotton wool suggests that this
is more than simply a substitution. The wall was a definitive separation
of past and present; it was impermeable. The cotton wool of non-being is
just the opposite; it is a kind of pliable background against which all of life's other moments gather their significance. In other words, these moments forever relegated to the cottony base are what allow for the epiphanic clarity of those moments which we actually do remember, three examples of which Woolf provides: a childhood fight she had with her brother, Thoby; a moment when she realized that a flower was an integral part of the earth in which it grew; and the announcement of a neighbour's (Mr. Valpy's) suicide.

Where these exceptional moments lead, however, is perhaps more interesting than what they exemplify, for Woolf discovers a common denominator, that these moments "brought with them a peculiar horror and a physical collapse; they seemed dominant; myself passive" (SP 72). And what this suggests for her is "that as one gets older one has a greater power through reason to provide an explanation; and that this explanation blunts the sledge-hammer force of the blow" (SP 72). One wonders, in fact, if this very digression on moments of being and non-being is not just such an explanation, one which enables Woolf to blunt the force of Gerald Duckworth's "sledge-hammer". In any case, it brings Woolf to the realization that such memories are only ever the "scaffolding in the background" (SP 73), for in spite of their intensity, it is the autobiographer who must make the structure whole by attempting to bridge the hermeneutic gaps:

From this I reach what I might call a philosophy; at any rate it is a constant idea of mine; that behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we--I mean all human beings--are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of
art; that we are parts of the work of art. Hamlet or a Beethoven quartet is the truth about this vast mass that we call the world. But there is no Shakespeare, there is no Beethoven; certainly and emphatically there is no God; we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself (SP 72).

Almost anticipating a Bleichian\(^2\) school of reader response, Woolf's so-called philosophy places the author/autobiographer in an extremely powerful position, a position which not only contradicts her opening stance, the idea that the form should choose itself, but also revises her notion of the relationship between the past and the present, because clearly the interpretive act of the present is as much a function of memory as the past events themselves.

All of which brings us back to the passage at hand, and, more importantly, to the question of Woolf's interpretive choices. Certainly, part of what she recalls is her childhood reaction to Gerald Duckworth's abuse, but how she explains her reaction is equally important. The idea, for example, that it is instinctive and matrilineal, something passed down through "thousands of ancestresses" (SP 69) is extremely thought provoking, for it suggests not only that Woolf's relationship to patriarchal dominance is accidental, an inherited commodity, but also that patriarchal dominance is itself systemic, unavoidable, and hardly specific to the Victorian era. Hence, she is able to conclude that she was born "many thousands of years ago" (SP 69), because, given the larger context, she is no different from any other female who came before her. But what do we make of this explanation for Woolf's looking
glass shame, this shared identification with all oppressed women throughout the ages? Is it a feminist gesture of solidarity which reinforces her instinctive sense of patriarchal wrongdoing? Or, is it rather a justification of patriarchy, an explanation not unlike the one which follows George Duckworth's molestation in "Old Bloomsbury"?

My own instinct tells me it is the first, a feminist gesture which attempts to replace the Puritan "ancestors" who lurk behind the looking glass with these "ancestresses" who facilitate her rebirth. This explanation, however, is somewhat complicated by the potential ambiguity of the passage. If, indeed, this shared identification is an expression of Woolf's feminism, then the idea that she should be indistinguishable from all other women is potentially disturbing, since effectively it constitutes an erasure of her identity, an erasure of those qualities which earlier in "A Sketch of the Past" seemed so necessary to her autobiographical craft. In other words, Woolf gives us room to misconstrue the notion of thinking "back through our mothers" (Woolf 1928: 76; Lee 79). But whether we believe that Woolf has learned from her foremothers or reacted against them (Lee 79), it is still more likely an explanation than the one which suggests either that she has accepted her abuse as part of a normative pattern in history, or that she is trying once again to gloss over the truth. The latter, especially, seems inappropriate, since Woolf's own feelings of inadequacy about getting at the "truth" cause her to do just the opposite, as she offers up yet another recollection to supplement the already accruing list of possibilities:
I dreamt that I was looking in a glass when a horrible face—the face of an animal—suddenly showed over my shoulder. I cannot be sure if this was a dream, or if it happened. Was I looking in the glass one day when something in the background moved, and seemed to me alive? I cannot be sure. But I have always remembered the other face in the glass, whether it was a dream or a fact, and that it frightened me (SP 69).

Now, instead of placing herself in the general context of all women, she returns to the realm of private specificity. It is not relevant whether what she remembers is a dream or reality, because, regardless of the fact, it is her consistent reaction to this moment that makes it real for her.

What is relevant, though, is Woolf's substitution of this ambiguous reality for what, earlier, in spite of multiple explanations, she had wanted to portray as an immutable event, for what this suggests is that Woolf is attempting to extricate herself from the kind of logic which dictates that realism must necessarily be accompanied by transparent meaning. In other words, the fact that Woolf situates this event in the nebulous territory between dream (fiction) and reality implies a certain dissatisfaction with linear realism, since, clearly, it is a version of reality which fails to encompass the particular reality of her own experience. What this implies, furthermore, is the relocation of Woolf's subject position. No longer content with the myth of objectivity which would cast her subjectivity as a type of fiction within the dominant reality, Woolf has decided to reinscribe her reality
from her own peculiar angle of vision, however complex or incomprehensible it may seem to the reader who is expecting the smooth, linear progression of an autobiographical subject toward some sort of teleological destination. If it may be said that Woolf has any destination at all, it is to find a language of her own.

That this is no simple task, however, becomes more evident when we read back over the constant shifting of ideas and the overall process of self-revision which occupies the better part of this initial instalment of the "Sketch". Acutely aware of self-representation and memory itself, Woolf becomes increasingly "self" conscious, an indication of her desire to find an alternative form of reference, perhaps one in which she is able to see herself apart from the mirror which always reflects a patriarchal reality. If only for this reason, then, her disproportionate devotion in this entry to the discovery of a possible explanation for her looking glass shame seems most appropriate, for it is as though each successive explanation brings her closer to breaking the smooth surface of the mirror. The whole process is a kind of symbolic rebirth---moving from an explanation which is infected by patriarchal gender logic (that it suited her tomboyish manner, or that it might have been the religious legacy of her paternal grandfather) to one in which she identifies herself with all womankind throughout the ages, even revising the moment of her birth to mark her feminist awareness (in spite of its atrocious catalyst), and then, finally, to one in which she "re-members" the whole as something which might just as well have been a dream, relegating the horrific animal in the mirror (perhaps patriarchy itself) to the nether region between reality and fiction. Therefore, unlike Woolf, who sees
her "real" birthday as the day of Gerald's abuse, I would situate it here, in this final explanation of her looking glass shame, for it is here that her subjectivity emerges for the first time, apart from all the reflections in the patriarchal mirror.

II

If Woolf's transition, in the subsequent three entries, from (re)birth to matriarch seems a little ironic on a symbolic level (perhaps an attempt to substitute one mirror for another or even to retreat into her grape-like womb), on the level of discourse it represents a significant change, not only because it counterbalances the patriarchal loomings of the previous section, but also because it provides her with a very different vocabulary. It is on the latter, I believe, that we should place the emphasis, particularly in light of Woolf's announcement that she may have "discovered a possible form for [her] notes[,] [t]hat is, to make them include the present--at least enough of the present to serve as a platform to stand upon" (SP 75). Her desire to include the moment of inscription, to recognize her "self" apart from the selves she inscribes, signals her move beyond the looking glass. That each of the following entries, moreover, begins with a brief discussion of the present moment and with those elements of the present which manage to catalyze her thoughts of the past, indeed that we are made aware of Woolf's life apart from her existence as an author of the
text, suggests, in fact, that she has found both her form and her platform.

In terms of form, for instance, Woolf has finally reached the point of self-revision where she acknowledges and insists upon the influence of "invisible presences" (SP 80), those things without which a piece of life-writing would be futile. And it is in light of these "invisible presences" that Woolf returns to her mother, recognizing her centrality not from the enclosure of her grape-like membrane, but from a "vast space [...] a great hall [...] with windows letting in strange lights" (SP 79). The perspective is still that of the outsider, but unlike Woolf's grape vision, the great hall perspective is neither a metaphor for the opacity of memory, nor an attempt to recapture the impression of infancy. Rather, it represents a passage in which Woolf sees herself at the centre of a nexus of influence, of strange lights which bear down upon her presence. The separation, therefore, is not between herself and a world in which others have constructed her according to their reality, but between herself and her own ability to construct the reality around her. In other words, she has reconstructed her subject position and, effectively, in the process, found a way of making her presence felt. Those answers which were seemingly out of her grasp at the beginning of "A Sketch of the Past", presumably because she was looking for them in all of the wrong narrative structures, are now there for the taking; her only task is to put those strange lights into words.

That she should return yet again to her earliest memory, then, is most appropriate, for, to some extent, Woolf is seeing her mother for
the first time. And so, not surprisingly, Woolf attempts to dissociate her mother from the fable of Julia Stephen which had infected her childhood, making a concerted effort to look for the "particular person" beneath the "general presence" (SP 83). The method she chooses, likewise, is a form of dissociation, the semblance of a biographical sketch from "Reminiscences" with a content that is at once ironic and highly self-conscious. Now, rather than depicting her mother as "all the golden enchantments of Tennysonian sentiment" (REM 32), or as an angel in the house whose attempt to keep up the "panoply of life" (SP 83) had exhausted her, Woolf provides us with many of the details she had earlier obscured in favour of the ideal portrait. For instance, through the lens of Julia Stephen's two very incongruous marriages, Woolf allows us to see that her mother was actually a "'mixture of the Madonna and a woman of the world''' (SP 90), as a friend of the family had once described her. But perhaps more importantly, Woolf acknowledges the complexity of her own feelings towards her mother, and especially towards her mother's death. Recalling more than just the great beauty of Julia Stephen, or her own catatonic state, Woolf now discusses some of the nuances of feeling and sensuality which were also part of the mourning period. She describes, for example, a "magnificent blaze of colour" (SP 93) at Paddington Station, and a sense of linguistic transparency which struck her in a poem which Vanessa had read to her in Kensington Gardens. And possibly the most telling of all is Woolf's account of the family's reaction, for she observes that it was not her mother's death itself that was tragic, but the fact "that it made her unreal."23 (SP 95).
This unreality, in fact, is what seems to propel the autobiography forward, since what we receive now is a catalogue of similar sketches which attempt to draw out the remainder of the family, almost as though it has suddenly struck Woolf that unreality does not reside exclusively with her mother. Again, not unlike this latest reworking of her mother, the form is deceptively "reminiscent", highly biographical and predominantly linear, and yet rendered from a completely different angle of vision. We are introduced to Stella, for instance, from the point of view of her own (present) inability to continue writing Roger Fry's biography. The context already casts something of an ironic shadow, for Woolf's return to her autobiography is not only underscored as an interruption of the present moment, but also as one prompted by her "distracted and disconnected thoughts" (SP 95). If we are expecting a smooth transition between mother and daughter, Woolf does not deliver. Stella's portrait, if one can continue to use the label, is made up "from stray anecdotes and from what [Woolf] noticed [herself]" (SP 96), in other words, a combination of stories and imaginings. With neither the pretense of objectivity nor the compulsion to oversimplify, Woolf presents an almost impressionistic version of her half-sister, and one which is not particularly complimentary. For now, rather than drawing her as a simple beauty of domestic virtue, she depicts her as considerably more repressed and subservient, as the moon which orbits around the mother sun (SP 96), and as a woman whose acute insecurity was as much a part of her stupidity24 as her lack of formal education (SP 97). The rose-coloured glasses of her initial autobiographical attempt are obviously gone.
Certainly any residual doubt we might have is dispelled by Woolf's revisionary glance at her father, Leslie Stephen. Even the authorial platform which begins this particular section seems more assertive, identifying not only the date, June 19th 1940, but also the moment of inscription, "the present" (SP 107), as though somehow this portrait will do more than any other to confirm Woolf's new-found form. What she describes, furthermore, as the event which prompts her recollection is possibly Woolf at the height of her ironic sensibility. First she invokes the war by mentioning that "[t]oday the dictators dictate their terms to France" (SP 107), then the immediate environment by relating a detail about the toothless organ grinder who plays in the square outside her window, and, finally, her father. The order of appearance already intimates that Woolf views her father as both a tyrant and a buffoon. Thus, to some extent, it is hardly surprising when the first thing we read about Leslie Stephen is that "during the seven years between Stella's death in 1897 and his death in 1904 [...] Nessa and I were fully exposed without protection to the full blast of that strange character" (SP 107), for it seems to confirm what we already know.

The surprise, if one can call it that, comes in the self-conscious explanation which follows, Woolf's quandary over whether or not the word "exposed" is the right one, and her reason for using the word "strange", because she no longer inhabits "the outworn shell of [her] own childish mind and body" (SP 107). In other words, time has erased a good deal of what she recalls about her father. However, just as she could not let the memory of her mother lie until she had written To the Lighthouse, so too she cannot surrender her father's memory until she has fully written
him out (SP 108). And it is here that she surpasses herself in irony, for rather than admitting to the unavoidable fiction of her rendering, she announces instead that she will "try to sketch him as [she] think[s] he must have been, not to [her], but to the world at large" (SP 108). The implication is somewhat more complex than it might at first appear, since her intention is to preserve a pretense of objectivity even while she is imagining what that "objective" perspective might be, and no less within the context of a "sketch," something which already connotes fragmentary incompleteness. But if, indeed, this is Woolf's intention, then one could also suggest that there is some kind of parody\textsuperscript{25} at work, a type of variant repetition which "presupposes both a law and its transgression" (Hutcheon 1991: 101). The law in this case would be the androcentric assumption of objectivity, an assumption which is closely allied with the notion that the (male) subject is possessed of a sort of Platonic ontology (Smith 1993: 7), and the transgression would be the context of subjectivity and incompleteness which supersedes this objective pretense. Thus, read as a parody, the sketch of Leslie Stephen is rife with subversive irony, for this recontextualized objectivity not only inscribes a distance between Woolf and her father (a distance which, incidentally, did not exist in "Reminiscences", in spite of the same assumption), but also manages to reconfigure her father as an abstract being who is held hostage by her own subjective reality (a significant reversal of the situation in "Reminiscences"). In other words, Woolf's contextual variation succeeds in transforming Leslie Stephen from an abstract ideal to an abstract idea.
Woolf's original quandary over the word "exposed" is, therefore, most appropriate, since the description which follows is not so much an exposure in the sense of revelation as it is an exposure of the type one encounters in photography. The ambiguity of the word is nevertheless convenient, for by undermining the earlier picture Woolf is also revealing herself as the photographer behind the camera, the artist who frames her subject. How she chooses to frame Leslie Stephen is very much in keeping with her new-found form, her ability to "re-member" the past by including the present in it. Now depicted as a "strange" combination of the past (a perspective which Woolf has othered through distance and presumed objectivity) and the present (a perspective which is marked by a laughing admiration), Leslie Stephen is at once steely and tempestuous, godlike and childlike, privileged and pathetic, ingenious and unimaginative (SP 108-116 passim). From Woolf's present platform he is also a man whose character may be gleaned from the simple constructs of his writing, writing which does not suit her taste, but nonetheless serves a purpose, for "just as a dog takes a bite of grass, [she] take[s] a bite of him medicinally, and there often steals in, not a filial, but a reader's affection for him" (SP 115-116). And so, in the end, Leslie Stephen is not once, but twice, removed from his Platonic seat. He is the writer who is read by the autobiographer who, ultimately, reinscribes him as a character within a double frame of her own making, as a fiction in the world according to Virginia Woolf.
As though the symbolic act of writing her father out has enabled Woolf to discard the final vestiges of her literary attachment to the Stephen family, the autobiography now proceeds with a keener sense of her own distinctive literary signature. More than simply recognizing the contingency of the present moment on her recollection of the past, Woolf in fact demonstrates how much of her literary self is bound up in that present moment. The "scene making" which dominates these final entries is not only "[her] natural way of marking the past", but also a way which defies rationality and logical argument; it is not a conventional literary device which will neatly tie up or disentangle all of the previous loose threads (SP 142). If anything, Woolf's "scene making" is just the opposite, for it confuses the reader with a further collection of "invisible presences" (SP 80) which, although not entirely unrelated, do not approach anything resembling a conventional denouement.

Part of this confusion, of course, is a product of our readerly expectations. For instance, when Woolf continues from the "portrait" of her father with a highly realistic physical description of 22 Hyde Park Gate (complete with details about the furniture, paintings on the wall, dishes on the table, and the street scene beyond the windows), we are more than a little disconcerted by Woolf's narrative choice. For the conservative reader, the incongruity is a matter of order; this type of description is something which would normally appear at the beginning of an autobiography. But even for the reader who has followed Woolf thus far, allowing for her moments of being and non-being, there is something
unsettling about the fact that here, for the first time since "Reminiscences", we encounter a description of such realistic proportion. And yet, if we follow through, we discover, once again, that it is not a literary regression, but a "reminiscent" form that Woolf has misshapen for her own end. It is the frame she re-frames, the literary context she designates, both ironically and appropriately, for her description of "the cage" (SP 116), that house which had "framed" her being for so many years. Moreover, as the re-enactment of an insomniac mental tour she had taken of the house two nights earlier (SP 116), a tour which ultimately leads to a place of refuge, a room of her own, this realistic scene is not only diffused by the psychological realism of the "present" platform, but also by the introduction of a space which is far more symbolic than material in its realism. In other words, if we are looking for the type of closure which might attend linear realism, then Woolf has managed to point us in another direction entirely.

Suddenly, in a room at the back of the house that Woolf remembers as two halves which "fought each other" for dominance (SP 123), a living half and a sleeping half, the reader cannot help but accept that Woolf is "making" another scene. The painterly attention to physical details has been tempered by the symbolic significance she now attaches to nearly every item. For example, the looking glass that George had given her is described as "imitation", a word which, in the context of Woolf's autobiographical oeuvre, carries multiple suggestions: that George's aristocratic airs were nothing but a pretence; or, perhaps, that he was imitating his brother Gerald in his abuse of Virginia; or, possibly even that Woolf, from her present perspective, is able to denigrate the
patriarchal associations of the mirror, if not the pattern of abuse itself. On another level as well, the looking glass is one of many icons of Victorian ladyhood which are part of the sleeping half of her room; it is at war with the living half, the half which contains all of her books and writing implements, those things which, quite literally, belong to her "self". And thus, it is all the more significant that the looking glass is associated with her dormant life, for it suggests not only that the codes of Victorian propriety have been laid to rest, but also that the living half, her very livelihood, has won the war.

Confirmation of the victory seems to exist in the fact that Woolf now rejoins her "present" platform, drawing the reader's attention to her authorial subjectivity. Recalling that 22 Hyde Park Gate had become a Guest house, she wonders whether any of the guests had read *To the Lighthouse*, or *A Room of One's Own*, or *The Common Reader*, and, if so, whether "he or she might say: 'This room explains a great deal'" (SP 123-124). But if somehow the portent escapes the reader, Woolf now adds an interpretation of her own, how the

two halves symbolized with the intensity, the muffled intensity, which a butterfly or moth feels when with its sticky tremulous legs and antennae it pushes out of the chrysalis and emerges and sits quivering beside the broken case for a moment; its wings still creased; its eyes dazzled, incapable of flight (SP 124).

Certainly the reader's implicit alliance with the hotel guests suggests that we, too, should make the effort to read those texts in order to reach a better understanding of that psychic space; for, without this
further knowledge, we might not be able to fully appreciate the victory of the living half, seeing only the young Virginia "sitting there on the edge of [her] broken chrysalis" (SP 124) and wondering whether or not she ever took flight. Woolf's invitation to consider her fiction as part of what contributes to her subjectivity intimates a very successful attempt, telegraphing yet another rejection of the idea that autobiography as a genre is necessarily limited to the realm of fact.

Thus, it is not that Woolf fails to provide us with any explanation whatsoever, only that what we receive is less of an answer than it is a demonstration. And surely, for the reader with expectations of linear continuity, the following "scene" is something of a disappointment, for once again Woolf returns to St Ives. What is peculiar about this scene, however, is that Woolf does not return to her earliest recollection, but instead to a moment which predates her birth. In fact, she relates that she "was to be born in the following January" (SP 127). What Woolf has written, in other words, is complete fabrication, something which confirms her idea that this autobiography, like the fiction she writes, is a "loose story" (SP 124). More peculiar still is the fact that Woolf's stated intention here, to describe herself in relation to Vanessa and Thoby (SP 125), invokes an idea she expressed earlier in the "Sketch", that in order "to describe oneself truly one must have some standard of comparison" (SP 65, emphasis mine). All of which invites us to consider an interesting contradiction. How can she describe herself "truly" in relation to what she has already acknowledged as a fiction? The answer, of course, is that she cannot, that she must also include herself as part of the fiction. Her return to
St Ives, therefore, is not so much an act of repetition as it is an act of self-revision. It is as though the actual process of writing the autobiography has brought Woolf to the realization that she herself is as much a part of the construct as anything else. If only to confirm our suspicions, the following description of her brother Thoby at St Ives seems to occupy a border region somewhere between reality and fiction, so closely resembling many of the passages in To the Lighthouse that it is difficult to tell which one came before the other. But whether it is a fictional reality or a real fiction is not particularly relevant, for, in any case, it demonstrates that Woolf "came to think of life as something of extreme reality. And this of course increased [her] sense of [her] own importance" (SP 137).

This heightened sense of reality is most acute in Woolf's final autobiographical entry, in which she attributes to herself the perspective of a complete outsider. Recalling her father not as the paterfamilias or even as an individual, but as a part of his social environment and its attendant ideologies, she represents herself as a gypsy girl who has happened upon a great circus which piques her curiosity (SP 152). She stands apart from "the game of Victorian Society" (SP 150) and looks in at all of the people who "played" in accordance with its rules. What Woolf sees here is quite revealing, not because she is looking at the way things "really" were, but because of the extreme angle of vision she attaches to the scene. 22 Hyde Park Gate is no longer a cage, but a patriarchal machine she regards from her distant (and distancing) metaphorical perspective; her father is the "framework" and George, who now appears to be the "perfect fossil of the
Victorian age" (SP 151), "fill[s] in the framework with all kinds of minutely-teethed saws" (SP 152). Moreover, any girl who inhabited that "ruthless machine [...] had no chance against its fangs. No other desires--say to paint, or to write--could be taken seriously" (SP 157). Thus, from this external and distant perspective, Woolf is able to show us the inherent contradiction of a younger self, the fact that she, like many women of her day, hung precariously in the balance between the inside and outside of their societal codes. So long as she was content to be the specular other by which her father and her brothers could define their familial dominance, she was accepted as part of the machine; but, any step taken towards her own subjectivity, any motion to break the gender rules, and she was quickly ousted by its merciless fangs. More importantly, Woolf shows us that it is infinitely preferable to be an outsider in a society of one's own choosing, for as an autobiographical subject who has configured (and reconfigured) her "self" to a point where her perspective no longer straddles two worlds, or two halves of a room, she is demonstrating that she has finally taken flight, that she has not only found her form, but also her signature.

From Reflection to Reframing: An Evolution of the Self

Retracing the various modes of self-representation employed by Woolf over the course of thirty-three years, from "Reminiscences" (1907) to "A Sketch of the Past" (1939-1940), we discover a kind of map, a map which not only indicates the constant relocation of her subject
position, but also the shifting attitude of her writing self towards her own subjectivity. In "Reminiscences", the authorial self, apprenticed in the ways of Victorian autobiography and bearing the stamp of patriarchal dominance, is difficult to separate from the authored subject whose domestic situation and absent presence seem perfectly compatible with androcentric convention. And yet, even without Occam's razor, we may discern the nascent signs of tension. The patriarchal norms are implicitly challenged by the predominately matriarchal focus; the private emphasis of the subject matter is countered by the public endeavour of the autobiography itself; and the relational subjectivity inherent in the biographical portraiture is tempered by the hint of a shared subjectivity between Woolf and her sister Vanessa.

In the Memoir Club contributions, the separation between Woolf's writing self and written self becomes far more evident. Woolf has dispensed with most of the Victorian formality that haunts the earlier piece. The completely othered self, presumably a Victorian pose of modesty, has given way to a clearly delineated presence, both in terms of the narrating "I" and the sexual body. Nowhere is this more apparent than in "Old Bloomsbury," with Woolf not only introducing the independent voice of her diary, but also a sexual frankness which is unprecedented. The pretence of objectivity, likewise, has been replaced by an awareness of the subjectivity of subjectivity. Choosing to ironize instead of idealize and opting for artistic arrangement instead of linear organization, Woolf is beginning to assert her authorship. She is also beginning to question the relationship between autobiography and fiction, for where the earlier piece employed fictional touches for
decorous and decorative purposes, these interim attempts at autobiography seem to acknowledge the common subjective ground that supports both genres.

Finally, with "A Sketch of the Past," Woolf's inscribing attitude towards the self she inscribes is decidedly more complex. Woolf, the author, has become much more self-conscious. The question now is not so much a matter of the subject at hand as it is a matter of how that subject is rendered. In other words, Woolf is not simply revising the way in which she chooses to depict the scene, but actually revising the way in which she sees the relationship between herself as autobiographer and herself as the remembered subject. And perhaps, for this reason, the designation of "sketch" is most appropriate, since the piece is constantly shifting its perspective, never allowing its outlines to take on any distinctive form. From the slippery ambiguities of her grape-eyeball, to the great hall with its sidelines of influence, to the gypsy who stands apart from the circus of Victorian society, the lens through which we view Woolf's reality is never the same.

But more importantly, the lens through which Woolf views herself is equally unstable. She begins with an idea of her autobiographical self as eavesdropper, the notion that memory, like sound, must be intense enough to pierce through the wall of the past—that firm boundary which separates the writing and the written self. Finding this explanation somewhat inadequate, however, Woolf decides that the wall is actually more like cotton wool, a permeable haze of non-being upon and through which special moments emerge with overwhelming clarity. Although Woolf's sense of these nearly epiphanic moments dictates a certain
artistic passivity, the boundary between past and present selves is nevertheless breaking down, for seemingly Woolf recognizes that her presence as an author is somehow linked to the presence in the text. Indeed, her subsequent shift acknowledges this connection, as she makes a deliberate effort to include the present in the past. Each diary-like entry announces her presence with the inclusion of a brief passage which details the moment of inscription and, furthermore, serves as a platform from which to launch her memory of the past. And thus, within the scope of the "Sketch" alone, Woolf has gone from an author who feels dominated by her memories to an author who consciously dominates her recollection, from an idea that the form will choose itself to an idea that she alone can choose her form.

In terms of subjectivity, therefore, Woolf has completely abandoned the idea of autobiography as an objective historical account. If there is any mirror of reality here at all, it is one which reflects her struggle to break away from traditional modes of representation, modes which seem to have the "power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size" (Woolf 1928: 37). Hence, Woolf's transition from the "looking glass consciousness" (Gray 81) of the earliest entry to the highly subjective reality of the later entries is extremely significant, for it not only signals her desire to break away from the smooth, linear surface of the looking glass narrative, but also indicates that she has come through the looking glass, to a subject position which no longer depends upon that reflected reality. The process of self-revision, in other words, has taken her from resignation to reassignment.
NOTES

1. Although James King's Virginia Woolf (London: Penguin, 1994) claims to be the "first full-scale literary biography" (xvi) of Woolf, Hermione Lee's more recent Virginia Woolf (London: Chatto and Windus, 1996) is every bit as exhaustive, and possibly more so in terms of drawing out the connections between Woolf's literature and autobiography. Another formidable source, however, is Roger Poole's The Unknown Virginia Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978; 2nd ed. 1995) which, because of its attempt to move away from the canonicity of Quentin Bell's biography and Leonard Woolf's autobiography, strives to read the autobiographical back into the fiction.

2. These memoirs were not published until 1976 with Jeanne Schulkind's collected edition Moments of Being (New York: HBJ, 1976).

3. Any further citations from Moments of Being will acknowledge a specific text with the following shorthand: "Reminiscences" (REM); "22 Hyde Park Gate" (HFG); "Old Bloomsbury" (OB); "A Sketch of the Past" (SP).

4. The concept of persona, the social façade one adopts to satisfy his or her environment, would have been well known to Woolf, since she underwent an intermittent series of treatments for her breakdowns and depressions (ranging from the Darwinian to the Psychoanalytic) which began shortly after the death of her father in 1904. The Hogarth Press also published English language editions of Freud's works, although it is evident from Woolf's diaries that she did not read them until after the outbreak of World War II. Furthermore, the degree to which Freud influenced "A Sketch of the Past" is somewhat uncertain. Louise DeSalvo argues that Woolf's new found acquaintance with Freudian ideology "urged her to abandon her own insights" (127), while Hermione Lee suggests that Woolf was always much more dismissive than dismayed. Here, at least, it would appear that Woolf does not invoke the accommodative connotations attached to the idea of persona.

5. In a 1927 essay called "The New Biography" Woolf would eventually acknowledge "the draperies and decencies" of the Victorian literary conventions which coloured her first autobiographical attempt, recognizing her predisposition to "censored, reverential" accounts (Lee 9).

6. It is interesting to note here that Woolf's later conception of artistic "talent" would come to include a notion of direct and indirect influence, an idea that even the "lives of the obscure" contribute to "the production of culture by the 'talented'" (Howe 6-7). See Florence Howe ed., Tradition and the Talents of Women (Urbana and Chicago: U of Illinois, 1991).
7. Although the substance of these two memoirs are remarkably similar, Hermione Lee's observation that the mood of the Mausoleum Book more closely resembles "A Sketch of the Past" casts an interesting sidelight on the idea of literary inheritance (Lee 29). Additionally, the year I have cited here is only an approximation, since Leslie Stephen wrote the bulk of the Mausoleum Book between May and July of 1895. The actual process of writing continued until his death in 1904 and the text itself was not published until 1977 (Edited with introduction by Alan Bell. Oxford: Clarendon Press).

8. Christopher Dahl's article "Virginia Woolf's Moments of Being and Autobiographical Tradition in the Stephen Family" (Journal of Modern Literature 10 [June 1983]: 175-196) places each of Woolf's memoirs in patrilineal context, discussing how they relate in form and content to the memoirs of James Stephen (Leslie Stephen's grandfather), the diary of Sir James Stephen (Leslie's father), the autobiography of George Stephen (his uncle), the autobiography of Fitzjames Stephen (Leslie's older brother), and Leslie Stephen's Mausoleum Book. One note of interest, however, is the fact that Dahl has no knowledge of whether or not Virginia Woolf ever read any of these memoirs. Although this would certainly strengthen the argument for family inheritance, one qualification does emerge in Hermione Lee's biography which documents that Woolf not only read her father's book, but also took dictation for the final portion he wrote just prior to his death (Lee 56-57; 69). This latter fact is also confirmed by the Mausoleum Book itself, which records the detail of Virginia's dictation on 14 November 1903. As for the rest of her ancestors, it is quite possible that Woolf had a decent second-hand knowledge from Fred Maitland's historical biography of her father.

9. All accounts of Leslie Stephen's involvement with this dictionary suggest that he was extremely obsessive about the project, nearly tripling the original volumage he had intended. The degree to which this obsession took hold is evidenced by the fact that Julia Stephen was forced to seek out the care of Dr Seton who strongly advised some method of mental release from the "incubus of this Dictionary" (Lee 100). As far as Virginia was concerned, therefore, this would have been a rather pervasive force in her life.

10. Jack Hills and Stella Duckworth, Julia Stephen's daughter from her previous marriage to Herbert Duckworth (d. 1870), were married for only a brief period before Stella's death on 19 July 1897. Soon after the marriage, Stella became ill with peritonitis, suffering several relapses, until finally her pregnancy caused a fatal complication. Woolf's veiled reference to the intimacy between Jack Hills and Vanessa may have further implications if one considers the fact that Vanessa's husband, Clive Bell, served as Woolf's primary advisor and proof reader while she was writing "Reminiscences." One might question in this case if Woolf was deliberately attempting to be nasty instead of just adhering to the codes of propriety. Hermione Lee's interpretation suggests that Virginia was indeed using her relationship with Clive as a
vehicle to disturb Vanessa, but out of a jealous love for her sister and not pure maliciousness (Lee 250).


12. As Hermione Lee has ventured, Clive Bell's function as the proof reader/editor of the text tends to blur the boundary between memoir and love-letter (Lee 235). Woolf "liked the idea of a nephew as an audience for her narratives" (Lee 235 emphasis mine), but she was much more interested in Clive Bell's approval, both from a literary and a romantic standpoint (Lee 248-249). In either case, whether appealing to a male authority figure whose predilection was for "lucid", "harmonious" prose (Lee 254) or striving to impress the man himself, it would appear that Woolf is conforming to a distinctly patriarchal code.

13. According to James King, the Memoir Club began its meetings on 4 March 1920, and was formed at the instigation of Molly McCarthy "in an attempt to provide a forum in which Desmond [her husband] might write something other than journalism" (King 282). Although Quentin Bell's and Hermione Lee's biographies both concur with this time frame (Bell 233; Lee 263), there is some question as to the membership of the group. Since there is a tremendous amount of overlap between the members of Old Bloomsbury and those of the Memoir Club, it is difficult to say where one group ends and the other begins. In any case, the group's primary activity was the reading of memoirs written expressly for the occasion of their meetings. Additional points of interest include the fact that the group had agreed upon "absolute frankness" (Schulkind, 161), and the fact that Woolf's initial response to the idea of publicly revealing her private self was quite negative (Lee 15-16), something which may partially explain her tendency towards "stylish performances" (Lee 18).

14. Just how commodified a woman of that age and in that age was is easily gleaned from the historical usage of the term "marriage market". Woolf's account of this nightmare of rituals and opportunism is surprisingly modest.

15. Worth noting is the fact that Woolf deliberately cut a passage about George which was potentially ambiguous and not completely compatible with her satiric aim: "He dreamt and he desired with great natural lust;
but as for giving either to himself or to others an account of his desires that was out of the question" (qtd. in Lee 155).

16. That Woolf jokingly referred to her "coming out" years as the "Greek slave years" (Lee 140) may perhaps offer a partial explanation for her confusion of the two texts. Another possibility is the fact that George was famous for intruding upon her Greek lessons (Lee 196). However, neither of these possibilities suggests whether the first or the second text provides the more accurate detail.

17. Although several critics discuss "A Sketch of the Past" in terms of Woolf's sexuality (Sidonie Smith and Louise DeSalvo most notably), Phyllis Rose is possibly the only one to underscore the overtly sexual nature of the language itself. See Woman of Letters: A Life of Virginia Woolf (New York: Oxford UP, 1978) 17.

18. I refer here to a passage from section one of Emerson's Nature which embodies the quintessential Romantic aesthetic of the visionary:

   Standing on the bare ground...all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part and parcel of God.


19. The Clapham sect was a "prosperous evangelical group dedicated to abolition" (King 15) and often viewed as "the conscience of the British middle classes" (Lee 59).

20. A point of clarification. The word "other" here is not meant to suggest that these are moments other than the ones attached to the previous metaphor. These moments, similarly, are profound instances of both good and bad. The only thing which has changed is Woolf's analogy.

21. David Bleich subscribes to a school of "subjective criticism" which not only allows for the validity of the reader's subjective interpretation of the textual object, but also the reinterpretation or "resymbolization" of that object through subsequent readings, a revisionary process not unlike the one we encounter in the whole of this text. Bleich's idea that each subjective notion eventually contributes to a larger collective knowledge is also compatible with Woolf's idea of how art is made, which she conceives as "both an active, controlling process, in which she orders reality by 'putting it into words'; and a passive, self-abnegating process, whereby she recognizes that what she is making is part of something pre-existing and universal" (Lee 173). See David Bleich, Subjective Criticism (Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1978).

22. Emily Dalgarno's reading of the mirror scene casts an interesting sidelight here, since it is her (Lacanian) belief that the absence of the mother's reassuring gaze is, in fact, more disturbing to Woolf than
what she sees reflected in the mirror in the first instance (Dalgarno 180).

23. Woolf's explanation, curiously enough, seems to respond to her own earlier query about Julia Stephen in "Reminiscences," "Where has she gone?" (REM 39).

24. According to Hermione Lee this "stoppage" in Stella's mind may have been caused by a childhood illness (Lee 121-122). Woolf's rather uncharitable portrait here lends credence to the fact that she is, in large part, cultivating the powers of her imagination.

25. Ironically enough, Hermione Lee seems to think that Woolf's portrait of Leslie Stephen is a "fair-minded tribute" (Lee 71).

26. Without wanting to suggest that this is the only instance of parody in Woolf's autobiographical works, I would assert nevertheless that this is, by far, the most obvious in terms of signposting her intent.

27. Hermione Lee makes the additional observation that the passage echoes many of the adjectives employed by Woolf in Jacob's Room and The Waves (Lee 115-116).
CHAPTER TWO

Setting the Record Straight:

Vera Brittain's Testament of Youth

Not that I much like her. A stringy metallic mind, with I suppose, the sort of taste I should dislike in real life. But her story, told in detail, without reserve, of the war, and how she lost lover and brother, and dabbed her hands in entrails, and was forever seeing the dead, and eating scraps, and sitting five on one WC, runs rapidly, vividly across my eyes (Virginia Woolf, 2 September 1933)\(^1\).

The idea that Woolf should not much like Brittain herself, but that she would lavish praise for a text which could evoke such powerful images, goes a long way toward an explanation of how the two women differed in their approach to autobiography. Woolf, throughout her autobiographical evolution, would always favour the personal, those outstanding moments of being which gave voice to her private sense of self. Brittain, on the other hand, would write Testament of Youth (1933) with the intent of speaking for an entire generation, of making her private experience resonate with public significance. But however unlike the two women were in terms of style, they were, in many other respects, engaged in the same autobiographical pursuit, for the process of self-revision which becomes evident in a progressive reading of Woolf's separate memoirs is one which, in Testament of Youth, is self-
contained. The tension between the voice of the experiencing subject--the Vera Brittain who outgrew the provincialism of Buxton, who attended Oxford University, and who served as a VAD\(^3\) during World War I--and the voice of the narrating subject--the Vera Brittain who inscribes and interprets the experience she recalls--not only accentuates the text's self-reflexive revision, but also exposes the same autobiographical reality which comes to light in Woolf, that ultimately there is always an authorial platform from which the whole has been executed.

The more obvious distinction, however, is between one woman who revisits the same scenes of her youth from four different authorial platforms, and another who, from a singular platform, visits one particular span of existence with the idea of rewriting history at the same time that she is writing about herself:

"Why should these young men have the war to themselves? Didn't women have their war as well? They weren't, as these men make them, only suffering wives and mothers, or callous parasites, or mercenary prostitutes. Does no one remember the women who began their war work with such high ideals, or how grimly they carried on when that flaming faith had crumbled into the grey ashes of disillusion? Who will write the epic of the women who went to the war?" (TE 77)\(^3\).

Indeed, Brittain's explicit desire to redress the shortcomings of the Great War autobiography marks a kind of revisionary intent which Woolf never manages to articulate, for as self-conscious as Woolf is about autobiography, she never designates a generic focal point. But Brittain, almost in imitation of the soldiers who occupy the majority of these
works, takes aim at that particular sub-species which in the decade following the war had been fondly dubbed the "trench autobiography".

In large part, it was the very monopoly of the trench autobiography that fuelled Brittain's fire, for it seemed to her not only that war literature had been dominated by men, but also that soldiers' first-hand accounts had all too narrowly circumscribed the reality of the Great War. Therefore, like many of her male contemporaries, Brittain has as her primary autobiographical impulse the correction or amendment of an unreliable historical record--with one substantial difference, of course, since the unreliable record in this case is the androcentric front-line version of the war which already claims itself as adequate redress to the inadequacies of official history. In other words, the record Testament of Youth is attempting to set straight is the idea that the soldiers were the only participants in the war and, consequently, the only possible locus of authenticity. Clearly, Brittain does not concur. Furthermore, the fact that she has signalled a challenge to both the official and androcentric versions of history suggests that Brittain is also at odds with the assumption of greatness which normally attends the war autobiography, for with the intimation that her version of things will ultimately complete the story, she implies not only that her subjective account is just as valuable as those delivered by her male contemporaries, but also that as a female author she is no longer willing to resign herself to a sub-cultural stance.

Thus, as an attempt to revise the definitional boundaries of the trench autobiography, Testament of Youth is remarkable both in terms of
expanding the idea of Great War literature and in terms of autobiographical subjectivity. In the first instance, Brittain's disclosure of a female perspective, and particularly of her experience as a VAD, an experience that falls somewhere between the customary opposition of the home-front and the front-lines, effectively prevents us from assuming the usual equivalence between the World War I narrative and the trench autobiography. In a sense, Brittain is telling us that there is a kind of literary No Man's Land beyond the rigid conventions of the trench autobiography, a place which is neither bound by gender nor the exclusivity of experience.

That Brittain's account manages to traverse the front-lines of the genre, I believe, is equally the result of her self-representational strategies, the way in which she inscribes her subjectivity. In spite of the appearance of many trench-like tropes, Brittain's attitude towards these conventions is marked by an ambiguity and a self-consciousness which sets her quite apart from the majority of her male contemporaries. Certainly, on one level, Testament of Youth is fraught with many of the same contradictions. Brittain is compelled by her desire to commemorate the dead, and yet overwhelmed by her survivor's guilt, just as eager to forget the horrors she witnessed. Her strong need to impose narrative order, likewise, could easily be misconstrued as an attempt to defuse an otherwise chaotic reality. And her infusion of additional documentary sources might similarly give the illusion of immediacy where, in fact, none exists. However, on another level, Testament of Youth has, to some extent, redrawn the battle lines, because in every instance that the text intersects with convention, Brittain not only pushes the envelope
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by introducing those very elements which are often suppressed in the name of creating a seamless narrative, but also, by virtue of raising these incompatible aspects to the fore, she openly acknowledges the contradictions inherent in the assumptions of documentary realism and autobiographical objectivity. Thus, what sets Brittain apart is not so much the construction of a new form, but rather her self-conscious ability to expose the fault lines of the genre. Enacting a textual battle with convention, she invites us, by way of autobiographical realism, to reconsider the standards by which we normally judge the autodiegetic accounts of World War I.

Implicit in my analysis of Brittain's text is a body of criticism, both feminist and postmodern, which has recently formed around the Great War autobiography, in particular such revisionary studies as Claire Tylee's *The Great War and Women's Consciousness: Images of Militarism and Womanhood in Women's Writing 1914-1964* (1990) and Evelyn Cobley's *Representing War: Form and Ideology in First World War Narratives* (1993). Since my argument is an attempt to illustrate how Brittain's text not only reassigns the position of the female autobiographer, but also redefines the notion of the Great War autobiography, I would like to begin with a brief discussion of the trench autobiography, both as it was traditionally received and from the point of view of feminism and literary representation. With this as my theoretical springboard, then, I will proceed with a close reading of the text which, first, situates Brittain in relation to her autobiographical contemporaries and then, finally, demonstrates how Brittain's points of departure constitute a
revision of both the specific genre of World War I autobiography and the larger category of autobiography in general.

Redrawing the Battle Lines:
The Myth of the Lost Generation Revisited

In the years just prior to Brittain's publication of Testament of Youth, the trench autobiography had gained enormous popularity. As Martin Ceadel's study of late 1920s war literature attests, the more serious accounts of the war were beginning to take hold of the commercial market. And with the publication of such notable works as Richard Aldington's Death of a Hero (1928), Edmund Blunden's Undertones of War (1928), Sigfried Sassoon's Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man (1928) and Memoirs of an Infantry Officer (1930), Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front (1929), and Robert Graves' Goodbye to All That (1929), the pressure for Brittain to capitalize on such a boom was overwhelming, so much so, in fact, that by 1933 both Brittain and her London publisher, Victor Gollancz, were perhaps more anxious to see the book finished than to forego its popularity. In other words, the trench autobiography was just as much a commercial enterprise as a literary genre, a phenomenon which is not especially unusual, but one which certainly accounts, at least in part, for the history of the Great War autobiography. The preponderance of first-hand battlefield memoirs was nearly guaranteed by the mutual reinforcement of popular and critical fashion, while autobiographical works from beyond the front-
lines remained primarily in the shadows, published privately or by lesser known presses, and receiving little or no critical acclaim. And since these were often the works of women who were not permitted to fight, but could only gain indirect experience of the war either through volunteer work, nursing or correspondence, the rather predictable division between the trench autobiography and other autobiographical forms had also become a very pronounced division of gender.

Europe, it seems, was determined to remember its war as almost exclusively masculine. The "myth of the lost generation" would invariably become the story of all those young men at the Front who fought and died on behalf of democracy, of the best and the brightest lost forever, because it was, after all, a story told by the returning voices of their compatriots. That this was an ideology as much perpetuated by the literature itself as by the cold facts of the wartime casualty lists was of little concern to the public at large, for in the end it was what they wanted to believe, that the only "truth" of war had emerged from the fighting young men in the trenches. In fact, as Dorothy Goldman sees it in Women Writers and the Great War, "it became an act of postwar piety to nurture such myths and to give the writing that embodied them cultural pride of place" (Goldman 1995: 101).

However, to look more carefully at the writing which supposedly "embodied" this collective narrative, at the actual character of these so-called trench autobiographies, is to recognize the difference between myth and reality. In the first instance, trench autobiographies in general are not about the honourable deaths of the young soldiers. Arguably, they are not about anything at all, since many of them are, in
fact, devoid of plot in any traditional sense. To be sure, one can
discern a structural pattern, but this pattern is more episodic than
unified. As William Blissett's rather reductive outline of the typical
Great War narrative reveals, there is nothing especially compelling
about the events themselves:

the outbreak of war, enlistment, training, embarkation, the
base, marching to the line, the sound of bombardment, the
first shell, the line, digging in, under fire, the first
death, relief, leave, return, on patrol, in combat, the
suffering of hardships or wounds or sickness, the end
(Blissett 258).

Indeed, the dominant narrative device in these first-hand documentary
accounts of the war is description. The text calls forth its
authenticity through a succession of realistic details, a predominantly
referential methodology which, as Evelyn Copley has observed, is often
done at the expense of drama, characterization, plot development and
analysis (Cobley 31-33). The primary objective is to fulfil the demands
of historical realism, to convince the reader that what is being related
is not only accurate, but also as close to the real experience as one
can come.

To this end, the author assumes a unified subject position,
suppressing or depersonalizing the narrative self in order to elevate
the experiencing self, the person who actually endured all of the untold
horrors of trench warfare (Cobley 88). The narrator, in other words, is
extremely passive, less likely to intrude with interpretive remarks or
provide any lengthy analysis. The prevalent assumption is that the facts
will speak for themselves, and that the illusion of immediacy supersedes the need for explanation. So long as the process of transcription appears neutral and unemotional, the reader will be duped by the impression of objectivity (Cobley 76). For this reason, therefore, a great many of these accounts are written in what Cobley terms the "middle style", employing a tone of understated seriousness or detached irony (Cobley 97).

To those tutored in an older school of Great War criticism, this last point, in fact, emerges with an irony of its own, for according to the dictates of Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975), Robert Wohl's *The Generation of 1914* (1979), or Bernard Bergonzini's *Heroes' Twilight* (1980), this "middle style" fares much more prominently in these autobiographical accounts. Understatement or ironic detachment is much less a product of underlying narrative assumptions than a product of their authors' defining cynicism towards the war, the quality of which has been effectively (and most humorously) captured by Samuel Hynes' more recent study, *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (1990):

> A generation of innocent young men, their heads full of high abstractions like Honour, Glory, and England, went off to war to make the world safe for democracy. They were slaughtered in stupid battles planned by stupid generals. Those who survived were shocked, disillusioned and embittered by their war experiences, and saw that their real enemies were not the Germans, but the old men who had lied to them. They rejected the values of the society that had
sent them to war, and in doing so separated their own generation from the past and from their cultural inheritance (Hynes xii).

For Fussell and many others, it is this general disillusionment, together with the sense of alienation and the final rejection of traditional values, that determines the formal aspects of the trench autobiography. The "baldness of narrative style" and the "sharpness and exactness of observation" that Bergonzi identifies (Bergonzi 141; 145), the understated ironies, the surface metaphors, and the anti-heroic language that Fussell isolates, all seemingly emerge from this embittered attitude. The idea of separation from an older cultural inheritance is inscribed in the very method employed, or indeed the structure of the work itself, as is the case with several trench works that employ a kind of binary-vision, "a contrast between the brutal realities of war and the remembered or imagined beauties and harmonies of nature and the rural order" (Bergonzi 144). Edmund Blunden's Undertones of War, a prime example, is structured on the pastoral elegy, with the soldier in his trench implicitly likened to the shepherd at his watch.

Although there is nothing ostensibly wrong with most of these observations, there is a tendency amongst this earlier generation of critics to focus on the way in which the "myth of the lost generation" had found its autobiographical translation, whether in the pastoral undertones of Blunden or the caustic farce of Graves. Apart from Paul Fussell's interrogation of Goodbye to All That, very little effort has
been made to explore the relationship between memory and its representation in this group of war autobiographies. It is assumed for the most part that these recollections replicate the facts as faithfully as possible, even if the account is deliberately fictionalized, as we find in Sassoon's Sherston series. The exceptions are noted, but usually minimized in order not to interfere with the assumption of spontaneous authenticity. What all of this effects, therefore, is a notion of autobiography as historical record, the very equation that most of these works were attempting to achieve, since it was perceived that their intimate revelations would rectify, or even replace, the incomplete version of the war put forth by the official history. The fault with this kind of criticism, in other words, is not so much an error in judgement as it is a failure to recognize just how much it complies with the underlying assumptions of the autobiographies themselves.

In this respect, Evelyn Cobley's analysis of the autodiegetic war narrative and, in particular, her ability to elicit the inherent ideological contradictions which exist at the site of inscription, represents a substantial and welcome departure. Although Cobley deliberately focuses her attention on First World War narratives written by men, I believe her postmodern methodology will prove enormously useful for the study of women's texts as well, in part because it allows for an autobiographical subjectivity which extends beyond the scope of the experiencing "I", but also because it acknowledges a textual depth which acts as a deterrent to essentialized gender comparisons. Two larger strains of Cobley's argument are especially relevant where
Brittain's text is concerned: first, her discussion of various lexical, phenomenological and semiotic constraints that compete with the assumption of authenticity, the idea that a highly descriptive or referential mode duplicates a kind of historical realism; and secondly, her treatment of the narrative contradictions that impinge upon the assumption of objectivity, the idea that foregrounding the experiencing "I" can replicate the immediacy of the event. In both instances, what makes these contradictions significant is the fact that they are never taken into account by the male writers Cobley discusses. In other words, these authors assume their narrative poses quite blindly. The tensions, for example, between the dominant descriptive mode and the contingencies of selection, or the facts which do not actually speak for themselves, or the highly focalized points of view, are never questioned. In fact, to do so would constitute a type of surrender, an admission that this autobiography is less than it claims to be, less than real and less than authentic. Yet, as Cobley demonstrates, that is precisely the nature of autobiography. It is, after all, only representation, a narrative about its author, but nevertheless a narrative subject to all the pitfalls of textuality. Therefore, the fact that Brittain, as narrator, acknowledges many of these contradictions, that she, in a sense, admits to being an autobiographer instead of an historian, is quite remarkable, for she reveals a margin of difference which simultaneously distinguishes her authorship and questions the dominant assumptions of the genre.

Of course, from the feminist point of view, the failure to question the representational ability of these accounts is not just a matter of testing the definitional boundaries of Great War
autobiography; it is tantamount to obliterating the woman's war, since at root it is a failure to acknowledge any experience of the war beyond the experiences of men at the Front. For Dorothy Goldman, this kind of oversight carries dangerous implications:

If it is conceded that it was women's lack of battlefield experience that excluded their writing from literary consideration, then we grant warfare a central function in determining cultural significance; and if, conversely, women's writing is to be forgotten because women remained true to their own experiences, seldom wrote about mud, did not describe life in the trenches, then we enshrine men's perception of men's experience as the single determinant of literary culture (Goldman 1993: 2).

Simply put, the deformation of history and the deformation of the literary canon have been mutually reinforcing, and mostly to the detriment of women.

The fact, then, that Brittain's Testament of Youth was one of very few women's war texts to receive any recognition in its day is doubly significant: first, because its often begrudged inclusion in the wartime canon seems to make a case-in-point, particularly in light of recent recovery projects which reveal approximately seventy-two contemporary autobiographies written by women; and secondly, because it was popular in spite of its "unentrenched" subject matter, a strong suggestion that a woman's perspective could be equally compelling. That Brittain proves to be something of an exception to the rule, however, is not entirely unproblematic, for in some cases it simply exposes the fact
that the androcentric standard has become naturalized. A prime example can be found in Claire Tylee's somewhat contradictory analysis of the text. As a revisionary feminist, Tylee insists on the importance of including Testament of Youth in the war-time canon, and commends Brittain for her ground-breaking "generational autobiography" (Tylee 214). As a literary critic, however, Tylee has a few reservations concerning Brittain's exemplarity. Brittain's self-proclaimed ability to represent an entire generation of men and women fails on two counts: first, her inability to understand the men she writes about, in part because she has oversimplified the male experience, but also because she seems unaware of the psychology which contributed to the gulf between men and women during the war; and secondly, her inability to comprehend women, since she provides no feminist context and only seems interested in women of her own class (Tylee 214). What Tylee fails to recognize is the fact that she has judged Brittain in accordance with the androcentric ideology of the trench genre, for instance, the idea that it is necessary to delve into the soldier's psychology in order to fully capture the mood of the war. It never occurs to Tylee that such details may not only be wholly inappropriate to a woman's account of the war, but also beyond the scope of her experience because of the non-combatant restrictions placed on female service.

Just what exactly might constitute a typical account of the woman's war is another question entirely, and one not so easily answered. Sandra Gilbert's response in "Soldier's Heart: Literary Men, Literary Women and the Great War" suggests quite simply that women's more positive experience of the war produced a very different kind of
literary representation. Unlike the trench authors who expressed themselves in terms of cynicism, misogynistic anger or disempowerment as a result of their physical and psychological division from the home front, women writers were much more inclined to express themselves in terms of optimism and liberation because of their newly-gained political and economic freedoms. In other words, the war's temporary displacement of "patriarchal primacy" (Gilbert 425) had not only contributed to the cause of women's suffrage and the increase of women's employment, but also to the quality of women's writing. In fact, as Gilbert sees it, the war produced a kind of sexual release for women, which expressed itself in their writing as anything from heightened sensuality to very explicit depictions of sex. Thus, while men were presumably bonding out of necessity over their common alienation, women were uniting over a sense of common victory, so much so that Gilbert is even willing to suggest that the burgeoning of lesbian literature after the war is a direct consequence.

Certainly, as a feminist footnote to Paul Fussell's The Great War and Modern Memory or Bernard Bergonzi's Heroes' Twilight, Gilbert's essay is a very welcome addition to the critical canon, for it not only makes the point that women's war literature is worthy of consideration, but also that it must be regarded from an entirely different perspective. Where the argument falls short, however, is in its strict adherence to the oppositional logic of gender, for Gilbert's homogenous idea of women, together with her selective use of examples, effectively elides the differences that exist between women writers, particularly women of different classes and different occupations. I raise this issue
specifically because of its relevance to Vera Brittain, whose difference is noted once again as an exception to the rule, only here it is not her departure from the androcentric model that is emphasized, but rather her inability to conform with the dominant female pattern. Gilbert fixes on Brittain's lamenting tone, her sense of alienation (Gilbert 425) and her inhibited attitude toward sex (Gilbert 436), and decides, in fact, that she is much more masculine than feminine in her outlook. Seemingly, the only point of commonality between Brittain and her female contemporaries is her expression of "'gratitude' for the 'sacred glamour' of nursing" (Gilbert 435).

Although Gilbert's perspective is somewhat single-minded, her discussion of Brittain's nursing as one female point of intersection raises several thorny issues about the perception of this specific female occupation, particularly in light of the fact that for many, and especially for the VADs themselves, this occupation was seen as the female equivalent to the soldier. In other words, one could argue just as effectively that Brittain's experience in a military organization devoted to the care of wounded soldiers had more in common with the accounts written by her male contemporaries. The fact that Gilbert has chosen to underscore the conservative, feminine aspect of devotional sacrifice is thus both curious and revealing, for while, on one hand, it seems to belie her feminist politics, on the other hand, it suggests the powerful allure of the war-time propaganda which often depicted the nurse as a hybrid of mother, lover, nun, and virgin. Gilbert's analysis of Alonzo Earl Foringer's 1918 Red Cross War Relief poster makes this point rather neatly. The poster, depicting a very large Red Cross nurse
holding a miniature soldier on a stretcher, below which is written: The Greatest Mother in the World, is for Gilbert confirmation of the positive, restorative powers of the maternal (Gilbert 436). From another point of view, however, it is also confirmation of the kind of Christian submissiveness so often associated with the Marion role, of the "sacred glamour" that Gilbert draws to our attention in the first place. And yet, beyond recognizing the parody involved, Gilbert never considers that this "bizarre intersection of the Madonna and child and the Pietà" (Ouditt 20) might bear conflicting connotations.

More to the point, however, it never occurs to Gilbert that the idea of the war nurse avails itself of more than one possible interpretation, that it may be seen as liminal not only in terms of physical location, but also in terms of gender identity. For while, on one hand, nursing is one of many distinctly female experiences of the war, on the other hand, it is also an experience which occupies the boundary of the masculine. As such, it is one which allows us to question, perhaps with even more feminist potential than Gilbert's argument, the very rigid association of trench autobiography and Great War literature. In Brittain's case, especially, the subject position of the VAD is fraught with such contradiction that it is impossible to locate with any amount of precision. But certainly the fact that it is also a position heavily inflected by the ideology of the narrating author changes its complexion even further. Therefore, to return to Dorothy Goldman's caveat about the necessity of including women's literature in the war-time canon, I would add that it is equally important to look at the quality of each author's representation,
particularly in a text where the subject matter tells only half the story.

The Unentrenched Voice

From Brittain's opening page, where she announces "the honour of sharing with Robert Graves the subject of [her] earliest recollection" (TY 17), to her mention of that "very articulate group of young writers [...] who were seriously analysing the effect of the War upon themselves and their world" (TY 497), and her peppering throughout of various war poets, the reader emerges with a very strong sense of the literary context out of which Testament of Youth arose. And not surprisingly, that context is almost exclusively masculine, for conspiring to create such a lopsided impression was not only the popularity of trench literature in general, but also Brittain's own ignorance about female war writing. Together these factors suggest an anxiety of influence which for most women was not so easily escaped. Women who wanted to write about the war were in a most uncomfortable position. On one hand, they were anxious to express their gender-specific experiences--what it was like to be a nurse, a munitions worker, a desolated lover, a bereaved mother--and, on the other hand, they suffered a kind of formal crisis, wondering whether their choices for documentation--letters, diaries, poems, short stories, novels--were appropriate to the subject. The question for women, in other words, was often one of validation. How could they express themselves in a manner befitting the importance of their part in the war? For some, the choice of expression was more
private, and hence not as popular as the androcentric version of war in the trenches. In fact, the store of women's letters and private documents on file at the British War Museum would suggest that a great deal of the literature written by women was never intended for publication. But for others, the decision to go public was a necessary part of the validating process, as was the choice to employ a form reminiscent of those found in the majority of the trench works. For, although one has to allow for the anxiety of masculine influence, one must also concede that this influence was recognized by many as a powerful expedient for conveying their gender-specific messages.

In Brittain's case, I would argue that it was probably a little of both, since the testament form was something she decided upon after several unsatisfactory attempts to narrate her war experience. In 1922, she discovered rather quickly that the private revelations of her diary did not have the literary cachet that she had hoped (Bishop 1981: 13). And after several fictional incarnations, she realized, as she notes in the Foreword, that she needed "retrospective reflections heavy with knowledge" in order to bear the weight of her "indictment of a civilization" (TY 12). The process of writing her experience, in other words, was a process of discovering that the gravity of her situation could only really be expressed in documentary form. The assumption, unfortunately, is one which reinforces the belief that only "those who were there" are qualified narrators, for although Brittain was never actually in the trenches, the implication of her desire to fulfil the historical demands of her story puts her there in spirit.
Indeed, to look at many of the formal aspects of Brittain's text is to realize the extent to which the trench autobiography exercised its influence. And yet, for every point of similarity, there is also something distinctively different about Brittain's choice of self-representation. The pose of exemplarity, for instance, which she assumes in the opening lines of the Foreword, bears a striking resemblance to the autobiographical poses adopted by many a male contemporary. Brittain wanted
to write something which would show what the whole War and post-war period—roughly, from the years leading up to 1914 until about 1925—has meant to the men and women of my generation, the generation of those boys and girls who grew up just before the War broke out. I wanted to give too, if I could, an impression of the changes which that period brought about in the minds and lives of very different groups of individuals belonging to the large section of middle-class society from which my own family comes.

Only, I felt, by some such attempt to write history in terms of personal life could I rescue something that might be of value, some element of truth and hope and usefulness, from the smashing up of my own youth by the War (TY 11).

In other words, like many of the trench autobiographers who preceded her, Brittain is very intent on setting the record straight. She not only presumes to speak on behalf of an entire generation of middle-class men and women, but also to create an impression of their lives at that time, and to write that history from a more intimate, and hence more
"authentic", point of view. However, the arrogance implicit in the assumptions of objectivity and authenticity which colour this statement of intent soon gives way to a self-conscious consideration of the narrative task at hand:

It is true that to do it meant looking back into a past of which many of us, preferring to contemplate to-morrow rather than yesterday, believe ourselves to be tired. But it is only in the light of that past that we, the depleted generation now coming into the control of public affairs, the generation which has to make the present and endeavour to mould the future, can understand ourselves or hope to be understood by our successors. I knew that until I had tried to contribute to this understanding, I could never write anything in the least worth while (TY 11).

