Inimical Languages: Conflicts of Multilingualism in British Modernist Literature

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Abstract

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Twentieth-century British literature bristles with words and phrases in foreign languages, fragmentary residues of conflicts between the English-language text and the national languages and cultures that surround it in this era of war and instability. This project addresses the form and function of these remnants of foreign language – what are here called "multilingual fragments" – analyzing and contextualizing them within the historical use of foreign languages in British discourses of national identity and international politics over the course of the twentieth century. Within modernist literature, phrase- and word-length fragments of translated and untranslated foreign language reveal texts' deep engagement with the political conflicts of their time on the level of the letter, enabling authors to express a variety of political ideologies, from the liberal or cosmopolitan to the reactionary or jingoistic. At the same time, these fragments' inherent contrast between foreign language and English context interlace the text with points of rupture, exposing authorial manipulations of language and disrupting any single-minded ideology to reveal ambivalence, ambiguity, and nuance. This study historicizes and expands the long-held conception of multilingualism as a central aspect of modernist commitment to formal innovation, and provides a more comprehensive context for understanding large-scale experimental works. It argues that it is specifically through the disruptive effects of small-scale multilingual fragments – traces of foreign language so slight that they are at once easily overlooked and subtly influential – that modernist texts engage in complex interventions on issues ranging from wartime xenophobia to debates over class, women's rights, immigration, and the afterlife of empire.

This project's attention to word- and phrase-length fragments of multilingualism through a series of case studies reveals a more specific, historicized understanding of what Rebecca Walkowitz has influentially termed twentieth-century literature's "cosmopolitan style": first, in demonstrating the centrality of both canonical and minor, extra-canonical authors in the development of new, internationally-oriented multilingual techniques, second, in exposing the breadth of ideologies and complex political discourse that such techniques can facilitate, and finally, in demonstrating how writers use multilingual fragments to reveal the inherent hybridity of *all* language. This historical and wide-ranging study contributes to current critical discussions in four major fields: twentieth-century British literature, world literature, translation studies, and women's and gender studies. Contrary to past conceptions of modernist multilingualism as benignly aesthetic, exclusionarily elitist, or unilaterally liberal, it demonstrates that multilingualism can be applied in the service of a range of ideologies, and that the inherent instability of fragmentary multilingualism further complicates expressions of political allegiance or affiliation. Further, it expands our understanding of what constitutes "world literature" by making the case for fragmentary, small-scale multilingualism as a vehicle which transports the concerns of world literature – border-crossing conversation, "gaining in translation" – into texts produced in and for a national readership. Finally, it draws together the canons and concerns of world literature and women's and gender studies in order to make the case for marginalized female and homosexual figures as major innovators of multilingual usage, deliberately manipulating multilingual fragments to disrupt and protest the political status quo.

Each chapter of "Inimical Languages" presents a case study analyzing a specific nexus of linguistic and political conflict, demonstrating how multilingualism is employed both to express and to destabilize political ideologies by means of language. In the first chapter, this method is

demonstrated via the model of E.M. Forster's novels (1906-24), which incorporate fragments of multilingualism in order to advocate humanist connection in the midst of the increasing anti-German xenophobia of pre-World War I Britain, as well as the rifts created by British imperialism in India. Despite Forster's explicitly cosmopolitan intent, his use of small-scale multilingualism exemplifies the technique's inherent, often unintentional ambivalence: foreign phrases contradict the xenophobia of their era, yet at the same time, are increasingly constrained, equivocated, and even effaced by Forster's doubts at the achievability of his humanistic mission.

Chapter 2 discusses Ford Madox Ford's participation in World War I propaganda which denigrates its German enemy by presenting untranslated German terms like "Kultur" as at once self-evidently nefarious (intelligible as such even to the monolingual English reader) and utterly alien (expressing untranslatable German depravity). An Anglo-German, Ford proves himself a master of this multilingual propaganda, yet its play of revelation and concealment ultimately exposes his underlying ambivalence as a propagandist in his manipulation of a silently *translated* German phrase ("unter vier Augen"/"under four eyes") in his novel *The Good Soldier* (1915). The novel's dependence on this phrase for its thematic and symbolic structure calls into question Ford's propagandistic appeals for the German language's eradication. Later, in his postwar tetralogy, *Parade's End* (1924-8), Ford deliberately dismantles the workings of propaganda, exposing and criticizing its dependence upon linguistic control and manipulative translation.

Chapter 3 addresses early spy fiction's development of the multilingual spy in the context of World War I-era concerns about espionage, demonstrating the implications of multilingualism as both a skill and a tragic liability, showing it to be the origin of multi-faced affiliations which threaten to undermine the spy's national loyalty. In creating a new taxonomy of early spy literature (c. 1890-1925), this chapter shows how the slippage between languages is mapped onto

narratives of sexual incontinence and transgression. Multilingual spies – and particularly female and homosexual spies – are shown to be inherently volatile and untrustworthy unless they strictly police their linguistic choices as well as the inadvertent sympathies they form through direct communication with the enemy. This chapter discusses literature by a host of writers (many of whom were spies themselves), and charts a movement from pre-war espionage fiction (Erskine Childers, John Buchan), which seeks to contain the multilingual English spy's shaky loyalties, to post-war fiction (i.e. A.W. Wheen's 1924 *Two Masters*), which depicts a less idealized vision of the alienation and dangerously inimical sympathies inherent to real espionage.

Chapter 4 reads the full canon of Jean Rhys' work in its depiction of linguistic estrangement as a form of female suppression. In her novels of the 1920s and '30s, Rhys, who had married a stateless Dutchman in 1919, exposes the repercussions of the widespread European/American legal predicament of female expatriation and estrangement by depicting exogamic English protagonists adrift in Paris, their imperfect knowledge of French signaling their inability to find a home within any national community. Rhys employs multilingualism's fracturing effects deliberately, forcing her readers to navigate between the languages of her texts as a means of experiencing her protagonists' uneasy residence between languages and cultures. In her final novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), Rhys adapts these earlier multilingual techniques to address the grave predicament of colonial disenfranchisement. Demonstrating the heightened stakes of linguistic inequality in a colonial context, Rhys exposes women's experience of linguistic alienation even within the English language itself, and shows how the equivocal, idiosyncratic Englishes of colonized women (of both the servant- and master-class) come into conflict with the hegemonic, standardizing English of colonizing men.

Chapter 5 shows how modernist experimentation with multilingual fragments is adapted by postwar authors at the periphery of the British empire to demonstrate the experience of living within a hybrid identity suspended between multiple cultures, and further, to expose the hybridity inherent to *all* language. G.V. Desani's *All About H. Hatterr* (1948) deliberately undermines assumptions of linguistic authority or standardization by exposing the constructedness of all language, imbricating Desani's authorial voice in the eccentric, Joycean idiom of the half-Indian, half-European Hatterr and his friends, and creating a mélange of multilingual Englishes that prevents any attempt to isolate a "standard" English or even a standard Indian-English. In *The Satanic Verses* (1988), Salman Rushdie continues Desani's project of exposing all English as "migrant" or "mongrel" by depicting a London scene in which his many characters – including the deific narrator – all speak different, hybrid forms of English. In doing so, Rushdie uses multilingual fragments as a pedagogical tool, as he challenges and conditions his readers to participate in multilingual language games even in less familiar, non-Western languages.

As this final chapter suggests, "Inimical Languages" provides not only a strategy for reinterpreting early twentieth-century literature, but also a robust new method for addressing multilingual fragments in literatures from a variety of provenances and periods. Indeed, this project itself is poised to expand into a book-length work, with additional chapters on the conflicting use of Spanish and German in Anglophone propaganda during the Spanish Civil War, and on the anti-fascist multilingualism of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939). In British modernism and beyond, this project argues that multilingual fragments constitute and call for a "world literary practice," a transnational, interdisciplinary mode of reading that recasts and enriches our understanding of nation-based works of literature.

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Introduction

Inimical Languages: Conflicts of Translation in British Modernist Literature

> It goes without saying, then, that language is also a political instrument, means, and proof of power. It is the most vivid and crucial key to identity: It reveals the private identity, and connects one with, or divorces one from, the larger, public, or communal identity. There have been, and are, times, and places, when to speak a certain language could be dangerous, even fatal. Or, one may speak the same language, but in such a way that one's antecedents are revealed, or (one hopes) hidden. […] To open your mouth in England is (if I may use black English) to 'put your business in the street': You have confessed your parents, your youth, your school, your salary, your self-esteem, and, alas, your future.
>
> – James Baldwin[1]

Twentieth-century British literature bristles with words and phrases in foreign languages, fragments of French, German and Italian, Hindi and Bengali, Kiswahili and Yoruba that protrude from the surface of predominantly English-language literature. Unusual accents, italicized phrases, and inverted grammar appear in this literature as errant tinges of foreignness picked up by authors who scrape a bit too closely against alien tongues. More pointedly, fragments of foreign language appear as shards or shrapnel embedded in the skin of British literature, the result of its violent collision with the colonial, rival, and allied idioms that encroach upon Britain's borders in this era of war and political instability. Like poppies and crosses on a Flemish battlefield, fragments of foreign language in English texts mark sites of rupture, conflict, suture, and scar-tissue. As pieces of language, foreign words and phrases are at once the residues and the weapons of conflict, and – what is more – the channels through which conflict might be assuaged or even laid to rest.

This study examines the methods by which British modernist authors invoke words and phrases of translated or untranslated foreign language as a means of wrestling with their own

[1] Baldwin, "If Black English Isn't a Language," 454.

roles and reflections on the world-changing, at times catastrophic political conflicts of their era. Word- and phrase-length scraps of foreign language – what I term "multilingual fragments" – allow these authors to engage with epochal issues ranging from world war to national citizenship, and to do so on the level of the letter. I call these fragments "multilingual," because they draw together two or more languages, either in a hybrid neologism or in a foreign word situated in a text that's written predominantly in another language. Thus, they are also "fragmentary," since they are never entirely assimilated into the language of their context, yet are often so slight or subtle as to be easily overlooked. Multilingual fragments may seem, by their very smallness, to be merely a minor decoration or a bit of "local color," but in fact, this study shows that it is precisely in this smallness and subtlety that they are pivotal to our understanding of how twentieth-century authors draw transnational, even world literary relationships and conflicts into their predominantly monolingual texts.

Multilingualism itself has long been recognized as a central feature of British modernism, from T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* to James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* and beyond, extending even to texts like Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, which, while they may stretch the bounds of "Britain" and the "modernist era," nevertheless take part in multilingual, semi-modernist techniques and concerns that align them with earlier, pre-postcolonial works. Recent critical work by scholars such as Matt Hart, Rebecca Walkowitz, Jessica Berman, Juliette Taylor-Batty, and others has gone far in charting British modernism's engagement with multilingualism, translation, cosmopolitanism, and other forms of transnational contact or consideration, culminating in Steven G. Yao's claim that modernism is an "age of translations."[2]

[2] Yao, *Translation and the Languages of Modernism*, 5. For some of the exciting recent work in multilingual and transnational modernism, see: Yao; Hart, *Nations of Nothing But Poetry*; Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitan Style*; Berman, *Modernist Commitments* and *Modernist Fiction, Cosmopolitanism, and the Ethics of Community*; North, *The Dialect of Modernism*; GoGwilt, *The Passage of Literature*; Lewis, *Modernism, Nationalism, and the Novel*; Caneda

I argue here that it is even more so an age of multilingualism.[3] Such an assertion is borne out by texts like Eliot's *Waste Land* (1922), a work of paradigmatic modernism so multilingually allusive and erudite that Eliot even felt the need to include nominally helpful endnotes.[4] Eliot's poem is bookended by what, in this context, we might term extended multilingual fragments: it begins with an epigraph in Latin and Greek from Petronius' *Satyricon* and a dedication in Italian from Dante's *Purgatorio*, and culminates, after 400-odd lines, in a multilingual explosion:

Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina	[Italian – *Purgatorio*]
Quando fiam ceu chelidon— O swallow swallow	[Latin – *Pervigilium Veneris*]
Le Prince d'Aquitaine a la tour abolie	[French – de Nerval]
These fragments I have shored against my ruins	[modern English – Eliot]
Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.	[early mod. English – Kyd]
Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.	[Sanskrit – Upanishads]

Shantih shantih shantih[5]

With the notable exception of Sanskrit, Eliot does not use his endnotes to translate any of these or other foreign interpolations in his poem, and in fact it is in the notes that he compounds the poem's sense of whirling, echoing languages, as he grounds many of its Anglophone allusions in extensive and often oblique footnotes with quotations from texts in Italian, Latin, French, Old Occitan, and German. Even his note on the English translations of the Sanskrit words "Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata" cites not an English source but a German one (401n.). The effect of all this, as generations of English-speaking readers have found, is a profound sense of instability: of an English language fragmented not just by poetic breaks (e.g. the successive enjambments of

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Cabrera, "Polyglot Voices"; Dalgarno, *Virginia Woolf and the Migrations of Language*; Taylor-Batty, *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*; and in a slightly later-twentieth-century context, Lennon, *In Babel's Shadow*. In addition, the interest in translations of British modernist literature (and modernists' relationship with their translators) has grown of late, as evidenced in the Continuum Press series of critical works on the reception of various authors (Woolf, Lawrence, etc.) in Europe, as well as articles and books including Bosseaux, *How Does It Feel?*; Jansohn, "D.H. Lawrence and His German Translators"; Hayman, "English Modernism in German."

[3] Or, in Juliette Taylor-Batty's formulation, a "multilingual turn." *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, 23.

[4] On the faintness of these endnotes as a "concession to the cultural underprivileged," see Forster, *The Poet's Tongues*, 74. For a comprehensive discussion of Eliot's allusionary practices, see Longenbach, "'Mature poets steal.'"

[5] Ln. 428-34. *The Waste Land* is quoted from Eliot, *Collected Poems*, 51-76. Subsequent citations are noted parenthetically in the text (by line number).

the opening lines), but by the intercedence of foreign words and phrases.

These multilingual fragments insert an opacity into *The Waste Land* even as they open up its capacity for meaning, serving as allusive wormholes that, through the seeming authenticity of their direct, untranslated quotations, lead directly from Eliot's poem into the significatory worlds of Dante, Baudelaire, Virgil, and the Vedas (to name just a few). Eliot's multilingual fragments thus take part in a dual signification: both as objects in the text (as points of obscurity and signifiers of "authentic," unmediated allusion) and as signifiers themselves, that is, as words which, in this context *and* in their original context, purvey an interpretable meaning. For instance, in quoting Dante's *Purgatorio* XXVI in his dedication to Ezra Pound, Eliot's "*miglior fabbro*" ("the better craftsman") serves both as an object of Italianness – a signifier of the Renaissance art and erudition connected with the language (and the acumen required by an Anglophone reader to understand it) – and a translatable signifier, connecting Ezra Pound's superior "craftsmanship" with the work of Arnaut Daniel, the Occitan troubadour in *Purgatorio* upon whom Dante (via his fellow poet Guido Guinizelli) first bestows this honor. In short, Eliot's "*miglior fabbro*" is at once a metonym for (Renaissance) Italianness, a symbol of Anglophone philological erudition, an allusion to Dante's deference to Daniel, and, simply but crucially, an intelligible phrase that *means* "the better craftsman." In this regard, Eliot's use of multilingualism in *The Waste Land* is representative of the various cases of modernist multilingual fragments that will be discussed in this study, in which multilingual fragments signify on multiple, intertwined levels. We can group these into two dominant modes: multilingual fragments signify both as a) metonyms for the language and nation from which they originate and b) translatable, intelligible signifiers. Even in those works whose use of foreign language is less immediately allusive than Eliot's, multilingual fragments represent pieces of a

particular national language (i.e. German, the language of Germany or Austria), and thus are often invoked as metonyms for their nation of origin and the political issues associated with it. Further, multilingual fragments are *always also language*, signifiers whose meaning can be guessed, understood, or misapprehended by a largely monolingual English readership, thus spilling beyond a simple metonymic representation of the nation into the realm of interpretation and association. It is the extent to which multilingual fragments combine these two modes of signification that determines their role as sites or articulations of the political fractures within a given text.

What then, we might ask, are the national affiliations and politics of the multilingual fragments in *The Waste Land*? What conflicts are written into the poem through its use of multiple languages? Contrary to Michael Levenson's claim that it's precisely *through* the "meet[ing] and mingl[ing]" of these multilingual allusions that Eliot assuages the frictions and fragmentation between the "human 'characters'" who "collide and disperse" within the poem, I argue that Eliot's choice of the particular multilingual fragments that appear in *The Waste Land* serves as a means of substantiating and deepening the poem's sense of profound unsettlement, providing not an "ideal community" of transnational communication between poets (as in Levenson's conception), but a *mise-en-abyme* of fractured understanding.[6] Critics have long remarked that Eliot's explanatory notes refract rather than refine the clarity of his allusions, but I think that it is in these *particular* allusions themselves – Eliot's multilingual fragments – from which such significatory fractures emanate. This is because Eliot's multilingual fragments are not simply single (if multiply interpretable) fragments, but *themselves contain* multilingual fragments. In other words, they are multilingual fragments that turn back on themselves, leading into an abyss of slanted translation and incommensurability, a true *mise-en-abyme* (literally

[6] Levenson, "Does *The Waste Land* Have a Politics?," 11.

"placed in the abyss"[7]) that proliferates rather than condenses meaning. This is the case even before the poem truly begins, in the prose epigraph from Petronius in which the narrator speaks Latin while the Sybil and her interlocutors converse in Greek:

> 'Nam Sibyllam quidem Cumis ego ipse oculus meis vidi in ampulla pendere, et cum illi pueri dicerent: *Σίὲβυλλα τί θέλεις*; respondebat illa: *ἀποθανεῖν θέλω.*'[8]

Not only must we, then, consider the relationship between Petronius' Latin and Eliot's English, but between the Greek fragments *within* the quotation and the Latin into which they're embedded. What are the resonances, the implications of Latin in English? of ancient Greek in Augustan Latin? How does it affect our reading of Eliot's poem to have one linguistic pairing embedded in another? Such questions open up an echo – an abyss – of shifting meaning that undermines any effort to successfully translate one language into another, to make sense of one language *in* another. In his contemporaneous essay on "The Task of the Translator," Walter Benjamin figures translation as the act of flinging meaning across an "abyss," from the original text to the translation ("stürzt der Sinn von Abgrund zu Abgrund").[9] Eliot's *Waste Land* seems to suggest that meaning in 1922 is, instead, suspended above this abyss in the form of an irreducible multilingual fragment, and threatens – via this linguistic *mise-en-abyme* – to topple headlong into it.

The multilingual fragment-within-a-fragment in Eliot's epigraph is repeated in various

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[7] The term's modern meaning regarding artistic self-reflectivity derives originally from André Gide, 1893. See "mise en abyme, n."

[8] Southam quotes the translation from "Eliot's own edition": "Yes, and I myself with my own eyes even saw the Sybil hanging in a cage; and when the boys cried at her: 'Sybil, Sybil, what do you want?' 'I would that I were dead', she caused to answer.'" *A Guide to* The Selected Poems, 133. Southam further cites Grover Smith in his argument that Eliot did not get this quotation directly from Petronius, but through Dante Gabriel Rossetti's verse version (134) – yet one more linguistic, translational fracture within this fragment. To compound the complexity of translation/quotation here further, Jim McCue and Christopher Ricks note that the translation of Petronius that Eliot was using (by Michael Heseltine, 1913) mistranslates the Latin "ampulla" as "cage" rather than "bottle," and the *Dial* edition of *The Waste Land* inexplicably split the Greek word "*ἀποθανεῖν*" ("apothanein") into two words. Personal correspondence with Jim McCue, March 2014.

[9] That is, "the meaning plunges from abyss to abyss" (my translation). Benjamin, "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers," 21.

forms throughout *The Waste Land*, and particularly in the poem's last lines.[10] There, Eliot quotes from Dante's meeting in *Purgatorio* XXVI with Arnaut Daniel, which is notable in that it is the only instance in the entire *Divine Comedy* in which the Florentine poet allows one of his interlocutors to speak in his own, non-Tuscan tongue. Eliot includes part of Daniel's short speech in his native Occitan in the endnote (427n.), but the line that he places in the poem is, in fact, the single line which concludes the Canto in Dante's own, narrating *Italian*: "*Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina*" (427; "Then dived he back into the fire which refines them"[11]). Perhaps, in alluding to the Daniel episode here, Eliot is suggesting (as Levenson argues) that multilingual allusion is a means of trans-poetic connection. And yet the absence of Daniel's own voice in the poem implies that this Eliot-Dante-Daniel conversation is more complicated, a multilingual fragment that points to its own fragmentariness through the absence of one of its interlocutors. A similar effect is brought about by Eliot's quotation from the 1854 French poem by de Nerval, "El Desdichado" ("The Disinherited"), which nonetheless has a Spanish title, a further allusion to a chivalric motto in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. Thus, within Eliot's English text, the French fragment points to a Spanish word (Eliot gives the poem's title in his endnote; 429n.), and finally, back to an English novel, suggesting a far more complex linguistic relation – a descent into a *mise-en-abyme* of multilingualism – than even simply between Eliot's English and de Nerval's French. De Nerval's title only serves to further underline the sense that in drawing these interlocutors into his poem, Eliot is both enriching his idiom and fragmenting it – "disinheriting" it – further. Finally, this concept of fractured translation and allusion is summed up in Eliot's reference to Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1592), whose ostensibly mad "Hieronymo" recalls the Latin name of the great Biblical translator, St. Hieronymous (Jerome), and whose

[10] See Gish, "'Gerontion' and *The Waste Land*," 36.
[11] The translation is from Southam, *A Guide to* The Selected Poems, 196.

promise to "fit you" seems at once an offer (a threat?) of translation, and a suggestion of the meaning that is lost in translation, the meaning that, like Daniel's words or de Nerval's title, doesn't "fit" into the poem's fragmentary lines. Overall, this succession of allusions seem specifically selected to draw our attention not only to what is gained through allusion but to what is left out, to the violence and friction that coincides with the edges of the multilingual fragment.

It seems a fairly straightforward leap to make from Eliot's *mise-en-abyme* linguistic fragmentariness to the claim that this is yet another iteration of *The Waste Land*'s prevailing theme of a postwar London (and world) whose meaning is tragically jumbled and fractured, whose application to literary forebears only echoes off into multiplying penumbrae of allusion and sense.[12] This, in itself, indicates the major conflict at the heart of *The Waste Land*, borne out in the fractures (and fractures within fractures) of multilingual fragments. And yet it seems difficult to read these multilingual fragments in a way that renders this conflict more specific with reference to the particular languages that Eliot juxtaposes with English (and with each other) in his poem.[13] In short, Eliot's fragments point clearly toward an allusive literary inheritance, yet much less – singly or in aggregate – to a conflict between the speakers and setting of Eliot's English and the speakers or national counterparts of, say, Italian, Occitan, French, or Sanskrit. Eliot's quotation of Dante's "*poi s'ascose…*" or "*miglior fabbro*" seems far more a comment on a poetic relation across languages than a political one, even as, combined with the other *mise-en-abyme* multilingual fragments of Eliot's poem, these foreign quotations do point to a prevailing sense of political and cultural fracture. In this regard, then, *The Waste*

[12] On the milieu of Eliot's poem and its connection to the war's preceding violence, see Cole, *At the Violet Hour*, 65-81; North, *Reading 1922*; Tratner, *Modernism and Mass Politics*, 166-82.

[13] Taylor-Batty makes a rather different argument about Eliot, suggesting that he responds to the "crisis of language" with "regret" and an emphasis on keeping languages "distinct" from one another (*Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, 37). I think the issue is rather more complicated, and the political import of these languages is crucial to our thinking about how any given author treats them. In other words, it means something different for Eliot to keep Italian "distinct" from his text than it does, say, for him to intermix German in it, as I will discuss further below.

Land's multilingualism, though richly, paradigmatically modernist, is, for the most part, *not* the sort of multilingualism that I will discuss in this study. Rather, the authors and works that I will discuss here make use of multilingual fragments which bear some resemblance to the *form* of Eliot's allusive interpolations, yet they differ in their deep investment in the connection between specific languages, places, and politics in the early twentieth century. Eliot's poem is certainly "political" (as, I would argue, is all art), but it stands at the boundary of this study inasmuch as my focus here is on a series of twentieth-century authors whose use of linguistically specific multilingual fragments grounds their entry into subtle yet complex and often influential positions in the political debates of their time.

This differentiation can be illustrated by looking at yet one more multilingual fragment from Eliot's poem, an exception in *The Waste Land* which, with regard to the criteria of this study, proves the rule. In the first stanza of the first section of the poem, "The Burial of the Dead," Eliot centers his depiction of the lost Bavarian childhood of a noblewoman named "Marie" around a strange declaration in imperfect German, "Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch" ("Am not a Russian at all, come from Lithuania, truly German"[14]):

> Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee
> With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,
> And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten,
> And drank coffee, and talked for an hour.
> Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch.
> And when we were children, staying at the archduke's,
> My cousin's, he took me out on a sled,
> And I was frightened. He said, Marie,
> Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.
> In the mountains, there you feel free.
> I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter. (8-18)

This line stands out within the poem, since it is the only multilingual fragment not taken from a

[14] My translation. A more correct (if still choppy) German might read, "Ich bin gar keine Russin, ich stamme aus Litauen und bin echt deutsch."

specific, literary source (even the semi-verbal Thames-daughter cries of "Weialala leia," 277*ff*., stem from Richard Wagner's *Ring* cycle), and also one of the few multilingual fragment not italicized within the text.[15] This line, since it's written in German, might easily be assumed to belong to the "Marie" of the surrounding lines, who reminisces about the summer at the "Starnbergersee," the "Hofgarten" in Munich, and winter with "the archduke," her "cousin." And yet, even without the discovery in 1954 that "Marie" was really Eliot's acquaintance Marie von Larisch, Countess of Wallersee-Wittelsbach, the nobility of the poem's Marie is readily evident and thus immediately discordant with the halting German and national adamancy of the "echt deutsch" declaration. Marie von Larisch would, of course, have been impeccably fluent in German, as well as conversant in French and English (the language she most likely spoke with Eliot), nor would she have any reason to declare a Germano-Lithuanian affiliation.[16] Her statement that "In the mountains, there you feel free" might partake in a Germanic syntax, but this reads as quaint rather than, like the "Bin gar keine Russin" line, existential.

The Lithuanian speaker is thus evidently a different persona than "Marie," even as the language and gender of her speech ("keine Russin" is feminine) seems to invite their conflation. Peter Edgerly Firchow suggests, I think rightly, that this unnamed woman, with her unconvincing, ungrammatical insistence on her Germanness, is likely a product of the jumbled up Europe created by the treaties of Versailles and St. Germain after World War I, which had the result of "forcing people to redefine their collective identities in cultural and ethnic, and not merely national or political terms," not to mention fracturing such identities into various

[15] At least not in *most* versions of the text. In Jim McCue and Christopher Ricks' recent work collating the many different manuscript, typescript, annotated, and published versions of *The Waste Land*, they have found a great deal of variation in its formatting, particularly in the italics of multilingual fragments such as this one. Nevertheless, this line is italicized in only one version of the poem, that published in the journal *Dial*; all other versions leave it unitalicized. Personal correspondence with Jim McCue, March 2014.

[16] On the discovery and discussion of Marie von Larisch, see Firchow, *Strange Meetings*, 27-35. See also Southam, *A Guide to* The Selected Poems, 15-16, 142-3.

incomplete shards (Russian, Lithuanian, German), as is, of course, one of *The Waste Land*'s major themes.[17] Eliot enunciates this European postwar predicament in his later endnote from Hermann Hesse's 1920 essay collection *Blick ins Chaos* (*Glimpse into Chaos*): "Schon ist halb Europa, schon ist zumindest der halbe Osten Europas auf dem Wege zum Chaos, fährt betrunken im heiligem Wahn am Abgrund entlang und singt dazu" ("Already half of Europe, already at least half of Eastern Europe is on the road to chaos, driving drunkenly in holy delusion along the abyss and singing too," 366-76n.). It is, then, in the Lithuanian's elliptical German line that Eliot includes the poem's most intimate, affecting expression of this delirious, potentially debilitating postwar descent into Chaos" – into the abyss. In the context of Eliot's controlled English poetry (particularly in this first stanza) and the elegiac narrative of the noble "Marie," the ungrammatical, almost staccato German line stands out as anomalously messy: a female, Eastern European *cri du coeur* from amidst the snowed-over, semi-amnesiac, privilegedly apathetic (or hysterical) wreckage. Eliot and Marie have the power to harness language (and, crucially, *languages*: Italian, Latin, Greek) to tell their stories, while language – the German language – seems to subsume this Lithuanian woman, as her desperate protestation *auf* Deutsch that she is "echt deutsch" (an adamant spondee) seems to signal the very uncertainty of this claim. In the midst of Eliot's controlled English, her German intrusion rings with the cries of expatriated women across Europe, stammering ineffectually at immigration officers in the wrong language.

This multilingual fragment in *The Waste Land*, then, is the single, prominent example in the poem of precisely the types of multilingual fragments that will be discussed in this study, as it uses the collision of two languages – English and German – to signal the crux and complexity of one of the many political conflicts experienced and witnessed by English writers in the early twentieth century. Eliot's fleeting depiction of this estranged Lithuanian woman – perhaps a

[17] Ibid., 33. Southam seems to agree (142-3).

refugee, perhaps a woman expatriated by the misogynist citizenship laws of her time,[18] perhaps the sort of Frau or Fräulein who would later welcome Hitler's Germanifying regime into Lithuania – draws her enigmatic plight into conversation with the many other fractures and losses experienced in *The Waste Land*, from the exiled Dante to the unsexed Teiresias. And yet it also sets this line apart: the one foreign fragment that does not point back to Eliot's allusive erudition and which is assimilated into his own poetic voice without the barrier of italics. Might we read this as Eliot's muted transnational, trans-gendered expression of poetic sympathy with this deterritorialized woman? A more intimate affinity even than in his incorporation of Dante or Baudelaire's poetic mastery? These are the sorts of questions that this study of multilingual fragments raises, pointing to a central nexus of relation between multilingualism, politics, history, and the personal experiences and expressions of British writers in the early twentieth century. I read twentieth-century literature as a series of personal narratives, in which the combined intimacy and alienation of language – or rather, languages – allows for authors to use multilingual fragments in increasingly nuanced, self-reflective explorations of their own involvement with the political and cultural conflicts of their era. In his representation of this anonymous Lithuanian woman, Eliot is surely among them.

Each of the following chapters takes up the work of an author or set of authors and contextualizes his or her use of multilingual fragments in Britain's cultural, political, and popular discourses. By my selection of case studies here, I wish to put pressure not only on the confines of multilingual modernism as traditionally understood – that is, as composed mainly of works by male authors like Joyce, Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Beckett – but on modernism itself, considering how seemingly peripheral "modernist" writers (including those well beyond the bounds of the "modernist era," such as Rushdie) might be connected to more canonical modernists on the basis

[18] See also Chapter 4.

of their use of multilingual forms to deal with the most intense, most painful moments of political inflection. This project comprises a series of case studies, yet it also seeks to provide a sketch of the shifting purpose to which multilingual fragments are used over the course of the early twentieth century, from roughly 1890 to 1950. Over the course of this era, we can see an increasingly conscious exploitation of multilingual fragments as a means of destabilizing hegemonic political forces, from patriarchal legal institutions to fascist efforts for total societal and political control. Nevertheless, this is not a clear-cut story of linear development: later chapters in the story of twentieth-century multilingualism, focused on the diversely multilingual work of authors like Jean Rhys and Salman Rushdie, can only be fully understood when read in the context of earlier multilingual experimentation, such as World War I-era texts by Ford Madox Ford or the early spy-fiction authors Erskine Childers and A.W. Wheen. Although later authors often use multilingual fragments more consciously and with greater breadth, the techniques by which they incorporate them are similar to – and often derived from or a reaction to – those used by earlier authors. Though composed largely chronologically, this is not a study of a straightforward advancement, but of an ongoing, vibrant, complex conversation.

Multilingual Fragments and Translational Motion

The multilingual fragments that appear in certain Anglophone texts – and, as I will argue, particularly modernist texts – almost invariably represent moments of encounter, collision, and, at times, connection. Each instance of foreign language within an otherwise monolingual text entails a decision of whether and how to translate it: will the author leave this word or phrase in its original tongue or absorb it into the text by rendering it in English? If so, to what extent will the English translation make itself known as a foreign adoption? In what context do the

characters of the work think or speak this foreign language? What is the effect of their use of foreign language on their relationship to other characters in the work? In their multilingualism, these fragments set in motion an encounter and conversation between two languages within the body of a single text, initiating "the distinctive social dialogue among languages" by which Mikhail Bakhtin characterizes the novel.[19] They constitute a particular form of the polyvocal, dialogic fragments that Bakhtin terms "heteroglossia": the "dialogue" inherent to multilingual fragments is one of translation suspended, of dynamic movement between two languages encapsulated in a remnant of foreign language.

The relationship between multilingual fragments and translation is always an intimate one, though it can take multiple forms. Because of their fragmentary nature, these scraps of foreign language cannot ever complete the motion of translation – the finished movement from one language to another – but instead remain suspended in a kinetic motion between multilingual fragment and English context. In discussing the theories of Walter Benjamin, Samuel Weber encapsulates this concept in the singular German suffix "-bar," or (in English) "-able." As Weber explains, adding "-bar" to a verb funnels the verb's potential for movement into an adjectival or adverbial neologism, resulting in a word which embodies a modality rather than a substance. Benjamin's "übersetzbar" – "translatable" – is precisely one such "-bar" form, and it may well be the preeminent form, since translation itself signifies a movement between languages.[20] To be "übersetzbar" is to signify not only the "movement" of translation itself but the potential *for* that movement. Multilingual fragments, then, are inherently translat*able* (übersetz*bar*) but never translat*ed* (übetsetzt); they are never resolved into a monolingual text, but by definition continue to stand out from the rest of the text because of their foreignness, even when that foreignness is

[19] Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," 263.
[20] Weber, *Benjamin's -Abilities*, 117; see also Benjamin, "Die Aufgabe Des Übersetzers."

encapsulated in a translated, "native" text which has, by accent or idiom, been marked as foreign. Instead of setting us on firm monolingual ground, multilingual fragments demand that we, as readers, recognize our lack of "ownership" of the text, our tenuous placement between two languages which cannot be made entirely commensurable or comprehensively understood without reducing one language to the other and hence completing the act of translation, boiling the jagged fragment down into a monolingual plane. Thus, unlike most full-scale translations, the literature that contains multilingual fragments is itself kinetic: a text embedded with minute sites of perpetual motion. It is a perpetual motion which necessarily initiates a perpetual, often insoluble friction.

In the words of Édouard Glissant, the multilingual text "sparkles,"[21] yet I want to argue, too, that the sparks ignited by the movement between languages can be as painful and dangerous as they are dazzling. Theorists like Glissant have long celebrated the seemingly magical movement between languages in translation while also recognizing the risks and vulnerability incurred by those who traverse its sparsely-marked trails. Writing in 1937, José Ortega y Gasset titled his essay on translation "The Misery and the Splendor" ("Miseria y esplendor"), and Benjamin wrote of translation both as a plush, richly enveloping "royal robe" ("ein Königsmantel in weiten Falten") *and* as the action of meaning hurling itself across an "abyss."[22] Later theorists have taken such paradoxes or contradictions in new directions, as in Lawrence Venuti's consideration of the problematic valuation of modern Anglophone translations' "fluency" as inciting the "translator's invisibility," André Lefevere's discussion of the economic forces that drive the sorts of "refraction" permitted in different translations, and Emily Apter's analysis of translational ethics of "fidelity" and "originality" by considering works which claim

[21] Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 84.
[22] Ortega y Gasset, "The Misery and the Splendor"; Benjamin, "Die Aufgabe Des Übersetzers," 15, 21.

to be translations yet, "scandalously," have no "originals" from which they are translated.[23] This study expands this rich body of work along several trajectories. By re-contextualizing issues of translation in a theorization and understanding of multilingual fragments, this study hones in on the very moment of translational choice, the inflection point of movement between one language and another. It demonstrates the irreducible distance or lapse between languages which remains at the heart of the translational act, suggesting that within *every* multilingual fragment – even those that seem perfectly "translatable" – there persists a shade of what Apter has recently termed the "politics of untranslatability."[24] In other words, multilingual fragments expose the authorial choice and fallibility inherent to any movement between tongues, the sense that the act of juxtaposing languages fundamentally violates and *changes* both the fragment and the text into which it is inserted. Multilingual fragments demonstrate that translation is inherently an act of rupture and *différance*, a stitching-together of languages that at the same time exposes the deep, ultimately insuperable rifts between them.

One aspect of translation and language-exchange that multilingual fragments set at the forefront is the relationship between national languages, national literatures, and their international context. In reading multilingual fragments specifically within British modernist literature, this study inhabits a space between world literature and national literature, never quite conforming to either frame, yet engaging theoretical concepts from both perspectives. The works of British literature that I discuss operate within the geographic and cultural boundaries of the sovereign state – Great Britain – while often cleaving to its liminal spaces, the borderlands of citizenship and civic participation that trouble any monolithic definition of national belonging. For some authors, this language-associated liminality is not fully intentional. For others, like

[23] Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*; Lefevere, "Mother Courage's Cucumbers" and *Translation, Rewriting*; Apter, *The Translation Zone*, 210ff.
[24] See Apter, *Against World Literature*.

Jean Rhys or E.M. Forster, marginalization of one sort (i.e. Rhys' loss of British citizenship or Forster's closeted homosexuality) facilitates a heightened awareness and attraction to the foreignness of multilingual fragments. Although homosexuality does not play an explicit role in Forster's early published works, his experience of discrimination and silencing as a result of his sexual orientation is directly connected to issues of translation in his posthumously published *Maurice* (1971). Here, he shows a Cambridge Dean commanding his class to eliminate homosexuality from their translations – "Omit: a reference to the unspeakable vice of the Greeks"[25] – and, implicitly, demonstrates translation's facility as a method of silencing as well as communication. In Forster's Britain, a nation whose Labouchere and obscenity laws obligated Forster to sublimate his own homosexual desires into heteronormative plot-lines, the technique of translational expurgation demonstrated by *Maurice*'s Dean is also a tool of the censoring state. Thus, Forster's knowledge of his own, semi-secret liminality within the nation is deeply connected to his use of multilingual fragments both as a mode of resistance to such silencing and also as a demonstration of translation's exclusionary effects (as is illustrated further in Chapter 1). Like Rhys, Forster's use of multilingual fragments is embedded in the context of early twentieth-century Britain at the same time that it demonstrates his keen awareness of his proximity to the borders of national belonging and his aberrance from mainstream national identity.

In speaking about American literature, Wai Chee Dimock describes these liminal spaces of national identity as overlapping specifically with the borderlands of language:

> a crisscrossing set of pathways, open-ended and ever multiplying, weaving in and out of other geographies, other languages and cultures…input channels, kinship networks, routes of transit, and forms of attachment – connective tissues binding America to the rest of the world. Active on both ends, they thread America [sic] texts into the topical events of other cultures, while also threading the long

[25] Forster, *Maurice*, 51.

durations of those cultures into the short chronology of the United States.[26]

Dimock's "pathways" and "channels" are, in essence, a version of the radical, translinguistic bridge formed by multilingual fragments. Yet multilingual fragments also initiate a motion between the foreign and "native" or national English language that both facilitates *and* destabilizes transnational or cosmopolitan connection. English-language works that draw in fragments of foreign language do not simply "gain" by this translational movement, as David Damrosch argues that fully-translated works of world literature do. Instead, they carry this translational impulse back into a national context, setting it in contrast to the surrounding English of the text. Multilingual fragments exist within the "ellipsis" that, according to Damrosch, world literature draws between national literatures,[27] yet they do not simply float around within this world literary space, but are tied to specific coordinates. They call to be read in the context of a specific political or cultural moment (such as Britain and Germany's antagonism during World War I) and facilitate a very specific understanding of the attitudes, values, and assumptions that connect these two languages.

In this sense, multilingual fragments often occur in texts which are, in Damrosch's terms, too "culture-bound,"[28] too associated with a particular national literature and specialization to be considered part of a canon of "world literature." Yet at the same time, they also, crucially, signal that we cannot simply read such "culture-bound" texts as speaking along a single, flattened national or cultural plane. Foreign fragments, however minute, vary the topography of national literature, serving as jagged protrusions that incite us to look where we are going and to forge new, idiosyncratic trails and tunnels of understanding. They draw the multi-dimentionality and polyvocality of world literature into a national context, and reciprocally, suggest a new

[26] Dimock, *Through Other Continents*, 3.
[27] See Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?*, 281–3.
[28] Damrosch, *How to Read World Literature*, 2.

perspective and scale from which we might apply the concept of world literariness. Scale, as Franco Moretti, Eric Hayot, and Nirvana Tanoukhi have recently discussed,[29] is a major concern for world literature (and literary study in general), as the world is simply too big to be viewed – read – by any single scholar. Moretti proposes that we remedy this by toggling the scale of our inquiry away from close reading and the single book and instead toward the graphs, maps, and trees of what he calls "distant reading."[30] Yet I think that we can shift the scale of world literature rather differently by refocusing our attention on the *small* rather than the large or distant, that is, by theorizing world literary movement on the level of the word, phrase, or even the single letter – on the level of the multilingual fragment.

The motion between the national, the transnational, and the worldly within multilingual fragments facilitates authors' complex engagement with political affiliations and alignments. In Yasemin Yildiz's formulation, multilingual fragments disrupt the "monolingual paradigm" (Glissant terms it a "monolingual prejudice,"),[31] exposing and emphasizing the polyglot, poly-dialect realities that underpin any state or empire. In Bakhtin's words, multilingual fragments divest the national language "of its naïve absence of conflict."[32] Multilingual fragments provide a refraction of the problem – a twenty-first century riddle – articulated recently by Judith Butler and Gayatri Spivak: if, in response to President George W. Bush's dictate that the U.S. anthem be sung only in English, one ventures to sing the anthem in a "prohibited" (i.e. non-English) language, "is it still an anthem to the nation and can it actually help undo nationalism?"[33] Transposed to the context of literature: if one introduces a multilingual fragment into, say, an

[29] See Moretti, "Conjectures" and *Distant Reading*; Hayot, *On Literary Worlds*, esp. 30-41; Tanoukhi, "The Scale of World Literature."
[30] Moretti, "Conjectures," 54-5, 57.
[31] Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 2; Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 98.
[32] Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," 368.
[33] Butler and Spivak, *Who Sings the Nation-State?*, 69. A similar riddle: David L. Eng asks, does the American family that adopts a Korean child become an Asian-American family? *The Feeling of Kinship*, 1–2.

