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Blake Ballard

I Summoned the Flowers

Pencil, Ink, Acrylic

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From the Editors' Desks

Dear Readers,

Upon perusing this issue of the University Scholar, you may notice a common theme running through much of the artwork and writings. The theme, travel, or the experience of foreign cultures, was unintentional. Yet, it is not entirely coincidental in a publication of the students of the University of Dallas. The contents of this issue mirror the conversations and personalities of the students of the University; we have all been affected in some way by our study abroad program. For some, the influence finds expression in their artwork, for others, in a deepened interest in the cultures of antiquity. Others find that their interest in cultural differences has been piqued. Even those who do not participate in the Rome program are influenced indirectly by the overseas experiences of their professors and roommates. Thus, this issue is a reflection of the fabric of UD culture; it is full of faith, art, modern and ancient mediterranean culture, and even a little science. We editors sincerely hope you enjoy it.

The Editors

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The “Whirling Cerebral Chaos” of *Under the Volcano*: Finding Intelligibiliy through Ending

“The Consul felt a queer relief. Now he realized he had been shot” (389). “Queer relief” might aptly describe the reader’s sensation upon arriving at the end of *Under the Volcano* as the protagonist Geoffrey Firmin, former British consul to Mexico, dies. In the previous chapter, we witness the death of his recently divorced wife, Yvonne. She has returned to Quauhnahuac, Mexico on the Day of the Dead to reunite with Geoffrey and save their relationship, despite the presence of Hugh, the Consul’s brother with whom she had an affair. Yvonne’s death is abrupt, and we are not even certain it has happened when it does. Geoffrey’s occurs after a macabre, hallucinatory drunkenness. For both, there is no afterworld, nor afterlife narrated, and in fact, a denouement of any kind is completely lacking. But, after a narrative full of portentous symbolism hinting at a final doom, their deaths come as relief, or resolution, like the return to the tonic at the end of a piece of music. Nevertheless, there is an extra note in the final chord, or perhaps one missing, and this “queerness” we perceive with uncertainty. Although the story heralds apocalypse at every corner, the end seems to lack appropriate finality. We are no more fazed by their deaths than Geoffrey is at being shot. Despite our closeness to the characters, we ask, “Now what?” Or the more dangerous question, “So what?” This question is of the greatest importance, but it is also very difficult to answer. Does the ending’s queerness imply that Lowry failed? Thus far, most of Lowrian criticism is essentially an attempt to justify this novel, but the justifications allow Lowry an easy escape. Observing *Under the Volcano*’s allusions, intertextuality, symbolism, and multiplicity of voices, critics are able to justify the novel in terms of its ability to create an intricate system of references. Ironically, like the Consul, they frantically track down every reference, and when they have plotted every point in the novel and reconstructed an elaborate web of allusions, they believe they have found the novel to be meaningful. They peg Lowry as a post-modern *pastiche* artist. Critic Sue Vice calls *Under the Volcano* “collage with a conscience.” These analyses are not inappropriate or incorrect, and are often very insightful, but they neglect consideration of both *Volcano* and Lowry for what they are fundamentally: a story and a story-teller. Although it may bear semblance to a collage, it is first a fiction, and as

such, has its proper end. Frank Kermode, in his lecture series entitled *The Sense of an Ending*, puts forth many helpful characterizations of the phenomena of endings. I will be referring periodically to those characterizations which prove useful in understanding *Under the Volcano*. In his introduction, he says: “Men, like poets, rush ‘into the middest,’ *in medias res*, when they are born; they also die *in mediis rebus*, and to make sense of their span they need fictive concords with origins and ends, such as give meaning to lives and to poems” (7). In *Under the Volcano*, we are deep in the middle of things, caught and trapped in a “whirling cerebral chaos” of a single day, a mere snapshot of the characters’ lives. We are locked in a world of excessive detail, of multiplicity of voices, texts, and interpretations. How we understand Geoffrey’s and Yvonne’s deaths allows us to make sense of their lives. How we understand the ending of *Under the Volcano* allows us to make sense of the novel. In this essay I hope to show how this ending, which seems so bizarre upon our first reading, actually fits and supports Lowry’s aesthetic project. I will claim that the characters possess a strong desire to locate a logical beginning, middle, and end, but accomplishing this is not so easy. Lowry presents a vision of life in revolution, and this circularity makes it difficult for one to establish the ends that allow for a sense of whole. The characters’ salvation, and ours, depends upon the proper fictional accounts we give, and how we respond to them. To understand the incongruity of the end, we should look at the beginning. After a flashback introduction by the Consul’s old friend Jacques, our three main characters Geoffrey, Yvonne, and Hugh, meet early in the morning in Mexico on November 2nd, and spend a day wandering from bar to bar in three different towns. Of course, this hazy continuity is punctuated by the appearance of various scenes, characters, and vignettes — scenes like a vagrant hurling a tire down the street, characters like the Consul’s uptight American neighbor, Quincey, and vignettes like the Consul watching an insect escape from the clutches of a cat. All seem to have little cause, and little consequence in terms of plot. In addition to these interruptions, the plot is broken by the histories of the three main characters, Geoffrey, Yvonne, and Hugh, presented in flashback form. Critic Ronald Walker actually quantified the percentage of time spent in anterior mode, and it is high, even for a modern novel. My point is this: almost nothing happens in this novel, besides wandering about and drinking, drinking, drinking. Thus, we are somewhat unprepared for the gravity of death. Geoffrey is shot by fascist police, but not before releasing the horse which will, unbeknownst to him, trample