The idea that her account will present us with anything approaching transparent history is deflated not only by the admission that this autobiography represents a kind of private contribution, but also, and more importantly, by the way in which Brittain acknowledges her narrative self, the present-day Vera Brittain who is going to look back into the past. For this, right from the very beginning, serves as a gentle reminder that both the illusion of objectivity and the illusion of immediacy are just that--illusions. We may be tempted to mistake Brittain's pose for an assumption of unitary subjectivity, complete with the idea that autobiographies are capable of a neutral and accurate transcription of events, but, in the end, we cannot overlook the way in which Brittain underscores the autobiographical reality.
Of course, part of this acknowledgement is a product of the "complex double function" many women performed during the war, as "actors in their own war and spectators of the soldiers' war" (Goldman 1995: 102). The feeling of being simultaneously on the inside and the outside lent itself quite readily to a split perspective or a split subjectivity in their writing. Thus, while the trench autobiographers were supposedly plagued by the binary-vision which separated Front from home, many of the female writers were struck by an equally imposing binary, marking the same opposition, only now seen through the looking glass. What is different, though, is the way in which women inscribed this binary in their writing, for rather than simply lamenting the destructive psychological effects of the division or presenting it symbolically, women were much more apt to discuss those effects openly or to seek some kind of explanation (Goldman 1995: 105).

So, too, is the case with Vera Brittain, who, at least on three separate occasions, discusses the impediment of the war at some length: first, as a "barrier of indescribable experience between men and the women whom they loved, thrusting horror deeper and deeper inward, linking the dread of spiritual death to the apprehension of physical disaster" (TY 143); second, as a "terrible barrier of knowledge by which War cut off the men who possessed it from the women who, in spite of the love that they gave and received, remained in ignorance" (TY 215); and finally, as a "dividing influence [which] moved [her] to irrational fury against [...] the spiritually destructive preoccupations of military service" (TY 217). To the latter, she adds: "I had not yet realized--as I was later to realize through my own mental surrender--that only a
process of complete adaptation, blotting out tastes and talents and even memories, made life sufferable for someone face to face with war at its worst" (TY 217). Therefore, in terms of authorial subjectivity, Brittain's assumption of exemplarity is somewhat more complex than either Claire Tylee or Sandra Gilbert allow. Certainly, as a "generational" exemplar, she adopts a typically androcentric pose. However, as a narrator who also provides self-conscious analysis, Brittain is clearly much closer to her female or non-combatant contemporaries, because, unlike most of the trench authors, she does not presuppose the implicit understanding of her readers (Goldman 1995: 105), but rather communicates her sense of the incommunicable. The duality of her narration, in fact, telegraphs her occupation of both a literal and a figurative No Man's Land, her liminal position between those who experienced trench warfare and those whose second-hand knowledge was not enough to presume absolute understanding.

For this reason, as well, Brittain's accounts of the war are marked by a kind of borderland perspective—all of the horror, but none of the mud. In other words, like many of the trench autobiographers, she conveys a strong sense of "the physical and psychological shock that the Great War caused" (TY 45), but, as many of her fellow non-combatants, she can only give us that sense from the outsider's point of view. Brittain's first experience with death provides a very telling example:

Although surprised at my own equanimity, I had not yet acquired the self-protective callousness of later days, and I put into the writing of my diary that evening an emotion comparable to the feeling of shock and impotent pity that
had seized Roland when he found the first dead man from his platoon at the bottom of the trench (TY 176, emphasis mine). Evidently, she had received information from her fiancé, Roland, about life in the trenches, enough to feel a kind of empathy; but, in the final analysis, the best she can effect is a kind of comparison. Not that Brittain’s perspective is in any way depleted or less interesting, only that it is necessarily affected by her experience as a VAD who saw most of the war’s devastation from another angle of vision:

After the Somme I had seen men without faces, without eyes, without limbs, men almost disembowelled, men with hideous truncated stumps of bodies, and few certainties could have been less endurable than my gruesome speculations (TY 339).

Again, the point of view of the outsider is difficult to overlook. The focus of Brittain’s description, revealing her nurse’s perspective, is the aftermath of the battle. The battle itself is absent, belonging, as she intimates, to the realm of speculation.

On the other side of this split perspective, however, is also Brittain’s desire to relate the woman’s war in all of its glory, with no apologies for its difference. Indeed, a large part of the text’s function is political. Brittain is not just interested in the "physical and psychological shock" of the war, but how that shock affected the "Modern Girl of 1914" (TY 45). Therefore, at the same time that she is drawing our attention to the liminal position of the VAD, she is also attempting to ensure the acceptance of women in a military capacity. For, in spite of the fact that "the VAD, as a women’s organization, was not in a position to challenge or change the power system" (Ouditt 12),
it was for Brittain and many other young women an avenue of escape from the stultifying effects of Edwardian gender norms. "After twenty years of sheltered gentility," Brittain was anxious to see life (TY 213), to assert her individuality in any way she knew how:

I do not agree that my place is at home doing nothing or practically nothing, for I consider that the place now of anyone who is young and strong and capable is where the work that is needed is to be done (TY 214).

In other words, enlisting in the VAD was not just a way of being close to her beloved Roland, or an expression of sympathy for the soldiers in the war effort. It represented for Brittain, at least in the beginning, a way of doing "the next best thing" (TY 213-14), that is, a way of joining the women's war.

Unfortunately, as Brittain quickly discovers, the "sacred glamour" of the profession is tempered by a great deal of "tedium and disgust" (TY 210). But this, too, is politically expedient, for, seemingly, it demonstrates Brittain's ability to separate the symbolic quality of the VAD from the harsh reality of the day-to-day performance of the job:

At least a third of the men were dying; their daily dressings were not a mere matter of changing huge wads of stained gauze and wool, but of stopping haemorrhages, replacing intestines and draining and re-inserting innumerable rubber tubes. [...] I often wonder how we were able to drink tea and eat cake in the theatre--as we did all day at frequent intervals--in the foetid stench, with the thermometer about 90 degrees in the shade, and the saturated
dressings and yet more gruesome human remnants heaped upon
the floor (TY 374).
These atrocities, so far removed from the feminine construction of
nursing as a kind of devotional sacrifice, not only suggest that
Brittain's Victorian upbringing is a dim flicker in the background, but
also that she has truly fought a war of her own, that the cross on her
uniform is perhaps better likened to the figure of St George (Ouditt 10)
than that of a nun. And certainly, the association of the VAD with the
Virgin Mary is no longer appropriate, since part of what Brittain
acknowledges is her crash-course in sex education:
I still have reason to be thankful for the knowledge of
masculine functioning which the care of them gave me, and
for my early release from the sex-inhibitions that even to-
day--thanks to the Victorian tradition which up to 1914
ddictated that a young woman should know nothing of men but
their faces and their clothes until marriage pitchforked her
into an incompletely visualized and highly disconcerting
intimacy--beset many of my female contemporaries, both
married and single (TY 165-66).
Thus, in response to Sandra Gilbert's notion that Testament of Youth is
less characteristically female because of Brittain's sexual inhibitions,
I would argue, to the contrary, not only that Brittain discusses
sexuality, but also that her discussion of it belongs very specifically
to her female experience of the war.
Where Brittain seems, once again, to expose the anxiety of
masculine influence is only towards the end of the book where her
articulations on the subject of nursing delve into a kind of pessimism reminiscent of the trench accounts. Here, Gilbert's observations are much more apt, as we find Brittain remarking (with all of the self-deprecation Gilbert would also attribute to the male accounts) that she is "nothing but a piece of wartime wreckage, living on ingloriously in a world that doesn't want [her]" (ty 490). Moreover, Brittain's nightmarish accounts of the post-war "hallucinations and dreams and insomnia" she experienced as a result of the "excessive strain" of her profession have led to a kind "sinister transformation" (ty 496). She has "drifted to the borderland of craziness" (ty 496), imaging each time that she passes a mirror that her face is deformed, or that she has grown a beard. In other words, "the effects of the horrors of war ate into the most obvious elements of her gendered identification" (ouditt 38). The "chocolate-box prettiness" (ty 211), the femininity of which she was quite conscious earlier in the text, is now completely altered. But the fact that the war seems to have displaced her sense of identity is not, as Gilbert might suggest, a quintessentially masculine trait. Arguably, it is a trait common to all human beings who have endured such extreme suffering. Furthermore, the fact that Brittain has suffered a loss of feminine identity might do more to suggest that the war has finally brought her to the brink of feminist existence, for although it is her initial rejection of the role of "provincial young lady" that causes her to join the VAD in the first place, it is her actual experience with the horrors of warfare that causes her to question the nature of such roles.
Indeed, for Brittain, a large part of the war's effect involves the dissolution of the boundary between the private, domestic realm and the public sphere of influence:

Now, like the rest of my generation, I have had to learn again and again the terrible truth of George Eliot's words about the invasion of personal preoccupations by the larger destinies of mankind, and at last to recognize that no life is really private, or isolated, or self-sufficient (TY 471-72).

As a constant refrain throughout the autobiography, the tension between public and private identity not only plays a dominant thematic role, but also emphasizes, once again, the female version of binary-vision. In fact, beginning with her days at Oxford, when she perceives the war as a terrible intrusion upon her private life, and ending with her career as a lecturer for the League of Nations, which she views as a happy compromise between public and private obligation, there is always a sense that, for Brittain, this tension was as much a formative experience as the war itself:

What exhausts women in wartime is not the strenuous and unfamiliar tasks that fall upon them, nor even the hourly dread of death for husbands or lovers or brothers or sons; it is the incessant conflict between personal and national claims which wears out their energy and breaks their spirit (TY 422-23).
Of course, these competing claims were something which exhausted many men as well, and, in this respect, I would be reluctant to suggest that Brittain's gender-specification was necessarily just. However, as a heightened expression of the "incompatible claims with which women have always been tormented" (Goldman 1995: 43), and, more importantly, as an autobiographical expression of these claims, Brittain's concentration on these issues is most definitely an inscription of female subjectivity. Certainly, in terms of her male contemporaries, Brittain's exploration of her private self is already most unusual, since the emphasis in the vast majority of the trench works is decidedly public, treating only the most referential aspects of the war. The psychology, if it exists, tends to expose itself in the various narrative tropes employed by these writers, but it is never explored with any amount of analytical attention. And so, to privilege the psychological tension between the claims of private and public, as Brittain does in Testament of Youth, distinguishes her female authorship to a considerable degree.

But finally, whether we acknowledge that Brittain's female subjectivity is a product of her ability to exploit her liminal position as a VAD or a function of her attention to more private issues of the war, it is difficult to overlook the way in which Brittain's narrative self manages to impose a feminist perspective over the whole of the text. This, perhaps more than anything else, sets Brittain apart from her male contemporaries, for it not only calls attention to her ideological predisposition, but also effectively underscores the constructedness of the autobiography. In other words, it is Brittain's way of informing the reader that her narrative subjectivity plays just
as significant a role as the subject who dominates the recalled experience.

Since there is more of an ideological compatibility between the experiencing self and the narrating self towards the end of the autobiography, I will draw my example from the beginning, where the simple fact that her experiencing self has not yet actively adopted a feminist politic will make Brittain's narrative inflection much more apparent. In particular, I would like to focus on Brittain's recollection of her school days at St Monica's as something of a feminist foundation. She begins in the fifth part of Chapter One by telling us that the school was headed by two female principals, her aunt (Florence Bervon) and Miss Heath Jones. Brittain's choice of words here is quite significant; she refers to Miss Heath Jones as her aunt's "partner" (TY 32), a word which, in its very ambiguity, not only invokes a type of female solidarity, but also hints at their unconventional relationship. But perhaps more remarkable is the priority which Brittain assigns this information, since it is immediately suggestive of a much later arrangement which existed between herself and Winifred Holtby--two friends working and living together in an environment of mutual support--an arrangement which would, in fact, continue until Holtby's death in 1935. Although I would not venture to conclude that Brittain was writing with this parallel in mind, I do believe that her partnership with Holtby and her feminist politics in general at the time of writing likely influenced the way in which she chose to order the telling. Brittain's inclusion of the fact that Miss Heath Jones was "a brilliant, dynamic woman who had been educated at Cheltenham and
Newnham" (TY 32) provides us with a case-in-point, for without even mentioning that such a level of education would have been most unusual for a woman at the turn of the century, Brittain once again alerts us to the fact of who is writing the text, a woman whose own attendance at Oxford had been marked by a feminist struggle for both the matriculation and graduation of female students.¹⁶

Possibly one of the most obvious signs of Brittain's feminist imposition is the intrusive commentary she provides along the way. For instance, only a few pages into her discussion of St Monica's Brittain exposes herself quite plainly:

Only the other day a fellow-journalist, half rueful and half amused, told me that I had made a better thing out of sex equality than she had ever thought possible for such a portentous topic until I began to scatter articles on equal pay and married women's careers through the pages of the daily and weekly Press. If that is so, then I can only reply that I have written nothing on the various aspects of feminism which has not been based on genuine conviction, and that the foundations of that conviction were first laid, strangely enough, at a school which was apparently regarded by many of the parents who patronised it as a means of equipping girls to be men's decorative and contented inferiors (TY 38).

Underscoring her desire to interpret that period of her life as a feminist foundation is the remark which follows directly on the heels of this passage, that she had always suspected Miss Heath Jones of being
"secretly in sympathy with the militant suffrage raids and demonstrations which began after the foundation of the Women's Social and Political Union in 1905" (TY 38). Not surprisingly, from this point forward, Brittain portrays Miss Heath Jones as though she was, in fact, such a feminist, placing particular emphasis on her teacher's encouragement in reading Olive Schreiner's book, _Woman and Labour_, a text she identifies as both the Bible of the women's movement and the book which inspired her own final acceptance of feminism (TY 41).

Certainly, by itself, the pattern of events here would not be sufficient cause to suspect that Brittain has imposed any feminist template. However, while it is the case that Brittain often cited Olive Schreiner as her feminist influence, there are also a number of factors which suggest that Brittain is getting a little ahead of herself in this chapter recounting her school days. The first is that Brittain's "reaction on first reading _Woman and Labour_, during her last year at school, was by no means exceptional" (Bishop 1983: 82). In fact, as Alan Bishop documents, it was not until Roland Leighton gave her a copy of _The Story of an African Farm_ in April 1914 that Brittain developed any particular interest in Schreiner (Bishop 1983: 86-87). This, however, is an event she does not relate until Chapter Two, when she also tells us that Roland had "been a feminist ever since he discovered that his mother's work as well as his father's had paid for his education and their household expenses" (TY 84). Thereafter, her enthusiasm becomes apparent, as she remarks in her diary of 4 May 1914 that _The Story of an African Farm_ "is a great book & has made [her] head almost ache with thinking. Religion--life--the position of women--one may contemplate
them forever" (CY 80). Although she would refer repeatedly to Schreiner's influence in later articles she would write as a journalist, it is perhaps a little too soon to suggest her final acceptance of feminism with her first reading of Woman and Labour.

As an autobiographical transgression, however, Brittain's exposure of the fault lines between the experiencing self and the narrating self, her retrospective construction of a feminist subjectivity, hardly constitutes an error, for, in the end, it serves a very important function in Brittain's determined effort to write the woman's war epic. Like her insistence on writing a war autobiography not only as the life of a VAD, but also as the life of a woman torn by the competing claims of public and private, Brittain's feminist impositioning becomes yet another ideological inflection which reveals her female subjectivity. And, as such, it becomes another viable force pushing against the definitional walls of the genre. From a political perspective, in other words, it suggests that Brittain has not only forced open the narrative boundaries that kept women's war autobiographies from canonical recognition, but also that she is asserting another ideology as a substitute for the one which had nurtured the myth of the lost generation and assumed that trench literature was its only appropriate voice. Furthermore, with Brittain's own voice split between the subjectivity of the past and the subjectivity of the present, the arrogant assumption of unitary subjectivity that we find in so many of the trench works is effectively revised. Brittain's autobiographical selves demonstrate that one voice is no longer sufficient.
Where *Testament of Youth* becomes somewhat more confusing, however, is in the realm of form, for although Brittain's subjectivity raises little question of her departure from the generic norm, her adaptation of several trench-like tropes has many of the book's critics thoroughly confounded. Sandra Gilbert, emphasizing Brittain's language and tone, sees her account as more masculine than feminine. Deborah Gorham, fixing on the absence of "deft" irony and "linguistic deconstruction" of the heroic (Gorham 1996: 232-234), suggests, to the contrary, that her account is more distinctively female. And Dorothy Goldman, adopting yet another approach, suggests that Brittain's use of high diction together with her imitation of a kind of "jolly good chap" tone (Goldman 1995: 109) lends the text a certain genderal ambiguity.

To some extent, the text supports all of these readings. Brittain's articulation of the divisive effects of war certainly lends credence to Gilbert's notion that the book expresses a typically masculine pessimism. The book's tone, moreover, is nothing if not lamentative, particularly as it draws to a close. In fact, Brittain provides us with what could be considered the quintessential lost generation lament:

Too many victims of the Great War have not risen again and will never rise, while there appear to be quite a number of that younger generation which swings between jazz and unemployment in a world denuded of prospects and left arid and pointless, who have never risen at all (TY 496).
The text is equally cooperative where Deborah Gorham’s opinions are concerned. Brittain’s attitude towards heroic language, for one, is far from deconstructive. Her martyr-like depictions of both Roland Leighton (her fiancé) and Edward Brittain (her brother), indeed, suggest quite the contrary. And the fact, furthermore, that Brittain refers to Roland after his death as one would refer to Christ not only confirms her romantic attitude, but also establishes a connection with an older tradition of heroic war writing, a tradition in which it would not be uncommon to liken the war to a kind of Christian crusade (Tylee 57).

Similarly, Brittain’s irony, although it exists, is not pointed in exactly the same direction as the irony of the trench works. As Jean Pickering has noted, Brittain does employ a type of surface metaphor, at least in so far as an ironic contrast between the tennis courts and trenches can be discerned (Pickering 76). However, compared with Sassoon’s Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man or Edmund Blunden’s Undertones of War, where the surface metaphors are fundamental to the structure of the works, Brittain’s attempts to pictorialize the irony of war are much less pronounced. In fact, her tendency where irony is concerned is simply to deliver it head on, as a subject onto itself, part of the cruel reality of war.

And finally, to accommodate Dorothy Goldman’s notion of Testament of Youth, we may observe that the language of the text also bears a striking resemblance to its masculine counterpart. Brittain may not display her literary predisposition in broad structural strokes, but, on a verbal level, she makes herself quite evident. Brittain’s description of Malta at the beginning of Chapter Seven is, in fact, worthy of high
romance. She recalls the island as an "interval of heaven" (TY 290), a "shrine, the object of a pilgrimage, a fairy country" (TY 291), and then cries out with a kind of ubi sunt lament: "Come back, magic days! I was sorrowful, anxious, frustrated, lonely--but yet how vividly alive" (TY 291). Certainly, for someone like Paul Fussell, who is inclined to see a kind of romantic revival at the generic root of the Great War autobiography (Goldman 1995: 52), this kind of language would not be considered out of place. And arguably, since she would have read most of the war books published prior to her writing of Testament of Youth, Brittain herself is well aware of the similarity, and in more ways than one, for, beyond this romantic hyperbole, she also recognizes her tendency toward descriptive realism. Referring to a letter she wrote to her mother just prior to the Battle of Beqaps, she remarks that she was writing

in a language not so different from that used by Roland to describe the preparations for the first of those large-scale massacres which appeared to be the only method of escape from trench warfare conceivable to the brilliant imagination of the Higher Command, "there has been the usual restless atmosphere of the great push--trains going backwards and forwards all day bringing wounded from the line or taking reinforcements to it; convoys coming in all night, evacuations to England and bugles going all the time; busy wards and a great moving of the staff from one ward to another..." (TY 387, emphasis mine).
The point I wish to demonstrate, in other words, is the fact that
*Testament of Youth* is inherently contradictory, bearing the weight of
the androcentric model rather inconsistently. To depart from the
critical norm, however, which suggests that Brittain's struggle with
that model manifests itself as either imitation or rejection, I would
argue that her textual struggle signs itself somewhat less decisively.
It may be the case that certain local instances provide clear examples
of Brittain's resolution one way or the other, but, taken in the context
of Brittain's self-conscious and multiple subjectivity, most of these
formal elements are complicated by an acknowledgement of textuality.
Vacillating between voices of the past and voices of the present,
Brittain constantly reminds us of her position as author of the text,
whether she is attempting to account for the evolution of her
experiencing self, or whether she is merely alerting us to the
"immutability of time", the notion that when people

"look back upon themselves it is not themselves they see,
not even--as it is customary to say--themselves as they
formerlly were, but strange ghosts made in their image, with
whom they have no communication" (*TY* 13).

And thus, even as Brittain intersects with convention, her approach
invites us to reconsider the assumptions implicit in the form. For
instance, in the letter to her mother, there is little chance of being
seduced by the illusion of immediacy inherent in Brittain's descriptive
language, because her self-conscious remark at the beginning already
deflates the illusion. Brittain's struggle with convention, therefore,
is not a pre-textual event we can assume from various codes, but rather an event enacted within the text itself.

One aspect of this struggle, as we saw in the previous section, is certainly apparent in Brittain's narrative pose. The assumptions of objectivity and authenticity inherent in Brittain's exemplarity are quickly tempered by her disclosure not only of a very subjective war, but also of a concept of self that is divided along both spatial and temporal lines. Indeed, Brittain's intrusive and analytic remarks throughout the text suggest that the locus of objectivity is no more. Brittain's feminist impositionning is only one example. Another can be found in Brittain's continual desire to draw herself as a pacifist, something, in fact, she did not become until 1936\(^7\), and was only just beginning to consider at the time of writing this autobiography. Moreover, if we carefully cross-reference Brittain's war diary (published in 1981 as Chronicle of Youth), the closest approximation to an unmediated account of the period, we discover that Brittain's distaste for war was rather gradual, that she began instead with a more romantic view, one which Lynne Layton identifies as the product of very naïve and abstract notions of heroism (Layton 72), and one which Alan Bishop suggests is the product of a young, idealistic woman much more taken with the "glamour of war" than the humanity of pacifism (Bishop 1983: 86; 91). Thus, even without delving too far into the complex relationship between the diary and the autobiography, one is able to recognize the presence of Brittain's narrating self as an anachronistic imposition.
Ironically enough, however, Brittain issues the invitation herself by way of constantly alluding to, or including fragments of, her diary within the text:

The naïve quotations from my youthful diary which I have used, and intend to use, are included in this book in order to give some idea of the effect of the War, with its stark disillusionments, its miseries unmitigated by polite disguise, upon the ingénue who "grew up" (in a purely social sense) just before it broke out (TY 45, emphasis mine).

Brittain's assumption is quite plain. She intends to use these entries as a kind of documentary source, as evidence of her part in the war. Chronicling her immediate reaction to the events of those years, the diary represents for her an "unmitigated" slice of history. Seemingly, then, Brittain plays directly into the dominant assumption of the war autobiography, namely that these accounts are capable of duplicating the realism of the event. In other words, like many of the documentary war autobiographers, Brittain feels compelled to interject evidentiary material in order to support her narrative claims, engaging in a very typical practice of overdetermination (Cobley 83). However, as Evelyn Cobley reveals, such a practice is inherently contradictory, for while the writer is attempting "to ground the text firmly in experience," producing a kind of mimetic realism, he or she also reveals, by virtue of the textual insertion, "that empirical reality recedes behind an infinite chain of substitutions" (Cobley 85). Simply put, Brittain's ability to employ any part or all of her war diary exposes the actual contingency of the process. For instance, Brittain's failure to
incorporate any diary entries after her account of 1916 when, in fact, her war diary spanned the years 1913-1917, would certainly alert us to her authorial selectivity.

In this respect, Testament of Youth is not unlike many of the contemporary war autobiographies. The assumption of realism is met by its contradiction at the site of inscription. Where Brittain distinguishes herself, however, is not in terms of the contradiction itself, but rather in her narrative attitude towards this overdeterminism. As was the case with the letter where she remarks on her linguistic resemblance to Roland, Brittain's tendency with her diary entries is similarly indirect. Very rarely does she include a portion of her diary without first commenting either that she is about to do so, or prefacing it with some remark about herself or her state of mind at the time of the entry. And, in most cases, she does not even include the entry itself, but rather alludes to it, emphasizing its facilitative role in jarring her memory. Therefore, as with the example of the letter, Brittain's intrusiveness not only deflates the illusion of immediacy, but also exposes the narrative contradiction, for in spite of her intentions, she is well aware of the fact that her diary does not provide us with an "unmitigated" history. Indeed, with each phrase that alerts us to the intrusion of an outside form, Brittain is acknowledging how very fragmentary and contingent her reality is.

Furthermore, Brittain's departure from the use of more traditional forms of overdetermination suggests that her attitude in general is far more playful than that of her male contemporaries. The Foreword, with its declared intention to indict an entire civilization, might ring a
familiar bell. However, the fairy tale fragment we encounter at the beginning of Part One will most assuredly strike us as unusual, on one hand resembling a classical epigram and, on the other hand, figuring rather incongruously amongst sombre dedications and war poems. And yet, the vignette itself is quite appropriate, a proleptic view of Brittain as autobiographical heroine. Destiny offers a young woman the choice between happiness in youth and happiness in old age, and she chooses the latter. What makes this fabular fragment so unusual, therefore, is not so much a matter of content as one of discursive politics. We question Brittain's choice not only because it belongs to The Pink Fairy Book, but also because it draws our attention to the arbitrary process of her selection. In other words, it is a choice which detracts from the illusion of authenticity implicit in the text's referential discourse, for unlike the inclusion of letters, recruiting poster facsimiles, musical scores or diary entries, Brittain's use of fairy tale does more to reveal than conceal her narrative self, drawing the reader's attention away from the presumed replication of war-time history and toward the autobiographical process itself.

Indeed, even with Brittain's more conventional use of epigram—the many war poems she employs at the beginning of each chapter—there is a sense that she is attempting to break the discursive mould of the Great War autobiography, for, rather than simply allowing these poems to perform in their usual authenticating capacity, Brittain has used them not only as a way of incorporating a more intimate perspective of the war, but also as something approaching an interpretive key. One very obvious indication that Brittain is writing beyond the convention is her
deliberate pattern of arrangement. Alternating between her own poetry and that of her dead fiancé's and, additionally, mixing poetry from the more recent past with poetry written during the war, Brittain's epigrammatic arrangement immediately suggests that she is attempting to strike a balance, between the perspectives of male and female, combatant and non-combatant, past and present. However, beneath the surface, many of these poems also function as a kind of proleptic signpost, anticipating the events that will follow.

One rather outstanding example of this appears at the beginning of Chapter Three, *Oxford Versus the War*. The poem, deriving from Brittain's *Verses of a VAD*, is called "August 1914", and ostensibly imagines God's wrath against Man for the death and destruction caused by the war. In the context of the chapter which ensues, however, the poem takes on a slightly different complexion. The first line of the poem, "God said: 'Men have forgotten me'", becomes especially ironic, particularly in light of a circumstance that would warrant Brittain's own recrimination. She has finally won a small victory in the battle with her father, gaining his consent to attend Oxford; and suddenly, the war breaks out, not only depriving her of her beloved Roland, but also causing "an infuriating personal interruption" (TY 93). To Brittain's way of thinking, therefore, she has been forgotten in both a literal and a figurative sense. She has been physically left behind, forgotten by the man in her life, as well as having fallen prey once again to the larger patriarchal machine, for despite the fact that she has finally loosened the stranglehold of her own father, Father England now compels her to leave her less than patriotic seat at Oxford to join the war effort.
Brittain's poem, therefore, is much more than just a tone-setting gesture of authentication, for as a conventional form which stretches its conventional capacity, its pertinence lies in its transgression, in the margin of difference which constitutes Brittain's signature. In other words, it is Brittain's use of the epigram as a private interpretive device that once again alerts us to the conscious crafting behind the story.

As opposed to many of her male contemporaries, then, Brittain establishes a kind of balance between the book's referential and textual aspects, for while we may be compelled by the story of the experiencing "I", we are equally aware of the narrating "Eye" who gives this story direction. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Brittain's construction of a plot, for unlike the largely unstoried accounts of the male war writers, Testament of Youth bears the pattern of the traditional romance\(^\text{18}\). The only thing missing is the customary closure, the happy ending we usually equate with marriage. But the fact that Brittain supplies us with a succession of epithalamial gestures only to deprive us of our much anticipated end suggests nevertheless that some very conscious crafting is at work.

Brittain's construction of her relationship with Roland as a cliché of the star-crossed lovers is a prime example of such narrative arrangement, exposing her imposition of "plot" where one might not be so easily discernable. Here, it is not only evident that Brittain has ordered the events climactically, but also attributed some symbolic (primarily religious) significance to those events. We are introduced to Roland during an account of Easter holidays in the months just prior to
the war. Vera and Roland establish a close bond. They meet a total of seven times before they finally kiss, and only then in a moment which they manage to steal away from their chaperon, Vera's Aunt Belle. They agree to a tentative engagement. Roland is killed just in time to darken her family's Christmas celebration. And his death, suggestive of the martyred Christ himself, is more than once associated with the Oxford chapel inscription, "I am the Resurrection and the Life". Brittain's rendering of the situation suggests that she is extremely mindful of her reader, and perhaps even anticipates a reader with certain literary predilections, for through the quality of arrangement Brittain not only delivers the story of two star-crossed lovers, but also manages to convey a sense of how the war could intensify even the most quotidian of experiences, how it succeeded in both expediting and quickly aborting what would otherwise have been a very ordinary relationship.

Of course, part of what adds to our sense of Brittain's conscious crafting is her deliberate dramatization of each one of the relationships contributing to the overall romantic pattern. Here I will have to tread somewhat more lightly, since I cannot claim that the events of Brittain's life are part of the autobiographical invention. Certainly the fact that Brittain does not marry either Roland Leighton or Victor Richardson has everything to do with their deaths in the war, and the fact that she does not relate her marriage to George Catlin (who is identified only as G.) has much more to do with the temporal boundaries of 1900-1925 she has set for the text. However, Brittain's choice of presentation is another matter entirely, since her arrangement of the facts in each case places these anticipated marriages in a
context of heavy irony. With the death of Roland, for instance, Brittain intensifies the event by first presenting us with an account of her family Christmas. Although, as the narrator of the piece, she would have been well aware of Roland's death preceding the holiday (since he died on December 23, 1915), she chooses instead to delay this information in the text until after she has related the details of the family celebration, almost as if she wants to reproduce the cruel irony she herself would have experienced in hearing the news two days later from Roland's sister, Clare. Similarly, with Victor's death, she prefaces the event by relating a story which appeared in the newspaper of a grieving widow who attempts to console herself by volunteering to marry a wounded soldier (TY 343-4). The fact, then, that Brittain essentially did the same thing with poor Victor, who returned from the war with a severe head injury and suffering from partial blindness, presents the situation as an ironic imitation of the previously related news item. And thus, when Victor finally dies, the ironic intensity is further increased. Brittain emerges much more pathetically than the woman in the newspaper, for she has now been doubly widowed by the cruel realities of the war.

With her impending marriage to George Catlin, however, the irony is somewhat more complex, introducing an extra-textual level as well. As both of the most recent Brittain biographies reveal, the reason that she presents the details of her courtship in an abbreviated fashion, and indeed the reason she refers to her husband as the anonymous G., is largely the result of Catlin's strong objection to the inclusion of such information in the autobiography. Not only did he consider his marriage private, but he was under the impression as well that such information
could be potentially harmful to his political career (Gorham 1996: 229; Berry and Bostridge 257). This knowledge, read back into the text produces a kind of multiple irony. On one hand, her upcoming marriage seemingly presents us with a reversal of the previous trend. Not only has she found a man who has managed to survive the war, but she has found a compatible, feminist mate who is willing to accommodate her career with a "semi-detached marriage" (TY 658). And so, although the text does not include the actual marriage, we are still satisfied in knowing that Brittain will finally marry happily. But, on the other hand, we must also consider the possibility that Brittain has deliberately aborted the book's ending, and not just in response to her husband's request, but also as a way of expressing her own anger. As Deborah Gorham mentions in the chapter she devotes to Testament of Youth, Brittain was convinced that the details of her courtship and marriage were necessary to the popular success of her autobiography. From this angle of vision, therefore, a hint of the unhappy outcome which would have informed Brittain's writing in 1933 is already apparent. Certainly any notion we may have of Catlin as an accommodating mate is somewhat altered, as is the way in which we perceive the boundaries of the text, since this bifurcation not only makes us aware of events which extend beyond the scope of Brittain's self-imposed limits, but also, once again, forces us to recognize the temporal fracturing between the Vera Brittain who narrates the story and the Vera Brittain who is the subject of the autobiography.

What is evident in all of these examples, then, is Brittain's insistence on narrative interest. Whether she has developed a plot in
order to bolster the descriptive details of her love story, or whether she has simply dramatized smaller episodes within the larger whole, her narrative interference is quite deliberate. In other words, Brittain has sacrificed the illusion of spontaneous authenticity by revealing some of the phenomenological and semiotic constraints which are normally suppressed in an autobiography which purports a seamless replication of history. By revealing the narrative "Eye" behind the experiencing "I", she has not only shown us the contradiction which informs the assumption of immediacy, the idea that an autodiegetic narrative is perfectly mimetic, presenting us with an unmediated version of history, but also the semiotic contradiction which lies at the heart of such representational assumptions, for Brittain's structural and thematic patterns immediately suggest a much larger frame of reference, one which explodes the idea that the facts are able to speak for themselves. To be sure, once we have recognized the pattern of romance or an irony which extends beyond the temporal frame, the notion of a referentially self-contained text becomes somewhat ludicrous. Therefore, by acknowledging rather than suppressing these inherent contradictions, Brittain has once again managed to sign her difference in the field of contemporary war narratives.

Digging a New Trench: War Autobiography With a Difference

By giving precedence to the notion that Brittain's text constitutes both a specific response to the "official" male versions of
the war and a more general response to the hegemony of the trench autobiography, I have wanted to suggest not only the importance we should assign to Brittain's assertion of a female/feminist subjectivity, but also the significance of her representational construct as an enacted struggle with the androcentric norms of the genre. In both instances, Brittain's revisionary potential is remarkable. As an author who insists on recounting the woman's war from a perspective which blurs the opposition between the front lines and the home front, Brittain has created a sort of literary No Man's Land which both revises the notion of the Great War autobiography and expands the territory of the autobiographical subject. She has taken the Great War autobiography beyond its overly "entrenched" bounds not only by acknowledging the external perspective of the non-combatant, but also by inscribing the fractured borderland subjectivities which constitute that reality, the experience of someone caught in tension between passive and active participation in the war and between public and private claims. And furthermore, as a war autobiographer who acknowledges the split between the experiencing subject and the narrating subject, allowing both an equal identity throughout the text, Brittain has also taken the Great War beyond the realm of myth. Her lament for the lost generation may suggest a woman upholding a male tradition, but her self-conscious narration, to the contrary, suggests a woman eager to break the mould, a woman whose autobiographical realism both questions and revises the androcentric assumptions of spontaneous authenticity and objectivity that traditionally mark the genre.
Through a process of multiplication, then, one could say that Brittain has certainly done her part for the revision of subjectivity, for, like Woolf, she creates "subjectivity through female experience" and through "an ambiguous environment of shifting realities" (Gray 84; 85). She responds to the "official" version of the war by providing an account which is at once private and public, distinctively female and yet somewhat ironic in its seeming imitation of certain androcentric strategies. In other words, she adopts a multiple perspective which enables her to occupy both the position of self and other, a sort of binary vision, I am sure, Paul Fussell never entertains, for it is one which must acknowledge that it is possible for a female writer not only to take up arms against the dominant patriarchal myths, but also to construct her subjectivity in full view of her existence as part of that fiction.

NOTES

1. This particular excerpt from Woolf's diaries is reproduced in Paul Berry and Mark Bostridge, Vera Brittain: A Life (London: Pimlico, 1995, p. 264), and constitutes what is perhaps Woolf's most visceral response to Testament of Youth. The original can be found in volume 4, The Diary of Virginia Woolf, 5 vols., ed. Anne Olivier Bell (London: HBJ, 1984).

2. Although VAD was technically the acronym for the Voluntary Aid Detachment, it became in popular usage a way of referring to an individual nurse who belonged to the organization.

3. Testament of Experience (1957) is the third instalment of Brittain's testament series. Testament of Friendship was published in 1940, and Testament of Time, only half complete when Brittain died, remains unpublished. The context of the passage cited is one in which Brittain tries to account for her motives in writing Testament of Youth, and the
quotation itself reproduces her response from early in 1929 to the many (male-authored) war books being published at that time.

4. Popular usage of the term "trench autobiography" stems primarily from the fact that the majority of war accounts came from soldiers who fought at the Front. A more comprehensive discussion of the implications surrounding the term will follow in the next section of this chapter.

5. Brittain's impression is, of course, quite erroneous. Claire Tylee's The Great War and Women's Consciousness (1990) includes a lengthy appendix which cites several hundred First World War-related works written by women between 1914 and 1964, and Jean Kennard, citing William Matthews' Bibliography of British Autobiographies in Vera Brittain and Winifred Holtby: A Working Partnership (1989), records that seventy-two war autobiographies alone were written by women prior to 1929. Far more interesting than the fact of her oversight, however, is the reason behind it, for apart from her conscious decision to overlook the fiction written by women (Berry and Bostridge 240), Brittain seems to share a world-wide ignorance perpetuated by the ethic of the trench autobiography: "Those That Had Been There" (Goldman 1995: 101).

6. In Representing War: Form and Ideology in First World War Narratives (1993), Evelyn Cobley speaks of "telling the truth" as a primary autobiographical impulse and "commemorating the dead" as a secondary motive (Cobley 6-7).


9. Of the few exceptions, one of the most notable is Robert Graves's Goodbye to All That (1929) which not only employs a great deal of dialogue (mostly invented or recreated), but also makes use of several comic conventions in order to dramatize the narrative. Otherwise, Graves himself has admitted that there is not much of a plot, but rather a series of short stories. See Robert Graves's But It Still Goes On (London: Cape, 1930, 6; quoted in Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory, 205).

10. I refer here to Sigfried Sassoon's autobiographical trilogy: Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man, 1928 (London: Folio Society, 1971); Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, 1930 (London: Faber and Faber, 1965); and Sherston's Progress, 1936 (London: Folio Society, 1974). Although Sassoon has adopted a fictional mode, employing the "persona" of George Sherston, the works themselves have generally been regarded as "unmediated" autobiography. The bulk of this impression stems from Sassoon's attempt to "recreate" the immediacy of the events, which, ironically, supersedes his self-conscious attitude towards this narrative endeavour.
11. Another version of this essay (Signs 8.3 [Spring 1983]: 422-450) appears in Sandra Gilbert's and Susan Gubar's collaborative effort Sexchanges, Vol. II (chap. 7) of No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989). However, compared with Gilbert's earlier thoughts on the subject, the only difference would appear to be its tendency toward overstatement, for instance, its presentation of the war as a "festival of sexual liberation" where women "swooped over the waste lands of the war with the energetic love of the Valkyries" (293).

12. The first chapter of Dorothy Goldman's Women Writers and the Great War (New York: Twayne, 1995) considers the body of informal responses to the war, the letters, journals, diaries and memoirs never intended for publication, now housed in the Archives of the Imperial War Museum (18, 19, 25). These private documents can be found in The Women at Work Collection (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Microform, 1984-1986, 91 reels).

13. Although Brittain herself mentions that her first two attempts to chronicle the war were by way of diary and long novel (TY 11-12), a more detailed discussion of the process which eventually led to Testament of Youth can be found in Paul Berry and Mark Bostridge Vera Brittain: A Life (London: Pimlico, 1995) 236-238.

14. In an article entitled, "The Education of Edward and Vera Brittain: Class and Gender in an Upper-Middle-Class Family in Late Victorian and Edwardian England" (History of Education Review 20.1 [1991]: 22-38), Deborah Gorham describes the relationship between Florence Bervon and Miss Heath Jones as intimate, adding that "although no evidence exists to support an assertion that the two women actively chose to make a life together in preference to heterosexual marriage, they did create for themselves a 'woman controlled space', a community in which work and home were amalgamated" (29). It is interesting to note that the definition of lesbianism which Gorham employs is that of Martha Vicinus, one of only a few feminist critics who define the term so broadly. Others include Lillian Faderman, who regards any relationship of emotional intensity between women as lesbian, and Blanche Cooke, who focuses on an environment of mutual support as the only necessary component. See Martha Vicinus, Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920, (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1985); Lillian Faderman, Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present, (New York: William Morris, 1981); and Blanche Cooke "Women Alone Stir My Imagination": Lesbianism and the Cultural Tradition" Signs 4 (1979): 718-739.

15. Jean Kennard discusses the possibility of a lesbian relationship between Brittain and Holtby at some length in the introductory chapter of Vera Brittain and Minifred Holtby: A Working Partnership (Hanover: UP of New England, 1989). Considering both sides of the issue, the more conservative views of biographers like Paul Berry and Hillary Bailey who contend that there was no erotic component and cite the fact that Brittain was philosophically opposed to homosexuality, and the more
liberal views of such critics as Sheila Jeffreys who sees Brittain as something of a hypocrite because of her inability to defend lesbianism, Kennard herself seems to adopt a more moderate position, satisfied with the idea of an emotional intimacy which allowed the authors to engage in a sort of cathartic literary self-definition (12).

16. After the war, during Brittain's second attendance at Oxford, she became actively involved in the feminist push for the female students' right to matriculate and graduate. 

"[T]he battle was almost won, as she puts it, on May 11, 1920 when a statute claiming these rights was actually passed, and wholly won in October of that year when the university saw the matriculation of nearly a thousand female students and the first degree giving ceremony involving women (TY 506-507).

17. Most critics who concern themselves with the issue of Brittain's pacifism cite 1936 as the year in which she became politically active, since it coincides with her meeting of Canon Dick Sheppard, the leader of the Pledge Union. See especially the two most recent biographies, Paul Berry and Mark Bostridge, Vera Brittain: A Life (1995) and Deborah Gorham Vera Brittain: A Feminist Life (1996), as well as articles cited by Muriel Mellows, Marvin Rintala and Lynne Layton.

18. To my knowledge, Jean Pickering is the only critic who ventures this type of interpretation, claiming that Brittain's structure is that of a romantic comedy. See "On the Battlefield: Vera Brittain's Testament of Youth," The Female Imagination and the Modernist Aesthetic, eds. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar (New York: Gordon Breach, 1986) 76.

CHAPTER THREE

The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas:
Writing Beyond the Genre

As Marianne De Koven recently suggested in her introduction to the special Gertrude Stein commemorative issue of Modern Fiction Studies, the relatively new and ever-burgeoning interest in Stein's oeuvre can be attributed primarily to the decline of New Criticism and the subsequent rise and currency of feminism and postmodernism. In other words, the change in critical emphasis from text to context, from the impersonal to the personal, and from the centre to the margin, has given rise to a figure who would otherwise have remained forever on the edge. The implication is that Stein was never "really" a modernist, at least not according to the conventional (New Critical) definition. Indeed, elsewhere, De Koven has identified Stein either as an author whose relationship to modernism constitutes the "middle ground between centre and margin", or as one whose affiliation with the avant-garde makes her more of a postmodernist. Part of what complicates this view of Stein as a denizen of the modernist hinterland, however, is the fact that while she may be "half out" (to borrow De Koven's terminology), she is still, by implication, "half in". And surely De Koven's "postmodern" designation carries similar connotations, for, as critics such as Linda Hutcheon have theorized, "postmodernism literally names and constitutes its own paradoxical identity" (Hutcheon 1988: 20), both extricating and implicating the "modernism" which follows its prefix.
Discerning which part of modernism Stein implicates, or, perhaps it is better to say, which part of modernism implicates Stein, is another matter entirely, for the categorical slippage which seems to characterize Stein's oeuvre as a whole is something which also applies to every type of literature Stein has written. I even hesitate to use the word "genre", since Stein's revision of form and language would, in most cases, burst the definitional boundaries. The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (1933) is no exception, in spite of its conventional appearance, and in spite of its reception, by some, as a less than literary piece of gossip. As I would argue, in fact, it is because of its slippery appearance that it manages so successfully to question the "convention" to which it belongs, for not unlike Vera Brittain's Testament of Youth, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas destabilizes all of its conventional tropes from within--writing against and beyond androcentric norms, carving out a new subject position, and reforming ideas of subjectivity in general. And in this, the book accomplishes much the same work as Virginia Woolf's final autobiographical "Sketch", demonstrating the ultimate inadequacy of conventional autobiography for so subjective a reality.

Where Stein's approach differs, however, is in her deliberate manipulation of the reader. Unlike Brittain or Woolf, Stein does not take a sympathetic reader for granted. Nor does she assume that a sympathetic reader is even necessarily implied by "autobiography". Certainly, if her title is any indication, Stein is not looking to establish any sort of "autobiographical pact". Seemingly just the opposite, for it is not until the final page of the autobiography that
Stein openly reveals herself as the author of the text. Until this point, we receive what has been called, variously, a "tall tale" (Adams 37), "a duplicitous out-of-body ruse" (Smith 65), and "a lesbian lie" (Stimpson 1992: *passim*), all of which suggests that Stein is not only flouting some of the most basic autobiographical assumptions, but also interrogating readerly expectations of the genre. And still more interesting is the fact that such an interrogation also revises the reader's (and many a critic's) expectation of Stein's autobiography as the most accessible of her literary productions, since any apparent simplicity is really only part of the literary "ruse" at hand. If the reader is interested in truth or authenticity in any conventional sense of those terms, then he or she should look elsewhere. This is not to suggest that Stein's text is completely devoid of "truth", only that it does not deliver the kind of veracity we have come to associate with that word. What it does deliver is a totally different configuration of the traditional reader-autobiographer relationship. Where usually autobiography is regarded as a *readerly* genre, one in which the reader passively consumes what is thought to be a finished text (a teleological progression where the correspondence of language and meaning is never questioned), Stein's version of autobiography reconfigures it as a *writerly* genre, one in which the reader is forced to actively produce meaning from the infinite number of possibilities that constitute the open or incomplete text⁷.

What I would like to suggest, in other words, is that Stein's text pushes the reader beyond the bounds of generic limitation, and not simply because she is writing against the grain of conventional
autobiography, making the reader conscious of its shortcomings, but primarily because she forces the reader outside the very logic which determines what that "grain" is in the first place, what is and is not considered "normal" autobiographical practice. Of course, it is entirely possible that Stein's own peculiar logic may force the reader out prematurely, for, as Georgia Johnston has recently suggested, there are actually two types of readers engendered by the text—the intimate reader, the type of reader who is willing to follow each interpretive possibility (within and beyond the text), and the stranger, the type of reader who is preoccupied with the recuperation of an Oedipal narrative, a narrative which "moves towards ending and unitary meaning" (Johnston 592). Although admittedly my emphasis gives priority to the intimate reader, I do not wish to discount the importance of the strange reader, for, in part, I see the implication of both readers, in dialectic relation to each other, as something which contributes to the extraordinary quality of Stein's text. However, since my objective here is to demonstrate how Stein forces the reader beyond normative expectations, I would like to consider this aspect of the text as only one of many which manage to break through the generic autobiographical seal.

In terms of my own argument, therefore, I would like to treat each of these transgressive elements in turn—Stein's alternate sense of temporal and narrative order, her substitution of style for truth, and her plural, non-heterosexual subjectivity—before returning to the idea of Stein's implied readership. In other words, I feel it is necessary to look at the way in which Stein writes beyond the genre, before we can
fully appreciate the way in which she forces the reader to read beyond
the genre. The irony in this, of course, is that my own approach will be
most un-Steinian, adhering to a fairly rigid logical pattern.
Consequently, part of what I would like to endeavour is a preliminary
explanation of Stein's basic artistic philosophy, not only as a way of
seeking partial redress, but also as a way of accessing the ghost in the
machine, the thought which informs Stein's response to, and rejection
of, the autobiographical form. Such an inquiry, I believe, is important
for two reasons: first, because Stein's implication as a modernist (in
the New Critical sense of the term) is, to a great extent, the result of
her ideas about language and art in general; and second, because I would
like to argue that Stein's literary practice, as an extension of this
theory, not only questions the definitional boundaries of autobiography,
but also those of modernism itself. If there is any way in which Stein
implicates modernism, it is in her uncanny ability to stand half in and
half out of tradition while viewing (and reviewing) things from a
perspective that always seems to reposition the border which separates
the two.

Learning to Speak Steinese

In Language Unbound: On Experimental Writing By Women (1992),
Nancy Gray introduces her chapter on Stein with a childhood anecdote
about a time when she and her sister had been dared to grasp a ball of
mercury. The story serves a dual purpose. On one hand, Gray is trying to
convey the impossibility of fixing Stein's continuously changing and processive ideas about language. On the other hand, she is suggesting that criticism, as an epistemological version of "taking hold" (Gray 39), is not unlike her own attempt to grasp the mercury. The contact of text and critic manages to create something else entirely. Of course, in the face of postmodernism, Gray's admonition is hardly new. But nevertheless, as an attempt to demonstrate how thoroughly "uncategorical" (Gray 40) Stein's writing is, the analogy is more than appropriate, for not only does it manage to capture the idea of Stein's mercurial thought, but also the way in which her medium, ordinary American English, remains constant, even as her artistic mediation continually reshapes it.

Indeed, Stein's insistence on ordinary language is a large part of her critical enigma. We encounter the apparent simplicity of "a rose is a rose is a rose," and either we dismiss it as utter nonsense, or, like John Malcolm Brinnin, we attempt to wrestle with all of its possible meanings. Unfortunately, Stein's own thoughts on the subject are just as varied as the critics' responses. In part, her use of everyday language is a product of her ongoing fascination with grammar, particularly the idea that even simple words can be imbued with an excess of meaning, that "real simplicity" is, in fact, very complicated. Moreover, as she states in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, "the use of fabricated words offended her, it was an escape into imitative emotionalism" (ABT 119). As it would seem, then, Stein's insistence on the ordinary is also partly informed by a kind of moral objection to linguistic invention, at least to the extent that it indicates a certain mimetic
romanticism—the whole of which is rendered somewhat ironic by the fact that her offense is meant to justify an earlier stated "desire to express the rhythm of the visible world" (ABT 119). Presumably, therefore, Stein's language not only functions as a reflection of the underlying complexity of grammatic structures, but also as a way of imitating the "rhythms" of empirical reality.

Already then, without venturing any further into Stein's artistic impetus, it is evident that her simplicity is almost always deceptive, concealing a philosophy of inclusiveness which penetrates much deeper than the rudimentary surface. What continues to confuse the reader, however, is the fact that most of Stein's poetry, and a good quantity of her prose, is inundated with repetition. How, we may ask, is this an adequate reflection of the visible world and all of its complexity? The answer, of course, depends on how one conceives of reality. For Stein, life is a pattern of repetition with variation, "the only thing that is different from one time to another is what is seen and what is seen depends on how everybody is doing everything" (Stein 1962: 513). More succinctly, variation or difference is a matter of socio-historical context; it is always dependent on the present moment, which both alters and recreates the past. Therefore, what at first might appear repetitive is actually Stein's way of accounting for the fluidity of time and context. Nothing is ever repeated exactly the same way twice. The variations may be slight, but they are always a sign of movement and composition, a reflection of reality as a process of interaction.

In terms of representation, therefore, it is difficult to speak of realism as a narrative structure with a beginning, a middle and an end,
because for Stein reality is a process of beginning again and again and again. Each interaction between text and context renews or recreates reality. Temporality exists, but it is closer to a notion of suspended time, a continuous present which is constantly changing but never reaching an end. Likewise, the idea that realism is in any way equivalent to mimeticism has almost completely evaporated with Stein's revision of the concept. Her preoccupation with the continuous present, even in her novels and short stories, seems to insinuate itself as something much more akin to impressionism, the repetition of larger structures accomplishing the same work as the local repetition of her poetry. Perhaps the only exception to all of this is Stein's notion of character, which was greatly influenced by her studies in psychology under William James, who espoused the idea of a "bottom nature" personality, a personality that, no matter the variables, would remain fundamental. But the fact that Stein adopts this notion is not wholly incompatible with her concept of reality, for, to some extent, it is simply a translation of her "repetition with variation" world view; only here, it is a certain core of subjectivity which remains constant while the ever changing context takes what is left and transforms it into a personality in progress.

Although such a cursory sketch could hardly provide us with a comprehensive understanding of Stein's literary philosophy (for I believe, as Nancy Gray does, that any attempt to "grasp" Stein will never quite satisfy the original), there is at least enough here to suggest why it is that most critics are plagued with an inability to categorize her writing. For one thing is certain: if Stein intersects
with literary convention, it is only to reshape it and to allow it to begin again. Strict ideas of time and linearity, and assumptions of transparent language, are all absent from Stein’s way of thinking about literature. Perhaps, for this reason, Stein is most at home with poetry and literary sketches. This, however, does not account for her choice of autobiography, or, for that matter, any other "time" genre (such as the novel or the short story) with which her creative force has managed to collide. The choice of autobiography is especially curious given Stein’s objection to imitative realism and her own preference for the continuous present.

In fact, Stein is quite explicit about the kind of art she privileges. In an essay entitled "What are Master-pieces and Why Are There So Few of Them [sic]," Stein makes two points (repeatedly), that neither identity nor time play any part in a real masterpiece, or, as she puts it, "time is very important in connection with master-pieces, of course it makes identity time does make identity and identity does stop the creation of master-pieces [sic]" (rpt. Kime Scott 500). The logic which informs this thought is really quite simple: "Identity is recognition" (rpt. Kime Scott 496), recognition is a function of memory, and memory fixes things in time, in the past, barring them from participation in an ongoing present. Therefore, both time and identity are logically incompatible with Stein’s idea of great art. Returning to the idea of autobiography, then, it would appear that the leap from convention to masterpiece is nearly impossible. If autobiography is the act of representing one's self prior to the moment of inscription, then,
by implication, it is a genre dependent on time and identity, and certainly not a Steinian masterpiece.

So how, given her own definition of great art, does Stein manage to write an autobiography without completely compromising her own aesthetic ideals? According to James Breslin, Stein undertakes this nearly impossible feat by enacting her creative struggle with autobiographical convention (Breslin 149), by admitting but not submitting to any of its tropes. The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas gives us time, order, memory and identity, but it does not give us linearity, development, reliability or unitary subjectivity. In other words, it is a text which resembles conventional autobiography in all of its outward appearances, but one which does not follow through with any normative expectations. And herein lies one small concession, for in order to demonstrate her ability to circumvent the tyranny of time and convention, Stein needs an audience, a reader who is capable of recognizing (and hence fixing) her transgressive acts.

Just how any given reader would fix upon these literary transgressions, however, was something Stein could not entirely predict. In February 1935, transition, a Paris journal which had been known for its encouragement of experimental literature, published a rather discouraging testimony against The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. The editors, disturbed by the book's frequent inaccuracies and their potential effect on "less informed readers", made an appeal to Henri Matisse, Tristan Tzara, Georges Braque and André Salmon to refute those particular untruths "before the book [...] had time to assume the
character of historic authenticity" (Winterson 45). These counter-
testimonies, as they saw it, would

invalidate the claim of the Toklas-Stein memorial that Miss
Stein was in any way concerned with the shaping of the epoch
she attempts to describe. There is a unanimity of opinion
that she had no understanding of what really was happening
around her, that the mutation of ideas beneath the surface
of the more obvious contacts and clashes of personalities
during that period escaped her entirely. Her participation
in the genesis and development of such movements as Fauvism,
Cubism, Dada, Surrealism, Transition, etc. was never
ideologically intimate and, as M. Matisse states, she has
presented the epoch 'without taste and without relation to
reality.'

The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, in its hollow,
tinsel bohemianism and egocentric deformations, may very
well become one day the symbol of decadence that hovers over
contemporary literature (rpt. Winterson 45-46).

From a journal which "fomented the revolution of the word,"
espousing the "need for a new language crossbred from all languages, all
myth, all forms of art" (Barille 109), and, no less, from a journal
which had already published several of Stein's previous works, this
harsh commentary emerges with heavy irony. It is almost as though the
editors, Eugène and Maria Jolas, are drawing an imaginary line in the
sand: authors may experiment with most forms of literature, but
autobiography is apparently off limits, over the line. The underlying implication is that the licence of modernism does not apply to the law of this particular genre, otherwise neither Eugène Jolas nor Madame Matisse would have been especially troubled by Stein's departure from historical fact and narrative realism. A further irony, however, exists in Jolas's choice of vocabulary, both his use of the word "hollow" and his description of "the mutation of ideas beneath the surface" suggesting that all the while Stein deforms the genre she manages to keep the form intact. Evidently, the necessity of the intimate reader cannot be underestimated, for Jolas's "strange" reading, his determination to overlook Stein's experiment, seems to acknowledge Stein as an outlaw who is completely aware of the laws she is breaking, as someone who, in any other instance, he would typify as modernist.

"What is the use of being a boy if you are going to grow up to be a man?" [4]: Stein's Resistance to Temporal Order

Perhaps Stein's most obvious gesture as an outlaw of the genre is the way in which she writes against and beyond the conventional notion of time, the idea that autobiographical narrative should deliver a linear pattern of development (from childhood to the moment of inscription, presumably adulthood) in a neat chronological package. Not surprisingly, Stein was not very fond of such ideas. Ideas of beginning, middle, and end, of logical order and closure, were in direct conflict with her own aesthetic ideology, her insistence on keeping art alive in
the continuous and ever changing present. The next question, of course, is how Stein manages to escape the deadening, time-bound conventions of autobiography without completely eluding the reader who is her only potential salvation. Stein's answer: give them all of the necessary signposts, but don't give them any reliable directions. Tell them this is an autobiography, but don't divulge the actual subject. Organize the book into chapters with a semblance of chronology and teleological progression, but don't let on that the book really centres around a relatively small cluster of events which begin again and again and again through flights of narrative memory which return to them repeatedly, only each time from a slightly different perspective. In other words, let them see for themselves that the still-life of autobiographical convention can be transformed into a breathing "master-piece".

And indeed, this is where Stein's enacted struggle with autobiographical convention begins, in the play of outward appearances against inward (Steinian) reality. The original 1933 edition of the autobiography\(^1\), exhibiting no obvious mark of Stein's authorship on the cover, makes this point rather dramatically. No sooner do we approach the text than we are met with an immediate sign of the tension between mask and signature. We read the cover's title, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, and then our eyes glance down at the embossed circular inscription of "Rose is a rose is a rose...", an insignia which even the least astute of readers would probably identify with Stein. Already, then, Stein has made an unofficial declaration of war, for this hint of authorship on the cover destabilizes our traditional conception of the autobiographical subject as a unitary narrative force.
Furthermore, if we consider the additional connotative weight of Stein's insignia, we may perceive it as much more than simply a silent signature. As Sidonie Smith suggests, in fact, it is a "multiply valent signature [...] which points to a variety of phenomena that mark the disruptive nature of Stein's autobiographical text" (Smith 1993: 65). First, because it is a band which separates an inner space from an outer space, it quite literally calls attention to the "interdependencies of margins and centres, outsides and insides" (Smith 1993: 65-66); second, because of its configuration, it "signifies the seamless relationship of beginnings and endings" (Smith 1993: 66); third, because it is pictorially suggestive of a ring, it symbolizes the lesbian union of Stein and Toklas; and finally, because a rose often symbolizes the female genitalia, it represents "a metaphorical trace of the female body" (Smith 1993: 66).

Thus, in addition to her covert claim of authorship, Stein's insignia seems to function as a temporal bridge which links the text to its context. It is, at once, a figurative and a literal joining of the inside and the outside. The symbolic representation of the ring figures this relationship spatially, and the allusive gestures both to Stein's artistic philosophy and to her private sexuality literally extends the text beyond its covers. Before we have even begun to read, Stein has seemingly ensured that any sense of narrative time we might have or impose will always be tempered by that which exists outside of the text, those variables which sustain a continuous present.

Once we manage to get inside, however, the whole process seems to begin again, and quite deliberately to be sure. Now we are faced with
Stein's somewhat deceptive habit of labelling all of her chapters with some sort of temporal indication. Three of the seven chapters actually stipulate a certain period of time (1903-1907; 1907-1914; 1919-1932), and the others, by virtue of their reference to a particular event, evoke a specific time nevertheless. Alice's arrival in Paris in 1907 fares quite prominently as a date, since both the first and second chapters ("Before I Came to Paris" and "My Arrival in Paris") refer to this event. Stein's own arrival in Paris in 1903 and World War I (1914-1919) make up the remainder. Ostensibly, then, Stein is luring the reader in with yet another normative signal. Our expectations of a story which will follow a chronological pattern of development have, at least, been piqued.

Interfering with our expectations, however, are several fairly significant details. The first can be found on the superficial level of the text, in Stein's organization and designation of the chapter titles themselves, and is something which primarily disturbs our anticipation of the traditional pattern of development. Stein's odd sense of organization might not strike us immediately, since most versions of the text do not include a list of the chapters in descending order; but, if we look closely, we will notice, in fact, that chapters three and four are out of order. Chapter Three, supposedly dealing with the years 1903-1907, has been arbitrarily positioned before Chapter Four, which treats the years before Stein's arrival in Paris in 1903. Although few critics see fit to raise the issue at all, probably because most of them simply view it as a small taste of the grand lie which is about to follow, Carolyn Faunce Copeland goes out on a limb to suggest that
Stein's misorganization is a deliberate attempt to sustain the interest of her reader (Copeland 129). After all, who wants to read about Stein's childhood when they can read all sorts of colourful anecdotes about Stein's interactions with the likes of Matisse and Picasso? But, whatever the motivation, this does not alter the fact than when we approach the book from beginning to end, we still encounter these anecdotes in advance of Stein's account of her childhood. And therefore, we must conclude either that Stein is anticipating the kind of reader who will not be bothered by such a small lapse in organization (especially if the "gossip" is worthy), or that she is having the reader on, that she has deliberately broken one of the fundamental tenets of the autobiographical pact.

My best guess is the latter, since this small departure from the developmental pattern is reinforced by Stein's chosen designations, the first four of which centre around the word "Paris", and the last two of which mention the war. What I am suggesting, in other words, is that Stein has orchestrated a slight tension between the temporal and the verbal designations of her titles. Where her inclusion of various temporal ranges (all of which are chronologically arranged) intimates a linear progression, her repetition of "Paris" in four titles and "the war" in two (accounting for six of the seven titles which make up the book as a whole) suggests, rather, that the narrative will be somewhat circumlocutory.