English novel, does the novel still constitute a contribution to English identity and does it help to undo hegemonic forms of Englishness and English-language dominance? This study of multilingualism answers such questions as "both," and endeavors to show how a variety of authors address the inherent national/transnational interrelation of multilingual fragments by complex and pivotal mechanisms.

The ability of multilingual fragments to facilitate this sort of internal movement and situated critique depends upon their minuteness and near-invisibility, their containment to isolated words or phrases within a surrounding, often muffling monolingual context. Another, basic facet of this study's inquiry into the relation between multilingual fragments and translation, then, is the quandary of how "big" a movement between languages must be to be considered a "translation." In other words, where do we draw the boundary between "translation" and "multilingual fragment"? Is there a boundary at all? More specifically, how does the size and extent of multilingual fragments facilitate their distinctive, often subversive function in literature? One key aspect of multilingual fragments is that their small, circumscribed profile in the text makes particularly clear their dual function as a) metonymic representations of the national language and nation from which they originate, and b) signifiers of linguistic meaning, intelligible (at least to some extent) to a monolingual audience via translation, cognates, association, and imagination. This duality is always the case in instances of translation, yet full-scale translations are often able to gloss over the foreign origin of the text, emphasizing its fluency in its language of translation (one of Venuti's key criticisms of contemporary translation). That is, full-scale translations are more easily able to ignore a language's national function (a) while emphasizing its signifying function (b). Multilingual fragments, in contrast to full-scale or extensive translations, retain this foreignness in the text, and even when authors

obscure a word or phrase's foreign origin by translating it into English, it often retains telltale residues of its national provenance via accent, syntax, or idiom.

As this study will demonstrate, the inherent conflict and movement of multilingual fragments centers around a dual recognition of the fragment's connection to both a particular nation or region and its function as a signifier. For instance, the fact that a German phrase like "ich liebe dich" means "I love you" *and* that it comes from Germany provides a tension between its simultaneous intelligibility and irreducible alterity. Thus, the German "ich liebe dich" acts rather differently from a similarly short phrase in a less recognizable language. If one were to say "seni seviyorum" or "dw i'n dy garu di," it would signify to most English-speakers an unknown object of Turkishness or Welshness (respectively), but not an intelligible expression. The same holds true for a longer passage of text in a more recognizable foreign language: a long, untranslated quotation from Nietzsche interpolated in an English-language text will more likely appear to the monolingual English reader as a representation of Germanness (or, if one recognizes the origin, Nietzscheism) than a legible expression. In all cases, multilingual fragments hover somewhere along a continuum between the metonymic (a) and signifying (b) functions. Exactly where they fall depends, of course, on the context (time, location, audience) for which they're written and by whom they're read. It is through the size, as well as the shape of multilingual fragments that they inhabit this continuum, and it is one objective of this study to evaluate how different authors position their use of multilingual fragments in relation to its two ("a" and "b") endpoints.

As their name suggests, multilingual fragments are necessarily distinct from instances of full- or large-scale language-crossing. Rather than crossing borders, multilingual fragments inhabit the borderlands themselves, or, as in Apter's recent reconception of translation, mark the

irreducible, localized immediacy of the "checkpoint."[34] This sets them apart from the sorts of fully border-crossing works that are often referred to as "world literature," works which Damrosch describes as "gaining in translation" through their complete transposition from one national context to another.[35] It also differentiates them from the sorts of works that Steven G. Kellman designates as "translingual," having been written in a foreign language by an author grounded in a different mother-tongue or working language.[36] For instance, an isolated French line like "You! hypocrite lecteur!—mon semblable,—mon frère!" (76) in *The Waste Land* functions very differently from the French of Eliot's entirely Francophone poems, "Mélange Adultère de Tout" or "Lune de Miel."[37] Eliot's French poems certainly define him as a "translingual" author in Kellman's terms, and they might also be considered "comparative" or "world literary" on a variety of grounds, including the similarity/contrast of their meter and stress with Eliot's other, English-language poems from his 1920 volume (including "Whispers of Immortality" and "Gerontion"), or the confluences of Eliot's style with that of the natively French poets who influenced him, such as Mallarmé or Baudelaire. Nevertheless, these poems do not constitute multilingual fragments: their implied contrast with Eliot's English work – or the sense of their translation from an English-speaking mind – lacks the immediacy of the direct juxtaposition of different languages within a single line, stanza, paragraph, or page. While one might discern multilingual fragments in the bits and pieces of foreign-tinged language that pepper the works of authors who translate themselves or write in multiple languages (including Eliot, Samuel Beckett, Vladimir Nabokov, Fernando Pessoa, and Elif Şafak), these works are usually not inscribed with the intent of a comparison or conflict between languages, but rather,

[34] See Apter, *Against World Literature*, 99-114.
[35] See Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?*, 281*ff.*
[36] Kellman, *The Translingual Imagination*.
[37] Both of the French poems are from 1920. Eliot, *Collected Poems*.

with the objective of creating a self-contained work of art in a single, new language.

The sense of conflict inherent to multilingual fragments can persist even in cases in which these fragments are so minute, so near-invisible that they consist of a mere palimpsest beneath English translation, discernible only by the faintest aberration of syntax or idiom. Yasimin Yildiz theorizes such translated fragments by differentiating between the category of circumstantial loan-translations referred to by linguists as "calques" and the sort of translational neologisms which, in Yildiz's words, "loudly announce" their "difference," preserving some important mark of their foreign origin. Yildiz illustrates this distinction by contrasting the German words "Muttersprache" and "Mutterzunge," the first a normal German translation for the English term "native language" (it translates literally as "mother-language"), the latter a coinage by the German-Turkish author Emine Sevgi Özdamar, which is a literal translation of the English "mother-tongue" or Turkish "anadili." Özdamar's term is notable not only because it departs from the usual German vocabulary, but also because it evocatively replicates the English and Turkish conflation of "tongue" and "language" to create a new German term. Özdamar carries this conflation *into* German, emphasizing her and her characters' Turkish origins and deliberately muddying the semantic waters between the body ("tongue"), language, and both of these attributes' supposed inheritance via the "mother."[38] Yildiz's discussion of Özdamar's "Mutterzunge," as well as Chantal Zabus' coinage of the term "relexification"[39] illustrate how key phrases might be translated into English yet retain the trace – or in certain cases, the taint – of the phrase's origin in another idiom.

Another, slightly different form of palimpsestic, translated multilingual fragment can be discerned through the aberrant syntax or grammar that signals a speaker's foreign origin or

[38] Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 26–8, 148.
[39] Zabus, *The African Palimpsest*, 102–7, 135–6.

affiliation. This can be seen, for instance, in the faintly Germanic syntax of Marie's "In the mountains, there you feel free" in *The Waste Land*, and it becomes particularly important in early spy fiction (Chapter 3), where such syntactical multilingual fragments often signal a speaker's hidden allegiance to an allied or inimical power. For instance, in Manning Coles' 1940 spy novel *A Toast to Tomorrow*, the long-lost spy Tommy Hambledon emerges from the depths of Nazi Germany speaking in a German-tinged English, "verbs at the end and capitals to all his nouns," a hybrid idiom which confirms the extent of his "under-cover" immersion. He asks his British handlers hopefully, "How my English inconceivably improved has, even during this short interlocutory or what-have-you, ain't it?"[40] This is no direct translation from German, yet its aphasic phrasing and displacement of verbs – a sort of Yoda-speak – makes clear Hambledon's split linguistic identity. Were the entire narrative to be written like this, it might indicate a linguistic failing on the part of the author (and a deep annoyance for the reader). Here, in the midst of normal English prose, Hambledon's eccentric speech stands out. As Coles suggests, Tommy's loyalties and sense of identity are as fractured as the multilingual fragments that riddle his speech. It becomes the objective of his British comrades to bring him back home not only physically, but also ideologically and linguistically.

In order to systematize an understanding of how and where multilingual fragments occur, various critics, most notably Brian Lennon, have set out to catalogue the typographical and stylistic forms these fragments take. Lennon identifies groups of "domesticating conventions" by which authors "manage" foreign languages in predominantly monolingual texts, providing a fairly comprehensive list of strategies such as "containment" (confining foreign speech to dialogue or sporadic "seasoning"), "tagging" (italics or accent), or translation (i.e. appositive

[40] Coles, *A Toast to Tomorrow*, 57, 63.

glosses).[41] Although these stylistic categories may seem fairly simple, they are compounded and complicated by the different types of relations between different languages or dialects, such as those identified by Glissant, which include domination, fascination, contagion, subservience, mockery, subversion, and intolerance.[42] Even among these categories, though, each multilingual fragment renders a new slant on such broad relational labels, requiring the reader to make a game-time interpretation not only of how two different languages move against one another, but further, how the friction of this movement sends shockwaves throughout the symbolic, thematic, and ideologic structure of the work of literature and its literary and historical context. That interpolated foreign languages – multilingual fragments – can have so many more relations to their context than textual forms suggests that there is no direct taxonomy between form and meaning, and that each instance of multilingualism must be read and understood in context rather than in isolation. It is for this reason that this study is structured not as a description of *all* sorts of multilingual fragments, but rather, as a series of case studies which consider instances of multilingualism in the context of a single author, genre, and/or cultural context.

It is for this reason, too, that I focus on what Lennon describes as "weak" multilingual fragments rather than "strong" multilingual texts. In discussing translation and multilingualism in the context of the modern Anglo-American publishing industry, Lennon focuses on what he calls "strong" multilingual texts, works which use "significant quantities of a language or languages other than English" in part to disrupt the hegemony of the publishing industry's demand for translatable, homogeneous works.[43] "Strong" multilingual texts like Christine Brooke-Rose's *Between* (1968) or James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939) are "translation-resistant" because of the extent of their foreign interpolations; as Lennon explains, such works imply that it would be

[41] Lennon, *In Babel's Shadow*, 10–11.
[42] Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 104-6.
[43] Lennon, *In Babel's Shadow*, 9, 61.

easier to learn the languages contained within the text than to take on the herculean task of devising some analogue for them in a translating language. By contrast, "weak" multilingual texts – Lennon identifies Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) as an example – incorporate foreign words legibly into an "expanded *literary* English," providing a discernible English-language scaffolding that eases these texts' translation into English and also, concomitantly, makes them more approachable for the uninitiated, monolingual Anglophone reader.[44] In the case of Burgess' novel, which incorporates a great deal of Russo-English neologisms, much can be gleaned from the multilingual fragments' context, as well as from the glossary that Burgess includes at the end of the volume. While Lennon focuses on Brooke-Rose or Joyce's more spectacular feats of multilingualism in order to discuss the economics of publication, the focus of my study is on those works that situate themselves squarely in a national context, yet also push at the boundaries of that context through minute fragments of foreign language. I demur from Lennon's rhetoric of "strength" and "weakness" here, since not only do "strong" and "weak" multilingualism make use of similar stylistic strategies (Joyce's *Wake* might be seen as a concatenation of smaller multilingual fragments or vignettes), but "weak" multilingualism often shows a peculiar strength of its own, slipping almost silently from beneath the surface of an English text, surreptitiously sliding into the reader's awareness and calling into question the linguistic, political, and ideological boundaries of the text, its author, and even its national context.

Above all, this study moves away from Lennon's distinction between "strong" and "weak" multilingualism because these terms prove misleading when it comes to the impact that a multilingual fragment might exert in a text. As we will see in Chapter 2, reams of propagandistic

[44] Ibid., 78, 101. Lennon uses the term "plurilingualism" where I use "multilingualism"; the difference is nominal, but I prefer the latter inasmuch as it suggests that even two different languages might be considered "multiple" whereas "plural" implies a number greater than two.

arguments for war might be heaped upon the mere insertion of a capital letter-"K," changing Anglo-French "culture" to German "Kultur." The insidiousness by which such minute multilingual alterations establish German alienness while also hinting (often misleadingly) at its ready intelligibility is a major facet of the argument for fighting a German enemy which seems at once barbarous and troublingly familiar. Indeed, as Yildiz writes, such minute incursions of linguistic heterogeneity can be most "threatening" of all in the context of a national mother-tongue, illuminating what Chris GoGwilt terms the "shades of dialect" which "haunt all languages" and which threaten to disrupt the nation's centralized, hegemonic control of grammar, vocabulary, and orthography. Such minute multilingual fragments have proven highly influential over the course of the twentieth century, perhaps even more so than more extensive linguistic experimentation. It is precisely through such subtle linguistic interventions that new linguistic forms have arisen out of twentieth-century genres like post-colonial and feminist literature and entered into mainstream speech and writing.[45] Considered seriously, these small, even "weak" interpolations of foreign language allow us to determine not only how multilingual fragments are inserted into a text, but what the foreign comes to signify in early twentieth-century Britain.

The Languages of English Multilingualism

There are two main aims of this study: first, to offer a theorization of multilingual fragments and their applications, and second, to tell the story of specifically how multilingual fragments uncover and interact with the rifts of political conflict in British texts of the twentieth century. With regard to the first aim, this study comes into conversation with an array of recent

[45] Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 67–78; GoGwilt, *The Passage of Literature*, 34; on post-colonial usage, see for instance Zabus, *The African Palimpsest*; on feminist usage, see Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" and Wittig, "The Mark of Gender."

critical work within a variety of national literatures, as well as in the ever-shifting field of "world literature." These include discussions of multilingualism within Turkish-German literature (Yildiz), Anglophone modernism (Taylor-Batty, Rosenwald, Miller, Yao), contemporary Anglo-American literature (Lennon, Perloff), Tolstoy's Russian novels (Beck), Jewish-American literature (Wirth-Nesher, Taubenfeld), and the reconfiguration of "American literature as American translation" (Boggs).[46] The value of theorizing the methodology by which we read and understand multilingual fragments, I argue, lies in the possibility of drawing together such disparate sites of linguistic collision within a common theoretical framework and further, within a common understanding of how texts that participate profoundly in different national contexts incorporate the phenomena that we have been taught to associate specifically with "world literature."

The texts that I examine in this study all originate in twentieth-century Britain – and mainly early twentieth-century Britain – within the borders of an empire that at first expands past the sunset and then retracts to the area of an island. This is no idle focus: to look at multilingualism in the context of modernist-era Britain is to delve into an embattled space in which every aspect of culture – and especially language – is called into question. This study seeks to add a deeper, language-oriented understanding to what scholars like James Buzard and Jed Esty have termed the "auto-ethnographic" or "anthropological" turn in British literature from about 1850 until 1950, the period of Britain's imperial rise and fall. In the context of the nineteenth century, Buzard examines the British effort to define its national identity in the context of a growing empire, looking at how Victorian texts perform their "insiderness" even as

[46] See Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*; Taylor-Batty, *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*; Rosenwald, *Multilingual America: Language and the Making of American Literature*; Miller, *Accented America*; Yao, *Translation and the Languages of Modernism*; Lennon, *In Babel's Shadow*; Perloff, *Unoriginal Genius*; Beck, "The Emperor Has No Voice!"; Wirth-Nesher, *Call It English*; Taubenfeld, "'Only an "L"'"; Boggs, *Transnationalism and American Literature*, 32.

they make unstable claims for their own ethnographic authority. Esty takes this inquiry into the next century, looking at "the discursive process by which English intellectuals translated the end of empire into a resurgent concept of national culture," and charting the modernist literary shift from transcendent, internationally-directed aspirations to an artistic value "restricted by national or ethnolinguistic borders."[47] Thus, as Esty explains, the beginning of the end of empire – dated, perhaps, from the death of Victoria and end of the Boer Wars to the independence of India in 1947 – marks a particularly fraught, self-conscious period for British national identity, a period further pockmarked by the disruptions of two world conflagrations, a controversial civil war in Spain, and pan-European conflicts over women's and class rights. It is a period in which one might well expect British writers to "go native" and to consider exactly what their nativity might mean.

It is in this era and the preceding century that the English language comes into particular focus as a signifier for Britain and its boundaries. During the early twentieth century, the British orientation toward languages which are *not* English is one of both defensiveness and self-reflection. As Michael North writes, barriers against incursions of dialect into English were taken up as "a way of defending England against the cultural consequences of the implosion of the empire," marking the boundaries of what Esty terms England's "shrinking island."[48] Petra Rau argues that during the early twentieth century, the British sought a "conduit," a scapegoat 'other' through which to "channel" and more easily "articulate" their anxieties about their own national identity.[49] Rau identifies this "conduit" as "the Germans," yet I would argue, along with North, that language itself is the only entity with enough depth and proximity to absorb the existential anxiety of this era. Although foreigners or "others" can be stereotyped via foreign language,

[47] Buzard, *Disorienting Fiction*, 35; Esty, *A Shrinking Island*, 2–3.
[48] North, *The Dialect of Modernism*, 16.
[49] Rau, *English Modernism, National Identity and the Germans*, 1, 10.

multilingualism destabilizes any direct or single ideology or purpose, calling into question that ideology's limitations even as it corroborates it. Thus, multilingual fragments are the perfect auto-ethnographic implement, allowing for an assertion of linguistic containment, defense, and control even as they facilitate reflection upon one's own identity, upon the ultimate boundaries between self and other, original and translation, native language and foreign tongue.

The history of the direct connection between language and nation is a relatively short one, beginning in the eighteenth century with the rise of European monolingual nations – and empires – out of polyvernacular dynastic realms.[50] Its inception can be seen in the Enlightenment-era theorizations of Johann Gottfried Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt, who linked language and nation under the aegis of a linguistically-bound national consciousness.[51] Although Herder and von Humboldt's ideas have been criticized for centuries, their basic precepts continue to exert power into the present day, and the interceding years have only gone to prove that the correlation between language and nation can be forcefully magnetic and dangerously coercive. A national language is, essentially, an "imperialist construction," or as Yildiz terms it, a "monolingual paradigm."[52] National language serves as a containment mechanism for the nation, a linguistic border-patrol which determines and marks those who belong inside. The inheritance of the national language by "insiders" is reinforced through schooling and other forms of education, which ensure that, in Pierre Bourdieu's description, "the state language becomes the theoretical norm against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured."[53] The problem here is that not everyone within the nation's geographical borders

[50] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 77.
[51] See Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 2–8; see also Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*.
[52] Robert Crawford qtd. in Boldrini, "Translating the Middle Ages: Modernism and the Ideal of the Common Language," 41; Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 2; Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 98; see also Boggs, *Transnationalism and American Literature*, 1.
[53] Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 49, 45.

may speak this "state language," nor may some of those who speak the language be vested with the rights of national citizenship. Thus, in a colonial context, language is one of the forces that keep the colonized within the colony, since they seem at once to belong there – to possess and work in the lingua franca of the place, the imperial language – yet at the same time remain in an inferior class with regards to those who control the empire and the idiom.[54] This linguistic power-differential occurs in any case in which one group or person speaks a divergent version of the "state language," or, in Bourdieu's terms, possesses less "linguistic capital" than someone speaking or writing in a form closer to the dominant, standard language.[55]

The duplicitous lure of language as an initiatory mechanism for the nation is in its promise of inclusiveness. Even a critic as circumspect as Benedict Anderson can state that, in theory, language is inherently inclusive, since anyone can learn it and its acquisition is limited only by mortality.[56] To those aspiring to gain work or citizenship in a nation, that's an enticing point, yet to anyone who has ever attempted to learn a second language, the limitations of the point are immediately apparent. Although possible, it takes time and skill to speak a language with "native" fluency, and more often than not that fluency is incomplete, revealing the speaker's bilingualism in moments of indiscretion or lapse. Even for a seemingly fluent speaker, the demonstration of belonging within a national language can be compromised by the jagged edges of grammar, limited or misused vocabulary, and (above all) equivocal accent. And even if one does succeed in speaking a national language convincingly, an individual language does not by itself signify that one belongs to the nation. As Anderson points out, language is not itself a signifier of the nation,[57] yet the effort to masquerade belonging by speaking the national

[54] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 122.
[55] Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 55.
[56] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 134.
[57] Ibid., 134–5.

language strengthens the nation's implicit boundaries.

The reality of language – and the premise of literary language – is that no one really speaks a completely standardized "state language," and that even as speakers of a national language comprise an Andersonian "imagined community," they trouble the borders and foundations of that community by their heterogeneous uses of its idiom. One might argue that it is in this context that we speak of a "national literature," since literary authors often self-consciously toy with the boundaries of their language in order to reflect upon the idiosyncrasies and liminal spaces of national identity. As Azade Seyhan writes, a national mother-tongue can, ideally, offer its speakers a sort of substratum, a "framework of reality and identity that they can appropriate in their own way," providing space to accommodate different dialects and languages within it.[58] Multilingual intrusions into a national language can be particularly potent in penetrating and relativizing a nation's sense of a monolithic language, ideology, and identity, carrying out what Bakhtin calls a "verbal-ideological decentering."[59] Multilingual interpolations reveal the boundaries of the language, as well as its "essential *human* character," its representation of heterogeneous "speaking human beings."[60] Yet even so, the capital-value of the "monolingual paradigm" continues to hold sway, and any multilingual interpolation may be calculated to strengthen or detract from its power.

It is the focus of this study to consider how twentieth-century authors negotiate this relationship between the monolingual and multilingual, the normative and divergent, in the context of the many international conflicts that scar the literature and history of early twentieth-century Britain, from the world wars to conflicts over national belonging to the end of empire. British modernism resides at a crux-point of monolingualism: a century or so after a naturally

[58] Seyhan, *Writing Outside the Nation*, 8.
[59] Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," 368.
[60] Ibid., 370.

multilingual monarchical state had been superseded by a mandatorily monolingual empire, yet still prior to the late twentieth- and twenty-first-century, post-imperial phenomenon that Yildiz terms the "post-monolingual condition." In short, British modernism is the temporal site of the crucial negotiation between a multilingual past and future, and an embattled, waning monolingual present. As Yildiz writes, "While monolingualism is a quintessentially modern structure, it is modernism that most clearly begins to unsettle it and that attempts to find ways out of it, even if the language crisis that animates modernism is generally articulated around 'language' in the singular."[61] Thus, modernist literature is interested in "languages," but not quite to the point of disturbing its establishment in a single, national language or of provoking it to reach too far beyond its comfort zone into strange tongues. Modernism acts very much like Dimock's description of Homer's Attic dactylic hexameter: "a kind of linguistic sponge […] superresponsive to its environment, picking up all those non-Greek words that come its way, but not necessarily dissolving them, perhaps keeping them simply as alien deposits, grains or lumps that stick."[62] When it comes to multilingual fragments, modernism is a lumpy literature, indeed.

In order to understand modernist literature's use of multilingual fragments, though, we need to take a further look into its past. The origins of English multilingualism run deep within the long history of a language forged from Germanic roots, an Anglo-Saxon heritage, and a Franco-Latinate vocabulary, yet the story of multilingual fragments interpolated into a self-consciously monolingual English truly begins with the advent of empire and the "monolingual paradigm" in the nineteenth century. In contrast to modernist literature, though, the most overwhelmingly frequent language of interpolation in the Victorian novel is French. This difference makes historical sense, since France constituted Britain's primary national foil in the

[61] Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 26.
[62] Dimock, *Through Other Continents*, 26.

nineteenth century before becoming one of its closest allies in subsequent years. During the Victorian era, France represented Britain's major colonial rival as well as its ideological and military foe during the French and American Revolutions and the Napoleonic Wars, building upon an inimicality which might be dated as far back as the first hints of English nationalism during the Hundred Years' War.[63] Thus, it is with a long, complicated backstory that Charles Dickens makes the murderous villains in two of his greatest works, *Bleak House* (1853) and *Little Dorrit* (1857), none other than the French lady's-maid Hortense and the Marseillais criminal Rigaud. In *Bleak House,* Dickens presents the murderous Hortense as directly connected to British memories of French atrocities, describing her as resembling "some woman from the streets of Paris in the reign of terror." She speaks with a French-inflected English, and when angered, breaks into a telltale accent and syntax: "Why I r-r-r-ruin my character by remaining with a Ladyship so infame!"[64] To an Anglophone ear, Hortense's rolling of the "r" and her Franco-syntactical ending on the adjective "infame" underline her ineradicable Gallic passion and the violence which leads her to commit murder. Hortense's accent and her fiery delivery not only stereotype her French origins, but also strengthen the implicit, opposing stereotype of English verbal restraint.

Yet Dickens' recourse to villains who betray their true characters through their menacing French accents signifies more than a simple stereotyping of the French 'other' as depraved and violent. Reassuringly, he shows his English readers that these figures, though clever and controlling, may be betrayed to canny ears through their inimical accents, the slips of syntax and vocabulary which betray them as interlopers in the native, English language. Dickens makes his readers into amateur detectives of language alongside *Bleak House*'s clever Inspector Bucket,

[63] As read through the lens, say, of Agincourt in Shakespeare's *Henry V*.
[64] Dickens, *Bleak House*, 226, 523; *Little Dorrit*, see for instance p. 715.

asking them to read accents for clues to Hortense or Rigaud's real characters, urging them to move beyond a casually hegemonic attitude of deliberate ignorance by which one character in *Little Dorrit* opines that "the English tongue was somehow the mother-tongue of the whole world, only the people were too stupid to know it."[65] Instead, as Dickens implies, we must strengthen the British national identity by recognizing and weeding out malicious intruders, while also remaining charitable toward foreigners with good intentions and a will to learn English. Thus, he very gently satirizes the offices of *Little Dorrit*'s Mrs. Plornish, the Cockney woman whose solicitude for her Italian friend Cavalletto leads her to serve as "interpreter" for him, speaking to him in "Italian" (actually pidgin English) long after he has mastered the English language.[66] While Mrs. Plornish's "translations" of "Oo him?" and "Ow you know him bad?" reflect her own non-standard, class-based accent more clearly than Cavalletto's need for her interpretation, they imply her clumsy humanism at the same time that they show Cavalletto's virtuous mastery of English. This, Dickens implies, is the sign of a good treatment of foreign interpolations: a native-speaker with charitable impulses and a foreigner with good intentions, an eye to mastering English, and – perhaps most importantly – a charmingly Italian rather than criminally French accent.

French is the predominant source of multilingual fragments in nineteenth-century British literature, yet while it provides for a malicious roll of the "r" in Mademoiselle Hortense's speech, it never makes for particularly strong politicization. This is due, in large part, to the widespread knowledge of the language amongst the novel-reading Anglophone public: while French can be stereotyped through inimical accents, as in Dickens' novels, it can never be condemned as wholly depraved, since far too many English-speakers understand it far too well, and thus would

[65] Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, 770.
[66] Ibid., 549–50.

be too deeply implicated by a more trenchant vilification. A testament to the widespread French-knowledge among Victorian Britain's novel-readers can be found in the wealth of un-glossed French language incorporated into works like Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853). Brontë's novel takes place in a small, French-speaking country that closely resembles Belgium (where Brontë herself served as a governess), and it abounds with French phrases such "cette jeune fille magnifique aux cheveux noirs comme les jais" ("that magnificent young girl with the jet-black hair"), which receive no gloss or footnote to aid the monolingual English reader. Indeed, despite the extent of the text's French interpolations, the original 1853 edition contains no editorial apparatus such as endnotes, and it is not until forty years later (1893) that a British editor sees fit to add them (including a gloss on "cheveux noirs").[67] In the current "Oxford Classics" edition of the novel (2000), the "Explanatory Notes" span over forty pages, and at least a third of them are devoted to translating French phrases, reflecting the fact that that the knowledge of French among our current age of Anglo-American readers has shifted dramatically from what it was in 1853 Britain.[68] Or to state the same point differently, the sort of linguistic help required by readers in the twenty-first century implies that English-speaking readers who do not require such help – including the novel's first half-century of readers – are familiar with French to an impressive degree by today's standards.

As Brontë's even-handed, generous use of French suggests, too, the language does not always hold the same threatening tone for Victorian readers that it takes on in Dickens' novels. The breadth of Brontë's French suggests that English readers (at least those of a certain class) could be expected to understand it fairly readily, and hence to feel somewhat complicit in speaking it, along with native French speakers. Further, *Villette*'s setting in a Belgium-like

[67] Bell, *Villette*, 1:281; Brontë, *Villette*, 1893, 177 and 325n.
[68] Brontë, *Villette*, 2000, 497n.–538n.

country reminds us that French was a language spoken not only in France but in a span of other countries and colonies, covering nearly as many continents – if not as much land area – as Britain's own English-speaking empire. In addition, French persisted into the nineteenth century as the language of culture in courts from Paris to Petersburg.[69] The language could not, then, be easily aligned with any one country's actions or enmities, as one might, say, align Italian with an emergent, colony-poor Italy. If British writers shied away from writing in French, it was more out of "language loyalty" to their native English, as Leonard Forster explains, than out of a strong sense of political antipathy associated with the language.[70] French could never serve as the threatening, thoroughly inimical tongue that German would become in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Indeed, when it comes to discussing the use of multilingual fragments in the context of British international conflicts, much of this study turns upon the relationship between British literature and the German language. Although the inimical relationship between Britain and Germany dominates the twentieth century, it is a fairly young phenomenon, arising only after a newly unified and Bismarckized Germany had defeated France in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. Throughout the nineteenth century and before, Britain had always maintained a close, if uneasy connection to Germany through the Hanover dynasty, in which two centuries of monarchs married *only* German consorts, and the British royal family often spoke German at home.[71] Nevertheless, German was not a very commonly learned or spoken language in nineteenth-century Britain, relative to French or Italian. It was only in the latter half of the century that it came into a sort of vogue, particularly through "Wagnermania."[72] As we will see

[69] On the endurance of this state of affairs with regards to literature, see Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*.
[70] Forster, *The Poet's Tongues*, 52.
[71] Ramsden, *Don't Mention the War*, 42–3, 11–12.
[72] Ibid., 19, 32–4, 40. See also Argyle, *Germany as Model and Monster*, 5; Stark, *Behind Inverted Commas*, 17-21.

in Chapters 2 and 3, though, an influx of German immigrants and World War I put an abrupt end to Britain's benign interest in Germany. The story of violent Anglo-German conflict throughout the early twentieth century had the consequence that the knowledge or study of the German language in Britain became deeply problematic and even dangerous. By the end of World War II, German-speaking Britons were so scarce that the British foreign service could not find enough German-speakers to interrogate German prisoners of war, and had to employ Dutch, Czechs, and Norwegians to help.[73] Thus, we can understand the period between the wars – and really the period beginning in 1871 – as one in which German was truly an embattled, often inimical language, a language which was both recognizable enough to seem a threat to a sense of British security, yet strange enough to bear the brunt of a shifting, complex, virulent enmity.

By the advent of World War I, German provided an ideal, easily isolated contrast to French in that fewer people in Britain spoke it, and hence to know the German language was more deliberate and, in the context of war, more obviously suspect. In a work like Dickens' *Bleak House*, *being* French – and exposing one's Frenchness through a French accent – may be a liability, yet speaking French could never be portrayed as such, since French in Britain was (and remained into the twentieth century) not just a metonym of France but a prized marker of class-bound acumen. By contrast, few enough Britons spoke German that to know the language could easily be cast as a liability in a time of war, as I discuss in Chapters 2 and 3. By 1914, a canny Anglo-German author like Ford Madox Ford could triangulate German and French as opposing foils to English, suggesting the former to be as inimical as the latter was linguistically and culturally beneficent. As I demonstrate in Chapter 2, Ford's contrast is an important one: it confirms French's full rehabilitation as a national signifier and suggests that perhaps French never really needed to be rehabilitated at all. Instead, the weak vilification of French in some

[73] Ibid., 234.

Victorian fiction and its subsequent, easy exoneration only made the way for its replacement, German, to be abhorred more fully.

This study is closely tied to the paradigmatic place that German assumes as an "inimical language" in early twentieth-century Britain, though it is by no means the *only* inimical language. German plays a singular and crucial role in an account of modernist multilingualism most importantly because Germany was Britain's main antagonist in two extremely virulent world wars (1914-18 and 1939-45), and was a major, albeit implicit foe in two additional conflicts in which Britons were deeply invested, the Second Boer War (1899-1902) and Spanish Civil War (1936-39). In addition, Germany constituted Britain's "Intimate Enemy,"[74] due, in part, to the singularly proximal relationships between the German and English languages. The fact that German and English share a linguistic family tree and thus myriad cognates allows German words to serve not only as fraught metonyms of Germany and Germanness, but also as legible or nearly-legible signifiers. It is often the gap or discrepancy between these two forms of meaning – metonym and signifier – that furnishes the tension or conflict at the heart of multilingual fragments.[75]

Other languages come into play as multilingual fragments over the course of this study, but none with so potent a combination of simultaneous intelligibility and alterity as German. On the one hand, the languages of Britain's colonies – Hindi, Tamil, Yoruba, Kiswahili, Zulu, Irish, and so on – might well be called "inimical" in relation to English, yet they are not so easily decipherable for the uninitiated reader. Often, multilingual fragments in these languages come to represent points of deliberate opacity in the text, as a mode of resistance to the imperial

[74] The epithet comes from the title of the essay collection edited by Stanzel and Löschnigg, *Intimate Enemies*.
[75] On the literary and historical relationship between Britain and Germany in the twentieth century, see particularly Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin* and *Strange Meetings*; Rau, *English Modernism, National Identity and the Germans*; Ramsden, *Don't Mention the War*.

imposition of the English language.[76] In other cases, as with the myriad Hindi fragments in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901), they are glossed appositively in English so as to clarify their meaning for the reader, and this glossing itself signifies a deliberate, interpretable decision in the context of the text's politics, as is discussed further in the Coda. Classical languages like Latin, Greek, and Biblical Hebrew also play a relatively small role here, though for the opposite reason, namely, that they are readily intelligible to many early twentieth-century readers, and further, that they are very rarely "inimical," since they represent no current nation or group. Relatedly, a living language like Italian is far less represented here than German even though it, too, is tied to an inimical and (during World War II) fascist power. Nonetheless, the use of Italian by modernist writers like Eliot or Forster (with the notable exception of the Mussolinist Pound) is less charged with the political divisions of the present day than it is with the palimpsest of Italian politics in the time of Dante or Petrarch. In other words, Italian may be a living language, but it is more connected to a classical, Renaissance past than to the twentieth century's fraught political present.[77] With regards to other major European languages, such as Russian[78], Polish, and Spanish, the limits of this study are also the limits of my own linguistic acumen and page-constraints. I plan to elaborate upon these relations further in the book-length version of this work.

Multilinguistic Conflict

In summary, German is central to this study of twentieth-century multilingualism because

[76] On the politics of opacity viz. imperial languages, see esp. Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind*.
[77] On the role of Italian in modernist literature, see Wilhelm, "Guido Cavalcanti as a Mask for Ezra Pound"; Dasenbrock, *Imitating the Italians*; Morrison, "Come Far Poteresti Un Sofismo?"; Boldrini, "Translating the Middle Ages."
[78] On the confluences of modernism, multilingualism, and Russian, see, for instance, Diment, "Tolstoy and Bloomsbury"; Reinhold, "'A Railway Accident'"; Beck, "The Emperor Has No Voice!"

it gives rise to multilingual fragments which are most emblematic of what I term "multilinguistic conflict." In the interpolation of German or similarly positioned languages in English (e.g. French in the novels of Jean Rhys; see Chapter 4), multilingual fragments become the sites of immanent pressure, stress, and fracture. Foreign fragments cut into English text like shrapnel from an explosion, leaving jagged edges of English language flapping around the wound. This is no idle simile between words and war, but rather a deep analogy and connection: multilingual fragments serve as a special form of weaponized word, an emblem and avatar for the extralinguistic, battlefield violence which characterizes the early twentieth century. This study demonstrates that multilingual fragments, like warfare itself, are the result of the violent collisions of international politics.

In a general sense, the concept of language forged by conflict is as old as war itself. Indeed, as far back as the 5th century BCE, the Athenian historian Thucydides described the empire-rending Corcyran Civil War as bringing about a state of total flux in which even "words" were seen to "change their usual meanings":

> What used to be described as a thoughtless act of aggression was now regarded as the courage one would expect to find in a party member; to think of the future and wait was merely another way of saying one was a coward; any idea of moderation was just an attempt to disguise one's unmanly character; ability to understand a question from all sides meant that one was totally unfitted for action.[79]

And, indeed, modernists from Joyce to Woolf take up the trope of words as weapons: from "dagger definitions" to words that "ceased to lie flat in a sentence […] rose, became menacing and shook their fists at you."[80] This sense of generalized linguistic conflict is intensified in the case of multilingual fragments, which recreate conflict within the text itself, redrawing textual boundaries, or in Bakhtin's words, merging "alien territory" and "warring parties" on the level of

[79] Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 242.
[80] Joyce, *Ulysses*, 153; Woolf, *Between the Acts*, 59.

the letter.[81] Yet while these fragments entail a fracture of language, a linguistic fragmentation that mirrors the shattering and detritus of war, the fact that they are knitted together in a single text implies the possibility of mending and emending them. They do not constitute, in other words, the total failure or incommensurability of translation which Emily Apter succinctly describes as war itself.[82] Instead, each instance of a multilingual fragment represents both a rupture and an attempt to heal that rupture by fitting pieces of language together.

The fact that these foreign fragments remain visible in the text – even when hidden beneath an English translation – means that the frankensteinian scars of their insertion retain an essential, inassimilable lividness. The suturing that knits foreign words into the monolingual text is far less complete, systematic, and homologous than similar language-shaping phenomena which modernist critics like Michael North have named "dialect" or, in Matt Hart's evocative term, "synthetic vernaculars." As the implicit "synthesis" of Hart's phrase suggests, the vernaculars he discusses are idiosyncratic and composite, yet also fitted together into something like a coherent idiom, a language with smooth surfaces. Synthetic vernaculars have a wholeness that endows them with the capacity to disrupt "the identification between the concept of a national language and the idea of 'the People,'" and thus to remain within the "interpretive horizon" of the nation-state while evading recruitment as "a mere function of sovereign power."[83] By contrast, multilingual fragments are just as jagged and unwieldy as their name implies; while they may puncture the connection between nation and language, calling this conjunction into question, they are never able to rupture it fully. Many of the texts which employ multilingual fragments on a larger scale seem to lie along a path whose eventual terminus might be a synthetic vernacular, yet they lack – or deliberately eschew – the systematization and

[81] Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," 418.
[82] Apter, *The Translation Zone*, 16.
[83] Hart, *Nations of Nothing But Poetry*, 37.

reconciliation of parts necessary to this end.

Instead, the shards of foreign language which interlard modernist texts resemble more the minute, almost hidden points of violence that Sarah Cole characterizes as a hallmark of modernist thinking: "a partially covered road, a single word, or even a sparkling flower petal" that might be "reinvested with its violent past."[84] This study is both an effort to contextualize and "reinvest" literary multilingual fragments in the cultural discourses and conflicts in which they occur, as well as to excavate and analyze the inherent ability of these fragments to evoke that foundational conflict through their particular textual construction. My methodology combines "New Historicist" approaches to literature with close-reading, as a means of addressing this twofold situation of multilingual fragments. Each of my chapters thus looks at a specific literary case study which I contextualize in the cultural discourse of its time. This critical action participates in what Vincent Sherry defines as New Historicism's "forcefully expanded and variegated frame of reference" for reading works of literature, the identification of "a populist provenance, a sort of mass (even anonymous) authorship"[85] within cultural discourse. Such a historicist approach is uniquely germane to looking at the use of multilingual fragments, since the political uses of foreign languages are defined by their play not within a single literary work but within a larger, amorphous cultural-discursive sphere. These languages *qua* languages signify in a given literary text inasmuch as they gain their significance from their cultural context.

Yet at the same time, by taking up foreign fragments in this way, authors also participate in and shape the cultural usage of foreign languages, often exerting exceptional linguistic influence. As Bourdieu reminds us, "The struggle among writers over the legitimate art of

[84] Cole, *At the Violet Hour*, 34.
[85] Sherry, *The Great War and the Language of Modernism*, 20.

writing contribute, through their very existence, to producing both the legitimate language, defined by its distance from the 'common' language, and belief in its legitimacy."[86] As my study of multilingual fragments shows, too, literary authors often have a significant hand in determining the legitimacy or associations of languages like French, Italian, or German with particular class-boundaries, political affiliations, or rules of international power and mobility. In this way, the combination of historicist and close-reading methodologies allows us to read the doubleness of multilingual fragments: their minuteness and vulnerability within the surrounding cultural discourse, but also their significant ability to fracture and shape the literary work in which they appear, a literary work which, in turn, occupies a privileged place in that same cultural discourse.

Because multilingual fragments depend upon an author's own linguistic knowledge, itself a product of that author's cultural context, there are many points in this study at which the biographical and the historical converge. This becomes particularly apparent in the context of genres which arise out of real historical events and cultural preoccupations, such as early spy literature (Chapter 3). Here, "real" and "fictional" spy stories often seem oddly homologous and intertwined, especially with regards to their use of foreign language. At times, it becomes difficult to discern the fictional from the non-fictional as both sorts of accounts take on similar methods of describing spies' multilingual prowess or the dangers of linguistic slippage while undercover. This is, in fact, because many spy narratives were written in response to authors' own experience as spies (the list of former spies who became spy novelists is endless and eminent), and also because the genre of espionage fiction engendered fears and stereotypes that exerted a surprisingly vast influence on the structure of Britain's incipient spy service. Similarly, in chapters that focus on a single author's work (such as Ford's in Chapter 2 or Rhys' in Chapter

[86] Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 58.

4), I discuss the author's own knowledge and use of foreign languages, since this knowledge forms the inimitable linguistic boundary of the text, even as the text itself often exposes the unenunciated boundaries of the author's understanding, abilities, and linguistic control. Wittgenstein's 1921 dictum that "*The limits of my language* mean the limits of my world"[87] holds particularly true here: the limits of the literary text's "world" are defined by the limits of the author's language(s).