Yvonne. It is a tremendously drastic ending to a—may as well acknowledge it—boring story. As I have said, with the entire novel ceaselessly introducing portents of death and doom, there is certainly a thematic context for death and tragedy. When Lowry is not filling the sky with thunder and lightning, he relentlessly reminds us, “*Es inevitable la muerte*” (240). Yet there is further reason that the novel would call for the death of these two characters, which is based on neither the plot nor thematic resonances, but upon the resolution of a conflict embedded in the novel’s representation of life. In other words, it is a conflict which does not arise solely from actions and events in the form of a plot, but emerges from the texture and aesthetic of the novel itself. This conflict presents the same challenge to both character and reader simultaneously: how does one make sense of one’s life out of the overwhelming data presented? The data to which I refer comes from a dialogue of newspapers, billboards, playbills, labels, garden signs, menus, travel posters, transcribed noises, and overheard voices, all typed in full before the reader — this, in addition to a richly detailed landscape, a host of passing characters, a plethora of vignettes, images, flashbacks, and hallucinations. The characters undergo the difficulty of trying to interpret their lives, based on an inundation of fragmentary details compounded by ineffectual and insignificant action. The conflict is reproduced for us as readers, and we join them in their quest for meaning. This search for meaning in their lives is analogous to finding meaning in the novel. The endings of lives and novels, yield an end as *telos*—intention, purpose, or direction. As a greater finality than death is difficult to imagine for mere mortals, it serves as the ending they are unable to locate. When they struggle to find stability, unity, and finality, death alone can help them. Let us then examine the appearance of this conflict in the text for both Yvonne and Geoffrey, as well as their attempts to resolve it. The personal conflicts of both characters crescendo in their respective penultimate chapters. By looking at these moments we can obtain a strong sample of the tension which drives these characters. I might note that chapters in *Under the Volcano* are effectually narrated (under the guise of a third person omniscient narrator) by the main characters. Starting with Yvonne in Chapter 9, the last four chapters alternate between herself and the Consul. Let us begin with Yvonne’s penultimate chapter, which narrates a scene at a rodeo. At this point we would already have a sense of her inner conflict, a search for an end which is manifest in her search for home. Her suitcase, bespangled with hotel-stickers from various countries, is a physical

representation of her roaming. Such restlessness is not limited to a geographical realm, but extends also into her love life with Geoffrey, to whom she is unable to remain faithful. Her return to Mexico signals an attempt to restore home, but she does not find it there. So Yvonne finds another end by which she can make sense of her existence: she hopefully projects a future home for herself and Geoffrey. Her reflections in the rodeo arena have been primarily on her past as she tries to synthesize the scenes of her past life in Ohio, Hawaii, California, Chile, and Mexico. She dwells on her father's failed projects, her failed career as an actress, and her first failed marriage. But at the sight of another happy couple, her thoughts turn to the possibility of a living in a farm-shack in British Columbia: "But," as she says, "it was not a shack—it was a home!" (280). Yvonne imaginatively furnishes it with a wealth of meticulous description. Although at this point it is completely fictive, she gives the shack a "narrow path that wound down through the forest from the store, with salmonberries and thimbleberries and wild blackberry bushes that on bright winter nights of frost reflected a million moons...There was a wide porch where they sat on spring mornings" (279-280). She gives the vision a remarkable realism by constructing a complete landscape with specific flora and fauna. This realization of her dream gives it extra weight. Her more poetic descriptions, while departing from this realism, only amplify its significance. But what is most peculiar is perhaps her use of the past tense in imagining the future. By imagining the action as in the past, she imagines it as complete. Because it has ended, she can refer to it as a whole. Yvonne continues to develop this vision since it would allow her to see her marriage with Geoffrey, and her return to Mexico, as successful and thereby fruitful. The pain and failure of the past possesses positive direction because it has an endpoint. In a world wherein she feels drawn in different directions in endless confusion and unfamiliarity, she looks for the stability of home. As they leave the arena, Yvonne mistakes a greenhouse roof for a lake: "but their house was in her mind now as she walked: their home was real" (290). In a world of false appearances and misleading signs, Yvonne maintains that her fictional home is more real than what appears before her, and she attempts to hold the endpoint as an anchor to steady herself. I am not claiming that this necessarily remedies the problem. Instead, I suggest simply that Yvonne's fictive projection of home via the imagination is the natural result of the vertigo of her present, and the ramification of her past. Yvonne's confusion sparks the invention of her own story, or fiction. The Consul's struggle with finding direction is

similar to Yvonne's but his symptoms are even more recognizable. In the Consul's penultimate chapter (10), he, Yvonne, and Hugh eat dinner and drink in the Salon Ofelia. As he sits in the bathroom there, the Consul's condition is dramatized as a dialogue of overheard voices from another room, voices from the past, his mescal-induced thoughts, and the text he is reading at the moment, which happens to be a travel pamphlet. Each of these voices is given equal importance. The travel pamphlet is reproduced in full, which means that it likely speaks more to the Consul than Yvonne does in the entire novel. Nothing marks the difference between things spoken in past and present, and a careless reader could easily mistake the Consul's remembered voices with Hugh and Yvonne's current conversation. We have spoken of the difficulty of making coherent a multiplicity of voices, and here this is realized for the reader. Very close to the Consul's mind, we are privy to his struggle and undergo it ourselves. The reader supplies the Consul's questions: What is the pattern, if any, to this dialogue? What is its meaning? Is it significant? Again, this seems to be a good description of the "middest." We are thrust into the middle of a chaos, *in medias res*, out of which we must derive some order. In addition to suffering from a failure to make such multiplicity of voices intelligible, like Yvonne, the Consul also feels encumbered by his past. As the possibility for renewing his relationship with Yvonne again arises, and their eyes meet longingly, the Consul remembers the time when they first met in Spain. He sees "behind her eyes, beyond her" to Granada and their memories there, unable to encounter Yvonne without also becoming entangled in the unintelligible ramification of the past. To see her as human is to see her life, her past, and his past with her. Dropping his eyes, he meditates on a catalogue of multifarious alcohols and then thinks, "How indeed could he hope to find himself, to begin again when, somewhere, perhaps, in one of those lost or broken bottles, in one of those glasses, lay, forever, the solitary clue to his identity? How could he go back and look now, scrabble among the broken glass, under the eternal bars?" (304). His need for order and completion is manifest in his scrabbling for a whole identity, which has been dispersed in his alcoholic past. He carries the weight of his past even as he sees it in Yvonne. He must piece his way through the overwhelming catalogic detail of both past and present. Over their dinner, the Consul and his brother Hugh argue over the appropriateness of interfering in the affairs of various nations in trouble, such as Spain or China, to which Hugh, as a journalist, has devoted much of his life. "Read history. Go back a thousand years.