And indeed, once we delve into the text proper, this would appear to be the case, marking what I see as the second crucial element of interference, Stein's very digressive and repetitive narrative strategy,
a strategy not unlike the one used by Laurence Sterne in *The Lives and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*. There is nothing which actually constitutes a dominant narrative so much as a pattern of interruptions which allow for digressive excursions to radiate perpetually outward. According to Lew Welch (one of Stein's earliest critics), in fact, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* effects more than just a "sunshine of reading"; its digressions "determine its structure" (Welch 24). For my part, I would agree, for even though the text is anchored by its beginning and seems, for the most part, to centre on a handful of significant events, it is one which is driven by digression. The repetitions are always variant. If Alice departs to make an interesting note, she never re-enters the story at her original place of departure. She returns instead to a slightly different place or time, almost as though she were a jeweller giving each facet its lapidary consideration.

Of course, such an analogy is hardly apt for those readers who find themselves completely frustrated by Stein's narrative method. Try to imagine what it must be like for the reader who is a stranger to Stein's aestheticism, for the one who expects a temporally ordered narrative to unfold and, instead, receives what Shirley Neuman has described as a "germ of narrative [...] suspended in time" (Neuman 1979: 21). The germ which Neuman herself takes as an example is Alice's first Saturday night at Stein's atelier, a rather compact passage from Chapter Two with so many digressive reincarnations that it begins to take on a life of its own. Neuman's description of the various narrative machinations as a "complex temporal interpenetration" (Neuman 1979: 23) is worth quoting in full:
In the passage quoted, the reader, beginning with Alice's success at party conversation, is led into a digression, based on her subsequent experiences, about the wives of geniuses. A return to the party sends Toklas on a walk to Montmartre, again at a later date. Once again at the party, Alice's narration becomes more complex as the past luncheon, narrated this time by Stein, is recalled and, in its turn, intimates the future vernissage and a future event in the autobiography's chronology. With Alice's return to the party and her conversation with Picasso, the associational matrix which gives coherence to these temporally separate events extends further. Picasso, in the 'present' of the party, begins to narrate an earlier experience—"You see . . . Gertrude"—and is interrupted by a Toklas parenthesis generalizing from the knowledge garnered in all the years intervening between the party and the autobiography. Toklas's response to Picasso generates another digression, this time on the future of the Stein-Toklas relationship (Neuman 1979: 23-24).

Thus, in the space of only two pages, and in what is, ostensibly, one anecdote, Stein has managed to involve nine different temporal frames of reference. Past, present and future moments are all bound together in this particular narrative instance and recreated in the continuous present of its telling. And, of course, this is only one such instance in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. Georgia Johnston is equally fascinated by how the text "continues to return to the moment when Alice
comes to Paris, creating anew Stein's meeting Toklas and initiating the text, which defers an ending by beginning" (Johnston 590). Julie Abraham, likewise, notes that Stein's multiple revisititations on one particular memory of the war seems to create an alternate sense of history, one which not only conflates, but also confuses, ideas of fact and fiction (Abraham 81-82).

For the reader with normative expectations, then, the text, as a succession of these narrative "germs", is somewhat disappointing, certainly not a multi-faceted gem. However, in terms of Stein's own objectives, and especially her desire to escape the stultifying effects of linear time, such narrative germs are a good beginning. The idea of linear time still lurks in the background, but the autobiographical plotting of that time, the element which for Stein puts the "graph" in autobiography (Neuman 1979: 24), has been greatly altered. The teleological progression of the traditional autobiography, the march of linear time, has been replaced by a pattern of digressions and variant repetitions which circle around, rather than moving forward from, the events to which they pertain. The "sunshine of reading," as Welch calls it, may radiate outwards, but certainly not towards an end, for Stein ensures that our beginning will be perpetually suspended in a time of her own re-(ad infinitum)-creation. With a considerable degree of success, therefore, Stein's repetitive narrative method has managed to replace the temporal world of beginnings, middles and endings with the spatial milieu of the continuous present.

Part of this success, however, can be attributed to Stein's choice of a putative narrator, since her decision to create the text as Alice's
autobiography is doubly advantageous. On one hand, Alice's natural
speech patterns, which were apparently quite frenetic and unpredictable,
facilitate Stein's experiments with time. And, on the other hand,
Alice's very position in the text as the supposed "subject" of the
autobiography manages to run yet another form of interference with the
reader's expectations of development. Imagine the process as it might
take place. We have no reason to question that anyone other than Alice
is the actual subject. We begin reading Chapter One and we encounter
what appears to be a rather formulaic beginning: Alice's first
disclosure is her birth, and she continues by supplying us with
additional information about her ancestry, her childhood and her
eventual arrival in Paris. What strikes us as peculiar, however, is the
fact that Alice devotes less than three pages to the whole of her life
prior to the meeting of Gertrude Stein in 1907. Thirty years are almost
entirely overlooked; but then, as the chapter draws to a close, we are
suddenly met with a lingering passage (occupying nearly a third of the
total space) about Alice's first encounter with Gertrude Stein and her
immediate recognition of Stein's genius.

Although such an abbreviated introduction might certainly raise
the hackles of our suspicion, it does nothing, as yet, to make us
question the authorship of the text. What it alters is our view of
Toklas, especially when we discover that the rest of the book is
virtually an extended tribute to Gertrude Stein. In fact, between the
incantatory effect of the constant repetition of Stein's name and the
incessant mention of her books, most notably Three Lives and The Making
of Americans, the reader almost forgets the fact that this is supposed
to be *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. At the very least, we find ourselves questioning this rather lopsided version of the genre—three pages of Alice's development, one chapter devoted to Stein's childhood and early adulthood (chronologically askew, if we recall), and the rest of the text, both in terms of its content and its narrative methodology, centered around the heart of the Stein/Toklas marriage. And so, to some extent, it is not even necessary for Stein to acknowledge her authorship in order to disturb the reader's quest for a developmental pattern. Two very obvious elements already manage to stall the most naive of readers: first, Alice's emphatic concentration upon Stein; and second, Alice's undue focus on one significant period of her life. Certainly, if we are expecting the traditional self-made (*sui generis*) autobiographical hero, Alice does not deliver, for what we actually receive is her life as it has been grafted onto Stein's, and, at that, only a small portion of it. In essence, she has thwarted our expectation of the genre in the first place, since most people would agree that such an account is closer to the stuff of memoirs than of autobiographies.

However, as we finish our hypothetical reading of the text, we discover one more curious complication, the fact that Stein is actually the author of the autobiography, a fact which now completely revises the way in which we have read the text. Now, instead of viewing Alice as the subject, we are more apt to view her as a textual conduit, a hostess to the book just as she had been a hostess to the guests at 27 Rue de Fleurus. Therefore, looking back at the malproportioned text, we are somewhat relieved to discover that it is indeed Stein's. At least we are able to account for the emphasis, if not for the fact that Stein, too,
seems to neglect her childhood, both deferring and abbreviating its existence in the text. Thus, on one level, the disappointment we experience over Alice's largely absent development has simply been substituted by our disappointment over Stein. That is, unless we find ourselves overwhelmed by curiosity, or perhaps affected by Stein's subliminal cue, an illustration of the first page of the manuscript facing directly opposite the last page of written text.

In other words, we may find ourselves wanting to read the text again, perhaps not so much because of Stein's inducement (although it is a lovely suggestion of temporal seamlessness, a visual reinforcement of her idea that true art begins again and again), but more so because we are compelled to play detective, to uncover the paper trail which leads to Stein's final revelation. The clues, although not terribly abundant, are certainly there. For instance, the insignia on the cover, the incantatory repetition of Stein's full name throughout the book, and the sporadic mention of "Ada" (a short biographical story about, but not by, Alice) all serve as subtle hints of Stein's authorship. And then, of course, one might add the not so subtle hint of the book's frontispiece, a Man Ray photograph depicting Stein at her very large desk in the foreground and Alice in the background framed in the doorway. The positions of the two subjects are already suggestive of the ensuing textual relationship; however, the position of the frontispiece itself reinforces Stein's dominant presence, for, not unlike the final illustration, this picture also occupies a rather strategic position in the text, directly facing the title page which, in the original edition, simply read, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. Effectively, then,
the reader sees the relatively small verbal declaration on one side and
the glaring visual declaration on the other. What could be a clearer
sign of intention? In fact, there are a handful of critics, most notably
Timothy Dow Adams and Paul Alkon, who would question the reader's
inability to remark at such a blatant announcement of Stein's authorial
ruse.

Whatever the detective work, however, one thing remains constant.
Stein has reconfigured the traditional trope of development, for if
reader and critic alike are compelled either to search (or re-search)
for clues of Stein's authorship, then it would seem that the teleology
of convention has been replaced by the paper trail which leads us to
Stein's final disclosure. In other words, we do not follow the
development of either Alice or Gertrude per se, but the development of
the text itself. The final result is something Catharine Stimpson
(taking her cue from Linda Hutcheon) wants to call "historiographic
metafiction," the kind of text which "'inscribes and then subverts its
mimetic engagement with the world'" (Stimpson 1992: 158). For the most
part, I believe she is correct, particularly where Stein's treatment of
temporal and narrative order is concerned. Stein has given us all of the
signposts and then cleverly subverted each and every one of them. The
conventional time-oriented linear progression has been replaced by a
spatial pattern of events, and the conventional idea of development has
been transferred from the autobiographical subject to the
autobiographical text. Where I am inclined to depart from Stimpson's
analysis is only in matter of degree, for my own understanding of the
text, and even of historiographic metafiction, suggests that the analogy
could stand to be pushed a little farther, to include the process of referentiality. For when all is said and done, it is the reader (and the reader's understanding of the world) that makes the reading experience. The fact that Stein's enacted struggle with these conventional autobiographical tropes always seems to point to the reader's expectations suggests to me that the ultimate referent of Stein's text is not Stein, but the reader—a realization which, of course, only further upsets our understanding of conventional limitations.

"My sentences do get under their skin":

Stein's Version of Authenticity

Already by dismantling the tyranny of time and, hence, by questioning the usual "readerly" approach to autobiography, Stein has managed to transfer the emphasis from the autobiographical subject to the reading subject(s). She has forced her readers to relinquish their passive ways by demonstrating that the meaning one attaches to conventional expectations is ultimately elusive. In other words, without perpetrating the death of the author, Stein has surrendered the life of her text to its readers, a perfect solution for an author so insistent on the idea of continuous presence. What remains to be seen, however, is whether or not this transformation from "readerly" to "writerly" text can actually sustain the life which constitutes its subject, for part of Stein's manipulation naturally involves an altered conception of truth and authenticity. If Stein is no longer the locus of "objective" truth
(as conventional autobiography would hold), then it would seem to follow either that she has unwittingly murdered her "self", or that she has revised the entire notion of autobiographical authenticity. If only on the basis of Stein's countertextuality and intertextuality, I would like to argue the latter, since these particular "textual" features not only manage to telegraph that Stein is alive and well (always reminding us of her presence in the wings), but also function as a way of escorting the reader beyond the bounds of intratextual reality, to another realm of truth, one which both acknowledges and subverts our traditional understanding of authenticity as an equivalence of veracity.

To begin, I would like to qualify my use of the terms "countertextuality" and "intertextuality," not so much because I intend to use these terms any differently from other critical practitioners, but more so for the purpose of clarifying and circumscribing the territory of my argument. The idea of countertext is especially tricky, since most people would be tempted to equate it with counter discourse, which immediately suggests an ideological inflection I do not want. My own sense of the term is much closer to what dramatists would call didascalia, those things in the text which do not belong to the work proper but indicate the author's parallel presence. Thus, what I would like to call the countertext is simply what others might call the apparatus. In Stein's case, I use the term to refer specifically to the photographs and illustrations which accompany the written words. My choice of an oppositional prefix, therefore, is more a function of my own interpretation, since I view this portion of Stein's text as largely contradictory. To some extent, then, my use of the term
"intertextuality" is slightly redundant, since photographs and
illustrations are normally considered part of the alternate semiotic
system of a text. For the purpose of my argument, however, I would like
to employ the term rather more narrowly, invoking only the idea of
extratextual referentiality, and more specifically the way in which the
autobiography refers repeatedly to Stein's own literary productions.

As to the countertext of the autobiography, I have already
discussed some of the more obvious instances: the insignia on the front
cover, the frontispiece, and the final illustration of the first page of
the manuscript. However, in the original Harcourt Brace edition of the
text, Stein has placed a total of sixteen different illustrations, with
all photographs and facsimiles considered. I suggest that she has
"placed" them, because unlike the traditional gathering (or gatherings)
of photographs one normally encounters in an autobiographical text,
Stein's illustrations exist at sporadic (as opposed to evenly-spaced)
intervals, an indication that each position is quite deliberate, if not
utterly strategic. And certainly, if there is any doubt, we have only to
look as far as the immediate textual surroundings, which in almost every
instance will produce a sort of circumstantial irony, an irony which
emerges from the contradiction of the verbal frame or context (Hutcheon
1994: 143). Of course, there is already something of an irony attached
to the fact that Stein has subverted our normative expectation of
verbal/visual irony in autobiography: pictures usually take us back in
time while the narrative usually takes us forward in time. But with
Stein, this "usual" irony has been complicated by the fact that the
narrative is suspended in a kind of "liquid time" (Copeland 123), and,
furthermore, by the fact that each illustration, even as it may contradict the immediate context, has become part of that time\textsuperscript{21}. In other words, if we attempt to read the visual text in a linear or progressive fashion, we will soon discover that it is equally devoid of "chrono-logic." And so, what actually engages the reader is not the contradictory movements of the verbal and visual texts, but the recognition that each instance of local irony is an intended product.

The first photograph after the frontispiece is a perfect example of this kind of irony. Directly following page seven of the text, Stein has situated a picture of herself which was taken "in front of the atelier door". The picture depicts Stein in a monk-like dress, with her hair pulled up, and in a pose that suggests she is praying or possibly meditating. As Paul Alkon has remarked, the position of this picture, immediately following an allusion to Picasso's portrait of Stein, is rather curious. We have just read that Picasso's "now so famous" portrait would at that time (1907) only have been known to the painter and his subject and, therefore, the logical choice for an illustration would have been a facsimile of the portrait itself, a gesture which would allow us to confirm our recognition. Instead, Stein supplies us with a photograph which, at the time of publication, would probably have been just as obscure as the Picasso portrait in 1907. On one level, the photograph simply thwarts our expectation of the Picasso portrait; however, on another level, it manages to provoke a sort of imaginary comparison between the photograph in front of us and the absent portrait which is mentioned here as well as throughout the text, producing yet another irony in the discrepancy between the photographic moment (which
suggests that it is possible to "capture" Stein's essence), and the seemingly endless process that was involved in the painting of the Picasso portrait (which suggests, to the contrary, that it was impossible to capture her "real" essence).

Indeed, almost every photograph prevents us from fixing the subject or subjects in a way that would allow us to assign authenticity or priority to either the written or the visual text. The photograph on page twenty-four, for example, depicting "Picasso and Fernande at Montmartre" in a pose which intimates domestic harmony (complete with their dogs), comes directly after Stein's account of their marital strife and break-up. It is as if the picture's physical opposition to that part of the text has been literalized, reflecting a kind of reverse mirror image. But more than this, it creates a situation in which the verbal and the visual compete for the "truth". The reader with normative expectations is put in the position of having to decide which account is the more reliable, Stein's or the photographer's. And the reader who will not be forced to make such decisions must simply accept that neither rendering supplies the "whole picture", that both are party to a process of selection.

Nowhere is this process more apparent than in Stein's illustrative choices for Chapter Four (Stein's account of her upbringing) where she includes two pictures of herself, one in Vienna and the other at John Hopkin's Medical School, both of which simultaneously complement and accentuate the chapter's anachronistic placement in the text. The first photo, depicting Stein as a little girl in Vienna, conjures up the "usual" verbal/visual irony we expect from autobiography--the photograph
taking us back in time while the text is taking us forward. What is unusual, however, is the fact that this particular photograph is not a temporal contradiction; it plunges us back in time, but so does the anachronism of chapter four. In other words, the suggestion of conventionality is both inscribed and subverted. The second photograph, coming at the end of the chapter, likewise, suggests that Stein is fully cognizant of the conventional idea of closure, but not so willing to supply us with a straight forward example. The effect, at first, is similar to that of the first photograph. The reader has a sense of complementarity (rather than contradiction). Stein has just given us sporadic accounts of her days at Radcliffe and John Hopkins and, hence, the picture of herself at medical school seems an appropriate way to end the chapter. However, as Paul Alkon has cleverly observed, the picture's inclusion of a skull carries connotations which not only re-open our sense of closure, but also manage to send us in two temporal directions at once (Alkon 867). The allusion to her death embedded in a photo which is supposed to be representative of her beginnings has us looking both forwards and backwards, and, like the facsimile of the first page of the manuscript which ends the autobiography, provides us with an idea of temporal seamlessness, the beginning and the ending together in one sign.

To a very large extent, then, our experience with Stein's photographic text is not unlike our experience with the written text. The pictures which draw us backwards and forwards in time, generating contextual irony and precluding our ability to read for determinate meaning, seem to mimic Stein's narration. Even the idea of Alice as the
"hostess" of Stein's autobiography seems to find a parallel in the absent photographer(s), the imagined (but nevertheless real) being through whom we receive the text. And, of course, the effect of all this is also very similar. Rather than concerning ourselves with the contents of these various photographs, we find ourselves more often fascinated by the way in which Stein has chosen to position them. The reader's attention is drawn away from the substance of the text and drawn toward the process of textuality itself, the method of representation.

Furthermore, the idea of representation itself is seemingly "represented" by the movement of the visual text which, on the whole, becomes less and less focused on the human subject, and more and more metatextual. Although early on Stein includes three photographs of her salon from different angles, with various paintings as their focus, it is not until the middle of Chapter Five that the paintings themselves (and not the room) become the designated subjects. In other words, what we receive (at least with four of the final five illustrations) are representations of other representations, photographs of paintings ("Homage à Gertrude, ceiling painting by Picasso; "A Transatlantic, painting by Juan Gris"; "Bilignin From Across the Valley, painting by Francis Rose"; "Alice B. Toklas, painting by Francis Rose"). Again, in context, all of these illustrations seem curiously chosen, especially the Picasso and the Gris. Even though Picasso figures quite prominently in Chapter Five, his "Homage à Gertrude" is never actually mentioned. And likewise, Gris's abstract representation of a shipboard, in the middle of a chapter about the war, seems equally incongruous. But perhaps more important than the textual friction or incompatibility
(which by this juncture might be a little redundant) is Stein's allusion, in both cases, to herself.

The Picasso painting is particularly evocative, since it is a ceiling painting which depicts a host of abstract angels hovering over what appears to be a bed, one of which resembles Stein (with her hair in a neat little bun) and can be seen (quite ironically) blowing her horn. The humorous parody of the Sistine Chapel is difficult to overlook (Alkon 872); however, the fact that a representation of Stein should appear in the midst of this creation scene makes it doubly parodic, for at the same time that it invokes Michelangelo's famous fresco, it also invokes the text we are reading, drawing our attention to Stein's act of creation, which, on one level, hovers over the surface (like the ceiling) as metatext, and, on another, hovers over an empty bed (like the angels depicted in the painting), the bed she shares with Alice, but which is never explicitly mentioned.

Gris's "A Transatlantic", somewhat more obtuse, manages a similar allusion. The painting itself, a distorted image of a shipboard with several smokestacks all emitting fumes, is not particularly suggestive. However, as Paul Alkon has observed, "the title is an invitation to consider the picture as an apt emblem of that other transatlantic, Gertrude Stein" (Alkon 874). Moreover, as a verbal sign which invites us to consider a visual sign, it also invites us to look at the way in which Stein has interfused the two sign systems in her text and, as a consequence, made the reader more acutely aware of her textuality. Thus, once again, it is an allusion which seems to direct us off-stage to the author waiting in the wings, for the intertextuality of both these
paintings forces us to look beyond the physical icon of the text to the
realm of production, intention and context.

Another manifestation of this method can be found in Stein's
pervasive use of the intertextual reference, specifically the repeated
mention of her own works. The titles Three Lives and The Making of
Americans appear so often, in fact, that their incantatory effect is
only second to that of Stein's name. However, apart from the subliminal
quality of the repetition itself, Stein's intertextual allusions force
us beyond the material realm of the text in two very significant ways:
first, as a way of signalling to the reader that there is a store of
information outside of The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas which could
very well influence the way in which we read the present text; and
secondly, as a way of alerting the reader to his or her interpretive
function. Simply put, Stein is telling us there is not only more to
Stein than what we see in front of us, but also more to our readerly
role than a simple act of passive consumption. Indeed, for Georgia
Johnston, the ability to recognize Stein's insistent nudge is what
separates the intimate reader from the strange reader, since the strange
reader will not be compelled to read beyond the confines of the original
text in the quest for extraneous interpretive possibilities.

In part, then, the text is dependent upon the intimate reader's
active participation, his or her ability "to read through associational
progression rather than by means of progression of knowledge, through
satisfaction by means of sustained habit rather than by continual
replacement, and through dislocation rather than centering" (Johnston
596). In other words, our continual encounters with the titles Three
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Lives and The Making of Americans should not simply strike us as a Steinian indulgence in her own genius, but rather as Stein's method of coaxing us into the margins to discover, perhaps, that Three Lives is an exploration of lesbian sexuality, or that The Making of Americans employs a conventional historical framework to deliver an unconventional idea of history (Abraham 84). Of course, the potential for expanding one's interpretive range is endless, but even with such little information one is able to see how the process might work. For example, instead of interpreting The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas as a text which suppresses Stein's lesbian sexuality (as is often the case, especially in the earlier criticism), we may read Stein's reference to Three Lives as an intertextual "outing". We may also at this point decide that Stein's two references to "Ada", a short biographical story in Geography and Plays, are hardly accidental, since it is both the portrait of a lesbian union and one which specifically pertains to Alice. Thus, the fact that Alice is depicted as reading the story with pleasure might be seen as yet another layer of information the strange reader would likely overlook. And taking this one step farther, one could also suggest, as Leigh Gilmore does, that Stein's initial reference to the story as "a good description" is something which alludes directly to the line "Trembling was all living, living was all loving, some one was then the other one" ("Ada" 16; Gilmore 1991: 68), something which not only implicates the idea of lesbian love, but also the idea of a shared subjectivity22.

Certainly, if we are inclined to look at the text as a pattern of allusions which cast innumerable interpretive sidelights, the idea that
Stein has involved us in a grand hoax, or that the text is simply a lie, must necessarily be modified. The act of dislocation (as Georgia Johnston calls it) or translocation (as Leigh Gilmore terms it) has affected the way in which we think about autobiographical truth. Stein's repeated mention of *The Making of Americans* might be our first hint, since this text mimics precisely the same pattern we have seen in the autobiography, providing us with a semblance of conventional form while executing a substance which is extremely unconventional. Her allusion to the literary portrait of "Ada", and to various painted portraits, particularly her own by Picasso, might also suggest that Stein's artful mixture of autobiographical form with the idea of portraiture or literary sketching is quite intentional. Therefore, if the reader has in mind something which is not necessarily self-contained or whole, and something which one would not normally associate with expectations of veracity, then the demand for autobiographical truth is somewhat diminished.

Of course, the most obvious example of Stein's allusive buttressing is her reference to *Robinson Crusoe* at the end of the book, just after she has divulged her authorship, for here Stein seemingly hits us over the head with her generic intentions: "You know what I am going to do. I am going to write it for you. I am going to write it as simply as Defoe did the autobiography of Robinson Crusoe" (ABT 252). Just how simply Stein has actually written the autobiography, however, is subject for debate. And perhaps, given the argument at hand, it might be better to suggest that the simplicity of the allusion is wholly dependent on the reader's willingness to pursue the reference. Many
critics, for example, are content to read this final allusion as one of mere confession. Just as Defoe feigned the autobiography of Robinson Crusoe, so, too, Stein has feigned The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. But, as Timothy Dow Adams has pointed out, the resemblance may, in fact, imply just the opposite. Crusoe is an imagined literary character, based on an actual person, who claims that his life is a metaphor for the author who created him in the first place— which is exactly what not only Gertrude Stein but all autobiographers are doing (Adams 35).

It is possible, in other words, that Stein's so-called deception is closer to the truth than we might otherwise have thought. What is different, however, is the way in which Stein has opened up the term, for in this case the concept of truth is not quite the same as objective fact. On the contrary, it is a truth which acknowledges the impossibility of objectivity, "the impossibility of finding any truly objective position from which the autobiographer may present him [or her] self as he [or she] appears to others" (Neuman 1979: 25). Shirley Neuman has called this the "paradox of veracity", but I would suggest as well that this is the paradox of autobiography in general, since convention tends to assume that the autobiographer writes from a locus of objectivity even while he or she imparts a truth which is completely subjective. The fact, then, that Stein's allusive autobiography seems to enact this truth and, therefore, situates it as a product of form and style is most significant, for Stein has not only transformed the locus
of truth from what was formerly a matter of substance to what is here a matter of structure, but she has also managed to demonstrate that the reader's participation in the textual production of meaning plays an equal part in what she would consider veracity. To some extent, therefore, Stein has taken Philippe Lejeune's notion of the autobiographical pact and turned it on its head. Expectations of truth have been thrust from the writer to the reader. And the convention of the readerly text has given way to the unconventional writerly text. To reconfigure the metaphor of Crusoe one last time, one could say that Stein has created her own autobiographical island.

"Trembling was all living, living was all loving, some one was then the other one."23: Sharing a Subjectivity

Unlike Crusoe, however, Stein was not subjected to a great many years of isolation before meeting her own version of Friday. In fact, as I have already discussed, the great majority of the autobiography turns on the events of the Stein/Toklas marriage, and, as I will argue here, in more ways than one. For, part of what contributes to the sense of their marriage or lesbian partnership is the way in which Stein effects a shared subjectivity through her "out-of-body ruse," as Sidonie Smith has called it (Smith 1993: 65). By making Alice the disembodied voice (subject) and herself the material body (object), Stein effectively creates a "we" instead of an "I", something which not only reinforces the possibility that the text is a celebration rather than a suppression
of her lesbian love, but also revises the traditional notion of subjectivity as a unitary entity.

But naturally, as with every other aspect of the text, this is not something Stein delivers in a neatly wrapped package, for even though the Stein/Toklas "we" bears little resemblance to the traditional unitary "I", lacking any conventional notion of development towards a predestined greatness, it is nevertheless a "we" in danger of being misconstrued as an "I". The reason for this is two-fold: first, because of Stein's depiction throughout as a genius; and second, because of Alice's generally subservient role, a role which is, in fact, neatly packaged in a summary towards the end of the book:

I am a pretty good housekeeper and a pretty good gardener and a pretty good needlewoman and a pretty good secretary and a pretty good editor and a pretty good vet for dogs and I have to do them all at once and I found it difficult to add being a pretty good author (ABT 251-252).

What I am suggesting, in other words, is that the inequality of the partnership, or what some critics have seen fit to describe as a parody of the masculine/feminine dynamic of heterosexuality, lends itself quite easily to a traditional interpretation of the autobiographical subject as a unitary "I" bound up in the myth of genius. However, while it is difficult to overlook Stein's shameless self-promotion, one must also recognize that the pose of creative genius is tempered by the acknowledgement of another contributing force. Stein is not claiming to be the self-made hero of the book, but rather a genius fostered by the care and support of her partner. Furthermore, the lesbian partnership
makes it difficult to cast the relationship in the heterosexual currency of masculine and feminine gender roles. And the idea of an androcentric pose of genius somehow superseding the feminine pose of domesticity to assume the unitary subject position is equally problematic, bound up in a discourse of patriarchal dominance. Part of what I would like to explore, therefore, is how Stein manages to assert herself as genius while, at the same time, countering the discourse of heterosexuality which threatens to deplete her shared subjectivity with Alice. I would like to argue, in fact, that Stein's configuration of her genius constitutes yet another form of autobiographical revision, and one that taken in conjunction with her dual subjectivity is truly novel.

To situate Stein within the discourse of genius, however, is an accomplishment unto itself, for, as Bob Perelman has pointed out, the concept of genius is already fraught with contradiction, particularly in modernist times where the idea tends to privilege an "aura of illegible authority" (Perelman 1). How does a genius function as "both origin and goal for society at large" (Perelman 164) if his or her work is largely inaccessible? Is this what it means to be able to create something of transhistorical value in a culture which has recently been transformed by so many new and heterogeneous technologies and art forms? Perhaps so, but even "though the genius may be free from the baggage of history that everyone else is doomed to carry, the category of genius has a history" (Perelman 159). And this, I believe, is the necessary starting point, since the modernist version of genius is not entirely divorced from earlier Romantic ideas of the "born" genius and the rarefication of art. Moreover, it is similarly plagued by the androcentric language of gender
which looks upon the "man of genius" as something quite natural, whereas the "woman of genius" (if the term is even applied) is looked upon in comic or ironic terms which "deflate both the possessor and the pursuer of feminine genius by pointing to its artifice or constructedness" (Elliott and Wallace 91).

In other words, it is necessary to recognize that the exclusionary premise of genius not only extends to ideas of the feminine, but also, by implication, equates the feminine with the ordinary. The advent of modern times changed very little, for although the attitude towards creativity had been somewhat altered, the attitude towards gender was much the same. Artistic women, as Gillian Hanscombe and Virginia Smyers observe, were expected to perform their domestic tasks nevertheless (Hanscombe and Smyers 4). They were expected to do it all, even if they earned money from their artistic output. And because of the strong gendered association of the feminine and the domestic/private realm of society, intellectual misogynists were still very much in fashion, those who saw the female genius as a "'contradiction in terms, for genius [was] simply intensified, perfectly developed, universally conscious maleness'" (Otto Weininger Sex and Character 1907; qtd. in Elliott and Wallace 96).

That Stein should position herself as genius among male geniuses, then, is both expected and somewhat surprising, for while, on one hand, her placement with Pablo Picasso and Alfred Whitehead seems to acknowledge the necessity of fashioning her genius as male, on the other, her central position seems to suggest that her genius is superior. But what of this genius? Stein's insistence on ordinary,
simple vocabulary would seem to deflate the concept. And yet, her ability to penetrate the complexity beneath the ordinary surface, or, perhaps it is more appropriate to say, her ability to nudge the reader towards such a demonstration, seems to fit the definition of genius quite well. Likewise, in the context of the autobiography, her assertion of greatness is entirely compatible with the male idea of genius. Where Stein departs from this pose, however, is in the absence of any myth of self-generation. Take, for instance, the passage in which Alice first recognizes that Stein is a genius:

I met Gertrude Stein. I was impressed by the coral brooch she wore and by her voice. I may say that only three times in my life have I met a genius and each time a bell within me rang and I was not mistaken, and I may say in each case it was before there was any general recognition of the quality of genius in them. The three geniuses of whom I speak are Gertrude Stein, Pablo Picasso and Alfred Whitehead (ABT 5).

The origin of Stein's genius is not her birth, but rather Alice's recognition of her genius. Furthermore, Alice's recognition is not predicated on any stereotypical idea of genius. She knows that Stein is a genius primarily out of intuition. Stein's appearance and voice cause an imaginary bell to ring within Toklas' mind, and this bell, within the context of her experience, means that Stein is a genius. Simply put, Alice's recognition is private; it does not correspond with received ideas, but instead emerges from a standard which is entirely her own.
And indeed, the idea that Stein's genius is a product of its context is sustained by the method of representing herself through Alice's eyes. In large part, she is a genius because Alice and the other women are merely the wives of geniuses. In other words, she is the centre because they form the margins, a position which is doubly reinforced by Alice's descriptions of other men in diminutive terms as well, their last names often appearing in conjunction with an adjective such as "little" or "small". Stein's name, on the other hand, is always written out in full, a semiotic suggestion of her superiority, but one which, in this particular instance, is mostly the result of its semiotic environment.

To some extent, then, Stein's configuration of her genius may be regarded in terms of irony and constructedness, the very terms usually applied to denigrate the notion of female genius. However, as I see it, the irony is one of feminist appropriation, and the construction is one which approaches another typically feminist pose, that of the relational subject. Of course, complicating the idea that Stein's representational strategies are deliberate feminist subversions is the fact that Alice always occupies a secondary position. Alice does not relate stories which pertain exclusively to her, nor does she apportion the anecdotes equally between her own and Stein's. The autobiography, on the contrary, is filled with "detailed observations about [Stein's] literary concerns, writing techniques, and habits of work [...] that corresponded to prevailing myths of masculine genius" (Elliott and Wallace 99). In other words, Stein's construction of her genius is not entirely seamless (Elliott and Wallace 100). She may not be the stereotypical masculine
genius, but neither is she a subversive feminist, as Shari Benstock is quick to remark in Women of the Left Bank (176-177). Her position, if one could map it, is somewhere in the problematic middle ground.

However, part of the problem, as I mentioned earlier, is the critical temptation to regard the Stein/Toklas relationship in heterosexual terms of masculine and feminine, for invariably such binary logic will not accommodate the lesbian economy of the autobiography. In fact, such logic typically produces the kind of reading which looks at the text as an act of narrative ventriloquism (Brodzki and Schenck 10)--Stein appropriating Alice's voice in order to tell her own story, or Stein using Alice to demonstrate the split consciousness of the autobiographer (Adams 20)--or, worse yet, as the story of a "happy marriage" (a husband and wife who subscribe to a dominant/submissive dynamic)\textsuperscript{24}, or the relationship between mother and baby (as is the case in one of Catharine Stimpson's earlier articles where she attributes significance to the couple's nicknames for each other--Mama Woojums and Baby Woojums)\textsuperscript{25}. As both Leigh Gilmore and Shari Benstock\textsuperscript{26} have observed, these types of interpretations not only injure the shared subjectivity of the autobiography, but also the way in which we look at Stein's work in the context of modernism as a whole, because in both instances the heterosexual norm which is applied as the standard elides the alterity of Stein's and Toklas' sexuality.

Again, the question of how we read the text becomes the issue at hand, for naturally a willingness to view the Stein/Toklas relationship through the lens of heterosexual logic will produce a corresponding interpretation. However, a knowledge of the couple's sexuality,
regardless of one's critical predisposition, seems to render this kind of imposition somewhat ridiculous. Why, for instance, would one impose a masculine/feminine gender dynamic when the more likely dynamic is that of the butch and the femme? And why, more importantly, would one want to impose a singular identity where a shared subject position has been inscribed? My own suspicions tell me that it has much more to do with our reluctance to surrender the patriarchal laws of the genre than anything else. Autobiography, after all, is not usually a collective proposition, but rather the narrative of a singular self who progresses from a point of origin to a point of inscription. Moreover, it is also very often a narrative of greatness, a story worthy of telling because the public demands it. Therefore, given both the fact of Stein's overwhelming presence and the fact of her notoriety, egregious interpretations of this sort are at least expected, even if they are not entirely acceptable.

What might be more acceptable, however, is not so easily accomplished, since we must first necessarily find or invent the appropriate language to speak these "unspeakable differences." As Audre Lorde might say, we cannot continue to use the master's tools if we have built a house with materials which belong to someone else. In the case of The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, then, it is necessary to find a language which allows for the lesbian economy of the Stein/Toklas subjectivity without reducing it to either heterosexual or androcentric terms, a language, in other words, which expands the law of the genre. All of which is not to say that the critic must force every instance of generic resistance into a reading of the lesbian signature,
for in most cases Stein's departures are simply experiments with
language and time. One should, however, consider those instances which
effect a "displacement" (to borrow Leigh Gilmore's terminology) of the
gender identification associated with the androcentric norms of
autobiographical convention.

One such displacement occurs in the chiastic intermingling of
subject and object, the fact that Stein and Toklas simultaneously
function in both capacities. Toklas is the speaking subject and yet the
object with relation to the dominant subject matter--Gertrude Stein.
Likewise, Stein is the object of Alice's narrative and yet the actual
subject of the autobiography. Together they function as the body and
voice of their collective subjectivity. Therefore, as a "we" instead of
an "I", the shared subject position effectively displaces the unitary
self one usually associates with autobiographical practice. And as a
"we" which is more than simply "the superabundance of I--that is, [...] 
overdetermined by the tremendous referential work it must perform"
(Gilmore 1991: 60), as an inextricably linked position, the Stein/Toklas
subjectivity also very definitely signals its lesbian sexuality in a way
which actively resists the presumption of a normative, heterosexually
marked "I". In fact, as Leigh Gilmore points out, the plural
subjectivity in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas is more aptly
described in terms of Monica Wittig's "j/e", a term she uses "to signify
a coupled rather than a split female subject" (Gilmore 1991: 60).
Regardless of the terminology, however, we cannot mistake its alterity.
"Stein [has made] the unspeakable of lesbian coupling speak" (Smith
1993: 81).
Yet another locus of resistance can be found in the very dynamic which is often taken as a parody of the masculine and feminine—the butch/femme dynamic which is inscribed throughout the text, a dynamic which is similarly performative, but which differs once again in terms of the space it occupies. Where the masculine/feminine dynamic is inherently oppositional, the butch/femme dynamic is "a role lesbians inhabit together" (Case 56). The difference may appear subtle, especially when we consider the dominant performances—genius and wife of genius, writer and editor, nocturnal creator and daily domestic, the brave rescuer and the fearful victim—however, as Leigh Gilmore rightly observes, they should not be read simply as a "miming of heterosexual domestic relations" (Gilmore 1991: 64), for if they are a "parody of heterosexual segregation" (Gilmore 1991: 65) they are enacted as a couple. And herein lies the crux of the matter, since the performance is twice removed and, more importantly, recognizable as a performance. The repeated mention of Alice's "wife sitting", for instance, is so exaggerated that we cannot fail to see the irony of Stein's depiction. And similarly, Stein's over-stated pose of genius effectively raises husbanding to a new level of camp. Therefore, the fact that Stein has represented her genius in such a terribly ambiguous fashion seems particularly relevant at this point, for it suggests that her irony may have been quite deliberate, that her inscription of both androcentric and gynocentric traits may have been part of the butch/femme performance at large. If this is the case, then Stein is not only wreaking havoc with the idea of genius, but also, in doing so, revising the conventional idea of the autobiographical subject, for the additional
element of irony goes a long way towards the deflation of "the great man" who normally occupies the central narrative position.

A third instance of displacement can be found in what Leigh Gilmore refers to as "a code of lesbian gifts in anti-realist and anti-authoritarian discursive practices" (Gilmore 1991: 66). Of course, to some extent, it is possible to read the entire text as an offering from one lesbian lover to the other, since Stein's experiments with language and time go against the grain of conventional autobiographical practice and, hence, the attendant androcentric and heterosexist assumptions. However, without wanting to reiterate the whole of my argument, I would like to emphasize those instances which specifically reinforce the lesbian partnership: the rose imagery of the front cover; the repeated allusions to Three Lives and to "Ada"; the illustration of Picasso's Homage à Gertrude; and the fact that Alice's narrative returns again and again to significant moments in the couple's life together, each time from a different angle, as if to constantly breathe new life into their love for each other. For, these smaller instances of gift giving, more specifically than the larger gift of Stein's narrative strategy itself, represent the shared economy of the lesbian subject position. Indeed, Stein is demonstrating that in return for Alice's "pretty good" everything else, she can be a pretty good partner, inscribing her love as a distinctive and permanent part of their "pretty good" autobiography.
What finally makes *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* distinctive, however, has much less to do with permanence than with a strategy of representation which transforms readerly expectations into writerly textuality, a strategy which not only questions the conventional limitations of autobiography, but also encourages the reader to interpret beyond those definitional boundaries. Stein's encouragement, to be sure, is less than subtle, for, like a mischievous tour guide, Stein has given us a map with all of the major sites clearly marked, but she has neglected to tell us that we are in another city entirely. Thus, as we encounter the signpost of chronological order, and discover instead a pattern of digressions and variant repetitions, or the signpost of objective truth which has been replaced by Stein's subjective and often metafictional version of truth, we soon learn that the markers we have come to expect make for an insufficient tour of the city before us.

In large part, therefore, Stein's text departs from the norm because it forces the reader to recognize that norms are simply literary vessels which may be filled or exploded as the writer and/or reader wishes. That is to say, its difference is one which rests primarily on the reader's ability to perceive Stein's playful manipulation of conventional autobiographical tropes. The reader, for instance, who cannot see beyond Stein's altered sense of temporal organization, or beyond her unorthodox notion of truth, is the reader who, in all likelihood, will find him or herself estranged from the text. In other
words, the reader who simply approaches the autobiography with a pre-determined set of conventional expectations, and then assesses whether or not Stein has managed to fulfil her literary destiny, is the same reader whose disappointment will translate into condemnations of the book's gossipy nonsense and lack of veracity. But the reader who sees Stein's transgressions for what they are, and engages in the excess meaning of the self-reflexive text, is one who will recognize that Stein's outlaw activity constitutes a revision of the genre which not only enables her to accommodate her own aesthetic ideals, but also to inscribe a subjectivity which more adequately represents her own sense of self.

One irony in all of this is the fact that the interpretive skills of the "intimate" reader are at once a salvation and a concession, for while the reader is the only one who may prevent the text from being fixed or identified in terms of conventional autobiographical practice, he or she, by the very act of interpretation, is fixing the text in time, identifying it in a way which runs contrary to Stein's aesthetic ideal. Nevertheless, the necessary interaction of reader and text in the production of meaning creates yet another temporal bridge between the inside and the outside of the book, between the text's materiality and the interpretive variables which are forever changing and, hence, allowing the autobiography to remain in Stein's preferred realm of the continuous present. Therefore, with regard to Stein's philosophy as a whole, the reader of the autobiography is much less a hindrance than a fundamental contribution, especially in terms of Stein's revisionary project.
Indeed, as I would like to suggest, an intimate reading such as the one I have attempted here not only contributes to a remapping of autobiographical convention—an expansion of the law of one particular genre, but also, in the larger scope of things, to a remapping of the idea of modernism itself, for it calls into question the conspicuous absence of both female and autobiographical works from the narrow, androcentric, definition of the term, replete with its imperatives for newness, freedom of form, linguistic experiment, and allusiveness. Certainly, we can no longer accept the idea that autobiography is a genre we must exclude from modernism, even in its most traditional sense, because Stein has shown us not only that it is possible to interfuse linguistic experiment with conventional trope, but also that the struggle she enacts between convention and her own margin of difference replicates the modernist "quest for the representation of the self" (Vanacker 1988: 113). Likewise, Stein's playful attitude towards autobiographical plotting and subjectivity, together with her imaginative and varied use of intertextuality, demonstrates that the female narrative is neither always linear nor exclusively heterosexual. Thus, in the end, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas emerges as a text which forces the exclusionary boundaries of modernism to open, for with one foot in tradition and the other one performing a lively dance in the margins, Stein sees not only that it is time to write beyond the confines of the genre, but also that it is time to read beyond our own categorical predispositions.
NOTES


2. See Marianne De Koven, "Transformations of Gertrude Stein," Modern Fiction Studies 42.3 (Fall 1996): 469-483. This issue commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of Stein's death on July 27, 1946.


5. Although this kind of dismissal typifies a slightly dated view of Stein (Donald Sutherland, Gertrude Stein: a Biography of Her Work [1951]; B.L. Reid, Art By Subtraction: A Dissenting Opinion of Gertrude Stein [1958]; Kingsley Widmer, The Literary Rebel [1965]; Bruce Kellner, A Gertrude Stein Companion: Content With Example [1988]), I would argue that its repercussions are still with us, since, in relation to the rest of Stein's oeuvre, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas still garners very little critical attention.

6. The terminology here derives from Philippe Lejeune's article "Le Pacte Autobiographique" and refers to the idea that an autobiographer makes a "pact" with his or her reader to deliver an authentic version of the self. Although this notion displaces the problematic equivalency between autobiography and truth, it still presumes that the autobiographical act is one of good faith, that the author intends to produce a personal history and that the name affixed to the text is necessarily a sign of authenticity. See "Le Pacte Autobiographique," Poetique 14 (1973): 137-162; rpt. "The Autobiographical Pact," On Autobiography, 3-30, trans. Katherine Leary, ed. Paul John Eakin (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1989).


9. My specific reference here is to John Malcolm Brinnin's lengthy The Third Rose: Gertrude Stein and Her World (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1987), in which Brinnin announces his own inability to understand "the
third rose" as the critical impetus for the study. There are, however, several critics who regard Stein's works in terms of codes which require decoding, ranging from Wendy Steiner (Exact Resemblance to Exact Resemblance; New Haven: Yale UP, 1978), who perceives Stein's language as a system of equivalences, to William Gass ("Gertrude Stein and the Geography of the Sentence," The World Within the Word [Boston: David R. Godine, 1979] 63-123), who has taken the idea of covert meaning to the point of excess, attempting to decode Stein's works with a set of algorithms which seem to draw on his own store of associative meanings.

10. All of the quotations from the autobiography will refer to the Vintage edition of the text (New York, 1961) and will hereafter employ the same shorthand (ABT).


12. Testimony Against Gertrude Stein was originally published as a supplement to the February 1935 volume of transition, edited by Eugène and Maria Jolas. Surprisingly few critical works concern themselves with the implications of such a testimony. Timothy Dow Adams's Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1990), Shirley Neuman's Gertrude Stein: Autobiography and the Problem of Narration (Victoria: English Literary Studies, Monograph Series, 1979), and Jeanette Winterson's Art Objects: Essays on Ecstasy and Effrontery (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996) are possibly the only works in recent years to mention the episode as something more than simply a demonstration of Stein's unreliability.


15. Although this is the date Stein herself supplies, it is evident from several biographies that Stein did not take up permanent residence in Paris until some time later. Diana Souhami, in fact, records that up until 1904 Stein was still somewhat troubled by whether or not she wanted to leave the United States. Curiously enough, though, 1903 is the year in which her older brother Michael, his wife, Sarah, and their family did move to Paris. See especially chapter five of Diana Souhami's Gertrude and Alice (San Francisco: Pandora, 1991).
16. To my knowledge, the original 1933 Harcourt Brace edition is the only one to include a table of contents.

17. In the Vintage edition of the text, this particular passage can be found on pages 14-16.

18. An interesting qualification emerges from Diana Souhami's biography, *Gertrude and Alice* (San Francisco: Pandora, 1991), which suggests that "Ada" was in fact "a joint declaration of their love" (95) since Alice is supposed to have added the last few sentences herself while in the process of transcription, beginning with, "Trembling was all living, living was all loving, some one was then the other one" ("Ada" 16).

19. This quote may be found near the beginning of chapter four in The *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (p. 70 in the Vintage edition).


21. Stein's interference with the interpretive act here seems to confirm at least two modern views on photography: Susan Sontag's idea that photographs "cannot themselves explain anything," that they "are inexhaustible invitations to deduction, speculation, and fantasy" (On Photography, 1977 [New York: Anchor, 1989] 23); and Roland Barthes's idea that "ultimately, photography is subversive not when it frightens, repels, or even stigmatizes, but when it is pensive, when it thinks" (*Camera Lucida* [New York: Hill and Wang, 1981] 38).

22. Please refer to note number 18.

23. This quote, taken from the final paragraph of "Ada" (*Geography and Plays* [Boston: Four Seas, 1922] 14-16), represents Alice's collaborative effort. Please refer to note number 18.


25. See the initial reference of the previous note.


27. I allude here to Julia Watson's essay, "Unspeakable Differences: The Politics of Gender and Lesbian and Heterosexual Women's Autobiographies," De/Colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography, eds. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1992) 139-168. However, Watson's title is itself derivative, alluding to Adrienne Rich who "uses the 'unspeakable' to name how women's love for and affiliation with one another, which she sees as primary, are silenced by the colonizing practices exerted literally upon the bodies of women in Western Culture" (Watson 146).
CHAPTER FOUR

Zora Neale Hurston's Dust Tracks on a Road:
Dialogism, Dialectics and Diaspora

Gwendolyn Mae Henderson, in her essay "Speaking in Tongues," suggests that the tendency towards dialogism in black women's writing can be seen from two different perspectives, in the usual sense of multi-vocality or multi-discursiveness, and also in the biblical sense of speaking in tongues, "signifying intimate, private, inspired utterances" (Henderson 23). She uses this latter qualification to propose that black women writers are "modern day apostles, empowered by experience to speak as poets and prophets in many tongues" (Henderson 24). Certainly, in the realm of black women's autobiography, one of these modern day apostles is Zora Neale Hurston, whose inspired private vision prophesies the coming of a new era in both Afro-American and Euro-American autobiography. Indeed Dust Tracks on a Road, the title of which already conjures up a palimpsestic image (Davies 147), speaks in many different tongues, creating a multi-layered effect which simultaneously explodes conventional boundaries and defies categorization. Françoise Lionnet and Alice Deck both refer to the text as "autoethnography," a term meant to connote the combination of self-portraiture and anthropological study, and yet, in their final analyses, find the term wanting, unable to capture the whole. Barbara Johnson, in league with the vast majority of Hurston critics, fixes on the unreliability of the narration, calling it a trickster's tale
(Johnson 183). And Nellie McKay, taking this kind of interpretation one step further, suggests that the text is pure performance, though not unlike a story told by an African griot "whose memory preserves the sense of a past culture" (McKay 1988: 184). But tempering this view of Hurston's autobiography as an extended "lying session" are also critics such as James Krasner, who scorns the normative valuation system and recognizes Hurston's evasiveness as an honesty more profound than simple veracity (Krasner passim), or Claudine Raynaud, who acknowledges both the generic pressures of the confessional mode in Western autobiographical tradition and the more specific editorial constraints which transform the text from its original manuscript version (Raynaud 1988: passim).

Clearly, Hurston's method of self-representation is not unproblematic. However, her mixture of elements from the American slave narrative, confessional autobiography, Southern black folklore, cultural anthropology, the epic, the picaresque and the essay is better taken as a whole, for the critical inability to parse and label seems to reveal only that Hurston's text is not operating within the same grammar. Her dialogic approach resists any stable category, in part because no one element adequately represents the whole, but largely because Hurston's experience and rendering of that experience disappoints any generic expectations we might hold. To be sure, many of the signposts are there, but not all of them. In each case, the generic destination, so to speak, is absent, almost as though Hurston is deliberately toying with her reader's desire to locate a dominant thread. But this is not just post-modern meta-text before its time, for although *Dust Tracks on a Road*
functions on two levels, Hurston's evasiveness, in this case, is also a statement of subjectivity, an acknowledgement of the varying influences which converge at the juncture which is her "self". In other words, it is a way of locating her identity within the margin of difference that separates her from the fixed subject position of black/female/author/autobiographer, a way of demonstrating not only that she is neither one of those things exclusively, but also that she is so much more.

Complicating this neat view of Hurston's resistance to conventional norms and fixed identity, however, is the original resistance which marks the autobiographical occasion of the text. Prompted by her publisher, J.B. Lippincott, to write the autobiography as a sort of promotional vehicle, Hurston was initially very reluctant. In the first place, she did not think she had accumulated enough experience to warrant the telling; she was only in her forties at the time, and her literary career was only just gaining momentum (Hemenway 1977: 275). And in the second place, she was apprehensive about the genre itself, claiming that she did not feel an autobiography could adequately capture the "inner self" (Hemenway 1977: 278; Raynaud lll). Though not many critics question whether the printed text adequately encompasses Hurston's subjectivity, since most either concede her final volition in writing the autobiography or have an iconic regard for the textual "I", a brave few have begun to speculate on the distortion resulting from the editorial midwiving, for like Hurston's own midwife her publisher was white and male. The fact, therefore, that certain chapters have been omitted, that some are greatly transfigured, or that some of the language has been changed or excised, forces us to consider
how these editorial constraints affect the subjectivity we perceive in
the original edition of the text, revising issues of race and gender,
and also greatly vexing the question of autobiographical authenticity.
To some extent, we must accept that Hurston's text is not as far removed
from the slave narrative as we would like to think, at the very least
encoding her subjection to a white male publishing industry with its
coeextensive desire to appeal to a similar audience.

More complicated still is the question of which text, the printed
version or the manuscript version\(^1\), deserves our attention. Do we
regard the editorial interference as something which adds yet another
inflection to Hurston's subjectivity, or should we simply accept the
textual "I" as the only "true" mark of self, regardless of intention?
The assumption of authenticity, furthermore, brings its own set of
problems, as we saw with Stein's autobiography. One could certainly
argue that the manuscript version is the more authentic of the two
without inviting the notion of truth, since it is whole, uncensored and
idiomatically original. However, by the same token, one could argue that
the printed version is equally authentic, representing that part of
Hurston's subjectivity which derives from the imposition of white
androcentric norms. My own approach, therefore, will involve the
surrender of Occam's razor, abandoning the assumption of authenticity
altogether. Since both texts are valuable in their own right, especially
in terms of assessing Hurston's revisionary autobiographical methods, I
do not wish to privilege either version, but wish, instead, to regard
the text as a processive whole which in every one of its manifestations
contributes to Hurston's subjectivity.
With this in mind, then, I would like to concentrate on the text's revisionary dialogism, focusing on the self-representational strategies with which Hurston not only resists categorical definition, but also maps out a new trajectory for women's autobiography. Taking my organizational cue from Sidonie Smith's essay on Hurston's diasporan subjectivity, I will subdivide my discussion in terms of Hurston's resistance to temporal, racial, gender and narrative "fixing." However, unlike Smith's approach, my own will delve somewhat further into the text, both inviting more nuance and expanding upon the idea of narrative dialogism, for although Smith's treatment is an excellent one, it does not account for several of Hurston's autobiographical registers. In particular, it does not account for the dialectic between Hurston and her publisher, or the related dialectic between Hurston and her reader, which manifest themselves as subtle subversive encodings, and consequently modify Smith's contention that "Hurston's text moves by incorporation rather than exclusions" (Smith 1993: 124). However, this is not to detract from Smith's theory of self-multiplication as evidence of Hurston's diasporan subjectivity, but only to give consideration to an element of the text which potentially alters its critical complexion, since, from the time of its original publication to the present day, Dust Tracks on a Road has often been overlooked as a document of social protest and either unjustly affiliated with the literary school of Uncle Tomism or characterized as highly selective in its racial portraiture. To use one of Hurston's metaphors, therefore, this new consideration of the text is a way of sharpening the oyster knife (Raynaud 1992: 36), of opening the shell to reveal yet another autobiographical space.
Like the dead-seeming cold rocks, I have memories within that came out of the material that went to make me. Time and place have had their say.

So you will have to know something about the time and place where I came from, in order that you may interpret the incidents and directions of my life (DT 1)\(^5\).

The self-consciousness with which these opening paragraphs of the first chapter, "My Birthplace," not only announce that time and place will play a significant role in the autobiography, but also figure the implied reader of the text is not immediately impressive, particularly when the next three words we read are "I was born". We come away with the assumption that Hurston, like the vast majority of autobiographers, is going to begin with an account of her birth. However, contrary to expectation, Hurston does not deliver. What we receive instead is the history of Eatonville, Florida leading up to its incorporation as an all black town on August 18, 1886. Hurston has certainly given us a description of her birthplace, but the events recounted are still at quite a remove from her birth. The second chapter, "My Folks," continues this pattern of contextualization, only here narrowing the focus to an anecdotal portrait of the immediate family: her father, John Hurston; her mother, Lucy Ann Potts; the eight (mostly unidentified) children; Aunt Caroline and Uncle Jim. Zora, the subject of the autobiography, is still absent as Zora, the author, supplies us with all of this second-
hand information. In fact, between the order of the telling (from her place of birth to her parents and then, finally, in chapter three, to her birth) and the distant "I" of the narration, one almost has the sense of reading Zora's birth certificate rather than her autobiography.

Her actual birth in Chapter Three, however, does little to satisfy our readerly expectations:

This is all hear-say. Maybe some of the details of my birth as told me might be a little inaccurate, but it is pretty well established that I really did get born (DT 19).

Not only has Hurston deferred the conventional positioning of this event by postponing her birth until the third chapter, but she has almost entirely eluded the matter of autobiographical chronology, for, instead of supplying us with the date of her birth, she telegraphs her acceptance of the community's recollection of the event. Indeed, for some of Hurston's critics, this omission is tremendously bothersome. Robert Hemenway, Hurston's literary biographer, sees it as evidence of two pervasive flaws, Hurston's overall "reluctance to locate personal experience in the common chronological record" (Hemenway 1984: x), and the fact that the actual date, when superimposed on the events of the text, creates a missing decade and, consequently, an entirely new reading of the text (Hemenway 1984: xi). And similarly, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese sees such demonstrable inaccuracy as one of many attempts to construct her identity apart from history, particularly the literary inheritance of the slave narrative (Fox-Genovese 1987: 172, 174).

Evidently these critics were expecting a traditional developmental pattern: Hemenway the Euro-centric norm which situates the
subject in a horizontal progression of historically identifiable events; and Fox-Genovese the Afro-American norm which situates the subject in a similar progression of racially identifiable events. Clearly, both are disappointed by Hurston's failure to replicate the pattern. However, what both of these critics overlook is Hurston's careful navigation between the Scylla and Charybdis of autobiography, her successful passage between the self-effacing androcentric norms of both white and black traditions. What I am suggesting, in other words, is that Hurston's alternative ordering principle is less a matter of deliberate deception than it is a matter of asserting her individuality. She is certainly not the self-generated (sui generis) hero of the European tradition, but neither is she the exemplar of an oppressed race. Perhaps, for this reason, Hurston's autobiography begins with what Lillie P. Howard calls "the rich incubator of her own birth" (Howard 161), a description of the environment which contributed specifically to Zora Neale Hurston.

Of course, one cannot discount the idea of deliberate misrepresentation entirely, for Hurston's self-conscious address to a fictitious "you" is quite enough to suggest the separation she perceives between herself and her audience. And given the editorial constraints she encountered at the time of publication, it would not be so implausible to suggest that Hurston might be inclined to antagonize readerly expectations as a subtle form of revenge. In fact, Claudine Raynaud locates the origin of the author/reader tension in the proleptic image of the title itself, claiming that "the temporariness of the traces left on the road, the fleetingness of the dust announce the
silences and the voluntary omissions" (Raynaud 1988: 112). Further
evidence, however, can certainly be found within the autobiography.
Hurston's recollection of her gate-post performances, for example,
provides us with one substantial hint:

I used to take a seat on top of the gate-post and watch the
world go by. One way to Orlando ran past my house, so the
carriages and cars would pass before me. The movement made
me glad to see it. Often white travellers would hail me, but
more often I hailed them, and asked, "Don't you want me to
go a piece of the way with you?" (DT 33-34).

Poised between the all-black town of Eatonville and the white passers-
by, Hurston inscribes her ambivalent position (Johnson 279). She belongs
to the black world, as her scolding grandmother often reminds her, and
yet, she can be lured, for a price, "to go a piece" in the other
direction. As "both audience and actor" (McKay 1988: 181), therefore,
she had observed the behaviour of the white tourists and knew very well
how to take advantage of them.

Another example can be found in the glaring contradiction between
the excised chapter, "Seeing The World As It Is" (chapter fourteen in
the original manuscript) and the inscription Hurston penned for the dust
jacket:

Freedom is a cemetery flower--rooted in struggle and
nourished in blood. Now our young men are in the field,
offering and giving that last and final possession--life--
that we may secure in possessions and peace, liberty and
life. Can we do less than give freely of perhaps the least
of the things they are guaranteeing to us with their all?

Buy War Bonds. Buy Saving Stamps. (qtd. in Hemenway 1984: xxxiv)

In light of the book's publication during the height of World War II, a patriotic appeal of this sort might not seem especially peculiar. However, in light of the fact that Pearl Harbor had justified Lippincott's omission of a chapter which not only attacks American Imperialism and democratic zeal, but also sympathizes with the Japanese (Hemenway 1977: 276), this inscription emerges with a great deal of irony. Either Hurston's opinion has instantaneously reversed itself, or she is having a bit of fun at her publisher's expense. Given the exaggerated quality of the purple prose, one is almost certain that Hurston intended this as more than just an inside joke.

The question which remains, however, is whether or not these moments of resistance are enough to suggest that Hurston's evasiveness about the details of her life is simply a matter of subversion. I think not, in part because Hurston's refusal to locate herself within a larger historical framework and Hurston's subtle undermining of her publisher's authority contribute to her subjectivity in two very distinct ways, but largely because Hurston's evasiveness expresses much more about her complex understanding of self-representation. Like Stein, Hurston is acutely aware of the impossibility of objective self-portraiture:

I did not know then, as I know now, that people are prone to build a statue of the kind of person that it pleases them to be. And few people want to be forced to ask themselves, 'What if there is no me like my statue?' (DT 25-26)
In other words, Hurston's experience with the genre has altered her perception of the autobiographer as the locus of objective truth. Truth, in Hurston's revision of the term, is the product of subjective desire.

However, the subjectivity of subjectivity, as we saw in the previous chapter, is just as much a truth as any factual detail. And this, I believe, is crucial to an understanding of Hurston's alternate sense of order, for, as James Krasner has pointed out, Hurston's distaste for the idea of "truth [as] a time-dependent phenomenon" (Krasner 116) fares rather significantly in the way she chooses to pattern the text. That is to say that if Hurston is interested in building the kind of statue which it pleases her to be, then she is not likely to build it using someone else's plaster. For Hurston, truth-bound ideas of time are just that, a kind of plaster which would not only limit her to the historical past, but also fix her in someone else's idea of truth. Thus, Hurston's refusal to supply dates or historical benchmarks, or any of the overt signs which normally accompany the developmental pattern of the autobiography, is less a form of mistruth than it is an attempt by Hurston to carve an individual space for her own autobiographical statue.

What manages to confuse even the most astute of readers, however, is the fact that part of Hurston's private construction seemingly patterns itself upon the confessional autobiography. Hurston invokes this pattern with a rather lengthy passage in Chapter Four which describes the visionary experience of a seven year old Zora:

I had knowledge before its time. I knew my fate. I knew that I would be an orphan and homeless. I knew that while I was
still helpless, that the comforting circle of my family would be broken, and that I would have to wander cold and friendless until I had served my time. I would stand beside a dark pool of water and see a huge fish move slowly away at a time when I would be somehow in the depth of despair. I would hurry to catch a train, with doubts and fears driving me and seek solace in a place and fail to find it when I arrived, then cross many tracks to board the train again. I knew that a house, a shotgun-built house that needed a new coat of white paint, held torture for me, but I must go. I saw deep love betrayed, but I must feel and know it. There was no turning back. And last of all, I would come to a big house. Two women waited there for me. I could not see their faces, but I knew one to be young and one to be old. One of them was arranging some queer-shaped flowers such as I had never seen. When I had come to these women, then I would be at the end of my pilgrimage, but not the end of my life. Then I would know peace and love and what goes with these things, and not before (DT 42).