Many early twentieth-century authors seem particularly concerned with the primacy of the authorial relation to language, as Chris GoGwilt has shown in his discussion of auto-biographical scenes of language-learning in modernist literature.[88] The reason for this might be attributed to many factors, but above all to the prevalence of violence, conflict, and upheaval during the modernist era, which threatens to rend and redefine language itself. The violence inflicted upon language is emblematized in the fractured enjambments or the plea of "Bin gar keine Russin" at the opening of Eliot's *Waste Land*, or the scene in Woolf's final novel, *Between the Acts*, in which the "zoom" of a warplane overhead "sever[s]" words on the ground.[89] A dominant, pessimistic strain of early twentieth-century writing portrays this fracturing of language – of which multilingual fragments form a special part – as a sign of humanity's modern, post-Babelian self-destruction. Yet other strains of thinking recast this fracture and destruction as a point of departure for new forms and realms of artistic creation. For instance, in a 1940 letter written during the Blitz, Woolf textualizes the non-verbal mark made by her pen jumping at the impact of a bomb falling outside, turning it into a very intelligible "X."[90] This writerly incorporation, textualization, and literarization of violence (a three-step process often

[87] "Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt." Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 88 (§5.6).
[88] GoGwilt, *The Passage of Literature*, 10.
[89] Woolf, *Between the Acts*, 193.
[90] Woolf, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, VI:435; see also Wirth-Nesher, "Final Curtain on the War," 186–7.

elided into one) is easily adaptable to the case of multilingual fragments: if conflict fractures language, then it is the prerogative of authors to knit that language (or language*s*) back into a more evocative, personalized text. A work like *The Waste Land* might not be possible without the intrusion of such fractures, and might tell a different story than a more linguistically homogeneous and "whole" work. Like Ernst Friedrich's 1924 volume *Krieg dem Kriege! Guerre à la Guerre! War against War! Oorlog aan den Oorlog!*, which in the interest of pacifism brought together horrifying pictures of soldiers disfigured in World War I, a text like *The Waste Land* (or *Between the Acts* or many others) often achieves exceptional ends by exposing its scars.

As critics such as Yildiz, Azade Seyhan, Bella Brodzki, Marianne Hirsch, and Sandra Bermann have discussed, multilingualism and translation are often employed thus as a means of and signal for the representation and working through of trauma in literature, whereby chronicling the fractures of languages can "restore and recuperate loss and memory." It can also, as in the case of expatriated or colonial writers, signify a certain mastery or "conquering" of an otherwise hegemonic language.[91] While an author like Jean Rhys, for instance, depicts her experience of expatriation through protagonists who are lost in the flux of French and English, her very depiction signifies her orchestrative triumph over this linguistic confusion: she herself has the meta-capacity to write these complex, multilingual narratives. Nonetheless, Rhys' heightened concern with the politics of multilingualism often places her work (and the work of similar authors) in a category of "minor literature," marginalized by a canon which speaks more clearly within an established nation and national language. In discussing the work of Franz Kafka, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari define "minor literature" as showing a "high coefficient of deterritorialization," which is inscribed in Kafka's Czech-Jewish Germanophone fiction as

[91] Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 20, also 146; Seyhan, *Writing Outside the Nation*, 89; see also Brodzki, *Can These Bones Live?*, 168; Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory*, 92–3; Bermann, "Translating History," 262.

"something impossible – the impossibility of not writing, the impossibility of writing in German, the impossibility of writing otherwise."[92] Kafka's work – like Rhys' – cannot escape from being political because it exists always on the margins of politico-linguistic power. As such, it seems topical and grounded in a way that works more liberated from the nitty-gritty of language might not. In this study, I endeavor to draw the brilliantly multilingual work of "minor" authors like Rhys or even thoroughly unknown ones like A.W. Wheen alongside better-known texts by Forster or Ford as a way of depicting how different treatments of language serve to classify these authors as "major" or "minor." At the same time, these authors' use of multilingual fragments also muddies the waters between such classifications through intertextual "conversations" of multilingual technique: "major" texts often make use of multilingual forms that "minor" texts employ with a greater sense of their political necessity and imminence. In short, a focus on multilingual fragments expands the range of what we might understand as "modernist" or "major," demonstrating the deep stylistic interconnectedness of works like Eliot's *Waste Land* and G.V. Desani's *All About H. Hatterr*, and suggesting that neither work is able to escape from the considerations of language and politics which, ostensibly, mark the distinction between "major" and "minor."

I'll conclude, then, by charting how these intertextual conversations come together in the chapters of this study. The scope of my project moves largely chronologically, from the last gasps of late-Victorian realism to the height of postwar, postcolonial literature, from the tentative incorporation of a few foreign words to late (or, in the case of Rushdie, *very* late) modernism's explosion of exuberantly heterogeneous and hybrid English. Broadly speaking, it also follows a trajectory by which authors take up multilingual fragments with increasing deliberation and destabilizing intent, an increasing attention to the use of multilingualism as a representation of

[92] Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 16–17.

the twentieth century's chaos and conflict. In my first chapter, I demonstrate a method for reading multilingual fragments via the model of E.M. Forster's novels (1906-24), which incorporate such fragments in order to advocate for humanist connection in the midst of the increasing anti-German xenophobia of pre-World War I Britain, as well as the rifts created by British imperialism in India. Despite Forster's explicitly cosmopolitan intent, his use of small-scale multilingualism exemplifies the technique's inherent, often unintentional ambivalence: foreign phrases contradict the xenophobia of their era, yet at the same time, are increasingly constrained, equivocated, and even effaced by Forster's doubts at the achievability of his humanistic mission.

In Chapter 2, I discuss Ford Madox Ford's participation in World War I propaganda which denigrates its German enemy by presenting untranslated German terms like "Kultur" as at once self-evidently nefarious (intelligible as such even to the monolingual English reader) and utterly alien (expressing untranslatable German depravity). An Anglo-German, Ford proves himself a master of this multilingual propaganda, yet its play of revelation and concealment ultimately exposes his underlying ambivalence as a propagandist in his manipulation of a silently *translated* German phrase ("unter vier Augen"/"under four eyes") in his novel *The Good Soldier* (1915). The novel's dependence on this phrase for its thematic and symbolic structure calls into question Ford's propagandistic appeals for the German language's eradication. Later, in his postwar tetralogy, *Parade's End* (1924-8), Ford deliberately dismantles the workings of propaganda, exposing and criticizing its dependence upon linguistic control and manipulative translation.

Chapter 3 addresses early spy fiction's development of the multilingual spy in the context of World War I-era concerns about espionage, demonstrating the implications of multilingualism

as both a skill and a tragic liability, showing it to be the origin of multi-faced affiliations which threaten to undermine the spy's national loyalty. In creating a new taxonomy of early spy literature (c. 1890-1925), I show how the slippage between languages is mapped onto narratives of sexual incontinence and transgression. Multilingual spies – and particularly female and homosexual spies – are shown to be inherently volatile and untrustworthy unless they strictly police their linguistic choices as well as the inadvertent sympathies they form through direct communication with the enemy. This chapter discusses literature by a host of writers (many of whom were spies themselves), and charts a movement from pre-war espionage fiction (Erskine Childers, John Buchan), which seeks to contain the multilingual English spy's shaky loyalties, to post-war fiction (i.e. A.W. Wheen's 1924 *Two Masters*), which depicts a less idealized vision of the alienation and dangerously inimical sympathies inherent to real espionage.

In Chapter 4, I read the full canon of Jean Rhys' work in its depiction of linguistic estrangement as a form of female suppression. In her novels of the 1920s and '30s, Rhys, who had married a stateless Dutch man in 1919, exposes the repercussions of the widespread European/American legal predicament of female expatriation and estrangement by depicting exogamic English protagonists adrift in Paris, their imperfect knowledge of French signaling their inability to find a home within any national community. Rhys employs multilingualism's fracturing effects deliberately, forcing her readers to navigate between the languages of her texts as a means of experiencing her protagonists' uneasy residence between languages and cultures. In her final novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), Rhys adapts these earlier multilingual techniques to address the grave predicament of colonial disenfranchisement. Demonstrating the heightened stakes of linguistic inequality in a colonial context, Rhys exposes women's experience of linguistic alienation even within the English language itself, and shows how the equivocal,

idiosyncratic Englishes of colonized women (of both the servant- and master-class) come into conflict with the hegemonic, standardizing English of colonizing men.

As a coda, I show how modernist experimentation with multilingual fragments is adapted by postwar authors from the peripheries of the British empire to demonstrate the experience of living within a hybrid identity suspended between multiple cultures, and further, to expose the hybridity inherent to *all* language. G.V. Desani's *All About H. Hatterr* (1948) deliberately undermines assumptions of linguistic authority or standardization by exposing the constructedness of all language, imbricating Desani's authorial voice in the eccentric, Joycean idiom of the half-Indian, half-European Hatterr and his friends, and creating a mélange of multilingual Englishes that prevents any attempt to isolate a "standard" English or even a standard Indian-English. In *The Satanic Verses* (1988), Salman Rushdie continues Desani's project of exposing all English as "migrant" or "mongrel" by depicting a London scene in which his many characters – including the deific narrator – all speak different, hybrid forms of English. In doing so, Rushdie uses multilingual fragments as a pedagogical strategy, as he challenges and conditions his readers to participate in multilingual language games even in less familiar, non-Western languages.

Inimical Languages provides not only a strategy for reinterpreting early twentieth-century literature, but also a robust new method for addressing multilingual fragments in literatures from a variety of provenances and periods. In British modernism and beyond, a reading of multilingual fragments recasts and enriches our understanding of nation-based works of literature in a transnational context, drawing our attention to the long, continuing history of multilinguistic mixing, as well as the fractures of political and social conflict that such foreign interpolations mark within the text. To tell the story of multilingualism is to delve into a history of collisions

and connections, painful fractures and half-sutured wounds. It is to recount a piece of the ongoing tale of how human experience forms and is formed by our language – or, shall we say, languag*es*.

Chapter 1

The Impossible Bridge:
Multilingual Fragments in the Novels of E.M. Forster

> But Aziz was addicted to cameos. He held the tiny conversation in his hand, and felt it epitomized his problem.
>
> – *A Passage to India* (1924)[1]

E.M. Forster does not, at first glance, stand out as a multilingual modernist. This may seem odd, since the majority of his novels and stories take place abroad in places where the dominant idiom is not English – most notably Italy in *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), *A Room with a View*(1908), "The Story of a Panic" (1911), and "The Eternal Moment" (1928), and India in *A Passage to India* (1924). Nevertheless, these works are set almost entirely among English-speaking groups, with only minor, generally unremarkable incursions by foreign interlocutors who speak mainly in English if they speak at all. Instead of dominating his writing, foreign languages form a sort of substratum to Forster's work and thought, an accompanying shadow to his English, in which rare fragments of foreign language suggest that a multilingual or entirely non-English world persists just beyond his largely monolingual frame. Forster himself was candid about his limited capacity to depict the native inhabitants of the places that his English characters visited, later admitting that his vision of the Italian Gino in *Where Angels Fear to Tread* was largely a matter of guesswork, and that his "limitations were grave" in depicting the Italian language in that and other novels, since he lacked the capacity to represent the tongue "as Italians have chosen to speak it," and instead proceeded with a "vocabulary largely composed of *questo, quello, quanto* and *troppo*," "some strange personal noises," and "occasional phrases from Dante."[2] This statement is tinged with a characteristic Forsterian self-deprecation and

[1] Forster, *A Passage to India*, 309.
[2] Forster, "Three Countries," 290-1.

modesty, but it nonetheless points to the potential incongruity of beginning this study of multilingual modernism with an author who strays so rarely and tentatively into languages other than the tongue of his native Tunbridge Wells.

And yet Forster's self-consciousness about his use of foreign languages and characters in his works is notable, since it points to two simultaneous yet seemingly contradictory attitudes about the capacity for language and translation to cross the divide between human beings and, in aggregate, to assuage the conflicts and misunderstandings that drive people to the mass destruction of war. On the one hand, Forster's focus on foreign locations for his novels and his liberal humanist interest in the interactions of individual characters suggest that language and conversation have a profound capacity to connect radically different ideologies or perspectives by way of charitable understanding. He articulates this form of connection, this "rainbow bridge," most famously in *Howards End* (1910): "Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer."[3] Translation furnishes a particular and profound occasion for such connection, since it necessitates not just the congress between different ideas or expressions, but the juncture of two radically different languages. In theory, then, multilingual fragments in Forster's English-language texts ought to create a microcosm of interpersonal connection through the translational movement between the word or phrase in a foreign language and the context in which it's embedded. Forster's interest in the connective potential of moving between multiple languages is evident in his account of his first meeting with his Egyptian lover, Mohammed El Adle, in which their mutual feeling is figured through the flowering of a translinguistic intimacy:

> 'you shall never pay,' you [El Adle] said, because the way I had once said 'Thank you' pleased you. – 'You talk English' – 'A little practice makes perfect.' – 'I wish I could talk Arabic.' 'Why?' – 'To read the elf Lela wa Lela.' – 'Oh – they were

[3] Forster, *Howards End*, 213-14.

written by a celebrated philosopher.' – This was on our first talk.[4]

This conversation and the subsequent relationship between Forster and El Adle is predicated upon the latter's fluency in English, his willingness to meet Forster on his own terms. And yet Forster, in this brief encounter, illustrates a more delicate process of linguistic exchange: El Adle is the one who adjudicates their shared English in deciding that he likes Forster's "Thank you," and Forster, in a gesture toward his interest in El Adle's own language, pronounces the name of the *Thousand and One Nights* not in English but in Arabic. Thus, Arabic and English meet in the common ground of Forster and El Adle's conversation, and this conversation itself becomes a metonym for the radical connection of their relationship.

Nevertheless, such a linguistic exchange can never be entirely equal and complete. By dint of class and nationality, it is El Adle, a tram operator, who must enter into Forster's English in order for their relationship to take place. Even in this seemingly successful congress between two such radically different yet mutually sympathetic individuals, then, Forster's illustration of connection points, at the same time, to the gap of difference that remains between languages and people. This gap is figured, in miniature, by the space between Forster's pronunciation of the "elf Lela wa Lela" and his aspirational (and never actually realized) capacity to read Sheherazade's tales in Arabic. Even if Forster enters into El Adle's linguistic world through this murmured title, the boundaries of that shared space are confined only to a few words; the fragment does not expand into a full mutual knowledge, nor do the rules of colonial and cross-class interaction require that Forster immerse himself in El Adle's Arabic beyond the bounds of his own literary curiosity. Even with the most connective and transnational of intentions – and certainly, I think, we can credit Forster with these – the juxtaposition of two languages opens up not only the possibility of a translational connection, but exposes the politics and power differentials that

[4] From Forster's posthumous letter to El Adle, 27 Dec. 1929, rptd. in Shaheen, *E.M. Forster*, 185.

intercede in the space between languages, drawing our attention to the prevailing gap between different human beings.

This seemingly insuperable gap between languages and people, between the foreign fragment and its context, is emphasized by the dearth and tentativeness of Forster's forays into actual foreign languages in his novels, which points to an implicit pessimism toward the possibility of achieving a radical human connection across the space between languages. It is precisely the smallness, the self-conscious hesitancy of Forster's incursions into other tongues that, I will argue, allows him to set the precedent for how multilingual fragments might serve a precise and nuanced role in articulating not just the way that people come into contact across languages, but also the inherent limitations and fractures within the cosmopolitan connections that Forster, in so much of his fiction, seems to champion and pursue. In this regard, Forster resembles and reflects upon the attitude of his main character in *A Passage to India*, Aziz, whose "addict[ion] to cameos" is at once expressive and insufficient. It is by the smallness of Forster's fragments of foreign language that he is able to articulate a subtle incitement toward efforts of interpersonal, often transnational understanding, but also, at the same time, an implicit critique of the limits of this liberal impulse, limits which mirror of the confined boundaries of the multilingual fragments themselves.

Forster's depiction of transnational connection in his writing – and particularly in his novels – by way of small, often near-invisible multilingual fragments falls in line with the sense of nuance and individualized scale that he champions in his political and critical writings. During World War II, Forster voiced his adherence to no belief other than a faith in "the individual," "[p]ersonal relations" and "[l]ove and loyalty," culminating in his famous declaration that "if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the

guts to betray my country."[5] Implicitly in such enunciations, Forster sets up a contrast between the individual and the group (the state, the popular imagination, etc.), a contrast which is above all one of scale: to champion the individual is to shift the scope of political thought radically away from its focus on conflicts between groups and mass ideologies (a particularly potent move in the 1930s and '40s); it is to see human interaction not in the abstract calculus of polls, casualties, or collateral damage, but the idiosyncracies of individual stories. On the level of Forster's criticism or fiction, this focus on the individual and on what Lionel Trilling has called Forster's "moral realism" (his "acceptance of the human fact as we know it now")[6] results in texts that refuse concrete conclusions in favor of complexity and individual thought.

Various critics have commented on Forster's dependence on textual tactics that call for an individualized readerly interaction with the work's nuances of thought, such as "ironic indirection," "promise and withdrawal," and sentence structures based in "saving clauses, excuses, and evasions."[7] I would argue that multilingual fragments are yet one more. In each case, Forster guides readers away from a sense that the work is "about" any single theme or issue, and instead exposes them to the nuanced messiness of individual human relations, both between the characters of the work and between the reader and the text. Forster pushes against certainty and toward individual interpretation, or what Judith Herz calls "provocative uncertainty."[8] Forster himself seems to sum up this sense of nuance in his 1939 description of Mendelian genetics, which, he alleges, subverts fascist concepts of purity by suggesting "that no stock is pure, and that it may at any moment throw up forms which are unexpected, and which it

[5] Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," 57; "What I Believe," 68-9.
[6] Trilling, *E.M. Forster*, 10, 14.
[7] See Armstrong, "Two Cheers," 286-7; Orange, "Language and Silence"; Colmer, "Promise and Withdrawal"; Herz, "Forster's Sentences," 12-13.
[8] Herz, 12-13.

inherits from the past."[9] In saying this, Forster not only gives the lie to Nazist racism, but implies that the genetic variance and idiosyncrasy that prescribes for the heterogeneity of individuals also provides for those individuals' creation of heterogeneous thoughts, stories, texts, and most fundamentally of all, language. If our shared genetic material can give rise to "unexpected," impure hybrid forms, Forster suggests, then so too might our shared vocabularies mate together to give rise to new, individualized idioms.

Individuality, for Forster, plays out on the level of the letter. As his account of his encounter with El Adle demonstrates, it is through language that we meet and connect with each other, and language becomes both the context and the means of our interaction with others. This infiltration of individuality in language and diction is evident in Forster's 1941 portrayal of the eighteenth-century altercation between that bastion of free-thinking, Voltaire, and the progenitor of modern Germany, Frederick the Great. Forster locates Voltaire's individual protest against Frederick's tyranny in the repeated, "ominous little word 'But'":

> It is the instinctive protest of the free man who finds himself in the power of a tyrant. [...] It all may seem nice upon the surface – but! The tyrant may be charming and intelligent – but! The machinery may work perfectly – but! Something is missing: the human spirit is missing. Voltaire kept faith with the human spirit. He fought its battle against German dictatorship two hundred years before our time.[10]

For Forster, the incursion of individual difference might be no larger than a single "but," which nevertheless retains the capacity to shift Voltaire's appraisal from acquiescence to individualized critique. A similar principle and politics holds true for Forster's use of multilingualism: Forster deliberately does *not* include extensive multilingual fragments in his fiction, but instead applies to ever-slimmer slivers of foreign language in order to destabilize and diversify the sentiments of

[9] Forster, "Racial Exercise," 20.
[10] Forster, "Voltaire and Frederick the Great," 169, 171.

his English characters and, by extension, his English readership. For Forster, interspersing a text with pieces of foreign language is not a matter of making a work set in Italy or India seem more "authentic" by way of linguistic "local color," since the definition of "authenticity" and the apprehension of a place differs according to each individual perspective. Rather, Forster's multilingual fragments act as Voltairian "but"s, subverting the seduction and hegemony of large-scale powers and ideas and directing our attention back to the small, the individual, the nuanced, the human.

In the following chapter, I demonstrate how Forster makes use of multilingual fragments in his works of fiction as a means of articulating connection on a small, individual scale, and also, crucially, of critiquing the potential for transnational or interpersonal understanding on the level of the letter. Myriad critics have commented on Forster's eventual disillusionment with the possibilities of liberal humanism,[11] particularly in his last work, *A Passage to India*. Yet by looking at the increasingly rare places where Forster inserts foreign language into his text, we can identify his recognition of the possibilities and boundaries of such small-scale connection in a more pervasive, more nuanced way. Even as early as *Howards End*, Forster's use of multilingual fragments confirms that he is acutely aware of the prevailing question of whether small interventions might truly hold sway against the large-scale forces at work in the early twentieth century, from class conflict to imperial hegemony and world war. Multilingual fragments emphasize the sites in Forster's work where he recognizes the gaps or rifts that intercede between individuals, marking the limitations of his own liberal impulse and the ultimately fragile, slender outlines of his injunction to "only connect."

If, in pre-war novels like *Howards End*, Forster suggests the limitations of radical connection by way of the smallness or timidity of his multilingual fragments, by *A Passage to*

[11] See, for instance, Trilling, *E.M. Forster*, 114, 121; Parry, "*A Passage to India*."

India, he implies a far more troubling separation between individuals and cultures by eliminating foreign languages almost entirely from his text. This multilingual absence is conspicuous in the midst of India's linguistic fecundity, as well as following the 1922 explosion of modernist multilingualism in Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Joyce's *Ulysses*. If anything, we might expect Forster to expand the scale of his use of multilingual fragments in *A Passage to India* rather than diminish it. Instead, Forster seems to suggest that in the context of imperialism, the gaps of understanding that intercede between different languages have widened into chasms, swallowing up the possibility of multilingual connection and interlarding the text with sites of mistranslation, silence, and confusion. A far greater bridge will be needed to assuage colonial pain and violence, Forster seems to suggest, than a few Hindi or Urdu words interspersed in an English text. Yet although *A Passage to India* seems to foreclose the possibility of wielding multilingual understanding against the continent-spanning rifts of imperial strife, Forster's elegiac final novel leaves open the possibility that we, as readers, might read the ringing absence of foreign language as an incitement toward building a context in which the languages of India – crucially including English – might once again come into conversation with each other. Thus, Forster shows that small pieces of foreign language – even those so small that they recede into absence – retain the capacity to signify and, fundamentally, to connect.

Forster's Languages

Through Forster's use of multilingual fragments, his early work bares the most elemental aspects of his professed ideology of liberal humanism and cosmopolitan connection, demonstrating its potentialities as well as its limitations and fault-lines. Both of these are captured potently in *Howards End*, his novel centered around the interactions, conflicts, and

liaisons between different factions of London's middle-class: the haughty, capitalist Wilcoxes, the bourgeois-intellectual Schlegels, and on the very bottom rung, the struggling, quasi-proletarian Basts. The novel's famous epigraph, "Only connect...," encapsulates both Forster's objective of bridging the rifts between these individuals and his wistful concern that such a breach might remain impossible. Long before Forster's encounter with the problems of race and imperialism in *A Passage to India*, the ellipsis in his epigraph to *Howards End* seems to signal a similar authorial surrender to the difficulties of bringing people together across class and cultural lines. The three dots fading off into obscurity may well point our attention toward the novel itself as an answer, but perhaps they also lead to the unanswerable, "disintegrating" question that Trilling identifies at the heart of *Passage*: "What is to be done?"[12] Thus, from the beginning of the novel, Forster seems to suggest that he will explore both connection *and* its boundaries. His use of multilingual fragments here illuminates the deep intertwining of these dual themes: the juxtaposition of different languages serves as a means both to connect people and languages together, but also to emphasize the rifts and gaps between them. If, for Forster, multilingual fragments offer the possibility of a tenuous linguistic bridge, they also draw our attention to the vertiginous chasm beneath it.

In seeking to "connect" the main conflicting forces in *Howards End*, Forster literally marries them: in the unlikely match between the young, liberal Anglo-German Margaret Schlegel and the older, conservative, *echt*-English Henry Wilcox.[13] In the culminating scene of this synthesis, he takes the radical "connection" of these two seemingly opposing forces a step further, as Margaret seeks to join them not only in their sentiments but also in their languages:

> It had been a strange love-scene – the central radiance unacknowledged from first to last. She in his place, would have said 'Ich liebe dich,' but perhaps it was not

[12] Trilling, 109.
[13] On the contrast between these two, see Bradshaw, "Howards End," 153; Burra, "The Novels of E.M. Forster," 28.

> his habit to open the heart. He might have done it if she pressed him – as a matter of duty, perhaps; England expects every man to open his heart once; but the effort would have jarred him, and never, if she could avoid it, should he lose those defences which he had chosen to raise against the world.[14]

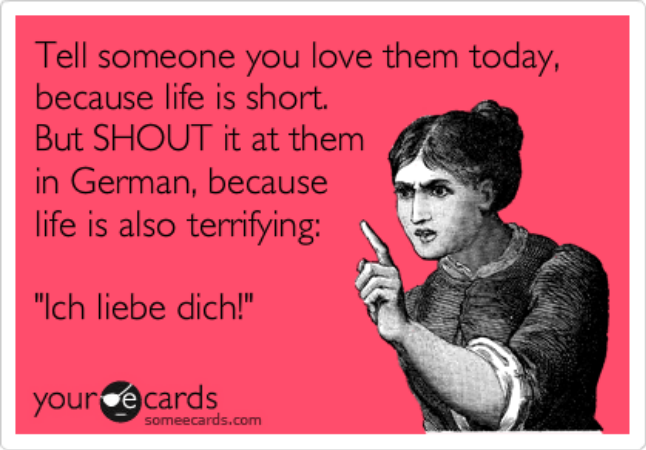
Margaret's imagination of Henry speaking words of love not in his native English but in another language – the German of "ich liebe dich" – at first seems a pinnacle of the sort of peripatetic, cosmopolitan engagement that Forster's novel reveres. It is a cosmopolitanism that takes the form of an endless journey into new realms of humanity, prefiguring T.S. Eliot's later statement that "we shall not cease from exploration," as well as Forster's own articulation of the principle of "tolerance," which entails "hav[ing] all the time to be putting yourself in someone else's place": "Though A is not unchangeably A or B unchangeably B, there can still be love and loyalty between the two."[15] As Forster has it in *Howards End*, "truth, being alive," could not be static, but is "only to be found by continuous" mental and interpersonal "excursions" of the sort that Margaret is well accustomed to by dint of her "profound vivacity, a continual and sincere response to all that she encountered in her path through life" (223, 13). Thus, Margaret is the perfect Virgil to guide Henry along the way of this "truth," what Forster terms the "rainbow bridge": "She would only point out the salvation that was latent in his own soul, and in the soul of every man. Only connect! […] By quiet indications the bridge would be built and span their lives with beauty" (213-14).

Yet the ambiguous passive tense by which this "bridge" is "built" indicates that the path between the native English of Margaret and Henry and her imagined profession of German love is by no means clear. First and foremost, German is not a language to be thrown around lightly in 1910. Even with the buffer of four tenuously peaceful years, Forster and his novel are, as Trilling

[14] Forster, *Howards End*, 190; subsequent citations are noted parenthetically in the text. N.b. This passage seems to have been original to Forster's original version of the novel, and shows no emendations in later drafts (see Stallybrass (ed.), *The Manuscripts of* Howards End, 164).
[15] Forster, "Tolerance," 47; "What I Believe," 68.

writes, "precisely sensitive" to the tremors of the European conflagration to come,[16] and well aware that it will most likely arrive at the hands of the patriotic, regimented Germany which Margaret's father has fled and which her German cousins comically embody.[17] Margaret's imagined "ich liebe dich" may hearken to the softer tradition of her "idealist" father's German romanticism (34-5),[18] yet it does so by way of an embattled language, one that calls for her lover not only to transgress the bounds of his own tongue, but also to cross the widening gulf which will soon encompass the hybrid territory of "No Man's Land." The Englishman's "duty" of heart-rending transnational engagement – as Margaret imagines for Henry – will, in 1914, be transfigured into the deadly "duty" of "pro patria mori." By proposing for Henry to express his love in German, Margaret asks him to cross a much more dangerous and distant ground than if he were to profess his love in French or Italian – a ground bounded by English and Germans who already, in 1910, frequently suspect each other of being "of the dreadful sort."[19] This effect is well summarized by a 2011 American cartoon which commands, "Tell someone you love them today, because life is short. But SHOUT it at them in German, because life is also terrifying: 'Ich liebe dich!'"

[16] Trilling, *E.M. Forster*, 102.
[17] See Firchow, *Death of the German Cousin*, 61*ff.*
[18] Forster, in a funeral oration for the founder of the National Council for Civil Liberties, Ronald Kidd, pulls from precisely this romantic tradition in quoting Schiller's verse in *Wilhelm Tell*: "Und eine Freiheit macht uns alle frei" ("And one freedom makes us all free"). Forster, "Ronald Kidd," 48.
[19] Parkinson points out that Forster uses "syntactical repetition" in *Howards End* to emphasize that the Schlegels are marked both by their English and their German relatives as specifically *not* Germans or English, respectively, "of the dreadful sort" (50). This attitude toward German and implicit fear of "Prussianism" will only grow greater in the years following 1910; see Chapters 2 and 3.



While German's capacity to "terrify" in 2011 has undoubtedly been transformed and amplified through its association with the horrors of the Holocaust and World War II, Forster's use of the language in 1910 still bears an incipient resonance of force and intimidation, of the "Germans" – and German – "of the dreadful sort" housed within Margaret's plea for translinguistic love (34).

At the same time, though, the fleetingness of Forster's German phrase and its easy intelligibility – by the twentieth century, even the monolingual Anglophone reader will know or can guess its meaning – suggests that its allusion to the actual threat of political conflict between England and Germany may serve as little more than a convenient, amplifying vehicle for Forster's message of charitable understanding and cosmopolitan "connection." Indeed, the fact that scholars of Anglo-German literary relations frequently refer to *Howards End* as Forster's "Anglo-German novel"[20] suggests that its nationality is relatively incidental, its Germans and German-language simply a rather challenging entry in a series of foreign interlocutors brought to bear on the question of interpersonal comprehension in Forster's early novels.[21] This is certainly true in Forster's "Italian" novels, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1906) and *A Room with a View* (1908), where the problem and value of confronting, respecting, and "connecting" to the

[20] See Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin*, 61; Rau, *English Modernism*, 43*ff.*

[21] It is worth noting, though, as R.N. Parkinson does, that only in *Howards End* does Forster fully integrate his foreign context (German here; Italian in the earlier novels) via hybrid, Anglo-foreign characters like the Schlegel sisters. Parkinson, "The Inheritors," 58.

otherness of other human beings (even those of the same nation) is figured through the meeting of different cultures and classes while abroad. Forster lampoons bourgeois characters like *A Room with a View*'s Miss Bartlett, who presume to "connect" to Italy simply by parroting its language. After only a day in Florence, Miss Bartlett takes to calling the protagonist, Lucy Honeychurch, "My dear Lucia,"[22] an affectation that Forster clearly condemns as an alienating impediment to actual interpersonal understanding. Worse, Forster paints characters like Lucy's suitor Cecil Vyse as speaking Italian to their fellow Englishmen in order to dismiss or exclude them.[23] It is only when Cecil translates into English his Italianate, allusive announcement of engagement, "I promessi sposi,"[24] that Lucy's mother understands their circumstance, and indeed, "the sound of the thing in English" softens Cecil, making "him flush and smile with pleasure, and look more human."[25]

In Forster's easy rejection of Englishmen speaking beyond their national tongue – in claims such as "Italian in the mouth of Italians is a deep-voiced stream […] In Mr. Eager's mouth it resembled nothing so much as an acid whistling fountain"[26] – he promotes a sort of linguistic essentialism, implying that language is most proper in the mouth of a native-speaker. Yet while he praises the beauty of non-translation (as in the case of the allegedly untranslatable Italian adjective, "*Simpatico*"[27]), he expressly does *not* state or imply that everyone should be confined to monolingual borders policed by national identity. Rather, some of the most profound "connections" in Forster's Italian novels occur at the point where two languages meet, and particularly where speakers make felicitous mistakes in speaking unfamiliar tongues. Lucy's

[22] *A Room with a View*, 23.
[23] See Cecil's treatment of the well-meaning pastor Mr. Beebe, 147.
[24] The phrase is taken from the title of Alessandro Manzoni's 1827 classic novel.
[25] *A Room with a View*, 137.
[26] Ibid., 102.
[27] *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 79-80; the italics are Forster's.

brother Freddy punningly names Cecil as Lucy's "Fiasco" rather than her "fiancé," gesturing perhaps at the Honeychurch family's lesser comfort with French terms and at the same time demonstrating Freddy's surprising insight, as his chosen term hits the nail squarely on the head when it comes to Lucy and Cecil's disastrous engagement.[28] Similarly, while Lucy is travelling in Florence, her happier marital fate is initiated when she asks an Italian for the whereabouts of the clergyman Mr. Beebe, "Dove buoni uomini?" Her rather literal translation of "the good man" confuses the Italian, who directs her not to Mr. Beebe but to another character who might, rather differently (if perhaps more aptly) be designated a "good man." It is George Emerson, who promptly kisses Lucy, and later marries her.[29]

These felicitously jumbled translations demonstrate that, as scholars have long noted, Forster's concern here is less with the meeting of different nationalities and idioms, and much more with the capacity of these good-faith communicational efforts to facilitate human connection. The arc in Lucy's character in *Room* begins with her first introduction to Florence, in which she is improperly "saddened" by the Cockney accent of her Pension's "Signora," clearly wishing for a more authentically Italian proprietor, one with children named Gino and Vittoria rather than "'Enery" and "Victorier."[30] As Forster suggests, such wishes for authenticity are misguided; the only important authenticity is humanness, and the English are authentic enough in this, whether in Florence or London. By the end of *A Room with a View*, Lucy will learn to filter her speech so as to best bring about a sense of connection with different interlocutors. Thus, she speaks polite Italian to the Florentine cabman who asks for her patronage (and admonishes George against being rude to him), and then seamlessly continues talking with George in an

[28] *A Room with a View*, 149.
[29] Ibid., 108-10.
[30] Ibid., 13, 20.

English free from multilingual affectation.[31] As Forster demonstrates throughout his early novels, encounters across languages are merely heightened, instructive instances of the challenge of interpersonal, verbalized understanding. For instance, in Forster's *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, the novelist and critic Rose Macaulay's cuts to the heart of the novel when she wonders what language its English and Italian lovers (Lilia and Gino) might speak to each other when they are alone. As Macaulay discerns, it is nearly impossible to imagine these two characters traversing between languages in order to have an intimate conversation, an observation which underlines the novel's sense of a mutually insuperable non-comprehension that is even more profound and dooming than a language barrier.[32] Forster implies that foreign encounters are instructive in priming characters to recognize the depth of all – even monolingual – exchanges between people. This is the realization which ultimately redeems Lucy and allows her to enter into a happier marriage with George: "She might be forgetting her Italy, but she was noticing more things in her England."[33]

The Anglo-German critic Petra Rau comes close to recognizing this connection between language and Forster's overarching themes of connection, yet she misses the mark in reading its particularities as incidental for Forster in *Howards End*: "culture is naturally transnational and cosmopolitan, precisely because it produces connections, even though most of his examples are actually German."[34] In fact, as I've argued above, Forster's uses of German language and his plot based upon a family of Anglo-German characters is not simply an "example," but rather a deliberate choice on Forster's part to use the language and its speakers as a concrete foil to

[31] Ibid., 314-18.
[32] Macaulay, *The Writings of E. M. Forster*, 39.
[33] Forster, *A Room With a View*, 238. Juliette Taylor-Batty identifies a similar auto-ethnographic move in the works of D.H. Lawrence and Dorothy Richardson; *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, 43.
[34] Rau, *English Modernism, National Identity and the Germans*, 51.

English and Englanders.[35] Forster's transnational, cosmopolitan bent depends upon a connection centered not around an imagined other (an Italo-German amalgam), but a figure vivid in particularity. This is reflected in his deliberate depiction of characters originating from places in which he himself had personal experience, from his youthful travels in Italy to his tenure as a tutor for the novelist Elizabeth von Arnim in northern Germany, to his later service as personal secretary to an Indian Rajah. Upon his arrival in Germany in 1905, Forster wrote in his diary that

> I don't make out the G.s. They terrify me. I swear anything they're the warring nation, if only because they've prigged so many Italian pictures. The country is unthinkably large and contented and patriotic – I mean that is its spirit as you go in the train. It's got no charm, like Italy, where you think all time of the glorious limb sliding southward between warming seas; but w/ an awful formlessness which – I don't know what: I had better learn some Grammar.[36]

There is no evidence that Forster became particularly good in German, but his transition in this diary entry from an initial stereotyping, anti-German reaction to a commitment to learning "Grammar" – the means by which to communicate with and deepen his understanding of Germans and Germany – is emblematic of Forster's ethic of connection as he articulates it in *Howards End* and elsewhere. Indeed, the passages of foreign language that Forster incorporates into his early novels are uncannily idiomatically correct, even as Forster later admitted limitations with regards to learning about and depicting the "class-structure," "economic problems," or language of places like Italy.[37] Nevertheless, as Macaulay notes, Forster's reproduction of Italianate English speech in *Angels* is so acute that she challenges readers to "[t]ranslate this into Italian, and see how right it reads."[38] Similarly, his Germanisms in *Howards End*, particularly the Germanic English of Margaret's cousin Frieda (only mildly mocked by her

[35] On this point, see also Burra, "The Novels of E.M. Forster," 28.
[36] Forster, "Diary with Lucy Notes," 20r.
[37] Forster, "Three Countries," 290-1.
[38] Macaulay, *The Writings of E. M. Forster*, 40.

English aunt Mrs. Munt) are in "perfect pitch" (see 192*ff*.).[39] This is a distinct aberration from contemporaneous British writers' representations of German, which show little interest – and often overt, deliberate disdain – for grammatical verisimilitude, as we will see in Chapters 2 and 3. Forster, by contrast to such authors, implies that even though comical mistranslations can give rise to felicitous recognition between those who speak the same language (as with Lucy's "buoni uomini"), an honest attempt at accurate language is necessary for the sort of understanding which he wishes to provoke between even the most foreign characters. The challenge and import of bridging the distance between languages accurately is heightened when the language of encounter is one associated with an inimical power, such as the increasingly conflictual Germany that Forster himself had experienced and expressed in 1905. The path of connection that Margaret wishes to build between her German and Henry's English is, as Forster implies, an increasingly distant and treacherous road.

The crux in understanding Forster's engagement with foreignness and cosmopolitan understanding in *Howards End* is to ask whether Henry really does traverse this transnational path at all. In a "love-scene" whose center remains "unacknowledged," Margaret's key phrase of translinguistic connection – "ich liebe dich" – remains unuttered and imaginary, a translation trapped within her own mind. She hopes by "quiet indications" to teach Henry connection, yet is this really a viable strategy? Does an imagined foreign phrase so small as to be overlooked by a monolingual reader constitute a real means by which to challenge and initiate interpersonal communion? Perhaps, we must posit, Forster's application to the smallest of multilingual fragments signifies the boundaries of Margaret's (and, by extension, his) foray into a real challenge of radical interpersonal charity and connection. Perhaps, the limitations of Margaret's and Forster's German language – as Wittgenstein might say – are the limits of their cosmopolitan

[39] Duckworth, *E.M. Forster's House of Fiction*, 97–8.

world, and the protective cushion of English words and Anglophone equivocation demonstrates the real brunt of their concern, as well as the prevailing limits of using such interpolated foreign fragments as an effort at multilingual understanding.[40] Certainly Margaret is ready to understand Henry in all his otherness, yet her own multilingualism cannot bridge this gap for him, and as she only later realizes, "Henry could not bear to be understood" (274). In using "ich liebe dich" to demonstrate his and his protagonist's efforts at connection, Forster actually, if reluctantly, exposes the limits of this strategy, calling into question a "Georgian utopianism" and liberal humanism that will be all but annihilated in the trenches of World War I. While some critics have argued that *Howards End* is a last bastion of these pollyannic ideals, I would argue that the linguistic pessimism of the novel indicates precisely the opposite, and demonstrates its affinity less to the optimistic multilingual conclusion of *A Room with a View* and much more to the profound, linguistically striated pessimism of *A Passage to India*.[41]

In *Howards End*, Forster demonstrates that the connective power of multilingualism is limited, too, by the characters who might have access to such translinguistic fluency. In *Howards End*, the matter of who might be able to understand a phrase such as "ich liebe dich" is not only one of inclination, but also, profoundly, of class. Characters from the upper-middle-classes, including both the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes, have the leisure not only to learn and understand more than one language, but to choose their path amidst language in general. Forster encapsulates the ebullience of upper-middle-class epistemological prowess in the character of Henry Wilcox: "With a good dinner inside him and an amiable but academic woman on either flank, he felt that his hands were on all the ropes of life, and that what he did not know could not be worth knowing" (151). Henry's attitude is emulated, on a smaller scale, by the book's other

[40] From Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*: "Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt." ("The limits of my language mean the limits of my world."), 88 (§5.6).
[41] See Widdowson, "*Howards End*," 130-1.

upper-middle-class characters, such as Margaret's brother Tibby, who demonstrates his prerogative to decide his own worldly engagement by declaring himself a rootless, idealistic "cosmopolitan" (182). It is only because Tibby's class places him so far from the front-lines of international conflict that he has the leisure to declare himself above such troglodyte cares.

Yet Forster does not limit the boundaries of his story to Tibby's rarified world. It is through the ill-fated, lower-middle-class clerk Leonard Bast that Forster presents a more complex and ultimately pessimistic view of translinguistic connection, demonstrating that the movement between languages can impede interpersonal connections just as easily as it can facilitate them. Unlike Margaret or Henry, Leonard is not the master of languages, but is trapped between them, vertiginously suspended above a "gulf" or "abyss" (132, 54). While Leonard's reference to himself as teetering on the edge of the "abyss" refers clearly to the early twentieth-century social rhetoric that figured London's poor as "people of the abyss," this description dovetails fortuitously and tellingly with Walter Benjamin's later depiction of the "Abgrund" ("abyss") as the space traversed by translation.[42] In other words, for Leonard, to fall into the (literally) abysmal realm of the truly poor is synonymous with the failure of translation, communication, and culture to connect him with a higher class (such as the Schlegels), as well as with his utter banishment from the education that would further allow him to enter their multilingual world.

Most of all, Leonard is trapped between different versions of English. On one side, he has the capacity to communicate with his wife Jacky in the "pseudo-geniality of the Cockney" (56), yet on the other, he aspires to become conversant in the humanist world of the Schlegels, reading Ruskin yet finding himself unable to translate his reading's refinements into everyday usefulness. "Could he adapt it to the needs of daily life? Could he introduce it, with

[42] See London, *The People of the Abyss*. Benjamin, "Die Aufgabe Des Übersetzers," 21.

modifications, when he next wrote a letter to his brother, the lay-reader?" (58). Although Leonard elicits the Schlegel sisters' philanthropic interest, they find his life imperfectly translatable into their own understanding, to the extent that Helen Schlegel self-consciously exaggerates Jacky's Cockney accent in order to gesture toward her linguistic and social distance (129-31; see also 274). Later, Margaret herself underlines the difference between the easily multilingual Schlegels and Wilcoxes and the monolingual Basts by capitalizing upon the latter's linguistic abilities in order to exclude and control them. As the Basts' blundering into the Schlegel-Wilcoxes' affairs threatens to disrupt the family's newfound equilibrium, Margaret begins to send messages to her sister and siblings-in-law in a language, French, which she evidently assumes that the Basts will not understand (265, 339). This linguistic ruse is successful, but the Schlegels' initially well-meaning machinations ultimately result in Leonard's untimely death. While David Bradshaw alleges that this tragic outcome may be the result of the Schlegel sisters' inherent "Prussianism" (as represented by the German sword that ends Leonard's life),[43] it seems more germane to argue that it is actually the Schlegels' plotting in a seemingly inoffensive language – French – that sets off the events leading to Leonard's death.