What is the use of interfering with its worthless stupid course? Like a *barranca*, a ravine, choked up with refuse, that winds through the ages" (323). The Consul sees an inevitability to the story of every nation, and as such, no reason to interfere with its course. This course is written and determined in history such that a glance at the past reveals that the future is unchangeable. For the Consul, this concept is easily applied to his own situation, specifically his dipsomania. After mocking Yvonne for trying to save him, he thinks, "Was the Consul saying this? Must he say it?—It seemed he must" (325). The Consul chooses to see his own downward path through alcoholism as immovable as a ravine. In mocking Yvonne's attempts to save him, he embodies this very belief: his hurtful remarks are part of an unalterable course, such that he can do nothing but insult her, and in so doing, destroy the possibility of their future together. The Consul views the relationship between his past and present identities as tenuous and unstable, so he invents the fiction of the *barranca*, a story of his life's inevitable plunge. He thus relieves himself from the responsibility of making his life intelligible. He is able to both simplify the multiplicity of voices and dispersed past and give them significance by forcing all to mean one thing. His interpretation is given one direction, to a single outcome or end, namely, his own destruction. If he has been doomed from the start, then his misery, loneliness, and alcoholism align conveniently. Kermode notes that *Apocalypse*, a type of end-based fiction with the world as its subject, is resilient because it "can be disconfirmed without being discredited" (8). That is, there is always the "power to manipulate data in order to achieve the desired consonance" (9). The Consul's apocalypse is his own infernal doom. He interprets every detail as confirmation of his destiny, such that he achieves the desired consonance. In the Farolito, the bar at which he is shot, he catalogues everything, even going so far as to count the toothpicks on the bar. He asks himself, "did not each correspond, in a way he couldn't understand, yet obscurely recognized, to some fraction of his being?" (377). The assumption that everything in some way points to himself becomes a subconscious activity when he misreads a newspaper headline referring the pope's imminent death as alluding to his own. As he leaves the Salon Ofelia for the Farolito, the Consul, distracted by his surroundings, says, "I...I choose—... Hell...Because—...I like it" (327). Even the most deliberate decision to accept the finality of hell is fragmented by his thought and action. Whereas Yvonne projects an end in order to orient the past, allowing her to act meaningfully, the Consul chooses to hurl himself into

finality, to plunge into the *barranca*, so that he may be dispossessed of the responsibility of action as response to interpretation.

Now that we have isolated the conflicts of the characters (which coincide with the reader's anxiety), we must shift modes by exploring Lowry's aesthetic vision, which describes the world in which these characters operate. Before moving on, I will briefly summarize what we have determined so far. We began by reacting to the incongruity of a severe ending in a novel whose action is replaced largely with details, allusions, and flashbacks. It seemed strange and inconclusive because there is little context to distinguish their death from the chaos that marks their lives. Yet death is present thematically throughout the novel, and their endings seem to come as a "relief" by satisfying such allusions. For human life, death is the greatest finality, so their deaths also satisfy both characters' desire for an end. Where do we see desire for end? Both Yvonne and the Consul have difficulty synthesizing the chaos of the present with its multiplicity of voices and signs. They also are burdened by the weight of the past with its fragmentation and dispersion. They imagine endpoints, which determine their direction, and thereby allow them a more coherent sense of their lives. Yvonne imagines a home, a comic end. Geoffrey tragically imagines himself into hell.

We have established then, that the ending does not follow from the action, but the characters' personal conflicts. Their struggles to find an end are finalized by death, yet the missing note remains. The question of the novel's value persists: does the end make sense, and if it does, what are its implications? How does the end make intelligible the world vision that is Lowry's aesthetic? If the end properly belongs to the story, we would have difficulty conceiving of another ending which would lend the same meaning, or achieve a similar effect. These possibilities should be considered, but before doing so, we must supply context for analysis—the form of Lowry's aesthetic. An understanding of the persistent vision of life which emerges from the text will provide a backdrop with which to bring the end into proper focus. Both characters conceive of their lives as movements through time which must follow some logic, however indeterminable. If they are made of past, present, and future, then when past and present are a directionless chaos, endings bestow linear order. Kermode offers a brilliant analogy for how we make sense of this duration or interval of our lives relative to beginning and end. The words tick and tock are metaphors which describe the story of a second. He says, "the clock's tick-tock I take to be a model of what we call a plot, an organization

that humanizes time by giving it form; and the interval between tock and tick represents purely successive, disorganized time of the sort that we need to humanize" (45). The form of this novel does not itself present a linear temporality. *Under the Volcano* is a tock-tick novel, which Kermode sees modern novels like *Ulysses* doing, "when tick-tock seems altogether too easily fictional" (45). Lowry has deliberately organized the novel around the most basic unit of human life, a single day, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. And yet, he completely scrambles temporal order. Events which occur simultaneously are placed sequentially, such as the last two chapters. The history of each character's life (which composes much of the story), is told in anterior time (or flashbacks), such that events occurring many years ago are inserted into the present, often without introduction. From the first chapter with Jacques' flashback, we are continually going backward. In light of this, Victor Doyen's spatial reading of the novel seems to make sense. The claim here is that when a novel like this lacks a coherent action, our understanding of it cannot be based on temporal order, or upon any sense of linearity. Instead, its organization is web-like, or better yet, cartographical, with each reference linked intricately by a filament or highway, to another. We must be cautious here, however, for we do not wish to resemble the bull upon which Yvonne meditates at the rodeo, which, "temporarily defeated...resembled some fantastic insect trapped at the center of a vibrating web" (279). The tireless search for an answer in the form of patterning may land you in the midst of a giant web from which you are unable to escape, a situation in which the critic can easily find himself. Patterns do not mean; they help collect meaning. If pursued too vehemently, the reader will run circles without end like a bull in a ring. So is there another way to characterize this sense of temporality? The tock-tick conceptualization is tied to Kermode's treatment of the modern sense of ending, specifically its apocalyptic sense. Our age feels the constant immanence of an ending at which we never arrive. He says that in our times, "the stage of transition, like the whole of time in an earlier revolution, has become endless...Our own epoch is the epoch of nothing positive, only of transition. Since we move from transition to transition, we may suppose that we exist in no intelligible relation to the past and no predictable relation to the future" (101-2). Before, there were complete revolutions, possessed of beginning and end. Now, Volcano's protagonists, deprived of completion, appear to live in a state of transition: Yvonne, between one country and another, between one lover and the next; the Consul, between bars and hallucinations.