Admittedly, the passage is too much to ignore, echoing as it does with many of the familiar sounds of confessional writing: the visionary subject (with no less than twelve visions), the "cartographic plotting [of] her life" (Smith 1993: 106), and the proleptic or teleological organization which casts that life in terms of one grand spiritual quest. The only thing missing, as Sidonie Smith observes, is the "traditional tripartite structure of death, conversion, [and] rebirth"
(Smith 1993: 107), which Hurston cleverly eludes by stating that the end of her pilgrimage would not be the end of her life.

Understandably, therefore, many critics are disappointed by the fact that Hurston does not follow through with the structural pattern she invokes. Robert Hemenway, in fact, makes this a central issue in his introduction to the second edition of the text, suggesting that the absence of visions nine through twelve detracts from our ability "to explain how an imaginative young girl could travel from Eatonville to the horizon, discovering fame and fortune as a nationally known author" (Hemenway 1984: xxxvi). In other words, Hemenway is once again disturbed by the fact that Hurston does not adhere to conventional modes. Her failure to employ the twelve visions as a structuring device and, hence, her failure to provide the reader with a "proper" sense of closure, is quite simply the mark of a negligent autobiographer. What Hemenway himself fails to recognize, however, is the possibility that Hurston invokes this generic form, not as an ordering principle, but as a way of inscribing her departure from both the Euro-centric and Afro-American versions of the confessional autobiography.

I raise this possibility primarily because of the passage immediately preceding Hurston's description of the twelve visions, a passage which describes the quality of the visions themselves:

Like clearcut stereopticon slides, I saw twelve scenes flash before me, each one held until I had seen it well in every detail, and then be replaced by another. There was no continuity as in an average dream. Just disconnected scene after scene with blank spaces in between. I knew that they
were all true, a preview of things to come, and my soul
writhed in agony and shrunk away (DT 41).

Hurston's characterization of these visions as a disconnected series of
flashes which resemble stereopticon slides not only preempts the
"confessional" interpretation by alerting the reader to the actual
discontinuity of the narrative which ensues, but also suggests an
alternative map for reading the text--"a preview of things to come". To
regard Hurston's visions as anything other than flashes of recollection,
therefore, is to impose a pattern where one was never intended.
Moreover, it is an imposition which generates its own expectations. The
critic who mistakenly reads the following narrative as one which
patterns itself on the confessional, expecting linear continuity and its
attendant closure, is necessarily a disappointed critic. And so, to
accuse Hurston of not properly fulfilling her literary station as a
confessional autobiographer is simply erroneous, not to mention
careless.

Indeed, the reader who pays closer attention to the text as it is
written will more likely interpret Hurston's authorial stance as one of
conscious unreliability, and will understand that her disclosure of
disconnectedness is the "preview of things to come", for in spite of her
declaration that "time was to prove the truth of [her] visions" (DT 43),
we have come to learn that Hurston's version of the truth is not
necessarily the same as ours. One formidable clue already exists in
Hurston's evasion of historical and temporal markers. Her suspicion of
time as an agent of truth not only explains why she has chosen to
project forward into the territory of temporal uncertainty, but also,
because of this uncertainty, suggests that this projection may be somewhat tenuous. In fact, if there is one truth Hurston manages to convey, it is the truth she attaches to the natural phenomenon of unreliability, a truth she reinforces at the beginning of Chapter Five (appropriately entitled "Figure and Fancy") where she asserts, "Nothing that God ever made is the same thing to more than one person. That is natural. There is no single face in nature, because every eye that looks upon it, sees it from its own angle" (DT 45).

That Hurston's "angle" on autobiography should differ from the rest, therefore, is not entirely unexpected. Hurston has signalled her departure not only by actively resisting the normative temporal patternings of developmental and confessional autobiography, but also by sharing her conscious unreliability with the reader. But where the organization of the first four chapters had a tendency to lead the traditional reader down the literary garden path, the subsequent chapters seem to practice more overtly what Hurston preaches. Hurston's resistance to linear temporal order and its association with autobiographical truth is now marked by what Françoise Lionnet has called "interactive thematic topoi" (Lionnet 97). The chapters have each been organized around a particular topic (childhood fancy, wandering, love, research, books); however, as opposed to being linked by chronology, they are simply linked by the author's fabrication of the text, interactive only in so far as the events all pertain to the life and life-writing of Zora Neale Hurston. In other words, Hurston has replaced traditional horizontal organization with a kind of vertical
organization which makes no pretence about the seamlessness of autobiographical narrative.

Possibly more interesting than the strategy itself, however, is the type of critical response engendered by Hurston's vertical temporality, for even those who acknowledge the alternative ordering principle are still compelled to read the text in terms of continuity and progression. The peculiar combination of cross-disciplinary discourse theory and conventional autobiographical theory in Alice Deck's reading, for instance, effectively undermines her own understanding of Hurston's organization. On one hand, she allows for the possibility that Hurston is employing an antiphonal structure of call and response, a synchronic order which preserves "her voice as a distinct entity" (Deck 249); and, on the other, she claims that "Hurston offers a straight linear narration of her life" (Deck 241) and adheres "to the conventional innocence-to-experience plot of autobiography" (Deck 242).

Only slightly more convincing is Judith Robey, who suggests that *Dust Tracks on a Road* has simply displaced the usual autobiographical progression to a meta-textual level. There may not be any linear plotting per se, but nevertheless the text is possessed of an "overall progression" which consists of "shifts in generic modes within the autobiography--from myth in the chapters on childhood, to the picaresque travel chapters, to the final essay chapters" (Robey 668). Hurston is still depicted as a traditional autobiographical hero, but instead of coursing her way through chronological time, she moves from the natural (feminine) time associated with myth, to the episodic (masculine) time
associated with the picaresque genre, and then finally to the essayistic (neutral) present. Thus, while on one level Robey's argument successfully allows for Hurston's vertical organization, on another, it is somewhat defused by the imposition of traditional literary structures as a way of reading progressive movement back into the text. In fact, the additional implication of Robey's gendering, that Hurston's subjectivity evolves from feminine to masculine to neutral, is potentially contradictory to the main thrust of her argument—-that these fictional analogues represent the assertion of Hurston's individuality—since it suggests that Hurston's success in extricating herself from the politics of gender is a product of self-effacing neutrality.

What all of this reveals, apart from a certain predisposition to traditional interpretive structures, is that Hurston's "an-archic" temporality not only defies conventional labels, but also demands a language of its own. Perhaps for this reason, Françoise Lionnet's interpretation, as one which constantly expands to accommodate the various nuances of the text, comes closest to capturing the spirit of Hurston's Dust Tracks. Dismissing the term "autobiography" almost immediately, Lionnet suggests that the text is better looked upon as a kind of self-portrait, a self-contained entity rather than a representation of the past (Lionnet 98). The linear historical program of conventional autobiography is not compatible with the "'figural anthropology'" (Lionnet 99) of Hurston's essayistic method. And furthermore, it does not accommodate the performative element of Hurston's storytelling, which not only generates its own genealogy, but also overwhelms the chronological sense of time with something much more
fluid and contextual (Lionnet 101). Storytelling, as Hurston herself
tells us in Chapter Ten ("Research"), is a phenomenon which cannot be
fixed either in form or content:

Once they got started, the "lies" just rolled and the story-
tellers fought for a chance to talk. It was the same with
the songs. The one thing to be guarded against, in the
interest of truth, was over-enthusiasm. For instance, if a
song was going good, and the material ran out, the singer
was apt to interpolate pieces of other songs into it. The
only way you can know when that happens, is to know your
material so well that you can sense the violation. Even if
you do not know the song that is being used for padding, you
can tell the change in rhythm and tempo. The words do not
count. The subject matter in Negro folk-songs can be
anything and go from love to work, to travel, to food, to
weather, to fight, to demanding the return of a wig by a
woman who has turned unfaithful. The tune is the unity of
the thing (DT 143-144).

The process Hurston describes is one which has its origins in the
context of the group. The story or song may have had a previous life,
but each new telling is a kind of rebirth, as the story or song is
transfigured by the interpolations of all who are present. As Hurston
says, the words do not count. What matters is the tune or the tempo. The
idea of an historical frame of reference, in other words, has been
replaced by a rhythmic sense of time which is significant only within
the context of the immediate situation.
The same, I believe, applies to Hurston's autobiography as a whole. There is a tune or tempo which makes the work significant within its own frame of reference, but the words do not count; they are not necessarily consistent with the message they deliver, nor do they necessarily jibe with anyone else's song. The fact, then, that Hurston moves from one subject to the other, almost exactly like the folksongs she describes, or that she invokes certain literary traditions to suit the moment rather than pattern the whole, should not be judged in terms of inconsistency or lack of continuity, for within the model of storytelling she gives us, she accords completely. Hurston has interpolated her song with many different elements--confessional autobiography, folklore, storytelling, essay writing--but, in the end, she has made it her own, and given it her own tempo. The problem for any critic who perceives the autobiography as lacking, therefore, is the problem of having a different song in mind while reading what is quite clearly a unique and self-contained composition.

_Diasporan Subjectivity, or De-Colonizing the Self_

Unfortunately, the idea that Hurston is marching to the tune of a different drummer does not lend itself so easily to a discussion of racial subjectivity. In terms of politics, critics have divided along issues of whether Hurston's evasive practice is a product of feminist self-assertion or yet another manifestation of racial suppression; and, in terms of literary analysis, critics are split between those who feel
that Hurston has forsaken her Afro-American literary heritage in favour of "dust tracks on a road" and those who assert that many of Hurston's self-representational strategies are, in fact, an extension of the little recognized, albeit strong, tradition of black female autobiography. In part, the difficulty arises from what Françoise Lionnet calls the "métissage" of the text, Hurston's braiding of several cultural forms together (Lionnet 128), for while this diasporan dispersion makes it difficult to fix Hurston's subjectivity with any racial stereotype, it also suggests that this self-orphaning mode of representation may be a function of necessity. Another factor contributing to this problem, however, is the politics of publication, for Hurston's autobiographical command performance, so to speak, together with the very intrusive editing which brought about the first edition of the text, raises the issue of whether or not Hurston's subjectivity is truly her own. Those who focus on the heavy-handed excision of Hurston's potentially inflammatory material, or on the editorial suppression of her black idiom, are apt to interpret Hurston's subjectivity in terms of racial or sexual oppression; and, those who assert that Hurston has subtly encoded her resistance to the impositions of J.B Lippincott and Company are, naturally, more inclined to read her subjectivity as one possessed of racial pride or feminist strength.

But then, of course, there is the issue of what Hurston has actually selected for the telling, for, in spite of all the embedded caveats that warn the reader against taking her words at face value, she has nevertheless exercised a certain amount of choice in the material she has braided together. Although Hurston's content is by no means
exempt from the critical warfare, some choosing to exalt the text on the basis of Hurston's identification with her own race while others denigrate it for just the opposite reason, I believe that Hurston's own views on race, if not the last word on the subject, are at least a good place to begin, especially if we are interested in examining the strategies with which she has chosen (or not chosen) to represent race.

One chapter in particular deserves our attention, Chapter Twelve, entitled "My People! My People!", where Hurston not only gives us her opinion of such concepts as race pride, race prejudice, race man, race solidarity and race consciousness (DT 159ff), but also discusses her own racial socialization. To be sure, Hurston's understanding of race terminology is a little unsettling to the reader who is accustomed to more radical or militant views. In fact, according to Hurston's world view, race consciousness and race solidarity are not necessarily desirable. Race consciousness is simply "a plea to Negroes to bear their color in mind at all times" (DT 159), and race solidarity is a fiction produced and sustained by the upper classes. For Hurston, the black race is a much more variegated concept. There are "well-mannered Negroes" (DT 157) and "trashy Negro[es]" (DT 158), those who impose their opinions and those who are quiet-spoken, those who are educated and those are not, those who belong to the upper classes and those who, like herself, come from a lesser economic class and were raised on folktales rather than political fictions. Indeed, the conclusion Hurston draws at the end of telling a story about racial strife in her community is

that the Negro race was not one band of heavenly love. There was stress and strain inside as well as out. Being black was
not enough. It took more than a community of skin color to make your love come down on you. That was the beginning of my peace.

Light came to me when I realized that I did not have to consider any racial group as a whole. [...] I learned that skins were no measure of what was inside people. So none of the Race clichés meant anything any more (DT 170-171).

As part of Hurston's socialization, therefore, these stories play a significant role in the development of her racial views. But an equal part is played by the fact that Hurston grew up in the all-black town of Eatonville Florida, for apart from what she learned and observed about her community, the "rich incubator of her own birth" (Howard 161) was, to some extent, a shield which kept her protected from the racial tensions that plagued the rest of the South. In fact, as Hurston describes in Chapter Six, it was not until she was sent to Jacksonville as a young girl that she was made to feel the colour of her skin (DT 68). Thus, as both an acknowledgement of her sheltered upbringing and a declaration of racial diversity, the final paragraph of Chapter Twelve emerges as perhaps the most important statement Hurston makes on the subject of race:

I maintain that I have been a Negro three times--a Negro baby, a Negro girl and a Negro woman. Still, if you have received no clear cut impression of what the Negro in America is like, then you are in the same place with me.
There is no *The Negro* here. Our lives are so diversified, internal attitudes so varied, appearances and capabilities so different, that there is no possible classification so catholic that it will cover us all, except My People! My People! (DT 172).

Although the manuscript version of this chapter is much more anecdotal and, to some degree, more personalized, it does not affect Hurston's overarching message, her adamant assertion about the heterogeneous quality of her race. No one classification will suffice. And this, as I see it, is something quite inextricable from the way in which Hurston has chosen to represent herself on the whole, for it not only informs the way her subjectivity is poised between various cultural traditions and discursive modes, but also offers a partial explanation as to why she feels free to borrow from both Euro-American and Afro-American autobiographical conventions without having to take up permanent residence in either tradition. It is not so much that she is rejecting or disinheriting any of these traditions outright, but more so that she is indicating how many different influences converge to make up Zora Neale Hurston, and that no one classification will suffice.

To reconsider Hurston's autobiographical pastiche with this in mind, then, will not only reveal a more inclusive notion of her racial subjectivity, but also shed some new light on the raging critical dispute which, at present, surrounds the text. In fact, the question of whether or not Hurston has sold her race down the river seemingly becomes irrelevant, because the textual "métissage" (Lionnet 128)
encourages the reader to look upon the various discursive elements as they are braided together, and not as potentially antithetical modes. One cannot, for instance, separate the Zora Neale Hurston who identifies herself with the community of Eatonville women (a typical relational pose for black women autobiographers) from the Zora Neale Hurston who inscribes her subjectivity as a solitary mythic hero (a pose common in Western tradition)—an inverse Persephone (Smith 1993: 115; Lionnet 119) who will (re)search for her mother, since it is Hurston's strong collective sensibility in the first place which leads to her solitary wandering. In other words, both poses emerge from the same racial identification of the subject.

Likewise, an attempt to distinguish the Southern black storyteller from the Boazian anthropologist who records the folktales is rendered nearly impossible by the fact that Hurston's autobiography participates equally in both discursive modes. Her recollections of Polk County, for example, are not just of the people and the folklore she encountered, the detached scientific observations of a "white" academic; they include herself as an active participant in the story of jealous misunderstanding and female brawling she relates. Hurston is, in fact, the object of the jealousy that incites Big Sweet (the ostensible subject of the study) to have it out in a knife fight with Lucy, the woman who perceives Hurston as a threat to her marriage. Thus, not unlike the seat she adopts on the gatepost at the beginning of the book, Hurston is both actor and audience, both black and white identified.

To regard Hurston's subjectivity in terms of identity formation is, therefore, somewhat misleading, for even a patient sifting of all of
the racially identified moments in the text will never really produce an either/or result, since Hurston's poised position on the boundary between the two always affects the way in which we receive these moments. Hurston may tell us with seeming naiveté about her days as a domestic servant or as a lady's maid for a Gilbert and Sullivan company, but the voice which reminds us that "people can be slave-ships in shoes" (DT 85) is never very far behind. Or, as is the case in Chapter Nine, she may tell us rather neutrally about the bigoted barber for whom she worked on Capitol Hill, but the story is not over until she acknowledges her own part in this Jim Crow operation (DT 119). Hurston's ambivalent stance, in other words, prevents us from fixing her identity one way or the other. And possibly, for this reason, many critics avoid discussing or even mentioning the Cudjo Lewis episode in the book, for it is one which suggests that Hurston is simultaneously an embodiment of Harriet Jacobs and Uncle Tom:

One thing impressed me strongly from this three months of association with Cudjo Lewis. The white people had held my people in slavery here in America. They had bought us, it is true and exploited us. But the inescapable fact that stuck in my craw, was: my people had sold me and the white people had bought me (DT 145).

Certainly, as an implication of her own people's guilt in the selling of slaves, the revelation is less than appropriate for a woman who has spent most of her life documenting and extolling the language of Southern black folklore. But nevertheless, as an identification which at once equates her with slavery ("my people had sold me") and also brings
to it the academic objectivity implicit in her project (the research she was conducting on behalf of *The Journal of Negro History* at Columbia University), this passage emerges as perhaps one of the most remarkable in the autobiography, for here it is truly impossible to classify Hurston's racial subjectivity in any way that satisfies the whole without acknowledging that she is both one and the other together. In effect, Hurston has multiplied her identities (Smith 1993: 109). But more importantly, by this process of multiplication, she has shown us that "the body [is not] constitutive of the sign 'race'" (Smith 1993: 108), that race is a cultural construct, not one homogenous essence, but a variety of individuals, each of whom brings his or her contextual differences to the boundless reality.

Of course, Hurston's resistance to essentialized identity was not without its problems. The idea of a prominent black author who refused to be seen as a representative of her race stirred a great deal of controversy, particularly amongst the black literati. Initial reception of the text was mostly mixed, and mostly because of what critics saw as Hurston's negligent portrayal of race. It was not so much that Hurston had overlooked racial issues (for evidently the subjects of slavery and oppression are present), but primarily that she had opted for a depiction of race which was not only more positive, but also much more varied. In other words, she had refused to subscribe to a notion of the victimized black race in a literary climate which stipulated that the black author must necessarily write protest literature. To contemporary critics, therefore, Hurston was regarded as something of a traitor, as an author who would not assume the requisite exemplary
position. Moreover, as an autobiographer, Hurston's resistance to the literary norm seemed doubly egregious, since it was not only seen as a way of turning her back on her own race, but also, very specifically, as a way of denying the literary heritage implicit in the tradition of black autobiography:

The 'self' of black autobiography on the whole [...] is not an individual with a private career, but a soldier in a long, historic march toward Canaan. The self is conceived as a member of an oppressed social group, with ties and responsibilities to the other members. It is a conscious political identity, craving sustenance from the past experience of the group, giving back the iron of its endurance fashioned into armor and weapons for the use of the next generation of fighters (Butterfield 2-3).

In short, then, Hurston's "disarming" approach to autobiography was seen as equivalent to a kind of literary genocide, for in the process of disowning herself she would orphan all future generations.

One point which is consistently overlooked, however, is the fact that black slave narratives, as the first manifestation of Afro-American autobiography, were also motivated by individual concerns, by the desire for "authentic self-expression" (Smith 1974: ix), a desire, in fact, which would mark their authors' difference from other members of their race even as it served to inscribe their opposition to white enslavers. To some extent, I would argue that private desire, at least as it inheres in the demonstration of erudition, has always been there. Thus,
to Stephen Butterfield's narrow circumscription of the black self, I would add William Andrews' assessment:

By the end of the first century of Afro-American autobiography, the genre had become the scene of a complex discursive encounter presided over by a self-determining narrator who makes free with text and reader in the name of truth to self, a standard that left both identity and veracity problematically intermeshed in their own mutual relativity (Andrews 2).

And like William Andrews, I would emphasize the autobiographer's truth to the self, for here, in this particular aspect of the tradition, I think it is still possible to recognize *Dust Tracks on a Road*. Certainly, no one would ever suggest that Hurston's sense of truth and identity rests on any standard other than her own, especially considering the mutual reinforcement of her express opinions on race and the text as a whole.

But clearly, what separates Hurston from the majority of Afro-American autobiographers is the fact that her idea of truth in identity does not invite the usual oppositional politics of black versus white. Hurston does not enlist in Butterfield's autobiographical army precisely because she does not see herself as a "warrior or defiant black activist" (Deck 237), but rather, as she puts it, as a "better-thinking Negro" (DT 169). And, as such, I think that Hurston was able to see beyond the tangible oppression of the white race to the more powerful oppression that exists in the logic of opposition itself. Therefore, as I see it, Hurston's resistance to an essentialized racial identity is
not so much an attempt to dispossess herself of a people or a literary heritage as it is a way to extricate herself from the oppressive binary logic which informs the normative concepts of race and, in turn, motivates a great many black autobiographers. In a sense, then, it is a way of freeing the self which transcends the inscribed desires and freedoms of the slave narratives, for it is truly a decolonization of the self.

Unfortunately, "the creation of her fictive self is not solely a self-conscious textual strategy, but also a product of her historical position as a black female writer" (Raynaud 1992: 35). Although the self which Hurston delivers in the published (first edition) version of the text is one whose deliberate diasporan strategies constitute a very positive decolonization, it is also a self which cannot be separated from the author who was both coerced and constrained in the autobiographical act. In other words, if we allow for the idea that Hurston's racial identity is one which operates by a process of incorporation, multiplying rather than excluding as Sidonie Smith suggests, then we must also allow for the incorporation of an element which potentially complicates the decolonized self of the printed page. We must consider not only the fact that Hurston was a reluctant subject, but also how, perhaps, that reluctance was eventually encoded as part of the autobiography. Furthermore, we must consider the political implications of the various excisions and deletions which were imposed upon the text, for without the addition of these polemical voices we emerge with something less than a complete understanding of Hurston's racial identity.
Indeed, a certain irony manifests itself in the idea of Hurston's otherwise unfixable racial self being controlled by a predominantly white publishing industry, especially if we consider how closely the editorial process at J.B. Lippincott resembles that of the editors and/or scribes involved in the publication of slave narratives. It is probably no coincidence that Hurston referred to Bertram Lippincott as "the Colonel" in the original manuscript (Raynaud 1992: 37), since his editorial requests were often issued by command, and sometimes quite arbitrarily. The omission of Hurston's last chapter, "The Inside Light--Being a Salute to Friendship", for instance, seems to have been motivated primarily by inconvenience. Although Hurston finished the chapter on July 20, 1941, in time to submit it with the rest of the manuscript, no reason was given for the omission. Perhaps it was only a matter of timing, but perhaps it was also a very deliberate way of suppressing Hurston's subjectivity, for no where else in the autobiography do we find such a profusion of personal friends and acquaintances. In fact, the majority of the chapter reads like an extended thank-you note. It is quite possible that Lippincott found this to be an inappropriate addition to what is normally considered an "objective" literary work. Another possibility, however, is the fact that Hurston refers to James Weldon Johnson (ironically, the man whose collection now houses the Hurston manuscript at Yale) in less than complimentary terms: "There's a man white enough to suit Hitler, and he's been passing for colored for years" (DT 216). A potential libel suit may have been cause enough for the omission. But the question of why Lippincott chose to omit the whole chapter nevertheless remains.
An educated guess, on the basis of Lippincott's expressed opinions concerning other major excisions, would favour the idea that they simply found the chapter "irrelevant" to the autobiography, as was the case with Chapter Fourteen, "Seeing the World As It Is". Although the omission was undeniably judicious in light of the Pearl Harbor bombing, this was not the reason Lippincott supplied. To be sure, the manuscript is littered with "queries such as 'Says who?,' 'Sure of this?,' and 'Can you quote examples?'' (Hemenway 1984: xxxiii), an indication that Lippincott was fearful of the political consequences; but, the concluding remarks read: "Suggest eliminating international opinions as irrelevant to autobiography" (Hemenway 1984: xxxiii). In other words, Chapter Fourteen (and probably "The Inside Light") was omitted on the basis of incongruity, because it was uncharacteristic of autobiography, at least according to Lippincott's understanding of the term. The question we must ask, of course, is why? Was it because of the audience they perceived? Or, was it simply because they had such an incredibly positivistic notion of autobiography? Perhaps a little of both. But either way, the end result is much the same. The substantial elimination of these two chapters is a muting of Hurston's voice. As such, it alters the way in which we perceive Hurston's racial subjectivity, for part of what informs the text is the heavy hand of the white publisher whose primary concern is not to give offense to his predominantly white audience with (presumably) very conservative literary expectations.

This reasoning may, in fact, account for the majority of the minor changes and deletions as well, since it is evident from the erasure of much of Hurston's black dialect and spelling that Lippincott did not
want to alienate their perceived white audience. But, while such alterations to the language may have achieved the desired effect for their readers, the effect for Hurston was increasingly negative. Not only did this represent a further constraint on Hurston's subjectivity, but another way in which Hurston's voice had been depleted, and quite literally so. By changing the Southern black dialect to standardized English spelling, the woman with "the map of Dixie on [her] tongue" (DT 99) could no longer be heard (Raynaud 1992: 39). And perhaps this is precisely the point, because part of what these alterations effect is the elimination of Hurston's orality (Raynaud 1992: 39), the oral/aural quality which accompanies the story-telling component of much of the text. If the text is no longer written in the phonetics which conjure up Hurston's Southern black dialect, and hence the voice of the story-teller, then the oral quality becomes lost, overwhelmed by the "polished, acceptable form of written language" (Raynaud 1992: 39) demanded by the publishers. Ultimately, Hurston's control over her own voice is severely compromised.

More compromising still, however, are the actual excisions which suppress the strength of Hurston's racial voice. One passage is particularly noteworthy, as Claudine Raynaud points out, because it is a passage which significantly departs from the somewhat muted voice we hear in the rest of the autobiography. The passage was stricken from the beginning of Chapter Eight which details Zora's employment with Mrs Moncrief, and is itself the reconstructed voice of Mr Montcrief:

I am not the kind of man to be worried with so much responsibilities. Never should have let myself get married
in the first place. All I need is a young, full-of-feelings girl to sleep with and enjoy life. I always did keep me a colored girl. My last one moved off to Chicago and left me without [end or over]. I want a colored girl and I'm giving you the preference. (from MS folder 13, 122, qtd. in Raynaud 1992: 44).

As an overt critique of the racism which persisted in Hurston's day, and one directed specifically at the oppression of black women, this is not only a voice worthy of social protest literature, but also one whose affinity extends back in time, to the literary heritage of the slave narratives. Thus, the excision of such a passage is doubly ironic, for while it was taken out to turn down the racial volume for the white audiences, it was also precisely the kind of omission which garnered the most criticism for the book, since most felt that the book's racial sensibility was entirely too tepid, especially given contemporary literary norms. Thus, to realize that Lippincott removed several like passages from the autobiography is to realize that Hurston's subjectivity is much more complex than it might at first appear in the original published version of the text, for, in addition to the diasporan dispersion, we discover there is also a self whose racial identification is quite evident. This may be only one of many voices which contribute to Hurston's subjectivity, but nevertheless it is one we cannot discount entirely, especially since it marks the intersection between Hurston the author and Hurston the textual subject. In other words, it is what allows us to see the way in which her existence as a black female author in the 1940s does, to some extent, inform her
textual subjectivity. Perhaps, this is one of the instances she refers to at the end of Chapter Twelve when she discusses being made to feel like a Negro only three times in her life.

Considering the type of editorial practice which surrounded the publication of the text, and the fact that Lippincott took full advantage of their position in relation to Hurston, one would not have to stretch too far. Indeed, the reason that Hurston did not openly object to Lippincott's impositions had everything to do with the imbalance of power. Hurston was an author who depended upon the promotion of her publisher. Moreover, at the time of Dust Tracks' publication Hurston "had no security, no steady income, [and] no guarantee that her career would extend beyond the prepublication publicity" for the autobiography (Hemenway 1984: xiv-xv). However, the fact that Hurston was not open about her objections should not necessarily be taken as a sign of passivity or resignation. Hurston may have been forced not to bite the hand that fed her, but she ensured that Lippincott's heavy hand would not go unnoticed. Appended to the manuscript at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University is a note in Hurston's own hand which reads: "Parts of this manuscript were not used in the final composition of the book for publisher's reasons" (qtd. in Hemenway 1984: xxxiii). And so, although Hurston's affinity with the slave narrators may be more than most critics are willing to acknowledge, there is one very significant point which distinguishes her as well. She refused to resign herself to the editorial constraints of her publisher without at least having the final word.
Implicit in Hurston's negative experience with her publisher is the power of the patriarchal institution, for as much as Lippincott was aware of her race, so too were they aware of her position as a female author. In fact, the separation of race and gender, as far as the subjectivity Hurston brings to the text (as distinct from her textual subjectivity), is almost artificial, since many of the passages which Lippincott chose to omit were considered racial precisely because of their sexual explicitness. As Claudine Raynaud's study of the original manuscript reveals, folklore which had been "erotically inflected" or revelled in the pleasure of black sexuality was either "cleaned up" or completely excised (Raynaud 1992: 40). No attempt was made to separate racism from sexism. As an author, therefore, Hurston suffered equally from the double othering which has marginalized black women from the time of the first female slave narrative.

As the textual subject of *Dust Tracks on a Road*, however, Hurston speaks in a voice which is far from muted. Her publishers may have suppressed that part of her female voice which was inextricably bound to the racial material they predicted would overwhelm their white audiences, but the voice which remains is still powerfully audible. Underscoring the point is Hurston's departure from the (black) female autobiographical tradition, for although she shares a similar subject position as an author, the intersection of Hurston and gender in the text bears little resemblance. Hurston's voice is self-affirming where the voices of her predecessors had been primarily self-effacing; and
where those voices could often only be heard in relation to dominant or communal voices, Hurston's is a voice which stands alone. She does not require the validation of others, especially not the kind of validation which society deems the result of an advantageous relationship with a man. Her career as an independent anthropologist and author always fares more prominently than love or even the institution of marriage. And perhaps, for this reason, a large part of the autobiography's unconventionality stems from Hurston's refusal to play into the hands of gender typing. As we have seen, she does not fulfil the generic expectations of the dominant androcentric models, invoking but never sustaining either of the secular (developmental) or the confessional trajectories. The same holds true for the dominant female tropes. Hurston's subjectivity is a long way from the "piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity" associated with "The Cult of True Womanhood", and an equal distance from the cloaked, God-fearing selves who populate most of the female conversion narratives (Welter 21; Moody 52).

To be sure, if Hurston has concealed anything, it is her position in relation to the gender hierarchy. Constructing herself as neither male nor female identified, and revelling in the cerebral as much as the sexual, Hurston effectively eludes the idea of a particular gender role. Furthermore, as an author who refuses to participate in the dominant autobiographical models of her culture, either androcentric or gynocentric, she seemingly alerts us to the inadequacy of a gender-based subdivision of literature. In part, I believe Hurston is telling us, as she did in Chapter Twelve concerning race, that no singular definition
of "female" will suffice. Just as there is no such person as "The Negro", there is no such woman as "The Female". Beyond this, however, I believe that Hurston is making a very significant statement about autobiography in general, for whether or not her resistance to the gendered norms of convention is deliberate, it is one nevertheless which demonstrates not only that a woman is capable of breaking away from the autobiographical sub-culture to which she has been relegated, but also that she is capable of borrowing tropes from all cultures, dominant or otherwise, and creating an autobiography which stands apart from the entanglements of gender politics.

I

Beginning with Hurston's self-construction, we discover rather quickly that her so-called "statue", although missing a few pieces of plaster here and there, is for the most part unconstrained in any other way, particularly in the area of gender. Hurston's "primary sense of herself," as Elizabeth Fox-Genovese asserts, "transcends gender" (Fox-Genovese 1988: 81). One of the first clues we receive is Hurston's "cross-gendered mythic birth" (Smith 1992: 112), a rather dramatic passage which relates the crisis surrounding the event:

So there was no grown folks close around when Mama's water broke. She sent one of the smaller children to fetch Aunt Judy, the mid-wife, but she had gone to Woodbridge, a mile and a half away, to eat at a hog-killing. The child was told
to go over there and tell Aunt Judy to come. But nature, being indifferent to human arrangements, was impatient. My mother had to make it alone. [...] Help came from where she never would have thought to look for it. A white man of many acres and things, who knew the family well, had butchered the day before. Knowing that Papa was not home, and that consequently there would be no fresh meat in our house, he decided to drive the five miles and bring a half of a shoot, sweet potatoes, and other garden stuff along. He was there a few minutes after I was born (DT 20).

Although perhaps not mythic in any conventional sense—Hurston does not, after all, spring from the head of her mother—her birth is nevertheless constructed in mythic proportion. Zora's mother, abandoned by Mother Nature and Aunt Judy in her hour of need, must brave the situation by herself, until finally the white man makes his timely appearance. The white man is, for all intents and purposes, the hero of the piece. He arrives with much-needed supplies, and just in time to act as Zora's mid-husband. In terms of gender, therefore, a situation which is usually exclusively female in domain has become a cross-gendered event, and, moreover, an event which suggests that Hurston's first moments as a female child were male-identified.

As the narrative continues, the conflation of male and female identification is sustained. Hurston's childhood is marked by an elusive vacillation between the two gender roles, a sort of gender limbo. On one hand, we find her "playing" at very traditional female plots of epithalamia, creating a marriage scenario between Mr and Mrs Cob (her
corn-cob dolls) and fantasizing about her own eventual marriage to the school principal. On the other hand, we discover a child who is much more aptly described as a tomboy, a child whose Christmas dreams consist of owning a swift stallion and riding off to meet the horizon. In fact, the desire for speed, power and conquest associated with this masculine fantasy is so strong that little Zora declares to her father: "If I can't have no riding horse, I don't want nothing at all" (DT 29). What Hurston gets for Christmas, however, is a lesson in gender politics. Her father's refusal to buy her the stallion is accompanied by the message that it is not acceptable for girls to have such ambitions, and the present she receives instead is a doll.

Hurston's reaction to all of this seems to suggest not only that she rejects her father's idea of propriety and gender, but also that she was, to some extent, aware of the performative aspects involved in the concept of gender. She describes how playing with girls never suited her, that she was always too strong and consequently managed to hurt her playmates. "Everything was all right, however, when [she] played with boys" (DT 29). Her assessment of the situation is extremely telling:

The fly in the ointment there, was that in my family it was not ladylike for girls to play with boys. No matter how young you were, no good would ever come of the thing. I used to wonder what was wrong with playing with boys. Nobody told me. I just mustn't, that was all. What was wrong with my doll-babies? Why couldn't I sit still and make my dolls some clothes? (DT 30).
She is attuned to the accepted norms of the family, but cannot understand why those are the norms, nor why it is the case that she must accept them as her own. Evidently, no one ever supplied her with an adequate reason. Thus, in order to placate her family and simultaneously satisfy her own needs for action, Hurston invents imaginary dolls which "did everything" (DT 30): "So I was driven inward. I lived an exciting life unseen" (DT 30). Almost instinctively, therefore, Hurston turns to the one place where she can escape the dictates of gendered socialization. She cannot understand why it is unacceptable for her to play with boys or to like boys, and so she does so in her mind. She eludes the performance of the good little girl by turning inward to the realm of the imagination.

Part of Hurston's inward turn, however, can be attributed to the death of her mother, an event which not only marks a turning point in her life, but also in the way that she represents herself within the autobiography. From the young girl who is constructed in somewhat ambiguous terms, and whose "phantasies [sic] were still fighting against the facts" (DT 60), we now move to the near-adolescent Hurston whose confrontation with the facts of life seem to inspire both a more active rejection of exclusively domestic feminine norms and a resistance to the type of linear progression which would normally attend the romantic female plot. For, it is here, at this juncture in the narrative, that Hurston abandons the idea of telling the "story" of her life, however unconventionally, in favour of the thematic topoi which occupy the rest of the text. In terms of representation, in fact, the moment is among the most symbolically significant in the entire book:
The Master-Maker in His making had made Old Death. Made him with big, soft feet and square toes. Made him with a face that reflects the face of all things, but neither changes itself, nor is mirrored anywhere. Made the body of Death out of infinite hunger. Made a weapon for his hand to satisfy his needs. This was the morning of the day of the beginning of things (DT 63).

The male figure of Death, depriving Hurston of her maternal anchor, alters things forever. One tell-tale sign seems to be Zora's outward defiance of the Eatonville women who come around to ensure that certain deathbed ceremonies are being upheld, particularly the covering of clocks and mirrors. Presumably this is done so that Death will neither reflect nor become fixed in that place; but little Zora will have none of this domestic superstition, knowing that her mother would want things to be left as they are. Although her nine year old voice is ignored by the town women and she herself is restrained physically by her father, the outspoken transgression is tantamount to the fulfilment of the dream she has of reaching the edge of the world, for not only has she given voice to her mother's silent wishes, but she has also let it be known that she herself will not be circumscribed by this private domestic code. Her mother's death at sundown had changed the world for her (DT 65), bringing her to the horizon without any stallion or fantasy to assist the journey.

Beyond the horizon, however, Hurston's change is marked by the "structural invocation of the myth of Demeter/Persephone, the mother/daughter quest for union" (Smith 1993: 113). Now that Hurston and
her mother can no longer physically unite, the story of Persephone which had fascinated Zora in her schooldays takes on a rather strange spiritual resonance. Inspired by her mother's death to go wandering, as she calls it, the adult Zora will now (re)search on behalf of her mother. In other words, the plot of the original Greek myth has been reversed (Smith 1993: 115; Lionnet 119). And as though the text must somehow follow suit, the quality of the narrative shifts just as drastically, wandering in and out of various themes instead of adhering to the stories associated with one particular period in Hurston's life.

Although there are many ways to interpret this shift, some of which I discussed earlier, I believe it is significant not so much for its symbolic gesture as for the statement it makes about Hurston's subjectivity. Judith Robey's temptation, for instance, to regard the shift as one of progression from the feminine mythic world to the masculine picaresque realm, is one to which I would rather not succumb, especially since its final destination seems to be the self-effacing neutrality of the autobiography's final essays. In fact, symbolically, I think it is more a question of not having the maternal or feminine reflection to frame her existence. Although there is nothing ostensibly wrong with Robey's association of the masculine and the picaresque, I do not think it is the most appropriate in the context of Hurston's autobiography. Again, Françoise Lionnet's assessment is definitely preferable, since the shift, for her, is closer to a merging of Persephone and Narcissus (Lionnet 123). Without her mother in the mirror, or the domestic anchor of the Eatonville women, it would stand to reason that the only reflection Hurston perceives is her own. Thus,
in terms of self-representation, the frenetic shifts of the narrative are better seen as various attempts to capture her subjectivity apart from the maternal/domestic frame which had played such an important role in her childhood.

Indeed, my own interpretation of these transitional chapters in the autobiography would suggest that Hurston is becoming much more self-identified than male-identified, as Judith Robey's reading would have. Centred around themes of work, education, research and books, the content of these medial chapters primarily reflects the experiences of a young woman trying to establish herself in the world. The concentration is definitely upon Hurston's career: the various jobs she held as an independent adolescent; her education at Howard University and Barnard College; her field work as an anthropologist in Polk County, Florida, the Caribbean and New Orleans; and the publication history of her novels. However, the numerous stories which form the pastiche of these chapters are far from suggesting that these pursuits are exclusively masculine province. In fact, to a large degree, the heterosexist idea of masculine and feminine gender roles is absent, not so much because Hurston avoids the subject, but more so because she refuses to construct her own subjectivity in gender specific terms. Unlike the child who saw nothing wrong with "playing" at both roles, or even alternating between one and the other as she saw fit, the adult Hurston is much more reluctant about being fixed into place.

A prime example of Hurston's resistance can be found in the chapter entitled "Research", where she describes her field work in Polk County at some length. Hurston's anthropological study of the small
mining community has been misconstrued by some of the local women as a threatening sort of intimacy. One of these women, Lucy, wants to kill Hurston because she suspects a liaison between Zora and her husband. But yet another woman, Big Sweet, who also happens to be Lucy’s sworn enemy, recognizes that Hurston poses no threat and comes to her defense in a "specifying" battle which soon becomes violent. The reason Big Sweet supplies is twofold: first, that Zora does not know how to handle a knife; and second, that she believes her to be a virgin, never having slept with any men, let alone carrying on adulterous affairs with other women's husbands. The effect of the story as it moves from one perspective to the other is one in which Hurston is progressively disengendered. From Lucy's perspective, Hurston is the other woman, the femme fatale, a threatening female stereotype. But then, according to Big Sweet, she is a frail, defenceless woman and a virgin, both of which not only deplete the previous type of her threat, but also suggest, at least within the context of Big Sweet's ideology, that weakness and virginity are unusual, even unacceptable, qualities for a woman. Seen from Big Sweet's perspective, then, Hurston becomes a slippery combination of two stereotypes which have been emptied of their conventional significance within the revisionary context of the tale. That the story should end with Big Sweet and Hurston becoming fast friends is, therefore, nothing short of appropriate, for while the gender dynamic of the pair seemingly duplicates a kind of heterosexual bond, it is also a dynamic, within the terms of the revision, that can only be regarded as completely evasive, with both ideas of gender suspended in ambiguity.
Having less to do with suspension, however, and more to do with displacement is Hurston's near omission of heterosexual bonding in general. Although ostensibly Hurston devotes one entire chapter to the subject of love, she curiously avoids the discussion of anything too personal. In fact, she begins the chapter with what appears to be a kind of disclaimer:

What do I really know about love? I have had some experience and feel fluent enough for my own satisfaction. Love, I find is like singing. Everybody can do enough to satisfy themselves, though it may not impress the neighbors as being very much. That is the way with me, but whether I know anything unusual, I couldn't say. Don't look for me to call a string of names and point out chapter and verse. Ladies do not kiss and tell any more than gentlemen do (DT 181).

But under the guise of ignorance and "lady-like" propriety, Hurston has actually written herself an escape clause, for after a brief discussion of her most recent marriage and its shortcomings, she proceeds rather deliberately with the true love of her life—her career. The marriage, in fact, seems to function more as a springboard for the subsequent discussion. Only the most important details are fleshed out—that A.W.P. (his full name, Andrew Price III, is never used) was somewhat abusive, that he objected to her work, and that Hurston herself always had mixed feelings about the marriage. Her career, on the other hand, is described throughout the chapter in terms of religious calling. As she says at one point, "A charge had been laid upon me and I must follow the call" (DT 188). Although she is punning rather playfully with the "calls" that
also quite literally demanded the priority of her career, her choice in
the matter is crystal clear. Speaking of her marriage as a "fiendish
trap" in which she recognizes that her "real self had escaped him
[A.W.P.]" (DT 188), it is more than evident that the heterosexual bond
and its usual primacy in the "female plot" is, for Hurston, only
something of a second banana. Her first husband, Herbert Sheen (to whom
she was married in 1927), does not even merit honourable mention, and
Andrew Price (1937), who is mentioned only in terms of his monogram, is
more of a catalyst than a central issue. And as such, Hurston's
discussion of "love" not only eludes the epithalalial cliché of the
romantic female plot, but also suggests by virtue of her displacement
that a woman may find love apart from the domestic sphere of the
marriage bond.

II

Hurston's refusal to participate in the dominant gender codes also
extends to the text's narrative strategies, which reveal either her
resistance to or revision of previous gynocentric autobiographical
models, particularly the reticent and communally identified tradition of
the nineteenth-century black woman. Although Hurston's ties to the slave
narrative are certainly not negligible, as we saw in relation to the
editorial constraints of her publisher, her link to black female
autobiographers of the previous century in terms of representational
strategies is all but non-existent. In fact, most critics who place
Hurston within an Afro-American context are usually drawn to comparisons
with Frederick Douglass or Booker T. Washington. However, as I would argue, such comparisons also have their limitations, for even though Hurston's evasiveness and racial representation are reminiscent of Douglass and Washington respectively, Hurston's strategies in general do not pattern themselves after the androcentric model of ante-bellum autobiographies either. A partial explanation for Hurston's departure from both traditions may be the fact that she belonged to what was perhaps the first generation of authors not directly connected to the institution of slavery (Braxton 12), but an equally plausible explanation is the fact that "Dust Tracks is the first autobiography of a black woman who is a creative writer" (McKay 1988: 180). In other words, one may look on it as a transitional text in two different senses: as a text which marks the transition from ante-bellum narratives to modernity, as well as one which marks a generic transition. And possibly, for this reason, Hurston has chosen to represent her subjectivity as an abstract ideal, as a statue of what she would like to be.

Who that person might be, of course, is difficult to say, particularly in light of Hurston's elusive tendencies. However, to concentrate on Hurston's departure from the gender-specific strategies of her foremothers certainly reveals a considerable margin of difference. Two differences are especially noteworthy: Hurston's voice and her position in relation to the female community. In terms of voice, the traditional response to the double othering of the black female had been what Jocelyn Moody calls "paradoxical self-abnegation" (Moody 46). On one hand, the female narrator would assert herself, claiming the
necessary exposure of her story; and, on the other hand, she would adopt a pose of modesty, paradoxically disclaiming her interest in the authoritative function. From her rhetorical stance, then, the nineteenth-century black woman autobiographer was evidently torn between a kind of feminist self-assertion and compliance with the dominant codes of gender propriety prescribed by "The Cult of True Womanhood," and understandably so, since her lack of compliance would ensure that her autobiography would never find an audience. Indeed, the nature of the story itself was already, in many instances, considered unacceptable. Relating tales of sexual abuse, however veiled or indirect, was enough to pose a threat to the idea of true womanhood (Smith 1993: 41), deterring at least from piety and purity, two of the four cardinal female virtues. It was precisely for this reason that many black female autobiographers opted for a type of conversion narrative, hoping that the spiritual force of the form would outweigh the perceived threat. One very telling feature of these narratives was the suppression of any sign of authority; the title would very often exclude the autobiographer's name as well as the titular tag of "written by herself", hence relying on the religious significance of the story to carry the burden of authority (Moody 53).

Although Dust Tracks on a Road, as Claudine Raynaud observes, is a title which seemingly encodes its transience (Raynaud 1988: 112), and is perhaps even reminiscent of the nineteenth-century conversion narratives, its author can hardly be characterized in terms of suppression. If Hurston's voice seems paradoxical, it is not because she is torn between self-assertion and self-abnegation, but rather because
she is torn between telling what was and building her statue. To be sure, Hurston's authorial subjectivity still bears the mark of a doubly othered woman, but her textual subjectivity, to the contrary, is marked by an active resistance to normative gender practices. Hurston's self-conscious revelling in her female sexuality is a prime example. Describing the moment when she received a telegram announcing the acceptance of her first novel, *Jonah's Gourd Vine*, Hurston relates: "I never expect to have a greater thrill than that wire gave me. You know the feeling when you found your first pubic hair" (DT 155). And again, in reference to her Hoodoo research in New Orleans, Hurston describes how much she enjoyed her own nakedness for those three days. Another example, however, exists in Hurston's deliberate blurring of sexual codes, as we saw with the story of Big Sweet, a woman whose idea of womanhood could not be further from the nineteenth-century cultist notion. Thus, whether Hurston is employing the discourse of female sexuality, or whether she is openly confronting the "politics of heterosexuality" (Bethel 186), her voice is anything but self-effacing. In fact, her efforts to permeate the boundary between male and female suggest that her voice is possessed of a transcendent political strength, for once again she has chosen to target the oppositional logic rather than just the opposition itself.

Not surprisingly, then, Hurston's position in relation to other women in the text is also considerably different from the earlier autobiographical prototypes. Typically, the female ante-bellum narrator would inscribe herself in relation to her community, and, more often than not, in relation to strong matriarchal figures. Two different
schools of thought exist where this practice is concerned. On one hand, employing a kind of strength-in-numbers logic, some suggest that this kind of community identification acts as a safeguard against a potentially diminished racial and sexual self (McKay 1988: 175). On the other hand, however, we find those who compare this practice with Euro-American models of autonomous individuality and suggest, to the contrary, that this relational subjectivity effects the very diminution it seeks to prevent. To some extent, therefore, the ability to regard the autobiographer as self-possessed in a relational context is a function of the author's inscribed attitude toward herself, for clearly the critical pendulum could swing either way.

Indeed, if one had to locate Hurston's difference in this area it would be somewhere between her attitude and the strategies she adopts, for even though the initial portion of Dust Tracks bears a strong community identification, it is also one which revises the very terms of collectivity (McKay 1988: 184). To begin, Hurston's sense of community is already quite unusual, since Eatonville, unlike any other town in the United States, was founded on a principle of black autonomy. Certainly there could be no comparison between the war-torn environment of the Southern towns and cities which fostered earlier female autobiographers and the self-governed community of Eatonville. To many, in fact, Eatonville was considered something of a Utopia, a fantasy. If only because of this very unique "incubator", therefore, the community Hurston forms with other women is also based in some measure on strength and independence.
Hurston's mother and her Aunt Caroline, for example, both participate in her vision of "the universal female gospel" (DT 13) because of their ability to assert power in a heterosexist climate. Her mother, in spite of her small stature, emerges as the "boss" of the household because of her superior mental prowess. And Aunt Caroline is, similarly, "nobody's weakling" (DT 14) because of her persistent attempts to keep Uncle Jim from his wandering ways. Hurston's identification, in other words, is with women who seem to successfully transcend the socially imposed idea of femininity. Moreover, it is an identification made out of choice rather than necessity, for unlike the "strength-in-numbers" attitude that might accompany the slave narrative, Hurston's attitude is much more selective. Her mother's funeral provides a case-in-point. Rejecting the superstitious town women, Hurston chooses instead to speak on her mother's behalf. Thus, even while Hurston's voice merges with that of another woman, it still manages to strike a different chord. That Hurston should eventually divorce herself from this community identification, then, is not entirely unexpected, for in a sense Hurston is only following the model of independence which nurtured her from the beginning.

Making New Tracks: Permeating Old Boundaries

Speaking in tongues, using a variety of different voices as well as the inspiration of her experience, Hurston illustrates not only the unique confluence of elements which constitute her subjective self, but
also the potential prophesy inherent in her dialogism. With each voice, Hurston posits a different challenge, simultaneously forcing her readers to surrender normative expectations and to accept the unstable multiplicity which lies before them. It is a gentle antagonism, a playful dialectic between reader and text, but one which finally leads us to the boundary of the new, for with each successive departure from convention Hurston is urging us to abandon our old cartography.

The map we call time is the first to go. Old patterns of chronology and linear development are replaced by Hurston's contextual sensibility and vertical organization. Other autobiographies may begin with birth, but Hurston's begins with the rich spectrum of history that contributed to her sense of self. When she is born, she wants to ensure we have a context. Of course, part of that context may have involved a familiarity with older patterns, as Hurston's suggestion of the confessional seems to imply. But even here, we cannot ignore her assertion of individual difference, for whether her refusal to fulfil the pattern is deliberate or unconscious, it is a statement of her subjective reality nevertheless. Certainly, if the rest of the book is any indication, that reality does not follow behind anyone else's tracks. In fact, Hurston's vertical, thematic organization suggests her resistance to traditional horizontal development in general. The life we have before us is a series of facets devoid of any real coherence. It is as if somehow we have come to view that statue of Hurston's self and each chapter represents a different angle of vision. Each one belongs to the same construct and yet we cannot behold it all together. Therefore, like the folk stories she collected as an anthropologist, Hurston's
frame of reference is confined to the moment. We cannot look beyond the
text, because outside the frame of Zora Neale Hurston the words will no
longer carry the same significance. In other words, time has not only
been divested of its usual autobiographical privilege, but also revised
in such a way as to reconfigure the relationship between the subject and
her life-writing, because, as opposed to the writer who "graphs" her
life as a series of temporally ordered events, Hurston has orchestrated
a kind of antiphonal call and response pattern between her "self" and
herself.

Just as elusive are all of the signposts we normally associate
with the concept of self or identity. If Hurston does not want us to fix
her in time, neither does she want us to essentialize her subjectivity
in terms of race or gender. Resisting contemporary ideas of homogenous
race, Hurston writes against the grain of both socially imposed norms
and Afro-American autobiography. Her insistence on a heterogeneous
concept of race, together with the way in which she inheres that concept
in her own brand of self-representation, not only prevents us from
regarding Hurston in terms of "her people", but also suggests that a
traditional pose of exemplarity may only further exacerbate distorted
concepts of race. Certainly, as a woman already victimized by her
position as a black female author in a predominantly white publishing
world, Hurston does not want to adopt a discourse of race pride or black
activism which implies the uniform victimization of a uniform people. To
be sure, Hurston's textual strategy, and specifically her braiding
together of various cultural discourses, confirms an impulse which not
only runs contrary to the notion of racial essentialism, but also seeks
to transcend the bounds of racial identification altogether, for by questioning the very logic of opposition which informs the concept of race in the first instance, Hurston permeates the boundary which erroneously defines her position as one of disempowerment.

Similarly, in terms of gender, Hurston's refusal to comply with either heterosexist norms or gender-specific autobiographical practice is a way of asserting her transcendence. She resists essentialized gender identification by constructing herself as a person who lived transgenderally as a child, never observed the tyranny of heterosexism as an adult, and always seemed to privilege her autonomy above all else. Furthermore, by adopting strategies which neither dilute nor detract from the strength of that self, Hurston once again manages to permeate the boundary of convention, questioning the very logic which had previously defined the black female autobiographer in terms of self-effacement. Hurston has shown us, finally, that any fixed ideas of a black female autobiographer cannot be supported, for although her subjectivity embraces all three, those threads are only a few among the many which constitute the larger fabric of Zora Neale Hurston.

NOTES


2. The original manuscript for Dust Tracks on a Road can be found in the James Weldon Johnson Collection at Yale University's Beinecke Library, specifically in Box 1, folders 10 through 15 of the Hurston Papers. In
the absence of direct access, however, I have relied on Claudine Raynaud's bibliographical scholarship for most of the information concerning the manuscript version of the autobiography. See "Autobiography as 'Lying' Session: Zora Neale Hurston's Dust Tracks on a Road," Studies in Black American Literature Volume III: Black Feminist Criticism and Critical Theory, eds. Joe Wieland and Houston A. Baker Jr (Greenwood, Fla.: Penkevill, 1988) 111-138; and "Rubbing a Paragraph With a Soft Cloth?": Muted Voices and Editorial Constraints in Dust Tracks on a Road," De/Colonizing the Subject, eds. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1992) 34-64.


4. Early reviews of the text were especially guilty of this type of oversight. Arna Bontemps for New York Herald Tribune Books wrote that Hurston "deals very simply with the more serious aspects of Negro life in America--she ignores them" (Bontemps 3). Phil Strong for the Saturday Review of Literature, although mostly complimentary, went so far as to say that race consciousness was "completely absent" (Strong 6-7). And Harold Preece of Tomorrow, perhaps the most scathing of all, calls Dust Tracks "the tragedy of a gifted mind, eaten up by an egocentrism fed on the patronizing admiration of the dominant white world" (qtd. in Newson 20). Although this ideological trend has lost some of its momentum, it is nevertheless apparent in criticism such as Robert Hemenway's which characterizes her racial representation as a "nonconfrontational strategy" (Hemenway 1984: xiii), or Joanne Braxton's which points to Hurston's selective and highly controlled depiction of race (Braxton 150), or even Maya Angelou's which accuses Hurston of not mentioning "even one unpleasant racial incident in Dust Tracks on a Road" (Angelou, "Introduction," Dust Tracks, Harper 1991 ed., x).

5. Unless otherwise indicated, all of my embedded citations will refer to the 1991 Harper Perennial edition of Dust Tracks on a Road, and will employ the same shorthand notation (DT).

6. Hemenway devotes nearly two pages of the autobiography's (2nd ed.) introduction to this conundrum, claiming that Hurston had always been "deliberately ambiguous about her birthdate during her life time, variously citing 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1903 and 1910 on public documents" (1984: xi). According to Cheryl Wall, however, "working from the 1900 census records for Eatonville, Florida..., Zora Neale Hurston was born on January 7, 1891, rather than the usually cited January 1, 1901" (1984: xi).

7. Please refer to note four above.
8. This was not the first time Hurston had encountered this attitude. Five years earlier, with the publication of her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, she had been severely criticized by many of the black literati. Sterling Brown (*The Nation*), Alain Locke (*Opportunity*), Otis Ferguson (*The New Republic*), and Richard Wright (*The New Masses*), to name only a few, all took Hurston's predominantly positive portrait of race as a sign of betrayal, as a way of keeping her white audiences amused. Richard Wright's criticism of her minstrel-like characters has, in fact, become somewhat infamous, since it inspired Hurston's later retaliation. Reviewing Wright's 1938 book of stories, *Uncle Tom's Children*, Hurston remarked that "not one act of understanding and sympathy comes to pass in the entire work", that all the characters are motivated by hatred, infected by Mr Wright's communist predisposition to blame the state for everything (Review rpt. in *The Gender of Modernism*, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott [Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1990] 195).
CONCLUSION

Glancing Back and Forth: Some Revisionary Implications

Advancing a notion that the ideological instability of modernism presented itself as an opportunity for female life-writers to challenge the sovereign, androcentric foundation of autobiography—a discourse which, over the past fifteen hundred years, had settled on assumptions of metaphysical selfhood, objectivity, and neutral transcription—I have shown here four women who rose to the occasion: Virginia Woolf, Vera Brittain, Gertrude Stein, and Zora Neale Hurston. Each of these autobiographers, I have argued, seized the modernist moment by bringing about an awareness of the genre’s underlying fictivity. In Woolf’s case, it was an understanding reached through a process of autobiographical evolution. She saw with her first attempt, "Reminiscences" (1907), that the patriarchal mirror was one that excluded her own reflection; she could not employ her father’s "biographical" objectivity without forfeiting her "self", and thus contradicting her implicit rejection of Victorian gender codes. The Memoir Club contributions effectively introduced Woolf to that "self"; her subjectivity, absent in "Reminiscences" but for the trace of the textual "I", was here quite evident in the process of selection and arrangement, a fiction of recollection she would bolster with the addition of another self—the voice emanating from her diary. "A Sketch of the Past" (1939-40), finally, would return a gaze to the patriarchal mirror that would damage it irreparably, for here, through a process of self-conscious revision,
questioning the nature of recollection itself and endeavouring to include and expose the self who does that recalling, Woolf not only undermines the realist assumptions attending the dominant notion of autobiographical subjectivity, but also reveals her ability to "think back through our mothers" (Woolf 1928: 76)—to learn from the cultural and generic prescriptions of the matrilineal past and to think through them in order to find that present platform from which she could assert her subjective reality. In other words, Woolf's negotiation between the patrilineal and matrilineal narratives of selfhood results in a symbolic disavowal of both. Her final efforts to dissociate her mother from the myth of Julia Stephen and to reconstitute Leslie Stephen, paterfamilias, as merely a portion of her own subjective reality are both marked by an ironic reframing that signifies once and for all that this is the narrative of Virginia Woolf.

For Vera Brittain, focusing rather more specifically on the assumptions of spontaneous authenticity and historical objectivity so often taken for granted in "documentary" accounts of war, the angle of exposure was narrativity itself. Angered by the patriarchal myth of the lost generation, Brittain determined that Testament of Youth (1933) should exemplify the woman's war, a version of history that would permeate the barrier of the front line both in its story and in its conventions. She accomplishes this by revealing her own position in relation to World War I trench narratives, by unapologetically recounting her story and, in the process, acknowledging the inherent contradictions of representational immediacy and documentary realism. Like Woolf, Brittain uses her "present" platform to its fullest
advantage, the impositions of her narrating self never allowing the experiencing self to dominate the representation. Whether accentuating the liminality of her war experience, or emphasizing the anachronistic reality of her split autobiographical subjectivity, Brittain ensures that the fictivity involved in her narrative act will always remain in full view. The reader intent on the illusion of participating in a slice of history will be most disappointed, for, ultimately, Brittain's "testament" is one that depletes the word of its historical significance. Neither an eye-witness account, nor one delivering the whole truth, Testament of Youth tells the story of a woman's struggle with the dominant conventions of war autobiography, and how that particular battle was won in a frontal attack on the assumptions of authenticity and accuracy that had too long upheld the privilege of the trench soldier's authority.

Where Brittain had taken on one particular battle, Stein, it seems, would only content herself with the whole war. Flouting nearly every received autobiographical convention, from the chronological order of realistic, developmental presentation to the unitary subject who presumes objectivity, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (1933) revises nearly all of our readerly expectations concerning autobiography, as well as some concerning the very work itself. Certainly, if we had any notion that this text stood out in Stein's oeuvre as one of the most readerly, then Stein's playful attitude towards convention would also cause us to reconsider that assessment. But even this aside, Stein's approach, indeed the very ease with which she upsets the reader's normative expectations, demonstrates that the
implied reader is only part of the fictional construct, for in the end it is the author's writerly presence that orchestrates the whole. And how Stein orchestrates her autobiographical narrative, how she consistently draws our attention to the process of textual production and reception beyond the bounds of the text's words and illustrations, makes this point rather effectively. If all of the traditional signposts are in place, a guarantee of their fulfilment is not. As readers, therefore, we are given two choices: either we recognize Stein's resistance to the definitional boundaries of the genre, and read the text as a sort of historiographic metafiction that implicates us in the textual production of meaning, or, like Caliban, we run from the reflection in the glass because it is a representation, however just, that does not meet with our expectations. Either way, Stein shows us that her interference with autobiographical convention will always alienate her reader from the fiction of an implied reader who believes implicitly in the concept of neutral translation, for in this case it is not only Alice but the entire autobiography that has come through the looking glass.