Forster demonstrates his recognition of the deep repercussions of Leonard's class-bound, linguistic inequality and instability through his pre-publication editing of a passage in *Howards End* depicting Leonard's first conversation with the Schlegels. As the Schlegels and Leonard walk home from their chance meeting at a Beethoven concert, Leonard strives to banter with Margaret on her cultural level, conscious of the fact that "[h]is brain might be full of names, he might have even heard of Monet and Debussy; the trouble was that he could not string them together into a sentence, he could not make them 'tell'" (47). In the earliest draft version of their exchange, Margaret asks him, "What did you see this season?" and Leonard responds:

[43] Bradshaw, "Howards End," 163.

> ‘Faust, Aïda, and Tann – ’ He looked at her nervously [not sure whether it was] ‘~~Is it~~ “Tannhouser” or “Tannhoyser”?’
> ‘Tannhoyser.’
> ‘Thank you.’
> ‘Did you enjoy it’?’
> ‘Oh, I know the music very well. I have the Piano-forte score. One can get a very good play out of Tannhoyser.’[44]

Here Leonard confronts his ignorance as to how to pronounce a tricky German name (“Tannhäuser”) by gamely asking for guidance. Not only does he readily receive it, but his openness regarding this foreign name initiates a deeper, more egalitarian conversation – a connection – with Margaret, and allows him to add the correctly pronounced name to his vocabulary, as is evident in the last line of this exchange. Already, though, we can see in Forster’s emendation of the draft’s first line (shown here by superscript and strike-out) that Leonard’s linguistic uncertainty is receding out of direct speech and into his internal monologue. This change is implemented in the second draft of the passage:

> ‘This year I have been three times – to Faust and to Tosca and – ’ Was it ‘Tannhouser’ or ‘Tannhoyser’? Better not risk ~~it~~ [the word]. ~~How difficult life was! How full of traps!~~[45]

In this version, rather than asking for help and continuing the conversation, Leonard reaches a self-made aporia, and evidently, an abrupt end to his and Margaret’s connection. Yet here, at least, Forster exposes us to Leonard’s own *cri du coeur* as a result of this failure of communication in the cancelled cry of “How difficult life was! How full of traps!” Even as Forster truncates the conversation and eliminates the connection between Leonard and Margaret, he at least provides the reader with an insight (a different sort of connection) into Leonard’s feelings about this language-based failure. Yet in the final, published draft of the passage, Forster

[44] Forster, “Howards End Manuscript Drafts,” 48v.
[45] Ibid., 42. In this second draft, Forster also evidently rethinks his earlier mention of “Aïda,” replacing it here with “Tosca,” perhaps in the thought that Leonard would more likely be able to pronounce the latter (my thanks to David Damrosch for this insight). Note that the *Howards End* drafts are not included in consecutive order in this manuscript collection. These emendations are reprinted in Stallybrass (ed.), *The Manuscripts of* Howards End, 33-4.

erases even this modicum of intimacy with Leonard:

> 'This year I have been three times – to 'Faust,' 'Tosca,' and – ' Was it 'Tannhouser' or 'Tannhoyser'? Better not risk the word. Margaret disliked 'Tosca' and 'Faust.' And so, for one reason and another, they walked on in silence. (45)

Instead of Leonard's reaction here, we see Margaret's own evaluation – she is endowed with the unquestioned and unquestioning prerogative to pronounce judgment on musical taste. Without the suggestion that Leonard is sorry about this failed communication, the reader is left to assume that he doesn't know that his diffident monolingualism (and Margaret's cultural superiority) has doomed their conversation. Perhaps if Leonard had chanced his question about "Tannhäuser," Margaret might have found some interest in common with him, as Forster's own love of Wagner and the earliest version of this passage suggest.[46]

Instead, it is Leonard's linguistic hesitation which cuts short the conversation and his relationship with Margaret. If we accept Oliver Stallybrass's characterization of Forster as "an author who writes fast, and uses the physical act of writing as part of 'the process of creation,'"[47] it seems that this progressive emendation elucidates Forster's evolving picture of Leonard as a character made verbally, culturally, and socially impotent by his economic circumstances. It need not be this way; directly after this episode, Margaret's aunt Mrs. Munt demonstrates herself perfectly ready to "risk the word" when it comes to an unfamiliar musical title: "There was a thing – something about a faun in French – which Helen went into ecstasies over" (46). Mrs. Munt's class buffers her against any sense of compunction in forgetting the name of the Debussy piece, since "the word" (either Debussy's name or the rather complicated name of the piece, "Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune") is not endowed with the same weight of cultural capital as it is for Leonard. For Mrs. Munt, "the word" is just a word.

[46] On Forster's affinity for Wagner, see DiGaetani, *Richard Wagner*, 90*ff.*
[47] Stallybrass, "Forster's 'wobblings,'" 150.

Forster seems keen to this distinction, to the vexed relationship between class and language. Like his diminution of Leonard's inner-monologue and agency in his drafts of the "Tannhäuser" passage, Forster successively reduces Leonard's demonstration of internal thoughts over the course of *Howards End*, decreasing the reader's sympathy with the character and "increasing" the sense of "irony and distance" from him.[48] Does Forster do this out of callous indifference toward Leonard's plight? Or is this instead a more profound comment on the access that such a man might have to the sort of language – and languages – in which Forster's novel and its characters are readily fluent?[49] Forster's drafts of Leonard's "Tannhäuser" conversation, which increasingly draw the focus of the conversation away from Leonard himself, suggest that Forster is aware of this major hitch in his plan for interpersonal connection. Like Henry, Leonard fails to connect to Margaret because of his inability to traverse outside of his own language, to make a radical connection across different idioms, yet the similarity between the two men ends here. Henry Wilcox holds the reins of language, and his failure to "connect" is a mark of Margaret's diffidence in imagining his love as flexible and generous enough to value her even in a tongue that is not his own. Leonard, by contrast, holds no such power; he fails to "connect" because he does not own enough cultural capital, enough of the foreign language – or more specifically, foreign pronunciation – that would give him the confidence to forge a bridge across class lines. As Katherine Mansfield noted tartly, Forster portrays Leonard as so impotent that the reader "can never be perfectly certain whether Helen was got with child by Leonard Bast or by his fatal forgotten umbrella. All things considered, I think it must have been the

[48] Pinkerton, "Ambiguous Connections," 237.
[49] Or, conversely, on Forster's limited access or comfortability with *Leonard*'s own language, as a variety of critics have suggested. See Leavis, "E.M. Forster," 41; Bradshaw, "*Howards End*," 162; Shahane, *E.M. Forster,* 90; Wright, *Literature of Crisis,* 48.

umbrella."[50] Judith Herz summarizes this impotence as signifying that not only Forster but Leonard himself "remains [...] detached from his own voice."[51] Thus, the multilingual fragments that Forster includes in his text reveal their double edge: a potential tool with which to bring people together or to drive them apart, a marker either of the outstanding effort or the lack in breadth and commitment to cement interpersonal connection.

Absence and Echo in *A Passage to India*

Written over the course of more than a decade, Forster's final novel, *A Passage to India*, marks a crucial shift in Forster's style and thinking over that time, a period that comprised not just the First World War, but also, as Forster himself noted, a radical change in India and Anglo-Indian imperialism following the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh (Amritsar) Massacre and the rise of Indian nationalism under Gandhi.[52] Forster had first travelled to India as a tourist in 1912, after which he developed the novel's main characters and setting, but it was only upon returning as a secretary to the Maharaja of Dewas in 1921 that he felt able to continue his work, and he completed it only after returning to England.[53] In its non-European setting and focus on imperial friction, it seems clear that *A Passage to India* marks a departure from Forster's earlier novels, but it moves away from these most of all in the tone with which it ironizes and at times dismisses his earlier, idealistic liberal humanist endeavors toward representing and facilitating human connection. As Benita Parry has announced, *A Passage to India* is Forster's "epitaph to liberal-humanism," a novel for which, in Gillian Beer's words, "Only connect..." proves to be

[50] Qtd. in Page, *Howard End*, 28. I.A. Richards, however, notes that Forster does demonstrate a "confession of faith" in his desire to "let Leonard live on" through a child, even if Leonard himself is "worthless" and thus "killed violently" (20).
[51] Herz, "Forster's Sentences," 13.
[52] See also Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 75.
[53] See Forster, "Three Countries," 298.

"insufficient and dangerous advice," leading to misunderstandings and interpersonal disasters that only cement the hegemonic relationships of imperialism.[54] Indeed, it is a novel in which the "rainbow bridge" that Margaret Schlegel hopes will connect her world with that of Henry Wilcox is transformed into a "Bridge Party" that brings Indians and English together only to emphasize their divisions and to demonstrate the linguistic and political power wielded over the colonized by the colonizers. In other words, it is a novel in which the "bridge" marks the site not of the potential for connection but a fatal, seemingly insuperable gap.

This gap is, fundamentally, one of translation, and as I will argue in this final section, Forster's last novel is a work in which the sites of potential multilingual congress between English and Indians result only in mistranslation or in a ringing silence, a palpable absence of foreign interlocutors. Even more so than in his earlier novels, Forster incorporates the barest modicum of foreign language into *A Passage to India*. This is surprising first of all because of the overwhelming plurilingualism of the Indian subcontinent, which Forster had ample time to experience if not to master, and which he later celebrated as providing a sense of "enlargement and complexity."[55] It is even more surprising in light of Forster's earlier use of multilingual fragments – from "buoni uomini" to "ich liebe dich" to "Tannhäuser" – as a means of articulating the at times fractured connections between individuals. Even if he himself did not, admittedly, possess full fluency in Italian or German, Forster shows little difficulty in incorporating these languages at key points in his early works. Through his acquaintance with the Maharajah or Syed Ross Masood (the model for Dr. Aziz), he might easily have found enough Hindi-Urdu to accomplish a similar end in *A Passage to India*, and so it is notable that he incorporates barely a word of it.

[54] Parry, "*A Passage to India*," 140-1; Beer, "But Nothing in India is Identifiable," 16.
[55] Forster, "India Again," 325.

What, then, is the cause for this overwhelming monolingualism in what might seem likely to be Forster's most multilingual novel, the work whose narrative dwells most often and intimately amongst non-English-speakers and seems most in need of the connective force imparted by multilingualism? To address this question is to delve into Forster's deep, language-level critique of the possibility for transnational connection in the context of empire. The most immediate answer is the sheer problem of multiplicity. In an "India" which Forster adamantly reminds his reader is far from singular and is representable only through "Indians,"[56] there are simply too many voices, opinions, and languages to encapsulate and faithfully portray in a single novel by a single author. As Trilling notes, Forster sets himself in *A Passage to India* "for the first time" a "test of verisimilitude": "Is this the truth about India? Is this the way the English act? – always? sometimes? never? Are Indians like this? – all of them? some of them? [...] And then, finally, the disintegrating question, What is to be done?"[57] To try to impose a coherence on this through art would, as Edward Said points out, merely reinstantiate a colonizing order, an imperial taxonomy that, by the early twentieth century, was beginning to disintegrate.[58] Forster's ethics of individualism thus comes into direct conflict with his effort to represent Indians as both of-India and as individuals.

Further, Forster encounters here the conundrum (explored in depth by E. Nageswara Rao) of how to represent Indian vernaculars to an English readership. To interlard his Indian characters' dialogue with multilingual fragments or calques (loan-translations) might fall into the trap of linguistic stereotyping (e.g. "babu" English) or – more troublingly – might imply that characters like Aziz are Indians first and individual human beings second. As Mohammed Shaheen writes, Forster was at great pains not to replicate the work of Rudyard Kipling

[56] Forster, *A Passage to India*, 25. Subsequent citations are noted parenthetically in the text.
[57] Trilling, *E.M. Forster*, 109.
[58] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 189-90.

("whom," he declared, "I detest"), whose colorful depiction of Indians in works like "Gunga Din" (1892) often confirmed such stereotypes.[59] To reverse this hierarchy of identity is crucial to Forster's novel, where the question of connection is specifically one of the possibility for understanding between individual Englishmen and Indians, and most importantly between Aziz and characters like Cyril Fielding, Mrs. Moore, and (more equivocally) Adela Quested. Because Aziz is not in a social or cultural position to demand that the English speak *his* language as a common tongue and point of connection, it would seem that the only solution is for him to speak in the common, "unmarked" tongue – English – in order to place him on the same plane with his English interlocutors. Already, then, Forster enters into an uneasy linguistic compromise, as Aziz must speak in the language of the colonizers – rather than his own Urdu – if he is to be understood in all his individuality by both the novel's English characers and Forster's Anglophone readership. And, as we will see, speaking in this common tongue does not save Aziz from the difficulties of mistranslation and misunderstanding.

A second, graver reason for the monolingualism of *A Passage to India* is the ultimate insuperability of the connective gap, which, in Forster's earlier novels, a character like Margaret Schlegel might strive to bridge through the conjuncture of different languages. As in his successive drafts of the "Tannhäuser" episode in *Howards End*, Forster uses the failure or erasure of multilingual connection in *A Passage to India* as a means of demonstrating the rifts – like those of Leonard Bast's class or imperialist racism in India – that are not assuagable by small forays into multilingualism. As Parry explains, "Forster's tone can be mild, but the integrity and toughness of his pessimistic acknowledgement that here there is no middle way to compromise and reconciliation marks a break with his previous, though increasingly hesitant,

[59] Shaheen, *E.M. Forster*, 25.

appeals to rapprochement between contending social forces."[60] I think that Parry overstates the break that *A Passage to India* makes from Forster's earlier idealism – we can already see the seeds of his adherence to a pessimistic, painful realism in his depiction of Leonard's failed communications[61] – but her description of the lack of a "middle way" encapsulates Forster's depiction of an Anglo-Indian rift that cannot be crossed by a good-faith sharing of language. As Forster later reflected, even as early as 1912 India was not a place for a "tourist's outing," since its wonders were laced too deeply with "pain," with the "sense of racial tension, of incompatibility."[62] Forster represents this incompatibility in *A Passage to India* not through the collision of *different* languages – a collision that might be chalked up simply to the vicissitudes of translation – but to the collision of Indians and English in a *single* language. In this manner, he underlines the profundity of the problem of empire and imperial violence: it is a problem that cannot be represented by the conflict between languages, since it exceeds the bounds of language itself.

A Passage to India, I will argue, is a novel in which the space inhabited previously by multilingual connection is replaced, instead, by its notable absence. In *Howards End*, for instance, the "Tannhäuser" episode may, in the end, represent the failure of Leonard Bast to connect with Margaret on the basis of this Wagnerian title, but as we can see in the first version of scene, the German word itself does have the potential to furnish a connection between these two characters, if only they will make the leap across the abyss between them. In *A Passage to India*, this connective word – even a connective word, like "Tannhäuser," which ultimately fails

[60] Parry, "*A Passage to India*," 133.
[61] Molly Tinsley, too, notes this connection, suggesting that Forster's depiction of Leonard struggling with Ruskin in 1910 foreshadows his own efforts, in the 1920s, "to develop sentences that would aptly reflect the experience of India." See "Muddle Et Cetera," 257. Said, too, notes that as Forster would have been well aware, the economics of empire already pervade *Howards End*, where the Wilcoxes' livelihood is in colonial rubber production (*Culture and Imperialism*, 65).
[62] Forster, "Three Countries," 297.

to connect – is notably absent. It is a multilingual fragment that is shrunk down until it comprises only a conspicuous silence, a silence that makes itself known through pervasive mistranslation and echoing confusion. As Michael Orange has discussed, silence, in *A Passage to India*, is a presence itself – the ghost of a multilingual fragment, I would argue – and thus, it "must be felt."[63] Molly Tinsley locates it even in a single piece of punctuation, the "comma splice" that separates impenetrable worlds within Forster's sentences.[64] Because Forster shifts the focus of this failed, unbridgeable translation away from an individual, specific foreign language and into the realm of language itself (that is, into unmarked, monolingual English), he suggests that the problem of connection in India is one that spills beyond the boundaries of this imperial site and into all communication. Indeed, even after India's independence, the issues of national hegemony and power remained such that, as Forster claimed in 1959, "I could not write an English novel now: the prospect for all countries is too dubious and too complicated."[65] Forster claimed that *A Passage to India* was about something "larger than politics," and critics from Trilling to Beer have agreed that the novel's critique of human interaction exceeds India, or rather, demonstrates how the rifts written into imperial exchanges might taint and trouble the prospect of human connection in general.[66] This final section, then, will illustrate how Forster represents mistranslation, obfuscation, and silence in his final novel, marking a shift from his earlier works' localized, often tentatively optimistic representations of multilingualism to a larger comment on the failures of human connection, the bridge which is impossible less because of the discrepancies between England and India than because of the limitations of humans themselves.

A Passage to India is a novel where mistranslation, uncertain translation, and slippage

[63] Orange, "Language and Silence," 152.
[64] Tinsley, "Muddle Et Cetera," 262.
[65] Forster, "Three Countries," 294.
[66] Ibid., 298; Trilling, *E.M. Forster*, 121; Beer, "But Nothing in India is Identifiable," 23.

seem to be a fundamental state of being. Utterances like the English slogan on a placard at the Hindu festival of Gokul Ashtami, "God si Love," might imply, as the narrator tells us, "His [the god's] universality" or that "There is fun in heaven," but they do so only by way of an unassimilable, ultimately impenetrable hybridity, the product of a fractured literacy, a language that, if it is indeed the "message of India," is no clear message at all (320, 324). Taking into consideration the placard-painter's "unfortunate slip," we are left to ask what exactly connects these nebulous entities, "God" and "Love." Is it, as we might infer, a simple reversal of the copula "is," connecting these terms as equal and coterminous? Or, by the slogan's apparent reversal of what "is," does it instead imply some opposite or alternative to that copula, a more uncertain or even negated ontology, a God that merely "might be" Love or, even more troublingly, if "si" = "~~is~~," a God who "is not" Love at all? Could it be some intrusion of one of the many languages that inhabit India, the "si" or "sí" of mercantile Spanish (or even more likely, "se" or "sim" of Goan Portuguese) meaning "if" or "yes," or the local Urdu "siyah" or Hindi "syah" (سیاہ or स्याह) meaning "black"? Might the "yes" of a Spanish "sí" be counteracted by the implied "no" of the Urdu or Hindi word for "zero," "sifar" (صفر or सिफर)? Even as Forster's narrator gives us definite interpretations for this slippage, his definitions are almost immediately ironized, morphing into chimeras that undermine even this easy identification of "God" and "Love," this minutest iteration of the injunction to "only connect." Any apprehension of what this "God" might entail is called into question, as is the novel's more hopeful creation of the supposedly divine mantra, "Esmiss Esmoor" out of a similar slippage (250). Forster himself summarizes the sentiment in his epistolary memoir of his time in India in the 1920s: "Everything that happens is said to be one thing and proves to be another, and as it is further said in an

unknown tongue I live in a haze."[67] Although critics like Michael Orange have argued that utterances like "God si Love" or "Esmiss Esmoor" demonstrate that language's shortcomings are "transcended by the spirit of Hinduism," it seems that Forster offers no such certainty, and indeed, the sheer linguistic multifariousness of India allows them to be read with precisely the opposite – and far less reassuring – interpretation, that is, with the suggestion that there is no one, "transcendant" reading of these mixed-up fragments, but simply a self-echoing, refracting muddle.[68]

This pessimistic understanding of mistranslation in *A Passage to India* is borne out by the novel's depiction of the painful misinterpretations that interceded in the relationships between Indians and English. These occur particularly at the hands of the English, whose prerogative of translation – of determining the idiom that all must speak – extends to their neglect even to acknowledge or "read" the presence of their Indian cohabitants. This racialized misreading is demonstrated from the beginning of the novel, as Aziz takes a tonga (hackney carriage) to his English superior Major Callendar's house, only to have his arrival interpreted as the providential, seemingly anonymous godly delivery of a tonga precisely for use by the major's wife ("'Take the gifts the gods provide, anyhow,' she screeched"). Since Mrs. Callendar neglects to acknowledge Aziz's presence, she misinterprets the tonga-driver's hesitation in abandoning Aziz as sheer stupidity, "O Tonga wallah, club, club. Why doesn't the fool go?" (14) Aziz, promising to pay the tonga-driver later, finesses the situation, yet still without the English ladies recognizing him at all, that is, without their interpreting his presence as that of a fellow human being who might, like them, be in need of transportation and even have the first right to the vehicle. Aziz, for his part, reads the Englishwomen's confusion about the tonga-driver's action

[67] Forster, *The Hills of Devi*, 35.
[68] Orange, "Language and Silence," 135.

such that he prioritizes *her* interpretation (that the tonga is hers) over his own perspective (that the tonga is his), even as the latter seems more like the truth. Only later does Aziz voice his dissatisfaction with this solution, demonstrating that he is well aware of the charged mistranslation: "I am just a subordinate, my time is of no value, the verandah is good enough for an India, yes, yes, let him stand, and Mrs. Callendar takes my carriage and cuts me dead…" (21). Even his declaration that the English lady "cuts" him "dead" is a bit of a fanciful notion, since it presumes that Mrs. Callendar deigns to see Aziz as close enough to her social plane that he might be snubbed.

This uneven interaction between Aziz and the Callendars, by which Aziz's transnational generosity results only in his mistreatment, clearly foreshadows his fatal expedition to the Marabar Caves, in which the hyperbolic hospitality that he shows to his English friends (Fielding, Mrs. Moore, and Miss Quested) is repaid with his arrest on a charge of attempted rape. It is even more succinctly replayed in an episode later in the novel, in which Aziz's generous lending of a collar-stud to his friend Fielding results in the English officer Ronny Heaslop voicing his deprecatory, racist conclusion that "Aziz was exquisitely dressed from tie-pin to spats, but he had forgotten his back collar-stud, and there you have the Indian all over: inattention to detail; the fundamental slackness that reveals the race" (87). In each of these instances, it is not only Aziz's generosity which is misinterpreted, but his demonstration of his own, fundamental, border-crossing humanity. For cultural chauvinists like the Callendars and Heaslop, Aziz is interpretable only within a racialized hierarchy, as an Indian, which results in his *mis*interpretation as an individual actor.

What Forster suggests here is that it is not merely the languages of India that pose a problem to translation, but the overarching language by which one group of human beings

interprets another. Crucially, he shows that even those, like Mrs. Moore, who endeavor to dismantle this system of meaning, run the risk of rendering themselves unintelligible in the attempt. Aziz's first meeting with Mrs. Moore is marked by their initial misunderstanding over whether she has taken off her shoes on entering his mosque – he assumes she has not, when, indeed, she has (18). To some extent, this reverses the mode of stereotyping displayed in the Callendar episode, since here it is Aziz who misjudges Mrs. Moore on the basis of her nationality. Unlike the Callendars or Heaslop, Aziz is able to recognize his own misinterpretation, resulting in an affinity between the Indian doctor and English widow that, to a variety of critics, suggests that this "mosque episode" is the novel's updated iteration of Forster's impulse to "Only Connect..."[69] And yet despite this glimmer of hope, I think the situation is far more equivocal, belied first of all by the fact that this transnational meeting proves immediately unintelligible to Mrs. Moore's fellow Englishmen, even her son, to whom she relates her encounter with Aziz: "Ronny was ruffled [...] What a mix-up! Why hadn't she indicated by the tone of her voice that she was talking about an Indian" (30). Evidently, Mrs. Moore lacks the mastery of the tongue by which she might translate her connection with Aziz into a model for Anglo-Indian understanding.

Further, and even more troublingly, Mrs. Moore's role as a transnational saint is all but negated following her mental infection by the echo of the Marabar Caves, *A Passage to India*'s main figure for the profound failure of understanding and language. The Caves' echo draws all language together, yet reduces them all to a single, echoing, indecipherable sound:

> Hope, politeness, the blowing of a nose, the squeak of a boot, all produce 'boum.' Even the striking of a match starts a little worm coiling, which is too small to

[69] See Mohammad Shaheen, *E.M. Forster*, 72. Even Said makes the case that while Forster recognizes the "gulf" between Britain and India, his inclusion of episodes such as this one is evidence of his allowance of "intermittent crossings back and forth" over it (*Culture and Imperialism*, 201). On the contrary, I would argue that no character in *A Passage to India* ever really does cross that gulf, even Mrs. Moore.

> complete a circle but is eternally watchful. And if several people talk at once, an overlapping howling noise begins, echoes generate echoes, and the cave is stuffed with a snake composed of small snakes, which writhe independently. [...] If one had spoken vileness in that place, or quoted lofty poetry, the comment would have been the same – 'ou-boum.' If one had spoken with the tongues of angels and pleaded for all the unhappiness and misunderstanding in the world, past, present, and to come, for all the misery men must undergo whatever their opinion and position, and however much they dodge or bluff – it would amount to the same, the serpent would descend and return to the ceiling. (163-5)

If Mrs. Moore has been looking for a mode of translating between different individuals, languages, and cultures, she finds its solution in the Caves, but it is not the "Only connect" of Forster's earlier work. Rather, in its subsuming of all sounds and transformation of them into menacing worms (failed, imperfect oroboros), the Caves suggest that the only real, universal translation results not in a transcendent, eidetic, godly understanding, but in a nihilistic, incomplete yet recurring echo, a devouring sameness that forms a bridge between all languages only by destroying them.

This echo seems to confirm or complete Mrs. Moore's mounting pessimism as to the efficacy of small-scale, individual human interactions in improving the world. Mrs. Moore has already shown herself to be apathetic toward the sort of mundane, marital connections that had joined individuals together in Forster's earlier novels: "too much fuss has been made over marriage; centuries of carnal embracement, yet man is no nearer to understanding man" (149). Thus, even before the Caves, Mrs. Moore (and, implicitly, Forster) kills off the marriage plot as a figure for radical connection[70] – no combination of brides and bridegrooms will assuage the deep scars of imperialism. And yet Mrs. Moore's encounter with Aziz in the mosque suggests that there is still hope for a non-marital connection across cultures as a means of initiating transnational understanding. The Caves' greatest consequence, then, is in divesting her (and us) even of this hope, demonstrating that all such individual connections are helplessly consumed in

[70] On marriage and women's role in *A Passage to India*, see Sainsbury, "'Not Yet...Not There.'"

the echo, and thus rendering her apathetic to the sort of understanding required to take in the otherness of India. This is demonstrated most of all in her passage *out* of India (and of life and the novel):

> There was, for instance, a place called Asirgarh which she passed at sunset and identified on a map – an enormous fortress among wooded hills. No one had ever mentioned Asirgarh to her, but it had huge and noble bastions and to the right of them was a mosque. She forgot it. Ten minutes later, Asirgarh reappeared. The mosque was to the left of the bastions now. The train in its descent through the Vindyas had described a semicircle round Asirgarh. What could she connect it with except its own name? Nothing; she knew no one who lived there. But it had looked at her twice and seemed to say, 'I do not vanish.' (232)

No longer is Mrs. Moore the vaunted savior of Indian-English relations – and in the face of the hugeness of Asirgarh or the British empire, how could she be? Like the centripetal obscurity of the reversed and ever-reversible "si" in "God si Love," Mrs. Moore's vision circles back and, ouroboros-like consumes itself: her conception of India is reduced to a map (that most imperialist of implements), her sight of the grand Asirgarh Fort is "described" only by the self-eliminating visual palindrome of "mosque" and "bastions." Mrs. Moore's forgetting of Asirgarh and India is not an act of enrichment, as is Lucy Honeychurch's "forgetting her Italy," but rather, a demonstration of failed translation: Asirgarh doesn't "vanish," but it nonetheless means only "Asirgarh," a cipher that refuses equivalence with any English (or perhaps any human-scale) understanding, a mere echo of itself. Within it is the "mosque," an empty repetition of Aziz and Mrs. Moore's original meeting-place, that, even if it has been the site of transnational understanding, proves too minute and transitory to unravel or counteract the grand indecipherability (and incommensurability) of the English map and the Indian landscape.

This, then, is a profound reason for the suffocating monolingualism of *A Passage to India*: there is no method within the novel for successfully encapsulating the variety, the vast chorus of India in an articulable multilingual collage, using the juncture of languages to create a

tacit connection – a "rainbow bridge," in *Howards End*'s terms – between languages, individuals, and cultures. Instead, Forster interlards the novel with images of Indian expression circling back on themselves, like Asirgarh or the Marabar echo, suggesting that there is something here (in the words of Asirgarh, "I do not vanish"), and yet it is not something that can be reduced to the scale of language without repeating the violence of the imperialist effort to reduce India to a map (as, eventually, does Mrs. Moore) or a series of stereotypes (as does Heaslop or the Callendars). Instead of a multilingual bridge, Forster portrays the echo, the cipher by which he demonstrates the distance that intercedes between individuals whose lives have been marked by the imperial narrative.

The only bridge here, after all, is the "bridge party," the stilted, stratified meeting of Indians and English orchestrated by the English Club in honor of Miss Quested and Mrs. Moore's arrival in India, a mockery of their desire to meet and see the "real India." As Beer writes, it is a "bridge party" that "doesn't bridge," and that mirrors a novel full of "gaps, fissures, absences, and exclusions," a story "about how society – how meaning itself – depends upon exclusion."[71] It is the epitome of mistranslation: the English hostess, Mrs. Turton, speaks to her "guests" in Urdu, for "[s]he had learnt the lingo," yet "only to speak to her servants," and thus "she knew none of the politer forms and the verbs only in the imperative mood." In response to Miss Quested and Mrs. Moore's encouragement, the Indian ladies suggest that "Perhaps we speak your" language "a little," yet the equivocating "perhaps" proves prescient, as they seem only to know (or be willing to utter) English place-names. Adela, excited to meet "friendly Indians," "trie[s] to make them talk," but her words beat "in vain against the echoing walls of their civility" (42-3), walls which, as Keith Hollingsworth notes, themselves echo the

[71] Beer, 10.

devastating, meaningless echo of the Marabar Caves.[72] The "bridge party," then, is a radical demonstration of mistranslation, failed communication, and translinguistic mistreatment. The closest it comes to Margaret Schlegel's "rainbow bridge" – to a connection via a multilingualism – is, ironically, through Mrs. Turton's offensive efforts in Urdu. Forster condemns this multilingual contribution far more seriously than he does Miss Bartlett's Italian affectations in *A Room With a View*, since Mrs. Turton is not taking recourse to foreign language as decoration, but rather, as a tool to control and conquer.

This may be yet another reason that Forster does not include more foreign fragments in *A Passage to India*: languages like Urdu and Hindi are as much the tongues of the conquerors as they are those of the conquered. As critics including Sara Suleri and Gauri Viswanathan have shown, language was a dominant realm of English imperial hegemony, the vehicle by which the colonizers imposed their own idiom on their subjects through education while also appropriating a bastardized, *Hobson-Jobson* version of Indian languages for their own use. Indeed, in *A Passage to India*, it is almost uniformly the English characters that employ words in transliterated Urdu, most of these so recognizable – "pukka," "wallah," "burra sahib" – that they almost seem to become part of English, and are never italicized in the text. As Forster makes clear, these are not words that are learned by direct communication, but from the recycled, self-confirming rhetoric of the colonizers themselves: "When he [Heaslop] said 'of course there are exceptions' he was quoting Mr. Turton, while 'increasing the izzat' was Major Callendar's own. The phrases worked and were in current use at the club" (33). Heaslop and others use these terms, but of all of them, it is Mrs. Turton who is the greatest linguistic offender, stating early on that "Mr. Fielding wasn't pukka, and had better marry Miss Quested, for she wasn't pukka" (27). Forster seems to have added this ubiquitous Anglo-Indian word to emphasize Mrs. Turton's

[72] Hollingsworth, "*A Passage to India*."

character, since a previous version of the novel has her naming Adela as simply "not the right sort."[73] It serves as a condemnation not just of Mrs. Turton's affected cruelty, but of this imperial use of multilingualism itself, since it is Mrs. Turton who also voices one of the most brutal of the novel's racist slurs, declaring that Indians "ought to crawl from here to the caves on their hands and knees whenever an Englishwoman's in sight, they oughtn't to be spoken to, they ought to be spat at, they ought to be ground into the dust" (240).[74] Thus, troublingly, it is in the mouths of such imperial nightmares that Forster places his faint multilingual fragments, suggesting that "pukka" is a far cry from "ich liebe dich" or "Only connect." By contrast, then, it seems a deep compliment when, in his Indian memoirs, Forster describes his friend Josie Darling as notably different from such horrors: "No one less like a memsahib can be imagined."[75] In the context of *A Passage to India*, to call Mrs. Darling a "memsahib" would suggest not that she had come into contact with the Indians around her, but precisely, devastatingly the opposite.

Even if Forster places most of *A Passage to India*'s multilingual fragments in the mouths of the English, he is careful to demonstrate that there is a difference between their hegemonic use of language and the width of expression available to Indians like Aziz who can work both in English and in the native languages of India. While characters like Mrs. Turton might have access to (limited) Urdu, they speak it only incompletely, and lack the more intimate regional languages spoken at events like the "bridge party," including Bengali (46) and Punjabi (113). Even as Heaslop speaks Urdu, Aziz has to step in and speak the language "idiomatically" so as to help him communicate with a servant (83). In Forster's portrayal of Aziz and his countrymen, he is notably light-handed in his depiction of Indian accents in English, demonstrating their

[73] Forster, *The Manuscripts of* A Passage to India, 25 (see also 255).
[74] Her Kurtzian sentiment is only bested by her friend Mrs. Callendar: "the kindest thing one can do to a native is to let him die" (25).
[75] Forster, *The Hill of Devi*, 26.

linguistic estrangement only through slight aberrations of phrasing (e.g. Aziz's "Is not this the same box with a vengeance?," 20) or pronunciation (e.g. "chip" instead of "cheap," 35-6).[76] Aziz is diffident in his use of English – a notable contrast to the cavalier manipulation of Urdu by Englishmen – yet, as Fielding notes, he is often eloquent in it: "He was often struck with the liveliness with which the younger generation handled a foreign tongue. They altered the idiom, but they could say whatever they wanted to say quickly; there were none of the babuisms ascribed to them at the club" (68). Perhaps it is fitting, then, that all but a rare word spoken by Indian characters in *A Passage to India* is in English so as to demonstrate that Indian expressiveness – a metonym for Indian humanity – is not confined to Indian languages.

In light of this, it does not seem a satisfying explanation for the monolingualism of *A Passage to India* to claim that Forster neglects to include transliterated Hindi or Urdu multilingual fragments in his text simply because he is ignorant of these languages. Instead, he seems adamantly to exclude such multilingual fragments, particularly in the mouths of Indians, even when these would be familiar to educated Anglophone readers. By 1924, it seems likely that many readers of *A Passage to India* would also have encountered Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) and its ending in the Sanskrit "*Shantih shantih shantih*" (which Eliot glosses in his endnotes[77]), but Forster opts instead to use the English translation, with almost precisely the same wording as Eliot's endnote, "the Peace that passeth Understanding" (280).[78] In addition, Forster's Indian characters never use *Hobson-Jobson* words like "pukka" or "sahib," and only have recourse to Hindi-Urdu in the case of honorifics like "Huzoor" (15). What this implies is a sort of levelling of the linguistic playing field: whereas recourse to a foreign language in

[76] See Rao, "The Dialogue is the Thing," 145.
[77] Eliot, *Collected Poems*, 76.
[78] It is important to note that this is also the exaggeratedly Christian translation of "Shantih," alluding directly to *Philippians* 4:7. The Sanskrit word is much less grandiose – simply denoting "peace" as the closure to a prayer.

Forster's earlier works might signify an effort of transnational understanding, a portrayal of Indian Anglophone eloquence as nearly indistinguishable from English fluency suggests that the boundaries drawn between the two cultures are merely lines in the sand.

Yet at the same time, Forster's hesitancy to forge a multilingual bridge between characters like Aziz and Fielding via, say, a mutually understood Urdu phrase, demonstrates his recognition that even the bonds of their natural affinity are riven – the bridge broken – by the inscribed inequalities and enmities of empire. "No, not yet [...] No, not there," the novel ends (362), foreclosing the possibility of such radical connection in *this* novel, but opening up the potential for other novels – and, crucially, other authors – to write a different, perhaps more multilingually successful story after the end of empire (as I discuss further in the Coda). And indeed, Forster, as the sympathetic Englishman writing about India in English, might not be the right author for this story, or at least not the right author in 1924, when the glimmer of an independent India remains far on the horizon. As Said claims – his indirect syntax underlining his meaning – "How a resisting nationalism can be represented by a British writer who views it sympathetically is a problem Forster does not himself explicitly take on in his own work."[79] In order for an Aziz and a Fielding to "Only connect," the linguistic and social landscape of India would have to shift to the extent that Aziz could demand or request Fielding's understanding of Urdu even as he also meets Fielding on the common ground of their English. Within the limits of his own time and his own knowledge, Forster, ever an adherent to the "painful, concrete realm of practice," the "terms of actuality" rather than "the abstract,"[80] cannot portray this outcome, however much he or his readers might desire it. Forster could only write half of this story – the English half – and even later, in the face of Indian independence, he was candid about his

[79] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 206.
[80] Richards, "A Passage to Forster," 16.

"purely selfish reason" for hoping that English might be "the common language for India": "I like these chance encounters, I value far more the relationships of years, and if Indians had not spoken English my own life would have been infinitely poorer."[81] And yet it would take a truly multilingual author like G.V. Desani, Raja Rao, or Salman Rushdie to writer not only for the English-speaking reader like Forster, but to push the boundaries of that reader's understanding and expand his vocabulary to encompass and recognize the wealth of languages and perspectives that interlard and enrich Indian English. Read optimistically, Forster's *A Passage to India* suggests the gaps, the echoing rifts into which such later authors might enter and forge a new, adamantly hybrid Indian-English idiom. Yet this is another story for another time (the Coda, in fact), and Forster leaves the question open, while also providing a hint at the tools – multilingualism, translation – by which it might be addressed.

[81] Forster, "India Again," 323.

Chapter 2

"Unter vier Augen"/"Under four eyes": Ford Madox Ford, Nationality, and Propaganda

> One finds it in the midst of all this as hard to apply one's words as to endure one's thoughts. The war has used up words; they have weakened, they have deteriorated like motor car tires; they have, like millions of other things, been more overstrained and knocked about and voided of the happy semblance during the last six months than in all the long ages before, and we are now confronted with a depreciation of all our terms, or otherwise speaking, with a loss of expression through increase of limpness, that may well make us wonder what ghosts will be left to walk.
>
> – Henry James, *New York Times* (1915)[1]

What did multilingualism mean in British literature on or around August 1914? Not only had the outbreak of war "used up words," as Henry James lamented in 1915, but it had marked isolated terms and natural languages with national connotations that both mirrored and exacerbated the antipathies of the belligerent nations. In the context of World War I, multilingual fragments in English text – common nouns like "Kultur," proper nouns like "Yssingueux-les-Pervenches"[2] – came to symbolize everything from the causes of the complex international conflicts being played out in Mons or Gallipoli to the "periwinkle blue" eyes of a soldier's girl back home. Words in German, French, or Italian that had always held some national connotation now became unequivocal symbols of the values and allegiances of the countries that uttered them. In sum, words were at once "weakened" or "deteriorated" by their inability to encompass the World War's unprecedented horror, and at the same time freighted with more geopolitical meanings than they had sustained a century or even a decade earlier.

This chapter explores the role of multilingual fragments within the development of a modern propaganda strategy in World War I-era Britain. I will consider this relationship in two contexts, first through an exploration of multilingual fragments in official World War I

[1] Lockwood and James, "Henry James's First Interview."
[2] This last is from Ford, *No More Parades*, 427.

propaganda and British news coverage of the atrocity stories surrounding the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" (or "Carcass Utilisation Establishment") controversy. As we will see, multilingual fragments and translation were not merely convenient tools of the propaganda establishment led by the popular press and the War Propaganda Bureau, but an intrinsic facet of their efforts to sway neutral nations via a show of authority and an invitation to include readers in insider-knowledge. In the "Kadaver" controversy, misleading translations of this troublesome (and troubling) German false-cognate were manipulated to support wild claims of the Germans' inhumanity, as well as more general expressions of enmity. While modern readers might easily recognize that the controversy was nothing but a twist of language, the British propaganda establishment took advantage of this fact to convince its home- or trench-bound readers – who would never be able to confirm such a rumor definitively – that the English and French were both the natural and the justified enemies of Germany.

Such a manipulation of multilingual fragments was not limited to the popular or governmental press, as attested to by the second part of this chapter on the wartime work of Ford Madox Ford. Approaching foreign languages from a perspective of ambivalence regarding his German heritage, Ford Madox Ford employs multilingual fragments as a means of adopting the stylistic and semantic breadth of his paternal language while safely burying that embattled tongue in his chosen English idiom or, alternately, ostracizing it as the cause of the Germans' proverbial "frightfulness." As I will show, in his most famous novel, *The Good Soldier* (1915), Ford hides his central use of an unequivocally German phrase – "unter vier Augen" – by translating it into English, "under four eyes," a phrase that he then employs not only for its direct meaning (signifying a private colloquy between two people) but also for its resonance in the symbolic and thematic structure of his novel. By contrast, even as Ford suppresses the German

language in a novel that takes place largely in Germany, he emphasizes the urbane cosmopolitanism of the novel's Anglo-American characters by taking up the trope – ubiquitous in the British literature of this era – of peppering their language with untranslated French phrases. Such a championing of the French idiom and silencing of the German in *The Good Soldier* performs precisely the linguistic cleansing that Ford advocates in the two propaganda tracts that he produced for the War Propaganda Bureau directly following *The Good Soldier*. *The Good Soldier*, then, marks a turning-point in Ford's attitude not only toward his own national heritage, but also toward his depiction of patriotic ambivalence through the incorporation of multilingual fragments. "Under four eyes" stands as a cipher at the center of Ford's wartime trajectory from *The Good Soldier* through to his post-war opus, *Parade's End* (1924-8). It signals the centrality of language and translation to Ford's understanding and manipulation of wartime politics via propaganda: facilitating his propagandistic efforts to indict and attack Germany on the basis of its language, but later grounding his turn toward translation as a means for subverting propaganda and sustaining multiple meaning.