The restless movement of the book, with its disordered temporal alignment and constant wandering without structured plot, resembles continuous revolution. Their pasts are dispersed and unintelligible, and their futures are invented. We find this very sentiment in Yvonne's reflection of the film *Le Destin de Yvonne Griffaton*.

She arrives during the middle of the film, and having missed the beginning, never bothers to find out later what happened, because she "would have first to endure the newsreel, the animated cartoon, a piece entitled *The Life of the African Lungfish* and a revival of *Scarface*, in order to see, just as so much that conceivably lent some meaning (though she doubted even this) to her own destiny was buried in the distant past, and might for all she knew, repeat itself in the future" (277). Here is precisely the structure which we have noted. Yvonne would have to endure a clutter of distractions in order to view a past whose relation to herself is unintelligible. The past does not give singular meaning to the future, and the future is informed by an unstable past. The circular movie reel, for Yvonne, could begin at any point, for where does one locate the beginning and end of a circle? Without a beginning or end, one cannot grasp the whole interval of time at once; instead it must be experienced one part at a time, in fragments. It is Dante's difficulty in the divine vision: the line from heaven to hell can be described, but not the circularity of God. Is direction, and therefore meaningful action, determined only by one's place on an endless cycle? If the world does not always allow for a tidy fiction directed at an end, it allows for the comfort of repetition. If we cannot find tonic resolution, we may as well enjoy the return of the chorus. Although the inability to find an endpoint is frustrating, Yvonne does take some comfort in the familiarity of circular patterning. Her eventual recognition of the stars under which she originally felt lost is relieving: "the countless unmeasured jewelled wheels of countless unmeasured galaxies, turning, turning, majestically, into infinity, into eternity, through all of which all life ran on—all this, long after she herself was dead, men would still be reading in the night sky...would they not, too, still be asking the hopeless eternal question: to what end?" (336). The fact that men will repeat this even after her death is a testament to life's repetition, to its continually unanswered questions. The universe itself bears a circular structure, with its unmeasured galaxies (we cannot account for their massive amount of data), which revolve infinitely. Yvonne may be comforted by their eternality, but it then begs the question, "to what end?" This is a teleological question founded on the seeming

temporal endlessness of the world. Due to life's eternal revolution, until their search is ended by death, the characters never cease to "try, gropingly, to find a meaning, a pattern, an answer" (278).

But death does not answer the question which remains posthumously: to what end? Death seems to be the only way of permitting the diffusion of these characters a unity, but it is still shown to be inconclusive. Even in death, we are not given a neat, linear reality, but a divided consciousness. The end does not objectively cap the multiplicity, but occurs through it. We are nowhere told objectively, "Then Yvonne died," or "then Yvonne gave up the spirit." Likewise, with the Consul. Instead, their deaths are narrated by their consciousnesses, which conjure a series of scenes not easily distinguishable from those imagined in life, such as the fair, the stars, or a mountain in Kashmir. Such an end feels insufficient, "queer." Because the problem of their love story is not resolved, we might look for a context, a conclusion, an afterword. I would suggest that for this we must turn to back to the beginning, which reinforces the trochal structure of the book, which Lowry himself claimed was present. The cyclical pattern of existence returns us to the start such that Jacques's chapter functions as a temporally displaced denouement. With Jacques, we see their life in review, condensed to a letter and committed to the flames, and in this extension of the ending, we take greater comfort in its reality. In the same way eulogies are given in mourning for the dead, wherein reflection on a life yields a story, a fiction, which helps organize meaningfully the duration of their lives. The first chapter is this eulogy. First, we feel the frustration of being in the "middest" of the novel. In the end, we float in crisis, that moment between an end and a beginning and thus are propelled toward conclusion.

The vast amount of circular imagery, such as ferris wheels, carousels, movie reels, and the rotation of the celestial sphere, all support this revolutionary structure of the book. Time rotates backwards, characters live without beginning or end, as galaxies spin into eternity. Since the ending contributes significantly to this vision, it is justified as form matching content, but could there not be other possibilities for endings which are perhaps more appropriate? For we do not wish to be like the Consul, who assigns ends arbitrarily and then forces what is in the beginning and middle to justify them. Rather, the end should properly emerge from the middle. This returns us to a place from which we had to depart earlier—discussion of the possibility of replacing death in the end with an opportunity for Geoffrey and Yvonne to either reunite, or choose to separate. Both would be decisive and conclusive, and might not leave us in the bewilderment we experience upon first reading though the novel.

Without the context of Lowry's aesthetic vision of a life, these options would seem to make more sense. Now it is clear that the ending could not be otherwise. If they were able to find love again, it would change our conceptions of their characters, as well as what we understand of Lowry's vision of life. Their fundamental struggle to bring significant action out of the unintelligibility of past and present would have to disappear miraculously. The self-dooming fictions by which the Consul separates himself from Yvonne would have to be overturned. If they were both to separate decisively, we would not feel any force of implication or gravity to the situation. Without the impact of the end, we would have struggled through a sad, difficult, and somewhat boring novel with no way of gauging its meaning. The novel's end shows the complexity of our most basic conceptions of time, and the inconclusiveness of what we hold to be most final.

"Lies! Books are not circular! They are not revolving! They are rectangular prisms! I begin them at chapter 1, and then end when there are no words left, hence, beginning, middle, and end." In this way you could reproach me justly, because my characterization of the novel as purporting a vision of the circular is, in fact, a lie, as are all metaphors, and indeed, all fictions. Fiction allows us a way of modeling the world, just as I have proposed a model for this book. Through stories, we are given stable ways of making sense of our world. In the same way, geometry lies about books by calling them prisms, which is a simplification of the way they are not prisms. However, I hope to be responsible with my fictional accounts and metaphors, just as the characters in *Under the Volcano* ought to be. All three, interestingly, are story tellers: the Consul an author, Yvonne an actress, and Hugh a journalist. Through their projected ends and fictional accounts, they try to collect and cohere the diffusion of their lives. Hugh sees the guitar as an image for his life. He is not actually a guitar, nor do I wish to claim that the book is nothing more than a circle. Just as Hugh organizes the complexity of his life through fiction, we can see this image, united to our understanding of the end, as a way of synthesizing an immensely complex book.