No less ambitious in its confrontation with autobiographical norms is Zora Neale Hurston's Dust Tracks on a Road (1942), only here, instead of undermining the notion of a fixed genre complete with its fixed reader, Hurston directs her efforts at the idea of stable identity, undertaking to expose the actual vicissitudes that converge on the textual "I". Refusing to be fixed either in the proleptic temporal pattern of the confessional narrative or the linear development of the secular autobiography, Hurston creates a vertical organization, a group
of "thematic topoi" (Lionnet 97) that participate in nobody's sense of history but her own. And within this self-referential world, we discover a subjectivity as multiple and varied as the many discursive forms Hurston braids together to create her special autobiographical milieu. For those expecting to locate an essential Zora Neale Hurston, this diasporan subjectivity is most discomfiting, for with every attempt to position her at the intersection of black/female/author we are blocked by a voice that informs us of our limited understanding. The statue that Hurston has made of her "self" bears absolutely no resemblance to the monolithic fiction of the metaphysical subject, and most definitely cannot be taken in at one glance.

In challenging the assumptions which had formed the bedrock of autobiographical discourse—in revealing that memory cannot exact a mirror-like reflection, that autobiographical selection and arrangement is no more objective than any other form of narration, that reading autobiography is not simply an act of passive reception in which one has only to recognize their other self within the text, and that the autobiographical subject is not a stable locus of objectivity—all of these women insist on a new way of looking at autobiography. And they insist, furthermore, on a type of comprehensive vision which refuses to separate fact from fiction, autobiography from literature, self from other, or mainstream from marginal. In other words, they refuse to recognize the boundaries that sustain the old imperial notion of autobiography, exposing it as a language that is not necessarily spoken in practice. In all their revelations of fictivity, these four versions of selfhood have shown us that the old grammar of autobiography has
overlooked some very crucial parts of speech: the subjectivity of subjectivity, the conscious crafting of the writer, the reader's participation in the textual production of meaning, and the multivalence of the textual "I".

In terms of autobiographical scholarship, therefore, the revisionary implications of this study are clear. Together these four female selves assert the voice of a new authority—a female authority that is neither obscured by the spectre of Woman, nor diluted by the assumption of male privilege. Defying the prescriptions and circumscriptions of autobiographical discourse, each one of these women has revealed a margin of difference that establishes her identity on separate ground. And that ground, as I have argued, is not only more expansive because of its inclusion of these diverse aspects of subjectivity, but also considerably different because of the conscious awareness of fictivity that reflects back over the whole. Thus, as harbingers of a new and more inclusive definition of autobiography, these innovative practitioners have caused us to rethink our first principles and to dispense with our reverence for strict epistemological categories. That autobiographical scholars have only in the last two decades taken up the cause of feminist recovery and the kind of revisionist criticism directly related to these issues is evidence enough to suggest that these women were well ahead of their time.

To push the envelope still further, however, and to add to the potential of this argument by suggesting the additional fruit that might be borne of an interdisciplinary approach, I would like to end by reintroducing the idea of modernism, for beyond the fact that all of
these women were acting in modernism lies their effect upon modernism, and particularly upon the kind of assumptions attending "high" (male) literary modernism. If the modernist reconception of consciousness, reality and language had encouraged the female autobiographical pursuit, then it could be argued that the literary predisposition towards formal experiment and impersonality in art did not bode well for its canonical acceptance. Autobiography, according to the preconceptions of the time, was still a genre deeply rooted in historicity and personality, and, because of the latter, often associated with the sentimentalism of nineteenth-century Romanticism. Compared with the scientific prescriptions for art dictated by the likes of Eliot, Pound and Joyce\(^3\), therefore, autobiography was not only outside the realm of "good" literature, but outside the realm of literature altogether. What I would like to suggest, to the contrary, in terms of the quality of autobiography these four women have written and particularly in light of the literary boundaries they have already demonstrably crossed (fact/fiction, self/other, mainstream/marginal), is that another kind of "master" discourse is being called into question--namely the kind of modernism that fails to distinguish itself from the modern, the kind informed by "overarching narratives of innovation and decline" (Felski 9).

Certainly, given the experimental consciousness of all four autobiographies in this study, one might wonder at their absence even in a modernist canon that fulfils the Poundian prescription to "make it new". But the fact that their absence seems conspicuous is enough to suggest that such a narrow conception of modernism, and one that is
prone to ignore both the literary productions of women and
autobiographers, is no longer valid. Indeed, by forcing us to recognize
the constructed nature of autobiography, Woolf, Brittain, Stein, and
Hurston have not only blurred the boundary between fact and fiction that
was the basis for autobiography's exclusion from the realm of
literature, but also the unacknowledged border between male and female
modernism, impersonality and personality, since arguably their more
expansive notion of autobiography falls rather uncomfortably under both
headings.

In large part, then, these autobiographies contribute to an
understanding of the fundamental contradictions that lie at the heart of
literary modernism. If we have been predisposed to the idea that
innovation is a necessary part of modernist literature, then the kind of
innovation shown here causes us to question why we consistently overlook
the "newness" at the margins of male modernism, whether it is a newness
of gender consciousness or political inflection, for clearly it is
possible to extend the meaning of innovation to include matters beyond
those of language and representation. And if this is so, then it would
seem that the aesthetic projects of autobiography and modernism are no
longer mutually exclusive. They can and do intersect. The point I wish
to make, ultimately, is that we may also profit by the approach of this
study, an approach to genre and literary history that reveals the
importance of epistemological imbrication, the necessity of discursive
interpenetrations between areas of knowledge, and in a way that
underscores how such interdisciplinary communication can both benefit
and change our present understanding. In this case, the intersection of
gender, history, autobiography, and modernism has shown us that four
particular women played a significant part in autobiographical history,
facilitating the collision of two master discourses, and, as a
consequence, forcing us to reread that history from a perspective that
refuses to ignore the "other" gender.

NOTES

1. My allusion here is to the Preface of The Picture of Dorian Gray
(1891; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974) in which Oscar Wilde states that:
   The nineteenth-century dislike of Realism is the rage of Caliban
   seeing his own face in the glass.
   The nineteenth-century dislike of Romanticism is the rage of
   Caliban not seeing his own face in the glass (5).

2. In all of my research I was only able to locate two brief essays,
both by the same author, that considered the mutual effects of women's
autobiography and modernism. See, Sabine Vanacker, "Stein, Richardson
123; and "Autobiography and Orality: The Work of Modernist Women
Trev Lynn Broughton and Linda Anderson (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997) 179-
202.

3. I have used the term "scientific" to suggest the various impersonal
theories of art espoused by Eliot, Pound and Joyce. For Eliot, true to
his notion of the objective correlative, "the poet is the catalyst of
his art, never the expresser of his autobiography, only someone who
might use events from his life as the object of his writing" (Vanacker
1997: 187). For Pound, the Imagist manifesto required a similar
 impersonality, only here the autobiographical was eliminated in an
effort to allow the concrete image to speak for itself. And for Joyce,
it was a question of the way an artist did in fact relate to his work,
his "presence" becoming less and less evident, "refin[ing] itself out of
existence" until it simply became an indistinguishable part of the
narrative (Joyce 215).
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UMI®
PARADISIAICAL IMAGERY IN EARLY ISLĀMIC ART

by

N. J. Johnson

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations
University of Toronto

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Paradisiacal Imagery in Early Islamic Art

Doctor of Philosophy, 1998

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Abstract

This thesis considers the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's construction to have been a regional response, couched in a regional artistic vocabulary, to counter what was perceived to be a serious regional problem, the distracting effect of the beauties of Christian churches and, that 'Abd al-Malik's text in the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah reflects the ideological threat, by stating Christian beliefs and pointing out their inappropriateness for Muslims. It proposes that the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's ornament represents the Qur'an's numerous descriptions of Paradise as a wondrous garden of shady groves and trees bearing every kind of fruit. Byzantine art provided the model for the visualization of the paradisiacal imagery, and the art of the Sasanid empire contributed the fantastical, other-worldly elements that might be imagined of Paradise.

The Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's heavenly garden was not an isolated phenomenon, as versions of it are attributed to at least three mosques; furthermore, two distinct, deliberate iconographic images developed from the Qubbah's ornament. One of these shows a hypostyle mosque with a column and vase in its courtyard. A religious context may have been envisaged for this imagery, but there is evidence also of its popular manifestation. The second iconographic image was employed secularly, taking the form of a distinctive arcade through which naturalistic or very stylized vegetation can be seen. This version of the imagery appears as architectural decoration and was used in, or used to point to, areas in which public audiences might be held. Popular versions of the arcade imagery found on portable objects show that birds and animals as well as vegetation might be seen through the
In the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's shape, ornament and text, the building's patron showed himself alert and responsive to the cultural and religious environment. The development of Islamic iconographical forms suggests that the threat perceived from other religious iconographies continued beyond the erection of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah and that Islam was still attempting to define itself, but, as with the Qubbah, contemporary artistic vocabularies were used to construct a Muslim answer to a Muslim need.
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Figures                                           174
Introduction

The particular circumstance that led to this paper was the recognition that the sites of Qal‘at `Ammān and Qastal al-Balqa’ in Jordan and a number of unglazed clay lamps shared a distinctive architectural motif: serrated arches on plain engaged colonnettes within whose frames might be seen vegetation, geometric patterns or fauna. As instances of the motif accumulated, its appearance was observed to be remarkably similar across the range of examples and its location in architectural contexts, consistent. Furthermore, the search for paradigms led to the discovery that a Qur‘ān, found in a Cairo mosque, and some marquetry panels shared another, equally-distinctive architectural motif, namely, what seemed to be a hypostyle mosque with a prominently displayed floral motif in its central courtyard.

For reasons to be discussed, the architectural motifs individually appeared to be related to the Qubbat al-Sakhrah, suggesting that they might be evidence of Umayyad iconography. Neither motif had attracted attention as such, however, nor did a connection between them present itself until the writer saw three illustrations from a Qur‘ān found at the Great Mosque of San‘ā’, Yemen¹ (Figures 1,² 2 and 3³ herein).

An iconography of Umayyad architecture had been explored by J. Sauvaget, who proposed that, differences of detail aside, similar ceremonial usage had imposed common architectural layouts on the prayer halls of mosques and secular halls of audience.⁴ For his doctoral thesis O. Grabar⁵ examined the remains of several Umayyad princely structures, their decoration and textual material for evidence of the development of an imperial iconography. Both these works contain valued information and opinions, but their theses pre-date the discovery of much of the material on which this paper relies.

As for the two architectural motifs, it might be supposed that reports of finding extensive remains of serrated arches at a number of early Islamic sites would have elicited comment, if only
because of the motif's repeated use. Some writers have referred to some of their predecessors' work, but there are curious lapses.

In three articles of the 1950's K. Otto-Dorn reported that blind serrated arches were characteristic of Rusafah, and compared them with those at 'Ammān. She described Rusafah's blind arcades as typical of Umayyad art and referred to other examples such as those on the façades of Qaṣr al-Ḥāyr al-Gharbī and the Small Enclosure at Qaṣr al-Ḥāyr al-Sharqī, and on the "Marwān" ewcr.

In 1977, H. Gaube compared the serrated arches at 'Ammān, Qaṣṭal and Qaṣra Kharānah without mentioning those at Rusafah. He did point out, however, that the blind niches on the façades of Qaṣr Kharānah and the Small Enclosure at Qaṣr al-Ḥāyr al-Sharqī were similar, and that serrated horseshoe arches appeared at 'Ammān, Qaṣṭal, about the interior windows at Qaṣr Kharānah, and on the courtyard balustrade at Jabal Sajr. When he does refer to Otto-Dorn's articles on Rusafah, in 1979, it is in connection with the site only, not its decoration. P. Carlier compared Qaṣṭal's serrated arches with those at nearby 'Ammān, and later, A. Northedge described the serrated arches at 'Ammān without mentioning those at Qaṣṭal, even though he referred to Qaṣṭal in matters of other comparanda.

Only S. Urice appears to have seen any significance in the location of the arches. He remarked that the common context in which the small open arcades at Qaṣr Kharānah, the blind arcades above the sole entry to the Small Enclosure at Qaṣr al-Ḥāyr al-Sharqī, and the blind arcades in the Reception Hall at 'Ammān occur seemed to be at a "point of passage" between neutral and charged space.

The marquetry panels have fared even less well. M. Jenkins referred briefly to the tripartite decorative arrangement of the one in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, (Figure 109), and M. Rosen-Ayalon has pointed out that the winged motifs in the New York and Cairo panels (Figure 110) resembled those to be seen in the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's mosaics, as well as in the spandrels of the fragment of a Coptic sarcophagus found in Cairo. Rosen-Ayalon's observation is but one in an
iconographic study embracing all of the Haram. As the work is deliberately limited it does not deal with much of the material used by the writer, but a caveat on the study of the Qubbat al-Šakrah would be that it draws rather heavily on Christian and Jewish iconography for an understanding of that monument. F. Sarre's comments are the most interesting, and frustrating, for their lack of specifics. He noted that the architectural motif of the panel in Berlin (Figure 111) "was taken from contemporary mosques" and was "frequently found painted in gold as a decorative border on the pages of earlier Kufic Korans". The Qur'āns are not specified, but he associated the panel's medium with "contemporary Egyptian art, and in particular with the ornamental decoration of the early Korans". Again, the Qur'āns are not specified, but he mentions generally the folios published by B. Moritz.

O. Grabar is another who has drawn attention to Moritz' illustrations, in particular, to the architectural depictions in a Qur'ān found in the Mosque of 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ, Cairo. He identifies mosque structures on two Surah dividers, and connects the column on another folio with the column seen in Figure 3, unfortunately, his wide-ranging analysis of the Sanʿā' Figures is marred by the elimination from discussion of illustrative details he found "unsettling", an omission for which he is chided by one of his reviewers. The writer was pleased to see the Sanʿā' and Cairo Figures discussed together, as they are so important to this thesis, but disappointed in the findings. Particular responses to Grabar's comments are found in the chapters following.

This paper deals with the relationship between the two architectural motifs, the Sanʿā' Figures and the Qubbat al-Šakrah. All three Sanʿā' Figures are examined in detail, comparanda are presented for their various features and an identification for each is proposed. The new information on the Qubbat al-Šakrah that the Sanʿā' Figures provide leads to a reconsideration of that monument's origin and decorative programme.

In following the architectural motifs' trail the writer has not examined all monuments said to be Umayyad, nor all of the architecture and decoration of the sites at which the motifs are present. The trail is incomplete, but it has seemed important to record the existence of previously unrecognized
Umayyad iconography and its perceived relationship to the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah and the Sanʿāʾ Figures; to re-examine the Qubbah in light of new information, and to advise that identifications of the Sanʿāʾ Figures have been made other than those so far advanced.

* * *

The conventions observed in this thesis for the Romanization of Arabic script are those found in the 1997 edition of the Library of Congress' ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts. In this scheme, medial and final hamzah is Romanized as ʿ; alif maqṣūrah as à; ayn as `; and tāʾ marbūṭah as h, or t in construct.

Certain place names and a title are shown according to their Anglicized forms in The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic: Cairo, Damascus, Gaza, Mecca, Yemen, caliph.

To avoid confusion when citing place names from their works, the Romanization schemes used by the authors following have been retained: F.-M. Abel et A. Barrois, M. Avi-Yonah, Howard Crosby Butler, C.R. Conder and H.H. Kitchener, Jean-Pascal Fourdrin, Jean Lassus, Margaret Lyttelton, Ruth and Asher Ovadiah, Michele Piccirillo and ʿAbd al-Jalil ʿAmr, Aspelii Saarisalo and Heikki Palva, Deborah Thompson, A.D. Trendall, Vassilios Tzaferis.
Notes

1. Hans-Caspar Graf von Bothmer, "Architekturbilder im Koran," Pantheon 45 (1987): 4; Marilyn Jenkins, "A Vocabulary of Umayyad Ornament," Masrif San' F. Kuwait: Dar al-Áthár al-Islamiyyah, 1985: 19. The codex' inventory number is 20-33.1 and, according to the manuscript's conservator, Ursula Dreibholz, "Treatment of Early Islamic Manuscript Fragments on Parchment, a Case History: the find of Sana'a, Yemen," The Conservation and Preservation of Islamic Manuscripts: proceedings of the third conference of Islamic monuments 1995, p. 140 and n. 11, "20-33" means 20 lines to the page and the lines no longer than 33 cm, while "1" is that Qur'án's individual number. This numbering system was worked out by the first director of the Sana'a conservation project, G. Puin.


3. Figure 2 herein is Farb. II and Figure 3 is Farb. I in von Bothmer "Architekturbilder," the colour plates in that article having been reproduced as they appear side-by-side in the Qur'án, the right-hand picture (Figure 2) coming first. Von Bothmer customarily refers to them as "right" and "left" respectively. See "Architekturbilder," p. 5 and n. 27.


22. The first 12 plates of Moritz' publication.

23. Grabar, *Mediation*, figures 134 and 131, respectively.


Chapter One: Three Illustrations from a Qur'an

In 1972 a great quantity of parchment and paper manuscript fragments was found above the ceiling of the Great Mosque at San'ā\textsuperscript{1} when repairs were being made to that building. Based on such criteria as format, layout, script style, decoration of the Surah headings, twenty-five of the parchment fragments were determined to be part of one Qur'ānic codex\textsuperscript{2} and likely of the Umayyad period.\textsuperscript{3} Amongst those fragments, and the subject of this chapter, were the remains of three full-page illustrations: a geometric figure with trees referred to as the title page (Figure 1); a building with stairs and a centre aisle (Figure 2), and a building with a central courtyard (Figure 3), respectively, verso and recto of a double frontispiece.

Their ruined state notwithstanding, these are remarkable drawings. Unframed, they are the entire focus of their respective pages; it is not possible to say whether they were titled,\textsuperscript{4} but this may never have been necessary. While each differs from its fellows, clearly they are linked, first, by their elaborate borders, second, by the naturalistic vegetation in conjunction with the borders. As the most substantial features of Figure 1, and repeated in a modified fashion on numbers 2 and 3, these two elements have more than ornamental significance. A third link is the uniformity of much of the architectural detail and ornamentation that confirms the richness of the buildings; this uniformity has the effect of subordinating lesser features to the leading parts.

Contributing notably to the dramatic effect of the ensemble is the symmetry of the three Figures and the emphasis gained through a hierarchy of scale. For example, the trees in Figure 1 and the arched elements at the upper centres of Figures 2 and 3 are disproportionately larger than other elements of the drawings, suggesting that a greater significance was attached to them. Another example of this hierarchy of scale is to be seen in the apse mosaic of S. Catherine's, Mt. Sinai (Figure 56), where Jesus is the largest of the persons illustrated because he is the most important.

There is much realistic architectural detail yet, as is characteristic of other mediaeval
architectural depictions, representation shifts "discursively" between exterior and interior features. The seeming illogicality of the shifts and the difficulties of understanding and interpreting the results of them is discussed by R. Krautheimer, with special reference to the many depictions and "copies" of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and by P. Lampl, in a more general way. The latter refers to compositions of internal and external features as "ideal" renderings of architecture and points to some of the means used to attain them: only quintessential exterior and interior elements were drawn; one part of a building might be the synecdoche for the whole; some features were enlarged in accordance with their importance; actual size and spatial relationships were irrelevant, and numbers were important only if symbolically meaningful. In an examination of "Copies in Medieval Architecture" Krautheimer has interpreted this ideality as evidence that content, usage, and the name or attribution were often more important in the copying or depiction of a structure than the exact reproduction of its physical characteristics but, in a particular instance, has demonstrated how knowledge of a depiction's place of origin and period, contemporary building practices, textual and archaeological evidence have contributed to a reconstruction of that depicted. The instance is the Ecclesia mater mosaic (Figure 4) found at Tabarka, and his (Figure 5) and J.B. Ward-Perkins' (Figure 6) interpretation of that building portrait are relevant to problems faced in understanding the San`ā' Qur'ān illustrations.

Ecclesia mater has been reconstructed as a basilica with a wide centre aisle and narrower single aisles flanking. It has a gabled façade and a tiled roof above a clerestory whose windows are closed with pierced stone slabs. A central, curtained door in the façade is reached by stairs. In the nave there is an altar with antependium and three candles and beyond are steps which lead up to a three-arched arcade at the chord of the apse. At the left and right walls the arcade is supported on pilasters, and the nave columns end immediately before the raised apse floor. The apse protrudes beyond the building's principal dimensions and has an oculus in its half dome. Mosaics of birds and flowers decorate the basilica's floor, below which is a sarcophagus in a funerary vault.
As disposed in the mosaic, however, the gable has been placed beneath the clerestory supported by a nave column and, like the door at the extreme right, altar and apse arcade have been rotated to face the viewer. Nave and apse share the same floor level, although the reconstructions show otherwise, and the subterranean sarcophagus, floor-level mosaics and truncated columns of an aisle between them and the viewer have all been fitted into the space between the entrance and apse steps.

In both reconstructions the gable's windows have been lowered to clerestory level as their more reasonable position in North African basilicas, and the curtained door, which in the mosaic is found at the extreme right, has been placed at the centre of the façade. Altars in fifth century African basilicas were known to have been in the nave, and the stairs to the left are interpreted as leading up to the raised floor of the apse, because apses then were raised above nave level, rather than down to the funerary vault which may have been sealed.

As to the authors' differences, the apse' oculus is not shown on Ward-Perkins' reconstruction where it could not be seen, whereas Krautheimer has re-located it above the triumphal arch on the grounds it "probably slid down in the rendering from its actual place in the rear gable of the nave". As well, Krautheimer raises the clerestory on arches, because "the horizontal which runs above the columns in the mosaic is the bottom line of the outside clerestory and not an architrave, an element rarely, if ever, used in North African churches", while Ward-Perkins, who also appears to understand the inscription's underline as part of the clerestory, shows it as an architrave and states "There is no trace in any of the Tripolitian churches of the use of the architrave in place of the arch".

For the most part the authors agree in their interpretation of the mosaic, being distracted neither by its dissection, nor the enlargement or diminution of its several parts; their reconstructions were informed by the detail provided by the mosaicist, and what they knew of building practices of Ecclesia mater's time and place.

Another relevant basilical depiction is the Palatium, or palace of Theodoric, mosaic in the
nave of the early sixth century Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna (Figure 7).21 Structurally, this secular basilica would have looked much like Ecclesia mater (see Figures 5, 6), in having a high, wide nave, and tiled roof above a clerestory whose windows are closed with shutters. As with Ecclesia mater the clerestory roof is shown sloping towards the viewer. Note that the tiles over the central gable run parallel to the roof ridge, instead of down from the ridge to the eaves. Two reasons for this anomaly can be suggested: one, such an arrangement makes all the tiles directionally harmonious; two, the true alignment of the gable's tiles would have been invisible in this method of depiction.

The aisle columns terminate at a large three-arched arcade which, although at the far end of the nave, has been projected forward, and the combined interior colonnades and exterior clerestory roof can been seen to pass behind it. Where Palatium now has curtains in every bay there were once figures, the outlines of whose heads can be discerned above the curtain rods,22 and two of whose hands remain on the columns. It is suggested that the presence of the figures was the reason for depicting Palatium in this way, opening up the building like a book, then flattening it out to show all the persons clearly.23

Figure 2's building, head-on to and slightly below the viewer's position, is clearly-drawn, essentially two-dimensional,24 composed of exterior and interior structural components stacked one upon the other, mostly within the limits of elaborate floral bands. From bottom to top, there is a forecourt marked off by two low balustrades behind which columns are seen beneath the building (grid 1-4 E).25 Three doors with stairs lead inside, where there is a well-defined central aisle (3 A-D), at the farther end of which is the remnant of inclined steps (3B), and a great arch raised on two levels of paired columns (3 A-B). Flanking the arch is a line of vegetation (1-4 A), with stairs again at the extreme left. Because of its inclusion in a Qur'ān, and the particular identification of some features, this building has been identified as a mosque, with which the writer agrees, said to be like that of Damascus.

The Great Mosque of Damascus was tailored to fit an existing, rectangular site in which the
qiblah occurred on one of the long walls. In the prayer hall, two arcade-supporting colonnades create three aisles parallel to the long walls; at the extremities the colonnades abut the short walls; at the centre they are intercepted by, and abut, four piers supporting the dome (Figure 8). The effect of the piers is to create a centre aisle of single arches and it is this combination of central, single arches within a two-storied colonnade parallel to the qiblah wall that Figure 2's building is said to resemble.26

Two points might be made: first, unified, transverse arch systems consisting of a single arch flanked by two tiers of arches did exist in a few Syrian buildings, such as the fourth century (?) church at Tafhā (Figure 9)27 and the non-Christian second century basilica at Shaqqā (Figure 10),28 but these were raised on piers set close together in order to support flat stone roofs,29 and are not the arches depicted in Figure 2. Second, the structure at Damascus is not unified; it has been created from the marriage of different support systems, that of piers for the dome, and columns for the roof. It is argued that Figure 2's "likeness" to Damascus is the result of misunderstanding the juxtaposition of its support structures, about which the artist has conveyed understandable information.

Decorative differences highlight the structural difference of Figure 2's interior. The nave (3 C-D) has marble, or marbleized, columns with Corinthian capitals, and richly-decorated arches. The colonnades of the aisles (2 B-E) are comprised of trabeated, lower columns, with plain bases and capitals, supporting shorter columns with the same plain bases but slightly more-detailed capitals on which rest three arches and one gable. Upper and lower columns are chevronned, the architrave has a meander pattern, and in the spandrels are pairs of ivy leaves.

This building is interpreted as a basilica of oblong shape, in which two-tiered colonnades divide the lateral space into aisles perpendicular to the short walls, while at right angles to the colonnades large single transverse arches, raised on columns quite separate from those of the aisles', define the nave. The nave's columns stand just within, but free of the aisle columniations. In keeping with a basilical reconstruction it is suggested that this building likely had a clerestory, and that the transverse arches terminated in diaphragms which abutted it. It seems unlikely transverse arches
would have occurred at every bay, but only intermittently.

The artist has taken great pains to convey the elaborate structure of Figure 2's interior, according to conventions already observed in Ecclesia mater and Palatium. Here, although architraves are seen to extend from between the tiered colonnades to the springing of the nave's arches (3 B-C), the apparent linkage of these structural elements should be understood as a convention that contributes to the drawing's harmonious appearance, as does the straight line that connects gable, aisle columns and triple-arched arcade in Ecclesia mater. In Figure 2 the architraves abut the frame of the centre door (3 D) and the lower columns of the rear great arch (3 A), while the gable of the uppermost colonnade disappears behind the great arch's columns (3 A-C). Such a characteristic occurs in Palatium, where it emphasizes the separation of aisle and nave structural elements. The upper colonnade (2-3 A-B) of Figure 2 does not actually pass behind the rear great arch, anymore than the flanking aisles and clerestory roof pass behind the triple arch of basilical Palatium.

Like Palatium, Figure 2's interior has been opened up and flattened out in order to show clearly the structure of the colonnades and nave, their decoration, and the multitude of lamps. In a reconstruction analogous to Palatium's, the four sets of tiered colonnades might pivot on the gabled bays (2 A-D) which would then be positioned at the farther, short wall. But, rather than assume this exercise would give Figure 2 four lateral aisles to either side of the nave, it is pointed out that the artist had to incorporate four important central elements in his drawing, to Palatium's one: the great rear arch, the two nave arches and the centre doors, each of which has been placed in the context of the aisle colonnades. One may understand from this drawing that there were a number of lateral aisles and nave arches, but the exact number is unknown.

It has been observed that arched and gabled bays occur on the entrance façade of the palace at the Umayyad site of Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī, Syria, c.730⁴⁰ and on several sixth-seventh century ivories.⁴¹ Those differences may have been for artistic variation or, in Figure 2's case, might indicate some structural distinction in the bay nearest the qiblah wall, or in the roofing.
From about the fourth century CE onwards a high nave, clerestory lighting, and two or more longitudinal colonnades are common features of the monumental halls now called basilicas. According to archaeological and textual evidence, Constantine's basilicas of old S. Peter's, Rome, and the Churches of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem, and the Nativity, Bethlehem, were longitudinally colonnaded. Transverse arches are known to have existed in early Christian basilicas, for example, in old S. Peter's, there was one at the juncture of nave and transept, and in the non-Christian Great Hall of the Caracalla Baths, also in Rome, there were several. The reconstruction of the latter in Figure 11, where an ornate transverse support system is raised on columns standing within the margins of the perpendicular colonnades, gives an idea of the contrast in structure and decoration between the colonnades and transverse arches of Figure 2. (It is not suggested Figure 2 had a coffered ceiling.)

There were Syrian, and adjacent regional, precedents for the use of free-standing columns in conjunction with other arched constructions. The late fifth century main church at Alahan Monastery, southern Turkey has four free-standing columns at the crossing as part of the support for a central tower capped with a pyramidal timber roof. At Qal’at Sim‘ān, c.480-490, free-standing columns with Corinthian capitals stand just within the piers of the arched central entrance in the southern façade, and flank the angled piers on every facet of the martyrium's central octagon.

Evidence of the sumptuous decoration lavished on the naves of Christian basilicas is to be seen at Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, and Sant'Apollinare in Classe, c. 532/6-549 (Figure 12). The latter basilica, which has a transverse arch immediately before the apse, shows the relationship of the diaphragm heading to a typical wooden, double-pitched roof without the intermediary of a ceiling. This is the suggested roofing for Figure 2's columnar structure. H. Butler has described the wooden roofing common in many parts of Syria as double-pitched over the main aisle, with lean to's over the lower side aisles. Such wooden trussing is carved on the stone porch pediments of the convent at Brād, and the chapel at Bātūtā, both in Syria. A hypothetical reconstruction of the basilica of the
Holy Sepulchre has the wooden roof-pitching extended over nave and aisles.40

Turning now to the mihrab41 (Figure 13) (3 A-B in Figure 2), its frame consists of two orders of paired columns: the lower, on independent bases, is surmounted by a section of architrave upon which rests the upper order, also on independent bases, apparently linked by a narrow impost, more clearly seen in Figure 3, which supports the arch. The frame is interpreted as a free-standing structure, like a two-storey aedicule, the columns being perpendicular to the qiblah wall and probably braced against it at the levels of architrave and arch springing.

No exact model for the structure can be pointed to; however, in comparing the architecture in Roman wall painting with the appearance of contemporary buildings, M. Lyttelton has written, "... the frescoes do not necessarily show what was built, but rather the architectural schemes which interested contemporary architects and their patrons".42 As the mihrab frame shares characteristics of the ornate architecture in the Damascus mosaics, one may look to realized architectural decoration for inspirational sources.

In the eastern Roman world there are numerous precedents for the decorative use of structural features such as columns, arches and gables to enliven interior and exterior walls.43 For example, at Baalbek, Lebanon, the interior of the Temple of Bacchus and the Hexagonal and Great Courts preceding it,44 and at Petra, Jordan, the Khasne, and the Deir, c. mid-first century CE (Figure 14).45

Decorative columnar arrangements were a feature of amphitheatre stages also, and at Palmyra, first half second century CE, paired columns supporting an architrave and gable flank the principal entrance. Figure 1546 shows the relationship of the columns to the amphitheatre's back wall, much as the mihrab's frame would relate to the qiblah wall in Figure 2. At Lepcis Magna, Libya, the central element of the reconstructed façade of the Great Nymphaeum, c.211,47 described as "similar to the scaenae frons of a Roman theatre"48 is a two-tier arrangement like the mihrab's, composed of single rather than paired columns (Figure 16),49 the bracing of which is shown in Figure 17.50 Figures 1851 and 19,52 which are respectively the extant remains and suggested reconstruction of the north-western
apse of Lepcis Magna's Severan basilica (dated between 193-216), show interior use of decorative columns and their scale in relationship to the height of that basilica's nave and give an idea of the dramatic quality the mihrāb's frame conveys.

In Figure 2 faint traces of double lining at the arch springing suggest the hood of a tall mihrāb niche, and von Bothmer advises having seen traces of at least three, eight-pointed stars on a blue ground in the arch area. Other evidence for recessive space is the presence of the lamp, though admittedly this could be hanging from the arch itself. As for von Bothmer's preoccupation with the mihrāb's width, this may be attributable to the least controllable element in the drawing, the asymmetrical minbar.

Lepcis Magna's Severan buildings have been pointed out for their mixture of eastern and western Roman influences, and for the aid they may provide in understanding the drawing. For example, here as in previous basilical examples, greater care was expended on the decoration of the nave than on the aisles and galleries. In Figure 2, the mihrāb's upper columns rest on low, individual pedestals. The individual free-standing pedestals at Lepcis Magna (see Figures 18, 19) were common in regions of the eastern Mediterranean; they can be seen along the colonnaded street and in the agora at Jarash, Jordan; in the second century CE Roman temple at Qanawāt, Syria, and are a distinctive feature of Syriac canon table architecture like the Rabbula Gospels of 586 CE from the monastery of S. John at Beth Zagba, Mesopotamia, (Figure 20). A further correspondence between architectural decoration and book art is the plain border to the arches in the Qur’ān drawings, and the Rabbula Gospels' architecture, very like the uncarved margins of arch and pilaster decoration at Lepcis Magna and in the blind arcading at the North Gate of Sergiopolis/Ruṣāfah, Syria (Figure 21).

The mihrāb frame has been taken to indicate the possible presence of a dome, due, perhaps, to a misinterpretation of its hierarchical scale. Canopies of one sort or another are well-represented in early non-Islāmic art, and the representation of a dome was entirely within the capabilities of this
illustrator, so if there had been one perhaps it was indicated at the missing top of the illustration. In
the writer's opinion, however, there was no dome; the illustration shows only the projecting mihrāb to
whose hierarchical significance the rest of the building is subordinate.

Before the mihrāb is the minbar,62 seen at the bottom right of Figure 13, of which several
steps, a banister, a vertical member and trace of superstructure remain.

The rich decoration throughout the mosque is illuminated by the lit, globular, glass lamps in
every bay.63 Based in part on discoveries at Jarash, it has been pointed out that suspended glass lamps
of various forms seem not to be known prior to the sixth century, suspended here meaning those with
loops at the shoulders, as distinct from those meant to be inserted in metal polycandela. Post-Jarash
the handled bowl type came into common use, although all glass bowls with attached loop handles
may not have been lamps.64 A rounded glass lamp with loop handles65 was found at the church of S.
George, Jarash, constructed between 529-33.66

Crowfoot and Harden point out that while some lamps actually held fuel and wick, others
were really lamp "shades", into which a smaller vessel was inserted, and this smaller vessel contained
water, an upper layer of oil, wick holder and wick.67 Such a practice is indicated here, where smaller
vase-like shapes can be seen through the glass globes.

Mention has been made of the delimiting floral bands (1-2 A-D), and interpretations of them
lead one to believe the artist was fully appreciative of the ambiguity they might engender. They have
been referred to as the building's ground plan and elevation, and enclosure walls;68 and called
"unsettling", "incoherent" and "unrelated" to the architecture.69 As frames, they suggest the
marshalling qualities of canon table architecture,70 and in draughtsmanship and handling of pattern and
colour that they might be compared with the architectural frames of the British Museum's manuscript
Add. 5111. That manuscript consists of two partial leaves which had been bound into a copy of an
1189 Greek Gospel Book belonging formerly to a monastery on Mount Athos. The four pages, a
letter from Eusebius and three canon tables, ascribed to the sixth or early seventh centuries, possibly
of imperial patronage, are in brilliant polychromy on gilt grounds. C. Nordenfalk had suggested Add. 5111's column patterns (Figure 22) were inspired by embroidery like that in the bands of some Vatican silk fragments (Figure 23). In fact, it is the bands of the San'a' illustrations that are even more reminiscent of the Vatican silks.

A recurrent motif in the San'a' illustrations, and dominant in the silks, is ivy leaves, small and elongated in all the spandrels, and the bands of Figure 2; or heart-shaped and particoloured, in the bands of Figure 3. They are seen in all manner of pre- and early Islamic decorations, such as a fourth century Roman mosaic from the House of the Seasons, at Thugga, Tunisia; on capitals from the sixth century church of S. Polyeuktos, Constantinople (Figure 24); and throughout the area north-east of Hamah, Syria, all likely from Christian contexts of the fifth and sixth centuries; on carved, basalt doors at Tell Snân, issuing from a vase on a door jamb at Tell Hazne, and on a lintel at Temânya (Figure 25). The larger, heart-shaped leaves are also featured in the soffit mosaics of the Qubbat al-Sakhrah.

The particoloured Qur'an version, shown clearly in Nordenfalk's drawing of the Vatican silks' band (Figure 26), appears to have been very popular for it recurs in the bands of several seventh-eighth century silks, all likely from Syria, or said to be adapted from a Syrian design, and may be seen also in the spandrels of a floor fresco at Qasr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbî (Figure 27). O. von Falke points to the origin of this leaf in the carvings at Taq-i Bustân. As well, a motif very like the palmettes of Figure 2 is repeated many times on an Egyptian hanging of the fourth-fifth century CE (Figure 28).

This likeness to embroidery is particularly apt. As textile hangings were common interior furnishings, it is argued that the delimitation of the mosque's inner walls is shown by the embroidery-like bands, a convention readily-understood to allude to a richly-decorated interior. And while the bands may point only to the existence of decoration, they could be interpreted as actual decorative bands like those found beneath the windows on the inner surface of the outer wall of the Qubbat al-
J. Jakeman describes the decorative band of the illustration as a "vital component" that "may in fact be representational, indicating stucco or vegetal relief on the walls of the mosque".  

Typically, although more lushly than most canon table architecture, Add. 5111's arcades are crowned with vegetation, and one may reasonably speculate whether this layout influenced the positioning of the upper vegetation here. The Qur'ān groves have been likened to gardens surrounding mediaeval mosques, an evocation of Last Days, al-Ghūta oasis south of Damascus, and the riparian gardens in the west portico of the Damascus mosque.

Representation of the created world was frequent in Byzantine art of the late fifth, early sixth centuries. In secular contexts earth might be personified, but in churches it was more likely that a selection of flora and fauna stood for the whole. One such presentation appears as an end panel in a ninth century copy of the world map of the sixth-century geographer Cosmas Indicopleustes, taking the form of a line of fruit trees with underplantings which represent the Earthly Paradise no longer inhabited by men (Figure 30). In a mosaic panel on the floor of Dumetios' Basilica at Nikopolis, a similar grove of trees represents the earth (Figure 31), with the understanding the trees "could signify Earth or Paradise, according to their context". The assemblage of fruitful trees and underplantings in Figures 2 and 3, closely resemble the paradisiacal groves of the map and floor.

The Earthly Paradise of early Christian writers was a place of perpetually temperate climate "in which flowers bloom and fruit are ripe all at the same time and forever", and a similar sentiment is expressed in the Qur'ān at Surah LXXVI, 5 ff., where in Paradise mankind will have "shady valleys, all sorts of delicious fruits, (passim) of all seasons, and without a thorn ...". An earlier, secular version of an other-worldly garden is to be found in the Garden Room of the Villa of Livia at Prima Porta, c. 20 BCE, where trees and underplanted flowers of every kind "of all seasons appear together" providing their patron with an individual paradise (Figure 32). 

In his unpublished doctoral thesis G. Bisheh discusses the reports of Ibn 'Abd Rabbih and Ibn
Jubayr on the gold cubes called *fusayfisā* with which the interior walls of the Great Mosque at Madīnah were decorated. Ibn Jubayr reported the upper walls above the marble dado were decorated with various kinds of fruit-laden trees, and that the decoration of the *qiblah* was said to be the most careful. From other sources, Bisheh says "architectural compositions" were included in this decoration and of it a mosaicist is reported to have said "we have made the mosaic decoration according to the forms of the trees and mansions of Paradise". J. Sauvaget also quoted Ibn `Abd Rabbih’s description of the gold mosaics and the depictions of diverse trees with fruit-laden branches, and Ibn Najjar’s on the trees and mansions of Paradise, but was not convinced of their accuracy. From these descriptions the Madīnah mosaics have been interpreted as resembling the Damascus ones but, without the architectural compositions, they can be comprehended also as looking like the vegetation in Figures 2 and 3. The diverse, fruitful trees of the map and mosaic floor could well have provided models for the trees of Paradise at Madīnah, Damascus and in the Sanʿā’ Qurʾān figures; therefore, Figure 2's *qiblah* wall is interpreted as displaying to either side of the *mihrāb*, the representation of a paradisiacal garden in mosaic above a decorative band, just as the mosaic trees (and mansions) of Paradise are shown in the west portico of the Great Mosque at Damascus (Figure 33).

Turning now to the exterior. The mosque is entered by three, double-leaf doors above steps (1-4 E) but, unlike von Bothmer and Grabar the writer does not believe they are all on the façade; rather, it is suggested the left and right doors interrupt and flare beyond the decorative band to indicate they are on the sides of the building where, according to this illustrative method, they could not otherwise be seen. This detail may be significant also for showing the building stands alone, not hemmed in by other structures. The middle door shows decorated jambs, and the lintel, relieving arch, tympanum and return moulding of the left door are assumed for all three. That the central door does not have the latter features is undoubtedly because including them would conceal the richly-decorated arch and the hanging lamp above.
The elaborate portal has many Syrian precedents. Inspiration for the jambs and lintel could have been drawn from such monumental entrances as that in the peristyle of the Temple of Bel, Palmyra,103 or the entrance to the palace at Qasr al-Ḫayr al-Gharbī (see Figure 215), where an inscription on the lintel states it is from a sixth century monastery.104 As can be seen, an arch has been restored above the door. In the churches of Northern Syria from the fifth century onwards there's an increasing richness in the mouldings about entrances and windows.105 Two examples of decorated frames and relieving arches can be seen, for example in the men's and women's entrances to the basilica of Qalb Lozé, (Figures 34a, 34b).106

Again from churches in Northern Syria comes limited evidence for the filling of relieving arches, either by deeply-carved stone plates, pierced to varying degrees, or stone grills which may have been glazed,107 as could be indicated by the colouration of the left door's tympanum; however, another illustration provides a notable comparandum for the doors, relieving arches and tympana. This is the "Consecration of the Tabernacle" scene from the synagogue at Dura Europos, destroyed in 256 CE,108 where the enclosure about the "tent in the desert" has been replaced by a Roman wall in which are embedded three doors (Figure 35).109 The tympana in both illustrations appear to be identical. Further evidence supporting the doors' appearance is available in the form of a number of carved basalt ones, like that from Tell Snān, Syria, (Figure 36).110 Although carved as one unit, the layout indicates it is based on double-leaf models. Other doors are decorated with ivy leaves, concentric diamonds and circles, nail heads, and arcades. The testimony of the two illustrations and the basalt doors speaks to a remarkable continuity in at least one aspect of Syrian structural and illustrative tradition.

At Qasr al-Ḫayr al-Gharbī, lunettes over doors and window openings were filled with stucco transennae, some of which were fitted with coloured or painted glass cut to shape.111 The arch above Figure 2's left door is set within an elaborate heading; the remains of similar headings surrounding transennae-filled lunettes were found at al-Gharbī (Figure 37)112 and have been restored to second-
floor halls of the palace facing onto the central courtyard.\textsuperscript{113}

One of the features included in the Tabarka mosaic was the hidden, but known to exist, sarcophagus, and a similar qualification applies to some of the last elements of Figure 2 to be discussed, the forecourt, and steps at the upper left. The writer does not believe this mosque is raised on a podium,\textsuperscript{114} nor that it is on a mound or height,\textsuperscript{115} nor that the upper left stairs represent a minaret in section,\textsuperscript{116} rather, that elements which could have been partly seen, and were known to exist beneath the building have been drawn as preceding it, or being to the rear thereof, and together represent the unique subterransean feature of only one Umayyad mosque. Everything below the level of the door sills plus what seem to be flights of steps at the upper left of the illustration is related to the same structural feature, the passage of the Double Tunnel from its entrance at the foot of the southern wall of Temple Mount to its exit on the Haram al-Sharif immediately in front of al-Aqsâ Mosque, Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{117}

Al-Aqsâ's qiblah wall is at the southern extremity of Temple Mount where, in the Second Temple period, the Western Hulda double gate gave access to the Mount via a street at the foot of the southern wall.\textsuperscript{118} When the Muslims occupied Jerusalem the Western Hulda was renovated, probably by Caliph 'Abd al-Malik,\textsuperscript{119} becoming known as Bāb al-Nabī (the Prophet's Gate),\textsuperscript{120} and later as al-Aqsâ al-Qadīmah (Old al-Aqsâ), or the Double Gate, and continued to give public access to what had become known as the Haram al-Sharif, and specifically to al-Aqsâ.\textsuperscript{121}

According to R. Hamilton, the first version of the existing al-Aqsâ Mosque, which he attributes to the Caliph al-Walîd I,\textsuperscript{122} was some nineteen metres shorter than the present version on the north-south axis, (north being the front of the building),\textsuperscript{123} with the pavement before the façade at the innermost eastern aisle interrupted by the entrance to the Double Gate.\textsuperscript{124} At its southern entry (Figures 38a, 38b)\textsuperscript{125} the Gate has a vestibule of four domed bays supported by wall pilasters and a central pillar with a Corinthian-like capital (Figure 39).\textsuperscript{126} Steps rise from the western bays through the vaulted tunnel (Figure 40)\textsuperscript{127} to the platform before the Mosque.\textsuperscript{128}
Hamilton speaks of two other structures projecting above the pavement before the first al-Aqṣā's façade, a stylobate about four metres north of the mosque, and the head of the cistern called Bi'r al-Waraqah, the Well of the Leaf. G. Le Strange, quoting Nāṣir-i Khusraw, states: "(viii.a) In the south wall (of the Ḥaram area) is a gate leading to the places for the ablution, where there is running water. When a person has need to make the ablution (before prayer), he goes down to this place, and accomplishes what is prescribed ...", and Nāṣir-i Khusraw continues that al-Aqṣā has been erected over the subterranean passage called Bāb al-Nabī. C. Wilson, to whom Le Strange appealed for help in identifying the various gates into the Ḥaram mentioned by Nāṣir-i Khusraw, (amongst others), explains that the expression "leading to the places for the ablution" must refer to "remains of water-pipes and cells being still shown at this point in the substructures of the Aksā; for the ancient Gate of the Prophet under the Aksā can only be the so-called Double Gate, long since walled up, but still to be seen closing the southern side of the vaults under the Aksā."

The two amphorae (2E, 4E) flanking the central stairs are interpreted as a convention for Bi'r al-Waraqah and the ablutions' facility, while the stylobate, which is not represented in the drawing, might have supported the colonnade of a porch. Beyond the porch was an open, paved forecourt extending further north than the present mosque's façade and within this court was the well-head of Bi'r al-Waraqah and a staircase descending to the Double Tunnel. Von Bothmer has interpreted the amphorae as an ablutions' facility and suggested the balustrade partly conceals that area from visitors' eyes. Grabar acknowledges this may be an ablutions' area, but finds the amphorae "much too large and too obvious". As cleanliness is an obligatory preparation for prayer, the vessels affirm that an otherwise unseen washing area does exist.

In Wilson's survey of the Ḥaram the plan of al-Aqṣā Mosque has been superimposed on that of the Double Gate, so one can see the Well of the Leaf is situated south of the present Mosque's north wall, where the "rising vault of the subterranean passage" exited before al-Aqṣā Mosque (Figure 41). Something like the balustrade may have marked off the forecourt from the rest of the
Haram; it is possible also that the balustrade's appearance here is purposeful, like the truncation found in the Tabarka mosaic where the nave columns nearest the viewer have been reduced to stumps so as not to block the farther view, thus allowing the presentation of actual but hidden features. In Figure 2's case the features are the Double Tunnel's termini, something expressive of its subterranean-ness, and the ablutions' area. While the three stairs might be understood as the tunnel's exit before the mosque, placing aspects of the vestibule and inner ramp at the upper left of the illustration might not have expressed logically the southern entrance nor the subterranean qualities of the vaulting. So positions have been reversed. At the top left of the page the flights of steps represent both the southern entrance and the rising ramp of steps within the tunnel. At the bottom of the page, flanking the central stairs, the columns represent the tunnel's known, but concealed vestibule and vaulting in their proper position underneath the mosque.

As the artist chose to place together distinct, widely-separated features in the restricted space of the forecourt, in order to give each due prominence, without implying the one is before or behind the other, the bases and Corinthian capitals of the columns flanking the central stair have been halved to provide space for the amphorae, which do not obstruct either columns or balustrades. The flanking columns (2E, 4E) represent the supports of the vestibule (see Figure 39), while the columns behind the balustrade represent the underlying vaults and are partly-hidden to evidence this. The three sets of stairs should be understood to represent access between the Mosque and the subterranean passage.¹⁴⁰ For balance, there are "between" stairs at each door, those at the sides being halved so as not to mask the columns, or to appear to be behind the balustrade, as they would not be in their position at the sides of the mosque. There is no suggestion in the literature that more than one access stair existed. That these are not unique solutions to apparently conflicting problems of depicting appearance and showing position is evident from the distribution of structural elements in the less complex representation of Ecclesia mater.

As to whether the foregoing may be reconciled with the little that is known archaeologically
of the initial Umayyad al-Aqṣā, Hamilton established that, from the earliest times, the aisles ran north and south, at right angles to the qibla wall, and were from 4m. to c. 6m. wide, although the width of the building itself could not be established. The arcades separating the aisles were supported by columns and attached to the north and south walls by pilasters. No central north-south axis could be established, nor is the number of doors known, other than the traces of one door found at the eastern side of the façade. As for Figure 2's wide nave, while he specifically states there was no wide nave in the first mosque, the illustrative method suggests an explanation. The centre aisle is the same width as the miḥrāb and principal door it links, and the width of all three may have been influenced further by the asymmetry of the minbar. Width may not have been the nave's true emphasis, rather, its transverse arches, their height and rich ornamentation. Hamilton could not be exact, but his figure 30 indicates at least three flanking aisles on the east side, which may be compared with the two a side at the Church of the Nativity and the Holy Sepulchre's basilica.

In the matter of numbers, the illustration does not necessarily show the actual number of entrances, aisles, or transverse arches in this al-Aqṣā, nor may such accuracy have been especially significant to the illustrator. It was more important to show it was a free-standing basilica, with monumental front and side entrances, and an imposing centre aisle leading to a spectacular miḥrāb, and to convey its unique distinction of being the only mosque accessible by a subterranean, public walkway.

The information in the drawing accords with the general characteristics of a "Constantinian" basilica, a practical, quite utilitarian structure with longitudinal walls supporting a wooden roof, but without a dome, relying for renown on the quality of its embellishments, extravagant lighting and, perhaps, such relative novelties as more than one "triumphal" arch and the ornate confection of the miḥrāb frame. It has been suggested that the triumphal arch of the present may have been an eleventh century architectural novelty in the eastern Mediterranean. As for the paradisiacal decoration on the qibla wall, it is not impossible merely because we have not heard of it, and quite
likely, considering father and son both supported such decorative themes elsewhere in Jerusalem, Damascus and Madīnah. One may recall H. Stern's argument that the present Umayyad-like mosaics in al-Aqṣā's drum are Fātimid imitations of some Umayyad mosaics that were preserved up to the eleventh century. 147

Figure 3 depicts another mosque, 148 as symmetrically presented as the previous one, though of very different appearance. This building is raised on a single level of columns and arches evenly disposed around a central square within which is a pedestal supporting a vase with an elaborate floral arrangement (2C). The columns and spandrels are embellished like those of Figure 2, and in all but the central square there are similar, lit, globular, glass lamps. Framing the miḥrāb 149 (2A) is one level of paired columns and an ornament-topped arch from which a lamp is suspended; there is no discernible niche hood behind the lamp.

This is certainly a hypostyle mosque without any suggestion of processional nave, 150 as the columns of the arcades, here parallel to the rear wall, occur directly in front of the miḥrāb. As in Figure 2, there is a decorative register about the walls, and the representation of a paradisical garden above the register on the qiblah wall. The three flowers at the base of the miḥrāb suggest it too may have had vegetal decoration. There is no minbar.

The remains of a double leaf door (4C) in the mosque's side wall can be seen at the bottom right, in all discernible respects similar to the left door in Figure 2 and, by reason of the illustration's apparent symmetry, a like door is postulated for the left side of the building. Too much of the illustration is missing for assurance there was no centre door, however, as the one visible likely took up two ranges of columns, and if a centre door lacked the relieving arch and heading, then, conceivably, it could fit within the lower range of columns, although the lack of exclusivity in the aisle layout seems to preclude a centre door.

The similarity of its embroidery band to the others suggests the courtyard too was decorated, above the arcades perhaps, for it is reported of Ibn Jubayr in connection with the Great Mosque at
Madinah, that the south wall of the courtyard had mosaic decoration.\(^{151}\)

Because of the paradisiacal decoration, and the possibility of the \textit{mihrāb} being recessed, there is an immediate temptation is to identify this illustration with al-Walīd's reconstruction of the Great Mosque in Madinah begun 707 CE;\(^{152}\) however, this structure lacks evidence of the four corner minarets, or the Prophet's burial chamber;\(^{153}\) the ceiling rests on arches not architraves,\(^{154}\) and there is the courtyard object.

In sharp contrast to the observed detail of Figure 2's building, it seems those details have merely been transferred here in order to present a building according to its reputed features. This is a bookish construction, a type of building which the artist could put together from patterns and knowledge of other structures. It is interesting, however, that baroque features continue to be evident in this \textit{mihrāb}'s frame (2A) which resembles an arched aedicula, for the crowning ornament suggests this ensemble, like that in Figure 2, stands out from the \textit{qiblah} wall. Finials of one sort or another top buildings of every estate in the Damascus mosaics, as well as many arches in the Rabbula Gospels. Motifs like it occur frequently in the miniature arcades of a Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah tie beam (Figure 42),\(^{155}\) referred to for other reasons by von Bothmer.\(^{156}\)

Speaking of the decoration of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah, M. Rosen-Ayalon drew attention to the "vases on columns" being "invariably connected with the iconography of Paradise".\(^{157}\) Within the space constraints of Figure 3's courtyard, the pedestal might be construed as a shortened column supporting a vase which differs from those in the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah in form, not iconographic content.

Inclusion of the vase and column suggests the mosque is being used metaphorically: as a walled compound it reflects vernacular, civil architecture, an enclosure with shaded walks about a well-ordered, well-tended garden, which the vase might represent; an oasis of order within a harsh, chaotic environment; the Dār al-Islām within the Dār al-Harb. Perhaps the vase is a symbol of God's bounty, of a Paradise available equally to the community of Islām, which the mosque represents.
What link Figure 3 and the object may have with the Dome of the Rock will be returned to.

The last of the San‘ī Qur‘ān illustrations to be examined, Figure 1, is the remains of an eight-pointed star whose perimeter is defined by an embroidery band. At the star's inner angles are trees with flaring branches, the trunks of which weave alternately through the band, coming to rest on a plaited, gold circle. Inside the circle are the remains of what seems to be another octagon,158 and there are eight-rayed stars within the embroidery-band angles.159

In their principal qualities the trees are like those in Figures 2 and 3, slender of trunk, fruitful, with tapering crowns, however, their dramatically-flaring branches appear to be attached to the trunks by rings. At Damascus160 and in the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah, mature trees are flanked by younger ones; new growth springs from trunks where old branches have been cut away, and the impression is given that the star trees' branches reflect that new growth, just moved up so the trunks may weave through the band.

As for the rings, certainly they are a stylistic trait of the San‘ī illustrations, encircling every tree and plant in the paradisiacal gardens and holding together each pair of ivy leaves in the spandrels. Similar rings are a striking feature of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's mosaic and carved marble vegetation, where they appear in like positions, that is, on stems immediately below branching leaf forms, beneath floral shapes, and controlling the exuberant growth of acanthus rinceaux (Figure 43).161 They are of ancient use in the Iranian world, binding together elements of the Tree of Life, however, there were local examples available to the artists of the Jerusalem mosaics and the San‘ī illustrations, one of which can be seen in Figure 20, where rings encircle the inner cannon table columns at each change of pattern. In this, as in other details the artist has shown himself responsive to his cultural milieu, for his work reflects the cultural heritage of Greater Syria,162 available to the Umayyads at the beginning of the eighth century. It is in no way suggested all decorative details are Syrian, only that because of a long-established regional exchange of motifs and style characteristics such material was readily available.
Figure 1 has been likened to the frame about Anicia Juliana's donor portrait in the Vienna Dioscorides (Figure 44), however, the encircling trees (1A, 2B, 2C, 2D) must alert one to the fact that the star is more than a geometric framing device.

Encircling trees, or city walls and towers, shown flat is an ancient practice, an example of which comes from the tomb of Rekh-mi-re, Thebes, c.1700 BCE (Figure 45). The Egyptian illustration is meant only to show clearly that the trees surround the pool; it doesn't deny them their natural, upright position any more than does the similar illustrative method used in the c.560 CE mosaic map of Jerusalem in the church of S. George, Madaba, Jordan.

The most important representation there, the basilica and rotunda complex of the Holy Sepulchre (1A), is upside down (Figure 46). Upright, in its present space, its entrance would have appeared, incorrectly, to be near the city wall. Upright, in its true position on the lower side of the lower colonnaded street, not only would its back view have been presented to the viewer, that is, from behind the rotunda with little of the basilica showing, the complex would have masked portions of both colonnaded streets as well as part of a city gate. The conflict has been resolved by means of a very old solution; the Holy Sepulchre complex, like the gates opposite and at the left, has been shown flat. The entrance is in its proper position on the colonnaded street; the identifying façade and great length of the basilica can be seen as can the golden dome of the rotunda in its proper position at the rear of the complex.

What the tomb and the map make clear is that, in the first instance, the flat trees are not the most important feature, and in the second the flat Holy Sepulchre is, so their relevance is not in being shown flat but, like all features of the San'ā' Figures, being depicted in the way best suited to display their essential characteristics and their relationship to the illustration. Other buildings in the map have been turned to face the viewer, while the wall towers below the Holy Sepulchre have not, and these can be understood as further manifestations of relative importance.

As the foregoing suggests, the alignment and positioning of features of the trees in Figure 1 is
pertinent to the statement the artist wishes to make about them, and that is, when the trees are raised to their natural, upright position they bring the embroidery band with them, transforming the star into a star-shaped compound. The trees still surround the golden circle, but now their threading trunks are seen to be rooted on either side of a decorated wall.

That Figure 1 has been likened to Anicia Juliana's portrait frame is due to the geometry underlying both. This geometry has been examined in an attempt to obtain information on Byzantine architectural procedures from an examination of surviving octagonal structures\textsuperscript{166} and, of the several theoretical and practical working procedures considered, the ground plan for all could be shown as a circle within which rotated squares of varying size corresponded to the placement of concentric octagonal walls. From a common result of this exercise J. Wilkinson derived the name "star diagram"\textsuperscript{167} (Figure 47), lines drawn from the star points giving an octagonal shape. Himyaritic sources have been suggested for the use of star shapes,\textsuperscript{168} but that in Figure 1 derives from an established geometric source well-known for the Roman and Byzantine constructional and decorative works based upon it.

As a decorative device the star diagram is the basis for the Herodian ceiling decoration in the vestibule of the Double Gate, Jerusalem (Figure 48),\textsuperscript{169} and the floor mosaic in the Propylaea Church, Jarash, c.565 (Figure 49).\textsuperscript{170} As an architectural procedure it is a plan and proportional guide for octagonal buildings such as S. Peter's House, Capernaum, mid-fifth century; the church on Mount Gezerim, c.485, and Qubbat al-Šakhrah, Jerusalem,\textsuperscript{171} (Figure 50).\textsuperscript{172} And it is the basis for Figure 1, which, it is argued, is an imaginative, learned representation of Qubbat al-Šakhrah.

The features of this representation still most clearly discernible are an embroidery band in the form of a star, affirming the genesis of the Qubbat al-Šakhrah's shape and its identity; a golden circle for its dome, and the trees. Having in mind that content, usage or attribution might be significant determinants in a structure's depiction then, according to this drawing, the essence of the Qubbat al-Šakhrah is its decoration.
Today, that building's trees and vines and containers of vegetation are all inside, but originally there are said to have been similar mosaics on the outer walls.\textsuperscript{173} Constructing Figure 1 with the trees woven through the decorated wall not only adds credence to these reports, it presents the notion that the external decoration was as significant as the internal. As Title Page, Figure 1 must have been understood as the key to Figures 2 and 3, so the embroidery bands and vegetation of each can be seen as purposeful links. To be considered in the following chapter is why the decoration of the Figures might best be expressed as a grove of fruitful trees.

So far as is known, these Qur'ān illustrations are unique,\textsuperscript{174} for there seem to be no other early depictions quite like them. In conception, imaginative presentation, and quality of workmanship the San'ā' Figures must have been exceptional even in their own time; all the same, they are the work of an artist who participated fully in and was not distinct from contemporary artistic practices. Known solutions to problems of position and visibility have been used, and it can be recognized that the artist was knowledgeable about the variety of illustrative options available to him and amenable to using whichever best suited the task, for example, the trees of Figure 1. Furthermore, Figures 2 and 3 demonstrate a mixture of frontality, hierarchy of scale, and naturalism very like that seen in the Damascus mosaics.
Notes


4. At "Architekturbilder," p. 8, von Bothmer speculates on whether these drawings bore names.


11. Krautheimer, *Early Christian*, pp. 201-202 and figs. 152, 153. At n. 42 p. 201 Krautheimer acknowledges his fig. 152 is a modified version of Ward-Perkins' fig. 28, see also n. 12.


13. Gauckler, "Mosaïques" p. 188 ff. thought the work "very incoherent", see Lampl at p.12, n.41.


17. The sarcophagus could be a martyr's, possibly accessible from outside the church, or inaccessible below the altar, Krautheimer, *Early Christian*, p. 200.


23. Ibid., agrees that internal and external structural features are illustrated together in Palatium, which he refers to as a propylon flanked by lateral porticos, but not as the interior of a basilica.


25. A rough grid, not to scale, has been used with San'ā' Figures 1, 2 and 3 to identify more clearly what features are being discussed. The writer thanks Dr. Edward J. Keall for suggesting this procedure.

26. That is, with aisles running parallel to the qiblah wall through which cuts the nave, in an arrangement similar to that of the Umayyad Mosque at Damascus, von Bothmer, "Architekturbilder," p. 9; a hypostyle planning of space with a central nave cutting through, Grabar, Mediation, p. 157.


29. Ibid., p. 17.


34. Ibid., p. 463 on the foundations for the "triumphal arch" preceding the transept of the Constantinian basilica of St. Peter, first half of 4th century (n. 69, foundation date not recorded); Krautheimer, Early Christian, pp. 55, 59, giving the beginning date as c.319-322.