Translation as Propaganda

As we have seen in Chapter 1, the decade leading up to World War I coincides with the increased interest of authors like Ford Madox Ford or E.M. Forster in the interpolation of multilingual fragments in their literary works. In contrast to the offhand smattering of aristocratic French or scholarly Latin that marked literature of the preceding period, Edwardian authors show a marked increase in attention to the distribution, selection, balance, and framing of multilingual fragments in their English-language works, even as they do not necessarily attain to the self-conscious, pervasive multilingualism that followed 1922's *annum mirabilis* introduction of the

Waste Land and *Ulysses*. Yet literature is not the only arena in which multilingual fragments take on a new role in the early twentieth century, for they form a key facet – one might even argue *the* key facet – of the "new" field of institutionalized, directed propaganda. Although the phenomenon of "propaganda" as we now understand it – the dissemination of information to promote a particular political or ideological view – is nearly as old as the written word, the term itself is a distinctly modern one, arising out of the Edwardian period alongside the development of literary modernism. Though propaganda predates the First World War, its concerted, institutionalized use was accelerated by the War's incidence, and the definition of "propaganda" gradually shifted during this period from the more innocuous concept of "advertising or boosting generally" toward a more sinister connotation of deliberate untruthfulness. It is in the Edwardian and World War I years that we can see the term "propaganda" first invoked in phrases that suggest its modes of dissemination: "propaganda campaign" (1905), "propaganda play" (1905), "propaganda film" (1916), "propaganda leaflet" (1917), "propaganda poster" (1918).[3] In other words, it is in this time that such media began to be employed expressly – not merely collaterally – to propagandistic ends. The first years of World War I also witnessed the founding of Britain's first official propaganda office, the War Propaganda Bureau at Wellington House (later the Department of Information), initially led by C.G. Masterman and afterwards by the espionage novelist John Buchan.[4] Though propaganda may always have existed under various names and regimes, this is the era in which Britain began to take it seriously.

In the development of this "modern" propaganda, multilingual fragments furnish a crucial tool, for several important reasons. Most importantly, they can be manipulated in the context of a propagandist text to shape its reader's attitude toward three aspects of the work: a) the national

[3] "propaganda, n."; Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda*, xi–xvii, 3; On the genesis of modern propaganda during World War I, see also Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words*.
[4] For more on Buchan, see Chapter 3.

language exemplified or implied by the multilingual fragment; b) the character or speaker of the fragment's language and his/her political affiliation or alignment; and c) the author or publisher of the entire work itself and his/her political affiliation or alignment. These three aspects may be leveraged against each other to incite the reader toward contrasting opinions of language, character, and author, facilitating the creation of scapegoats or dichotomous contrasts via linguistic differences. Further, multilingual fragments might be manipulated in order to enhance the seeming "authenticity" of the propagandist text, accomplishing modern propaganda's fundamental objective of making a text *seem* unmediated and "real" despite the fact that it is a concerted product of a particular group with a particular viewpoint.[5] While multilingual fragments may not *always* be deliberately attuned to the national or political ends connected with propaganda, their implicit comparison between the language of the fragment (or at times the *implied* language of the fragment – as with Ford's "under four eyes") and the English-language text in which it appears facilitates the sort of political arguments that are propaganda's life-blood.

From the beginning, multilingualism and translation formed a major part of Masterman's War Propaganda Bureau during the First World War, in which each of the major combatants (Britain, France, and Germany) capitalized upon linguistic differences in order to gain allegiance among neutral nations (predominantly the United States, the Netherlands, and China) and to accrue strength and solidarity to their own sides while weakening their opponents' morale. Wellington House employed a slew of translators to disseminate publications in foreign nations, including William Archer, the acclaimed translator of Ibsen, who served as the head of its

[5] Such secrecy was one of Masterman's major innovations at Wellington House. Messinger, *British Propaganda and the State*, 37–41.

Scandinavian Department.[6] It produced works in seventeen different languages, and its most famous publication, the "Bryce Report" on alleged German atrocities in Belgium, was spread worldwide in thirty languages.[7]

Yet much of the efficacy of translation for Wellington House in relation to its German enemy lay in its prerogative *not* to translate everything. As Wellington House sought to gain the support of the most powerful neutral nation, the English-speaking United States, made ample use of Britain's presumed monolingual brotherhood with its "English cousins" in order to imply that the information which came to the United States from Britain was more "authentic" (that is, less overtly propagandist) than that which arrived from Germany, since there was no need to mediate the former via translation. Indeed, Masterman's gathering of Edwardian intellectuals played directly upon this sentiment when they signed Gilbert Murray's statement, published in *The Times* on 18 Sept. 1914, which called for unity among "all the English-speaking race" "against the rule of 'Blood and Iron.'"[8] As Mark Wollaeger notes, such ploys were calculated to exploit the United States' youthful belief in the "Adamic power of naming," and implicitly, the power of language: by speaking the same language, the United States and Britain seemed already to be on the same "side." This tactic proved, in the end, to be wildly successful, as it was in the U.S. and Canada that the war saw the strongest backlash against the German language itself: the renaming of "hamburgers" as "Salisbury steak" and "dachshunds" as "liberty dogs"; the reduction of credits for German courses at the City University of New York; and the public prohibition of speaking the German language in Iowa and Washington. As one citizen wrote to George Creel, the head of the U.S. Committee for Public Information (a counterpart of Masterman's Bureau),

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[6] Messinger, 41.
[7] Ibid., 40; Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda*, 22.
[8] Peterson, *Propaganda for War*, 5; qtd. in Messinger, *British Propaganda and the State*, 36.

"the German language now is a hated language and long will remain so."[9] Such scapegoating was of a piece with the "gross dichotomizing" which, as Paul Fussell notes, particularly characterized the Great War.[10] If the German language was to be hated, then on the opposite side of this dichotomy, the English language was to be trusted and revered.

One of the most widespread uses of translation as propaganda in the World War – and the one most dependent upon multilingual fragments – was the rampant dissemination of mistranslation. The chief chronicler of wartime atrocity stories, Arthur Ponsonby, admits that mistranslations during the war "occasionally" originated "in a genuine mistake," but were by far "more often deliberate."[11] Ponsonby lists mistranslation ploys from both the British and German sides, though it is clear that the widespread British ignorance of the German language gave rise to more frequent and egregious linguistic rumors. For instance, in 1915, the German *Kölnische Zeitung* (*Cologne Gazette*) endeavored to paint the English as ruthless through their mistranslation of one "Ethel's" public declaration to "Jack" in the London *Times* (July 1915) that "If you are not in khaki by the 20th, I shall cut you dead." Misreading the English idiom – perhaps deliberately – the *Zeitung* reported this phrase not as a lover's mild threat of social exclusion, but as the far more lethal "hacke ich dich zu Tode" ("I'll hack you to death").[12] The *Times*, however, did the Kölners one better when in October 1914 it published the rumor that the Germans had shot "ein Französling" as a traitor in Vosges, translating the German word as "a little French lad" and compared him to a victimized "Boy Scout." This (mis)interpretation would likely have held sway if the economist J.A. Hobson had not then written in with the correction that a "Französling" referred not to a little boy but to an adult French separationist in Alsace-

[9] Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda*, 134; Viereck, *Spreading Germs of Hate*, 187–8.
[10] See Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 89ff.
[11] Ponsonby, *Falsehood in War-Time*, 20.
[12] Ibid.

Lorraine.[13] Such mistranslated evidence of the Germans' alleged brutality was spread most enduringly and widely by the common British misinterpretation of the first line of the popular German anthem, "Deutschland über Alles auf der ganzen Welt." While the real meaning of the line is that Germans should honor "Germany above all things in the world," the British interpretation understood this instead as an exhortation to "(Let) Germany (rule) over everything in the world."[14] As Ponsonby notes, there were surely people who knew enough German to understand the phrase, but "no protest was made at the mistranslation," and it was employed even by the future Prime Minister, Lloyd George, in a September 1914 speech: "Treaties are gone, the honour of nations gone, liberty gone. What is left? Germany, Germany is left. Deutschland über Alles." Even when Lloyd George was corrected in his translation of the phrase, he "admitted the error, but seemed to consider that the accepted meaning of it justified his using it as he did."[15] The expectation of German inhumanity and jingoism was so deeply seeded that even an acknowledged mistranslation could not remove it.

The demonstrably insidious nature of such (mis)translational propaganda is twofold. Firstly, whether or not a foreign phrase has been fairly or correctly translated, its translation into the native language (English) allows the phrase and its associated meaning to gain traction to the extent that the translation itself gains precedence over the original phrase. As Ponsonby demonstrates in the case of "Deutschland über Alles," it doesn't matter if a multilingual fragment is wrongly translated since the mistranslated meaning is already assumed to be correct. In other words, the aggressive, wildly imperialist interpretation of "Deutschland über Alles" might be accepted and disseminated, even after it has been countered by a clearer translation. Secondly,

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[13] Ibid., 94–6.
[14] For an extended discussion of this misunderstanding – which Hitler would go on to exploit (in German!) during World War II – see Klemperer, *Language of the Third Reich*, 231.
[15] Ponsonby, *Falsehood in War-Time*, 88–9.

such mistranslation depends not upon contextualized, full-scale translation, but upon multilingual fragments, the salvaging of remnants of foreign phrases or words and their transposition into an English-language context. As I will consider more completely below, such decontextualization allows for the ready (and often incorrect) trans*literation* of these fragments by way of supposed cognates in English. For instance, the key word "Französling" in the *Times* story is legible in English as a French demonym with a diminutive suffix ("-ling"), but it is not, in fact, accurately translatable into its full meaning (an Alsatian partisan) via such cognates. Further, such remnants of translation are propitious to the creation of sound-bites or catch-phrases which quickly accrue stout propagandistic meaning while also retaining the semblance of authenticity. Even assuming that Lloyd George's audience might not know German, the future P.M. could appeal to the well-known meaning of "Deutschland über Alles" without either quoting the entire song-line or translating the phrase – yet while still preserving the seemingly authentic (and insidious) Germanness of the utterance. In sum, "Deutschland über Alles" could be assumed to be a true German saying while at the same time becoming imbued with a truly English meaning.

The Case of the "Kadaver"

The combination of translation and propaganda in World War I reached its most virulent peak as it collided with another major wartime phenomenon: the atrocity story. Tales of German acts of "frightfulness" had appeared nearly as soon as the war began, reaching Britain's shores with the first wave of Belgian refugees. Few stories were ever corroborated, and even when the proprietor of the *Daily Mail,* Alfred Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe), offered a £200 reward for a photograph confirming the tales of German soldiers cutting off the hands of French and Belgian children, no evidence was received. Trudi Tate has argued that the taste for atrocity stories was

really an offshoot of nineteenth-century sensational journalism, but it seems to date back even farther, as one story – involving buckets of eyeballs – was allegedly recycled from the medieval Crusades against the Turks.[16] What is notable is that all of these atrocity stories depended upon border-crossing and translation in order to work their effect: Belgian refugees carrying horrific tales to England, the French and English producing or passing on stories to scare the neutral Dutch or Americans into proclaiming War, and so on. By passing through a chain of languages and nationalities, these tales gained both a cosmopolitan attraction and a semblance of multilingual corroboration.

While most atrocity tales played upon age-old sympathies – the protection of women and children, the merciful treatment of prisoners, etc. – one particular tale brought these together with very modern concerns regarding science, commercial production, and at the heart of these, language. This was the story of the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt," a noun which might literally be rendered as "carcass utilization establishment," but was most often translated during the war as "corpse utilization establishment." It was introduced to Britain in a *Times* article on 17 April 1917 entitled "The Germans and Their Dead. Revolting Treatment. Science and the Barbarian Spirit." The article cited a piece by one Karl Rosner in the "Berlin *Lokalanzeiger*"[17] describing the battlefield north of Rheims:

> We pass through Everignicourt. There is a dull smell in the air, as if lime were being burnt. We are passing the great Corpse Exploitation Establishment (Kadaververwertungsanstalt) of this Army Group. The fat that is won here is turned into lubricating oils, and everything else is ground down in the bones mill into a powder, which is used for mixing with pigs' food as manure.

This was, in fact, a reprint from a short piece the previous day entitled "Use of Dead Bodies: Callous Admission," which had effectively translated the "Kadaver" of

[16] Horne, *German Atrocities, 1914*, 177–9; Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, 85–7; Tate, *Modernism, History*, 48.
[17] Really the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, or "Berlin Local Advertiser."

"Kadaverwertungsanstalt" both as a "corpse" (in the translation of Rosner's article) and as a "dead body" via the *Times* article's title. The article of the 17th expanded upon this tacit definition of "Kadaver" by calling the bodies "Their" (the Germans') "Dead," a label which it adopted from an extended account of the Establishment's processing facility in the *Independence Belge* (10 April) that *The Times* reprinted in English, "omitting some of the most repulsive details." Following the *Belge*'s alarming story of stripped bodies bundled and dragged by giant hooks and digested in a vat of steam (a grotesque premonition of the opening scene of Huxley's *Brave New World*), the *Times* added that not only might the Germans be using bodies to make oil and pig-slop, but they might also be distilling nitro-glycerin "from the bodies of their dead" in order to manufacture explosives.[18]

All of this information sufficed to make the specter of the German "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" sufficiently horrifying without either of these early *Times* articles ever explicitly specifying that "their dead" or "dead bodies" were, indeed, *human* bodies.[19] The use of the word "corpse" as a translation for "Kadaver" in the second article went a long way toward confirming this insinuation. As the *OED* explains, "corpse" was used until the seventeenth century to signify the body of a man *or* animal, yet was later refined to refer exclusively to a human body.[20] Nevertheless, the charge against the Germans was evidently grotesque enough that the *Times* was prompted to print a follow-up article on 23 April responding to an "intercepted" report from Berlin which called the British allegations "ridiculous" and the "acme of stupidity," while claiming that "everybody conversant with German knows" that the word "kadaver" [sic] "is never used for human bodies, but only for the

[18] "The Germans and Their Dead. Revolting Treatment. Science and the Barbarian Spirit."; "Through German Eyes."
[19] This is also noted by Viereck, *Spreading Germs of Hate*, 155.
[20] "corpse, n."

CANNON-FODDER—AND AFTER.

Kaiser (*to* 1917 *Recruit*). "AND DON'T FORGET THAT YOUR KAISER WILL FIND A USE FOR YOU—ALIVE OR DEAD."

[At the enemy's "Establishment for the Utilisation of Corpses" the dead bodies of German soldiers are treated chemically, the chief commercial products being lubricant oils and pigs' food.]

carcasses of animals." Although the *Times* itself had been guilty of the tactical sin of omission in its previous, insinuating articles on this issue, it now leveled this charge against its opponents, arguing that "this German *démenti* carefully abstains from denying the charge that matters – the charge that the German authorities do use the bodies of dead soldiers." Nevertheless, the Germans' alleged response launched what had otherwise been a fairly quotidian atrocity story into a complex battle over semantic equivalence. The onus was now on the *Times* and its patriotic supporters to prove that a "Kadaver" was, indeed, none other than a soldierly body.

Why was Britain so keen to pass this mistranslation off as truth? At root, the answer is another border-crossing tale, as the atrocity story was originally cooked up by General J.V. Charteris as a ploy to gain the support of the Chinese. George Viereck describes Charteris "dexterously" pasting together a photo of dead German soldiers alongside another of dead horses being brought to a factory, and inscribing under this the legend, "German Cadavers on Their Way to the Soap Factory." "Within twenty-four hours," Viereck explains, "the picture was in the mail pouch for Shanghai."[21] Charteris was evidently not alone in thinking this a useful strategy in bringing Asia into the War, as a writer to the *Times*, one "C.E. Bunbury," suggested that the Colonial Office should make further use of this propaganda among "Buddhists, Jains and Hindus," and especially "Mussulmans."[22] Indeed, the tale had a greater effect than Charteris had planned, as the story spread to America and the (alleged) Chinese reaction to it was republicized in Britain through a four-page Wellington House pamphlet that republished and confirmed the *Times*' and others' allegations alongside a response from the (unnamed) Chinese Ambassador in London. "[I]nterpreting the feeling of the East," he declared, "**I was much horrified. I could scarcely believe such a thing possible**. In China we have a very special respect and reverence

[21] Viereck, *Spreading Germs of Hate*, 154–5; see also Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, 90–2.
[22] Bunbury, "The Germans and the Dead"; this claim is supported by Turner, "The Germans and the Dead."

for the dead. […] we cannot but regard the German desecration with a very special horror."[23] Such international support and its show of authenticity (down to the Chinese Ambassador's subtly foreignized speech) obviated the need for Charteris' Military Intelligence Bureau to carry out a botched plan to plant a forged diary on a German soldier in the battlefield describing the "horrifying details of the corpse industry." It was enough for the "Maharajah of Bikanir" to write in the *Times* that the Germans' actions served to set these foes definitively apart from India's experience of "care and solicitude" at the hands of the British imperial establishment, and "deepen[ed] the enthusiasm of the Indian people for the great cause of human liberty in which the British Empire is engaged."[24] And it was enough for a "Belgian factory-owner" in the Wellington House pamphlet to heckle the British (and Americans) into sympathetic gullibility: "You wonder in England that they [the Germans] do not respect their dead, but if they treat the living as they have treated our deportees, how could they have feeling for the dead?"[25]

Such a claim (and the atrocity story itself) plays upon the general understanding – particularly so late in the War as 1917 – that German sensibilities and actions were radically different from those of their English and French opponents and hence fundamentally incomprehensible. The Chinese and Colonial application of "Kadaver"-related propaganda only underlined this difference, for, as one writer claimed, "the Germans have beaten the record for savage ferocity in war," their "bestial desecration of the dead" placing them below even godless "natives" in British sensibility.[26] As Siegfried Sassoon would later memorialize in his wartime poem, "The Tombstone-Maker," even a callous denizen of death is "horrified" to hear that

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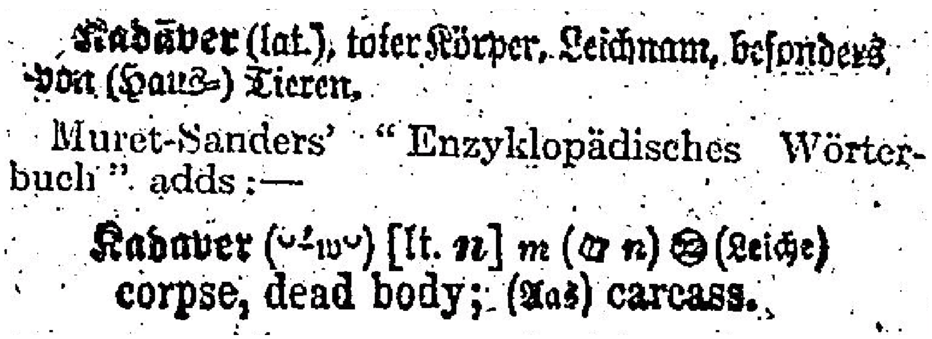
[23] *A "Corpse Conversion" Factory*, 3; The response was also published in "The Germans and the Dead. A Prisoner's Story." Emphasis is in the original.
[24] "The Germans and the Dead. Statement by the Maharajah of Bikanir."
[25] *A "Corpse Conversion" Factory*, 4.
[26] Turner, "The Germans and the Dead."

"Germans boil dead soldiers down for fat."[27] Yet the dependence of the atrocity story upon a delicate issue of translation – is a "Kadaver" a "corpse" or a "carcass"? – complicates this cliché of enemy unintelligibility by placing its British interlocutors in the position of arguing for the radical *intelligibility* of the German's meaning, that is, for the claim that British readers might understand (or explain) the meaning of "Kadaver" as well as or better than the Germans themselves. It is in this respect, then, that the multilingual fragment represented by the word "Kadaver" and all of its associated terms (including the permutations of "Corpse Conversion Factory") serve as a sort of worm-hole in the English texts of the *Times* and elsewhere, whereby English speakers arguing for Germany's unintelligible excrescence must simultaneously argue for its equally terrible intelligibility. Through a short analysis of the way that translation functions at the heart of the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" controversy, I will suggest that this Janus-like conception of translation is the key to reading *all* such multilingual fragments and translations, and particularly those made in the context of World War I patriotism and propaganda, as I will discuss in relation to the works of Ford.

As we have seen already, the use of the word "corpse" to translate "Kadaver" was a canny ploy on the part of the *Times* to insinuate that the Germans were boiling down not animal carcasses, but soldiers' corpses. This coyness could not continue once the story broke, though, and by 19 April the paper had become compelled to reproduce the original article by Karl Rosner, which it did in what appeared to be a facsimile of German "Fraktur" script.[28] This, of course, leant the German article an air of authentic Germanness regardless of whether the *Times*' readership could understand the language. Although the *Times* generally reprinted German

[27] Sassoon, *War Poems of Siegfried Sassoon*, 24. On the hysterical response engendered by the supposed "Kadaververwertungsanstalt," see also Sherman, *In a Strange Room*, 66.
[28] "The Germans and the Dead. Herr Rosner's Statement." Rosner's article was reprinted the following day in "The Germans and the Dead. A Prisoner's Story."

documents in translation to support its case (including a long set of exchanges and increasingly authentic documents regarding the delivery of the "Kadaver"s to the facility[29]), it turned to Fraktur, again, as it addressed the "Meaning of 'Kadaver'" in a 23 April article responding to the German claim about "Kadaver"'s real (animalian) meaning. Here the *Times* reproduced in a mixture of Fraktur and Latin script the definitions from two well-known dictionaries:


Kadāver (lat.), toter Körper, Leichnam, besonders von (Haus-) Tieren.

Muret-Sanders' "Enzyklopädisches Wörterbuch". adds :—

Kadaver (⏑–⏑) [lt. *n*] *m* (*a n*) (Leiche) corpse, dead body; (Aas) carcass.

While the *Times* reprints the full definition from *Meyers Konversations-Lexikon* in German (the first definition, above), the article itself translates and interprets this, inverting the order of the synonyms in order to claim that *Meyers* "does not go farther than to say that the word *Kadaver* is used 'especially' of animals. Meyer [sic] says that the word *Kadaver* means dead body (*toter Körper*) or corpse (*Leichnam*)."[30] This inversion places the emphasis on the more human-oriented components of the definition, which are listed last in the *Times*'s translation yet first in *Meyers*. In the latter, "toter Körper" and "Leichnam" are *modified* by the clause "besonders von (Haus-) Tieren," that is, "particularly of (pet-) animals." By placing this clause last, *Meyers* implies that the more usually human terms that precede it are here modified by their application to animals. Further, by adding that "Kadaver" applies particularly to pets, *Meyers* provides some implicit explanation for how it might easily relate to these human-oriented terms, as pets are

[29] For this succession of documents, see "Through German Eyes. The Germans and the Dead. Herr Zimmerman's Defence."; "Parliament: The Germans and Their Dead"; "Through German Eyes. The Germans and the Dead."; "The Germans and the Dead."

[30] "Germans and Their Dead. The Meaning of 'Kadaver.'"

more often anthropomorphized than other animals. The *Times* leaves out this detail in the course of its dismissal of *Meyers*' modification of the definition, and thus forecloses upon this explanation for the ambiguous meaning of "Kadaver."

Yet with such relatively shaky dictionary evidence, how could the *Times* and its fellow media outlets continue to make such convinced (and convincing) claims for the undeniability that a "Kadaver" was really a "corpse"? And if we assume that the *Times* staff were unaware of Charteris' fabrication of the story,[31] how could they have so doggedly forged ahead in this mistranslation? The answer, I believe, lies in the conflation of a transliteration and a translation. Although the initial articles on the "Kadaver" issue in the *Times* defined it as a "corpse," the natural recourse of an English-speaking reader would be to understand the word as its English cognate, "cadaver." This term, which entered English via Latin and French, is nearly identical in definition to "corpse" – "A dead body, *esp*. of man" – as it is to the definition of "cadavre" in French, "Corps (d'un être humain ou d'un animal mort)."[32] For a predominantly non-German speaking English public, "Kadaver" would be readily intelligible as its cognate, "cadaver," with further confirmation for the numerous Britons who spoke French. Even for those who were acquainted with German, the recognizability of the cognate could easily taint the more circumscribed meaning of the German term. In other words, the *transliteration* of "Kadaver" to "cadaver" (or "cadavre") easily superseded the more delicate act of *translation*, which would require simultaneous acknowledgment of the common Latinate origin of the English, French, and German words and recognition that the German meaning diverged slightly from this model. Thus, for a wide Anglophone audience, the simpler, English meaning of "Kadaver" became its *only* meaning.

[31] Neander and Marlin claim that Northcliffe's press may have participated in the fabrication of the story, but these claims are hypothetical and ultimately tangential to my argument. See "Media and Propaganda," 72.
[32] "cadaver, n."; "cadavre, n. m."

This conflation of the English/French meanings of "cadaver" and the German meaning of "Kadaver" reached a head with the discovery that there existed yet another homonym, the German word "Cadaver." Soon after the publication of the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" controversy, the *Times* published several letters from medical correspondents eager to attest to the use of the word "Cadaver" in an exclusively human context. The *Times* was so thorough as to provide a facsimile of a handwritten testimonial sent in by "M.D." and attesting in German to his proficiency in "operations on the nose ear and larynx, '*am Cadaver*.'" As M.D. added, "[n]eedless to say the operations were performed on the dead *human* body." This was followed by the notice of a correspondent "in Zürich" who had sent in the title-page of an 1881 book, *Leitfaden für Operationsübungen am Cadaver und deren Verwerthung beim Lebenden Menschen*, which the *Times* translated as "Guiding principles for operations on the dead body and their utilization in the treatment of the living body."[33] Not only would readers immediately recognize the near-identicalness of their own English word "cadaver" and this German iteration (most likely ignoring its signal difference – capitalization), but clever observers might also notice the proximity of this undeniably human, German "Cadaver" to the word "Verwerthung," which would now be familiar from the "Kadaver*verwertungs*anstalt."[34] Such uses of "Cadaver" seemed proof of the true purpose of the Germans' factories, but only if British readers ignored the fact that "Cadaver" and "Kadaver" were *not* identical in German, as the former was actually a technical term adopted directly from Anglo-French medical usage and applied exclusively in an anatomical context. Nevertheless, the *Times*' publication of these letters only strengthened their argument for the sinister meaning of "Kadaver," as these hints of a German medical background

[33] "The Meaning of 'Kadaver.'"; "Through German Eyes. The Germans and the Dead. Herr Zimmerman's Defence."

[34] The change in the "th" at the center of this word is merely significant of different German spellings current at this time. The meanings of "Verwerthung" and "Verwertung" are identical.

to the term emphasized the sense of cold, scientific calculation that had imbued the issue ever since the reputable British medical journal *The Lancet* had attested in a short, rather tongue-in-cheek piece on "The Chemicalising of Corpses" that the "dividends of the enterprising company known as the Kadaververwertungsanstalt" would be great enough to allow it to continue operations and "face criticism with complacency."[35] Because the British public was already primed to understand German-Prussian society as hyper-scientific and monomaniacally materialistic, they would find little trouble with the assumption that the "Cadaver" of the laboratory was the same as the "Kadaver" of the battlefield and factory.

This conviction that the multilingual fragment of "Kadaver" was readily intelligible in English allowed for a sort of translational tunnel-vision that predisposed the English reader (and writer) to corroborate the existing atrocity story by further equivocal or incorrect translations. This occurs in the Wellington House pamphlet, which translates part of Rosner's article, describing "ein fader Dunst" above the Kadaververwertungsanstalt, not as the correct phrase, "a stale smell," but as the more sinister "a sickly smell." In translating Rosner's short excerpt, both the Wellington House pamphlet and the *Times* exaggerate the grotesque boastfulness of the German claims by depending upon simple cognates rather than more complex semantics. Thus, "an der großen" Kadaververwertungsanstalt becomes not "by the large," but rather, "by the great" Kadaververwertungsanstalt; the "hier gewonnene Fett" taken by the facility becomes not the "fat gleaned here," but the "fat that is won here." Neither of these translations is strictly incorrect, but both are imperfect and misleading, turning the German description into a German boast.

Such misreading is most pronounced in the *Times*' interpretation of a statement by the German Foreign Secretary Arthur Zimmerman (himself a master of spin), in which Zimmerman

[35] "The Chemicalising of Corpses."

claimed that "Kadaver" related to "the bodies of animals and not of human beings (*tierische, nicht menschliche Kadaver*)," while noting that the "fact that the word 'cadavre' in French is used for human beings and animals has been exploited by our enemies." The *Times* responded by deeming Zimmerman's claim about "cadavre" nonsense, since Zimmerman referred to a "menschliche Kadaver" (the phrase is included in German in the *Times*' text), thus allegedly acknowledging that there must be such a thing as a "human Kadaver." Yet this conclusion registers as specious when we consider that if "Kadaver" apparently *requires* an adjective ("menschlich") in order to make it signify a specifically human body, then "Kadaver" alone must signify something else, or at least something more vague. Most likely, Zimmerman's phrase should be read as if quotation marks were placed around the word "Kadaver," so that the word is read less as Zimmerman's own utterance than as a direct, quoted reference to the British accusations. In other words, the "menschliche Kadaver" registers not as proof of a human "Kadaver"'s existence, but as a signifier of its pure hypotheticalness. Nevertheless, Zimmerman's comments were twisted by British propaganda to prove Germany's grisly culpability: as the Wellington House pamphlet proclaimed, "'Admitted' is too mild a word. They have boasted of it. […] A sign of their pious Kultur!"[36]

Along with the British certainty as to the gruesome human meaning of "Kadaver," the controversy surrounding its significance gave rise to the implication that the German word was parasitic or appropriative of the French/English (or Latin) word. If the word was natively French and English, and, as one reader wrote to the *Times*, the "Germans have, of course, borrowed the word from the French, and it carries all the French significance,"[37] then the Germans were implicated in an act of linguistic theft. The French and English, by contrast, were drawn together

[36] *A "Corpse Conversion" Factory*, 1.
[37] Dawson, "Corpse or Carcass."

as the proper owners of the word that the Germans had adopted and perverted. This reinforced the idea that the French and English, allied even at the roots of their languages, were destined to join in battle against the German speakers of a Germanic tongue. In the very word "Kadaver," the Germans had perpetrated linguistically the same crime of appropriation and subjugation that they were alleged to be pursuing politically in Europe. They might share the cognate "Kadaver" with French and English, but the slipperiness of the word's real meaning in German (and the shadiness of the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" itself) implied that the Germans had not come by it completely honestly.

The subtle difference of the German appropriation of this shared cognate was most overtly signaled by its capitalized letter "K." This initial letter, relatively rare in the English language, is frequent in German, which does not use "c" for a hard "k" sound except in words borrowed directly from other languages or in combination with other consonants (i.e. "Charakter" or "Blick"). By utter happenstance, several of the dominant German buzzwords of the First World War began with a capital "K," most prominently "Kultur," "Kaiser," and "Krieg." In Ford's novel *Some Do Not…* (1924), one of his characters criticizes the "rotten" philology of the Germans whereby "Cæsar equals Kaiser,"[38] a censure that is representative of the common English denigration of German words derived from Latin roots, in which the initial "K" emblematized the Latinate words' Germanic perversion. The most famous "K" word of the war was by far and away "Kultur." The British hatred for German "Kultur" originated in Otto von Bismarck's 1870s "Kulturkampf" ("culture fight") against Prussian Catholics, which Britain viewed with disdain in light of its own newfound leniency toward the Roman faith.[39] As we will see further below in relation to Ford's own efforts at propaganda, "Kultur" became the emblem

[38] Ford, *Some Do Not...*, 140.
[39] Davis, *The Victorians and Germany*, 362–3.

of Prussia and Germany's officious militarization and materialism, contrasted with salubrious English and French versions of "culture" or "civilisation."[40] By the advent of the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" controversy in 1917, "Kultur" had become so closely connected with the case against Germany that its signal "capital-K" was no longer necessary; in a famous *Punch* cartoon of late August 1914, German atrocities in Belgium were merely "The Triumph of 'Culture.'"[41] Although British texts were fairly limited in their handling of German grammar (for instance, no English-language discussion of the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" ever hazards a guess at its German plural form), this did not stop them from inserting the K-borne symbol of Germanness into English grammatical constructions. As the Wellington House pamphlet trumpeted, "Converting bodies of the dead into soap for the living! What a pastime for a Kultured nation!"[42]

In sum, then, the controversy surrounding the multilingual fragment "Kadaver" and the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" combines the claim that the German word, its meaning, and its back-story are readily legible to English-speaking readers (and, by association, French-speaking readers), with the understanding that even in this intelligibility, they retain a trace of difference that renders their meaning radically *un*intelligible to the English or French comprehension and conscience. In other words, this multilingual fragment represents the double-speaking paradox whereby the British can claim of the Germans, "we understand you but we don't *understand* you": we understand your language, but we cannot comprehend how you could apply it to such horror. In G.K. Chesterton's ironized polemic against Germany, *The Crimes of England* (written for Wellington House), the humorist performs a version of this linguistic/semantic contradiction. He exhorts his German addressee, not to "perpetually boast that you are cultured in language

[40] See Hanna, *The Mobilization of Intellect*, 79, 89.
[41] Partridge, "The Triumph of 'Culture'."
[42] *A "Corpse Conversion" Factory*, 4.

which proves that you are not."

> As it is, we cannot believe what you say about your superior education because of the way in which you say it. If an Englishman says, 'I don't make no mistakes in English, not me,' we can understand his remark; but we cannot endorse it. To say, 'Je parler le Frenche language, non demi,' is comprehensible, but not convincing. And when you say, as you did in a recent appeal to the Americans, that the Germanic Powers have sacrificed a great deal of 'red fluid' in defence of their culture, we point out to you that cultured people do not employ such a literary style. Or when you say that the Belgians were so ignorant as to think they were being butchered when they weren't, we only wonder whether *you* are so ignorant as to think you are being believed when you aren't.

Here, Chesterton deftly moves from a contradiction of grammar ("you claim to speak the language but you don't speak it correctly") to one of style ("you claim to be cultured but your style is inappropriate") to one of ethics and truth ("you claim that the Belgians weren't butchered, but they were"). His basic connection between linguistic comprehension and moral allowance – "we can understand his remark; but we cannot endorse it" – encapsulates the central contradiction at the heart of the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" issue.

Contrary to many other atrocity stories, which served mainly as an impetus for Britons to distance themselves (and their Allies) from their German foes on moral grounds, the multilingual fragment "Kadaver" required British readers to claim an ever-closer understanding of the atrocity, even as they refused to endorse it. Translation thus necessitates a proximity and deliberate (if disavowable) fascination that complicates Emily Apter's assertion that "war is the continuation of extreme mistranslation or disagreement by other means […] a condition of nontranslatability or translation failure at its most violent peak."[43] If war is instinctively rendered as unintelligible horror and failed translation, then the possibility of recuperating a legible, translatable fragment amidst this linguistic wreckage – even so horrific a fragment as the alleged "Kadaver" – is a tantalizing escape from such pervasive confusion. Even if the

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[43] *The Translation Zone*, 16.

"Kadaververwertungsanstalt" can't be eradicated, it can be understood and verified. Further, since this verification is through translation rather than reportage, it insulates the reader against the potential horror of eyewitness confirmation. Such legibility exerts a strong pull, even in the later twentieth century, as, despite Charteris' postwar admission that the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" story was fabricated, conspiracy theorists continue to speculate as to whether these factories were the "pilot-plants" of Germany's concentration camps thirty years later.[44] It is appalling and tragic to recognize, by contrast, that it was largely Britain and America's gullibility in the face of false tales like the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt" that made them slow to act upon the very real accounts of the Holocaust's atrocities during World War II.[45] With regards to the "Kadaververwertungsanstalt," the only complete proof of its non-existence was to break beyond the barrier of translation, language, and propaganda by investigating it first-hand, an endeavor taken up and described by C.E. Montague in his post-war chronicle, *Disenchantment*. As Montague recounts, he explored one of the alleged "Kadaver" factories in 1918, and found only the bodies of shelled workers (but no soldierly remains), thus providing physical evidence which stripped the "Kadaver" story of its linguistic complexity and "enchantment," rendering it a "quite simple case" of verbal rumor versus physical actuality.[46] It was only by recourse to such non-linguistic evidence that the play of translation and mistranslation might finally be laid to rest.

Ford Madox Ford and the Insider's Translation

As the "Kadaver" controversy demonstrates *par excellence*, in a war which placed its combatants out of sight from each other in trenches, and which separated its civilian populations

[44] Rubinshtain, *German Atrocity or British Propaganda*, 8–9.
[45] See van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz*, 130-4. See also Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*.
[46] *Disenchantment*, 119–21.

by linguistic and cultural borders as deeply ingrained as their physical counterparts, translation and multilingualism held sway as a major form of mediation and, consequently, propagandistic manipulation. This is particularly true in the context of the British understanding of Germany, since the German language was far less taught in Britain than French, Italian, or the classical languages, and thus most Britons required English translations of any information from or about the enemy. While Wellington House employed a team of translators, the eminent men vested with the dissemination of its propaganda (including Arnold Bennett, H.G. Wells, Arthur Conan Doyle, and J.M. Barrie) were largely incapable of interrogating the original language of their German sources, though many might have been able to do so in French. Their audience, which included the increasingly literate lower- and lower-middle-classes of "Tommies," was likely even more monolingual. After all, this was the class of men who would christen Belgian Passchendaele "Passion Dale" and Ypres "Wipers."[47] In sum, most information from or regarding Germany arrived (or was produced) in Britain in translated form, and even when the British readership demanded access to the original texts – as in the "Kadaver" controversy – it still depended on the guidance of "experts" to decipher this enduringly foreign language.

A major consequence of this dependence on translation – in tandem with the silence of the British propaganda establishment that stood behind it – was a distrust of anyone who might openly possess the capability of translating and hence manipulating such information. The group which, in 1914, held a virtual monopoly on this faculty were the approximately 57,000 German aliens resident in Britain, as well as the innumerable Britons who were of German heritage.[48] Yet in the face of centuries of assimilation and Anglo-German mixing,[49] this group was extremely

[47] Stephenson, *Battlegrounds*, 265; see also *The Wipers Times*.
[48] Panayi, "Prisoners of Britain."
[49] On the sense and actuality of Anglo-German "racial kinship," see Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin*, esp. 32.

difficult to differentiate from more "native" Britons. No dependable difference of skin tone, hair color, or physiognomy would mark an Anglo-German as anything but identical to his more ancestrally British fellows. For an Anglo-German whose family had lived in England for more than a single generation, no accent would betray his English as anything other than the native tongue. Until the creation of an official registry of Anglo-Germans in the first years of the war (discussed further in Chapter 3), all that set these Anglo-Germans apart from "native" Britons was their ability to translate between English and German, and all that outwardly signaled this difference were their Germanic names.

British distrust of any resident (alien or native-born) who bore a German name – that is, of those who were potentially capable of German loyalty – led many Anglo-Germans to make a pledge for assimilation and British patriotism by adopting English names in the early years of the war. The most famous example of this patriotic renaming was the "mass rebranding" of nobility brought about by George V, who in 1917 changed his royal title from "Saxe-Coburg-Gotha" to "Windsor," while translating a slew of royals and nobles into more Anglicized entities. Prince Louis Alexander von Battenberg became "Prince Louis Mountbatten, Marquess of Milford Haven" ("Mountbatten" being a semi-direct translation of his original title), and various Battenbergs, Tecks, and Schleswig-Holsteins were obliged to relinquish their hereditary names in favor of "Athlone," "Cambridge," or – as the king joked of the princesses – "Helena Victoria and Maria Louise of *Nothing*." As the king's declaration made clear, "nothing" was better than a German surname, even at the expense of a demotion. In Alex von Tunzelmann's summary: "Henceforth, Prince Louis would be a marquess, and Battenberg a cake."[50] Not only would citizens and nobility doff their German names in favor of more patriotic ones, but so, too, could ill-named locations, even those far beyond England's borders. In Australia, the name-changing

[50] von Tunzelmann, *Indian Summer*, 45; see also Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin*, 44.

fad appeared in the form of Aboriginal place-names which were used to efface Germanic ones. As "Bergen" was transformed into "Murra Murra,"[51] the southern colony made the tacit point that even the language of a centuries-subjugated and "barbarous" native people was preferable to that of Europe's would-be overlords.

While the British public accepted its sovereign's self-translation with evident equanimity, the popular press succeeded in fomenting a modern witch-hunt when it came to more middle- or lower-class Anglo-German name-changers. The campaign to expose those Germans "who were treacherously changing their names from Knopp to Knox, from Baumann to Beaumont" was captained by Horatio Bottomley, the editor of the newly reincarnated *John Bull*. Bottomley was one of the War's most successful opportunists and propagandists, a class-crossing figure described as both the "gentleman's friend" and the proprietor of the "Tommies' Bible," and credited by D.H. Lawrence with the myopic jingoism that doomed British democracy.[52] Bottomley's mania for catching those guilty of, as *The Daily Mail* put it, "raiding our surnames," caught on widely with a xenophobic public ready to vilify Britons for owning a dachshund or, in the case of Lord Haldane, for having a dog named "Kaiser." *John Bull* printed weekly lists of those who had allegedly changed their names, deeming these Anglo-German hybrids "an unnatural beast – a human abortion – a hellish fiend," and calling for their "exterminat[ion]."[53] Such accusations were universally damaging, even as they were not always accurate.[54] Their virulence marks a pointed contrast between the often blind British dependence on translation for

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[51] *Year Book Australia*.
[52] Bottomley qtd. in Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin*, 40; Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, 61–2; Lawrence, *Kangaroo*, 216–17. For Bottomley's vision of himself as arbiter of the war's depiction, see his introduction to *John Bull's Diary of the War*, 3–4, and *John Bull's Diary of the Second Year of the War*, 3–4.
[53] Qtd. in Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin*, 44; see also Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, 115–31.
[54] For instance, a journalist-disciple of Bottomley's outed the MP and President of the Board of Trade, Sir Albert Stanley, for having been born a "Nuttmeyer," only to have Stanley counter that he had been born in Derbyshire, and that his father had changed his name from the Scandinavian "Knatriess" when he emigrated to Canada. Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, 131.

news and propaganda purposes – culminating, perhaps, in Bottomley's own translation of Germans into "Germhuns"[55] – and distrust of those who took advantage of such wartime language-exchange in order to assimilate themselves into British society via self-translation. This fear ran deeper than the basic assumption that nominally naturalized Anglo-Germans might be secret spies (and, as I will discuss in Chapter 3, very few actually were), evincing a fear and distrust of translation itself, of the possibility that something (or someone)'s true nature might be illegible or opaque to the monolingual English observer. Led by Wellington House and the popular press, Britons sought to counter this fear by taking translation into their own hands, often with dubious results, such as the creation of "cadaver" from "Kadaver" and "Germhuns" from "Germans." In coining their own translations, the British press and public signaled the initiation of a contest parallel to the combat in the trenches, a game of linguistic propaganda, a war of translation.