We have determined the ending, and consequently the story, to be worth our time, so what are its implications? In the end, the possibility of love between Geoffrey and Yvonne is squashed. However, Lowry does offer us a positive ethical alternative in Hugh, who survives. Within the limits of this essay, I can merely hint at the contrast which he provides to Yvonne and the Consul. These two are interpreters striving to find meaning, and story-tellers seeking endings. However, Hugh is possessed of great willpower, intention, action, and ability to change. He intends

to change the fate of nations, and he insists on helping the dying Indian they encounter on the way. While Yvonne meditates on the bull's despair and circular entrapment, he climbs atop it and subdues it. Hugh takes responsibility for Geoffrey's disappearance at the end when both Geoffrey and Yvonne attribute it to fate. This suggests that although stories and ends have immense power, they are not immovable like the Consul's ravine. They are continually in transition, and Hugh understands their flexibility. Assigning ends can help us organize our lives meaningfully, but life requires action and the proper response to the interpretations we make.

I will close with a simple consideration of what our purpose has been here. The feeling of discomfort that the novel's end affords propels us into a rereading. Through analysis of the conflicts which drive the characters, we saw how they imagined ends to resolve these tensions. *Under the Volcano* gives us a world of transition, where such problems are inherent, and cannot entirely stop, even for death. How we imagine this intricate world of revolving cogs and gears, and how we respond to it, is of the utmost importance.

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Patricia Bernardo

Il Cielo

Far nascere un bambino in questo mondo
è sempre un miracolo
Un miracolo nudo, basso, grigio—e poi dimenticato

La terra, il mondo, l'amore di giovinezza—
viviamo con questi che non si muovono mai

Abiti nella tua casa, abito nella mia
Le porte sono tutte le stesse—grigie
Entriamo con piedi stanchi

Chiedo qualcosa di diverso—guarda la mia anima
Tieni il mio cuore, per favore
Posso volare da questo mondo giovane

Hai paura di volare?
Sai?—Viaggiare è lasciare il tuo passato, la tua casa
È necessario, Caro mio, per crescere

Puoi solo ricordare quelle porte
della tua casa vecchia
Devi morire per vivere di nuovo, Caro mio,
Devi vedere il mondo fra il nero e il bianco,
dall'esterno, dal cielo

Duallayer microfluidic platform for cell galvanotaxis studies in 3D

Abstract:

Galvanotaxis is the directional response of cells in the presence of a direct current electric field (dcEF). In vivo, endogenous electric fields ranging from $0.1 - 5 \text{ V cm}^{-1}$ have been shown to influence wound healing and embryogenesis. Scientists have also hypothesized that the spread of cancer (metastasis) may be influenced by electrical impulses inside the body. To explore how an electric field directs cell migration, we propose the use of a 2-layer microfluidic device made of polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS) to study galvanotaxis in 3D. The device features pneumatically actuated micro-valves to allow a precise control of cell media flow. HT-1080 fibrosarcoma cells embedded in a type I collagen matrix were seeded inside the galvanotaxis chamber and monitored in the presence of a physiological relevant electric field (0.5 V cm^{-1}). We have observed galvanotaxis of cells in 3D environments, along with the alignment and migration of cells along collagen fibers. We have also observed that there is a lower threshold of voltage needed to stimulate the galvanotaxis-mechanism in comparison to 2D studies. Using this platform we can carry out applied electric field studies in order to characterize the response of cancer cells to electric fields in a physiologically relevant environment. Gaining a better understanding of galvanotaxis of cancer cells in 3D environments will provide an additional resource to the scientific battle against cancer.

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Research Institution: Johns Hopkins University*

Mentor: Dr. Peter Pearson

Authors of the John Hopkins University Study: Justin Samorajski, Yu-Ja Huang, Dr. Peter Pearson

Jacob Reilley

A Gallery of Memories: Portrait One

And there we, lovers, were and candles too
With shadows flirting, skirting flickering lights.
A Caravaggio – caliginous –
Yet with the subject hidden out of sight.

Wand’ring the mind at night through painted halls.

Darkness devoid of distraction – tenebrism –
With candles cornered far enough away
Perfects the pleasures of a kiss and clasp.
Touch thrives, becomes alive without sight’s sway.

Wand’ring the mind at night through painted halls.

• •

Alex Taylor

The Rhetoric of Edmund Burke and Maximilien Robespierre on their Conceptions of the State

Edmund Burke and Maximilien Robespierre were distinct ideologically: Burke was an English Whig who loudly opposed the French Revolution from its beginning, and Robespierre was a Jacobin who piloted the Committee of Public Safety through the Reign of Terror before falling under the ‘national razor’ himself. The two were similar, however, in that they were both trained in the classical rhetorical style, which involved the use of deductive reasoning and parallelism. Robespierre’s parallel constructions create a propulsive force from the first deductive statement to the next, and then to the next; this pushes the readers towards his final clause, where he places a highly emotional statement that seems logical like his past parallels; the developing deductions try to force the reader into seeing the ultimate emotional conclusion as a continuation of the deductive logic. Burke also uses parallel constructions, but his are capable of being logically understood separately in order to create a cohesive layered rhetoric, where

independent parts create a well-organized whole through their reference to a central theme or idea. Consequently, Robespierre's and Burke's different uses of classical rhetoric embody their conceptions of the state: Robespierre's *patrie* comprises citizens who love it emotionally as a continuation of rational logic, whereas Burke's setpieces show a state made beautiful by the timelessness of its multifaceted, developed institutions.

In Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, he uses parallel construction to both involve the reader in the English national identity and to create complex images of the events that have taken place in France, often intended to create a sense of repulsion in the reader. In discussing the stability retained by England, he says:

In England we have not yet been completely embowelled of our natural entrails; we still feel within us, and we cherish and cultivate, those inbred sentiments which are the faithful guardians, the active monitors of our duty, the true supporters of all liberal and manly morals. We have not been drawn and trussed, in order that we may be filled, like stuffed birds in a museum, with *chaff and rags and paltry blurred shreds of paper* about the rights of man. (73)
(emphasis added)

Here, Burke's repetition of the first person plural pronoun brings the reader into the sentiments Burke is creating in his rhetoric, and the sense of community created by his parallel constructions sharply contrasts with the image he creates of being drawn and trussed and turned into stuffed birds filled with the meaningless papers produced by the Revolution. The contrast of the parallelism with the image creates a discordance that is clearly in line with the image itself, which Burke means to repulse and shock the reader. Burke also uses asyndeton at the end of the first sentence, which contrasts the polysyndeton at the end of the second sentence, in order to heighten the contrast between the parallel construction of English national identity and the image of the stuffed birds of the Revolution. Burke's parallel constructions cause a gradual development of a sense of the English "inbred sentiments" and identity for the reader. This gradual development of sentiment mirrors Burke's belief in the beauty of the gradual development of corporate structures within the state from time immemorial; in his own words, "to make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely" (67). His image of "stuffed birds in a museum" reflects his view of the French Revolution: first, that the principles it proceeds from are meaningless stuffing for empty-headed men, and second, that it was always meant to be shown off to others so

that it might be emulated, that it had an inherent foreign policy agenda, which became a republican crusade to convert all of Europe by the sword.

Robespierre, in his *Report on the Principles of Political Morality*, also uses parallel constructions, but uses them to force the reader into the accepting logical trappings of his emotional concluding statement. Robespierre's parallel constructions are less important individually, because they do not serve to create an image, but rather create a progression of deductive logic. Robespierre's parallel constructions do not necessarily have worth by themselves, but only create something of worth as a whole. It could be said that his is essentially a collectivist rhetoric. This can be especially seen when Robespierre discusses the preferred values of the Revolutionary Republic:

We wish to substitute in our country morality for egotism, probity for honor, principles for usages, duties for good manners, the empire of reason for the tyranny of fashion, contempt for vice for contempt for misfortune, pride for insolence... *in a word, all the virtues and miracles of the republic for all the vices and absurdities of the monarchy.* (278-9) (emphasis added)

In this passage, Robespierre uses his parallel constructions to create an overwhelmingly logical, driving rhetoric, which culminates in his ultimate summative parallel, the final statement of emotion in a long strand of logical statements, the final capstone on a tower of words. Robespierre creates an accelerated momentum through his progression of deductive logic which causes the reader to hastily reach the culmination of the sentence in order to push the reader into the starkly emotional conclusion that “in a word, [we wish to substitute] all the virtues and miracles of the republic for all the vices and absurdities of the monarchy.” This is not to say that Burke’s writing does not have a sense of momentum, but his rhetoric’s momentum conveys a much more gradual sense of movement than Robespierre’s. Robespierre’s driving rhetoric is emblematic of his ideal of the *patrie* progressing further and further towards “peaceful enjoyment of liberty and equality [and] the reign of that eternal justice whose laws are engraved... in the hearts of all men” through citizens participating in public virtue by loving the *patrie* as an ultimately logical action. (278)

While Burke believed in a traditional national order and the timelessness of societal institutions, he also believed in the necessity of gradual reform and improvement. In order to explain this idea, Burke again uses parallel constructions and creates several images, here, that of the state as father and man as child, and the French as monstrous children:

We have consecrated the state, *that no man should approach* to look into its defects or corruptions but with due caution; *that he should* never dream of beginning its reformation by its subversion; *that he should* approach the faults of the state as to the wounds of a father, with pious awe and trembling solicitude. By this wise prejudice we are taught to look with horror on *those children of their country*, who are prompt rashly to hack that aged parent in pieces, and put him in the kettle of magicians, in hopes that by their poisonous weeds, and wild incantations, they may regenerate the paternal constitution, and renovate their father's life. (82) (emphasis added)

Burke uses his parallel constructions here in order to emphasize the duties of the man, pictured as a son as related to the fatherly state. His parallel constructions all depend on his first clause, “we have consecrated the state,” and proceed from that central idea to expound on man’s necessary attitudes towards the state. His constructions here culminate in the first image: “the faults of the state as the wounds of a father.” The image here creates a sense of sympathy for the reader towards the state; rather than an artificial construct, the state is a living, breathing person who comprised a vital part in the creation and raising of his sons. In this image, Burke reveals many of his notions of the state: a state’s institutions as a legacy which provide a cultural inheritance and upbringing for his people, the necessity of some emotion or reverence towards the state, and the quintessential need for reform. Burke believes in reform as a way to ease societal ills; as one would not want to leave his father in pain, in a state of illness, one should not want to leave his country in the stagnancy of its defects. However, reforms need to be sought with “pious awe and trembling solicitude,” because of the emotional reverence due to the state, and must proceed gradually. Burke continues the image of state as a parental figure through his more repulsive image of the violent French children, who “hack that aged parent in pieces... in hopes that... they may regenerate the paternal constitution.” The parallel constructions, which construct the previous image of the duties of the man to his father-state, stand in stark contrast to the second image of the violent, yet well-meaning children. The image of “the kettle of magicians... poisonous weeds, and wild incantations” is similar to Burke’s image of the “stuffed birds” in that both images are to him, by nature, the antithesis of progress and elements of a descent into barbarism. The violence of “those children of their country” is so horrible in Burke’s mind because of the lack of

prudence involved in the complete destruction of French institutions by the Revolution; he contends that the actions were made “prompt rashly” and were not at all reasoned, rational actions. (82) For Burke, the ultimate necessity in statecraft is the prudence exercised by reformers “to avoid therefore the evils of inconstancy and versatility” (82). This prudence is most carefully taught by the prejudices developed in the institutions of the state over time.