38. Krautheimer, Early Christian, figs. 149 and 239, respectively.
39. Early Churches, p. 199; for Brâd see illus. 201, and Bâtûtâ, illus. 204.


41. Identified as such by von Bothmer, "Architekturbilder", p. 6, and Grabar, Mediation, p. 160.


44. Lyttelton, Baroque, pp. 234-236, 2nd century CE ff.

45. Ibid., 80 and fig. 15.


49. Ward-Perkins, Severan, fig. 45.

50. Ibid., fig. 44b.

51. Lyttelton, Baroque, ill. 223. Note: Lyttelton's captions were reversed, 223 is the Severan basilica.

52. Ward-Perkins, Severan, fig. 30.

53. Ibid., p. 107.


55. Ibid., p. 12.


58. Klengel, Ancient Syria, p. 91, lower.

60. Klengel, *Ancient Syria*, p. 181; the 6th century CE walls were built under Justinian, p. 193.


63. Von Bothmer has commented on the desirability of a well-illuminated mosque, and the fact this one has them in every bay, "Architekturbilder," pp. 8, 6; contra Grabar, *Mediation*, p. 159 who states there are no lamps in the centre aisle.

64. Grace M. Crowfoot and D.B. Harden, "Early Byzantine and Later Glass Lamps," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* (1931) 17: 205; a number of these forms are shown on pl. XXX, 40-47.


68. Von Bothmer refers to them as ground plan and elevation, and variously as enclosing, encompassing, rearward walls, "Architekturbilder," pp. 5, 10, 11; Grabar proposes them as the ground plan and elevation of Figures 2 and 3, *Mediation*, p. 157.


71. Henry Shaw and Frederic Maddan, *Catalogue of Ancient Manuscripts in the British Museum*. Part 1 (Greek), London: Printed by Order of the Trustees, 1881; p. 21, pl. 11; *idem.*, *Illuminated Ornaments selected from Manuscripts and Early Printed Books from the sixth to the seventeenth centuries*. London: William Pickering, 1833; page second, the gospel book was bought for the British Museum in 1785, from Dr. Askew's library; in the editor's opinion it was of sixth century and, because of its quality, must have been executed for a monarch; plates I-IV. Kurt Weitzmann, *Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination*. New York: George Braziller, 1977, p. 116, suggests a late sixth early seventh century date and thinks it likely originated in Constantinople.

72. Nordenfalk, *Die Spätantiken*, vol. 1: 144-45, wherein he likens Add. 5111's fol. 11a (his taf. 3) to the Sancta Sanctorum textile reproduced in his abb. 15.


77. Lassus, *Inventaire*, fig. 215; and also at Ğerğanaz, fig. 3.

78. *Ibid.*, fig. 33.


84. Otto von Falke, *Decorative Silks*. 3rd ed. London: A. Zwemmer, 1936, in fig. 61, on a statue of Khosro II at Tāq-i Bustān, and seen also in a Coptic version in fig. 35.


106. Jean Lassus, *Sanctuaire Chrétienne*, pl.XXXXI.1, .2, of which .1 is a true arch, and .2 an arcedu lintel. This basilica, in the region between Antioch and Aleppo, is dated by Lassus as 6th century, *Sanctuaire*, p. 63, and by Butler as late 5th century, *Early Churches*, p. 72.

107. Ill. 282 shows an example of a pierced stone plate, while ill. 128 shows the window of Dehr Sītā church where the remains of an openwork grill which may have been glazed were found, Butler, *Early Churches*, pp. 243-244. Stone grills are illustrated also on pls. 13.1-4 and 14.4-5 in t. 1 of Le Cte. de Vogüe's *Syrie centrale: architecture civile et religieuse du Ier au VIIe siècle*. Paris: J. Baudry, 1865-1877.


110. Lassus, *Inventaire*, pl. XLIII.1, one of three doors from Tell Sannā; his figures 213 right, 215 bottom left, show similar doors, all of which are probably Christian, of the 5th-6th centuries. Other stone doors are illustrated on de Vogüe's *Syrie centrale*, pl. 83.


113. These entrances were to halls VI and VII respectively, for which see entrances 9 and 10 on pl. 43b.
114. Von Bothmer, "Architekturbilder," 10, who so interprets the half columns and steps behind the balustrade.

115. Grabar, Mediation, p. 158.


120. Elad, Medieval, p. 97.

121. Ben-Dov, Shadow, p. 286, thinks that, because of its proximity to Umayyad palatial complex at the foot of the southern and western walls of Temple Mount, the Double Gate did not serve the general public, with which Rosen-Ayalon, Early Islamic, p. 33 and n. 3 disagrees.


123. Ibid., p. 60.

124. Hamilton, Structural, p. 63; Warren & Conder, Survey, p. 167, point out the masonry change at 190 ft. from the Mosque's southern wall indicating where the passage originally exited inside the present mosque and the consequent cutting away of the duct to the Well of the Leaf, when the Double Gate's tunnel was extended to its present exit point 260 ft. from the southern wall.


127. De Vogüé, Le Temple, Pl. IV, top.


129. Hamilton, Structural, p. 63; von Bothmer, "Architekturbilder," p. 6, points out the ewers undoubtedly indicate ablutions; cf. Grabar, Mediation, p. 160, indicates the constructions before the building could be for ablutions, but, at p. 162, not likely before Ottoman times.


131. Le Strange, Palestine, 178-179.

132. Ibid., p. 182.

133. Hamilton, Structural, p. 64 n.1, notes also that two well-heads for Bi'r al-Waraqah may have existed in Umayyad times; Wilson, Ordinance, p.39, re conduit linking Bi'r al-Waraqah to other cisterns having been cut when the present exit of the Double Gate was made.

134. Hamilton, Structural, p. 65.

135. Ibid., p. 65.


138. Hamilton, Structural, p. 63; cf. von Bothmer, "Architekturbilder," pp. 7, 10, where these partial columns are interpreted as a podium.

139. Wilson, Ordinance, sheet 1, where the Double Gate's subterranean route lies immediately west (reader's left) of the Well of the Leaf.

140. Hamilton, Structural, p. 65.

141. Ibid., pp. 60, 61, 73.

142. Ibid., p. 61.

143. Ibid., pp. 6, 60-61.

144. Ibid., p. 60, widened subsequently when a dome was built.


156. The central vine scroll of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah tie beam mentioned in the previous note is compared to a vine on a Surah divider from Ṣan`ā′ Qur`ān 33-20.1 and another vine on the Himyaritic door post of the mosque at Sarha, Von Bothmer, "Architekturbilder," p. 14, abbs. 16, 20, 22.


160. The likeness of Figure 1’s trees to those in the Damascus mosaics, and the encircling quality has been observed by M. Jenkins, "Umayyad Ornament," p. 22.

161. K.A.C. Creswell, *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture*, revised and supplemented by James W. Allan, Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1989, fig. 19 is Figure 43 herein. For acanthus rinceaux see Creswell/Allan’s fig. 13.

162. This conclusion reached also, from examination of specific Umayyad ornamental forms observed in the fragments, Jenkins "Umayyad Ornament," p. 23. Yemen, Syria and possibly what is now Saudi Arabia have been presented as sources for the Figures, Grabar, *Mediation*, p. 156. Pre- and early-Islāmic aspects of Yemeni art have been suggested as sources in von Bothmer, "Architekturbilder," pp. 8, 9, 10.


165. Cover shot on pamphlet "Jordanie, visages et lieux de passe," published by the Jordan Tourism Board.


172. Creswell & Allan, *Short Account*, fig. 5.


Chapter Two: The Qubbat al-Šahrah

In the previous chapter it was argued that Figure 1 was a representation of the Qubbat al-Šahrah, the essence of which, according to that drawing, was its ornament, indicated by the embroidery of the star band and the trees. Further, its trees and the paradisiacal garden representations of Figures 2 and 3 derived from the image of a line of fruit of trees used in Byzantine art to denote the Earthly Paradise of Cosmas Indicopleustes' world map and Earth in Dumetios' basilica at Nikopolis. This chapter considers the reasons for the Qubbah's existence and the sources that were available to be tapped for its architecture and decorative programme.

Umayyad appropriation of a familiar image would not have been strange to contemporary non-Muslims. At its birth Christian imagery "borrowed, and kept, the Greco-Latin iconographic language as commonly practised at the beginning of our era everywhere around the Mediterranean". Christian iconography expressed itself in the verbal and visual language of its times, so the models on which Christian images were based were understandable to contemporary non-Christians, but by adding to or changing some of the details a Christian artist might transform an image common to the period into a Christian image. An example of this is Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Figure 51), adapted from the adventus, a sovereign's visit to a city of his empire (Figures 52, 53). Other categories of early Christian images evolved from "image-signs", whose particular traits, not the image, defined the subject for the informed viewer, and whose value lies in a brevity commensurate with being understandable and unequivocally decipherable, to detailed depictions of the subjects they were meant to evoke. Fish and a basket of loaves in one such image-sign are understood as "communion" (Figure 54) and, in a later depiction, fish and loaves are present at the Last Supper (Figure 55). In the process of constructing a definitive religious art some images dropped by the wayside because of the difficulty in visually encapsulating the subject; others were so closely identified with a particular event they faded from use because they lacked continuing relevance.
As to the Umayyad’s need of this image and the circumstances that may have led to its acquisition, one of the reasons advanced for the Qubbah’s construction has been that it was envisaged as a rival for the splendid buildings of other religious denominations.¹⁰

Al-Muqaddasī reported of his (al-Muqaddasī’s) uncle that al-Walīd spent money on the Great Mosque of Damascus rather than on roads and repairing fortresses in order to distract the Muslims from the beauties of such Christian churches as those at Lydda (al-Lidd) and Edessa (al-Ruhāʾ), and ʿAbd al-Malik erected a Dome for the Rock to distract Muslims from admiration of the magnificent Dome of the Resurrection.¹¹ The Dome of the Resurrection, or Anastasis Rotunda, was the round building erected over Jesus’ tomb in Jerusalem,¹² an architectural shell "... beautified with choice columns and with much ornament, decorating it with all kinds of embellishments", in an "... enormous space open to the clear sky",¹³ set apart from the basilica¹⁴ which formed part of the complex of the Holy Sepulchre.

In his reporting on the regional problem of the attraction Christian churches generally and the Dome of the Resurrection particularly had for Muslims in Greater Syria, al-Muqaddasī says ʿAbd al-Malik feared the Dome of the Resurrection would become more powerful in Muslim hearts;¹⁵ part of the fear, one may speculate, could have been that Muslims were considered incapable of producing something comparable. Perhaps the Qubbah was a test of strength.

ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb had prayed on the mount sacred to Jews and Muslims, and commenced the clearing away of its rubbish, but rejected including the Rock in his mosque’s qiblah because such a practice suggested adherence to Jewish worship practices.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the Rock came to be honoured in a spectacular way. Various reasons for its sanctity have been advanced. Along with its qubbah, it has been considered part of an Umayyad building programme to "sacralize" the Haram;¹⁷ specifically, it has been associated with the events of the Last Days, and in this connection A. Eld refers to M. Rosen-Ayalon’s examination of all the Umayyad Haram monuments for their iconographical linkages.¹⁸ In support of the Rock’s special qualities Rosen-Ayalon cites a tradition
that the origin of "Earth Water" [sic] lies beneath it, and says the roles of the world's omphalos, and Axis Mundi where only the Tree of Life would grow were appropriated to it. Also, the Rock is traditionally associated with the location of Solomon's Temple, and has been considered the place of Abraham's sacrifice.

A recent article by J. van Ess draws attention to a discounted hadîth which states that, during the Prophet's Night Journey (isrā') Gabriel went with the Prophet to the Rock and said, "Here your Lord ascended to Heaven ...". Although this tradition is known to have been accepted by a reputable early traditionalist, 'Abd Allâh b. al-Mubârak (died 797 CE), such anthropomorphism was later considered scandalous and the hadîth was rejected and called a forgery. The notion of God's footprint on the Rock was referred to as Syrian paganism, and the footprint was claimed for Abraham, "... when he made it [the Rock] a qibla for all mankind"; van Ess understands this as an Ḥijāzī attack on a hadîth of Syro-Palestinian origin. As to how 'Abd al-Malik might have reacted to such a tradition, van Ess states the Caliph may "have taken the anthropomorphism for granted or failed to see any theological difficulty in it". It is this hypothesis of God's ascension from the Rock that O. Grabar now accepts as the reason for building the Dome, combined with the tradition of the Prophet's isrā' to Jerusalem, possibly even to the Haram, that Grabar thinks may have been in place by the end of the seventh century. Perhaps belief in God's ascension from this ancietly-holy site was the reason, or part of the reason, for 'Abd al-Malik ennobling it with a qubbah. In building the Dome for the Rock from which God ascended to Heaven, Muslims could surely claim to have surpassed the Christians who had only Jesus' footprint in the Church of the Ascension.

The octagonal shape, which has been pointed to as an Islâmic quality, its "eight-ness" suggestive of the eight principal gates of Paradise, had been used throughout Europe and the Near East to the seventh century and M. Écochard draws attention to the appropriateness of the octagon for magnifying whatever object is at its centre, for instance, the column of a stylite, an emperor's tomb, or a rock. These particular octagons are, respectively, around the pillar of S. Simeon Stylites
at the heart of the cross-shaped complex of Qal‘at Sim‘an (end of the fifth century),\textsuperscript{32} the mausoleum of Diocletian at Spalato, 303,\textsuperscript{34} and the Qubbat al-Šakhrah.\textsuperscript{35}

Unlike other octagons with which it has been compared, the Qubbah fully realized its ambulatory potential; auxiliary structures do not detract from its central focus, and it is easily accessible by four, equi-distant doors. Its internal symmetry is emphasized by magnificent, but thematically repetitive ornamentation, aside from ‘Abd al-Malik’s texts, suggesting a visitor might enter and leave by any door without impairment of the experience.\textsuperscript{36} Indeed, its symmetry and prominent isolated position\textsuperscript{37} suggest it was conceived as omni-directional; complete in itself. One may conclude, therefore, that in the Rock’s housing the Caliph had availed himself of a well-established, centrally-planned building whose walls were amenable to adjustment for terrain, the shape of that being honoured,\textsuperscript{38} and offered suitable working surfaces for a contemplated decorative programme because, unlike Christian iconography which started tentatively and grew incrementally, on the evidence of the Qubbah a form of Islāmic religious art burst forth fully grown.\textsuperscript{39}

It cannot be supposed that, having felt constrained to meet the challenge of the Christian churches, ‘Abd al-Malik found it easy to initiate a programme of religiously-purposeful imagery, but, once the decision was made, it is reasonable to assume that work of surpassing quality and splendour was envisaged. Amongst the kinds of images Muslims might have admired and whose presentation they may have sought to emulate is the glittering gold and blue Transfiguration mosaic (Figure 56)\textsuperscript{40} in the apse of the basilica of S. Catherine, Mt. Sinai, c.600 CE.\textsuperscript{41} Befitting the high significance of this depiction is the dignified, large-scale, frontal presentation of Jesus in spotless white; the supranatural quality of the event is indicated by the mandorla about him; the background is luminous gold, and supporting the wondrous, almost unimaginable scene, is a text.

As for the content of the new imagery, the Qur‘ān does not recount the life of its Prophet, and even if it had figural scenes concerning the history of Islām, they could not be illustrated; the one consistent theme that might, however, is jannah, the garden of Heaven, Paradise.\textsuperscript{42}
Some years ago it was observed that the Qubbah's naturalistic trees might connote the Earth as they did at Nikopolis, but if such iconography was intended, it played only a minor role, as "such a symbolic theme is not unlikely, in view of the fact that it recurs in a more developed fashion in the decorative repertory of later Umayyad structures". The same scholar thought the trees would probably be suggestive of Paradise in a Christian setting, but not in a Muslim one because they were unaccompanied by the houris of the Qur'an's Paradise, this after having noted the Qubbah's decoration eschewed "animated figures" for religious reasons.

Another indication of the fruitful trees' customary role comes from E. Kitzinger in whose opinion archaeologists and even Bishop Dumetios' contemporaries might have interpreted the Nikopolis' panel as a paradisiacal representation had it not been for the inscription: "Here you see the famous and boundless ocean Containing in its midst the earth Bearing round about in the skilful images of art everything that breathes and creeps ...". But for the inscription, it was thought, the Bishop's contemporaries might not have readily grasped "the meaning with which familiar motifs had been invested in this instance". That the very similar line of trees on Cosmas Indicopleustes' map denotes Paradise is twice mentioned.

Attention has been drawn to the resemblance between the Earthly Paradise trees and those of Nikopolis' Earth; between Earth's trees and those of the Qubbat al-Šakrah, and between the trees of the San'ā' Figures and all those foregoing, yet none of the trees in question are quite alike; in the Qubbah's case the trees are physically separated but still have been considered as a group. The physical resemblance seems to be that each example is composed of various kinds of fruitful trees with new growth by them, or underplantings; the iconographic one, that such assemblages were frequently understood as paradisiacal.

Stylistically, Kitzinger likened Earth to the Garden Room at Prima porta (see Figure 32) in a general way, but considered its schematic arrangement of trees and birds closer to an heraldic arrangement of animals and trees on the floor of the new baptistery chapel, Mount Nebo. In fact, all
the groups of trees have much in common with the garden picture-panels of Roman painting. Figure 57 shows a Third Style garden with undergrowth and a line of fruit trees having tapered and spreading foliage. Figure 58, a Fourth Style garden, has tall reeds and date palms, and an arrangement of settled and flying birds very like that of Earth's. The schematism attributed to Earth derives from Roman garden paintings' characteristically shallow depth of field, essential two-dimensionality, and carefully delineated fruit and foliage, features noted of the paintings of the Garden Room also.

Not all fruit trees were thought to have symbolical or metaphorical meanings, of course, but they did have consistent paradisiacal characteristics, derived from Biblical and non-Biblical traditions. In Paradise no seasonal excess disrupted the peaceful existence of its inhabitants; it was a temperate place of ever-blooming flowers and ever-bearing fruit. Paradise might be Eden in which is "the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month"; or the Elysian fields at the world's end, where there is neither snow nor harsh winds, but the daily refreshment of the West Wind blowing in from the ocean. A sixth century Christian poet who wrote that the earthly Paradise from which man had been justly driven was now inhabited by angels, said it was a seasonless place whose fruits and flowers "fill the whole year''.

In Nikopolis' "familiar motif" the apple, pear and pomegranate trees draw their paradisiacal association from Homer, as does part of its inscription. Having crossed the wide seas to Phaeacia after his enforced stay on Calypso's enchanted island, pear, pomegranate and apple were three of the fruit trees Odysseus saw in Alcinous' god-given garden, fruit that "... never fails, nor runs short, winter and summer alike. It comes at all seasons of the year .....

The stories Odysseus related at the court of Alcinous were the subject of a series of paintings on his wanderings "through landscape". "Odyssey landscapes" may even have become a standard topic, for Vitruvius reports they appeared in Roman houses during the Second Style of Roman painting.

On the walls of S. Sergius, Gaza, c.536, there was a mosaic with "'pear trees, pomegranate trees and apple trees bearing splendid fruit,' blossoming in all seasons alike ...", allowing Choricius...
to observe that in this respect the King of the Phaeacians was rivalled. Kitzinger himself questioned whether the convention of combining these three trees was due to Homeric influence, and H. Maguire thought it possible that Choricius intended to show that the Homeric fruit were seen as "images of Paradise".

Choricius' descriptions have been disparaged because he was a panegyrist and trained to praise. In fact, his words timelessly evoke the paradise desired by the inhabitants of hot, dry Mediterranean lands. On the walls of S. Sergius' lateral apses there grew "... ever-burgeoning trees full of extraordinary enchantment: these are luxurious and shady vines, and the zephyr, as it sways the clumps of grapes, murmurs sweetly and peacefully among the branches ... Most elegant of all is the vase containing, I imagine, cool water", from which "the vine motif was represented as growing".

In the Qur'an, Paradise is temperate, seasonless, without want, and a way of expressing this latter, understood actually or metaphorically, is by the abundance of every kind of fruit:

Sūrah XLIII.73  
"Ye shall have therein
Abundance of fruit, from which
Ye shall have satisfaction.

Sūrah XLVII.15  
"... In it [the Garden]
There are for them all kinds of fruits.

Sūrah LXXVI.13-14  
"...They [the Righteous] will see there neither
(The sun's) excessive heat
Nor (the moon's) excessive cold.
And the shades of the (Garden)
Will come low over them,
And the bunches (of fruit),
There, will hang low
In humility.

Sūrah LXXVII.41-42  
"As to the Righteous they shall be amidst
(Cool) shades and springs
(Of water).
And (they shall have)
Fruits, - all they desire".

Images by themselves, like words, were neutral until appropriated for some special purpose;
they were an accepted way of conveying information about the state or religion and, in their acquisition of particular traits, could present or make reference to otherwise unwieldy parcels of knowledge; they implied more than they showed. Images already invested with particular meanings might be appropriated and transformed, as had imperial iconography by Christians, so a line of fruit trees with paradisiacal associations might, by adding to or changing the details, become jannah. The new imagery had to be the least offensive to Muslims, yet able to be as sumptuously-presented as any Christian religious art. Temperate fruitfulness was Qur'anic and could be interpreted without a single animate being. And there must have been recognition that the stylized vegetal motifs present in both Byzantine and Sasanid art, and the use of bejewelling to enhance the qualities of motifs of every kind, indicated a way of transforming the earthly fruit trees into their other-worldly versions in a heavenly garden.

The implications of the line of fruit trees are key to the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's decorative programme. In conventional representations of Earth or Ocean one might delight in the species that were displayed but imagined the rest, for such conventions were practical ways of dealing with insuperably large topics. If the pear, pomegranate and apple allusion was recognized, the rest of Alcinous' garden was recalled: the sweet fig, the olive, grapes, vegetable beds, the two springs, the beneficent West Wind, the garden's enclosing hedges. The fruit trees with their wealth of associations were transformed into a Qur'anic vision of Paradise. Convention and allusion were dispensed with and in their stead were presented a multitude of non-earthly trees and plants, adorned as befitted Heaven, and eternally bearing all together a superabundance of every kind of fruit. Looking beyond the line of trees a mind's eye had seen a whole paradisiacal garden, and it is this imagined reality which the Qubbah manifests. One no longer stood before an image, one entered it.

In this welcoming grove supra-natural fruiting trees ring the outer surface of the octagonal ambulatory, on whose inner surface are naturalistic trees bearing dates, almonds and olives, and amphorae, acanthus bases and cornucopias from which issue luxuriant vines bearing the most diverse
fruit. Acanthus bases, their vines heavy with fruit are on the outer surface of the circular arcade and on the inner surface, eight amphoræ exude fruitful acanthus rinceaux. In the drum, fruit-laden rinceaux issue from other amphoræ. On the soffits of the octagonal arcade there are floral shapes; rosettes; garlands and rinceaux bearing pomegranates, grapes, apples, figs, olives, pears, dates, marrows, limes;80 ivy, grape and fig leaves are spread with pomegranates, olives, cherries, cucumbers, citrus fruit, dates, corn, green figs, pears, apples, prunes and quinces,81 while other fruits are presented in baskets.82 And grapes are everywhere,83 growing from pots of all kinds, trailing from fantastical vines on almost every tie beam; on every side endless displays of fruitfulness emphasize the infinite abundance of Paradise.

The flourishing vines draw attention to their "fruit", an eclectic mixture of recognizable edibles, flowers and stylized motifs. Their models are the ubiquitous vines scrolling out of amphoræ and acanthus bases on countless church and synagogue floors about the Mediterranean that appear to bear such "fruit" as birds, beasts, men, women, flowers, fruit, harvest vignettes, hunting scenes, religious symbols and so on. This perceptive adaptation of contemporary visual imagery realizes the dominant paradisiacal quality of the seasonless association of every kind of fruit and flower. It not only brings together all kinds of "natural" fruit and foliage on the Qubbah's vines and trees, but, by adding the "non-natural" fruit of every kind of ornamental feature it imbues the paradise images with supra-natural qualities.

An earlier, purely vegetal version of the fruitful vine may be cited, from the mosaics of the Great Palace, Constantinople, dated between 450 and 550 CE, (Figure 59).84 A border in the area of the Peristyle has exuberant scrolls issuing from acanthus cornucopias bearing cherries, pears, artichokes, grapes, pomegranates, and many flowers, all with the most diverse leaves, of which the excavator says, "Almost every kind of flower and vegetable seems to have been included".85 A modest version of the Peristyle mosaic, known from an Egyptian textile attributed to the fifth century (Figure 60),86 has a border of acanthus scrolls bearing assorted fruits and flowers.
The high significance of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrāh's garden is evident from the honour done its presentation: the background is luminous gold; the trees are formal, dignified; their supra-natural qualities are indicated by jewel encrustation and their vitality by the extraordinarily diverse fruit they bear, and supporting these wondrous, almost unimaginable scenes is a text.

* A *propos the Qubbah's ornamentation, Choricius' response to the visual imagery of his churches ought not to be lightly dismissed by we who have a surfeit of images. Surely there were like reactions from those privileged to stroll about the Qubbah's shaded walks amidst its "ever-burgeoning trees full of extraordinary enchantment"; to see its luxuriant vines growing from vases undoubtedly filled with cool water, to pause beneath its leafy canopies dripping with numberless clumps of grapes.

Another appreciation of imagery's illusionistic qualities is related of the *qitf*, the great carpet "Bahār-i Kisrā", "The King’s Spring", 60 cubits by 60, taken by the Muslims at the fall of Madā'in in 637. On it were pictures of roads, rivers and houses, and its edges were "planted" with spring vegetables of silk. In winter, Sāsānid kings were said to have sat and drank on it, amidst its gold and silver blossoms and jewelled fruit, and imagined themselves in a garden. And what fantastical journeys must have been undertaken by those who could wander through the countryside and visit the cities and villages of the extraordinary map at S. George, Madaba.

Building and imagery combined suggests that the Qubbah was meant to be a personal sensory experience of the literal or metaphorical reward of the blessed in heaven. The relative sameness of images overall, their arrangement in continuous friezes between which the visitor passes, and the absence of distracting auxiliary structures, has led to the inner of the ambulatories being described as like "two hedges ... framing an unending alley" between which the visitor walks; a sensation the architectural elements do not effectually interrupt.

The ambulant's steps are directed by the texts found on the outer and inner surfaces of the octagonal ambulatory, starting from the outer southern facet, moving clockwise to the south-eastern
facet and 'Abd al-Malik's dedicatory inscription, then, turning to the inner surface, from the southern facet counter-clockwise to the end at the south-western facet.92

On the less well-lit outer surface of the ambulatory where rosettes or other ornaments divide the text,93 repeated stressing of God's singularity, Muhammad's role as God's messenger, and repetitions of the Basmala predominate. On the better-lit inner surface which lacks the text dividers,94 the text includes the Basmala, the stressing of God's singularity, the declaration that Islām is the true religion and Suwar 4:171-172 and 19:33-36, denying Jesus' divinity95 and, by extension, inveighing against the dogma of his resurrection. The excerpts from Suwar 4 and 19 speak directly to Muslims of the dangers of incorrect belief which the attraction of the Dome of the Resurrection could engender, countering such testimonies as that following Jesus' appearance after the event of the Resurrection:

Mt. 28:18-19  "And Jesus came and said to them,  
'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.  
"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ... "

'Abd al-Malik's contemporaries would have understood the Suwar periphrastically, that is, God makes you aware of Christian belief, which their Dome of the Resurrection commemorates, but you, as Muslims, believe otherwise. Sūrah 19:37-40 [not in the Qubbah] warns of the perils to befall non-Muslims on the Day of Judgement.

That the texts support al-Muqaddasī's reasons for the Qubbah's construction is not a new idea. At the time he proposed that the images of jewelled crowns in the Qubbah's mosaics were in the nature of trophies, O. Grabar stated the inscriptions could have a Muslim-only meaning, clarifying al-Muqaddasī's statement.96 N. Rabbat states that the texts against the deification of Jesus support al-Muqaddasī, and that they complement the building as a response to the attraction of Christian churches.97 It is only with the document that the San'ā' Figures represent that marrying of text and images becomes possible.98

Whatever indication of the Rock's sanctity there may have been in the missing part of Figure 1
is speculative. Perhaps, there was a footprint, or, some contemporarily-understood euphemism for it.

The qualities ascribed to the Rock may have been as varied then as now and, for their own reasons, the Umayyads may have been content to maintain it as the locus of some holy, but ambiguous continuum.

Among the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's mosaics the naturalistic trees and the thicket of reeds are understood to be the remains of this heavenly garden's model. They were retained in the adaptive process, as models seem to have been in Christian transformations, in as close a proximity to each other as the decorative programme allowed, that is, on the flanks of four adjacent piers on the inner side of the octagonal ambulatory. As naturalistic and stylistic trees are rendered with equal care, and as all the pier flanks could as easily have had pots of plants, the retention of the trees indicates that importance was attached to acknowledging their origin in the model.

Although modified by the addition of jewel encrustation, trees and reeds alike markedly resemble their Roman originals. One sees this in the interlaced branches, careful fruit placement and new growth from, or saplings beside, mature trees. In these respects the Qubbah's olive and almond trees and their flanking saplings (Figures 61, 62) are very like the trees and undergrowth in Figure 57. Saplings flanking mature trees are a commonplace in Roman garden paintings, and their appearance in the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah speaks to this natural phenomenon, not to a manifestation of Christian symbolism; only in isolation, out of the model's context, might the jewelled trees with flanking saplings be considered euphemisms for the Christian cross. It is of interest that a shorter version of the thicket of reeds (Figure 63) exists on the triumphal arch above the Transfiguration mosaic at S. Catherine's (Figure 64), where it is identified as the Burning Bush before which Moses is seen removing his sandals. The ensemble of apse and triumphal arch at S. Catherine's is considered the work of one team of mosaicists, dated on epigraphic grounds c. 600 CE.

External ornament was essential to the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's realization. Christians must have been aware of their churches' attractions for Muslims and they needed to know the challenge of their
religious art had been met. As they were unable to enter the building, what Christians saw of it from the outside had to be more than "decoration"; therefore, some external intimation of the interior's purposeful imagery was a requisite. The trees woven through Figure 1's perimeter wall attest the equal significance of internal and external imagery and substantiate reports of their similar appearance. Having in mind Choricius' and Paul the Silentiary's metaphorical descriptions of the Gazan churches and Hagia Sophia respectively, it is possible the Qubbat al-Šakrah's glittering dome and external ornament were meant to be interpreted as the likeness of a heavenly pavilion rising out of a paradisical garden. As such an illusion might be best served in the distant view, the location of the Rock at the focal centre of the Haram was a fortuitous circumstance. The writer cannot agree with O. Grabar's conclusion that the Qubbah's external ornament was a "colourful decoration", "exclusively for visual effect". In this planned response to the Christian challenge, imagery and building shape would have to have been designed together because of what seems to be their complementary roles.

On the subject of ornamentation, M. Gautier-van Berchem has provided a wealth of detail in her painstaking research into the Qubbah's mosaics; something may be added, however, on regional examples of elements in its visual vocabulary, and on the relationship between the Qubbah's imagery and the wider world of Byzantine art.

Notable features of some Qubbah soffits (Figure 65), are large, heart-shaped leaves bearing fruit and vegetables. A heart-shaped leaf bearing fruit found somewhere in Madaba is illustrated by M. Gautier-van Berchem, and other comparanda now known of suggest the Umayyads made use of an established, widespread symbol of plenty. Sites at which heart-shaped leaves bearing fruit, vegetables and even a fish and other leaves have been found, include: the chapel of Khirbat al-Kursi, Jordan, second half of the sixth century; a baptistery at Kafr Kama, about 5 km. north east of Mount Tabor, second quarter of the sixth century and a church at Kursi-Gergesa, on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee, late fifth to mid-sixth century. In the "House of the Worcester Hunt" at Daphne, circa sixth century, the leaves cover the pavement in the "Mosaic of the Leaf" room, in the centre of
which is a bust of Ge, Earth, holding a scarf filled with produce.  

At the Church of the Lions, Umm al-Rasās, Jordan, dated either 574 or 589 CE, (Figure 66) the pavement before the apse has heart-shaped leaves bearing fruit; birds with fluttering Sasanid neck ribbons, and two pieces of fruit with their cutting knives - one curved, one straight - alongside. This latter calls to mind the strangely-shaped fruit and straight knife in the bath mosaic at Umayyad Khirbat al-Mafjar. As well, between the rondels in the north and south borders of this pavement, there are small, paired ivy leaves flanking square bases. This same presentation of small ivy leaves is found in the border of a silk, possibly Syrian, seventh-eighth century (Figure 67); both examples are reminiscent of the paired ivy leaves in the spandrels of Figures 2 and 3.

The rings about the vegetation of the San'ā' Figures, alerted us to the significance of this feature in the Qubbah where similar rings control its exuberant vines. They can be seen about acanthus rinceaux in the borders of the Hall of the Seasons, Madaba, Jordan, sixth century, (Figure 68); controlling vines on the synagogue floors at Ma'on (Nirim) c.538 CE (Figure 69) and Shellal, 561-62 CE, both near Gaza; in the Great Palace border (see Figure 59) about the inner columns of a Rabbula canon table (see Figure 20), and about the vines on the Justinianic pavement of the Sabratha basilica, post 533 CE (Figure 70).

A prominent feature of the Qubbah's images is the bejewelling of containers. This has been likened to "crowns, bracelets, necklaces, and breastplates", referred to in the manner of votive objects dedicated to a sanctuary. Some motifs do resemble crowns and diadems, perhaps copied from such features on Byzantine mosaics, or from Sasanid and Byzantine spoils of war, but to distinguish this bejewelling from that elsewhere in the Qubbah is to give it an independent character it does not possess. Like the supra-natural trees and fruit and the fantastical containers of this imagined realm, jewel encrustation is an attempt to express the inexpressible, to heighten the out-of-this-world qualities of the equally non-real vegetation, just as Christians sought to express heavenly attributes with nimbi, manderlas, and rays of light. The crowns and necklaces and so on were familiar
models, the adornments of princes, and here, the adornments of heaven.

Local examples of bejewelling are two jewel-collared vases known from Jordanian pavements: one at the Church of the Lions, Umm al-Rasās, (Figure 71), and the other at the north church, Esbus (Hesban), c. sixth century (Figure 72). On the Sabratha pavement (see Figure 70) three of the rings are actually jewelled coronets which, it has been noted, may be the only other extant examples of such a motif outside of the Qubbah.

Bejewelling in the form of pearl bands featured on the very stylized vegetation of a page from Ms. Add. 5111 (see Figure 22) is of particular interest, as a possible foretaste of the Qubbah's jewel-encrusted vegetation. Pearl bands are found on the following Jordanian pavements: around vines or acanthus rinceaux at the Church of the Apostles, Madaba, 578 CE, and the Church of Bishop Sergius, Umm al-Rasās, 587-588 CE; about birds' necks at the new baptistery chapel, Mount Nebo, 597 CE, and about birds' necks and acanthus rinceaux at the Church of the Lions.

On a Byzantine silk found in the coffin of S. Cuthbert, died 687 CE, (Figure 73), the "Nature Goddess" rises from the sea holding a scarf filled with pomegranates, pears and possibly apples. Jewels depend from her collar, hair and belt, and there are pearl bands about the necks and wings of the flanking ducks. In her hands she carries vertically-sectioned objects, in style very like the Qubbah's formal trees. A late sixth early seventh century date is postulated for the silk. Features very like the carried objects are found on a silk with the monogram of the Emperor Heraclius (610-641) (Figure 74), while a stylized vegetal motif again reminiscent of the Qubbah's supra-natural trees alternates with a natural leaf about the rim of a silver paten from Constantinople, c. 570 (Figure 75).

The striking placement of vases directly above capitals on the inner face of the octagon is a feature of Add. 5111's folio 11a (see Figure 22), and another example from a floor mosaic is cited by H. Stern (Figure 76). Several examples of vases actually on capitals are known from Ma'īn, Jordan, and one containing a tree is shown in Figure 77.
In the matter of texts, those beneath the Transfiguration and on the silver patten that contribute to the imposing effect of those artefacts state only that the former was executed through the efforts of Longinus and his second-in-command Theodore, and that Bishop Eutychianus provided the latter. The text on the frieze of the architrave in the church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus, Constantinople, (between 527 and 536), is the dedicatory inscription of Justinian and Theodora. Conversely, the interpretive inscription at Nikopolis, described as exceptional in floor mosaics, seems to have more in common with the monumental inscriptions of two buildings prior to the Qubbah.

The first, in support of a building's attribution, is in the Lateran or Sistine Baptistery, Rome, c.432-440 CE, on the ambulatory side of the architrave on the octagonal canopy over the font (Figures 78.a, 78.b). In Lateran circles after 435 this font was regarded as the Fountain of Life, and the eight verse inscription, described by P. Underwood as "overwhelmingly concerned with the doctrine that baptism is a rebirth" supports that idea. To paraphrase roughly, the outpourings of the virginal womb of Mother church, from which "her children" are born, and the blood from the wounded Jesus, metaphorically contribute to the notion that "This is the fountain of life", in whose cleansing waters sinners may bathe and be reborn. This building was referred to by K.A.C. Creswell on account of its octagonal shape, not its inscription, and by M. Rosen-Ayalon for its shape and inscription as a prototype of the Qubbah.

The second is in the church of S. Polyeuktos, Constantinople, 524-27 CE, erected by the Byzantine princess Anicia Juliana in honour of that military saint, where a poem in praise of the princess, her lineage and the church, was carved in the nave's entablature and outside the narthex. By her church, the poem claims, Anicia Juliana surpassed the wisdom of Solomon, whose Temple's size and decorative features she sought to evoke. In raised letters 11cm high, on an entablature which followed a succession of niches, arches and corner blocks around the central nave, the lines were surmounted by a twisting, very naturalistic grapevine (Figure 79).

Prior to the dedication of Hagia Sophia in 537, S. Polyeuktos was reputed to have been the
most sumptuous church in Constantinople\textsuperscript{157} and shares with Add. 5111 superior workmanship, notable Sāsānīd influence, and a striking juxtaposition of naturalistic and stylistic features. The excavator commented on the range of sculpture found, from extraordinarily realistic to very stylized, and the frequent juxtaposition of these extremes on the same block,\textsuperscript{158} and while the naturalistic material is attributed to Hellenistic and Roman traditions, the stylistic is described as clearly Sāsānīd\textsuperscript{159} whose origins are largely attributed to textiles taken as booty by the Byzantines.\textsuperscript{160} Examples of the ornament are the vase on a pier face in Figure 80,\textsuperscript{161} a vegetal panel from the area of the apse (Figure 81),\textsuperscript{162} and a screen motif (Figure 82).\textsuperscript{163} M. Harrison has drawn attention to the parallels between this stylized vegetation and that in the Qubbah\textsuperscript{164} and, considering the extent to which other aspects of sixth century Byzantine art appear to have influenced the Umayyads, the possibility cannot be ignored that so notable a conjunction of text and ornament might well have been known to the Qubbah's designers.

The relationship between the paradisiacal imagery of the San`ā' Figures and the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrrah can be established, and how the imagery's model was adapted for that building can be demonstrated. What cannot be indicated is the way in which the model was actually presented on the qiblah walls in Figures 2 and 3; thus, the lines of fruitful trees in those two Figures are probably best understood as image-signs, defining the subject, not the image, for the informed viewer.

As to whether the model of the paradisiacal grove was used at the Great Mosque at Damascus, the writer believes so. Very briefly, there, the viewer stands beyond the encircling waters and sees through a grove of immense trees a fertile land of idyllic rural scenes and bejewelled palaces. The latter, in place of the bejewelled vegetation, are also formal, two-dimensional, frontally-presented; that these mosaics seem to be without Persian influence\textsuperscript{165} signifies no more than that Sāsānīd-derived art could supply appropriate models for the jewelled vegetation at Jerusalem, while Roman-derived art could supply the appropriate models for the architecture here. The resemblance between the trees of Figure 1 and those of the Great Mosque has been noted,\textsuperscript{166} those identified in the foreground of the
Barada panel are chiefly fruit trees - olive, apricot, walnut, fig, plum, pear or apple - and poplars and cypress.\textsuperscript{167} In layout only, the arrangement of the Barada panel suggests the paradisiacal grove was combined with a model like the riverine frieze at S. John the Baptist, Jarash, 531, (Figure 83)\textsuperscript{168} within whose border "people move toward walled cities and shrines" along a tree-studded river bank, while the river itself is filled with aquatic life and plants.\textsuperscript{169} Titled cities were included in the frieze, of which the one remaining is Alexandria,\textsuperscript{170} but the trees present are neither monumental nor dominant, and are not included in a later riverine frieze about the nave of the church of S. Stephen, Umm al-Rašās, CE756.\textsuperscript{171}

From reports of the innumerable towns "identified" in the Damascus mosaics,\textsuperscript{172} it would seem the courtyard frieze can be associated, in part, with the taste for cosmographic and geographic representations on pavements in the Eastern Mediterranean at its most popular in the sixth century.\textsuperscript{173} Here too convention and allusion seem to have been set aside in favour of the most complete rendering of the view beyond the trees.

'Abd al-Malik's text, the paradisiacal imagery and the San‘ā' Figures support the reasons al-Muqaddasi gives for the construction of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah. By his defence of 'Abd al-Malik and al-Walīd, it could be argued from the silence on the matter that al-Muqaddasi's uncle, and prior generations, understood the reasons for the Qubbah's construction. O. Grabar comments on the terseness of the earliest texts about the Qubbah, as though the events described "were either commonly known or of little importance."\textsuperscript{174} The silence and terseness give substance to J. van Ess' comments that the Rock may have been honoured in accordance with the Syro-Palestinian hadīth. One may speculate that al-Walīd felt secure enough of public opinion to go ahead with the installation of paradisiacal imagery in the Great Mosques of Madīnah and Damascus.

The Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah was an extraordinary response to a particular regional problem; couched in the architectural and artistic vocabularies of the times, it expresses a Muslim solution to a Muslim problem. Some evidence of its influence will be examined in the chapters following.
Notes


8. *Ibid.*, p. 112 ff. on unsuccessful attempts to achieve a "satisfactory iconography of the dogmas of the Trinity".


19. Rosen-Ayalon, Early Islamic, p. 53

20. Ibid., p. 71.


25. Ibid., p. 92.

26. Ibid., p. 93; the transmission chain referring to this rebuttal is given in n. 29.

27. Ibid., p. 98.

28. Grabar, Shape, pp. 113-114.


30. Gil, Palestine, p. 95.


32. Écochard, Filiation, p. 39.

33. Ibid., pp. 13-17.

34. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

35. Ibid., pp. 17-18, 21.


37. Ibid., pp. 104-105, on its visibility from different parts of Jerusalem.

38. Écochard, Filiation, p. 39.


44. Ettinghausen, *Arab*, p. 22.


46. Ernst Kitzinger, "Studies on Late Antique and Early Byzantine Floor Mosaics: I, Mosaics at Nikopolis," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* No. 6 (1951), pp. 100-102 and n. 79.


54. Ling, *Roman*, pl.XIIIA, "Garden paintings with Egyptianising statues and pictures, Pompeii I 9, 5 (House of the Orchard), bedroom 8, east wall, c. A.D. 40-50".

55. *Ibid.*, fig. 161, "Garden with shrine of Egyptian deities, Pompeii VI 2, 14 (House of the Amazons), garden (east wall). third quarter of 1st century A.D.".


61. The poet is Avitus, Maguire, *Earth*, pp. 23, 25, nn. 34, 53


64. Some of these still exist, and Ling's figs. 108-111 show some of the sections; they are dated c.50-40 BCE, from the Esquiline, Rome. Ling, *Roman*, p. 108.


68. Kitzinger, "Studies: I," n. 54. He notes also that in the pavement before the font at the baptistery on Mount Nebo, S. J. Saller identified three of the five trees as pear, pomegranate and apple, pp. 65-66, nn. 52-53.


72. Choricius, *Laudatio Marciani I*, 32 in Mango *Art*, p. 62, and n.38 from which Mango says "the vine motif was represented as growing."

73. Editorial note 4671 by A. Yusuf Ali, translator of and commentator on *The Holy Qur'an*, that "'fruit' and 'eating' are metaphorical".

74. All quotations are from A. Yusuf Ali's translation of *The Holy Qur'an*.


82. *Ibid.*, p. 274 and figs. 270-271, and a third basket which could not be photographed.


85.Rice, Great Palace, 2nd report, pp. 126-127 and fig. 48a, referring to a section of border scrollwork found below 'Torun Sokak', in the SE to NE area of the Peristyle (see plan on p. 3); Gerald Brett, W. J. Macaulay, Robert B. K. Stevenson, The Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors. Being a first report on the excavations carried out in Istanbul on behalf of the Walker Trust (The University of St. Andrews), 1935-38. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1947, fig. 40b.

86.Volbach, Early Decorative, cat. 17.

87.Grabar, Shape, p. 88, full of "life-creating force", the "other' world of the trees is shown as a living world"; these are "non-terrestrial trees" about a shrine or sanctuary.


89.Piccirillo, Mosaics, fold-out figure between pp. 80 and 81.

90.Grabar, Shape, p. 75.

91.Ibid., p. 76.


97.Rabbat, "Revisited," p. 70 and n. 61.
98. The writer is aware of the enormous body of scholarship on the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrāh not even touched on in this chapter. It has not been disregarded, instead, attention has been drawn to the evidence the Qur'ān Figures provide for a re-assessment of the building's imagery.


100. Gautier-van Berchem, "Mosaics," figs. 211 and 212.


115. Piccirillo, *Mosaics*, fig. 338, p. 236, the church was completed in the "month of Desius of the seventh indiction [A.D. 574 or 589]."


119. M. Avi-Yonah, "The Mosaic Pavement." In The Ancient Synagogue of Ma'on (Nirim). Reprinted from Bulletin III of Louis M. Rabinowitz Fund for the Exploration of Ancient Synagogues, 1960; p. 34, Ma'on is near Gaza, a dating of c. 538 is suggested, and it is likely to be from the same school as the Shellal mosaic.

120. A. D. Trendall, The Shellal Mosaic and Other Classical Antiquities in the Australian War Memorial Canberra. 4th edition. Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1973; p. Shellal is near Gaza and dated to 561-62, and p. 24, likely to be from the same school as the Ma'on mosaic.

121. Maguire, Earth, p. 61 and fig. 71, mosaic from the nave of Justinian's basilica built at Sabratha after its recapture from the Vandals in 533.


123. Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome," p. 47 ff.; in Shape, p. 73 n. 72 he advises this view has been criticized by him and others in recent years.

124. The writer disagrees also with the dominant thematic role M. Rosen-Ayalon assigns to precious stones and jewellery, Early Islamic, pp. 49, 52 ff.

125. Piccirillo, Mosaics, fig. 374.

126. Ibid., fig. 424, pp. 250, 17.

127. Maguire, Earth, p. 61.

128. Piccirillo, Mosaics, p. 106, figs. 80-86 inc., 93.

129. Ibid., p. 234, figs. 367, 368, 370, 371.

130. Ibid., p. 150, fig. 196.

131. Ibid., figs. 338, 378.


134. Ibid., p. 513.


137. Particularly noted by Grabar, Shape, p. 90, and rather ambiguously by M. Rosen-Ayalon, Early Islamic, p. 46, where it is not entirely clear whether it is vases filled with foliage, or vases filled with foliage and set above columns, that are "invariably connected with the iconography of Paradise".


142. Martin Harrison, A Temple for Byzantium, The Discovery and Excavation of Anicia Juliana's Palace-Church in Istanbul, foreword by Steven Runciman, Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1989, p. 24, fig. 17. SS. Sergius and Bacchus is the present-day Küçük Aya Sofya Camii, see Mango, Byzantine Architecture, p. 59.


144. Kitzinger, "Studies: I," p. 101, as something other than a dedicatory or laudatory label.


147. Ibid., p. 54.

148. Ibid., pp. 54-55; the complete Latin text and English translation are given on p. 55.

149. Creswell, EMA, vol. 1, part 1, p. 112 and fig. 48.


152. Harrison, Temple, p. 33 and n. 9. The poem is preserved in the Palatine Anthology, Greek Anthology I, 10, "a collection of ancient verses and epigrams which was compiled in about the year 1000".

153. Harrison, Excavations, p. 5, of which lines 1-41 were carved in the nave's entablature, and lines 42-76 outside the narthex, (the marginal scholia in the Palatinus 23 edition of the Anthology indicates the position of the lines inside and outside the church); pp. 117-120, confirm the information given in the scholia, and deal with the interior lines recovered in excavation, all or part of lines 9, 15/16, 25, 27, 30, 31, 32.

154. Harrison, Excavations, p. 410; Temple, pp. 137-139: in the vision of Ezekial the Temple is said to have been 100 cubits long by 100 cubits wide when the platform on which it stood was included. S. Polyeuktos' size had been problematical to the excavators but the conclusion reached was that it measures 100 by 100 long, or royal, cubits, the same unit used for Solomon's Temple. Moreover, decorative features of the Temple such as "palm-trees, capitals like lilies, capitals festooned with network, pomegranates, and open flowers" are all part of S. Polyeuktos' decorative repertoire.

155. Harrison, Temple, p. 81.
156. Ibid., pp. 34, 81, 91, fig. 88.
157. Ibid., p. 40.
158. Harrison, Excavations, p. 415; Temple, p. 119.
160. Ibid., p. 122.
161. Harrison, Excavations, fig. 155, p. 133; Harrison, Temple, figs. 118, 122, p. 100: two piers with this design stand in Venice's Piazzetta, where they are called pilastri acritani because they are said to have come from Acre. From similar remains found during excavations in Istanbul they have been proved to have come from the ruins of S. Polyeuktos, likely taken during the fourth Crusade, c.1204.
162. Harrison, Temple, fig. 134.
163. Harrison, Temple, fig. 164.
166. In chapter one, and by M. Jenkins, "Umayyad Ornament," p. 22.
171. There are boats, fishermen, fish, shells, etc. in that frieze which is surrounded by another of named cities including Lydda, Gaza, Jerusalem, Madaba; there is a line of fruit trees in the panel before the apse steps, Piccirillo, Mosaics, p. 238 and figs. 345, 380, 383. S. Stephen's nave seems to be accomplishing in a double frieze what the S. John the Baptist and, possibly, the Great Mosque, sought to do in one.
172. Ettinghausen, Arab, p. 28.
173. Kitzinger, "Renaissance," 218 ff., and referred to obliquely and without notes by Ettinghausen, Arab, p. 28.
174. Grabar, Shape, p. 111.
Chapter Three: The Hypostyle Mosque

It has been argued that the San'ā' illustrations not only draw attention to previously unknown paradisiacal imagery in the earliest Umayyad al-Aqsā, and another mosque, but link its occurrence to the deliberate introduction of an Islamic iconography in the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah.

The imaginative and highly-accomplished drawings that memorialize the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah, al-Aqsā and the hypostyle mosque indicate an awareness of Umayyad achievement, for they record Muslim ability to work with the cultural and artistic inheritance they had by conquest, and to create things Islamic therefrom. Of particular relevance to this chapter is the hypostyle mosque in Figure 3. Extending this beyond the San'ā' Figure attests that the Qubbah's imagery was part of a larger iconographical programme, of whose textual evidences we seem to know nothing, but to whose visual evidences we may point. That this is the case is suggested by the fact that, while the illustration of the hypostyle mosque in Figure 3 is, as far as we know, stylistically unique, it is not iconographically so, and this proposition will now be considered.

Discovery of the San'ā' illustrations renewed some interest in the architectural representations in another early Qur'ān, found in the Mosque of 'Amr b. al-ʿĀs, Cairo, ten Surah dividers of which were published in twelve plates by B. Moritz. This anonymous, undated manuscript, formerly in the Khedivial Library now the Dār al-Kutub, Cairo, and published without accession number or supporting notes, is identified by A. Grohmann as Mašāhif [sic] 139, and by E. Whelan as #18953. It has been known of since the early nineteenth century when 38 of its folios were acquired for what is now the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, identified as ms. Arabe 324c; and 12 others for the Herzogliche Bibliothek in Gotha, Germany, identified as Cod. Ar. 36 by A. Grohmann and as ms. 462 by E. Whelan. In addition to the Moritz' plates, one folio from ms. Arabe 324c has been published by E. Tisserant; one folio from the Herzogliche Bibliothek group identified as ms. 462 was published by J. H. Moeller, and one from the Herzogliche Bibliothek group identified as Cod. Ar. 36, by Sarre and

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Martin, after it had been exhibited at Munich in 1910. The writer doesn't know if Moeller and Sarre and Martin published the same, or different, folios.

According to his caption on the plates, Moritz dated the Qur'an I-II century AH, and later as c.100 AH; c.725 CE was suggested by Grohmann, with which M. Jenkins agrees.

From illustrations and written descriptions it is known that this Qur'an's Surah dividers go from margin-to-margin and are, at times, narrower to the right, giving a stepped appearance to the bands which are formed of numerous geometric and braided patterns. Both band termini have marginal ornaments, which may include architectural elements, and sometimes, above the band to the left of the Surah ending, there are arcades. The Surahs are not titled, but names have been inserted in a recent hand, as have part of the first and last lines of each sheet, (perhaps by librarians?).

A striking aspect of the divider ensembles is the stylistic difference between the marginal devices and the arcades; the former having a sketchy, impressionistic appearance, the latter, composed of registers of tiny squares, with the contrast more remarkable where both styles appear on the same divider. In connection with these differences, it should be pointed out that E. Whelan is of the opinion that only Moritz' plates 1-5 qualify as Umayyad; this seems to be a misunderstanding of Moritz' comment that the Persian style had entered Umayyad sacred art and the Sasanid palmette could be found alongside the Byzantine-Coptic ornaments on plates 2-5. Perhaps due in part to the European acquisitions mentioned above, 246 of the Cairo Qur'an's 586 folios said to exist in 1893 had been replaced in 1830, and this, in conjunction with the "markedly different character" of their ornaments, has lead Whelan to conclude that Moritz' plates 6-12 are some of the replacements, however, as Moritz was a former director and organizer of the Khedivial Library, it seems unlikely that he would have published any of the 1830 replacement folios as part of a first-second century AH manuscript. Moreover, the marked stylistic difference between elements of the illuminations is a purposeful characteristic, and this apart from the likelihood that different illuminators may have contributed to the drawings. Some details of the arcades and marginal ornaments will be noted...
generally, then more specifically.

Moritz' plate 1, and the detail in plate 2 (Figure 84),\textsuperscript{21} shows the divider between Surahs 37 and 38 has a line of horseshoe arches with hanging lamps and stepped merlons along the roof edge, while three stylized motifs are spaced evenly along the arcade; the marginal ornaments have all but disappeared from the band ends. The divider between Surahs 46 and 47,\textsuperscript{22} reproduced on plates 4 (Figure 85) and 5\textsuperscript{23} (Figure 86) shows both marginal ornaments, and a more elaborate arcaded structure ornamented with three stylized motifs similar to those on plates 1 and 2. Figures 85 and 86 illustrate the most complete divider on the Moritz' plates. A short arched segment without columns or merlons appears on plate 7 (Figure 87), between Surahs 56 and 57, and an arcade with stepped merlons on plate 11 (Figure 88), between Surahs 66 and 67. On plate 6\textsuperscript{24} (Figure 89) there is a double row of arches in the central field of the divider between Surahs 48 and 49.

In ms. Arabe 324c, the divider on folio 32r has, at the end of Surah 69, "... des arcs surmontés d'une bande de carrés rouges et blancs que soment des triangles verts - certains d'entre eux supportent une palme". As this arrangement is compared with Moritz' plates 2, 5 and 11,\textsuperscript{25} one may understand the arcade has the stepped pyramids of Figures 84 and 88, and the arcade ornaments of Figures 84 and 86. On f. 39r (Figure 90),\textsuperscript{26} the divider shows the narrower band to the right, both marginal ornaments, and has, at the end of Surah 75, a line of horseshoe arches with triangles above the arches and stepped pyramids above the columns.\textsuperscript{27} The arches surmounted by stepped pyramids on f. 44r are compared with those on Moritz' plates 1-2 (Figure 84).\textsuperscript{28}

As for the marginal devices, their flora appears to have been based on the style of the courtyard bouquet in the San`ā' Qur'ān's hypostyle mosque, and could generally be described as bouquets also. The Cairene version is composed of similar impressionistic flowers and attenuated ivy leaves, along with a sort of simplified palmette and lance-shaped forms with the impressionistic flowers at their apices.

On Moritz' plate 3 (Figure 91) an isolated column bearing such a bouquet is flanked by
attenuated leaf shapes and floral semi-circles, and a similar columnar composition appears on Moritz' plate 9 (Figure 92). At the inner margin of f. 42v of ms. Arabe 324c is a "palmette composite", described further as two lance-shaped palmettes supporting a semi-circle enclosing an isolated column.29

Marginal ornaments on ff. 23r,30 44r,31 and 46v32 of ms. Arabe 324c are composed of "trois palmes lancéolées", and that of 23r is compared with the motif of Moritz' plate 7 (Figure 87).

Figure 86's marginal ornament shows half palmettes (?) supporting a shell-like arch over a bouquet. On Moritz' plate 1033 (Figure 93) a bouquet like that in Figure 86 is placed beneath an arch supported by two columns. The inner marginal ornament of f. 39r of ms. Arabe 324c, (see Figure 90),34 a vegetal motif within an arch carried by two columns,35 has been compared with that in Figure 93, as has the outer marginal ornament of f. 43r, which has two arches carried by three columns from which vegetal motifs go out.36 Figure 85's ornament has two rows of linked circles arcing about a rosette above half palmettes, as well as some of the horizontal projections seen in the arcade of Figure 86.

In addition to the ms. Arabe 324c folios mentioned above, ff. 30r, 32r, 34v, 36v, 38r, 44r, and 46v are reported to have a "palmette composite" at the divider's two extremities.37 This is a catch-all phrase, acknowledging the presence of a marginal ornament, but, without an illustration or a supplementary explanation, there is no clue to the ornament's actual appearance. For example, as can be seen from f. 39r (Figure 90), "Aux deux extrémités, une palmette composite; dans la marge extérieure, c'est un motif végétal disposé dans un arc de cercle, tandis qu'à l'intérieur, ...", (see notes 26 and 34, above) the phrase covers a number of forms.

The Herzogliche Bibliothek folio exhibited at Munich in 1910 is shown in Figure 94; it divides Surahs 44 and 45, and the latter's title, al-Jāthaliya, appears on the plate, inserted in a cursive script. The right marginal ornament has a spiked rosette beneath an arch on two columns with floral elements radiating from the arch, as can be seen in Figure 93 also. At the left margin, lance-shaped
palmettes support a semi-circle over a bouquet similar to that in Figure 86.

According to the plates and descriptions, above, a fairly limited repertoire of marginal and arcade motifs was distributed among the Surah dividers: arcades, and bouquets with, or without, isolated columns, and arched forms. Of these, the arcaded structure in Figure 86 has been interpreted as a hypostyle mosque appearing to have receding pitched roofs; with a centre axis emphasized by the central floral composition, and an entrance apparently separated from the building; the pedestal and column of the central motif is not mentioned, nor have the horizontal projections on the structure's left side been accounted for.

Figure 86 is understood as a reproduction of the hypostyle mosque in the San'ā' Qurʿān (Figure 3), shown in longitudinal section. Two straight posts delineate a central courtyard rather than an axial aisle, and in the courtyard, on a column raised on a substantial base, is an elaborate motif, the top section of which is repeated at the mosque's extremities. Neither the curtained entrance nor the horizontal projections which define the extremities are anomalous to the structure; rather, they reflect an adaptation to the divider's limited space of the handling of longitudinal section as seen in the layout of Ecclesia Mater (Figure 4). The central entrance there is placed at the extreme right, while in lieu of Ecclesia Mater's apse, the corresponding wall of the mosque is marked with a stylized motif and a number of horizontal projections. Due to the limited detail one cannot say exactly where the artist of the Cairo Qurʿān meant the curtained entrance to be, but, a propos the speculation there was no central door in Figure 2, it can be argued that in this drawing a side entrance has been placed at the extreme right.

That there are curtains here instead of ornate doors seems to express ordinary practice; for example, curtains that have been gathered up and knotted are illustrated in Ecclesia mater, and at the side entrances to a basilica depicted in a floor mosaic at el-Bāra, Syria dated mid-sixth century (Figure 95). It is reported also that curtains were placed at the four gates of the Umayyad Mosque at Madīnah in 138 AH/775-76 CE. As for the frieze of triangles above the arches, this is but one
version of the pyramidally-shaped merlons that appear over arcades in the Cairo Qur‘ān, and which are interpreted as artistic variations of a contemporary architectural feature. Stepped, or, one may say, pyramidally-shaped, merlons are commonly found on buildings in the Umayyad period. They are to be seen on the façade of Qasr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī;41 and were recovered from the Reception Hall of the Umayyad Palace at the Citadel at ‘Ammān.42

The forms rising out of the arcades in Figure 84 (on Moritz’ plates 1-2) and, by extension, Figure 86,43 have been described as "winged palm-leaves",44 and "pomegranate bushes".45 They do have elements suggesting both wings and pomegranates, and there are numerous Sāsānid examples of winged pomegranates (Figure 96)46 occurring as repetitive motifs in stucco wall decorations, but in bestowing the above labels neither writer has addressed the reason why such a motif appears as the principal ornament of a mosque, and of a column in a mosque’s courtyard, or its uncommon embellishments. A winged pomegranate does become more understandable, however, if considered as a member of a class of Sāsānid motifs, like that found on a capital at Tāq-i Bustān (Figure 97),47 which provided so much inspiration for the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah’s supra-natural trees. And it is suggested that, in an attempt to capture the exotic appearance of the Qubbah’s paradisiacal imagery, an artist less able than the mosaicists at Jerusalem has used the more easily-drawn winged pomegranate as the basis for the Cairene arcade motifs, which are analyzed as follows.