No wartime author knew this contest more intimately nor played it more thoroughly than Ford Madox Ford. Born Ford Hermann Hueffer, Ford had inherited his name and his penchant for name-changing from his German-born father, Franz Hüffer, who became Francis Hueffer after he emigrated to England and married Ford's English mother, the granddaughter of the Franco-English pre-Raphaelite painter Ford Madox Brown.[56] Ford (I'll use his more familiar name for the sake of clarity) Anglicized his name in two major stages, first to Ford Madox Hueffer in July 1915, then to Ford Madox Ford in June 1919, ultimately effacing his paternal connection to the Hüffers of Münster through a self-reiterating palindrome.[57] Whether or not Ford changed his name in direct response to Bottomley, he certainly felt the force of anti-German assumptions in England, having been blocked from a staff job in MI6 on the grounds of

[55] Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin*, 44.
[56] Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford*, I:18; see also Rademacher, "Tracing a Biographical Habit," 125.
[57] Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford*, I:1, 33, 18.

his ancestry, "denounced" to the police as "a German spy" by friends of his sometimes-wife Violet Hunt, and derided in print as "not exactly of pure European extraction."[58] As Ford himself noted in a 1933 memoir, he had been aware of his troubled national identity ever since 1898, when the editor of *Punch*, E.V. Lucas, alleged that since Ford could not understand *Punch*'s peculiarly English humor, he must be, in truth, "not really English."[59]

Nevertheless, Ford's equivocation regarding his national allegiance is signaled by his hesitation until 1919 to entirely efface his German name. Due to this relatively late self-translation, critics have clashed over whether Ford's step-wise name-change signals his "chauvinism" and need to claim his English identity over his German heritage, or whether his neglect to do so fully until after the War's end denotes his pride and defiance toward Bottomleyist threats.[60] As I will argue, such differences of opinion actually indicate Ford's own ambivalence toward his German-British heritage, and his mixed biographical, personal, and professional reasons for this renaming "self-translation." Ford had long been an aficionado of the *fin de siècle* fad for name-changing as a titillating game of pseudonyms, masks, and "being found out,"[61] styling himself as a swashbuckling German courtier, the "Baron von Aschendorff," in 1908, and perhaps intending such a social flourish, too, with his 1919 name-change, as it caused the jilted Hunt to exclaim, "I am not now even the wife of his pen!"[62] Ford had also used self-translation to bolster his professional authority, as evidenced in his editorial footnotes to

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[58] Saunders, "Introduction," 4; Ford qtd. in Wiesenfarth, *Ford Madox Ford and the Regiment of Women*, 30–1; review of Ford's Zeppelin Nights qtd. in Tate, *Modernism, History*, 58. Ford elicited Hunt's friend Edward Heron Allen's ire by parodying him in "The Scaremonger" (1914), leading to Allen to name him a "German Journalist." Ford, "The Scaremonger: A Tale of the War Times," 140.

[59] Qtd. in Loeffler, "The 'Backbone of England,'" 4–5. The stereotype of German misunderstanding of Anglo-American humor is alive and well, as evidenced in the 2011 "Funnybot" episode of the animated series *South Park*, in which the Germans must devise a robot in order to make jokes.

[60] Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words*, 46.

[61] Tóibín, "Outsiders in England," 66; See also Miller, *Doubles*.

[62] "Aschendorff Verlag" was the Hüffer family's publishing company, Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford*, II:399, I:18, 245-6; Hunt qtd. in Cohen, "Citizenship in the Salon: The Public Private War of Violet Hunt," 69.

Hunt's 1913 pro-German travelogue, *The Desirable Alien at Home in Germany*, in which Ford signed himself "J.L.F.M.H." to match Hunt's references to him as "Joseph Leopold," and thus to substantiate his portrayal as an authority on all things German.[63] Often at the expense of Hunt's own authority, Ford asserted his expertise in *The Desirable Alien* as a naturalized guide to Germany,[64] calling for the reader's trust via his adoption of a national moniker – in this case, a German one. That Ford could use name-changing in such a variety of contexts and to such varying ends signals the complexity of his vision of self-translation, and proves that the name "Ford Madox Ford" covers a palimpsest of identity and nationalism far deeper than simple anti-German rebellion. As I will discuss, Ford's self-translation is only the most visible manifestation of his mastery of multilingual fragments as a form of literary- and self-fashioning. In the context of his virulent wartime propaganda writings for Masterman's Wellington House, combined with the buried, yet pivotal multilingual fragment at the heart of his most famous novel, *The Good Soldier* (1915), Ford demonstrates his mastery of self-presentation in a society at war both *on* and *in* translation. As Ford's writing shows, he was determined that "Ford Madox Ford" should be no mistranslated, misapprehended "Germhun" – he would counter Bottomley's threatening lists by taking control of the translation and anti-German vilification himself.

Parallel to Ford's literary appropriation of wartime translation within his own name are three small, translated words in Ford's most influential novel, *The Good Soldier*, words generic enough to be overlooked, yet integral to the novel's themes of sight, impression, and privacy even as their curious translation mirrors the complexities of Ford's own self-fashioned identity. These three words are "under four eyes," and the key to recognizing their centrality in *The Good*

[63] Hunt and Ford, *The Desirable Alien*, 3. As can be seen by "J.L.F.M.H.," Ford had already taken to adopting "Madox" as his middle name.
[64] On Ford and Hunt's tacit rivalry and Ford's performance of Germanness in this book, see Wiesenfarth, *Ford Madox Ford and the Regiment of Women*, 53–4; Moore, "Ford and Germany," 153–4.

Soldier is to hear their foreignness as an English idiom: they are, in fact, a direct translation of the German idiom "unter vier Augen," used to signify a conversation or meeting that happens privately between two people. Though very common as a German phrase, the translated idiom "under four eyes" is all but non-existent in English. It is not included anywhere in the *OED* (the closest is "four-eyes"[65]), and exists in common English usage in only three relatively rare contexts: a) direct, non-idiomatic translations from German prose, b) uses of the Caribbean-English phrase "to meet under four eyes," a calque (loan-translation) from various African languages, and c) the acknowledged adoption of the phrase from German, spoken by a German character in an English-language work.[66]

Ford's two uses of "under four eyes" in *The Good Soldier* are similar to a calque (usage (c)), yet they differ from this usage in that they remain unacknowledged as loan-translations from German. There is no question that Ford *could* have used the German phrase directly or explicitly, since he was fluent in German, and *The Good Soldier* is for the large part a story of an English and an American couple undergoing a rest cure at Bad Nauheim, a spa near Frankfurt am Main that Ford himself had visited in 1910.[67] The novel's American narrator, John Dowell, occasionally makes use of German and (more often) French terms, and sometimes provides an English gloss for foreign terms, as in "the Germans say, A.D. – at disposition."[68] Yet there is no indication in either of the phrase's uses in *The Good Soldier* that "under four eyes" comes from German. In the first instance of the phrase, Dowell speaks of Edward Ashburnham, the titular

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[65] Signifying a person who wears glasses. "four, adj. and n."

[66] Examples of these three types of usage may be seen in a) Richter, *Hesperus or Forty-Five Dog-Post-Days*, 52; b) Allsopp and Allsopp, "meet under four eyes," 220; and c) Wouk, *The Winds of War*, 474; or Walker, "With Compound Interest," 427. This survey of the phrase's usage is taken from the *Google Books* database.

[67] Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford*, I:18, 537n. Ford's description of Nauheim was also influenced by his 1904 stay at the spa Marienberg; see *Ford Madox Ford*, I:223.

[68] Ford, *The Good Soldier*, 237. That "A.D."/"at disposition" is a German phrase is questionable; I can find no evidence of its existence. Since it is a phrase which Dowell imagines for a peripheral character whom he dislikes, Rodney Bayham, it may be telling that "a.D." in German more often denotes precisely the opposite meaning, "außer Dienst," that is, "retired."

"good soldier" (the epithet is first mentioned here), who is having an affair with Dowell's wife, Florence:

> Good God, what did they [women] all see in him; for I swear that was all there was of him, inside and out; though they said he was a good soldier…what did he even talk to them about – when they were under four eyes? – Ah, well, suddenly, as if by a flash of inspiration, I know. For all good soldiers are sentimentalists – all good soldiers of that type. Their profession, for one thing, is full of the big words, courage, loyalty, honour, constancy.

In the second, Dowell speaks of Edward's wife Leonora and another of his mistresses:

> And there was not a word spoken. You see, under those four eyes – her own and Mrs. Maidan's – Leonora could just let herself go as far as to box Mrs. Maidan's ears. But the moment a stranger came along, she pulled herself wonderfully up.[69]

It is immediately clear from both of these passages that they involve precisely the secrecy and privacy inherent to the German idiom, as well as simply a "face to face" meeting.[70] Does Ford, then, transform "unter vier Augen" into "under four eyes" intentionally, as an alternative to the English "face to face"? Or is this a sort of Freudian parapraxis, in which one parental language, the German of Ford's immigrant father, subconsciously intrudes into and provides a felicitous phrase in the other parental (and chosen) language, the English of Ford's mother and artist grandfather? As Doris Sommer writes of the German-Yiddish Freud himself, for bilingual writers, "Foreign words manage to slide (*verschieben*) past linguistic control and release clinically significant information, when you know how to listen to double-talk."[71] Does the "double-talk" in Ford's multilingual fragment reveal a repressed language that slips to the surface when he finds himself in need of an idiomatic expression? Or, if Ford employs the phrase intentionally, is this a case of "relexification" as defined by Chantal Zabus, a phenomenon which stands apart from auto-translation, loan-translation, and calques in that it prescribes the

[69] Ibid., 33, 63.
[70] Sara Haslam is the only critic to notice and decipher this phrase, if briefly, explaining it as "the sense of judgment or conscience […] (conspicuous by its absence in a way), although what Ford is actually referring to is the unwatched interaction of two characters." *Fragmenting Modernism*, 115n.
[71] *Bilingual Aesthetics*, 67.

effacement of the 'original' by the translated phrase?[72] Along these lines, Ford's phrase may be characterized as a variant of what Emily Apter terms "texts that have turned out to be translations with no originals,"[73] since it is a translation which strives to appear as if it had no original, an Oedipal phrase that (literally and figuratively) sets out to kill its father. It may well act as a "sort of alibi"[74] attesting to the half-foreign Ford's mastery of his chosen, English language.

In any case – parapraxis or relexification, intentional or accidental – "under four eyes" is a discrete remnant of translation, what Sara Haslam calls a "kaleidoscopic fragment," of the signature impressionist style that Ford derived with his friend Joseph Conrad.[75] A definitive multilingual fragment, it is like a scrap of glass (or the pre-linguistic brushstroke of the impressionist painters). Irreducible to a single, simple linguistic origin, it is a hard, opaque collocation that exemplifies the "fundemental complicity" of Ford's politics, propaganda, and impressionism that Wollaeger discerns at the heart of *The Good Soldier*,[76] or the "sense of the danger of language" which Ford's biographer Max Saunders marks as the novel's defining aspect:

> the power of words to deceive or to destroy; to utter the unthinkable or the unspeakable, and thus to transform our lives; to express to ourselves what it is that we are, and what we have been doing without realizing it.[77]

That "under four eyes" is a paradigmatic example of the irreducible, unobtrusively effective *mot juste* envisioned by Ford as the base impressionist unit is corroborated by the fact that Ford left it whole and unchanged in his typescript for Wyndham Lewis' *BLAST*, his edited American edition

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[72] Zabus, *The African Palimpsest*, 102–7, 135–6.
[73] Apter, *The Translation Zone*, 212.
[74] See Tóibín, "Outsiders in England and the Art of Being Found Out," 70; Tóibín considers this as a form of invention and disguise used particularly by Irish authors to display their Englishness.
[75] Haslam, *Fragmenting Modernism*, 7; see also Ford, "On Impressionism" and "Developing the Theory of Impressionism with Conrad."
[76] Wollaeger, 129. For Wollaeger's extensive, insightful alignment of Ford's propagandism and impressionism in *The Good Soldier*, see 128-63.
[77] Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford*, I:443.

of *The Good Soldier*, and his own French translation of the novel.[78] The phrase's endurance through these different authorial drafts and translations, and its centrality to the symbolism of Ford's novel suggests that it is a calculated component of his thinking about the novel's thematics, as well as about his own mediation of his English, French, and German heritages in the context of the Great War.

To understand the significance of "under four eyes" within Ford's mediation of his national affiliation, it is necessary first to contextualize it in the deeply linguistic- and translation-based arguments of Ford's two contemporaneous volumes of anti-German propoaganda, *When Blood is Their Argument: An Analysis of Prussian Culture* and *Between St. Dennis and St. George: A Sketch of Three Civilisations* (both produced for Wellington House in 1915).[79] In these volumes, Ford leverages his mastery of multilingual fragments and linguistic chauvinism to devastating effect, as he argues for the fault of the Germans on the basis of their language, and advocates for the eradication of the German language itself. Ford's propaganda is famously virulent, as is made amply evident in the most excerpted passage from the two tracts: "I wish Germany did not exist, and I hope it will not exist much longer. Burke said that you cannot indict a whole nation. But you can."[80] Such an attitude is sufficient to convince Peter Buitenhuis that, like Bottomley, Ford is advocating for a "doctrine of total war," calling for the

[78] As Ford explains in his 1927 "Dedicatory Letter" to *The Good Soldier*, translating the novel forced him "into the rather close examination of this book," *The Good Soldier*, 3. In the translation, "under four eyes" appears as "sous quatre yeux." See Stannard, " Note on the Text," 198; Moser, "Note on the Text," xxxii–xxxiii; Stang and De Julio, "The Art of Translation," 276. On Ford's publication in *BLAST*, see also McCarthy, "The Good Soldier"; Peppis, *Literature, Politics, and the English Avant-Garde*, 84*ff*. The inclusion of Ford's excerpt in the first (of two) issues of *BLAST* seems particularly apt in light of Ford's politics, as the journal set out to present its Vorticist viewpoint as a distinctly British nationalist avant-garde, distinct from and opposed to the Italian Futurists and later, in the second, "War Number" issue (published July 1915), German imperial anti-modernism (Peppis 85-6, 96-8).

[79] Richard Aldington claimed that Ford was working on these books and *The Good Soldier* simultaneously, but since the end-date of *The Good Soldier* is uncertain, neither is this precise simultaneity; see Farrar, Jr., "The Artist as Propagandist," 146.

[80] Ford, *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 66.

German population's decimation.[81] Yet a closer look at Ford's propaganda shows that he strives to temper his claims by distinguishing between the German people themselves and the culture – above all, the *language* – that condemns them. While Ford delights in the possibility of "the end of Germany" as a "Power," he acknowledges that "We cannot extirpate sixty-four million human beings, and it would be better for us ourselves to die than contemplate such an extirpation."[82] Instead, Ford advocates the eradication of the German language, which is the "worst that can be alleged" against the Germans in its "certain clumsiness," "certain clinging to obsolescences of phrase, and a certain resultant stupidity and want of imagination." Although Ford might be hearkening to the long British history of extirpating languages,[83] we might wonder how he proposes to eradicate a widely-spoken language without eliminating those who speak it (including Ford himself) or annexing their nation to the English-speaking empire – in other words, reciprocating the sort of outrage that was Germany's own alleged goal. Nevertheless, Ford strives to make the argument that this is his main priority. Even as he imagines the destruction of Germany, he focuses not on this hypothetical outcome, but on its correlated effects: "Well, thank God, there's an end of the German language."[84] Which returns us to Ford's oft-cited refutation of Burke regarding the indictment of "a whole nation": as no critic has noticed, this famous passage does not, in fact, end Ford's chapter on "The Persons of the Drama." Instead, it is followed by the invitation to "Let us now consider France" – Ford's foil to Germany and the German language – and thus provides an entry-point into the book's next

[81] Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words*, 45.
[82] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 156, 10.
[83] This dates back at least as far as the 1536 Act of Union, which sought "utterly to extirpe" the Welsh language, preventing non-English-speakers from holding public office, and thus effectively eradicating the language among the Welsh gentry (see Stephens 6).
[84] Ibid., 68; Ford, *When Blood is Their Argument*, 293.

chapter: "Language"[85]

Ford's obsessive focus on language as the nexus of German cultural decay and danger is notable in that he himself is an acknowledged speaker of the language. As support for his own authority on the subject of Germany, he begins *When Blood* by noting his paternal "South German Catholic" heritage, tempering this with a note, too, on his grandfather's "more French than English" upbringing. He remarks that as long as he can remember, he has been "accustomed to think indifferently in French, in German, or in English," often beginning a sentence in one and finishing it in another.[86] Such involuntary multilingualism and translation is evident in Ford's pre-war writings, in which he remarks on "*Ewigkeit*" to John Galsworthy, translates Friedrich Rückert to describe his love for his wife, and complains (in 1904) of his encroaching multilingualism: "I'm really getting to write an abominable mixture of German-English."[87] As the order of these nouns implies, Ford was already, in 1904, feeling the encroachment of "German" *upon* "English" – yet the plethora of German in his pre-1914 works attests to his casual attitude toward such linguistic intrusion.

Such a mixture of languages was natural to Ford, who had been trilingual since his childhood, when he picked up some German from his often-absent father and some French from his more fatherly grandfather, and began learning both languages formally by at least the age of seven. It was around this age that he learned to use these languages pejoratively, too. In 1911, Ford recalled an episode in which he insulted his German-master's native language *in German*, calling it "fit only for horses," and later worrying that this outburst precipitated the master's early death, as he worried, too, that his outburst against a German waiter at the Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof incited that waiter's suicide. As Saunders proposes, Ford's compunction about

[85] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 66-7.
[86] *When Blood is Their Argument*, viii.
[87] Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford*, I:293, 57, 176; see also I:170, 176.

these early episodes in which he used the German language to anti-German ends may well be a carry-over of his feelings toward the uneasy, abruptly-ended relationship with his German father.[88] Nevertheless, Ford used his bi- (or tri-)lingualism to his advantage, as he travelled back and forth between Westfalen and England during his childhood, noting in 1904 that "Westfalen of course is my own country much more even than England." In 1910, he relocated to the Hessian town of Gießen in a bid to divorce his first wife by obtaining German citizenship (his performance of Germanness in *The Desirable Alien* is the legacy of his stay there with his wife-to-be, Violet Hunt). It is possible that the failure of this venture finally helped to sour Ford irrevocably against Germany, as he cut his final, 1913 visit to Westfalen short, in fear that if war broke out he might be "forced to fight against France."[89] Nevertheless, only four days after Germany had invaded Belgium, Ford would write:

> Whichever side wins in the end – my own heart is certain to be mangled in either case. I should feel no triumph in a German victory over France; I think I would cut my throat if the German Fleet destroyed the British Fleet; I should mildly like France to get back the Reichsland. I should feel intensely any mortification to Germany; almost more intensely any mortification to France; and any blow to this country [England] would cause me emotions more horrible than any others of a life not wanting in horrible emotions…for my sins I am a cosmopolitan…[90]

A cosmopolitan perhaps – but with a decidedly anti-fatherland slant. This slant would be emphasized in Ford's propaganda writing, as he denigrated his own earlier esteem for the Germans, and posed himself as an unequivocal Englishman, basing his propagandistic representations of "French and German life" on the same "methods of analysis as I have applied to my knowledge of myself *qua* Englishman."[91] Not only does this paint Ford as English, but it provides him with a distance from both France and Germany that allows him to place these along

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[88] Ibid., I:33, 41, 361–3.
[89] Ibid., I:174, 314ff., 394.
[90] Ford, "Literary Portraits - XLVIII," 208.
[91] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 61.

a continuum: German, the nationality and language which one should avoid and expunge; French, the idiom which one should set as a standard for all literary and cultural virtue.

Ford's denigration of the German language in his propagandist prose makes use of French and English as foils for his argument. English is at worst "[t]ight," while France is "always exactly right according to her aspirations as she is true in her phraseology," and consequently

> It is always only Germany that is absolutely wrong; it is always only Germany that accepts with inevitable voracity every phrase that is bombastic and imbecile. […] There is no department of German life into which this fallacious use of language has not penetrated; there is no range of human thought in which it has not been self-consciously employed to dig gulfs between the German nation and the rest of the world, or to make fallacious and mischievous distinctions.[92]

This pronouncement glosses the three central points on which Ford indicts the German language throughout his propaganda: a) "fallacious and mischievous," it masks a culture of war with a prose of peace; b) "self-consciously," it asserts its own primacy and separates itself from neighboring languages such as French; and above all, c) "bombastic and imbecile," it is *a priori* a demented and damaging tongue, a danger to all who come into contact with it.

Fairly straightforwardly – and in echo of G.K. Chesterton's sarcastic criticism of Germany – Ford denigrates the German language as the vehicle by which Germans "desired war whilst paying a lip-service to peace," contrasting this attitude with England's ignorance of the coming war and France's dread of it.[93] To substantiate this claim, he follows the text of *St. Dennis and St. George* with a chronicle of "One Hundred German Militarist Utterances," "got together without any particular trouble," compared with the alleged impossibility of finding any at all such utterances in English.[94] Further, Ford criticizes Germany for applying its language not

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[92] Ibid., 68-9.
[93] Ibid., 80.
[94] Ibid., 251, 33. This is a patently false assertion, even if one turns only to the works of Rudyard Kipling and Henry

only to utterances of veiled violence, but to actual linguistic violence against its neighboring languages in Europe. Specifically, he condemns the "uproarious and militant" German "*Sprachvereins*" (sic; the plural should be "*Sprachvereine*"), which seek to rid their native tongue of French encroachments, demanding that rail passengers show their "Fahrkarten" in place of what might earlier have been called ("very civilly") "billets" or "coupons," or asking that they "*umsteigen*" rather than the Francophone "*changieren*" as they switch trains.[95] While Ford laughs at the inability of Germans to escape from under Latin derivations (he points out that "Karte" comes from the Latin "*carta*"), he waxes nostalgic upon meeting an "old lady" who refers to her home-country not as "die grosse Nation," but as "la grande nation."[96]

The expulsion of such French words and "international culture" from the German language and sentiment signals, for Ford, a premonition of the war that Germany has perpetrated in Europe, and particularly in France. As in the "Kadaver" controversy (which Ford's propaganda is too early to include), the German language is criticized for being at once radically, intentionally different from the Romance languages, and also deeply similar and hence, parasitic to them. As with the later contrast between "cadaver" and "Kadaver," Ford levels French and English "culture" against German "Kultur," arguing that "the culture of England and France differs as much from the Kultur of Prussia as the two words differ in appearance."[97] Ford makes this assertion without providing further elucidation, as if the insertion of this multilingual fragment and apparent cognate suffices to evidence its alienness in English. Finally, toward the end of *When Blood*, Ford explains that if "culture" signifies "a man of all-round culture, attainments, and sympathies," then "a Kulturmensch is almost exactly the opposite," namely, a

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Newbolt (who, in 1892, urged would-be soldiers to "play up! and play the game!").

[95] Ibid., 69-70. The italics are Ford's own.

[96] Ibid.; *When Blood is Their Argument*, 40.

[97] *When Blood is Their Argument*, 281; this contrast is first introduced at the opening of Ford's book, 20.

"specialist."[98] It seems that the greatest criticism against the German-speaker, then, is that he is not well-rounded; a fairly weak claim after the violence of Ford's earlier assertions regarding German difference.

The feebleness of Ford's actual evidence of the damage caused by the German language is covered over by his most prevailing assertion in his propaganda, which is that the German language is *a priori* "the most unfortunate of languages for giving expression," petty and exacting in its phrasing and detrimental to anyone who speaks it. Ford performs the alienation of German by peppering his text with German terms suited to the confined mind that he ascribes to the "Kulturmensch." The most frequent of these is "*Quellen*," a term which Ford glosses as "ground facts," and which he implies to be the basis for "the extremely detrimental appetite for what is called 'Philologie'" ("the ugliest thing in the world") and "*Forschungen*," those "academic activities" that are left over after Germany has "crush[ed] out the constructive spirit."[99] Yet he also refers to his *own* scholarship as "*Quellen*," using this word to refer not only to "simply the amassing of documentations," but also his "personal impressions" and "historical sources."[100] Ford seems to be travelling two disparate routes here: taking advantage of this form of German scholarship and using it as an alibi for his own impressionistic historicism,[101] even as he uses this personalized historicism to deride German academic practice. In a more overt use of a multilingual fragment than in "under four eyes," Ford is applying to German for the benefit of his own work in order to use this work to anti-German ends. By applying "*Quellen*" in this way, he instantiates himself as both German and not-German, and inhabits this ambiguous role in order to use the German term against itself.

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[98] *When Blood is Their Argument*, 305-6.
[99] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 9; *When Blood is Their Argument*, 218, 293, xv.
[100] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 28; *When Blood is Their Argument*, 116.
[101] See Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda*, 147.

This is the paradox of Ford's propaganda: that he must claim intimacy to the German language in order to deride it more fully and with greater authority. At times, this necessitates a sort of indirect self-abasement, as when he approvingly quotes an "acquaintance" who asserts that the German language is detrimental to the literary health of English children:

> Certainly anything that one can acquire from modern German prose is insufficient to compensate for the harm that will be done to a child's intelligence by familiarity with the German habit of sentence. For it is a habit of sentence rather than a habit of mind. […] The fact is that it is impossible to think in German. The German never thinks. He adds by reflection to his armament of propaganda. […] I know that very well, for I find myself thinking in that language quite frequently.[102]

Ford strives to distance himself from this self-inflicted wound by asserting that he has heeded his father's warning "never to read German prose for any length of time or with any deep attention" and has read German books "with an exclusive eye for facts and paying as little attention as possible to the style." Yet such artificial separation of Saussurean "langue" and "parole" is ineffective, even at the heart of Ford's own propaganda. Germanisms creeps into Ford's syntax even as he applies to French vocabulary to heighten his idiom, as is evident in this sentence from *St. Dennis*: "If one of a group of nations persistently assume and take as a *chose donnée* the necessity for war as a means of ultimate enrichment none of the other States of that congeries of nations can possibly disarm."[103] While Ford's diction leans toward the Francophone, the verb shifted to the end of this sentence exposes a parapraxal syntax which is decidedly German.

In Ford's view, French was always the natural foil for German, the "highest" linguistic plane to which even English might aspire.[104] While he professes to deplore the "militant" imposition of German over French *in Germany* via the "Sprachvereins," he not only ignores the centuries-long existence of the comparably normative Academie Française, but advocates "a

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[102] *When Blood is Their Argument*, 296.
[103] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 9-10.
[104] *When Blood is Their Argument*, 295.

conscription of the French language into this country and a conscription of the English language into France," reasoning that "it is only through language that comprehension and union can arise." More than a call for Franco-English unity, this is an outright call for language's mobilization ("conscription") as a tool of war. Indeed, Ford proclaims the "exact use of words" to be "the most important thing in the world," for we are "in the end, governed so much more by words than by deeds." In consequence, "French will have saved Europe, if Europe is to be saved."[105] Ford supports this assertion not with a discussion of military prowess or efficacy, but with an oddly divergent foray into French linguistic and translational appreciation. In an abrupt change of tack, Ford concludes the text of *St. Dennis* (prior to his appendix of "One Hundred German Militarist Utterances") with a close analysis of the "almost unheard-of difficulty" of translating the opening line of Flaubert's short story, "Un cœur simple," into English. As Wollaeger notes, the "blunt instrument of German is not even an option" here, nor does Ford mention it.[106] Instead, he makes a self-acknowledged "fuss about the exact incidence of a few commonplace words" in order to prove the point that the very language of the French contains the key to their success as a people, and that they hold the standard for other civilizations, most of all the English. "Out of such small material indeed, and managing life with such frugality, these people achieve an existence of dignity and common sense. And that should be a great lesson to us."[107] Ford's own words beg the question: is he still speaking merely of the French language?

Ford's implication here is that the translator holds exclusive access to such an evaluation of the effect and efficacy of language. While a native French-speaker might live within his language without giving its nature a second thought, Ford's foray into translation allows him to

[105] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 205, 202-3, 68.
[106] Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda*, 145.
[107] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 204.

recognize the dignified intractability of Flaubert's phrasing and, what is more, to promote this "dignity and common sense" to his English- (but not necessarily French-)speaking readers. While such translation-analysis may not seem to be propaganda and is certainly far less violent or outright than the propaganda evidenced in the "Kadaver" controversy, it is, in fact, persuasion of the most subtle kind, since it draws Ford's readers in as accomplices to the act of translation which *he* performs, including them via the open publication of multilingual sources, convincing them of his implicit point by authoritative translations and finally, on the basis of this seemingly mutual agreement, capitalizing on his readers' sympathy in order to make wider, near-unsubstantiated claims about his source's meaning and intent, namely, the virtue of the French language and its speakers. In reality, the act of translation is idiosyncratic and often exclusive (excluding those who lack fluency in one of its two languages), yet Ford's translation-propaganda succeeds in selling *a priori* claims and persuasion by wrapping them in the trappings of legibility and inclusiveness.

In response to wartime xenophobia, Ford sought to leverage one language and translation against another: to efface the distinctiveness of his German heritage by emphasizing the (equivocal) exclusivity of his access to the French language. While Ford's compensatory Francophilia might be borne out by his translations of *The Good Soldier* or Pierre Loti's *L'Outrage des Barbares* into and out of French – as well as by his multiple French-language essays – it is most striking in his framing of *The Good Soldier*, a novel which takes place mainly in Germany, yet which sheds every possible vestige of this national language or location. In a 1927 dedication to the novel, Ford makes clear what the replacement for Germany should be, recalling his desire to forge in this novel an English equivalent to Guy de Maupassant's work in French, and quoting delightedly the modernist John Rodker's quip that *The Good Soldier*

represents "the finest French novel in the English language."[108] While critic Mark Schorer interprets this remark purely aesthetically – signifying a "perfect clarity of surface and nearly mathematical poise"[109] – and while Rodker himself may well have meant it in this vein, Ford's decision to include it in proximity to his Maupassantian aspirations and as a "tribute to my masters and betters of France" suggests that he wishes to position himself once again as a translator, providing exclusive access to a novel that, by rights, ought to exist in French. Ford's novel (and Ford himself as translator/conduit/author) is all the more valuable in that it provides English readers with access to French language and literature *without* the mediation of translation.

Ford's performance as an Anglo-French interpreter was so successful in this and other French-oriented writings that his propaganda work, *St. Dennis*, was translated and welcomed into wartime France (Farrar 148), while the French editor of a 1918 article by Ford went out of his way to ingratiate "Ford Madox Hueffer" with French readers, reassuring them that Ford's "inclinations are clearly anti-German" and that he "has been strongly influenced by French literature."[110] Ford substantiates this claim in the text of *The Good Soldier,* in which an abundance of French turns of phrase ("pour le bon motif," "*au mieux*," "*lâcher prise*," [111] etc.) serve as a foil for the dearth of German terms. Unlike the limited German words which Ford does include in his novel to give a sense of its setting in Nauheim, the novel's French words are more idiomatic, less related to food or travel technicalities than to human relationships, artistry, and thought. Further, the French words are far more fluently integrated in *The Good Soldier*'s English text, correctly conjugated and syntactically organized. By contrast, the diverse forms of

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[108] Ford, *The Good Soldier*, 3.
[109] Schorer, "*The Good Soldier* as Comedy," 45.
[110] "Pon...ti...pri...ith," 30. This article was originally printed in French in *La Revue des Idées*.
[111] *The Goo Soldier*, 47, 124, 215. These mean "with good intentions," "on good terms," and "to let go," respectively.

the German expressions included in the text (these number only five: "Ja," "Zum Befehl Durchlaucht," "trinkgeld" (sic), "Reiseverkehrsbureau," and "*Schreibzimmer*"[112]) suggest that Ford – a self-professed obsessive about language – was at pains to make these words seem careless and ancillary, de-capitalizing one noun, italicizing another. Though Ford knew enough German to include these words more correctly, this haphazard affect further distances his novel from the language.

Ford goes so far as to invoke his narrator in *The Good Soldier*, John Dowell, in this linguistic carelessness, having Dowell profess in one breath to speak "German much more correctly" than his wife, and in the next, undermining this assertion with Dowell's claim that he retains "the accent of the Pennsylvania Duitsch of my childhood."[113] This last pronouncement has stumped critics, who wonder that Ford could allow Dowell to utter such a "howler," as he would have known well that there is no such thing as "Duitsch," but only "Pennsylvania Dutch," "Deutsch," or "Deitsch," an American population descended from German immigrants. Dowell, here, seems to have conflated these with some combination of the English term for Netherlanders ("Dutch") and the Dutch term for Germans ("Duits"). Grover Smith insists that Ford could not have been "guilty" of this mistake,[114] but perhaps Ford is, instead, taking advantage of his famously untrustworthy narrator in order to distance his story further from its German setting and language. Like Ford, the confused Dowell claims the expertise required to guide his reader through this international text and translate from the German, yet Ford signals through Dowell's uncertainty about his own heritage and hereditary language/accent that his readers should expect no such linguistic intimacy.

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[112] *The Goo Soldier*, 128, 52, 86, 87. These mean "yes," "as you please, Highness," "gratuity," "travel agency," and "study [room]," respectively.
[113] *The Good Soldier*, 51-2. Subsequent citations are noted parenthetically in the text.
[114] Stannard, "Preface," xi and n.; Smith, "Dowell as Untrustworthy Narrator," 326–7.

The contrast between Ford's continuing knowledge and fascination with Germans and the German language, and his performance of disdain, repression, and occasional hatred toward them finds no more central, paradoxical expression than in his buried translation of "unter vier Augen" at the heart of *The Good Soldier*. Whereas Ford's French multilingual fragments in the novel are overt, elaborate and performative, displaying the sympathies of their author even as they ratify the social stratum of Dowell and his fellow upper-middle-class, cosmopolitan spa-goers, Ford's German multilingual fragments are either offhand, or, in the case of "under four eyes," they are covert and integral, mapping out the symbolic-thematic substratum of the novel itself. In other words, just as Ford uses French translation to re-varnish his own national persona, he uses French fragments superficially, to adorn the characters in the novel without making any deeper comment on their relationship with the French language or the country of France (even though Dowell and Florence are actually residents of Paris; 7). French may run throughout the novel, but its action takes place in Nauheim, England, and – peripherally – Ireland.[115]

Ford submerges his use of German via the relexification of "under four eyes," yet this phrase encapsulates much of what drives the novel thematically: the book's cabalistic preoccupation with the number four, Dowell's incessant interrogation of the language of "eyes," and most of all, the novel's comment on the boundaries of privacy, intimacy, and interpersonal knowledge. Behind this, Ford's very suppression of the translated German phrase, "unter vier Augen," implies the embedded importance of the novel's silent German setting. In particular, the German history of Luther, Zwingli, and the "Protest" at the 1529 Marburg Colloquy – which, as Petra Rau points out, was the site of the debate over the Eucharistic phrase, "This is my body" – sets the stage for Dowell, Florence, Leonora, and Edward's climactic visit to Marburg. This trip-

[115] Though I do not have space to include it here, the issue of Irishness in Ford's novel has been much discussed by critics such as Doggett, "'Those were troublesome times in Ireland'"; and Tóibín, "Outsiders in England."

within-a-trip brings to the fore for the first time the foursome's underlying tensions of religious difference (Edward's Protestantism vs. Florence's Catholicism), sexual infidelity (Florence's finger upon Edward's wrist all but declares their affair to the oblivious Dowell), and interpersonal strife (it is here in the narrative that Dowell overturns his former equanimity and declares his hatred for Florence).[116] While the major national players in the group's animosities seem to be England, Ireland, and the United States, it is on German ground and through German history that these tensions are exposed and enunciated.

And it is through "under four eyes" – a multilingual fragment – that the novel's themes are translated into a central phrase. The two passages in which this phrase is used in the novel (quoted above) present two of its most central conflicts, interrogated by the clueless Dowell through the question of what happens "under four eyes," that is, how do people achieve intimacy? First, Dowell wonders how Edward might have spoken with the women he has seduced. His surprisingly accurate solution – that Edward is a "sentimentalist" – foreshadows the weakness for sentimental attachment (namely, to the Ashburnhams' ward, Nancy Rufford) that will eventually bring about Edward's depression and suicide. Yet Dowell's question itself signals the deeper quandary of how two radically separate human beings can relate to each other, if not merely by the bonds of sex. If Edward's downfall is one reason for calling the novel, as Dowell does, the "saddest story," then another, more profound one is the comment that the novel makes upon the impossibility of communicating with or understanding another person beyond the bounds of their "eyes." Soon after his first mention of "four eyes," Dowell concludes that his acquaintance with the Ashburnhams has produced no souvenir of intimacy, of "knowledge of one's fellow beings," not even "a bone penholder, carved to resemble a chessman and with a hole in the top through which you could see four views of Nauheim" (44). While the four main

[116] Rau, *English Modernism, National Identity and the Germans*, 108; See esp. *The Good Soldier*, 53, 88.

characters have, indeed, experienced "four views of Nauheim," these perspectives do not cohere into a single, souvenir-like common memory, but instead drive them further apart. Ford himself would seem to reiterate this theme of tragic non-communication when, a year after publishing *The Good Soldier*, he named the shaky détente between the British and German naval powers "the saddest story in the chronicles of the world."[117] Like Dowell and Edward or Edward and Leonora, Britain and Germany had failed to bridge their geopolitical division and to understand each other – a failure of translation which Ford himself lamented, yet, like Dowell looking on at Edward's downfall, neglected to ameliorate.

The second use of the phrase, which arrives in the text relatively soon after the first, articulates the conditions and consequences of this radical failure of interpersonal communication and understanding. "Under four eyes," Leonora meets with Mrs. Maidan, the frail woman she knows to be having an affair with her husband, Edward. Enclosed in this private colloquy, Leonora exerts a truncated version of the vengeance she would like to exact: boxing Mrs. Maidan's ears much as if she were the child that Edward and Leonora lack. As the passage explains, when the two women's "four eyes" are met by another pair – "the moment a stranger came along" – this private understanding and retribution lapse into the well of unspoken knowledge which underlies the novel and threatens to swallow its characters. That neither women speaks during their violent meeting signals this pervasive silence and the fact that the "eyes" and bodily contact under which such meetings take place may express more than any enunciation. The private boundaries demarcated by these "four eyes," which allow Leonora the space to enact Mrs. Maidan's punishment, also suggests that even within this moment of seemingly direct communication, some understanding is left out. Outside of this interaction – as the Dowells and Ashburnhams are touring Marburg – Mrs. Maidan's weak heart expires under

[117] *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, 110.

the stress of her botched affair; the revenge that Leonora has exacted within the seeming confines of "four eyes" spills out into public view. In other words, this scene shows the power of interpersonal privacy – "four eyes" – to be as insidious and silencing as it is uncontrollable and prone to leakage.

Once these basic themes are laid out through the connection of "four eyes" in the first quarter of the novel, they are elaborated in the play of "four" and "eyes" that threads throughout *The Good Soldier*. Like Ford's own efforts at containing and redirecting his Germanness through propaganda and the tactical translation of "under four eyes," the webs of symbolism woven around "four" and "eyes" in *The Good Soldier* signal both Dowell's effort to exert control and order in a chaotic, polysemic world, and also the fundamental futility of such an endeavor. The number "four," for instance, is one of the novel's fundamental organizing principles and also the source of some of its most perpetual critical controversy. It furnishes what Martin Stannard refers to as the novel's "spine date,"[118] 4 August, the day on which almost every major point of action takes place. Dowell openly thematizes this uncanny recurrence:

> The death of Mrs. Maidan occurred on the 4th of August, 1904. And then nothing happened until the 4th of August, 1913. There is the curious coincidence of dates, but I do not know whether that is one of those sinister, as if half-jocular and altogether merciless proceedings on the part of a cruel Providence that we call a coincidence. Because it may just as well have been the superstitious mind of Florence that forced her to certain acts, as if she had been hypnotized. It is, however, certain that the fourth of August always proved a significant date for her.

He goes on to explain that it was on this date that Florence was born, set sail round the world (1899), had her first affair (1900), got married (1901), witnessed Mrs. Maidan's death (1904), and discovered Edward's further infidelity and committed suicide (1913) (91). Yet it is the 4 August that does *not* occur within the novel that has furnished the greatest controversy among

[118] Qtd. in Bergonzi, "Fiction and History," 153.

critics: August 4, 1914, the date that German invaded Belgium and began World War I. Ford is famous for having claimed that he completed writing of *The Good Soldier* before the outbreak of war, yet it wasn't published until 17 March 1915, and evidence supports October 1914 as the novel's terminal composition date, as do claims like Richard Aldington's that Ford was still working on the novel when he began writing wartime propaganda for Wellington House.[119] Nevertheless, there is no incontrovertible proof that Ford did go back into the novel and emend his "spine date" to this auspicious day. While the 20 June 1914 excerpt of the novel in *BLAST* does not go far enough into the narrative to include the 4 August citation, original manuscripts from Ford's amanuenses (including H.D.) show the date appearing well prior to the outbreak of war. In the end, the date may truly be an "amazing coincidence," as Arthur Mizener and Thomas Moser have called it.[120]

This calendric controversy displays the extent to which both Dowell's *and* Ford's narratives depend upon a repetition and coincidence which would seem to contradict the chaotic world around them (extramarital intrigue and World War I, respectively). Like the "four eyes" which it mirrors, "4 August" is a mode of converting a messy narrative into a regular, legible order. Regardless of whether Ford inserted the date before or after the German invasion of Belgium, it clearly organizes his novel, as it appears at the opening or close of several chapters and at the crucial nexus of betrayal and suicide at the center of Edward and Florence's affair.[121] Echoing Ford's claim to have foreseen the War a year to the day before its beginning, the recurring date's serendipity obscures the doubt, disorder, and polyvocality far more proper to an

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[119] Cheng, "A Chronology of *The Good Soldier*," 388; Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford*, I:436–8; Stannard, "A Note on the Text," 183; Bergonzi, "Fiction and History," 150; Farrar, Jr., "The Artist as Propagandist," 146.
[120] Moser, "Note on the Text," xxxiv. Or as Bernard Bergonzi reasons, perhaps a bit less amazing when we consider that with all the dates in August to choose from, Ford had a 1-in-31 chance of happening upon this soon-to-be historic one. "Fiction and History," 154–6.
[121] See *The Good Soldier*, 27, 91ff., 119, 140–1.

entropic world – and particularly to war. For Dowell, too, 4 August furnishes a mode for making sense of incomprehensible events, whether this recurrence is due to mere coincidence, or, as he guesses, to Florence's half-conscious choice. Dowell is resigned to cede control of the calendar just as he is resigned to stand semi-obliviously outside of Edward and Florence's meetings "under four eyes." What matters is only the certainty that this organization exists – a certainty which Dowell wishes to expand to his entire story by recounting it "in diary form." It is notable, though, that his twisted narrative fails eminently to do so,[122] and that the only dates which actually do appear in his narrative are repetitions of this, the *same* date. Dowell's constructed order cannot bear the puncture of variation. By contrast, Ford's own narrative (both *The Good Soldier* and his own self-presentation) succeed by way of the orchestration and regularity brought about by translation – of his own name, as well as "under four eyes" – which allow it to remain whole, coherent, and convincing under the pressure of international conflict and an embattled national identity.