Whereas Burke’s necessity in statecraft is prudence, Robespierre’s necessity in either statecraft or the people themselves is public virtue, which he describes as “the mainspring” (279) which supports democratic popular government. Robespierre again uses his progressive deductive logic and his parallel constructions to show the coequal relationship of virtue and terror in the midst of a revolutionary government:

*If the driving force of popular government in peacetime is virtue, that of popular government during a revolution is both virtue and terror: virtue, without which terror is destructive, terror, without which virtue is impotent. Terror is only justice that is prompt, severe, and inflexible; it is thus an emanation of virtue; it is less a distinct principle than a consequence of the general principle of democracy applied to the most pressing needs of the *patrie*. [emphasis added] (283)*

From the very beginning of the passage, Robespierre’s parallel constructions are deductively logical statements which lead into his more emotional conclusions. The parallelism of the emotional statements further emphasizes his notion of the conjoined nature of virtue and terror in a revolutionary government. Burke’s response to this conception would have to start from the base of Robespierre’s argument, which is that virtue is love of the *patrie*, in which the love, while emotional, proceeds from deductive, rational thought; Burke considers men to have natural feelings and ancient prejudices that give motivation for wisdom, reason and love of nation. His rhetoric similarly reflects this; Burke’s rhetoric focuses primarily on crafting setpieces designed to have a complex emotional effect on the reader, whereas Robespierre’s rhetoric aims at forcing the reader to accept his emotional statements through a torrent of logic. Indeed, to be a member of the *patrie* as Robespierre imagines it, one have to accept his presuppositions: “there are no citizens in the republic except the republicans” (284). For Burke, however, belonging to the state comes from having a national identity, an identity which is formed by those longstanding prejudices which are in turn produced by the institutions

which have gradually developed in the state. Robespierre's *patrie*, and indeed his rhetoric, are dependent on belief in the republican system, which is why Robespierre uses his deductive logic to propel the reader into believing his more emotive ideals. Burke's state exists as an autonomous being, just as his setpieces do, and his parallel constructions lead the reader into emotionally reacting to the images he creates, just as the longstanding prejudices engendered through national identity cause man to have strong emotions about his state, and view it "with other reverence" (82).

Burke and Robespierre were such extraordinary figures, primarily because of the individuality both of their rhetorical styles and of their conceptions of the state, and it is plausible that their conceptions and their uses of rhetoric are in some ways irrevocably linked, since it is difficult to picture Robespierre slowly crafting layered images to describe the *patrie*, or Burke proceeding from deduction to deduction rapidly to convince the reader of the logic of his emotional pronouncements about the beauty of national prejudices and the accretions of state. The effects that their respective rhetorics have on their readers are related to their conception of the ideal state: Burke tries to engender a sense of national identity so the reader can feel connected with the institutions of society and love them as an inheritance, where Robespierre tries to immerse the reader in deductive logic so that the reader may believe in the republic as an emanation of those principles and accept Robespierre's emotional assertions about the republic as the conclusions of his logic, as an ideal citizen would. The effects of their respective rhetorics on the reader are intimately connected to their conceptions of the state because they are fundamentally connected with their conceptions of humanity. Robespierre's reliance on deductive logic shows his belief that mankind is necessarily logical, while Burke's use of images shows his doubt of man's "private stock of reason, because we suspect that this stock in each man is small" (74). A more complete philosophical examination could examine the connection between their use of classical rhetorical style, their conceptions of humanity, and how they arrived at those conclusions. While neither man specifically wrote philosophical treatises on the nature of man, their conclusions about human nature have certain necessary implications on their premises about statecraft, and would be a worthy topic for further discussion.

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Luke Pecha

Ecstasy of Saint Theresa

Pencil

2012



Michael H. Walker, III

In the Chapel

Tender-hearted creatures that we are,
We quiver 'fore Thy perspicacious eyes;
Whilst without the world's made a war,
Impart Thy Peace whene'er we hear Thy sighs.

All breath within this place is candle-lit,
Unconscious of the lips that wisp this mist;
Whilst roses, incense, for fair verse are fit,
Afflatus-truth exudes miraculous.

O aroma amorous! Divine!
In Easter eyes of sable midnight skies,
Or clear blue flairs of cloudless morning tides,
Thou shinest as candles kindled in a shrine!

Jesus, Sweetest, melt mine glance in Thine,
And heal mine sullied tongue with more than wine.

Sarah Sokora

Henry Adams: A Discussion of “Thirteenth Century Unity” and “Twentieth Century Multiplicity”

“*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita / mi ritrovai per una selva oscura, / che la diritta via era smarrita*” (Dante, *Inferno* 1.1-3). Dante opens his great epic mourning the fact that he finds himself trapped in a dark forest in the middle of his life, not knowing how he came to be there and knowing still less how to find his way out. Henry Adams shares in Dante’s dismay, finding himself in the middle of his life both directionless and terribly discontented with the “education” he had received. In his youth he had flown to this same education with all the eagerness and high hopes that Boston and State Street had instilled in the young men of his time. The goal of all was to join and conform to society, to gain power and prestige, and to lead the masses with all of the success and pomp that would earn you, as you come to the end of your days, the “immortality” of busts and portraits (Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*, 388; hereafter, *The Education*). Yet, after dabbling in the noble and approved occupations and the studies of his time, Adams gazes distastefully on what he has accomplished and, even more so, on the education that led him there. With this motivation, he seeks out the underlying beliefs that guide an approved education, only to be left in stunned silence at findings so low in nature. His family name, his ancestry that so “distinctly branded” and “heavily handicapped” him, would not allow him to pursue such an unsatisfying end (Adams, *Education*, 1). Because “the old formulas had failed, ... a new one had to be made” (Adams, *The Education*, 393). On every page of *The Education*, in every instance of mocking tone and off-kilter metaphor, Henry Adams both derisively casts off what he perceives to be the dominant philosophy of his time and wonders why humanity does not see another end, his end. Adams asserts Aquinas in the face of society, teleology in the face of Darwin, the Virgin in place of the dynamo. In a very Aristotelian way, Adams argues for a “unified universe” in which the forms, causes and ends of things are considered together and unity is acknowledged, instead of the view of the surrounding culture which states that all is multiplicity, chaos and change and that one is meant to pursue force as a way of life. Simply put, Adams contends unity in the face of multiplicity.