At the centre of many of the Qubbah’s supra-natural trees and vines is an element like a vertically-sectioned bulb (Figure 98),48 which constricts at the top to a point or tuft, and from which, according to available space and the artist’s fancy, the varying widths of the outer layers spread or curl about (Figure 99)49, with minor stems supporting fruit, flowers and other adornments (Figure 100).50 In the Cairo Qur‘ān the "pomegranate” represents the vertically-sectioned core and the "wings" its outer layers, while the semi-circular stems with the nobby terminations that frame the core element are an attempt to copy the upraised grape bunches or other small motifs that similarly frame the core on a number of the Qubbah’s motifs. The small flowers between the "wings", the horizontal projections,
and the pendant circles of the column represent the diverse fruit, flowers and other motifs.¹

By placing a Qubbat al-Šakhrah motif on the column, instead of the Sanʿāʾ Qurʾān's Byzantine-style vase and floral arrangement, the artist of the Cairo Qurʾān has understood clearly that it was the Qubbah's paradisiacal imagery to which the Sanʿāʾ Qurʾān's artist referred; in fact, the artist of the Cairo Qurʾān has gone so far as to acknowledge their mosaic origins by styling the arcade motifs in registers of tiny squares. Having a recognizably paradisiacal motif at the arcade's left and continuing the motif's elements down the side indicates the farther wall, as well as showing that a representation of Paradise had been attributed to that wall in Figure 3. The motif above the entrance can be understood as emphasizing the paradisiacal imagery as much as for reasons of symmetry.

In Figure 84 the arcades have neither entrance, nor central courtyard and column, but their general similarity to those in Figure 86, the paradisiacal motifs, and the lit, globular glass lamps which have been compared with the lamps of the Sanʿāʾ Figures,⁵¹ evoke the hypostyle mosque, as would seem to be true also of ms. Arabe 324c's f. 32r, which has a "palme" between some of the arches. Other arcades described or illustrated above may lack specific details associated with the Sanʿāʾ illustration, but in the Cairo Qurʾān they ought not to be dismissed as just something to complete the line.⁵²

Figure 86 shows the first of the "copies" of Figure 3. As far as one can tell, there is no especial reason for its placement at this point in the manuscript, although originally that may have been otherwise. Because the style of the arcades strongly suggests mosaics and Sāsānîd-inspired flora, and the style of the marginal ornaments, Figure 3's Byzantine-inspired courtyard flowers, it seems that both needed to be present to affirm the known relationship between the Qubbat al-Šakhrah and the Sanʿāʾ Figures. There may never have been a great number of arcade illuminations in the Cairo

¹Because of the difficulties in making clear copies of the black & white and coloured photographs of the Qubbah's mosaics, the writer has supported Figure 98 with the less detailed drawings of Figures 99, 100. The Shape of the Holy's colour figures 38-49, and EMA I:1's black & white plates 13, 16, 22 are commended to the reader for showing the details described in this paragraph.
 Qui'in, but they are a purposeful inclusion, as is the isolated column of the margins.

The resemblance of the column in Figure 91 to that in the San'ā illustration (Figure 3) has been remarked, and it is striking, despite the floral semi-circles flanking and the lack of a vase between the column and the bouquet. Repetition of this motif in both its Byzantine and Qubbah modes in the same Qui'in suggests it had, or was in the process of being imbued with, a special meaning, and that a role independent of the mosque was envisaged for it. As the column ensemble had been "excised" from the octagonal ambulatory, this role could have been as an image-sign for the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrāh itself, its paradisiacal imagery, or both. Already characterized by a mixture of Sāsānīd and Byzantine elements, the column and bouquet could have been part of the "search for an identifying original imagery" discussed in connection with the images on some early Islamic coins, one of which has a bust of a Sāsānīd monarch on the obverse and the Prophet's lance, or ʿamārah, in a niche on the reverse, (Figure 101). As this coin is dated 75 AH/695 CE, O. Grabar has questioned whether the niche actually represented a miḥrāb at a date that is prior to al-Walīd's innovation of the recessed miḥrāb, or was just a mark of honour. The arches over bouquets in the Cairene marginal ornaments might be examined for the same reason.

It is tempting to think of the arch in Figure 86 as an elaboration of the miḥrāb with three flowers in the mosque of Figure 3; it may be so, of course, as may the arches in Figures 93 and 90, but another explanation is possible. The marginal ornaments of the Cairo Qur'ān and a number of carved wood panels from al-Aqṣā Mosque appear to reflect the newly-created paradisiacal imagery.

Prior to al-Aqṣā's restoration between 1938-42, the twenty wooden tie beams spanning the nave were supported on the walls by consols, and those parts of the consols projecting over the nave were masked with carved panels; such panels being used similarly on minor nave beams. The beams' made-to-measure panels, which are attributed to the second Umayyad building of al-Aqṣā, c. 715-16 CE, have a consistent theme of bountiful vegetation: vines laden with flowers, leaves, fruit, and small containers of these things, swirl out of pots, baskets and acanthus bases, their ebullience
only just constrained by the rings which draw the rinceaux together (Figures 102, 103). Some panels include arches with elaborately-scalloped hoods, lacy or flower-covered extrados, and flowers about the arches themselves, (Figures 104, 105); the arch with radiating flowers seen on a beam end (Figure 106) is very like that of Figure 93. Among the Cairene marginal ornaments there are equally-fanciful arches that encompass lush bouquets. While all of the panels recovered are illustrated by R. Hamilton, none include the isolated column; but, it should be noted, that of the forty possible from the principal nave beams only thirty-two panels still exist.

Al-Aqṣā's panels are of interest for several reasons: their vital flora shows relatively little Sasanid influence yet is very suggestive of that seen in the Qubbah in its abundance; in the overflowing containers; the inclusion of stylized vegetal elements and controlling rings, and the supra-natural combination of diverse fruits and flowers (Figure 107). There is even a tree with entwined branches (Figure 108) that resembles those of the San'a' Figures, the Damascus mosaics, and the Qubbah itself.

Arches filled with vegetal and other forms are common in Umayyad art, (found often on artefacts where the likelihood of their being miḥrābs is improbable). The carved al-Aqṣā panels were originally parallel to the ground about 16 m. up, and not easily seen, so while their and the Cairene arches could be miḥrābs, they might be examples of other views of Paradise, still to be considered.

This chapter began with the proposition that other representations of the hypostyle mosque exist, and the writer draws attention to them now: three published marquetry panels in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, (Figure 109); the Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo (Figure 110), and the Islamic Department of the State Museums, Berlin, (Figures 111, 112). All the panels are agreed to be Egyptian work, continuing in a long Greco-Roman through Coptic tradition, and exemplify the skill and patience that is required to produce the mosaic-like patterns composed of tiny pieces of ivory, bone and wood, inlaid or affixed to a wooden base. The New York panel's provenance is the Fayyūm, and that published by Z. M. Ḥasan, from the area of
F. Sarre reported that the right side of the panel in Figure 111, had been cut away, and the remainder "brought up to the size of the contemporary Korans" in order to make of it the front cover for a Qur'ān. All that remained of the back cover was the piece in Figure 112, described as being in the same technique, but without saying it came from the same panel as Figure 111. While Sarre talks about the "oblong form and large measurements of the cover", corresponding to the shape of early Kufic Qur'āns, and that it "need scarcely be doubted" the panel fragments formed the case of an early monumental "show" Qur'ān, he does not speculate on what the panel might have been used for prior to its cutting down.

M. Dimand said the Berlin fragments had been "wrongly regarded as a bookcover", and thought the panels probably belonged to a turbah, or tomb casing. In the absence of clear evidence, Z.M. Ḥasan called both the Berlin and Cairo panels part of a box or chest. The size of the artefacts, their similarity, and one of the find spots must have played a role in Dimand's opinion: the New York panel is 18 3/4 in. H x 76 1/2 in. W; the Berlin "front cover" is 19 7/16 in. H x 26 6/16 in. W, and Cairo's fragments are said to come from the cemetery at 'Ayn al-Ṣīrah. The New York panel is the most complete, and by observation its workmanship is rather more refined than that on display in Cairo, but there's such a high degree of uniformity amongst the three, extending to the patterns for upper and lower bands, for each arcade, and in which arcade pattern change may occur, as to suggest all are from the same workshop and closely-related in time.

It is a commonplace of later Islāmic art that patterns and designs of all kinds move from one medium to another. In this change of medium, a balance had to be struck between the meticulously-arranged patterns of marquetry, and maintaining the mosque's distinguishing characteristics of arcades, central courtyard, and the placement and appearance of motifs that recognizably linked it with paradisiacal imagery.

As in Figure 86, the architectural representations on the marquetry panels are laid out
horizontally. The panels are divided into well-defined, unequal thirds, five arcades being set within a frame of mosaic diapers to either side of an emphasized central square. In each example the extreme left and right arcades are narrower than the others. In Sarre's opinion, the arcade as an "architectural motif" came from contemporary mosques and was "frequently found painted in gold as a decorative border on the pages of earlier Kufic Korans". There are neither curtained entrances nor mihrāb indicators visible; nor may they have been necessary. These are bold, uncluttered representations; a box, or tomb casing, with such a panel on one, or both long sides would make an architectural statement.

Between each arcade is a column with a bulbous capital, an impost, and a vase from which rises a "winged thistle", in the New York and Berlin examples, and "winged pomegranates" at Cairo, the latter showing three of these motifs above the vase. Column and vase ensembles are cut from thin plates and whether thistles or pomegranates resulted may have depended on the cutter's skill. The columns, with their vases, only suggest a structural role, but their inclusion here is quite as striking a feature as the similar placement of vases above capitals in the Qubbah's octagonal ambulatory. As well, these thistles and pomegranates may be compared with similar forms rising through the arcades in Figures 84 and 87.

The centre third of each panel is the mosque's central courtyard standing on its edge, this being the means of showing the nature of a floor otherwise invisible in a two-dimensional representation. In Ecclesia Mater (Figure 4), the nave's mosaic floor is illustrated standing on its edge to show the birds and vegetation thereon.

In this adaptation of Figure 3 it is possible that the flowers, vase and column might not have transferred easily to marquetry. Such a large-scale element in the composition may not have been sympathetic to the medium's especial characteristic, meticulous geometric patterns formed of thousands of tiny pieces. It is speculated that the courtyard's bouquet of flowers was transformed into another, more easily-worked vegetal motif associated with fruitfulness, the vine on the carved central boss
(Figure 113), about which the craftsman was able to demonstrate his skill. Attention is drawn to another marquetry panel from Egypt, on a box of the sixth-seventh century CE (Figure 114). This chest has circular mosaics about carved bosses so it may be the Islamic panels follow a stylistic tradition.

These three marquetry panels mix Byzantine and Sasanid-inspired features in a manner that reflects both the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah and the Sanʿāʾ Figures. Their notable resemblance to Figure 3 is not diminished by differences in medium and presentation.

In assigning a date to the Berlin fragments, Sarre pointed to the bulbous capitals and mosaic design as "observable in the art of the contemporary Tulunid period", comments repeated by Grohmann. On the Coptic chest of Figure 114, most clearly seen between the two central panels of the bottom row of arcades, are bulbous capitals that bear comparison with those on the Islamic panels. It may be that the capitals in Figures 109-111 merely indicate less skilful workmanship than that in Figure 114. The Berlin fragments' workmanship is quite coarse.

As argued above, a Ṭūlūnīd attribution for Figures 109-111 could be considered only without knowledge of the Sanʿāʾ and Cairo representations of the mosque. Ahmad b. Ṭūlūn, eponymous founder of the dynasty, promoted Ḥabbāsid Sāmarra'-style decoration in the mosque named for him, not things Umayyad. M. Dimand dated the New York panel to the early Ḥabbāsid period; this too must be rejected. The four "copies" of Sanʿāʾ Figure 3, which is one of three illustrations the writer has identified as Ummayad, are of that same period.

One may speculate that the mosque and column were attempts to visualize an idea in which the mosque's symmetrical structure was used metaphorically as, say, a reference to the Muslim community as whole, the ummah, to its coherence in religious observance, and its equality before God; while the column in its midst may have reminded of the paradisiacal reward for faithfulness.

Whatever Figure 3 was really meant to express, for a while it was sufficiently well known and vital to be reproduced, and four "copies" of it remain. As an Egyptian origin is attributed to all the
copies, perhaps special regional factors contributed to the propagation and demise of this iconographic motif. The isolated column may have been "tried out" in the search for a more wieldy image, but it too faded from use, or maybe it was discarded because it did not serve the state's interest so well as the architectural motif to be examined next.
Notes


7. Grohmann, "The Early Islamic Period," p. 22; see also the note following.

8. Collected by U. J. Seetzen, see Whelan, "Writing: Part I," nn. 72, 74, and as well, her note 34 for other background information on European acquisition of various Qur'an folios, and the difficulties that can be encountered reconciling early catalogue numbers and descriptions of contents with current catalogues.

9. This folio, 39r, is illustrated in Eugenius Tisserant, Specimina Codicum Orientalium. Bonn: A. Marcus et E. Weber, 1914, plate 42, with corresponding catalogue entry on p. xxxii; see also Whelan, "Writing: Part I," n. 72; Déroche, Catalogue, p. 76.


14. Jenkins, "Umayyad Ornament," n. 17, in which she states also that ninth-tenth century CE is given by D. James, Qur’ans and Bindings from the Chester Beatty Library, (London, 1980) p. 23, but without supporting data.
15. Déroche, Catalogue, p. 75. Moritz' plate 1 shows the cursive text of the beginning of the first line on this sheet (from Surah 37), as well as the title given for Surah 38. Cursive text indicating the beginning of the sheet can be seen at the top right of Tisserant's plate 42, upper illustration.

16. Whelan, "Writing: Part I," p. 120, and n. 75: "This difference was implicitly recognized by Moritz, who cited only plates 1-5, representing three pages, in connection with the supposed 'Umayyad' ornamental bands in this Qur'an"; see also n. 74.


18. Whelan, "Writing: Part I," p. 120 and nn. 73, 74, this information given in the 1310/1893 Fihrist, in which the original folios are said to have twelve lines to a side, while the 1830 replacements have eleven lines to a side. Exactly what Surahs or parts thereof were replaced is not stated.

19. It has lead her also to criticize Déroche for comparing the illuminations on ms. Arabe 324c folios with those on Moritz' plates 6-12, "Déroche does not seem to have recognized that these folios belong to the later portion of the manuscript ...", Whelan, "Writing: Part I," n. 74.


21. Plate 1 shows a nearly-complete page, with the sheet's opening words at Surah 37:175 written in.

22. Rather than the more usual Muhammad, the title of Surah 47 is shown as al-Qītāl, which is described as a Magribī title, see Rudi Paret, Der Koran, Kommentar und Konkordanz. Stuttgart, Berlin, Cologne, Mainz: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1971, p. 546.

23. A severely-edited version of plate 5 appears as the upper half of fig. 134 in Grabar's Mediation, entirely omitting the left marginal device; while the lower half of fig. 134 is an edited version of plate 2, showing the divider between Surahs 37 and 38. The illustration entry on p. xvi omits mention of Moritz' plate 2.

24. Shown as plate 133 in Grabar, Mediation, and referred to on p. 164.


26. This is plate 42, upper illustration, in Tisserant, Specimina.

27. Déroche, Catalogue, p. 76.

28. Ibid., p. 76.

29. Ibid., p. 76.

30. Ibid., p. 75 - inner marginal ornament.

31. Ibid., p. 76 - inner marginal ornament, which is compared with that of f. 23 v°.

32. Ibid., p. 77 - inner marginal ornament.

34. The detail of this marginal ornament is shown in the lower illustration of Tisserant's *Specimens* plate 42.


37. See descriptions of 44r and 46v, above.


40. Sauvaget, *La Mosquée*, p. 76, and n. 3.


42. Northedge, "The Umayyad Palace," fig. 56 and pl. 29, E.F/1.

43. It seems likely the comments following apply to the "palme" of Déroche's description (*Catalogue*, p. 75) on f. 32r of ms. Arabe 324c also.

44. Grohmann, "Early Islamic Period," p. 22 and n. 92, said of the arcade motifs on plates 1-2 (folio 214b).


46. Jens Kröger, *Sasanidischer Stuckdekor*, Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1982, taf. 21,3 and catalogue 75, p. 67, found at Umm al-Za'ā'tir approximately 2 kilometres east of the Taq-i Kisrā; see also taf. 38,5 from Ma'ārid, and taf. 63,1 from Nizāmābād.


49. M. Gautier van Berchem, "Mosaics," fig. 311.


60. Their placement is described in p. 83 ff.; their position on the tie and corner beams is shown in figs. 42 and 45 respectively, and they are illustrated in plates L-LXXI of Hamilton, *Structural History*.

61. Hamilton, *Structural History*, p. 84.

62. From the section "An Alternative History of the Aqsa Mosque," which, according to n. 116, was supplied by R. W. Hamilton, Creswell & Allen, *A Short Account*, p. 82.

63. Hamilton, *Structural History*, plates LII.3E and LXI.14E, respectively.

64. *Ibid.*, plates L.1E and LIV.6E, respectively.


68. *Ibid.*, plate LVI.8E.


71. They are referred to in a general way in *The Dictionary of Art*, v. 16, p. 523, in the article on "Ivory," by Ralph Finder-Wilson.

Zaki Muhammad Hasan, Works of Dr. Zaki Muhammad Hasan. v. 2 "Al-Fann al-Islāmī fi Miṣr," Beirut: Raed al-Arabi, 1401H/1981M, plate 35, where the caption states this panel is in the Museum of Arabic Antiquities. In v. 3, "Funūn al-Islām," of Works, p. 493, Z.M. Hasan states there is another panel in the Museum of Islamic Antiquities, College of Art, University of Fuad I. What seems to be the panel shown here in Figure 112, is in the Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo, identified by a wall plaque as #9018.

74. F. Sarre, Islamic Bookbindings, trans. from the German edition Islamische Bucheinbände by F.D. O’Byrne, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1923, unnumbered "Introductory" page and fig. 1, the "back cover" (Figure 114), and unnumbered page with the caption to plate 1 (Figure 113); Grohmann, "Early Islamic Period," pp. 33-34, where the panel is said to be in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin, fig. 16 and n. 150.


77. Cedar base for the Cairo panel, according to Hasan, "Al-Fann al-Islāmī," p. 114; cedar also for the Berlin panel, Sarre, Islamic Bookbindings, unnumbered caption page, and ficus, according to accession information for the New York panel.

78. Hasan, "Al-Fann al-Islāmī," p. 115; in "An Egypto-Arabic Panel," p. 79, Dimand states that the "Arabic Museum of Cairo possesses six fragments with similar mosaic work, most of which come from the early Islamic cemetery of 'Ain al-Sīrah".

79. Sarre, Islamic Bookbindings, unnumbered caption page.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid., unnumbered introductory page.

82. Ibid.


85. Sarre, Islamic Bookbindings, unnumbered page caption to plate 1.


87. Grohmann noted the "intersecting zigzag bands" of the borders of the Berlin panel were like the same pattern on Coptic bindings, and thought they had presumably been taken over from the latter, "Early Islamic Period," p. 33.

88. Sarre refers to the arcade originally having five wide arches and a narrower one on each flank, however, there are only four wide and one narrower to be seen on all three examples, Islamic Bookbindings, unnumbered caption page.

89. Ibid., unnumbered caption page to plate 1.

91. Detail of Figure 109, Metropolitan Museum of Art panel.

92. Tardy, Les Ivoires, Deuxième Partie, pl. 43, the caption of which reads, "Coffre à bijoux. Bois et incrustations d'ivoire. Trouvé en Nubie dans une tombe de l'époque byzantine. Art Copte VIe-VIIe s. Musée Égyptien, Le Caire".

93. Sarre, Islamic Bookbindings, unnumbered caption page; Grohmann, "Early Islamic Period," p. 33; Hasan, "Al-Fann al-Islāmi," p. 114-115 also places both the Cairo (Figure 112) and Berlin panels in the ʿUṯmānid period.

Chapter Four, Part 1: The Serrated Arch

The Sa'ā' illustrations allowed us to see Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's paradisiacal imagery as a response to the powerful, established iconographies in the new Islāmic empire and, it is argued, the initial stage in a wider scheme to foster an Islāmic iconographical programme. Evidence of the "Sa'ā" iconography in the Cairo Qur'ān and on marquetry panels was discussed. How long-lived, or widely-used the congregational mosque and isolated column image-signs may have been, the writer cannot say. Perhaps they faded from use, or were discarded for some reason other than "local" appeal, because there existed in what is now Jordan and Syria a quite different "local" image-sign whose presence as decoration has had but passing notice, and whose popular copies are unrecognized.

This motif, a distinctly-framed arcade through which views of paradise are to be had, seems to have been as carefully crafted as that above mentioned. There is reason to state it was employed purposefully in architectural contexts that indicated those areas' special qualities or functions and that the presence of the form went hand-in-hand with a structural concomitant. In some instances the depiction of the arcades' imagery maintains the illusory qualities of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's ornament whence it derives; in others, the architecture imposes its own conditions and these seem to have prevailed over the maintenance of illusion. At times the distinctive frame itself might appear independently and be understood as referring to the more usual arcade with a view. Manifestations of the new iconographic form are considered in this chapter, but there is no comprehensive examination of sites at which it occurs, nor are all Umayyad sites examined.

Attention is drawn first to the Reception Hall of the Umayyad palatial complex of Qal’at 'Ammān, constructed over two Roman courtyards that were built on a large artificial platform jutting from an underlying hill.¹ It is the southern-most building in Figure 115.² This well-preserved building is at the entrance to the palace complex; it was the principal gate and may have been also the
Majlis al-Āmm, or hall of public audience, through which supplicants would have passed on the way to a Majlis al-Khaṣṣ, or hall of private audience, in the north building,3 (see Figure 115).

A. Northedge has described the Hall as a "four-iwan" structure built by someone familiar with the Byzantine cross-in-square,4 a locally-constructed "alien" design5 that includes four pseudo-squinches in the transition zones of the semi-domes covering the east and west īwānāt; "pseudo", because their outlines have been carved onto masonry that gradually rounds out above them, apparently the work of those who "did not know how to build the real thing".6 Other "alien" features include the Hall's tunnel-vaulted north and south īwānāt; exterior, rectangular buttressing as seen at the Sāsānīd Šaq-i Kisrā, Ctesiphon, and an interior façade of blind niches described as descendants of those on the exterior façades of the Šaq-i Kisrā, and the Parthian palace of Assur.7 R. Ghirshman's reconstruction of the Great Hall of third century CE Bīshāpūr, with four sets of three īwānāt facing a central court which was encircled with a row of separate niches resting on a ledge,8 was considered by Northedge for the influence it might have had on the Reception Hall's architecture, and dismissed for want of convincing evidence.9 E. J. Keall has referred to Ghirshman's reconstruction as improbable.10

Northedge reconstructs the Hall as an hypaethral court with stepped merlons, vegetally-decorated front and back, about the outer and inner roof edges11 (Figure 116).12 There were interior and exterior cornices, and the latter's decoration includes registers of serration (also known as saw-dog-tooth, zigzag, zackig-, zacken-, zickzack,) and bead and reel.

A. Almagro Gorbea, of the Spanish archaeological team at the site, considers the Vestibule (Reception Hall) to be in the form of a Greek cross with pseudo-squinches, and states that, while the courtyard covering is impossible to determine, a stone dome is logical as the building is strong enough to support it.13

Northedge disputes the dome theory on the grounds of there being insufficient supporting structures, and argues also that as the decoration has been carved in local limestone it could withstand weathering in the hypaethral court as execution in stucco could not.14 This latter reason is
questionable, as the decoration of the blind arcade about the towers flanking the entrance to the Small Enclosure at Qaṣr al-Hayr al-Sharqī is of moulded, reed-reinforced stucco, and stucco is used for the above-gate decoration at Qaṣr Kharāmah. The Hall may have had a later, wooden, roof against the cold Jordanian winter. Almagro Gorbea presents alternate façade reconstructions, one of which shows the buttressing as the lower part of large blind arches with only two external blind niches (Figure 117); his other reconstruction shows the exterior buttressing suggested by Northedge.

Figure 118 shows the interior niche arrangement, with Northedge’s crenellation-cornice reconstruction. There were twenty-four blind niches in the top register, eight in the middle one, and one hundred and six in the lowest register which form a continuous arcade about the entire inner area, above a pronounced moulding some 1.6 m. from the floor.

Niche ornament is predominantly floral, and regimented to fit confined spaces. The niches are individually decorated, 49.5% of which decoration still exists or is known of through photographs. Patterns vary not only from niche to niche, but between back, niche head and spandrel. Actually, the arch face and spandrel arrangement resembles the alfiz of Umayyad Spain, and is so called by the Spanish team.

As striking as their ornament must have been originally are the niches themselves, for their distinctive structure binds together the entire decorative programme. Each consists of two plain, attached colonnettes without capitals, set on low bases, and supporting an arch with a serrated extrados. Additionally, in the Hall’s lowest register the niches are set on what might be called a plinth, directly above the moulding, where they become an arcade by virtue of being placed closely side-by-side, although each niche remains discrete, that is, intermediate arches do not share supports, the arch of every niche is raised on its own colonnettes. The niches do not protrude beyond the wall plane, the arch faces recede progressively to a further-recessed niche back.

Kish, Umm al-Za‘ātir, al-Ma‘ārid, Nizāmābād, Tepe Hissar, Tepe Mil, Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad are among the sites Northedge mentions that between them have contributed all the basic
motifs to the decoration of the Hall,\textsuperscript{24} whose ground plan, architectural detail and decoration he concludes to be entirely in the Sāsānid and post-Sāsānid tradition.\textsuperscript{25} This should be reconsidered.

At `Ammān there are neither pattern-sheathed pillars, as at, say Dāmghān,\textsuperscript{26} nor pattern-sheathed ʿiwnāʾ, like those reconstructed at Umm al-Zaʿātir,\textsuperscript{27} nor are other parts of the walls "papered" with field patterns. So far as is known, the Hall's vaults and dado were plain, the absence of holes in the stonework making it "unlikely that a marble or stucco revetment was attached".\textsuperscript{28} Some of the Hall's niche decorative programmes are now incomplete and others are difficult to make out, but what could be discerned has been drawn, and the clear drawings from Northedge's book are used here as the basis for discussing features of the decorative programme.

The vegetation in the niche backs may be attached to a slim straight trunk, or it "grows" from a ground of three semi-circles; sometimes the vegetation is seen through a lattice. A series of independent circles containing rosettes and other vegetal elements, often with interstitial leaves, is a common arrangement (Figures 119,\textsuperscript{29} and 120).\textsuperscript{30} Uncircled rosettes with interstitial leaves appear on many soffits of the Qubbah's octagonal arcade,\textsuperscript{31} and circled ones with leaves are border motifs in the western riwāq at the Great Mosque, Damascus.\textsuperscript{32} On many of al-Aqṣā's panels continuous vines completely encircle leaves and flowers, giving a very similar appearance. Rosettes have long been used in Jewish sepulchral art, and `Ammān's alternation of rosettes and other vegetal forms with interstitial leaves may be compared with those on the sarcophagus in Figure 121, and the coffin in Figure 122.\textsuperscript{33} Figure 120's slim straight trunk supporting stylized scrolls filled with various floral motifs may be compared with the more naturalistic versions in Figures 107 and 109. Common also to the Hall and the wooden panels are groups of three leaves, upright or inverted on the panels, used to inaugurate change in a vegetal structure (Figures 108, 120, 102).

In seeking comparanda for the Hall's grapes Northedge focussed his attention on the few accompanying leaves and the vine's entwining of a straight stem,\textsuperscript{34} but the distinctive characteristic of the `Ammān grapes is that bunches are paired (Figures 123,\textsuperscript{35} 124,\textsuperscript{36} 125\textsuperscript{37}), either in the same loop, or
side-by-side along a stem. In five drawings of the Qubbah’s mosaic scrolls in which grapes appear (Figure 126) the bunches are paired in the same loop. One Qubbah tie beam has grape bunches on a leafless, stylized vine, while others show paired bunches alternating with paired leaves, one to either side of a central stalk, an arrangement found also on the cupola of the Double Passage (Figure 48). Paired grape bunches in the same loop are found at the Subsidiary Palace, Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad, for whose decoration an Umayyad date is proposed, but this was not the comparandum taken from that site. The Coptic chest in Figure 114 has grape bunches of a shape comparable with those at ’Ammān, and few accompanying leaves.

Figures 127 and 128, at ’Ammān and Figure 129 at al-Aqṣā, show vegetation on lattices; rosettes in diamond grids appear at ’Ammān (Figure 130), and on a wooden panel at al-Aqṣā (Figure 131).

The imbrication of concentric circles in some spandrels and niche backs is a seemingly anomalous motif, but D. Thompson points out that at Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad concentric spirals symbolize water through which fish are represented as swimming, and the overlapping concentric circles resemble water symbols on Sāsānian and later metalware. Perhaps water symbolism is intended in ’Ammān’s non-figural imbrication.

A comparison drawn from the Qubbat al-Ṣakhirah or al-Aqṣā’s panels cannot be applied to the content of every niche at ’Ammān, although there are sufficient correspondences to demonstrate the influence of both; the model for niches’ distinctive structure, on the other hand, may be attributed to the Qubbat al-Ṣakhirah, amongst whose real and decorative arcades are two composed of discrete, blind niches: one is internal, found on the inner face of the octagonal arcade and the outer face of the circular arcade (Figure 132). The arches are raised on independent, bulbous colonnettes with square capitals and bases; these star-filled niches are surrounded by pearl bands whose vertical members appear to support the elaborate interstitial vegetal forms.

The second example was found on the parapet during the repairs of 1873-74, when the
exterior tiles applied in 1552, in Sulaymān's reign, were being replaced. In this arcade, now concealed again, "each arch has its own pair of independent columns", and is flush with the wall plane, while the niche back, behind later infills of stones, formed "a sort of apsidal niche, 0.25 m deep". These niches had modest capitals and bases, and there was no mention of serrated arch faces.

Figure 133 shows a section of parapet with the blind arcade, including one of four open niches which Creswell suggested were used when making repairs. Remains of glass mosaics were found inside two uncovered niches and from these traces a pattern of interlace about rosettes was reconstructed (Figure 134). Clermont-Ganneau thought that if the mosaic remains were not original to the building, they were likely made after the same pattern; Creswell stated the mosaics could not possibly date from 'Abd al-Malik's time, and were probably of the thirteenth century. It is suggested that these two arcades were the inspirational source for the distinctive frames seen at 'Ammān and elsewhere, a resemblance noted by C. Conder, "In general arrangement, and especially in the detail of this upper order of dwarf pillars, the outer wall of the Dome of the Rock thus reproduces almost exactly features found in the Sassanian or early Arab building already described at Amman".

Serration will be considered later.

Brought down from the parapet, the arcade metamorphosed. The niches' carefully thought out placement in the Reception Hall is an exercise in trompe-l'œil. Their arrangement leads one to believe the designer sought to reproduce in some degree the sensory experience achieved at the Qubbāt al-Šakhrāḥ. Physically, the Reception Hall is windowless, yet it evokes the interior of some lofty pavilion, through whose colonnade and upper windows one may look out on the gardens of paradise, for they are the only "views" afforded.

To achieve this illusory world the Reception Hall's designer tapped a number of sources. Using otherwise functional structural elements - the niches - to articulate the wall surfaces was common in late Greek, and Roman architecture. In another hypaethral space, the courtyard of the Temple of Bacchus, Baalbek, Lebanon, there are two registers of arched and gabled aediculae
separated by Corinthian half-columns on the side walls. The "wall" of the Coptic chest in Figure 114 with its registers of arched and gabled niches is similarly arranged. O. Reuther pointed out that the "half column" used in Sasanid façade designs was of Greek derivation, but its degenerated form without capitals and bases, as seen at 'Ammān for instance, was typical of Sasanid architecture. In the Umayyad period, half-columns in Sasanid dress exist contemporaneously with those more classically-garbed.

Contributing to the illusion of the niches as windows on another world is the pronounced moulding which may have been borrowed from sixth century North Syrian churches where similarly elaborate exterior mouldings are a feature. They are to be seen above and around doors, and swagged about or placed beneath windows; the Hall's arrangement can be compared with windows rising above a prominent, continuous moulding at the North Church, Ruwēhā, (Figure 135) and the East Church, Me'ez, (Figure 136). The moulding is reminiscent also of wall paintings, which often start from a well-defined band marking the upper extent of the dado.

Illusion of various kinds is explicit in Roman wall painting from its earliest style. For example, a real colonnade and lattice balustrade on one wall is reproduced in stucco about three otherwise blank walls to convey the notion of receding space; trees and shrubs might be painted behind a real garden to enlarge the view; figures look out from a paint and stucco mansion, or one looks through a panel framed by a vine wreathed column, a pillar and an architrave at "... birds at a fountain and garden architecture, all of which might have been seen through the room's window" (Figure 137). These examples are not remote from 'Ammān's decorative programme; saving the figural elements, illusion is manifest in the Qubbat al-Šakrah, and the Damascus mosaics, the latter a vibrant example of the Second Style of Roman wall painting, where the framing device is the paradisiacal grove of great trees.

Northedge points out the Reception Hall was a public building, its decoration the finest at the site, and stresses how much seems to have been done for "purely visual effect". According to
Almagro Gorbea the Vestibule's (Reception Hall) design and decoration was "given maximum pre-eminence" to impress visitors with the inhabitants' wealth and position.\textsuperscript{69}

As principal gate, and possible \textit{majlis al-`amm}, for the administrative complex of the area,\textsuperscript{70} the Reception Hall was a point of encounter between local ruler and ruled, suggesting the imagery was disposed there to some purpose, which the niches on the exterior façade likely heralded.\textsuperscript{71} The richness of the display was surely meant to confirm that the Reception Hall had a special status.

Similar niches appeared also on the outside of the northern building,\textsuperscript{72} external access to which, Almagro Gorbea points out, was restricted to the "single path" through the Vestibule (Reception Hall);\textsuperscript{72} however, both he and Northedge point to the Vestibule (Reception Hall) as the most finely-decorated area of the complex, and this suggests that the Hall was an objective in its own right, not merely the first stage in some extended walk.

Almagro Gorbea dates Qal`at `Ammān between the beginning of the eighth century and before 744 CE,\textsuperscript{74} and Northedge from the beginning to just after the reign of Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (724-743).\textsuperscript{75} In connection with these suggested dates and the Reception Hall's position in relation to the rest of the site, it may be noted that Hishām had two palaces built outside the walls of Sergiopolis-Ruṣāfah, Syria, whose northern gate was enclosed by an extra-mural, hypaethral room. Externally, this rectangular room was flanked by towers, and the walls seem to have been plain; entry was by way of a single gate.\textsuperscript{76} Inside, the room's east and west walls were articulated with capitalled pilasters whose architraves joined that above the arches of the blind arcade framing the southern wall's triple entrance to the city. Of these two extra-mural rooms, the North Gate was a truly defended and defensible structure as the Reception Hall \textit{cum} gate was not; their shapes and ornament were not alike, but in their modest entries upon hypaethral, richly adorned interiors, they are conceptually alike.

The next site, Qastāl,\textsuperscript{77} is 25 km. south of `Ammān, where the eastern edge of the Balqa' farmland meets the desert.\textsuperscript{78} It is described as well-watered, and a hajj stopping place on the route Darb al-Shām from Damascus to Madīnah and Mecca, via `Ammān, Maʻān and Tabūk.\textsuperscript{79} Qastāl was
an aristocratic residence laid out within a castrum-like, crenellated exterior wall (Figure 138), whose merlons may have been stepped. It is a completed structure, built largely of ashlar, richly decorated with floor and glass mosaics, and much carving worked from the same stone as the structure itself. There was a single entrance through a tower whose jambs were ornamented with tiers of carved, paired pilasters (Figure 139). Beyond the door, which also had decorated jambs, was a vestibule of two domed bays leading to the central courtyard and the rest of the qaṣr, and, flanking the bays, stairs to the western end of an Audience Hall on the second floor immediately above the gate.

As reconstructed in a maquette (Figure 140) prepared by the archaeological team's architect, F. Morin, this second floor area was organized in the form of three apses about a central square covered by a dome whose drum was pierced by eight windows framed with engaged colonnettes similar to those in Figures 104 and 105. The north and south apses were semi-domed, while that on the east was otherwise vaulted and may have lead to a suite of small rooms above the gate for the qaṣr's owner. Figure 141 shows a dome voussoir (claveau) recovered from the north stairs. Figure 140 indicates an extrados and very wide intrados sheathed in ornament, a reconstruction rather like that attributed to Kish. Figures 142 and 143, claveaux for the head of a vault and a vault, respectively, evince the building's diverse motifs.

In Morin's reconstruction, the north and south apses have a plain dado, a band of ornament, then an arcade of niches. Two niches from the site have been published (Figure 144, 145) and, as at 'Ammān, they are discrete. The grapes in the larger niche are on a vine whose angularity reflects the tendencies to stylization remarked by M. Avi-Yonah of J. Lassus' researches into the fifth-sixth century CE remains north-east of Hama, Syria. Vines in the similarly-confining spaces of lintels and jambs had stems which moved stiffly from one border to another, with leaves and fruit adjusted to fit.

The smaller niche (Figure 145) has the rich surrounding detail shown in Morin's reconstruction, and shows an affinity also with both the lowest register of niches on the Coptic chest.
(Figure 114) and the Qubbah's arcade in Figure 132. Like those on the chest, the arch has an outer pearl band and an inner serrated one and, assuming a symmetrical composition, an arcade of these niches with their interstitial vegetation would have been similar to the Qubbah's arcade in Figure 132 and to the niches with interstitial grape rinceaux on the chest.

As for the inner fern-like motif, or branch, this does resemble those at 'Ammān, but a rather more notable comparandum is seen in the mould for a jar neck unearthed at Ramlah, which was founded on virgin soil about 708 CE, during Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik's (715-17) governorate. Figure 146 of the mould and a modern cast, shows the neck has a collar of rosettes beneath which are vertical panels of the fern-like motif. Both niche and jar mould illustrate the practice of deeply cutting the interior of motifs and leaving a raised border in order to emphasize the contrast of light and shadow. An example Avi-Yonah draws on in his discussion of this technique is the plant on the chancel post in Figure 147, the doubled outline of the mould's leaves give similar emphasis.

Among Qastal's ornament P. Carlier lists such motifs as acanthus, grape bunches, vines, rosettes, cornucopias, saw teeth, chevrons, blind horseshoe arches, and recognizes their indisputable relationship to Greco-roman, Persian and Sasanid art, "dans une conception du décor qui a perdu sa rationalité antique", and later says of the decoration "... des antécédents très proches à la Coupole du Rocher et à la Mosquée al-Aqṣā à Jérusalem", what aspects of the latter monument are not expanded upon.

The niches are strikingly like those at 'Ammān, and have been so remarked by P. Carlier, however, beyond mentioning the site briefly for other comparanda, Northedge conspicuously ignores these similarities. Qastal's decorative motifs come from diverse sources, and its architecture is not "Sasanid", yet, as at 'Ammān, the niches were placed to dominate an area identified as an Audience Hall. Because their carving is still so crisp, the deeply-recessed backs convey even more clearly than at 'Ammān the impression of views through windows to a garden beyond, as does their placement in Morin's reconstruction. It is not possible to say how the attributed glass mosaics may have
complemented them, but together they suggest an impressive display. Here too, it is suggested, that the splendidly-decorated audience hall was the objective of this part of the qaṣr and that the small suite of rooms over the gate were auxiliary to it.

H. Gaube published a very worn niche with a serrated horseshoe arch, the recessed back of which is filled with concentric imbrication like that seen in at 'Ammān. He considers this niche to have been part of the façade decoration, as may be seen above the portal at Qaṣr Kharāmah and Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī. It may be noted here also that from the remains of Qaṣṭal's contemporary mosque Gaube recovered a carved stone rosette, a medallion with a central "shrub", and a fragment showing a shrub between registers of egg and dart, suggesting that this early Umayyad mosque may have been ornamented with some sort of paradisiacal imagery.

As the qaṣr at Qaṣṭal was a princely residence, where al-'Abbās b. al-Walīd I and al-Walīd II may have stayed, the niches cannot have been an exclusive attribute of the gate to an administrative complex. The excavators have conjectured the qaṣr may date to 'Abd al-Malik's reign (685-705).

K. Otto-Dorn found the distinctive blind niches at Sergiopolis-Ruṣāfāh, Syria, during the 1952, 1954 excavations of an area identified as that in which Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik (724-743) built his two palaces. Limited exploration concentrated principally on one building (Figure 148), where rich finds of decorative stucco and wall paintings were made.

The first campaign established that the site had a castrum-like exterior wall, and was entered through a single gate. Room 1's extent was noted, as were parts of room 5, and the south-west corner's tower. Stucco finds in the gate area were particularly rewarding, and during the first campaign included moulded pieces decorated with a pomegranate (Figure 149), and naturalistic grapes and leaves (Figure 150). When first published, the pomegranate was said to be part of a frieze, but in the 1957 article, where it is shown with the flat border fillet uppermost, it had become a "Stuckfragment", and may have been considered part of the "Nischenfüllungen" for blind arches.

Found in the gate debris were palmettes, rosettes, and a number of different blind arch
fragments decorated with braided bands and wreaths of leaves, and "conspicuous" amongst the arch fragments was a piece with double serrated bands (Figure 151). There were also plain, half-columnar fragments with serrated ornament on the edge fillets (Figure 152). Moulded fragments had a fine gypsum coating, thought to be for weather protection, and there were remains of paint on the stucco, in red, black and yellow. Traces of red paint had been found inside 'Ammān's Reception Hall by the Italian team that originally excavated the site, although Northedge thought these could just as easily have occurred after the Umayyad period, and it seems that the columns at the entrance to the northern building’s ʿīwān were gilded.

Over both campaigns significant finds of decorative stucco and wall paintings were made in Room 1 amongst other north-eastern parts of the site, and in both courtyards. Along with vine leaf and grape motifs, there were borders of overlapping hearts, palmettes, spiral leaves, and fragments of serrated arches and half colonnettes. Stucco elements of blind arcades were found in the vicinity of the main courtyard's passageways, and the eastern part of the courtyard, leading Otto-Dorn to conclude that both the gate front and the courtyard walls had been ornamented with the niches.

Among the finds made in room 1: moulded stucco painted black, red and yellow was discovered during the first campaign and, on the north wall above the socle, on a well-finished stucco layer, were painted a number of columns in black and red, between which were lozenge shapes (Figure 153). In an early report there were said to have been four larger fields and two smaller side fields between the columns, whereas the reconstruction drawing in a later article shows only one smaller field on the left and five larger. Otto-Dorn thought the columns were likely part of a blind arcade, but the arches were not found. A layout of narrower fields flanking wider ones must call to mind the marquetry panels' (Figures 109-111), and even the one narrow end field in Figure 153 is suggestive of them. On the east wall there was a grid of double lozenges and a circle together, between what seems to have been a continuation of the painted columns, and near it more stucco fragments, and many small pieces of wall painting. From an analysis of patterns, and colours which
included red and white, red on a black ground, and clear tones of red, blue, yellow and green, as well as stucco pieces, it was concluded that the north and east walls had, above the socle, an arcade motif, three zones of painting, and an upper zone of decorative stucco.  

During the second campaign an elegantly-drawn tree outlined in black on a white ground (Figure 154) was found in the rectangular niche in room 1's south wall. Otto-Dorn compared it with the similar wide-branching mosaic trees at Damascus, and with that in the bath at Khirbat al-Mafjar. Another rectangular niche was found in the south-west corner of room 5, but there is no mention of any painting therein; both niches are shown on the plan in Figure 148. Had niches been found also in the south-east corners of these rooms one might say they were of an ornamental nature, but, and here it is speculated, one niche in a south wall could be a mihrāb.  

At Qasr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī the remains of a mihrāb niche were found in the south wall of the Small Enclosure's entrance room, oriented in the "correct direction". The mihrāb, which is shown on the excavators' plan 6D, is west of an entrance to room 28 immediately south. In a private dwelling at Ramlah, a single arch was discovered, inserted into the mosaic floor. This is considered to be a mihrāb, for it has the end of Surah 7:205, "... and be thou not neglectful" inserted in the arch hood, and is said to be "properly oriented to the south, towards Mecca". The second example, particularly, speaks of the same flexibility in the placement and form of a mihrāb as suggested for that in room 1 at Rusāfah.  

Another group of ruins about 1 km. from the first was surveyed during the second campaign. Included in it are two large buildings, and a number of mounds of debris. Around the walls of a high tower of the largest building was found a great deal more decorative stucco, including blind niches and niche fillings like those found at the first palace. Figure 155 is an arch with vegetal motifs in the spandrels and laurel leaves on the arch face, and Figure 156 is a niche filling described as a candelabra motif with entwining vine tendrils; of these later discoveries the excavator said all the elements of the blind arcade ornament in the first palace were found in the second.
Because the Ruṣafah excavations are incomplete there's no clear idea of the appearance of the palaces and their auxiliary buildings, but the excavator observed both sites were lavishly, and similarly decorated. The ornamentation of the exterior of Palace One's single entrance included blind niches with vegetal motifs in the niche backs, and serrated and otherwise ornamented arch faces, and friezes of grapes and vines, while arcades of similar blind niches were found on the east and north of the principal courtyard.

Using the excavators of 'Ammān and Qaṣṭal as guides, if, as Otto-Dorn says, the central courtyard of Palace One was lined with paradisiacal arcades, then it too could have been a place of audience, on a scale befitting a caliphal palace. Room 1's singularity is emphasized by its position immediately opposite the entrance, its size and ornament which could be described as reflecting the arcades of the courtyard and, should the conjecture of a mihrāb be substantiated, then private or semi-private devotions could have been held there. Also, room 1 appears to be connected only to room 2 and the unnumbered room to the west; an ensemble of principal hall and two waiting rooms that seems to be auxiliary to the audience area.

K. Otto-Dorn wrote initially that Ruṣafah's serrated arches were unknown at another Umayyad site, and later of her surprise at finding them, in carved stone, in the entrance building at 'Ammān, (Figure 157). In the Ars Orientalis article, which is almost the only one of hers on Ruṣafah that's ever mentioned, she repeated her statement that Ruṣafah's characteristic serrated arch ("charakteristischen Zackenbögen") was abundant in 'Ammān's entrance building; unfortunately, her words were not accompanied by the important illustration of the serrated arch face. She stated also that the correspondence between Ruṣafah's and 'Ammān's toothed arches and smooth half-columns was obvious, and likely would have said the same of Qaṣṭal's niches had they then been discovered. The other blind arcade comparanda she gives are Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī, Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī, the "Kiosk" in the courtyard at Khirbat al-Mafjar and, amongst portable art, the "characteristic example" in the decoration of the "Marwān" ewer. Neither Northedge nor Carlier mention Ruṣafah's
characteristic serrated arches.

Recent excavations at Ruṣāfah have uncovered the remains of a garden, an elaborately-decorated pavilion, and irrigation system south-west of the Otto-Dorn palaces' sites,\textsuperscript{146} providing substance for Theophanes' oft-quoted statements that Hishâm b. Ṭabd al-Malik not only built palaces in every city and town, he had crops sown, and gardens and fountains created.\textsuperscript{147}

At Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī, Syria, about 60 km. south of Ruṣāfah, there is an arcade of discrete blind niches around and between the towers flanking the single entrance to the Small Enclosure (Figure 158).\textsuperscript{148} Al-Sharqī is almost equally-distant from Palmyra, the Euphrates and the eastern extent of farmed land,\textsuperscript{149} at a point where the mountains north of it can be crossed north to south.\textsuperscript{150} Rainwater drains into the area from three ʿωiδνεν, and there can be substantial spring vegetation.\textsuperscript{151}

As has been mentioned, the niches here are of moulded stucco. Each arch shares an impost with the niche flanking, but has its own pair of engaged colonnettes with a palm trunk design and modest Corinthian capitals. There are acanthus in the spandrels and windswept acanthus on the arch faces whose narrow, plain margins copy similar margins found on carved stone.\textsuperscript{152} Gabriel's drawing of a niche's ornament and profile (Figure 159)\textsuperscript{153} shows one motif in the recessed back and another in the niche hood, a practice observed at ʿAmmān and in some of al-Aqṣā's panels. The only serration is in the form of a row of angle-laid bricks immediately above the arcades, nevertheless, the writer believes the niches are related to those at sites mentioned previously. Some exterior niches are proposed for ʿAmmān and Palace One, Ruṣāfah, although not on this scale. Here, the niches may affect signage, on the one hand indicating that this of the site's two enclosures is the one where "audience" takes place. (No niches are recorded for the multiple entrances to the Large Enclosure.) On the other, the Small Enclosure's courtyard activity may have made it an inappropriate audience area which instead would be found on the upper floor. Again, it is evident that the niches are not an attribute of the building's cultural origin or type.
This enclosure is thought to have been a caravanserai rather than a permanent residence, with storage space on the ground floor, and sleeping quarters likely on the second, in function, allied most closely with Qasr Kharānah. The excavator modified this attribution somewhat on the grounds that there was a lack of historical information about area trade routes, and that the Small Enclosure had rather superior construction and decoration for a caravanserai; it was possible the Small Enclosure had been built for some unique purpose.

It has been proposed that the Small Enclosure, like many other Umayyad structures, might have served a number of purposes, among which would be agriculture and trade and as a point where the Umayyads might maintain close contact with important tribal allies. This last factor might have influenced its construction c. 700, as part of a strategy to deal with tribal antagonisms resulting from the day of Marj Rāḥit, (684). According to an inscription found in the Large Enclosure, the construction was done in 728-729 CE, during Hishām's reign, by people from Homs; the inscribed stone, now lost, was thought to have been re-used, and not in its original position. The excavators believe the inscription refers only to the building of part of the Large Enclosure, some work of which was 'Abbāsid.

Qasr Kharānah, Jordan, about 60 km. south east of Ḥummān, has above its single entrance five panels of half-palmette trees rising from flanking "clover leaf" motifs, each panel being separated by pairs of engaged colonnettes, (Figure 160). It may be that originally these colonnettes supported arches, possibly serrated, to form a small arcade of discrete niches through which might be seen the paradise gardens. S. Urice is among the most recent to examine this site in detail, and his results are summarized briefly.

In contra-distinction to Qal'at Ḫummān, 's construction and many structural features are closely linked to Iraqi buildings, while its internal organization is typical of Syrian ones. In common with many other Umayyad buildings, its apparently defensive exterior is a sham, and the "arrow slits" in its walls provide ventilation and light. The qasr's building is divided into three stages: the ground
floor and rooms 47-53 (north of western stairs), first; then the southern, and eastern wing to room 39, with the northern rooms 40-46 remaining uncompleted,\textsuperscript{166} (see layout in Figure 161).\textsuperscript{167} North-western room 48 was purposely hypaethral, with ventilators, a drain, and a floor hole communicating with the room beneath, and this room is thought to have been used for cooking and eating; uncompleted room 40 in the north-eastern corner may have been in all respects similar to room 48.\textsuperscript{168}

Qaṣr Kharānah's decoration is as follows: rooms 49-53 comprise a coherently-decorated (the writer's interpretation) bāyt, or suite of rooms, with adjoining cooking and eating facilities. Room 51 has semi-domes at the western and eastern ends and, along the northern and southern walls, large blind arcades between transverse arches. These arches appear to be supported by groups of three engaged colonnettes, without bases or capitals, resting on continuous stylobates. The colonnettes are described also as "articulated piers", and "piers" only because the flanking walls have been pulled back, the supports speaking of "aesthetic choice" not structural necessity,\textsuperscript{169} (Figure 162).\textsuperscript{170} In room 51 there is serration at the base of the squinches and arches, and the arches have a rounded moulding.\textsuperscript{171} High on the walls of the five rooms, and originally at the apices of the semi-domes, are separately-moulded roundels (Figure 163)\textsuperscript{172} with a very stylized vegetal motif of a kind familiar from the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah.

Blind arcades, with engaged colonnettes appearing to support transverse arches, are repeated in rooms 59, 26, 29, 37 and 44, the arches being slightly taller and slimmer in the second building phase. Room 59 has a southern semi-dome and twelve rosettes impressed into the stucco above cornice height,\textsuperscript{173} (Figure 164).\textsuperscript{174} Room 26, immediately above the single entrance, has the only square bay in the qaṣr, and is thought to have been domed originally.\textsuperscript{175} It is also the only single room,\textsuperscript{176} connected to, but not part of the būyūt based on rooms 59 and 29, and it is on room 26's exterior wall that the paradisiacal imagery is found.

Perhaps connected to the exterior display, high on the northern walls of rooms 59 and 29 are two arcades of open, discrete niches whose serrated arches are supported by semi-engaged colonnettes
without capitals or bases (Figure 165); the arcades' mundane purpose is to enhance the ventilation.\textsuperscript{178}

Urice compared these open arcades with the blind ones of al-Sharqi's Small Enclosure and of 'Ammān, noting that in each case they seemed to mark the boundary between public and private space and, in 'Ammān's case, possibly indicating space of a ceremonial kind.\textsuperscript{179} Rooms 59 and 29 participate in this boundary marking as they connect with the principal room 26 via rooms 61 and 28 respectively.\textsuperscript{180}

It is of interest that although the arches and semi-engaged colonnettes of the ventilation arcades are described as and look similar to the large arches and engaged colonnettes of the articulated piers in rooms 51, 59, 26, 29, and 37, these similarities are not commented on by Urice. The writer suggests that in rooms 51, 59, 26, 29, and 37 the non-functional colonnettes "support" both transverse and wall arches - the cover drawing (of room 59) of Urice's book makes just this point (Figure 166).\textsuperscript{181} Thus, rooms 51, 59, 29, and 37, the principal ones of their respective buwāt, are actually decorated with large, image-free paradisiacal arcades, as is the single principal room 26; the western and eastern bayt's are meeting areas subsidiary to the southern pair which are linked to room 26. In such a reassessment, the ventilation arcades contribute to the charged space, but theirs is a subsidiary role. Motifs similar to that in both of Qaṣr Kharānah's roundels are to be found in the Qubbat al-Sakhrāh. The modest quality of the qaṣr's ornament, including the use of unornamented blind niches, may be attributed to the site's non-residential status and occasional use, but this in no way diminishes the significance of the paradisiacal imagery's occurrence.\textsuperscript{182}

Up to Urice's publication, the \textit{terminus ante quem} for the first building phase was an Arabic inscription in Room 51 dated 92 AH/710 CE.\textsuperscript{183} Since then more inscriptions and graffiti have been discovered and published, the most significant for this paper being four graffiti in Room 51 signed by 'Umar b. al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik, who was governor of the Jund al-Urdunn (Jordan) during his father's caliphate (705-715),\textsuperscript{184} giving a potentially earlier termination date for the first building phase. Urice interpreted the building as not for permanent residence, but purposely built during the Sufyānid
period, that is up to 684, to serve as an occasional meeting place for the rulers' and tribal representatives.\textsuperscript{185} The \textit{qasr} is not on a major travel route, but if that from the Wādī al-Sirhān to Azraq oasis was taken, \textit{Qasr} Kharānah would be one of a number of stations roughly 20 km. apart between Azraq and 'Ammān.\textsuperscript{186} Its original white stuccoed exterior, would have made it a very visible destination; its solitary position in open country would have ensured meetings a degree of privacy,\textsuperscript{187} and the stucco panel above the entrance has been characterized as creating a "public statement".\textsuperscript{188}

Urice postulates that construction resumed (the second building phase) during the reign of Marwānid, Yazīd II (720-724) who, with his family, had commercial and agricultural interests in the general area.\textsuperscript{189}

Their excavators' having attributed similar purposes to \textit{Qasr} al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī's Small Enclosure and \textit{Qasr} Kharānah, and in view of the paradisiacal imagery above their gates, the latter's \textit{terminus a quo} might be re-examined. Following the Second Civil War, it is possible the Marwānids saw the need to meet with tribal allies, and otherwise, at somewhere like al-Sharqī and \textit{Qasr} Kharānah. \textit{Qasr} Kharānah's first building phase, consisting of the ground floor with stabling and general accommodation,\textsuperscript{190} plus a self-contained suite of rooms with an adjoining cooking and eating area, could have been completed for use while the southern and eastern wings were being constructed, whereupon rooms 49-53, as those about room 37 seem to have been, became a lesser meeting area once the southern rooms were completed.

That room 51 is now known to contain sixteen instances of inscriptions and graffiti is hardly an argument for desuetude.\textsuperscript{191} A caliph's son accounted for four of those items, and even principal room 26 has two, dated eighth-ninth/tenth century on epigraphical grounds,\textsuperscript{192} potentially put there just after the second building phase had been completed. As is widely-known, the fact that its cars were covered with graffiti did not prevent the New York subway from running! Graffiti can be as easily attributable to the \textit{qasr}'s not being constantly occupied and to the diminished importance of room 51, as to a lengthy hiatus between building phases.
Jabal Says (also known as Seis, Usays), Syria, about 105 km. south-east of Damascus, lies on a travel route "circumventing the worst of the ḥarra"*, or fields of basalt, on the way north to Damascus and the Syrian desert. Found in the debris of its single, towered entrance were fragments of a blind arcade, whose shallow niches were faced with alternately plain and serrated horseshoe arches resting on clusters of three plain, engaged colonnettes, (Figure 167); the arcade is thought to have crowned the wall. It is unknown whether these niches contained ornament. Inside, similar open niches (Figure 168) were placed like a balustrade between the columns of the upper storey (Figure 169), indicating where the place of audience is likely to have been.

This is another example of the imagery's adaptability; it might be as spare or elaborate as occasion demanded, but was not of itself sacrosanct, so long as some manifestation of it was present to indicate the place of audience. Al-Walīd I lived at Jabal Says for a time prior to his becoming caliph and, on the basis of the site's mosque with its recessed mīhrāb, Brisch suggested a date of 88-90 AH/707-709 CE. Dated graffiti in the area points to Umayyad occupation from 93 AH/712 CE to 119 AH/737 CE.

A more distant site to be considered is the Main Palace at Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad, near Rayy, Irān, the probable date of whose stucco ornament is the Umayyad period, seventh-eighth century CE. The Main Palace's original principal entrance was on the north side, but "habitual entry" into the main hall was through four entrances on the east side, opposite which, seen between three pairs of pattern-sheathed pillars, were four wall niches, the remains of two of which are shown in Figures 170 and 171. At the back of each niche, between higher borders, are two "further recessed panels with floral ornament and thus simulates a view into a garden or greenery", an observation appreciated by the writer, who, quite independently, had reacted in the same way to 'Ammān's niches.

At the panel bases in Figure 171 are pearl-banded semi-circles reminiscent of those at 'Ammān. That on the left has a bar between it and the vegetation above, that on the right, a leaf below it; however, in both cases the semi-circles are within the inner panels and perhaps meant to
imply the ground from which the plant springs. Little remains of the other foliate motif in the right-hand panel of this niche, but Thompson likened the left panel's plant within a pearl and heart border to a similar panel at Khirbat al-Mafjar, found in situ on the south wall of the palace entrance (Figure 172), and to an "actual instance of a structural and decorative panel" found in the blind niches filled with foliage on the entrance tower of Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī's Lesser Enclosure.

There are grapes in both panels of Figure 170, quite naturalistic here, with fruit and a leaf in each vine loop. Of the two niches not illustrated, the panels of one probably contained vines, and those of the other showed "two variations of a candelabra tree with down-curving leaves". Other garden allusions were made in connection with the main hall. Pillars 3 and 4 were sheathed in the concentric spirals, through which fish "swam", and other fillers were various leaf motifs and overlapping heart florets all of which "must represent the fruitfulness and pleasures of vegetation which originate from water", and the columns themselves "may thus be regarded as symbolic of all the pleasant aspects of a Persian garden".

In the Main Hall neither engaged colonnettes nor serrated arch faces are mentioned. Nor were the panels the Hall's only ornament; there were plaques of a boar hunt, and the story of Bahram Gur and Azadah, and large-scale human and animal reliefs. Nevertheless, it does not seem to be mere coincidence that the recessed panels are referred to as providing a "view into a garden". The Main Palace's lateral entrances and niches are called "original" features when compared with known Sāsānīd structures, and their arrangement is said to be "unique". A source considered for the entrances and niches was the palace at Sarvistan and, for "ornamental niches", R. Ghirahman's reconstructions of the Great Hall and its niches at Bīshāpur. Bīshāpur's insufficient remains have been mentioned and, since D. Thompson's study, Sarvistan's Sāsānīd attribution has been rejected in favour of an early Islamic date, between 750 and 950 CE; however, knowledge of Ḍammān, Qaṣṭal and Ruṣāfah provides another framework for understanding the relationship of the panels to the Main Hall's adjusted entrance.
Blocking off the Hall's original principal entrance between piers 9 and 10 during the Umayyad period meant that visitors coming through the new lateral entrances were confronted with the niches and their garden-view panels on the wall opposite. Adjusting the principal entrance to force such a circumstance is most significant; it confirms that the placement of the second architectural motif, with or without paradisiacal imagery, at sites previously mentioned was purposeful. Had the original entrance remained, the garden imagery at one side could have appeared incidental. Confrontation enhanced the imagery's status, while its association with Sasanid figural themes suggests a compromise to suit different geographical and cultural circumstances. It was a Marwânid solution to the problem of installing the iconography in the least unsuitable part of an existing, unsympathetic architectural setting. The presence of the garden imagery suggests that the Main Hall was used for public audience in this complex of buildings. Its auxiliary area may have been reached by turning left through door 7 ("d7" on Figure 173), behind which the expedition's architect suggested there was a "half-domed throne room".

A propos 'Ammān's Reception Hall, had its "architectural detail and decoration" been entirely within the Sasanid tradition, then surely engaged colonnettes and serrated arch faces could have been incorporated into the decorative programme of Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad's Main Hall. Yet Thompson makes no mention of such features, leading to the speculation that the frame used in Greater Syria would have no significance here, even though Thompson described Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad's Umayyad decoration as done in a manner "more Sasanian" than what the Sasanids would have produced. On the other hand, Thompson's explication of the Persian garden symbolism of pillars 3 and 4 provides a conceptual framework for the Umayyad garden panels, in what must have been as striking an evocation of paradisiacal imagery as that of 'Ammān and Qaṣṭal, and as purposeful.
Notes


2. Ibid., fig. 36.


4. Northedge, Studies, p. 82.

5. Ibid., p. 101.

6. Ibid., p. 102.

7. Ibid., p. 81.

8. Cf. Roman Ghirshman, Iran: Parthians and Sassanians. Translated by Stuart Gilbert and James Emmons, London: Thames and Hudson, 1962, figs. 177 and 179 showing models of the reconstructed Great Hall and one of the niches. The reconstructions show the niches resting on a continuous ledge.