Similarly, the discussion of "eyes" throughout *The Good Soldier* would seem to signal the insight of a single, eye-witness perspective (such as Dowell's), yet in fact compounds the embattlement of Ford and Dowell's sense of order and identity through the intrusion of multiple voices – multiple "eyes" – encroaching upon this single, coherent narrative. In *The Good Soldier*, the "four" of "four eyes" mirrors not only "4 August," but also the four main actors in Dowell's drama (Dowell, Florence, Edward, and Leonora), and the disruption that arises from a fifth player (Nancy). At base, though, the integrity of unions between these four bodies is betrayed by the "four" that appears also in "four eyes," that is, the re-coupling and division which signifies an extramarital affair. It is significant here that Ford chose to use the German idiom "unter vier Augen" rather than its French or English semi-equivalents ("tête-à-tête" or "face to face"), since

[122] Ibid., 256; On time-shifts in the novel, see Meixner, "Ford's Literary Technique," 251.

it is only the German phrase that represents the re-divisibility of the body into the two eyes, the sense of sight, and therefore the possibility of private, four-eyed intrigue even in the presence of four players (two are party to the affair, two are "blind"). It is also significant that Ford chose to translate "unter *vier* Augen"; though this is the most common occurrence of the phrase, it is also adapted in German to invoke larger groups: "unter sech Augen" (six eyes, three people), "unter acht Augen" (eight eyes, four people), etc. The "four" of "four eyes," then, stands as a deliberate challenge and foil to the integrity of the group of "four" characters which the novel draws together.

Unlike similar phrases in French and English, "under four eyes" seems to signify the simultaneous gazing of two people at one object or concept, providing for an "extreme intimacy" (in Dowell's phrase; 7) which excludes other viewers. As Dowell naively explains, "the Captain [Edward] was quite evidently enjoying being educated by Florence. She used to do it about three or four times a week under the approving eyes of Leonora and myself." In other words, Edward and Florence's four-eyed, private intrigue continues unnoticed even in the presence of four people (eight eyes). Dowell's obliviousness to what happens "under four eyes" incites him to turn to the eyes as a portal for understanding other people's psyche and relational dynamics. Yet as Dowell describes Edward's eyes first as "honest," "stupid," "goodhearted," "straightforward," "direct," and then as "hopeless" and "doomed" (13, 35–6, 258, 263), we must wonder whether he really succeeds in reading eyes at all, or whether, as with Ford or Florence's dependence on "4 August," he is imposing his own meaning upon them as a way of corroborating his narrative. We know Dowell to be an unreliable sight-reader, since he fails to recognize any betrayal of Edward's infidelity even "by the quivering of an eyelash," and equivocates that "Florence was never out of my sight…come to think of it she was out of my sight most of the time" (112, 103).

By contrast, Leonora perfectly understands the mutuality of Edward and Florence gazes, and as Dowell later recognizes, she "knew that that gaze meant that those two had had long conversations of an intimate kind," as she had "from the way in which his [Edward's] eyes returned to doors and gateways" at the arrival of other mistresses (220, 207). The difference between Dowell and Leonora is that Dowell tries to read Edward's eyes themselves, thus failing to enter into Edward's *thinking*, while Leonora reads Edward's gaze – what is *under* his two eyes – and translates his private intrigues into something readily intelligible. Whereas Dowell is ineffectual in transmitting any gaze, Leonora has eyes like a "lighthouse," "china blue orbs" which Dowell imagines "boring" into Nancy, who herself has looks that could kill, with "a thing like a knife that looked out of her eyes" (40, 266, 147). If Leonora cannot be part of the private meetings "under four eyes" perpetrated by Edward and Florence or desired by Edward with Nancy, she will cut into them with the violence of her own insight.

Dowell, by contrast, has no such power, no access to the shared vision "under four eyes," though he asserts that a man's passion is based upon a "craving for identity with the woman that he loves…to see with the same eyes, to touch with the same touch, to hear with the same ears, to lose his identity, to be enveloped, to be supported" (135), a desire which might be applied to any other individual in Dowell's story. He wishes desperately to be absorbed into another's sight (not to be seen but to *see*), to experience one of the other perspectives or idioms that might make his story intelligible. Short of this sort of absorption, Dowell imagines transferring his own blindness to others through an Oedipus-like violence that would bring about an end to his isolation: he watches Florence, at the sight of the man who could reveal her infidelity, put her "hands over her face as if she wished to push her eyes out," and imagines Edward with his "forearms shielding his eyes" as he is flayed alive by Leonora and Nancy's cruelty (118, 274-5). As Dowell

concludes his story, "It was a most amazing business, and I think that it would have been better in the eyes of God if they had all attempted to gouge out each other's eyes with carving knives" (286). This is rather an extreme recourse for mutual non-understanding, but it may well be Dowell's ultimate recourse, as he reads Edward's "direct, challenging, brow-beating glare" as a request to be left alone (294), rather than a plea for help, an abandonment which leads to Edward's suicide and eliminates Dowell's rival's gaze as surely as if he had scratched his eyes out. In his repressed love for Nancy and his revenge for Florence's infidelity, it seems extremely plausible that Dowell semi-deliberately misreads Edward's silent communication to him "under four eyes."

Unraveling Translation in *Parade's End*

The acuity with which Ford represents Dowell's desperate bid for belonging and his manipulative mistranslation of Edward's gaze signals the author's inherent ambivalence about such techniques. As we might infer for a writer as careful and self-reflective as Ford, that ambivalence extends, too, to his own use of manipulative, propagandist arguments and translation in the context of World War I propaganda. Already, the centrality of "under four eyes" in Ford's novel suggests his mixed feelings toward the German language which, in his propagandist tracts, he purports to eschew. While he effaces the language through translation, the oddity of the translated English phrase inevitably points to its German origins and the German palimpsest of Ford's text. In applying to the translation of such a singular phrase, Ford lays bare precisely what he purports to conceal.

The duplicity by which the real linguistic origin of the phrase remains apparent – or rather, the ambivalence by which Ford allows the Germanic phrase to remain within the text – is

a function of translation which Ford explores more elaborately in his reflective post-war tetralogy, *Parade's End* (1924-28). Like *The Good Soldier*, this later series of novels features an equivocating protagonist, Christopher Tietjens, and employs the stream-of-consciousness high-modernist style that Ford had debuted in his 1915 work. In contrast to Ford's earlier novel, though, *Parade's End*'s omniscient, often sympathetic third-person tale of Tietjens' transition from statistician to soldier to civilian, from cuckold to lover, bears little of the sense of critical irony with which Ford, in the first-person narration of *The Good Soldier*, distances his reader from Dowell's obliviousness and dissects his protagonist's repressed psyche. Paradoxically, it is through the third-person narration of *Parade's End* that Ford brings his reader closer to Tietjens: through this narration, we are able to witness the machinations of others (particularly Tietjens' wife, Sylvia) that keep Tietjens in the dark, and this allows us to sympathize with his ignorance. Dowell's first-person narration, by contrast, alienates him from the reader, since Ford's manipulation of this narration allows us to see just enough of the characters around him to deprecate his naiveté. Whereas Tietjens seems only human, Dowell seems blamably blind. In a signal departure from his translation of "under four eyes," Ford facilitates the reader's sympathy with Tietjens by exposing – rather than subsuming – the multilingual, multivocal confusion of language which constantly confronts his protagonist.

One reason for Ford's de-ironized relation to his later protagonist may well be the autobiographical elements that inform *Parade's End*; much of what Tietjens experiences both at home and in combat would have been familiar to Ford.[123] Most of all, as Buitenhuis and Tate have argued, *Parade's End* (and particularly its first volume, *Some Do Not…*, 1924) dramatizes Ford's decision to depart from propaganda and to forge his own form of patriotism by joining the

[123] Even if the character himself may have been based largely on Ford's deceased friend, the mathematician Arthur Marwood (Saunders II:201*ff.*).

Royal Welch Fusiliers, at the age of 41. As Buitenhuis puts it, the "inherent hypocrisy of urging young men to go out and fight while he sat safe and secure in London, still a relatively young man, finally proved too much for his conscience." He was one of the few members of Masterman's crew to make such a decision, and it became a point of contention between himself and Hunt, which she fictionalized in their co-written 1917 novel, *Zeppelin Nights*.[124] While Ford carried his anti-German attitude to the battlefield, his accounts of encounters with the enemy show a vacillating mixture of acute interest (imagining a Bavarian sniper complete with moustache and a "finger…just curling tenderly round the trigger") and easy dismissal ("the Huns always seemed to me to be impersonal").[125] It is this cautious yet mounting ambivalence regarding the translation of the German enemy into a recognizable human being which imbues Ford's presentation of Tietjens' confusing, polyvocal world.

Parade's End, then, exposes not only Ford's own domestic and professional struggles in making the transition from writing desk to battlefield, but also his change of orientation toward propaganda itself. As Tietjens shifts from a propagandistic manipulator-of-statistics to a soldier, Ford's perspective in the novel replays his wartime transition out of propaganda-writing and into warfare, and also formulates his reflection on wartime propaganda from the vantage-point of its aftermath. Like Montague's debunking of the "Kadaver" controversy by his visit to the battlefield, Ford's time in action seems to have served as a form of disenchantment. As Tate writes, "What does 'democracy' mean if you do not have reliable information upon which to base your judgments, if the state in which you are now a democratic citizen has been systematically telling you lies?"[126] Further, what does it mean when you yourself have been complicit in this truth-production, while also suffering its consequences through the flurry of

[124] Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words*, 117–19; Tate, *Modernism, History*, 50ff.
[125] Ford (Hueffer), "Arms and the Mind," 46–7.
[126] Tate, *Modernism, History*, 56.

wartime gossip and rumor? This includes particularly the sort of anti-German xenophobia which led D.H. and his German wife Frieda Lawrence to flee England, and later – as late as 1937 – led Ford to protest his nationality in response to an allegation by Mrs. Lawrence that he only "preferred" to be English: it "is incorrect in saying that I prefer to be an Englishman. That also I could not help. I was born in England. One does not preside at the destiny of one's birth."[127] Yet Ford had, indeed, presided at the creation of his anti-German propagandist texts, and so in the hindsight of the 1920s, *Parade's End* provides him with the fictional space in which to complicate this unilateral propagandist stance.

Ford never re-claimed his German heritage, yet in *Parade's End*, he approaches it from a more level stance than in his earlier propagandist works. This is evident through the different real-life German locations that Ford involves in the plots of his pre- and post-war novels. In *The Good Soldier*, much of the action takes place in the ironically named Hessian spa-town "Bad Nauheim" [128] (approximately "New-Home Spa"), which proves to be the site not of "home" – as Ford himself had hoped to find in Germany in 1910 – but of the self-destruction of at least two marriages. By contrast, in *Some Do Not…*, Tietjens' flagrantly unfaithful wife Sylvia flees with her lover to "Lobscheid," a town in Nordrhein-Westfalen (about 130 km from Ford's earlier home in Gießen) whose name is akin to "Troth-division" or "Praise-division,"[129] suggesting its role as the site for Sylvia's decimation both of her wedding vows and of Tietjens' reputation. While this would seem to paint Lobscheid in a thoroughly negative light, it does so differently from *The Good Soldier*'s Bad Nauheim, as very little of the narrative actually passes in Lobscheid, and so the *genius loci* is less implicated in the outcome of Sylvia's actions there.

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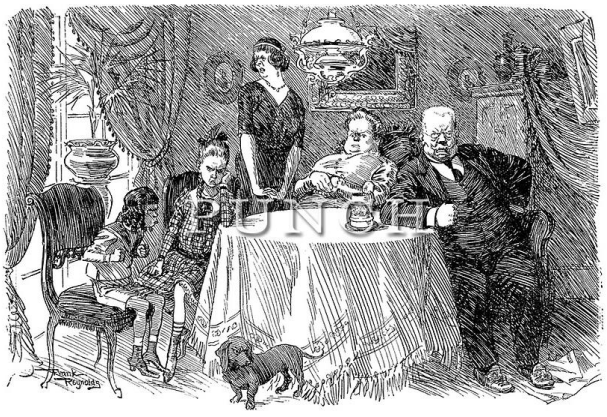
[127] Qtd. in Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford*, I:477.
[128] For more on spas and Bad Nauheim, see Rau, *English Modernism, National Identity and the Germans*, 100ff.
[129] "Lob" may mean "praise" or "accolade," but is also used in the verb "sich verloben," to get engaged. "Scheiden" means "to separate," and is used specifically for divorce.

While Lobscheid certainly represents a faraway, foreign place where such infidelities might occur, the repercussions of Sylvia's treachery are felt by Tietjens not in Germany, but in England itself.[130] In other words, Lobscheid – the place-name advertising the place's purpose – is simply a convenient (German) "elsewhere" for treachery to happen. Bad Nauheim, on the other hand – whose name serves as an ironic cover for the infidelity and intrigue that occurs within – is itself implicated as treacherous, advertising precisely the sort of "home" that Dowell and his fellows fail to discover.

What this name-play implies is that if Ford does not exculpate Germany in his post-war novels, he at least seems to set its depravity aside as a relatively benign given. This appears most clearly in *Parade's End*'s disenchanted representation of various propagandist slogans and stories familiar from the War years: rather than support or dispute these stories, Ford employs Tietjens and his fellows to expose them for what they are, namely, words. In the trenches, Tietjens' Colonel plays upon a well-known *Punch* cartoon and the stereotype of German "frightfulness" to belittle his comrade's fear of attack, assuring him that the "Germans' fire is not a '*strafe*,'" but rather, in quotation of *Punch*, "only a little extra Morning Hate."[131]



STUDY OF A PRUSSIAN HOUSEHOLD HAVING ITS MORNING HATE.

[130] For a unique perspective on the novel's Englishness via translation, see Rademacher, "Ford Madox Ford's Englishness."
[131] Ford, *A Man Could Stand Up* -, 661; On the *Punch* cartoon (from 24 February 1915), see Rau, *English Modernism, National Identity and the Germans*, 73.

As this implies, the Colonel believes that the Germans are no more particularly hateful than their fire is a true attack. Similarly, in the tetralogy's final volume, *Last Post* (1928), Ford himself diminishes the indictment of Germans as intrinsically evil at the same time that he pokes subtle fun at the fad for name-changing (of which he himself was a participant), as he mentions an acquaintance of Sylvia's, "Sir Gabriel Blatyre – formerly Bosenheir."[132] As any German-speaking reader – or Ford himself – would recognize, "Bosenheir" is a ridiculous (and non-existent) German name, combining the word "Böse" ("bad" or "evil") with the English word "heir" (which may also serve as a transliteration of the German "Herr," or "master"). It composes a parody of the anti-German Briton's bugbear: someone whose German name itself marks him as an "heir" and "master" of "evil."

Last but not least, Tietjens himself – the stand-in for Ford, who has previously been employed to twist statistics into patriotic forms – debunks the claims behind his friend Mrs. Wannop's propaganda projects: "The illegitimacy rate, he had said, had shown very little increase; the French-derived German word '*cadaver*' meant bodies of horses or cattle; *leichnam* being the German for the word 'corpse.'" Tietjens refuses to help Mrs. Wannop to support such claims, and goes so far as to convince her daughter, his beloved Valentine, that "the *cadaver* business" (if not the "war babies") is pure nonsense.[133] Nevertheless, while Ford allows Tietjens to speak against this egregious mistranslation, it is worth noting that he doesn't bother to differentiate the German from the French term, allowing this to remain as the Anglo-French "*cadaver* business" rather than specifying it as the German "*Kadaver* business."

As this anecdote shows, Ford employs Tietjens not as a monopolizing mistranslator such as Dowell, but as a conduit through which he can provide his reader with multiple perspectives

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[132] *Last Post*, 877.
[133] *Some Do Not...*, 289.

and texts for multiple interpretations. We are guided in such interpretation by Tietjens, whose virtuosically absorptive mind and experience in the sophistic Department of Statistics has made him an especially perceptive, open, and self-conscious translator, as well as a reluctant propagandist. Ford describes the workings of his protagonist's mind: it "picked up little pieces of definite, workmanlike information. When it had enough it classified them: not for any purpose, but because to know things was agreeable and gave a feeling of strength, of having in reserve something that the other fellow would not suspect."[134] Tietjens' mind, then, is a weapon, yet it is also the perfect defense against myopism or mis-persuasion. The arbitrariness with which Tietjens learns to classify information allows him to entertain multiple perspectives without collapsing them into a value system, as he explains to Valentine Wannop:

> Do you know these soap advertisement signs that read differently from several angles? As you come up to them you read 'Monkey's Soap'; if you look back when you've passed it's 'Needs no Rinsing.' … You and I are standing at different angles and though we both look at the same thing we read different messages. Perhaps if we stood side by side we should see yet a third. … But I hope we respect each other. We're both honest. I, at least, tremendously respect you and I hope you respect me.[135]

The difference between Tietjens' urge to enlist and Valentine's pacifism is not one of incommensurable division, but of different practices and perspectives of reading. His role, then, for Ford, is to serve as an unmasker – an unraveller – of translation and propaganda, exposing in his near-omniscience the multiple interpretations which less perceptive or multilingual readers might encounter collapsed into a single translation or persuasion.

Ford's depiction of the imbrication of fragmentary, equivocal, and often radically different interpretations or translations is first and most fully exemplified in Tietjens' and Sylvia's exchange of brief telegrams negotiating her return to England after her tryst in

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[134] Ibid., 75.
[135] Ibid., 250.

Lobscheid. Sylvia receives the telegram "*Accept resumption yoke*," which her Catholic advisor Father Consett interprets as a mark of marital "sympathy" through the sharing of "bywords." Sylvia debunks this assumption in her retort that "They were pretty bitter bywords, […] More like curses than kisses." In response, she sends back her own cryptic reply, "Righto. But arrange for certain Hullo Central travels with you. Sylvia Hopside Germany," which is duly misunderstood by Valentine Wannop, who assumes that it has "to do with German politics," rather than with Sylvia's maid, "Hullo Central." Tietjens, for his part, finds Sylvia's telegraphed words initially "meaningless" in his inability to fathom a return to cohabitation with her. Again, this gives rise to a refraction of interpretation, as Valentine imagines Tietjens' necessary trip to retrieve Sylvia in Germany as a visit to "the Fatherland of Goethe and Rosa Luxemburg," whereas for Tietjens it signifies only "Hell!"[136] While the telegrams between Sylvia and Tietjens transact a distinct piece of business (the salvaging of their marriage and reputation), their intractable wording precipitates multiple interpretations and misinterpretations, all of which coexist alongside the physical fact that Sylvia will return to her husband in England. Whereas in *The Good Soldier* the reader is exposed only to Dowell's single, obstinate translation of the events that he witnesses, in this scene and others in *Parade's End* we bear witness to the multiple perspectives and interpretations that can arise from a single statement, as well as the actions that such a statement might initiate.

Tietjens leads the reader in this revelation of multiple perspectives through his sensitivity not only to language itself, but to the interaction of multiple languages. This is the source of his attraction to Valentine, with whom he shares a love of "England" as signified by an English language which is a mix of local words and cosmopolitan terms as various as the birds that they observe in the fields of Kent: "chaffinch, greenfinch, yellow-ammer (*not*, my dear, hammer!

[136] Ibid., 32–3, 128–9.

ammer from the Middle High German for 'finch'), garden warbler, Dartford warbler, pied-wagtail known as 'dishwasher.'"[137] Valentine is Tietjens' ideal match because she approaches language with the delicacy with which he, too, employs it, understanding his expression of love in the mere use of "the word 'we'" and his farewell in "the inflexion of a verb."[138] Rather than accepting the meaning of words as a given – much as Dowell blindly adopts words like "sentimental" and "sight" – Valentine and Tietjens sustain a relationship based upon open discussion of words, exposing their malleability instead of employing them, as Sylvia does, as weapons. As Ford later shows, it is Sylvia's tactic of weaponized verbiage which prevails on the battlefield, as Tietjens' General orders his troops to shout "*Banzai!*" so as either to convince the Germans that they are facing Japanese (rather than English) troops or to "show them that we were making game of them" and send "these owlish fellows mad with rage." This does the trick – the Germans, who have been attempting to expose their opponents' nationality by singing English songs – "shut up!"[139] Whereas multilingual fragments are, for lovers, a point of connection, for opposing soldiers even one's own language is a weapon that can be used to expose or maim.

Tietjens serves as Ford's antidote to such violent usage. Through the novel's stream-of-consciousness narration, Ford further exposes readers to Tietjens' own, internal openness toward language. He portrays Tietjens as actively translating, considering a nineteenth-century song by Joseph Viktor von Scheffel (Tietjens mistakenly attributes it to Heine), in which he considers and reconsiders the opening lines,

> Die Sommer Nacht hat mir's angethan
> Das war ein schweigsams [sic] Reiten...

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[137] Ibid., 112.
[138] Ibid., 251.
[139] *A Man Could Stand Up* -, 651.

He remarks on the impossibility of translating Heine while rendering this first as

> It was the summer night came over me;
> That was silent riding…

Then, with a stroke of recognition, he amends the last line so that, rather than using the banal English word "silent," he better approximates the German "schweigsams" by twisting the English word to coin the term "silentish."[140] Nevertheless, Tietjens later quibbles with Heine, criticizing him as "sentimental" in his poetic compliment "*Du bist wie eine Blume*" ("You are like a flower"). "Damn the German language!," Tietjens mentally exclaims, "One should not say that one's young woman was like *a* flower, *any* flower. Not even to oneself. That was sentimental. But one might say one special flower. A *man* could say that."[141] Shortly after Tietjens' criticism of Heine, Ford pokes fun at Sylvia's lover, Major Perowne, for not only riffing off of Heine, but for selecting the *wrong* "special flower." Tietjens thus considers translation carefully, refusing to adopt a line from Heine's poetry merely as an unthinking adornment, and revising his own English so that it better approximates the phrase in German. Through Tietjens' stream-of-consciousness, the reader, too, is allowed to participate in this translation and revision, a notable departure from the stream-of-consciousness narrative which, in much of *Parade's End*, obscures the reader's ability to decipher which characters and plot-points are at play. Here Ford seems to make a point of providing the reader with *excess* information with which to comprehend these passages, a markedly different approach to multilingual fragments than in his silent insertion of the translated "under four eyes" in *The Good Soldier*.

However, as Ford himself would recognize, it is just such excess of information, language, and the residues of translation that can drive a man to (literal) distraction. Ford depicts

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[140] *Some Do Not...*, 137–9.
[141] *No More Parades*, 333.

the process of Tietjens' wearing down in the trenches by his increasing inability to discern different languages and speakers from each other, his buckling under the weight of language and information. Lying on his camp bed in the trenches, it is the echo of a German phrase beneath him – "*Bringt dem Hauptmann eine Kerze*" ("Bring the Captain a candle") – that begins to disintegrate his consciousness, and he "cast[s] around in his mind for some subject about which to think so that he could prove to himself that he had not gone mad."[142] The translation and absorption of this phrase is too much for Tietjens – he must find a new subject. Earlier, he finds it difficult to differentiate between the weight of the battlefield's mud and that of the German language, pondering,

> *Es ist nicht zu ertragen; es ist das dasz* [sic] *uns verloren hat*…words in German, of utter despair, meaning: It is unbearable: it is that that has ruined us…The mud! He had heard those words, standing amidst volcano craters of mud, amongst ravines, monstrosities of slime, cliffs and distances, all of slime… […] The moving slime was German deserters… […] And it had horribly shocked him to hear again the German language in a rather soft voice, a little suety, like an obscene whisper…The voice obviously of the damned; hell could hold nothing curious for those poor beasts…His French guide had said sardonically: *On dirait l'Inferno de Dante!*... Well, those Germans were getting back on him. They were not to become an obsession! A complex, they said nowadays…[143]

The act of translating the Germans' (or are they Tietjens'?) despairing words, of translating the muddy shapes into German deserters, of translating the German language into Hell, of translating Dante's Italian *Inferno* into France and French, and finally, of translating this sorry sight into a war and an opponent – the weight of all this bears down on Tietjens much as it must have encumbered Ford himself.

In this respect, both Ford and his protagonist are men who know too much, weighed down by the multilingual fragments, interpretations and considerations, which they are able to manipulate and control, but which also retain the capability to shape and compromise the minds

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[142] *A Man Could Stand Up* -, 609.
[143] Ibid., 524–5.

in which they reside. As Tietjens' onset of madness and "complex" imply, sanity is derived from the ability either to consider multiple interpretations or derivations in Wordsworthian "tranquility" (as on the Kentish fields) or to assimilate all conflicting languages and interpretations into a single narrative. As both Ford's own propaganda and the "Kadaver" controversy attest, this narrowing to a single, sovereign translation is precisely the end pursued and manipulated by propaganda. Ford's final comment on translation through *Parade's End*, then, may be a sober one: that while an ideal protagonist might consider and weigh against each other multiple interpretations or translations, he must ultimately be careful not to allow such accumulated residues to weigh him down to the point of madness. It is the role of propaganda to provide the shortcuts of translation and understanding that relieve such a cluttered mind. Whether intentional or unintentional, the multilingualism of Ford's *Good Soldier* or *Parade's End* holds the key both to understanding how such propaganda functions and to uncovering the multivocal palimpsest below this single message.

Chapter 3

Huns and Lovers:
The Linguistic Liaisons of Early Spy Fiction

> "Extraordinary!" I declared, absorbed by what he had related. "But while you've wrested from Germany the secrets of some of our most important defences, you have, my dear Ray, temporarily lost the woman you love!"
>
> – William Le Queux, Spies of the Kaiser (1909)

> Returning to my rooms in College I found a letter from the battalion awaiting me. It was to the effect that Ralston had walked out alone into No Man's Land on the morning of August 29, and had been killed.
> Then there was cowardice in his woman's heart after all.
>
> – A.W. Wheen, Two Masters (1924)[1]

And he shook hands with his firing squad. Thus ends the tragic life-story of the novelist Erskine Childers. Nearly two decades after he published his single novel, *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903) – the book that had made his name and provided the template for twentieth-century espionage fiction – Childers found himself an enemy of the English state that he had earlier defended, facing soldiers who might earlier have stood beside him as World War I comrades. Arrested at his ancestral home as an Irish republican rebel in possession of a printing press and unauthorized arms, Childers was swiftly brought to trial under the new Emergency Act and executed on 24 November 1922.[2] The handshake that served as his final self-declaration signified not only the equivocal allegiance of an English-born Irish revolutionary, but also the legacy of Childers' published ambivalence regarding the relationship between men who should be enemies, yet who recognize their mutual affinities even as they stand at opposite ends of the crosshairs. As Childers had explored years earlier in the Anglo-German intrigues of *Riddle*, the extreme

[1] *Spies of the Kaiser*, 19; *Two Masters*, 32.
[2] Ring, *Erskine Childers*, 285-9.

intimacy of men bent on killing each other breeds a mutual respect that facilitates such courtesy, drawing enemy men together in a perverse affinity and forbidden comradeship which extends even to the bounds of love.

Childers' publication of *Riddle* and his ignominious death bookend the period of British literary history that witnessed the genesis of the espionage novel, and with it, the creation of the character of the spy. During this period, espionage fiction progressed from its inception during the short-lived optimism of the Edwardian era to its sober maturation in the years following the catastrophe of World War I. *Riddle*, a novel of two English comrades who uncover and defeat a German plot to invade England, enacts the widespread pre-war belief that a pair of devoted Englishmen might infiltrate foreign conspiracies, vanquish their foes, and return home in time for supper. Yet it also hints at the recognition of such an enterprise's failure in the aftermath of the real espionage and carnage of the War. In this way, *Riddle* provides a starting point for charting the development of the spy's character and fate, which, in the matter of a quarter-century (approx. 1900 to 1925), grew to resemble far less the glamorous exploits of *Riddle*'s insouciant Englishmen than it did Childers' own tragic death – ambivalent, alienated, and on the wrong side of a gun.

As I will discuss through a survey of early espionage fiction in this chapter, the maturation of the espionage genre from the Edwardian era to the aftermath of the Great War is driven by the development of two mutually dependent tropes: the increasingly complex use of multilingual fragments and translation as a tool and signal of the spy's vocation, and the increasingly troubled, homosocially-charged relationship that such linguistic fluency facilitates between the spy and his ostensible opponent. As the espionage fiction of this era engages in an ever more complex examination and depiction of how, when, and why the spy speaks in a

foreign language, it evinces a growing concern with the ways that such intimacy with the enemy's language throws the spy into dangerously close contact and commune with his opponent. How can the spy converse with his enemy without making a verbal slip and losing his cover? How can he imitate and infiltrate his enemy without sliding into a sympathy that may undermine his mission and turn him against his own comrades?

With an increasing attention to the intricacies and boundaries of language, the spy becomes ever more embroiled in dangerous liaisons with his enemy, and his necessary mimicking of his opponent distends the bounds of "comradeship" to encompass the illicit love of his national antagonist. The extent and gravity of this illicit affinity is what sets the pre-war spy apart from the post-war agent, as my contrasting epigraphs suggest. The first quotation, from a 1909 espionage novel, *Spies of the Kaiser*, written by one of the most popular novelists of his day, William Le Queux, depicts a duo of Edwardian spies, Jack Jacox and Ray Raymond – close contemporaries of Childers' "Carruthers" and "Davies" in *The Riddle of the Sands* – who persist in spy-catching precisely because their strongly-charged homosocial bond allows them to fall back on a friendship defined by Englishness. This bond not only blocks out any room for sympathy with the enemy, but it even obviates the need for a loyal English girl. By contrast, the second quotation from *Two Masters* (1924), the sole piece of fiction written by the famed Australian-British translator A.W. Wheen (best known for his version of E.M. Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*), depicts the consequences of a British spy (Ralston) who has lost his internal battle between love for his German friend and love of his patriotic duty. That Ralston is described, in the end, as a "woman," speaks eloquently to the extent to which the unspeakable, untranslatable bonds of espionage map onto a discourse of queerness and gender trouble. As I will discuss, such queered language – the language of indirection, intrigue, secrecy, and shame –

was always present in spy literature, yet in earlier forms, the dangerous lure of the enemy had been sublimated into fervent patriotic love among British friends (as between Le Queux's Jacox and Raymond). After 1918, the recognition that "they" (the enemy) were practically the same as "us" prevented such displacement, and as Ralston's fate shows, the consequences of this could be dire.

In order to chart the development of the spy's language-bound predicament, I begin this chapter with an examination of Childers' *Riddle* and its portrayal of how the protagonist, Carruthers, successfully diverts his dangerous interests in German and the Germans back onto his hyper-patriotic English comrade, Davies. *Riddle* epitomizes the much-imitated mode of pre-war espionage literature that paints the English spy as continent and competent – both in his language and in his relationships – while marking the enemy spy (nearly always the German spy) as shifty, ineffectual, and prone to verbal and sexual slippage. In the heart of my chapter, I outline the development of this basic opposition between comrade and enemy, and consider how its introduction in works like Childers' or Le Queux's novels grows into the more nuanced portrayal of enmity and comradeship that characterizes post-war fiction like Wheen's *Two Masters*. In the years following the Great War, many authors' wartime experiences of real espionage taught them of its deep power to tear comrades apart through the fear of betrayal, and to twist language until it became less a tool for supremacy than a means of the spy's self-destruction. Thus, I end my chapter with a consideration of Wheen's poignant, if almost entirely forgotten novella, in which the story of a spy's disastrous transnational infatuation encapsulates this ultimate loss of control and the failure of comradeship. Wheen's novella represents the necessary development of an espionage genre which, since *The Riddle of the Sands*, depends upon the delicate balance between the spy's linguistic intimacy, personal affinities, and national

employment.

Mediating "the man and the enterprise" in *The Riddle of the Sands*

The Riddle of the Sands, Erskine Childers' only novel, is at once one of the most complex and most paradigmatic of Edwardian spy novels. *Riddle* epitomizes pre-war spy literature in a variety of respects: its demonstration of the British fear of a loss of colonial and European control (and the fight to regain it); its differentiation of "true" Englishness and irremediable foreignness; its transformation of a middle-class clerk into an "ordinary" hero.[3] As all of these points suggest, the greatest mark of the pre-war spy novel is its effortless use of individual actors and isolated situations to strike a much wider-reaching result; the two spies of the novel, Carruthers and Davies (they never gain first names), are not, like Somerset Maugham's post-war spy Ashenden would describe himself, "a tiny rivet in a vast and complicated machine" of the government[4]; they are free-agent yachtsmen whose reconnaissance along Germany's North Sea coast has repercussions on the world stage.

This is true not only in the world of the novel, but also in the real world of the novel's publication. From its first appearance in 1903, Childers' novel sold well and was widely praised, compared by the popular novelist John Buchan even to the works of Conrad. It was also a favorite work of several real spies, and served as both an inspirational and factual basis for their subsequent exploits. After 1897, when Childers himself yachted among the East Frisian islands that would serve as the setting for his novel, his maps of the area became some of the most accurate available in England. Childers reprinted several of them in *Riddle*, and these were later used by British spies pursuing surveillance of the German ship- and harbor-building operations

[3] See Stafford, "Spies and Gentlemen"; Nabers, "Spies Like Us"; Boscagli, *Eye on the Flesh*, 56ff.
[4] Maugham, *Ashenden*, 6.

along the North Sea. When one of these spies, Navy Lt. Vivien Brandon, was caught by the Germans, he testified in court – to the crowd's delight – that he had read *Riddle* three times.[5] Childers himself was marked for life by his publication of this single novel: he could no longer take his yacht among the Frisian Islands without being tailed by German spies, and even as late as 1921, he was accused by the Irish chairman, Arthur Griffith, of having started World War I through *Riddle* and now seeking to incite a second, Irish war by refusing the British concessions to an Irish Free State.[6] In spite of such far-reaching influence, *Riddle*'s scope is nevertheless quite specific: it is a novel based entirely upon espionage and documentation, not upon military action. Childers was well aware of this limitation, and claimed in his preface that his (fictional) friend "Carruthers" acknowledged that "it was doubtful whether" he and Davies had "stirred a foot to combat" the schemes they witnessed in Germany. As the (real) German Director of Naval Intelligence, Prince Louis von Battenberg observed, *Riddle* is an "excellent" novel, but a "rubbish" warplan.[7] Indeed, it is, in this respect, a true novel of espionage: an act of observation, but not a solution.

In presenting a plot focused solely on espionage, Childers imbricates the genre's two dominant elements: small-scale personal narrative and large-scale nationalism, or "the man" and "the enterprise" that Carruthers describes with regard to his comrade Davies: "But it would have taken a 'finished and finite clod' to resist the attraction of the man and the enterprise; and I take no credit whatever for deciding to follow him, right or wrong."[8] This is evident from the outset, in which Childers' "preface" recounts the history of their "true" account's publication. Childers

[5] See Ring, *Erskine Childers*, 13-15, 46-8; Richelson, *A Century of Spies*, 39; Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 32; Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 40.
[6] Ring, *Erskine Childers*, 128-31, 246-56.
[7] Childers, *The Riddle of the Sands*, v; Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 23.
[8] Childers, *The Riddle of the Sands*, 88. Such a combination has long been the basis for tales of national heroes, reaching at least as far back as the *Aeneid*'s opening pairing of "Arma virumque" ("arms and the man").

writes that up until "Carruthers" (he puts the name in quotes) had come to him to reveal the whole story, he had known only that his friend "had recently undergone experiences during the yachting cruise with a certain Mr. 'Davies' which had left a deep mark on his character and habits."[9] It is for "personal reasons" – namely, the potential indignity to a young lady – that Carruthers and Davies are hesitant to publish their account, and finally wish to recount only "the essential facts, stripped of their warm human envelope." Childers warns against this, claiming that without the voice of Carruthers, "with its humours and errors, its light and its dark side, just as it happened," the account might seem merely "a concocted hoax" – perhaps one along the lines of Le Queux, who was well-known for his absurd tales of intrigue. In the end, the two yachtsmen concede to publish according to Childers' narrative suggestion and collation, as a service to their country – or as the subtitle of the novel has it, *A Record of Secret Service Recently Achieved*. (vi-viii) What all this negotiation makes clear is that such "secret service" is inexorably a combination of personal narrative and nationalist aim. As Carruthers later recounts, explaining his friend Davies' twin desires to pursue England's interests and to protect a young lady unintentionally embroiled in the enemy's plot, "Both were right: neither could be surrendered. If the facts showed them irreconcilable, tant pis pour les faits. A way must be found to satisfy both or neither" (209). In this way, Carruthers and Davies' account within *Riddle* acts as a sort of thesis on espionage's mediation between these two perspectives, a pairing which maps onto their own relationship as dual spy-protagonists with discrete skills and weaknesses, as well as onto the envious, mirrored relationship between the countries these skills represent, England and Germany.

Childers' pairing of Carruthers and Davies forms a classic solution to the problem of

[9] *The Riddle of the Sands*, v. Subsequent citations of the novel will be noted parenthetically in the text.

endowing British spies with the skills and interest to infiltrate the enemy, yet preventing them from attaining too much sympathy for the enemy himself. Carruthers,[10] a foppish, up-and-coming clerk in the Civil Service, fluent in German and French, becomes paired with Davies, a haphazard but brave and talented, unassailably English yachtsman, after the latter sends Carruthers a cryptic invitation to join him on his yacht along the northern German coast for some early-autumn duck hunting. As the pair begins to unravel and uncover a German plot to invade England from the Frisian islands' sandy embankments, their scheme of espionage combines Carruthers' linguistic and reasoning skills with Davies' physical and technical prowess. Each serves as a source of check and balance for the other, Carruthers protecting Davies' ingenuous candor, Davies providing an English anchor for Carruthers' often wavering sympathies. As such, they form a template for contemporaneous and later spy pairings, such as that of William Le Queux's Jacox and Raymond in *Spies of the Kaiser*, in which Jacox nearly gets both the Englishmen killed by his flirtations with the German Otto Engler, yet ultimately returns to his English friend in the novel's final line: "to-day, with Ray Raymond, I am wondering what is to be the outcome of all this organised espionage in England. What will happen? When will Germany strike?"[11] It is the model, too, for John Buchan's more well-known and also more linguistically-bound pairing of Richard Hannay and the conscientious objector Launcelot Wake in *Mr. Standfast* (1919; a sequel to Buchan's famous *The Thirty-Nine Steps*). While Hannay himself speaks German, he requires Wake's more effeminate, less patriotic knowledge of

[10] Much speculation has surrounded the "true" identity of Childers' Carruthers. Candidates have been either of the two men who originally accompanied Childers on his voyage along the North Sea coast (his brother Henry or his friend Ivor Lloyd Jones), his close friend Basil Williams, or his acquaintances William Le Fanu, Bertrand Russell, or Edward Marsh; Ring, *Erskine Childers*, 78, 301n. Interestingly, Carruthers is also taken up as the name of two homosexual Edwardian schoolboys, in C.K. Scott-Moncrieff's story "Evenson and Morwesong" (1907) and in Alec Waugh's *The Loom of Youth* (1917); see Parker, *The Old Lie*, 111-12.

[11] Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 213-19.

German literature to identify the Germans' code. Wake later characterizes the difference between himself and Hannay: "You're a happy man and get things done, because you only see one side of a case, one thing at a time...I'm the kind of stuff that poets are made of, but I haven't the poets gift, so I stagger about the world left-handed and game-legged."[12] Such existential despair is the stuff of 1919, not 1903, yet Wake's account exposes the basic contrast between Jacox and Raymond or Carruthers and Davies: the equivocating, theory-bound comparativist balanced against the doughty, straight-sighted nationalist.

Childers himself encompassed both of these roles. While he certainly based Davies' sailing exploits on his own travels, and was proficient enough in yachtsmanship to run guns from Germany to Ireland in 1914,[13] he also showed himself a hide-bound comparatist in his other, non-fiction publications. Following *Riddle*, Childers wrote two monographs arguing for the re-purposing of British cavalry based on critical readings of the German military theories of Friedrich von Bernhardi, as well as a treatise on Irish Home Rule, in which he appealed to a study of "Imperial history" as the basis for his "comparative" approach to Anglo-Irish relations.[14] Childers' even-handed consideration of multiple international viewpoints is echoed in the comparisons of England and Germany that run throughout *Riddle*. As Samuel Hynes notes, this is an early Edwardian spy novel, and thus presents Germany more as a "competitor" than an enemy.[15] To begin with, the novel's invasion premise itself is, according to Davies, based in comparison: Germany's "got no colonies to speak of, and *must* have them, like us" (84). Further, Davies notes that this envy is reciprocal, since the English "want a man like this Kaiser, who

[12] Buchan, *Mr. Standfast*, 127, 250-1.
[13] See Ring, *Erskine Childers*, 46-8, 70, 128-31, 146-7.
[14] See Childers, *War and the Arme Blanche*; *German Influence on British Cavalry*; *The Framework of Home Rule*, vii.
[15] Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, 37.

doesn't wait to be kicked, but works like a nigger for his country and sees ahead" (104). In conclusion, he declares, "Germany's a thundering great nation...I wonder if we shall ever fight her" (47).

Davies' belligerent form of admiration is different from Carruther's softer bent toward emulation through language and literature. In accord with the Germans' less ascetic view towards yachting, Carruthers admits that he made "no pretence to being a Davies. Faithful to my lower nature, I vowed the Germans were right" in eschewing such drudgery (162). Davies, in contrast to his comrade, always translates his appreciation of German military success back into English terms. As he asks Carruthers to translate the German script on a war memorial commemorating German losses in the 1864 German-Danish War, Davies repeats the German words, "Heldenmüthig gefallenen" ("heroically fallen"), "lingering on each syllable," yet still inexorably English in doing so, "like a schoolboy reading of Waterloo" (48). This contrast between Davies' and Carruthers' forms of "reading" Germany is emblematized in their separately-voiced appreciation for the nobleman among their German foes, Commander von Brüning.[16] While Davies admires the man for his military prowess and rank, deeming him "a real good sort, and a splendid officer" (83), Carruthers' form of admiration, though of a similar sort, is notably queered. Carruthers keeps his admiration to himself, admitting that by some "illogical bypaths" he has arrived at the conclusion "that I liked the man and like him still" (272). This secrecy and propensity for "bypaths" is likely the reason that von Brüning singles out Carruthers (as opposed to the straight-shooting Davies) as a potential conspirator (165-6), although he also recognizes the patriotic worth of Davies in musing candidly that "I wish there were more [like him] in Germany" (162). Carruthers, then, is a potential tool for German use, while Davies is a

[16] The "von" in von Brüning's name signifies his nobility.

model of the irreducible “other” that Germany lacks and desires.