Adams begins promoting a philosophy of unity even before the first

his search for “the point of history when man held the highest idea of himself as a unit in a unified universe” (Editor’s Preface). This particular search culminates in *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*, which, when paired with *The Education*, Adams says is to be read as “his say in life”. That his quest for unity is the impetus behind such a defining work of his speaks volumes about Adams’s view of unity as a necessary philosophical stance one must take as a reasoning human being. This quest for unity (a new education) also leads him to Thomas Aquinas, to whom he devotes the last chapter of the *Chartres* and speaks of as one who, in his works, “sheltered God and man, mind and matter, the universe and the atom, the one and the multiple, within the walls of a harmonious home” (Adams, *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*, XVI; hereafter, *Chartres*). In Aquinas, Adams finds a kindred philosopher, one who provides proof for the true unity of the world through natural law in order to maintain the rationality and truth of Catholic dogma. Adams comments on how “[Aquinas] Church Intellectual remains practically unchanged...although the storms of six or seven centuries have prostrated, over and over again, every other social or political or juristic shelter” (Adams, *Chartres*, XVI). By contrast, “modern systems are complex and chaotic, crowded with self-contradictions, anomalies, impracticable functions and outworn inheritances” (Adams, *Chartres*, XVI). In comparing Aquinas’ steadfast work and philosophy to these “modern systems” that he characterizes as failing time and time again, Adams calls the reader to see the timeworn truth of Aquinas and to cast aside the modern theories as unable to adequately describe the world. Adams’ tone towards these two ideals also serves to convey his support of the former and disgust for the latter. This reasoning man of the 17th and 18th centuries cannot help but shudder at a philosophy that is both “contradictory” and “impracticable”. However abstruse Adams may be at times, here he is perfectly clear in his denunciation of contemporary modes of thought. After reading Aquinas and solidifying his own philosophy—that of unity, forms, and causes—Adams wrote *The Education* as both an explanation and critique of the philosophy promoted by his time through the lens of his own education, so that in reaction against it the reader might come to see and agree with the philosophy he himself ascribes to, one of order and unity.

One modern philosophy that Adams casts a critical eye upon is Darwinism, to which he was first exposed in London while his father was an ambassador. Within the Darwinism chapter of *The Education*, Adams implies a comparison between this modern

theory and teleology as two opposing philosophies. The basic biological theory of Darwinism is based on natural selection, which leads back to natural uniformity (Adams, *The Education*, 191). This is all well and good as far as Adams is concerned; unity had been acknowledged in unbroken evolution. The problem arises when men such as Herbert Spencer absorb Darwin's biological theory and transform it into a philosophy. For example, Adams finds Charles Lyell's explanation of the "glacial epoch" to be distinctly against uniformity, and, after researching the topic of natural selection, claims that "all he could prove was change," a tenet of multiplicity (Adams, *The Education* 195). In describing the birth of this philosophy, Henry Adams goes beyond his usual covert sarcasm into outright mockery. He accuses Darwinism of building up a "vast theory" on "narrow foundations" and, thus, of needing to be taken "on trust," but not on any sort of reasoning—serious criticism for a theory based in empirical science (Adams, *The Education*, 190). And while natural evolution would have been "the very best substitute for religion," it seems that Adams "could prove only Evolution that did not evolve; Uniformity that was not uniform" (Adams, *The Education* 190). The theory was not cohesive and was in no way uniform, hearkening back to Heraclitus' chaos, with no regard for the unity and order of Plato or Aristotle. Hence, instead of the multiplicity and the chaos of natural selection and random evolution, Adams chooses the ordered forms and causes of teleology, reasoning the causes of things from their nature and projecting an idea of their *telos* into the future. His "Darwinism" chapter denounces one philosophy and in doing so brings to light the one which Adams ascribes to. In the next, the images of the dynamo and the Virgin will represent contradicting philosophies, one of unity and the other of multiplicity.

In his chapter entitled "The Dynamo and the Virgin," Adams finds himself at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris, staring at the glittering exhibits uncomprehendingly until his companion Mr. Langley, a scientist and true man of his age, unfolds them before him. He teaches Adams about the Daimler motor and the dynamo and radium, but in doing so "threw out of the field every exhibit that did not reveal a new application of force," beginning with the art exhibit (Adams, *The Education*, 317). This disregard for anything that does not exert an easily discernible force on the world betrays an underlying philosophy of valuing force and control alone and places narrow constraints on what is of consequence in the world. The allure of force and power in these machines echoes the call of State Street, a siren luring Adams to trade in his reason and the

(Adams, *The Education*, 318). Adams begs us to acknowledge that art is truly powerful; the ability to spread an image, an idea, through a population in itself becomes a force, penetrating society at all levels. Art takes hold of the inner being as the Daimler motor never could, unifying one with others who share the same experience while subsuming them into the artistic tradition that courses down through time. “All the steam in the world could not, like the Virgin, build Chartres” (Adams, *The Education*, 324). Pitifully, St. Gaudens, the artist, cannot see this power of art, while those who dislike the message that the Virgin spreads are at least able to see her at the core of a painting and acknowledge her power.

“Since monkeys first began to chatter in trees, neither man nor beast had ever denied or doubted Multiplicity, Diversity, Complexity, Anarchy, Chaos”—such things are not difficult to spot in society (Adams, *The Education*, 380). Fires, thunderstorms, divorce, and all the seemingly random bits and pieces of our lives seem fragmented, but in reality there is a greater unity in which things have forms and causes—in short, purpose and unity exist. But as Adams gazes upon his contemporaries, he sees that few, if any, believe in unity and order. Society is disappearing under a roiling dark cloud of chaotic multiplicity where all is separate and causality has no meaning: “One gazed mute before this ocean of darkest ignorance that had already engulfed society” (Adams, *The Education*, 373). Adams finds America, which lacks any sort of cult, especially guilty of this ignorance. Little seems to have changed since his time. Moral relativism is the Darwinism and dynamo of our day; churches and religion have become the “powerless” Virgin. The claim that there is no absolute truth and no way to find one, and that each person is allowed to hold to his own version of the truth, would leave Adams shaking his head slowly at the state of the world today. Instead of returning to a world “that sensitive and timid creatures could regard without a shudder,” he might find that society had traveled even farther down the road from “thirteenth century unity” into “twentieth century multiplicity” (Adams, *The Education*, 420). We are left pondering with Adams how far down this path the world will stray, how far into multiplicity we dare tread. And, like Adams, after such contemplation, we are left with one recourse, one response. “The rest is silence!”

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Thomas Farris

A Poem

We want clear things.
Clear things are what we want.
Things are things only when connected to us.
So I'll be unclear:
LEAVES ARE GREEN
RAIN IS WET
FISH SWIM
BIRDS FLY
DOGS RUN

This poem does not have what you want.
A poem does have what you want.
So this poem is a not poem.
But you did not know
This poem is a not poem
Until You Read It.
How many not poems have you read?
Or
Have you ever read a poem?

Fall 2012

Maria Spence

Galaxy Bowl

Ceramics

2012