9. Northedge, Studies, p. 82, states Bishapūr’s ground plan only (his fig. 58) is reliable, as the walls are preserved to a height of about 2 m., and it is not known whether the building was still standing in Umayyad times to provide a model for ‘Ammān.


11. Only a portion of one stepped merlon was found, with "a half-palmette scroll on both sides", but Northedge comments merlons are among the first elements to disappear, citing the Great Mosque, Siraf, where only two were recovered from a building used for a much longer period than those at ‘Ammān, Northedge, Studies, p. 80, and n. 77.

12. Ibid., fig. 41.


17. Northedge, Studies, p. 81.


19. Northedge, Studies, fig. 40.

20. Ibid., p. 77.


23. Northedge, *Studies*, p. 77, and figs. 45-46, 55; there are two rows of serration on the interior arches and one row on the exterior arches.


25. Northedge, *Studies*, p. 102; Almagro Gorbea, "La Arquitectura," at pp. 204-205, considers Qal‘at ‘Ammān to be a symbiosis of the organization, construction techniques and decoration of the Sasanid and Byzantine-Classical worlds.


27. Kröger, *Sasanidischer*, abb. 40 "Rekonstruktionsversuch des Ostiwans"; see taf. 15.3, 17.1-2 for the fragments on which this reconstruction was based; also the reconstruction for Ma‘arid I, abb. 43, taf. 25.2-3.


30. *Ibid.*, fig. 52.2.


35. *Ibid.*, figs. 49.5 and 49.6.


37. Almagro Gorbea, "La Arquitectura," fig. 41.

38. M. Gautier van-Berchem, "Mosaics," figs. 153-156, shown in pls. 12c and 24b, 14a, 11a, 15a, Figure 130 herein; also fig. 160 and pl. 24f.


40. *Ibid.*, pls. 27.c., 27.e, 28.d.
41. Deborah Thompson, *Stucco from Chal Tarkhan-Esghabad near Rayy*, Warminster: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1976, Figure X.4-5 and p. 56 ff.


43. Hamilton, *Structural*, pl. LV.7W.


45. Hamilton, *Structural*, pl. LXIV.17E.

46. Thompson, *Chal Tarkhan*, p. 67; on her pl. XI.3, 2 1/2 spirals up and 2 1/4 spirals from the left, the head of such a fish can be seen in one interstice and its tail in the interstice immediately right. These spiral fields occur on pillars 3 and 4 in the main hall of the Main Palace.

47. Thompson, *Chal Tarkhan*, p. 86, and Northedge, *Studies*, p. 94, and n. 245.

48. The illustration here is from Ettinghausen and Grabar, *Art and Architecture*, fig. 9, "Jerusalem, Dome of the Rock, completed 691, mosaics".


54. Creswell, *EMA*, vol. 1, part 1, pp. 89-90, was able to look behind the parapet, as Clermont-Ganneau was not, and in the whole perimeter found only four opened niches, all the rest were blind; see his pl. 2b.


59. Lyttelton, *Baroque*, fig. 126, p. 24; the Temple is dated to the 2nd century CE.

61. Howard Crosby Butler, Architecture and Other Arts. Part II of the publications of an American Archaeological Expedition to Syria 1899-1900. New York: The Century Co., London: William Heinemann, 1904; pp. 181-82; among churches of the period noted for their exterior moulding are the apse at 'Arshin, p. 199; Bânkûsî, p. 194, and the North Basilica of the Church of S. Simeon Stylites, p. 190, in addition to the two examples given by the writer in the main text.


63. J. Lassus, Sanctuaire, pl. XXI.1, dated 6th century.

64. Ling, Roman Painting, pp. 21-22, fig. 18, "Stucco lattice-work balustrade. Herculaneum VI-2 (Samnite House), atrium. Late 2nd or early 1st century B.C."

65. Ibid., p.152.


67. Maxwell L. Anderson, "Pompeian Frescoes," reprinted from The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, Winter 1987/88, p. 18, said of fig. 24. In the reconstructed room of which it is a part, the garden is but one independent view divided from its fellows by painted columns - writer's photograph.

68. Northedge, Studies, p. 100.


70. In the Umayyad period 'Ammān was the administrative centre of a sub-governorate of Damascus, Northedge, Studies, p. 48.

71. Ibid., p. 79 states there are "more fragments than would be appropriate" for the two niches in Almagro Gorbea's reconstructions; he has restored twenty.


73. Almagro Gorbea, "La Arquitectura," p. 204.

74. Ibid., pp. 206-07.

75. Northedge, Studies, p. 88.


81. Carlier et Morin, "Recherches," p. 347, they were listed among a number of features called "perse et sassanide", but not otherwise described.

82. Carlier, "Qasṭal al-Balqa'," p. 108.

83. Carlier et Morin, "Recherches," figs. 16a, 16b, and 17 "Pilastre à colonnettes pour montant nord de l'Entrée"; Carlier, "Qasṭal al-Balqa'," illus. 3.

84. Carlier et Morin, "Recherches," p. 344.

85. Ibid., pl. LXVI.2 "Qastal, Maquette de Restitution, par Frédéric Morin, Salle d'audience au dessus du vestibule, Coupole centrale, absides est et sud vues de l'abside nord".

86. Ibid., p. 349, figs. 20 "Colonne engagée avec base et chapiteau tresse", 21 "Colonne engagée avec chapiteau floral".


88. Carlier et Morin, "Recherches," fig. 30 "Claveau pour coupole à svastika".

89. Kröger, Sasanidischer, abb. 120, "Kūš, Gebäude I. Bogenrekonstruktion (nach Watelin, Kish, Abb. 171B)".

90. Carlier et Morin, "Recherches," fig. 24, "Claveau pour tête de voute", and fig. 26, "Claveau a rosace pour voute".


93. Carlier et Morin, "Recherches," figs. 33, 34.

94. Avi-Yonah, "Oriental Elements," pp. 80-83, esp. p. 81 and n. 9, figs. 52, 54; Lassus, Inventaire, tome 1, figs. 8, 50, 74-75, and especially the almost geometrical grapes and leaves in fig. 138, Ruweyda, and on the capitals at Hawa, tome 2, pl. XVI.

95. Unfortunately, the smaller niche was either "given away or sold" to the Kuwait National Museum, who sent it off to "Les Tresors de l'Islam" exhibition in Geneva, under acquisition number LNS65S. Comparing the excavator's photograph and drawing with the catalogue photograph, it can be seen that,
as a Kuwaiti possession, the serration beneath the niche has been trimmed away. Carlier and Morin, "Archaeological Researches," p. 223 and n. 4. In entry no. 353 of the exhibition's English language catalogue, (Tony Falk et al, Treasures of Islam, Secaucus, New Jersey: Wellfleet Press, 1985), it is said to be from "Greater Syria, 1st half of 8th century" and "closely related" to the in situ niches at 'Amman. As well, Qasţal's residence and adjacent mosque received very severe damage from the modern owner of the site, with the result that parts of those structures are now irretrievably lost and known only through photographs and site records, Carlier and Morin, "Archaeological Researches," p. 221.


100.Ibid., p. 352.


102.Ibid., p. 108.


104.Ibid., p. 69.


106.Gaube, "'Ammān," p. 72, and taf. 9,A, B no. 2, C no. 3.


108.Carlier, "Qasţal al-Balqa'," pp. 120-121.


110.Otto-Dorn, "Grabung, pp. 119-133; this article deals with both campaigns, but does not, for example, reproduce all the earlier illustrations - a significant point.

111.Ibid., p. 119.

112.Ibid., text abb. A.
113. In Otto-Dorn's "Bericht," 1954-55 initial site plan, (abb. 1, "Russafa, Omayyaden Schloss"), "A" is Room 1; "B" is the north-west-corner of "Nordost-Nebenhof"; "C" is the north-east corner of the principal courtyard, and "D" is just within the south-west tower area.


116. Ibid., abb. 3.


121. Northedge, Studies, p. 80 and n. 78.

122. According to the English captions of Almagro Gorbea, "La Arquitectura," pl. 55b "Detail of the semi-columns with gilded stucco from the entrance arch to the Iwân", and pl. 56b "Eastern side of the courtyard 3 with the gilded semi-column of the façade and the foundation of the first column".


125. Ibid., p. 125.

126. Ibid., p. 125.

127. There's some ambiguity in the words used for what the writer believes are references to this room, for example, "Mittelsaal" in 1954 and 1957, and "Haupthall" in 1957.

128. Otto-Dorn, "Grabung," taf. 2 abb. 7, "Sockelmalerei (ergänzt) aus Saal 1".

129. Otto-Dorn, "Bericht," 1954, column 146 "... Zwischen ihnen satsen vier grotere Mittelfelder und zwei schmalere Seitenfelder".


132. Otto-Dorn, "Grabung," p. 126, taf. 3. abb. 9, "Nischenmalerei aus Saal 1".


137.Ibid., taf. 4 abb. 11, "Anlage II, Blindnischen-Füllung aus Stuck".

138.Ibid., p. 130.

139.Ibid., text abb. C, "Stuckfragment vom Tor", and p. 123.


141.Ibid., 1954, column 152.

142.This illustration appears in all three of her articles: abb. 10 in "Bericht," 1954-55; abb. 8 in "Bericht," 1954; taf. 4 abb. 12 in "Grabung".


148.Creswell and Allan, A Short Account, fig. 88, "Qasr al-Hair ash-Sharqi: entrance to the Lesser Enclosure".


150.Ibid., p. 3.

151.Ibid., p. 4.

152.See chapter 1, the margins on the arches of Figures 2 and 3, and those referred to at Lepcis Magna and in the blind arcading at the North Gate of Sergiopolis/Ruṣafah, Syria, Figure 20.


155. Ibid., p. 32.
156. Ibid., pp. 156-157.
158. Ibid., p. 12.
159. Ibid., p. 156.
160. Ibid., pp. 149-150.
161. Urice, Qasr Kharana, p. 74.
162. Ibid., "South facade, stucco panel".
163. Ibid., provides a discussion of the literature, pp. 6-23, and a comprehensive bibliography, p. 91 ff.
164. Ibid., pp. 82-83.
165. Ibid., pp. 61-63.
166. Ibid., p. 30.
167. Ibid., fig. 120, "Upper floor, plan", with additions by the writer.
168. Ibid., p. 29; the hole in room 48's floor is said to communicate with room 18, below, however, on the plan, Figure 161 herein, a communicating hole shows in room 47, and per the photograph of it and caption in fig. 93, this communicates with room 17, below.
169. Ibid., p. 72.
170. Ibid., fig. 27, "Room 51, general view towards southwest corner".
171. Ibid., p. 72.
172. Ibid., fig. 136, "Rosette, rooms 49-53".
173. Ibid., pp. 72-73.
174. Ibid., fig. 140, "Rosette, room 59".
175. Ibid., p. 33.
177. Urice, Qasr Kharana, fig. 141, "Room 59, north wall, elevation".
178. Ibid., pp. 72-73.
179. Ibid., pp. 75-76; other comparanda were the arcades at Ukhaydir, Atshan and Ma'aridh.
180. Ibid., p. 76.

181. Ibid., cover drawing signed "J. Sagasti".

182. Cf. Hillenbrand, "Qasr Kharana Re-examined," p. 112, that Qasr Kharānah's design was ignored by later architects and was a "dead end", and at p. 113, said of exterior arcade, that "little attempt is made to indulge in external display". Its design may have been ignored, but, as is reiterated herein, a building's design or origin is secondary to the inclusion of some manifestation of the paradiasical imagery.

183. Urice, Qasr Kharana, pp. 6-8, with other Arabic and Greek inscriptions and graffiti noted.

184. Frédéric Impert, "Inscriptions et espaces d'écriture au Palais d'al-Kharrāna en Jordanie," Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan (1995) 5: 409-411, graffito numbers. 8-11 inc.; of these, numbers 8-10 were published previously by Ghazi Bisheh.


187. Urice, Qasr Kharana, p. 86.

188. Ibid., p. 79.

189. Ibid., pp. 86-88.

190. Ibid., pp. 26-27.

191. Imbert, "Inscriptions et espaces," p. 416, "... vers 90 h. l'intérieur du palais aurait commencé à être dégradé progressivement".

192. Ibid., pp. 412-413, numbers 15 and 16; room 29 has four items, and room 37 has eight - see the table on page 415.


194. King, "The distribution of sites," pp. 92-93, and map 2, "Desert routes in eastern Jordan and northern Arabia".

195. Brisch, "Das omayyadische, (II)," 1965, p. 143, and part of abb. 4, "Fragmente und Rekonstruktion der Blendarkade vom Torturm des Schlosses (P. Grunauer)". It's not clear just where the niches would have been placed, but the curved piece of wall to which they are attached suggests some part of the tower. In "Das omayyadische," 1963, Brisch refers briefly to Otto-Dorn's article in Ars Orientalis about serrated arches and blind arcades having been found at Rusāfah, 'Ammān and Qasr Kharānah.

196. Brisch, "Das omayyadische," 1963, taf. XXXVII.b, "Bögen der Stuckbalustrade".
197. *Ibid.*, abb. 13, "Rekonstruktion der Hoffassade (P. Grunauer)".


200. Thompson, *Chal Tarkhan*, pp. 61, 71, 104 n. 51.


202. *Ibid.*, p. 3, and pls. XIII.1 and .6, niche' excavation numbers C.295 and C.296 respectively, "Decorative niche and flat facings from the Main Palace".


207. Thompson, *Chal Tarkhan*, p. 73; there was no mention of the al-Mafjar example having been found in place.


209. *Ibid.*, p. 73, excavation numbers C.297 and C298, respectively.


214. Thompson, *Chal Tarkhan*, p. 3.


217. Thompson, *Chal Tarkhan*, p. 54.
Chapter Four, Part 2: Origins and Uses

In part I of this chapter the paradisiacal arcades' origin was considered, as was their installation at various sites, one of which, 'Amman's Reception Hall, was discussed at some length concerning the influences other than Sasanid that may have contributed to its design and decorative programme. A characteristic feature of the arcades is their serrated arches and part II opens with comments on their likely origin and use.

K. Otto-Dorn drew attention repeatedly to Rusafa's characteristic serrated arches and the similar ones at 'Amman. H. Gaube compared serrated arches at 'Amman, Qasţal and Qaşr Kharānah; P. Carlier noted the similarity between Qasţal's and 'Amman's niches which have this feature and, in his examination of pendant and horizontal serration at Qaşr Kharānah, S. Urice, quoting L. Bier's work at Sarvistān, drew attention to Sasanid uses of the motif. On the basis of three, third century CE palaces at Firuzābād and Bīshāpūr, Bier suggested that serration "must have been a common feature of Sasanid architecture, at least in Fārs, where it served the same function as the dentil freeze in classical buildings in the West." Attention is drawn now to other examples of its application. The wide view is taken that serration is an easily-manipulated geometrical motif that may be carried out in a variety of techniques on different media.

M. Avi-Yonah points to the evidence of serration on votive altars from Gezer c. 625-600 BCE, and to its use on Jewish ossuaries from about the period of the Second Temple. In his setting out of "three appearances of chip-carving" (serration, or kerbschnitt) in Palestine, L. Rahmani says the first was in the Second Temple period and "exclusively" on Jewish ossuaries. Such an ossuary, found at Ramat Rahel, Israel, has serration about its sides and outlining rosettes. At Dura-Europos the serrated arch above the Atargatis graffito is thought to reproduce the shrine in which the goddess stood (Figure 174). There is a graffito in a tomb of Jerusalem's Northern Necropolis that shows two
registars of serration on an arch (Figure 175).\textsuperscript{9}

The serration found in Byzantine churches in the Negeb from about the mid-fifth century through the seventh is at the beginning of Rahmani's second appearance of the motif.\textsuperscript{9}

C.L. Woolley noted the use of serration at Abda, Negeb, as the lowest register in a string course,\textsuperscript{10} and on the capital of what seem to have been a pair of engaged colonnettes, from the side door of the North Church at Esbeita (Figure 176).\textsuperscript{11} According to A. Segal, this capital "disappeared decades ago and except for the drawing in Woolley and Lawrence's book there is nothing else on it".\textsuperscript{12}

Segal lists nineteen instances of the common motif "dog's teeth", or serration, on arches, lintels and pilasters at Shivta\textsuperscript{13} (also known as Sobota, Sebeita, S'beita, Esbeita), Negeb, including painted serration on the arch of an apse, and carved serration on the arch of a niche (Figure 177), both in the South Church,\textsuperscript{14} and on a pillar cornice (Figure 178).\textsuperscript{15}

H. Colt observed that at Nessana, Negeb, "dog's tooth" was part of the chip carving repertoire of simple designs that could be marked out with a compass and ruler,\textsuperscript{16} contra R. Ghirshman's statement that saw-tooth and zigzag patterns are all motifs deriving from brick buildings.\textsuperscript{17} In the local tradition the work was done on "intermediate quality limestone" that was comparatively soft when freshly quarried and hardened after exposure to the weather. The motif was found on bases and caps of door jambs and arch voussoirs, and used frequently to decorate large pilaster caps from which arches sprang.\textsuperscript{18}

D. Rice found fragments of serrated arches carved from stucco at Ḥṛah, near Kūfah. Some that were recovered from in a trench between mounds I and II, are thought to have been thrown out when building I in mound I was restored; the two pieces he illustrates have one and two rows of serration, respectively (Figure 179)\textsuperscript{19} Three construction, or restoration, phases were observed in building I; the first was considered to be Sāsānid, and the second and third Islamic, ending late in the eighth century or early ninth.\textsuperscript{20} There is some ambiguity in the period to which Rice assigns the serrated pieces. In 1932 he said that some elaborate carved stucco \textit{in situ} belonged to the third period,
and among examples cited says that some doors were topped by arches, and "fragments of similar [writer's italics] arches were found on other mounds"; a fragment cited is part of a serrated arch. In 1934 he describes the fragments of which the serrated arch pieces are part, as amongst the material thrown out when building I was restored, and may be late Sasanid, or belong to the seventh century at the latest.

On an early seventh century CE glass chalice, possibly Syrian, a cross is seen beyond a serrated arch at a building's entrance and there is a band of serration about the rim (Figure 180). A church lintel from Deir Abu Deî shows a serrated arch supported by paired, plain columns between crosses (Figure 181).

A remarkable comparandum for discrete niches and serration is the carved arcade on the lid of an object in the collection of the Palestine Exploration Fund, published as a Jewish ossuary by C. Clermont-Ganneau, (Figure 182), and as a Christian sepulchral chest by G. Chester. As can be seen, these niches share capitals and bases, but have individual colonnettes. The arches are serrated, as is the ledge beneath the arcade. This latter feature is much like that found originally with the smaller niche from Qasṭal (see Figure 145), while the rosettes within each niche call to mind the stars in Qubbat al-Šakhrāh's interior arcade (see Figure 132). Neither publisher mentions a date, but M. Avi-Yonah refers to the ossuary as "late", and within the dating parameters of his research on Palestinian art, one may understand that as late Byzantine.

Tangentially to the ossuary, on the remnant of a pilaster from the tower gateway at Sebaita, Negeb, is another instance of independent niches, whose arches are formed of an architrave resting on the columns (Figure 183). The ossuary, this lintel and that from Deir Abu Deî suggest there may have been some wider taste for the discrete form of arcade prior to its Marwânid use. This pilaster is illustrated by A. Segal, and by M. Avi-Yonah, but seems to have been photographed originally by C.F. Tyrwhitt Drake as one of a pair of pilasters similarly ornamented. In Tyrwhitt Drake's illustration, the pilasters support a lintel which is divided into three metopes, the outer two being filled
with rosettes within double circles; the stone above the lintel has an urn with a palm tree growing in it; a concentration of motifs with relevance for Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's ornamentation.

As pointed out in part I of this chapter, the arches on the Coptic chest's lowest register and the smaller Qasṣāl niche have an outer pearl band and an inner serrated one. A similar arrangement appears on an arch c. fourth century CE thought to have come from a church at Khirmet Kermel, about 13 km. south of Hebron (Figure 184),\(^2\) and on the arches of the "Marwān" ewer, found at Abū Sir al-Malaq, in the Fayyūm, near the reputed tomb of Marwān II (Figure 185).\(^3\) This is one of the comparanda proposed by K. Otto-Dorn for Rusafsh's blind arcades.

The ewer's niches have individual colonnettes with Corinthian-type capitals, and shared impostes. Above the arches a luxuriant vine frieze spills out of two vases placed to either side of the vessel's spout.\(^4\) Vases set above columns call to mind similarly-placed vases and vegetation in the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah, while the rosettes in the arcade follow the usage in Figures 133 and Figure 182. Novel are the birds and animals of an earthly paradisiacal garden.

A similar ewer, exhibited at Munich in 1910, has less well executed arcade ornament. From a rather unclear illustration there is serration on the outer edge of arches which rest on single columns, with animal, birds and vegetation seen through the arcade.\(^5\) On another ewer, in the Keir Collection, just one side of the body has an arcade whose columns support plain arches, beneath which are gazelles and vegetation. In the spandrels are "Sasanian" split palmettes.\(^6\) The "Marwān" could have been the archetype for a group of metal ewers whose decoration, which included bird spouts and ornate fill holes and handles, reflects paradisiacal imagery. One of the group, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, has no body ornament but the metal appliqué applied to its handle (Figure 186)\(^7\) gives the effect of vines entwining a column as they do those of the kiosk in the western ṛiwāq (Figure 187).\(^8\) The leafy turret about its fill hole, a feature which is similar on all the ewers, reprises the theme of a paradisiacal grove seen through arcades (Figure 188).\(^9\) What seems to be a popular interpretation of the turret appears on the body of a polychrome ceramic jug found at Sūsah (Figure
189), dated eighth century CE and described as "... des palmer, entre lesquels on aperçoit un arbuste(?)."

Imagery comparable to that on the "Marwân" ewer was found on a lintel at Khirbat al-Baydāʾ (also known as Qaṣr al-Abýd), Syria, c. 100 km. south east of Damascus (Figure 190). This depiction has the ewer's spirally-grooved columns, and Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah's interstitial ornament and scalloped niche hoods, with a serrated architrave forming the arches. Because Khirbat al-Baydāʾ's interior plan differs from that of acknowledged Umayyad structures, its excavator, H. Gaube, thinks it may be a marginal- or early Umayyad building, or, perhaps of Ghassânid construction. The lintel could indicate the site's Umayyad re-use, as it was found in the debris of the eastern enclosure wall in the vicinity of the single entrance. Al-Baydāʾ was occupied seasonally, as climate and water supplies limit its use to the months of March to May, when the ground is covered with grass and flowers; at other times of the year the country is desolate. One of the site's uses is thought to have been as a point of contact with Ghassân's tribal allies.

An arcade, with serrated arches from which hang lamps, appears on the dome-shaped portion of a steatite lamp (Figure 191) found in an Umayyad residence at al-Fadāyn/Mafraq, northern Jordan, an ancient site re-used in the Umayyad period as a ḥaqī station. A piece of ivory from the same site shows a single arch with a serrated face. Umayyad usage is attributed to the period of al-Walīd II (743-744).

L. Rahmani's second period of "chip-carving" in Palestine finished with the end of Umayyad rule. He remarked on its use on stone and clay Palestinian incense burners of the sixth-eighth centuries CE, and on Umayyad pottery; an instance of the latter appears in Figure 192.

The above examples show that rather than a Sāsānid motif of limited and temporally-distant use, serration was a contemporary, commonly-used Byzantine motif of which the Muslims availed themselves. Over the centuries it had been employed by Jews, Christians and others and, although ostensibly non-denominational, it may not have always been neutral. Serration was a traditional
motif in the Negeb, and in Palestine. Colt observed that Nessana, along with other Negeb cities, had prospered in the late sixth and seventh centuries CE with the revival of a caravan route between Aylah and the Mediterranean, and that the Muslim conquest seemed to have produced few changes there. Thus, Negeb workers might have applied their traditional, ongoing expertise to carving the stone serration at 'Ammān and Qasṭal and, perhaps, the stucco at Rūṣāfah. It seems possible also that, while many of Qasr Kharānah's structural features reflect Iraqi influence, the use of serration reflects contemporary regional taste.

Serration was used extensively by the Umayyads, and the wider Byzantine taste for combining it with bands of pearls or roundels seems to have flowed naturally into Umayyad art. Whether serration had some charged meaning for Muslims is not known, but in Marwānid hands the motif acquired a new dynamism. Arcades of serrated arches not only provided striking architectural settings, they are the distinguishing feature of a number of moulded, unglazed clay lamps.

At Ramlah, along with the moulded jar neck, were found a number of unglazed clay lamps having the general characteristics of that illustrated by F. Day in her plate XII.2 (Figure 193): a tongue handle, a channel around the fill hole that continues to the wick hole, a pointed base the same shape as the lamp with a ridge from the base to beneath the wick hole. Such a lamp is J. Magness' Form 5, a "channel-nozzle oil lamp", whose suggested date is eighth to tenth century. Lamps of this sort may or may not have a decorated base, as shown in Magness' illustration.

One of the Ramlah lamps has an arcade with tiny triangles above the arches, and vine loops filled with grapes above (Figure 194). A lamp in the Warschaw Collection, provenance unknown, shows a similar arcade with tiny spikes above the arches; a tree and a leaf can be seen beneath, and above the arcade is a vine frieze with a tree and assorted leaves, or flowers, in the loops. On the other side of the lamp are grape bunches and assorted leaves (Figure 195). The Royal Ontario Museum, (hereafter "ROM") has a lamp, provenance unknown (Figure 196), that could have come from the same mould as the Warschaw.
Two lamps with serrated arches were published from excavations at the Hill of Ophel, Jerusalem; trees, birds and a date palm are seen through the arcades of one (Figure 197), and birds only on the second (Figure 198), which has a more detailed drawing of the arcades. The ROM has a complete lamp with equally-detailed arcades, through whose arches may be seen birds, trees and flowers (Figure 199). Birds and, perhaps, a star, are seen through the arcades of another lamp in the Warschaw Collection (Figure 200).

An arced lamp fragment with birds was found by A. Tushingham, in the Armenian Garden, Jerusalem (Figure 201), and a tree is seen in the single complete niche on another lamp fragment, found at Ramat Rahel (Figure 202).

In a sepulchral cave in the "Wad Yasül", near Jerusalem C. Clermont-Ganneau found a lamp through whose serrated niches "palm leaves" are seen (Figure 203). On the evidence of this lamp and another found with it bearing a Greek inscription (not then deciphered), Clermont-Ganneau decided the site was an important Christian burial place. Trees appear under what seem to be serrated arches on lamp fragment found at "'Ain Karim", in a none too clear illustration.

From direct observation and what can be deduced from illustrations and descriptions these particular arcades are found only on lamps of the kind seen in Figure 193.

The lamp arcades mimic those that frame the paradisiacal imagery at 'Ammān, Qasṭal and elsewhere, and the creatures and vegetation seen through the arcades are popular versions of the paradisiacal imagery. Although the decoration is executed with varying degrees of competence, allowing for the small scale and the need to draw each arcade and its motifs individually rather than impress the moulds with a die, the lamps unmistakably reflect their architectural models. The plain, individual colonnettes and serrated arches are particularly-well delineated in Figures 198 and 199. Placing various motifs in each vine loop or within each niche follows the model set in the Qubbat al-Šakhrah, and the similar combining of anomalous motifs seen at 'Ammān. The vine scroll above the arcades links the decorative programme of the Ramlah and associated lamps with the "Marwān" ewer's
arrangement, as well as that suggested in the reconstruction of the audience hall at Qasṭal, while the inclusion of the birds, (some of which might be beasts!) allies the lamps with the ewers and Khirbat al-Bayḍā’s lintel and their terrestrial version of the arcades and garden imagery.

Another lamp from the Warschaw Collection shows serrated arches flanking the handle and less-well executed serration above the flanking the nozzle (Figure 204). A lamp similar to that in Figure 205, may have been found by S. Saller at Bethany. His illustration of it is poor, but the description, including mention of the "arch with tiny lines along its exterior", appears to describe the Warschaw lamp. (It is not suggested that the few lamp examples herein are all there are.)

There is a particular importance to the Ramlah lamp. On the assumption that it, like the jar mould, copied something, the lamp indicates the existence of at least one building with the arcade imagery prior to Ramlah's founding c. 708 CE. As the notable resemblances between Qasṭal's smaller niche and the Coptic chest suggest an early period, a date within 'Abd al-Malik's reign (685-705), as Carlier and Morin hypothesize, post-construction of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah, seems possible. What then do the distinctive arcades attest?

However decorative in appearance, they were not mere decoration. Nor were they a sign of residence, although they were found at residences. They seem not to have been applied universally; for instance, apparently not on the bath at Quṣayr 'Amrah, Jordan, nor over the multiple entrances of the Large Enclosure at Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī. They appear at sites on travel routes. Their appearance is independent of a structure's cultural origin or type. They might be more or less elaborate according to circumstance, yet maintain a remarkably constant and recognizable appearance. Their most elaborate form has been found at a caliphal palace, an administrative complex and a princely residence. They are found in areas identified as being for "reception", "audience", and "meeting", that may be on the ground floor, or the upper storey, roofed or unroofed. Rusāfah, Qasṭal, and, possibly Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad, have, immediately adjacent to the location of the garden imagery, exclusive space that seems to have been auxiliary to it. The arcades appear to have been
subjectively-related to a structure's entrance.

Concerning the sites at which the arcades were found, G. King has pointed out that Umayyad *qasr* show a pattern of considered placement along the boundaries between arable land and grazing territories of the Hawrān and the Balqa', (Figure 206). Far from being merely a succession of isolated aristocratic estates, they were often part of a complex of settled villages and towns based on agriculture, and likely served many purposes. Qasrāl, for instance, was an agricultural estate with substantial nearby water catchment facilities. It was positioned on the edge of arable land bordering the grazing range of nomadic herders allied to the Umayyads, and is thought to have been a stopping place for *hajj* caravans on the Darb al-Shām route between 'Ammān and Madīnah.

Qasr Khārānah's handiness to the Darb al-Shām and Wādī al-Sirāḥ routes has been pointed to by both Urice and King, and the most recently-discovered inscriptions found at that Qasr lead Gh. Bisheh to suggest it and the Wādī al-Sirāḥ route may have been used "primarily by government officials rather than by merchants and pilgrims" in the Umayyad period.

One might continue north from the Wādī al-Sirāḥ route via al-Baydā' and Jabal Saws to Damascus, or to the eastern desert via Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbī and Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqī; again, these sites are on travel routes bordering the lands of nomadic herders allied to the Umayyads.

King's hypothesis that *qasr* distribution suggests "coherent" state planning, is echoed by Bisheh, writing of Qasr Mshash, about 21 km. north-west of Qasr al-Kharānah. Mshash had a small *qasr*, a bath and substantial water collection and storage facilities, but the area is thought to have been generally non-residential. More likely it served a pastoral community and was a halting place for caravans and, possibly, was used by the postal service (*al-barīd*) and government officials travelling between 'Ammān and the Hijāz. "Coherent" planning might describe 'Abd al-Malik's administrative centralization, including reform of the currency and the introduction of Arabic as the language of bureaucracy. Qubbat al-Šakhrah was another of his initiatives and the paradisiacal arcades derive from it.
Qastal and Jabal Says had been lived in by Marwānid princes, so the arcades there could be a dynastic signature. Not so Qasr Kharānah, whose substantiated Marwānid connection is that it was visited by the governor of Jund al-Urdunn, 'Umar b. al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik. That the arcades appear at such disparate locations as Ruṣafah, 'Ammān and Qasr Kharānah may indicate no fixed ceremonial was associated with them; however, their appearance at Ruṣafah and 'Ammān suggests that the arcades might have been associated with a function that would be carried out by the caliph, or by someone to whom the caliph had delegated a power, such as his provincial governor. Modifying Urice's hypothesis that Qasr Kharānah was purposely built for meetings with Umayyad tribal allies, (events that might have been held as conveniently at regular, well-watered way stations), the paradisiacal arcades could have indicated places where the meetings or audiences included the administration of civil justice.

Writing on the organization of the caliphate, E. Tyan states that in the Umayyad period it was an essentially personal sovereignty, concurrently political and religious. Caliphs acted as judges, and some, including 'Abd al-Malik, 'Umar II, Yazīd II and Hishām, personally acted as a qādi. One manifestation of the caliph's absolute power was the judicial exercise called maẓālim, a superior justice wielded only by the caliph or his representative; an attribute of supreme authority, most evident in the ascendance of royal power, absent in its decline. Tyan describes it as extra-ordinary law, a sort of revolt against the shari‘a, not integrated into or accepted as a part of the fiqh system.

Traditionally, maẓālim was founded on Qur'anic texts and the Prophet's Sunnah, or, had its origins in pre-Islamic dispute settling mechanisms amongst clans and tribes without a central authority. R. Levy citing al-Māwardī says maẓālim courts for the review of wrongs were instituted by the "later Umayyads, who sat in person to receive petitions from all comers". J. Nielsen says al-Mārwardī's suggestion that 'Abd al-Malik "was the first to arrange for the regular hearing of maẓālim petitions seems to be premature". Tyan citing al-Maqrīzī says 'Abd al-Malik was the first to set aside a special day for maẓālim audiences, and put his qādi, Abū-Idrīs al-Azdī, in charge of them.
Maṣālim denoted the caliph's "fundamental competence to deal with all litigations and to right all wrongs". The wrongs he might right included: oppression of his subjects by his officials; unjust taxes; reduced official stipends; restoration of wrongfully-seized property; suppression of evil-doing, and general hearing and settling of disputes. The caliph could act personally, or delegate the power to his representative, such as a minister of state, provincial governor or administrator.

Maṣālim audiences were grand public occasions, whose essential goal was to allow persons to bring their complaints to the caliph. 'Abbasid caliphs from al-Mahdī to al-Muhtadī are said to have followed the Umayyad example of maṣālim justice. Al-Mahdī (775-785) is said to have been the first 'Abbasid caliph to administer maṣālim justice personally, and Mansūr (754-774) had its exercise recommended to him as a corrective of abuses of power by state functionaries. Mūsā al-Hādī (785-786) exercised maṣālim in the Dār al-Maṣālim, or Dār al-'Āmma, in Baghdad. Orders would be given for curtains veiling the caliph to be drawn aside, the doors would be opened, and the people allowed to enter. Al-Muhtadī bi-Allāh (869-870) built a qubbah with four entrances and called it "Qubbat al-Maṣālim" where all classes of his subjects received justice. The providing of special buildings, or parts thereof, for maṣālim audiences was followed by the Fatimids, Zangids and Mamluks, and in Umayyad Spain Amīr 'Abd Allāh b. Muhammad had a gate opened in the wall of his palace compound where his subject might come to make their complaints; the gate was called Bāb al-'Adl.

Such detail is not given for the Umayyads, but Tyan's general comments are of interest. Initially, there were no rules to determine where or when maṣālim courts would be held, other than that a mosque was never considered a place of habitual audience, because maṣālim justice was of a secular nature. "En principe, le juge des maṣālim peut tenir son conseil où il lui plait; en fait, tant qu'un local ne sera pas affecté spécialement à cet objet, il tiendra conseil dans le lieu où il exerce ses fonctions. Pour le souverain, ce sera son palais, pour les ministres, gouverneurs, titulaires distinctes des maṣālim, leur résidence officielle ou privée."
Continuing to speculate: Hishām might have sat in room 1 of Palace One, Ruṣāfah, dispensing justice to his subjects assembled in the courtyard; as might the sub-governor in the Reception Hall at 'Ammān, with the ceremony befitting his rank. At Qasṭal's earlier, princely residence something like Ruṣāfah's ceremony might have had the dispenser of justice seated in the suite of rooms over the gate and his petitioners assembled in the arcaded audience hall. These three sites' decoration, evident and reconstructed, suggests an ambience conducive to a grand show.

In the fractious times post the second civil war, the wide-ranging powers of mazālim justice would be called for, and the exercising of it at qusūr located strategically on travel routes might have been a practical measure. Qaṣr Khārānah's decoration is modest, but the arrangement of the southern rooms, with the buyūt centred on rooms 59 and 29 feeding into room 26, indicates a certain formality could attend the proceedings. Perhaps the sub-governor at 'Ammān rode out there for the purpose at set times of the year corresponding to seasonal pastoral migrations, or the passing of the ḥajj caravan, as a mazālim judge may have gone out from Damascus in Jund Dimashq to Jabal Says and al-Sharqī's Small Enclosure on similar occasions.

'Umar b. al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik, who could have administered mazālim justice, would surely have been out of his jurisdiction (?) at Qaṣr Khārānah during his governorate of Jund al-Urdunn, but maybe his visits occurred during the year he commanded the ḥajj caravan. Imbert, citing Bisheh, suggests that 'Umar b. al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik may have lived for a time at the Qaṣr.

As for Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad, to which a particular date or origin has not been ascribed; it, like Rayy, was within the administrative area of al-'Irāq, where 'Abd al-Malik had appointed al-Ḥajjaj b. Yūsuf governor, "excluding Khurāsān and Sijistān" in 75 AH. Al-Ḥajjaj, or one whom he deputed, might have dispensed justice there.

Why paradisiacal arcades should have been so used is again speculative. The writer thinks it most likely they originated with 'Abd al-Malik, who may have known that, ancienly, gardens were an
expression of a ruler's wealth and power,\textsuperscript{119} and his garden, the Qubbat al-\cScakhrah, was that. He may have known that ancient monarchs held audiences in their gardens, as is inferred of Cyrus the Great (559-530 BCE),\textsuperscript{120} whose garden is considered a link in the chain of royal eastern gardens, a tradition that was absorbed into the Isl\textaeic world and, post the Umayyads, expressed at the Balkuw\textaeri Palace, of `Abb\textaeisid S\textaeamarr\textae'.\textsuperscript{121}

If Qas\t\textaeal dates to the period of `Abd al-Malik himself, one might say the arcades were installed there because they were of his creation, Qubbat al-\cScakhrah, of which he must have been justifiably proud. The Qubbah was a manifestation of his, and by extension, Marw\textaeinid power and, of course, a Muslim triumph. If the arcades' installation coincided with the exercise of m\cSc\textaeilim justice at Qas\t\textaeal, a precedent could have been set and followed elsewhere for dispensing it in an area so ornamented. Certainly, the idea of the caliph displaying his absolute authority in the presence of imagery that celebrated absolute Muslim power would not have been beyond the imagination of the man who conceived of the Qubbat al-\cScakhrah.

As for the concurrence of the single entrance or route with the paradisiacal imagery, this could have focussed the ceremonial aspects of a m\cSc\textaeilim audience; then again, an existing Umayyad taste for single entrances may have been an opportunity of which to take advantage.

There are two further examples of the arcades to be considered. At Khirbat al-Mafjar, about 1.5 miles north of "modern Jericho in the Jordan valley",\textsuperscript{122} groups of three little painted niches "recessed in the wall faces" were set between each pair of the bath's clerestory windows (Figures 207, 208 and 209).\textsuperscript{123} Figure 210 shows the bath's restored clerestory,\textsuperscript{124} and Figure 211, an isometric reconstruction of the bath building.\textsuperscript{125} Those niches with serrated arches over plain colonnettes without capitals or bases are as spare as those found on the lamps; others with acanthus on arches over individual colonnettes with paired Corinthian capitals, are finely-detailed, and reminiscent of the arcades above the entrance to al-Sharq\textaei's Small Enclosure (see Figure 159). Both types have been given scalloped hoods and painted marble recesses.
D. Thompson drew attention to the similarity of a Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad panel motif to one in al-Mafjar's palace waiting room (see Figure 172). There it was just a panel behind a bench armrest, a minor feature in a profusion of vines and other ornament (Figure 212). A deliberate act, it seems, because separating the paradisiacal imagery from its distinctive frame, then elevating the frame high above the bath, an area for sybaritical audience, can only have been to provoke. The mischievousness intensifies when one considers P. Soucek's recent analysis of the bath porch's imagery as an interpretation of the legend of Solomon's flying throne, and that monarch's equally legendary "wisdom to adjudicate disputes". In fact, the many instances of discrete niches at al-Mafjar, as niches or lavishly decorated balustrades (Figures 213, and 214), suggest the imagery had become the butt of an extended joke.

Another joke seems implied in the arcades on the façade of Qasr al-Ḥayr al-Garbī, Syria, about 60 km. west-south-west of Palmyra. As at al-Šarqī, the occupiers of this qasr were positioned to observe the movement of tribes and their animals in the seasonal rhythm of desert life, as had previous occupiers of the site since at least Roman times, because al-Qasr al-Ḥayr al-Garbī was not only on a direct route from Damascus to Palmyra, but on an alternate route to Damascus via Qaratayn.

A recurrent aspect of paradisiacal imagery and its installation is the appreciation of illusion. Roman wall painting's influence is evident in this; as interpreted in the Damascus mosaics, it mixes realistically portrayed buildings and landscapes with the mansions and pavilions of dreamscapes.

E. B. Smith has said of al-Garbī's façade that its designer would not have gone to so much trouble had he been unaware of the "royal significance" of imperial gate imagery. O. Grabar points to the Roman tradition of symbolism associated with entrances as the likely origin of al-Garbī's elaborate façade. Another explanation may be suggested.

As reconstructed (Figure 215), the familiar discrete niches have been dispensed with, in favour of an arcade more common in pre-Islamic times, but a tree with entwining grape vine (Figure
that has been restored to the first tower bay to the right of the entrance suggests this is a variant, more elaborate, version of the paradisiacal imagery seen previously at 'Ammān and Qaṣāl, where the viewer is outside the garden looking in. Here, it is speculated, the view is from inside. Someone has attempted a fantastical "illustration" on the qār’s outer wall.

In the foreground of this illustration, above a postulated socle or dado on the towers, are three formal garden beds, or carpets, filled with rosettes and flower buds. These are edged with acanthus leaves at the bottom and rosettes at the top. Above them, the geometric register might be an opus sectile path between the garden beds and a cloistered enclosure wall; or, it might be a panelled wall (coated in vegetation) beneath the windowed gallery of a garden pavilion. Along the margin of the enclosure wall, or pavilion, there may have been a line of trees, of which the one remaining is reminiscent of the creeper entwined trees in the paradisiacal garden of San‘ā’ Figure 3, and similar arrangements in 'Ammān's niches and al-Aqṣā’s panels. Topping either structure is a line of medallions, then stepped merlons.

Acknowledging this arguable interpretation of al-Gharbī’s façade, the writer points out it is not the only such instance. An example of what seem to be "plantings" of trees and vines along a cloistered enclosure wall topped with stepped merlons is shown in Figures 217, and 218 on a ewer said to be Sāsānīd. Were all its bays filled with stucco trees, Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī’s towers, from the level of the arcades to the merlons, would look very like the ewer’s ornament.

There is a pavilion (Figure 219) in the centre of the well-known large bronze dish (Figure 220), in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, described as from Irān of the seventh century. It is domed and has verandahs on at least two sides. The façade shows stylized palmettes (?) or lotus (?) and palms about the lower walls, then a windowed gallery, a register of discs or medallions, and stepped merlons. A. Pope states the vegetals are only "wall decorations not a projection of the garden" because one of the motifs is repeated on the central dome; however, there is some justification for a contrary view because of the dish’s outer ornament, which could be interpreted as a screen of lush
foliage "planted" against a garden's cloistered enclosure wall. In Figure 215 al-Gharbî's "real" medallions and merlons are, concurrently, part of the "illustration".

Found at Sûsah, Irân, were parts of unglazed, moulded, four-sided objects whose walls were covered with vines (Figure 221) or other vegetal motifs (Figure 222), and topped with stepped merlons (Figure 223). On each side was an entrance topped with a five-lobed arches, sometimes serrated (see Figure 221), and sometimes pearl-edged (Figure 224). Figures 221, 222, 224 and, possibly, Figure 223, come from level 3 at the beginning of the site's Islâmic period, dated c. mid-seventh century to the second part of the eighth. Because there is a depression in the top of the objects they are referred to as supports, that happen to look like pavilions crowned with stepped merlons. These pavilions' walls may be decorated with vegetal motifs; alternatively, these pavilions may be interpreted as rising through a screen of vegetation "growing" around them.

In chapter 2 it was suggested that because of its external mosaics the Qubbat al-Şakhrah might have been interpreted as the "likeness of a heavenly pavilion rising out of a paradisiacal garden".

The above examples seem to be linked, in ways not immediately clear but related phenomenologically to the art, discussed throughout this thesis, that invites one to actively explore imagined worlds.

Schlumberger observed that the first Islâmic art used concurrently, juxtaposed in the same constructions, architectural forms, technical procedures and decorative motifs of diverse origins, all of which were visible at al-Gharbî, and the explanation of this eclecticism was known, i.e., "c'est la pratique de la liturgie, de la corvée d'état". It is speculated that duty has been turned about here, and Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbî may be meant to parody the Qubbat al-Şakhrah. Presiding over this garden is a bust of the goddess Atargatis (Figure 225), which has been restored to a spandrel between the middle gable and arch on the right-hand tower of Figure 215, and a reclining couple (Figure 226), who have been placed beside the merlons of the right-hand tower. Like other statuary at this site, the couple are modelled on the funerary sculpture of nearby Palmyra, and like their
models they too may be banqueting, at a feast for the dead (Figure 227). Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī’s façade is a wry tribute to the existence of the garden view.
Notes


4. Ibid., p. 36, and illustrates one in fig. 9, p. 96.


11. Woolley and Lawrence, Wilderness, p. 79, fig. 13, "Esbeita: North Church, capital of side door".


15. Ibid., p. 103, no. IV-8, "Wall-attached pillar cornice".


17. Ghirshman, Iran, p. 293.


27. Avi-Yonah, "Oriental Elements," p. 4 refers to the article's research within the "Roman and Byzantine period", and p. 36 to the ossuary's "late" date.


34. Arrows indicate these on Figure 188, and they can be seen in Sarre, "Die Bronzekanne," figs. 2, 3.


37. Handle of ewer in Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; writer's photograph.

38. Ettinghausen and Grabar, *Islamic Art*, fig. 15, "Damascus, Great Mosque, 706, mosaics from the western portico".


50. Cf. its use on the Atargatis and Christian shrines.


54. Rosen-Ayalon and Eitan, Rami, twenty-fourth page, lamp in the middle row on the left; only the one side of the lamp is shown.

55. Yaac Israeli and Uri Avida, Oil Lamps from Fretz Israel. The Louis and Carmen Warschaw Collection at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1988, cat. no. 464, acc. no. 76.6.1444. It should be noted that although at p. 155 the authors state Warschaw lamps like the F. Day one described have pointed oval [the writer's italics] bases, in its catalogue listing on p. 193, lamp 464 is said to have a ring base.

56. Acc. no. 910.114.202, one of a number bought "in 3 lots from Beisan, Taibe, etc.", from Vester & Co., Jerusalem, December 1907.

57. R.A.S. Macalister and J. Garrow Duncan, "Excavations on the Hill of Ophel, Jerusalem 1923-1925," Palestine Exploration Fund Annual (1923-25) 4: pl.XXI.21; at pp. 193-194, this is one of a number of lamps arranged in a tentative "chronological series" of the Roman and Byzantine periods. Of the twenty-two lamps on the plate, those from #10 on "do not call for any special word of description, the drawings speak for themselves, p. 196.

58. Macalister and Duncan, "Ophel," p. 196, fig. 211, as this is one of two lamps described as the "overflow" from pl. XXI, the dismissive comments of the previous note applies to it also.

59. Acc. 910.114.185, one of a number bought "in 3 lots from Beisan, Taibe, etc.", from Vester & Co., Jerusalem, December 1907.

60. Israeli and Avida, Warschaw, cat. no. 465, acc. no. 76.6.1436, no provenance.

61. A.D. Tushingham, Excavations in Jerusalem 1961-1967 vol. 1. With contributions by John W. Hayes, R.B.Y. Scott and Emmett Willard Hamrick. Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1985, p. 97 and fig. 32.33. It was with "Byzantine phase IIIB pottery", with which there may have been intrusive sherds; parallels cited include those of Macalister and Duncan, above.

62. Aharoni, Excavations, fig. 26.10, and p. 41 where it's said to be from the later Byzantine period "(stratum IIA), i.e. from the 7th century"; that the fragment's fill hole structure differs from that of the lamps in the figure can be seen in the drawing.

63. Clermont-Ganneau, Archaeological Researches, pp. 420-422, illustration on p. 422, "Terra-cotta Lamp".


65. Israeli and Avida, Warschaw Collection, cat. no. 468, acc. no. 76.6.1441, no provenance.

66. Ibid., cat. 467, acc. no. 76.6.1442, no provenance.

lamp is said to be in the category of "Late Byzantine and Early Arabic Lamps" with channel-nozzles and heart-shaped bases. At p. 186, the lamp shape was said to have been "in use through the early Arabic period, that is from about the seventh to the eleventh century.

68. Carlier, "Qastal al-Balqa'," pp. 120-121.


70. King, "The Umayyad qusuṣ," p. 72.


72. King, "The Umayyad qusuṣ," passim, and p. 73.


74. Ibid., pp. 370-371.


76. Ibid., p. 96.

77. Bisheh, "Qaṣr Mshash," p. 90 and n. 27.


81. Ibid., p. 82.

82. Ibid., p. 88.

83. Ibid., pp. 89-90.


90. Tyan, Histoire, p. 441.

91. Ibid., pp. 440-441.

92. Ibid., pp. 445-446.

93. Ibid., p. 441.

94. Ibid., p. 446.

95. Ibid., p. 512.

96. Ibid., p. 515.


103. Tyan, Histoire, p. 475.

104. Ibid., pp. 507-508.


107. Ibid., p. 457.

108. Ibid., citing al-Tabarî, p. 511 and nn. 2, 3.


111. Tyan, Histoire, pp. 510-511.

112. Ibid., pp. 509-510.
113. Ibid., p. 510.
114. Ibid., p. 510.


121. Ibid., p. 483 ff.


123. Ibid., p. 71 and pl. XIII.3, .6, and .7 respectively.

124. Ibid., fig. 33; this restored sketch of the clerestory of the Bath Hall's intermediate aisle bay shows sets of three serrated arches between each window.


126. Hamilton, Walid, fig. 22; in the reconstruction drawing of the palace waiting room, see the vertical panel behind the art rest at right.


128. Hamilton, Khirbat al Mafjar, pls. XXII.1a, "Marble screen fragments", and LXVI.1, "A forecourt balustrade panel". See also the arcades over the upper claustrum in Figure 35 herein.


130. Ibid., p. 24.

131. Ibid., p. 24.


134. Creswell and Allen, A Short Account, fig. 81.


137. Orbeli and Trever, Orfèvrerie, fig. 77.


140. Brisch et al, Islamische Kunst, kat. 119, abb. 27.


143. Rosen-Ayalon, La Poterie, fig. 192, p. 89, and in n 1 mentions portion of a similar support having been found in Bactria (J.-C. Gardin, Céramiques de Bactres. Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1957, pl. XIV.5a, b).

144. Rosen-Ayalon, La Poterie, fig. 193, p. 90.

145. Ibid., fig. 195, p. 91.

146. Ibid., p. 12, as are other fragments in figs. 96 and 97.

147. Ibid., p. 89.


149. Schlumberger et al, Qasr el-Heir, pl. 64.c, "Buste de femme coiffée d'un calathos"; probably Atargatis with a dove, p. 21; Weiss, Ebla to Damascus, cat. no. 251; cf. "Greek Choré", Grabar, "Ceremonial and Art," pp. 192-193.

150. Schlumberger et al, Qasr el-Heir, pl. 64b, "Groupe adossé à la tour Nord".


Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to show the relationship between the San'a' illustrations, the Qubbat al-Sakhrah and the two iconographic motifs: the hypostyle mosque and column of Figure 3, and the serrated arch. One conclusion reached is that the Qubbat al-Sakhrah was a regional response, couched in a regional artistic vocabulary, to what was perceived to be a serious regional problem. It was recognized that the effectiveness of the response, for conqueror and conquered alike, depended on the visualization of Paradise as a garden being interpreted in a widely-understood, contemporary artistic idiom, something that everyone would "get" in the broadest sense, even if not in all the details.

And in the building's shape; the imaginative adaptation of the "inhabited scroll" to display Paradise's infinite bounty; the arrangement of ornament, and the use of Qur'ānic texts to explain himself, the Qubbat al-Sakhrah's patron showed himself alert to the religious and cultural environment.

A second conclusion is that the Marwānid s were aware of the importance of their architectural achievements and memorialized them in the San'a' Figures, whose value as recorders of the early Islāmic period, and as works of art, can hardly be overestimated. Figure 1, the "star diagram" of the Qubbat al-Sakhrah, displays the imaginative resources at the Umayyad's disposal. Figure 2, identified as the first Umayyad al-Aqsā, known hitherto only from brief texts, is a realistic portrait of a building whose construction and ornament, like the Qubbat al-Sakhrah's, draws heavily on regional sources, including the baroque features of Roman imperial architecture. It was pointed out that the Jerusalem mosque's qiblah wall, like that of the Prophet's Mosque at Madīnah, and the courtyard of the Great Mosque at Damascus, bore a version of the Qubbah's heavenly garden. Figure 3 records the existence of a previously-unrecognized Marwānid iconographic programme, the need for which suggests, on the one hand, the threat perceived from other religious iconographies continued beyond the erection of the Qubbat al-Sakhrah and, on the other, that Islām was still attempting to define itself.
A conclusion yet to be reached is why a qubbah was built for the Rock and what it was about the Rock that made paradisiacal imagery so appropriate an ornament. Many of the reasons advanced have strong Jewish and Christian overtones, and early Islām was not impervious to the influence of these faiths; however, a response as powerful as the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah could only have been suitable in its patron's eyes if the Rock, its housing and ornament were deemed to be wholly Muslim. J. van Ess' argument that a contemporary Syro-Palestinian hadīth associated the Rock with God's presence and the world to come is most interesting.

For whom the Sanʿāʾ Qurʿān was made, or what occasion it might have celebrated, it can only be pointed out that Figures 1 and 2 refer to Jerusalem, and Figure 3 to an iconography whose remains, so far as is known, are from Egypt where it had some success, as the Cairo Qurʿān, and the marquetry panels in particular, evince. Reasons militating against its continuation might have been that it became otiose, or was of a too regional a taste to be useful elsewhere.

Regional taste is certainly evident in the serrated arch motif of Palestine, Jordan and Syria, viz. its absence at Chal Tarkhan Eshqabad. One is conscious that, in the consistency of its appearance and architectural placement, this motif was used purposefully. The administrative function which has been speculatively associated with it may not, of course, have been the application of maṣādīm justice, but the motif was not merely decorative. 'Ammān's use of it attests that a real attempt was made to recapture the illusive quality of the Qubbah's imagery, and the modest application of serration and blind arcade at Qasr Kharānah dignifies the architectural layout; but, at Khirbat al-Mafjar the imagery was trivialized, and at Qasr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī it appears to have been parodied, although done so imaginatively!

As interesting as any other feature of Marwānid paradisiacal imagery is its "scenic" quality. Whether it is a vista at the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah, a landscape at Damascus, a vine glimpsed through 'Ammān's "windows", or a bird seen through the arches of a clay lamp, the literal and spiritual eye is constantly directed to the farther view. That these views are frequently ambiguous and very stylized
does not diminish their attraction, they invite exploration. Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī’s façade is one such ambiguity; it is either a much decorated frontage, or a plain crenellated one masked as a pavilion seen through a paradisiacal garden, a three-dimensional illustration combining vertical perspective with the fantasy of Roman wall painting. The Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah is the beginning and al-Gharbī appears to be the end of the Marwānid iconographical adventure, if Mshatta’s celebrated façade is overlooked. It can be observed that the basis for its layout is serration, or a zigzag with dots (Figure 228).

The Marwānid art referred to in this thesis is notable for its deliberateness; its informed choice of regional motifs, and an awareness of its importance. Al-Mafjar and al-Gharbī’s use of the paradisiacal arcades have been pointed to as small indicators of the declining strength of the Marwānid caliphate, to which might be appended G. King’s observation that the degree "to which ḥuṣūr tended to meet specifically Umayyad needs and interests may be measured by the absolute neglect of so many sites by the Abbasids."
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160. South facade, stucco panel; after Urice, Qasr Kharana, fig. 116.
161. Upper floor, plan (with additions by the writer); after Urice, Qasr Kharana, fig. 120.
162. Room 51, general view towards southwest corner; after Urice, Qasr Kharana, fig. 27.
163. Rosette, rooms 49-53; after Urice, Qasr Kharana, fig. 136.
164. Rosette, room 59; after Urice, Qasr Kharana, fig. 140.
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166. Cover drawing signed "J. Sagasti" (of room 59); after Urice, Qasr Kharana.
167. [Detail of] Fragments und Rekonstruktion der Blendarkade vom Torurm des Schlosses (P. Grunauer); after Brisch, "Das umayyadische, (II)," abb. 4.
169. Rekonstruktion der Hoffassade (P. Grunauer); after Brisch, "Das umayyadische," abb. 13.
170. Decorative niche and flat facings from the Main Palace; after Thompson, Chal Tarkhan, pl. XIII.1, niche excavation number C.295.
171. Decorative niche and flat facings from the Main Palace; after Thompson, Chal Tarkhan, pl. XIII.6, niche excavation number C.296.
172. The palace entrance hall, detail of carved plaster found in situ: south wall; after Hamilton, Khirbat al Mafjar, pl. XXXIV.1.
173. Plan of the Main Palace; hatched finish indicates original construction, stippling a later state of building; after Thompson, Chal Tarkhan, plan 1.
La Deesse aux Colombes; after Rostovtzeff, "Graffiti," pl. XIX.5.

Painted ornament in tomb in the Northern Necropolis of Jerusalem; after Macalister, "Report 3," p. 256, fig. 6.

Esbeita: North Church, capital of side door; after Woolley and Lawrence, Wilderness, p. 79, fig. 13.


Wall-attached pillar cornice; after Segal, Architectural Decoration, p. 103, no. IV-8.

Fragments of carved stucco arches; after Rice, "The Oxford Excavations," 1934, fig. 8.

Chalice. Engraved glass, Syria (?), early seventh century; after Handbook of the Byzantine Collection, fig. 319.


Jewish ossuary in the collection of the Palestine Exploration Fund; after Clermont-Ganneau, "Nouveaux ossuaires," p. 401.

Kapitell (Sobota); after Rosenthal-Heginbottom, Die Kirchen, taf. 46.c.

Arceau provenant du Kh. Kermel; after Abel and Barois, "Yatta," p. 583, fig. 2.

Zeichnung der Gravierungen der Bronzekanne des Kalifen Marwan II; after Sarre, "Die Bronzekanne," fig. 5.

Handle of ewer in Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; writer's photograph.

Damascus, Great Mosque, 706, mosaics from the western portico (riwâq); after Ettinghausen and Grabar, Islamic Art, fig. 15.

Turret of ewer in Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; writer's photograph.

Polychrome vase de Suse; after Koechlin, Les Céramiques, pl. XIII.107.

Figurliche Dekorationen aus Hirbet el-Baida; after Gaube, Ein Arabischer Palast, taf. XI.2, F.-N. 28.


Incised Arab bowl from terrace; after Fitzgerald, Beth-Shan, pl. XXVI.3.


Lamp; after Rosen-Ayalon and Eitan, Ramla, twenty-fourth page, lamp in the middle row on the left.

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp; after Israeli and Avida, Warschau Collection, cat. no. 464, acc. no. 76.6.1444.

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp, Royal Ontario Museum, Acc. no. 910.114.202; writer's photograph.

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp; after Macalister and Duncan, "Ophel," pl. XXI.21

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp; after Macalister and Duncan, "Ophel," fig. 211.

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp; Royal Ontario Museum, Acc. no. 910.114.185; writer's photograph.

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp; after Israeli and Avida, Warschau, cat. no. 465, acc. no. 76.6.1436.

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp fragment; after Tushingham, Excavations in Jerusalem, fig. 32.33.

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp fragment; after Aharoni, Ramat Rahel, fig. 26.10

Terra-cotta lamp; after Clermont-Ganneau, Archaeological Researches, p. 422.

Unglazed, moulded clay lamp; after Israeli and Avida, Warschau Collection, cat. no. 468, acq. no. 76.6.1441.

Unglazed moulded clay lamp; after Israeli and Avida, Warschau Collection, cat. 467, acq. no. 76.6.1442.

Desert routes in eastern Jordan and northern Arabia; after King, "The distribution," map 2.

Fragments of plastered masonry; after Hamilton, Khirbat al Mafjar, pl. XIII.3.


Bath hall, intermediate aisle bay, restored sketch of clerestory; after Hamilton, *Khirbat al-Mafjar*, fig. 33.

The bath, restored isometric view; after Hamilton, *Wadi*, fig. 2.

The palace waiting room at Khirbat al-Mafjar, reconstruction drawing; after Hamilton, *Wadi*, fig. 22.


Qasr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī: the palace entrance as reconstructed; after Creswell and Allen, *A Short Account*, fig. 81.


Bronze ewer said to be from Dāghistān; after Orbeily and Trever, *Orfèvrerie*, cat. 77.

Drawing of Sāsānīd bronze ewer with candlestick trees and vines in an arcade; after Ringbom, *Paradisus*, fig. 85.


Schüssel, Iran. 7 Jh.; after Brisch et al, *Islamische Kunst*, kat. 119, abb. 27.

Fragment de support; after Rosen-Ayalon, *La Poterie*, fig. 194.

Fragment de support; after Rosen-Ayalon, *La Poterie*, fig. 192.

Fragment de support; after Rosen-Ayalon, *La Poterie*, fig. 193.

Fragment de support; after Rosen-Ayalon, *La Poterie*, fig. 195.

Buste de femme coiffée d'un calathos; after Schlumberger et al, *Qasr el-Ḥeir*, pl. 64c.

Groupe adossé à la tour Nord; after Schlumberger et al, *Qasr el-Ḥeir*, pl. 64b.

Funerary banquet relief from the underground tomb of Malkā, c. AD 200; after Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra*, pl. 100.