The creation of an intimacy between Carruthers and Davies forms the personal substratum (“the man”) upon which the spy/invasion narrative (“the enterprise”) is imposed. In Carruthers' account, it reads as a classic story of reluctant courtship, infatuation, jealousy, and eventual consummation in the English spies' successful joint enterprise. From the novel's beginning, Carruthers represents himself as the domesticated clerk-damsel to Davies' “physical energy combined with a certain simplicity and modesty,” which, since their acquaintance at Oxford, Carruthers has remembered as attractive, though also somewhat uncouth (7). Carruthers represents Davies' luring of him from London to Germany with great doses of self-pity and masochism, describing his trip (preemptively) as “an act of obscure penance” (9). Later, he will refer to himself as “a peaceful clerk,” “sore and victimised,” who has been “kidnapped” and exposed to Davies' “cure” (93, 21, 90). Certainly Davies “cures” Carruthers of his desire for the immaculate garb of yachting, the “cool white ducks or neat blue serge...the snowy-crowned yachting cap, that precious charm that so easily converts a landsman into a dashing mariner.” Upon discovering that Davies affects none of these trappings, Carruthers feels “oddly guilty” that he himself has brought them along (14). The pair's subsequent adventures lead Carruthers to forget these superficialities, replacing his desire to cross-dress (or in the spy's lingo, masquerade) as a “dashing mariner” with the more internalized marks of that profession.

As Carruthers warms to Davies, though, he laments the one remaining barrier to their “complete mutual confidence”: Davies' semi-secret love for Clara Dollmann, the daughter of the traitorous Englishman at the heart of the Germans' invasion plot (82). As Davies recounts Herr Dollmann's attempt to eliminate him and his dangerous knowledge of the Frisian coast by luring his small ship through a treacherous channel, he skirts the presence of Fräulein Dollmann aboard

her father's yacht, presumably out of shame and a desire to shield her name. Carruthers latches on to this omission's intervening “cross-current,” yet concludes that he and Davies lack the “deep foundation of intimacy” for such confidence, “I did not know my man yet, and I did not know myself” (82). At first Carruthers desires “feminine weapons for my sensitive antagonist” in order to gain Davies' withheld information, but he later resorts, instead, to chaffing Davies about his feelings for Clara, raising his comrade's ire (83, 170). Carruthers' passive-aggressive approach to gaining Davies' confidence culminates in his jealous antagonism against Clara, believing her to be a diversion from his and Davies' patriotic quest and, at worst, a knowing member of the German invasion plot. This begins with their first introduction: “Never did [Davies'] 'meiner Freund, Carruthers,' sound so pleasantly to my ears; never so discordantly the 'Fräulein Dollmann' that followed. Every syllable of the four was a lie” (192). In giving Davies and his quest up for lost (in the assumption that Davies will prefer protection of Clara over espionage), Carruthers finally admits his love for his comrade. As he is introduced to Clara as Davies' friend, he concedes, “well, I would have died for Davies there and then” (194).

Yet Davies refuses to give up espionage, even as he insists on protecting the innocent Clara. In Davies' own mediation between “man” (or rather, Clara) and his English “enterprise,” it is Carruthers who takes on the role of patriotic conscience. This, finally, initiates the comrades' true intimacy: “Davies broke down the last barriers of reserve and let me see his whole mind” (209). Carruthers cruelly capitalizes upon this vulnerability to take “perverse satisfaction” in reminding Davies of the impossibility of his attachment to an enemy spy's daughter (210). He goes on to insist that Clara is not entirely innocent (259), and finally, to discount her real importance to the spy plot even if she is a conspirator. For Carruthers, his and Davies' patriotic, English intimacy finds less opposition in the weak machinations of a woman than in the

perverted connections of her father, which he describes in tellingly sexual terms:

> For me the man was the central figure; if I had attention to spare it was on him that I bestowed it; groping disgustfully after his hidden springs of action, noting the evidences of great gifts squandered and prostituted; questioning where he was most vulnerable...The girl was incidental. (271)

This is the key distinction between Carruthers and Davies: the former is focused upon the foreign (Dollmann) and the homosocial (Davies); the latter upon the patriotic (defending England) and the heterosexual (Clara). Both are spies, but whereas Davies hastens to expunge or explain this label in relation to himself (86-91), he readily connects it to Carruthers' linguistic and strategic skills, explaining that "I wired to you – that chap was a spy." Such stream of consciousness stings Carruthers: "It was the close association of these two ideas" – his involvement and Dollmann's treachery – "that hit me hardest" (76). The signal of Carruthers' difference from Davies – and the reasoning for Davies' invitation of such an inexperienced seaman to join him – is the former's language skills. After going down from Oxford, Carruthers spent two years in France and Germany "to learn the languages" (7), and his outlook is concomitantly cosmopolitan. Upon introduction to von Brüning, he even lies about his governmental role, transferring himself from his actual department, the Civil Service, to the more internationally inclined, if more "suspicious"-sounding Foreign Office (162).

Carruthers' linguistic proficiency contrasts markedly to Davies' seemingly preternatural inability to pick up the German language. Carruthers describes his "blunt dog-German" as "deplorably weak in terminations," "*bizarre* in vocabulary and comical in accent," though Davies' congeniality often allows him to be understood, as if ingenuous Englishness obviated the need for fluency (196, 152, 51). His most frequently recounted error is his consistent reference to Carruthers as "meiner Freund." This not only emblematizes Davies' friendly linguistic haplessness, but contains the subtext – intelligible to the fluent Carruthers – that "mein Freund"

may mean both “my friend” and “my boyfriend” (51, 62, 152, 192).[17] This implication is underlined by the fact that Davies refers *only* to Carruthers with this epithet (in relation to others, Childers translates his speech as “my friend,” 62). Even if Davies misses this unintentional innuendo, Carruthers' attachment to the endearment hints that he is well aware of it.

With his fluency in German, Carruthers acts as a translator not only for Davies, but for the reader. In providing glosses for German text and speech, Carruthers takes pains to stress his discomfort with this task and his ultimate allegiance to his mother tongue. In describing the sand-banked channels through which he and Davies sail, Carruthers demurs at describing them by their complicated German taxonomy, and instead substitutes his own two, simpler categories, while denouncing their German suffix, “siel” (“sink” or “sewer”) as a “repulsive termination” (115-16, 142). Similarly, he complains about the intricate, coded language used by the German conspirators, finding himself “maddened” by “the scarcity of plain nouns” (239). He instead appropriates even the names of these conspirators into English translation, repeatedly punning on the name of one, “Grimm,” not as a German parody of the famous Brothers Grimm, but as a simpler English wordplay, “grim” (154, 168).[18] Such linguistic chauvinism is proper to the complex political landscape that Davies and Carruthers encounter along the Frisian coast, which is peopled with polyglot sailors who speak “the funniest broken English...with intense relish and pride,” as well as former Danish dissidents who make “a patriotic pretence of not understanding German,” relying instead on an English composed chiefly of “nautical slang” (58, 46). For these peripheral Germans and the two Englishmen alike, the English language functions as a form of protest or respite from the hegemony of post-unification Hochdeutsch.

The success of *Riddle*'s espionage plot depends upon the combination of Davies'

[17] As opposed to the unambiguously platonic “ein Freund von mir” (“a friend of mine”).
[18] Childers makes the same pun in his postscript, 331.

ingenuous monolingualism with Carruthers' subtle linguistic plotting. It is Davies' "bad German" that protects him from exposing the extent of his charting and exploration among the Frisian islands to Dollmann upon their first meeting, and that also allows him to corroborate his hunch that Dollmann is really a traitorous Englishman. After encountering Davies in harbor, Dollmann tries to get rid of him permanently by leading Davies to fatally crash his yacht on the sandy Frisian coast. Yet Davies' inability to understand Dollmann's German commands leads Dollmann to slip exasperatedly into "downright English," as he yells "Verstehen Sie? [Do you understand?] Short-cut through sands: follow me!" (81). Davies understands not only the command itself, but also grasps Dollmann's treachery, saving his own life by disobeying Dollmann's deadly orders. As Carruthers later notes of Dollmann's linguistic indiscretion, "if he was piloting you into the next world he could afford to commit himself before you parted!" (81). Yet there would have been no need for Dollmann to "commit himself" to English if he had trusted that Davies would understand German.

Dollmann's English-speaking indiscretion is reminiscent of other German spies' propensity to give themselves away linguistically once they are convinced of their defeat, as I will discuss further below. Indeed, Dollmann speaks fluent English once Carruthers and Davies finally corner him (318). The monolingual Davies, by contrast, adopts no such risk of giving himself away by speaking the "wrong" language, and in effect, his inability to follow German conversation succeeds in slowing down and foiling von Brüning's attempts at interrogation (78). Carruthers later takes up Davies' tactic, and he eventually capitalizes on Davies' unfeigned simplicity and surprise in order to convince the German spies that the English duo have decided to part ways and give up their game (161, 260). As Carruthers concludes, Davies' "own personality was really our tower of strength....all his pet phrases translated crudely into the most

excruciating German. He was convincing, because he was himself" (161-2).

Carruthers, on the other hand, is most effective as a spy through his ability to see beyond the "self" – to see "queerly" – and to masquerade as someone else. Davies calls upon Carruthers to discern whether Dollmann is, indeed, German, and to look more deeply into the German spies' plot. Carruthers takes the "lead" in tense interactions with von Brüning and his co-conspirators, jibing and chaffing Davies, who becomes so aggravated with Carruthers' subtlety that he finally explodes (265). In unraveling the Germans' espionage, Carruthers is finally obliged to impersonate a German himself, first attempting to "pass in a fog for a Frisian" among the higher-bred German conspirators, then playing upon the local Frisian ignorance of Hochdeutsch in order to masquerade among the locals as a well-travelled German sailor (229, 287). This succeeds until Carruthers encounters an ex-seaman whose "gift for language...and unerring scent for nationality" trumps his own and threatens to unmask him, yet he finally acquits himself by affecting a "fo-c'sle English, gathered from Cutliffe Hyne and Kipling...a disreputable hybrid, mostly consisting of oaths and blasphemies" (295). Carruthers' German masquerade fails, but his English persona salvages the Britons' plot.

Bad Italics: The Languages of Enemies and Comrades

The subtle play of German and English in *The Riddle of the Sands* is symptomatic of the anti-German hysteria that gripped Britain in the years leading up to the First World War, and provided fertile ground for the genesis of the paired figures of the treacherous German spy and the valiant British agent. World War I was certainly not the first war to mobilize European nationalisms against one another, but it was distinguished by the extent to which its antagonisms were played out in nearly every cultural realm. In the years following the Franco-Prussian War,

leading up to World War I, and encompassing, at their center, the major Anglo-German arms race incited by the warship *Dreadnought*, the British fear of a German military and naval threat was displaced not only onto German nationals, but to every aspect of German culture: music, art, literature, and most of all, language.[19] By wartime, Arthur Quiller-Couch could argue that Germans' "vocal organs" made them constitutionally unable to read Tennyson. [20] With the shared ancestry of Anglo-Germanic history and language all but forgotten, a half-century of enmity had begun.[21]

Yet in order to understand the singular venom of the English/German opposition, and the way that it gave birth to the genre of espionage fiction, it is important to recognize that until the outbreak of war, there were other possibilities for cultural animosity. The French remained a perennial potential antagonist, and indeed appeared as such in the early "shilling shockers" of William Le Queux (*The Great War of 1897*, 1894) or Max Pemberton (*Pro Patria*, 1901), or the historical fiction of Baronness Orczy (*The Scarlet Pimpernel*, 1905). Yet the French language never earned the disrepute or political weight imposed on German, nor did Russian, which was far less accessible to the British reading public or its authors (with the notable exception of Conrad). That French was seen as a relatively innocuous cultural artifact[22] – and entirely disjoined from any "French threat" – can be inferred from the copia of French verbiage spattered throughout Le Queux's *Great War*, a novel in which the French and Russians invade England. Le Queux – purportedly Queen Alexandra's favorite novelist[23] – describes his über-English hero

[19] Gisela Argyle notes that up until the 1930s, the term "German" was vague enough to be used to refer to German-speakers of any national origin (i.e. Austrian, Swiss, Hungarian), 5.
[20] Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 73.
[21] On the creation of the German "enemy" in cultural terms, see Firchow, *Strange Meetings*; Rau, *English Modernism, National Identity and the Germans*.
[22] This contrasts with recent pejorative anti-French neologisms, e.g. "freedom fries."
[23] Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 4.

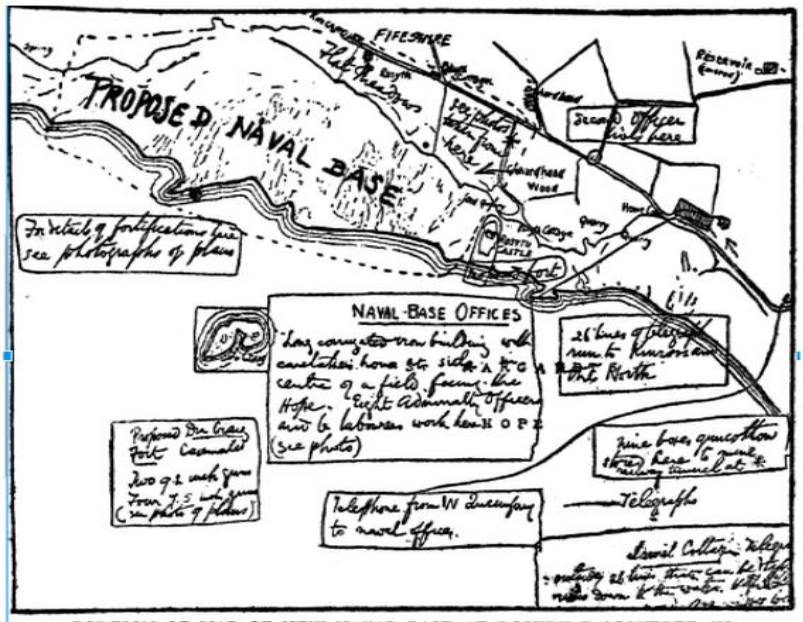
Geoffrey Engleheart as "overflowing with genuine *bonhomie*," his "*fiancée*" waiting for his hand in marriage. Engleheart defends England against the French invasion, whose destruction of Newhaven produces "débris" at its "*dénouement.*"[24] That Le Queux is conscious of the foreign origin of these words – rather than assuming them as naturalized loans to English – is signified by their correct punctuation and almost uniform italicization. Yet his applications of such words to an English hero and a French victory would be singularly inappropriate if they were cultural markers; instead, they are clearly the affectations of a second-rate writer. The young P.G. Wodehouse was canny enough to ridicule such linguistic ostentation, as in his spoof of an invasion novella, *The Swoop!, or How Clarence Saved England* (1909), he described his adolescent hero's "massive chin; those eyes, gleaming behind their spectacles; that *tout ensemble*; that *je ne sais quoi.* In a word, Clarence!"[25]

The key difference in Wodehouse's spoof is the seeming carelessness with which he intersperses such ostentation. By contrast, Le Queux – even more than his fellows-in-genre, Pemberton and E. Phillips Oppenheim – peppers his text with italicized words, more often English words than foreign borrowings. French terms may be politically insignificant to Le Queux, but italicized, stressed words are the key to parsing his antagonisms. "Count von Beilstein was a *spy!*," Le Queux reveals in the *Great War of 1897*, and his stress falls, notably, on the point of treachery, the "*spy.*"[26] The German-Jewish von Beilstein never speaks his mother-tongue, yet his enmity is conveyed clearly through Le Queux's constant italicization of his language. Thus, Le Queux produces a semblance of linguistic difference without venturing

[24] Le Queux, *The Great War,* 20-1, 96.
[25] Wodehouse, *The Swoop*, 3. Wodehouse's novel is a spoof of invasion/spy literature in general, but particularly of James Blyth's novel *The Swoop of the Vulture* (1909). Blyth was also the author of such gems as *Celibate Sarah* (1904) and *A Hazardous Wooing* (1907).
[26] Le Queux, *The Great War,* 29.

far beyond English. As he went on to become one of the most prolific anti-German novelists of the early twentieth century (eventually growing so obsessed that in 1922 he wrote a will complaining that he had been "poisoned by the Germans by ice cream"[27]), and produced a plethora of German characters, Le Queux barely incorporated a single word of the language beyond titles and ship names. His work is characteristic of the era: most early spy or invasion novelists incorporate little or no actual German language into their texts; instead, they forefront the enemy's treachery and difference through textual adornments. In Le Queux's case, these displays of authenticity and stress include italicization, as well as the incorporation of "documents" produced by the enemy upon his invasion of England. For instance, in Le Queux's best-selling *Invasion of England in 1910* (1906) – a work almost identical to *The Great War* except that the French and Russians have been replaced by Germans – the first German language that appears in the text is in a reproduced image of the announcement of German naval victory in "*Das Kleine Journal.*"[28] Similar documents and proclamations are found in Le Queux's later *Spies of the Kaiser* (1909), including handwritten annotations that he claims to have been translated from the German (see figure below), yet which appear far too intricate and haphazard to be so.[29]

[27] Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 9.
[28] Le Queux, *The Invasion of 1910*, 99.
[29] Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 5.



PORTION OF MAP OF NEW NAVAL BASE AT ROSYTH DISCOVERED IN POSSESSION OF A SPY.

The notes, here translated from German, were written on the British Ordnance Map.

Though the playing-pieces of pre-war spy plots are not always (or often) represented by foreign text, they are uniformly forefronted by methods like Le Queux's italics or interpolated "authentic" documents. With the approach of World War I and England's increasingly frenzied xenophobia, it becomes necessary only to mark an enemy as "not English" for him to be assumed, automatically, to be a German sympathizer or spy. This is the case in *Spies of the Kaiser*, as Jacox discerns that a certain

"Blackenbury"'s voice "betrayed just the faintest accent"; though nothing else hints that Blackenbury is a German spy, this "accent" is enough for Jacox to suspect him, and indeed, his guess turns out to be correct.[30] Guy du Maurier's blockbuster 1909 play, *An Englishman's Home,* the story of a foreign invasion of England, sought to appease the diplomacy-wary Lord Chamberlain (G.A. Redford) by giving its invaders non-German names and ambiguous costumes. Nevertheless, its hints that the invading army speaks "some incomprehensible

[30] Ibid., 112.

language" leave little doubt that the enemy soldiers are stand-ins for Germans.[31] Such insinuations only cement the assumption that a foreign-speaker is inevitably a spy.

This assumption is, of course, the root of the "spy mania" which gripped Britain in the Edwardian era, and which drew real-life and imagined, literary espionage into an intimacy and conflation almost unimaginable to modern readers. Le Queux was its poster-boy. Although pompous and obsessive, his *Invasion of 1910* held the public's attention, and was influential enough not only to increase the *Daily Mail*'s circulation by 80,000, but to incite Le Queux's friend, Lieutenant-Colonel James Edmonds, to push for the creation of a Special Branch in the War Office – the origin of MI5.[32] As this connection demonstrates, the line between fact and fiction was extraordinarily thin in these early years of espionage fiction, as the creation of the genre coincided with Britain's institutionalization of counter-espionage in the War Office. As I will discuss further below – and as is shown clearly in the case of Childers – the stories of 'real' World War I spies often seem strangely reminiscent of fictional ones, as if would-be spies and spy-catchers in this era were basing their work directly on the imaginations of novelists, as indeed, a few were. More than anyone, Le Queux capitalized on this grey area between reality and make-believe, beginning nearly every one of his many novels with a preface claiming that all of it was true and that he *could* name spies, yet refused to do so (or to reveal the source of his intelligence).[33] Le Queux's fervor for catching German spies (and thus, creating English counter-spies) spread to boys' novels and magazines,[34] and even as far afield as Australia, where, in T.E. Grattan-Smith's nostalgic *True Blue: The Adventures of Mel, Ted, and Jim* (1920), a group of

[31] Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, 46-8; du Maurier, *An Englishman's Home*, 89. The play was so successful in its message that the Secretary of State for War Lord Haldane set up a recruiting booth in the theater's foyer and enlisted 30,000 men (Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 26).
[32] See Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 8-9; Smith, *The Spying Game*, 65.
[33] See Le Queux, *German Spies*, 14-15; *The Invasion of 1910*, vi-vii.
[34] See Parker, *The Old Lie*, 134-7.

teenagers expose naturalized Australian citizens as German spies. The estrangement of this hysteria from any actual contact or knowledge of Germans and German (Le Queux's novels make it doubtful that he was well acquainted with the language) is attested to by the extent to which, as New Scotland Yard head Basil Thomson reported, the tropes of spy mania were "a godsend to the adolescent liar" looking for a convenient excuse for misbehavior. One girl claimed to have been contacted by a master German spy named "Eric Herfranz Mullard" – a rather unlikely German name, except, perhaps, in the novels of William Le Queux.[35]

It seems natural that spy mania would focus on accent and language, since one of its pervasive paranoias was that German spies might masquerade as naturalized Englishmen. If this were so, then accidental slips of language or foreignness might be the only way to catch the spies out. Like many Tory reactionaries, Le Queux called for the most extreme solution to this supposed danger: for all Germans and Austrians in England to be sent to "concentration camps," a widespread reaction which the more informed Thomson found, in retrospect, "very embarrassing."[36] One particular object of such frantic xenophobia was the alleged army of "German waiters," ready to rise up for Germany at the first sign of conflict.[37] Thomson recounted that sufferers of spy mania

> would tell you gravely that at a public dinner they had turned suddenly to their German waiter and asked him what post he had orders to join when the German invaders arrived, and that he, taken off his guard, had clicked his heels and replied, 'Portsmouth.'[38]

Of course the claim that all German waiters – or, in Le Queux's case, all German residents of

[35] Thomson, *Queer People*, 12, 17.
[36] Le Queux, *German Spies*, 170; Thomson, *Queer People*, 60; see also Firchow, *The Death of the German Cousin*, 40-5.
[37] See Le Queux, *German Spies*, 60; Thirlmere, 95. The German waiter army was the basis for the entire plot of E. Phillips Oppenheim's *The Great Secret* (1908). By 1914, the story of the "German waiter" had become a nostalgic memory, as recounted in Wilfrid Douglas Newton's *War* (see 77).
[38] Thomson, *Queer People*, 37.

England[39] – were spies was largely unfounded: wartime efforts to recruit naturalized German Britons to German espionage by "cold call" proved highly unsuccessful, and when the head of MI5, Vernon Kell, finally rounded up the major German civilian spy network at the outbreak of war, it consisted of only 22 members.[40]

Foreign language – or rather, the merest *hint* of foreign language – served to mark out the supposed enemy (German) spy, yet it was also instrumental in forging his patriotic counterpart: the preternaturally talented amateur linguist-spy-hero. In Le Queux's fiction, if the enemy betrays himself by an irregular accent or speech, then any Englishman with an ear for difference can become a counter-espionage agent. While *Spies of the Kaiser*'s Jacox does not appear to speak German, his friend Ray Raymond does; Raymond's brand of counter-espionage is distinctly Sherlock Holmesian, with Jacox as his Watson, and bilingualism as his version of Holmes' "extraordinary powers of observation."[41] John Buchan, in his creation of the more enduring (and convincing) amateur linguist-spy Richard Hannay in his *Thirty-Nine Steps* series, seems to chafe under this inevitable comparison, and he allows a pragmatic Scottish innkeeper to chide that Hannay's spy story sounds "all pure Rider Haggard and Conan Doyle," while Hannay himself admits that "I wasn't any kind of Sherlock Holmes. But I had always fancied I had a kind of instinct for questions like this."[42] Yet Hannay's indefinite "instinct" is actually quite good, leading him unscathed through several dangerous adventures. Hannay is one of the first English

[39] See Le Queux, *German Spies*, 66, 80.
[40] See Deacon, *A History of the British Secret Service*, 164-6; Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 36, 49-51.
[41] Doyle, *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, 4. Jacox's description of Ray makes evident the comparison: "He spoke with that clear decision which characterised all his actions, for in the investigation of any suspicion of the presence of spies, he first formed his theory, and then started straight away to prove it to his own satisfaction" (*Spies of the Kaiser*, 68). Holmes himself counted German among his capabilities, displayed in his decipherment of "Gt." as "Gesellschaft" in "A Scandal in Bohemia" (*Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, 7). Later, he would take on the Irish-German spy Von Bork in "His Last Bow" (1917).
[42] Buchan, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, 65, 196.

spies who offers credentials for his skills – his natively fluent Dutch and German is gleaned from his upbringing in South Africa.[43] Later, post-war spies will offer increasingly specific and plausible reasons for their linguistic knowledge.[44]

Modern readers might assume that the linguistic skills necessary for European espionage in the Edwardian era were more ubiquitous then than they are now, yet such an assumption is belied by the stress which chroniclers of both real and fictional spies place on the singularity of successful agents' linguistic credentials. Le Queux's novels abound with spies notable (and dangerous) for their linguistic acumen: his "Baroness X" speaks "every European language perfectly, and Arabic too"; another German spy is "a perfect linguist"; Jacox himself, though lacking German, suddenly proves to speak Polish and Russian.[45] Obviously some languages are more notable than others – while Le Queux explains that the agent Suzette Dubour speaks English and Russian, he mentions nothing of her presumable French proficiency, though she is stationed in Paris.[46] Although German knowledge had certainly improved in Britain since the eighteenth century, when, as Leslie Stephen opined, "no Englishman read German literature,"[47] it was by no means taken for granted. In Oppenheim's *The Great Impersonation* (1920), the key to the plot hangs on the fact that its dissolute but precocious protagonist Everard Dominey is fluent enough in German to persuade his acquaintances that he is actually his rival, English-educated German antagonist and doppelgänger, the Baron von Ragastein.[48]

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[43] Hannay shares these credentials with the real-life British-German double-agent Edward Meyers, who signed his spy-memoir as "M" (*My Experiences in the German Espionage*, 1916).

[44] As with Manning Coles' Tommy Hambledon, who, in *Drink to Yesterday* (1940) becomes a World War I spy in Köln because he is a teacher of modern languages at a public school (where he also recruits one of his best students to the force).

[45] Le Queux, *German Spies*, 54; Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 134, 186, 192.

[46] Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 125.

[47] Quoted in Argyle, *Germany as Model and Monster*, 5.

[48] Oppenheim, *The Great Impersonation*, 22.

Nevertheless, real-life spies on both sides of the Anglo-German enmity shared such credentials. The real-life German spies described as "most dangerous" were those who spoke English fluently, including the self-dubbed "Kaiser's Master Spy," Gustav Steinhauer (the head of the German Admiralty's Nachrichten-Abteilung [Intelligence Dept.] in Britain[49]), as well as the much revered spy Carl Hans Lody, who was said to speak perfect American-English.[50] Another was the famous Matahari; upon interrogation of her, Thomson mixed linguistic proficiency into his libidinal description: "tall and sinuous, with glowing black eyes and a dusky complexion, vivacious in manner, intelligent and quick in repartee. She was, besides, a linguist."[51] Early British spymasters and statesmen were not far behind. James Edmonds, head of the MI5 predecessor MO5, was an auto-didact fluent in German, and the Secretary of State for War Lord Haldane had studied in Göttingen.[52] Finally, the man who became the first and longest-reigning head of MI5, Vernon Kell, was a "brilliant linguist" of half-Polish heritage, who spoke French, German, Italian, Polish, Russian, and Chinese.[53] In other words, while French and often Latin were assumed qualifications for an educated Briton of the middle or upper class, the attainment of fluency in other languages (including the most important for intelligence work: German) was exceptional enough to bear repeated mention.

Linguistic Liabilities and Accidental Accents

In the lead-up to World War I, the stress that British writers placed on language as a credential for spies and spy-masters on both sides of the conflict indicates the recognition that

[49] Le Queux, *German Spies*, 102; Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 6.
[50] Le Queux, *German Spies*, 138.
[51] Thomson, *Queer People*, 181.
[52] Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 11. Haldane's fluency was the basis for later, wartime accusations of German sympathies. Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 26.
[53] Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 23; Deacon, *A History of the British Secret Service*, 157.

national, natural languages function much like espionage's contrived codes and ciphers. The connection between linguistic fluency and encoding goes at least as far back as Charles James Napier's notorious (and fabricated[54]) 1843 dispatch "Peccavi," which translated from Latin as "I have sinned," producing the pun, "I have Sindh," and thus indicating that Napier had captured the Indian Sindh province.[55] By World War I, codes and decipherment were a mainstay of espionage, and as Alan Hepburn points out, they are what differentiate spy fiction from its Holmesian predecessor, detective fiction. Whereas the latter depends upon "clues," "exegesis," and domestic conflict, spy fiction is based in "codes," "hermeneusis," and state politics.[56] In this way, spy literature, though generally disincluded from the modernist canon, is at one with high modernism's obsession with encoding.[57] Much as canonical authors like Joyce or Pound use multiple languages to shift their text among disparate political and social registers, spies and secret agents manipulate and traverse myriad languages to indicate allegiance and encode communication.

Yet linguistic knowledge is a double-edged sword. Although it can give a spy (or a civilian amateur) the ability to decode his enemy's language, its power to do so always marks this knowledge, too, as an unshakable liability. On the one hand, a spy or even an innocent bystander's knowledge of the opponent's language or code is sufficient to mark him as an enemy target. There is no way that he can divest himself of this knowledge or prove his ignorance of it,

[54] The pun was, in fact, the creation of an English teenager, Catherine Winkworth, who sent it in to *Punch*. Winkworth would go on to become a translator of German hymns, while Napier became known for his ruthless suppression of colonial insurgencies. See Knowles and Partington, *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 823; Farwell, *Queen Victoria's Little Wars*, 27-9.
[55] See Deacon, *A History of the British Secret Service*, 146; Innes, *History of England*, 219.
[56] Hepburn, *Intrigue*, 25-6.
[57] On the connection between modernism and encoding, see Hepburn, *Intrigue*, 56-7; and Thompson, *Fiction, Crime, and Empire*. On the association of World War I literature and High Modernism, see Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 438.

since his mere exposure to the language/code marks him as a threat. This dilemma is encapsulated in G.K. Chesterton's 1922 title *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, and it serves as the basis for the plot of Buchan's most famous novel, *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915). Here, the brilliant amateur Hannay stumbles upon a code in the notebook of the deceased British spy Franklin P. Scudder. He boasts of his ability to crack it, yet it is precisely Hannay's knowledge of this code which sets him on the run from a cadre of German spies based in England and Scotland. When they finally run him down, they try to trick him into speaking German, but Hannay, posing as a backwoods Scotsman, turns on them "a face as blank as a stone wall."[58] In the sequel, *Greenmantle*, Hannay goes undercover as a Dutch-speaking Boer in Germany, and runs into a similar liability as he is interrogated by the German officer Stumm, who keeps interrupting him to speak in German to another officer. Hannay explains,

> This kind of talk was jolly difficult for me...I had above all things to get the credit of knowing no German, and, if you understand a language well, it is not very easy when you are interrupted not to show that you know it, either by a direct answer, or by referring to the interruption in what you say next.[59]

As Hannay realizes, any hint that he might know German is enough to condemn him as a mole, just as his knowledge of Scudder's code marks him as a target.[60] His ability to hide this knowledge is his only hope of survival.

An even more crucial liability in linguistic knowledge is the threat that an undercover agent might expose himself (and his nationality) to the enemy via the use of his mother-tongue.

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[58] Buchan, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, 49, 131.
[59] Buchan, *Greenmantle*, 69.
[60] Though Hannay is the best example of this dilemma, multiple other cases abound. Geoffrey Engleheart is implicated in the plot of Le Queux's *The Invasion of 1910* because von Beilstein witnesses him translating a treaty from code into English, 32. Thomson catches out a Spanish spy by tricking him into speaking German, and uncovers a German spy by alleging that "Your accent is not quite American, though it is a very good imitation." *Queer People*, 218, 220.

The "code" of natural language – what Hepburn calls the mark of "tribal belonging"[61] – is an ever-present danger, since there is no way entirely to forget one's first language.[62] In early spy novels, this is most often a danger for enemy spies, who, though formidable, are generally exposed in a moment of indiscretion. Le Queux mentions myriad German spies who give themselves away by the slightest trace of an accent,[63] as if the much-parodied, stilted German-English were particularly difficult to evade. Indeed, one of the few instances in which a Le Queux character speaks with any accent at all (beyond Cockney) is the grotesque German-English of Jacox's Bremen acquaintance Otto Engler ("My dear meester Jacox...My dear frendt"), who ultimately turns out to be a murderous German spy.[64] Such facile connections between accent and allegiance exerted influence even among members of Britain's intelligence service; the German-British agent W.E.H. Cooke was eventually hired to MI5 (and became one of its first undercover agents as his own translation – "Wilhelm Eduard Koch"), but only after a note was added to his file explaining that "He is entirely British in sentiment and the fact that he speaks English with a foreign accent must not be allowed to militate against him."[65]

By contrast, in fiction, undercover British spies seem rather good as passing themselves off as non-English. A British Colonel in Le Queux's *Invasion of 1910* encounters a German acquaintance while spying behind enemy lines, yet speaks fluent, accent-less German well enough that he escapes. Similarly, Alfred Hilliard of Max Pemberton's *Pro Patria* (1901) bears accidental witness to the French construction of an invasion-ready channel tunnel, yet delivers

[61] Hepburn, *Intrigue*, 57.
[62] With one exception – in Manning Coles' sequel to *Drink to Yesterday, A Toast to Tomorrow* (1940) reintroduces Tommy Hambledon as a high-ranking Nazi official who becomes a British mole, after long-term amnesia (temporarily) makes him forget his nation, language, and identity.
[63] See, for instance, Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 63, 112; *German Spies*, 187-199.
[64] Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 213.
[65] Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 56-7.

himself from certain condemnation by impersonating a Frenchman.[66] It is only with the advent of the retrospective spy literature of the post-war period that British agents are shown to share their opponents' linguistic weaknesses and parapraxes, a subject that I will discuss further in the context of Wheen's *Two Masters*.

Some of the most comical and stereotypical self-disclosures of German speakers occur in their almost uniform impulse to curse in German at the slightest hint of exposure. Undercover British spies never display such linguistic indiscretion, even in extremity, yet Germans almost invariably release their suppressed Germanness at the moment of anger and despair. In Arthur Conan Doyle's feeble contribution to the invasion fiction genre, *His Last Bow* (1917), Sherlock Holmes describes the Irish-German spy Von Bork as letting forth "a stream of German invective," which proves that German, though "unmusical," is "the most expressive of all languages."[67] Other authors include German exclamations directly, perhaps because even a monolingual British audience might understand the phatic import of foreign curses. Le Queux's "Gott – no!" is indicative of the advanced grammar of such exclamations, while Buchan's misspelling of an escaping German's cry "*Schnell, Franz...der bott, der bott!*"[68] demonstrates their carelessness. Wodehouse parodically summarizes the basis for this trope in his German Prince Otto's inspired cry of "Gotterdammerung!" [sic],[69] which shows that it doesn't so much matter *what* the spy screams so long as it's recognizably, irredeemably German.

German spies' propensity for these involuntary, language-specific outbursts implies that Germans are *most* German when they are angry and antagonized. This recapitulates the idea that

[66] Le Queux, *The Invasion of 1910*, 58; Pemberton, *Pro Patria*, 81.
[67] Doyle, *His Last Bow*, 303.
[68] It should be "das Boot." Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 16; Maugham, *Ashenden*, 173; Buchan, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, 229.
[69] Wodehouse, *The Swoop*, 24.

Germanness (and hence, enmity) resides deep within even the most naturalized citizens or virtuosic spies – there can be no rehabilitation. The anarchist spy-master of G.K. Chesterton's parodic spy novel, *The Man Who Was Thursday* (1908), expresses this potential for self-betrayal as a bodily state: "I can't trust my own bodily machinery. I feel as if my own hand might fly up and strike me." This idea is later made literal in Stanley Kubrick's similarly parodic film, *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), and its titular character's involuntary Nazi salute.[70] While Hepburn argues for the predominance of the body as the site of the spy's split allegiances and contradicting ideologies,[71] I would amend this claim to suggest that such gestural parapraxes are more an extension of language than vice versa. In other words, it is language – at times the language *of* the body – that is simultaneously the spy's most native element and his most vulnerable point. Indeed, as I discuss further below, this confluence of language and embodiment is the point at which the spy's linguistic slippage coincides most directly with the 'slippages' of the body, the social and, at times, sexual attractions that draw him toward his dangerously attractive enemy.

While "shilling shocker" authors like Le Queux pay little attention to the nuances of different languages' effects within a story – their main aim is to show that the enemy is depraved and uncontrolled, the home forces clever and honorable – later writers delve deeper into the implications that a particular accent or syntax might exert upon a plot or characterization. In general, there is a trend toward increasing linguistic specificity and realism over the course of pre-1930 spy literature. By the time of Manning Coles' 1940 novels *Drink to Yesterday* and *Toast to Tomorrow*, or of Eric Ambler's early classics *A Mask of Dimitrios* (1939) or *Journey into Fear* (1940), the language politics faced by spies are quite as complex as those in Quentin Tarantino's recent film *Inglorious Basterds* (2009). Yet as early as 1908, Wodehouse lampoons

[70] Chesterton, *Man Who Was Thursday*, 118; Kubrick, *Dr. Strangelove*.
[71] Hepburn, *Intrigue*, xvi-xvii, 9.

the British invasion genre's pomposity and the Germans' notorious meticulousness about grammar in one fell swoop: “Thad's bad grabbar,” cries Prince Otto (who has a head cold) in response to Clarence's long-winded peroration on victory, which ends “...it is when apparently crushed that the Briton is to more than ever be feared.” Clarence retorts, “It isn't,” to which the Prince replies, “It *is*, I tell you. Id's a splid idfididive.”[72] Notably, the invading Prince's lesson on English grammar is not only correct, but peculiarly *English*. Clarence's sentence is nothing if not Germanic – yet the clever (if stringent) Prince is able to discern that his mother-tongue's grammar has no place in English. Even with a head-cold and a losing army, the Prince shows that English agents like Clarence might have something to learn from German exactitude. A similar lesson is provided by Oppenheim's *The Great Impersonation* (1920), in which the English gentleman Everard Dominey is able to re-win his wife's affection only when she becomes convinced that he is a spy seeking to impersonate her husband (actually, Dominey is impersonating the German spy von Ragastein, who is supposedly impersonating Dominey). As she lists the qualities which have raised this theory – he holds himself like a soldier, he drinks less – chief among them is the change in his speech patterns, no longer “slangy” with a clipping of final “g”s, but becoming “almost a precisian.”[73] Indeed, in order to convince his German superiors (and, at this point in the novel, the reader) of his authenticity as the agent von Ragastein, Dominey has begun to speak English with the precision of a German, and the attention of a second-language. At least as far as his wife is concerned, this is a beneficial result.

These novels’ increasing attention to the particulars of Germans speaking English, or of the varying types of English accents, is evidence of a mounting recognition that these complex speech patterns are the key to the discernment of masquerade and authenticity, national identity

[72] Wodehouse, *The Swoop*, 87.
[73] Oppenheim, *The Great Impersonation*, 191.

and affiliation. It is important to note, though, that such attention bears on only a selection of languages, while others attain very little scrutiny (and still others – like German – gain closer scrutiny over the course of the era). Thus, the group of Bloomsburians who took part in the famous 1910 "Dreadnought Hoax," in which they gained entrance to the flagship *Dreadnought* by posing as Abyssinian diplomats, saw little need to learn any more Swahili than they could glean on the train from London to Weymouth and mix together with a convincing dose of Virgilian Latin and cries of "Bunga-Bunga."[74] This attitude toward peripheral and non-European languages does not change much over the course of the half-century. Eric Ambler's late 1930s and early 1940s novels show only a rudimentary representation of Turkish even when they take place in Turkey, and while more central languages like French, German, or Greek might be used as part of the plot or to trick multilingual protagonists, Turkish, Bulgarian, and their ilk are present only as background matter, unknown either to Ambler's British agents or, presumably, to the reader.

Once particular languages attain significance in the context of political conflict, acting as "codes" between agents and officials, they also open themselves to utilization as tools of attack or resistance. In Saki (H.H. Munro)'s invasion novel *When William Came: A Story of London Under the Hohenzollerns* (1914), the protagonist Murrey Yeovil is first made aware of the Germans' successful invasion of England as he arrives in Victoria Station to find signs written in both German and English. "London had become a bi-lingual city, even as Warsaw."[75] Yet unlike his wife and much of London's fashionable set, Yeovil resists this political incursion through a further twist of language. As he enters a taxi and hears the driver repeat his address back in

[74] Lee, *Virginia Woolf*, 278-9. Le Queux was irate at the breach of national security implied by this hoax; see *German Spies*, 212.
[75] Saki, *When William Came*, 31.

German, he repeats it again – in English. The driver, who "seemed to have combative instincts," strikes back, in turn, by pointing out the "Grossmutter Denkmal" (presumably the Victoria Memorial) on their way through the city.[76] Here, language becomes a form of territorial and symbolic appropriation.

In contrast to such language battles, Le Queux and his reactive fellows take up remnants of German verbiage as banners of that country's malevolence – or conversely, as weapons against its invasion. One extraordinarily widespread example is the concept of "Der Tag," literally "the day" on which, allegedly, the Kaiser would signal for the simultaneous invasion of England and the mass revolt of all Germans stationed in Britain.[77] Le Queux goes so far as to claim that all Germans long for this day, and seems to have taken up "Der Tag" as a clarion-call for British vigilance and distrust of naturalized Germans, a reminder of the insidiousness even of benign immigrant citizens, much as the seemingly benign "Tag" creeps in amidst English vocabulary.[78] It is difficult to discern an origin for the concept of "Der Tag" itself, though Le Queux may have taken it from his own earlier work, where he warned that "the Day of Reckoning is hourly advancing," bringing invasion by France or Russia.[79] Yet its translation into a German multilingual fragment provides the term with a flavor of authenticity, as if to remind that even if the threat of German invasion had been recycled from earlier xenophobic fears about French or Russians, these had never progressed to a "jour" or "день," while the German threat was now imminent, specific, and untranslatable.

By the end of the Edwardian era, the connection between "Der Tag" and the fear of German invasion was so widespread that it could be translated back simply to "The Day" –

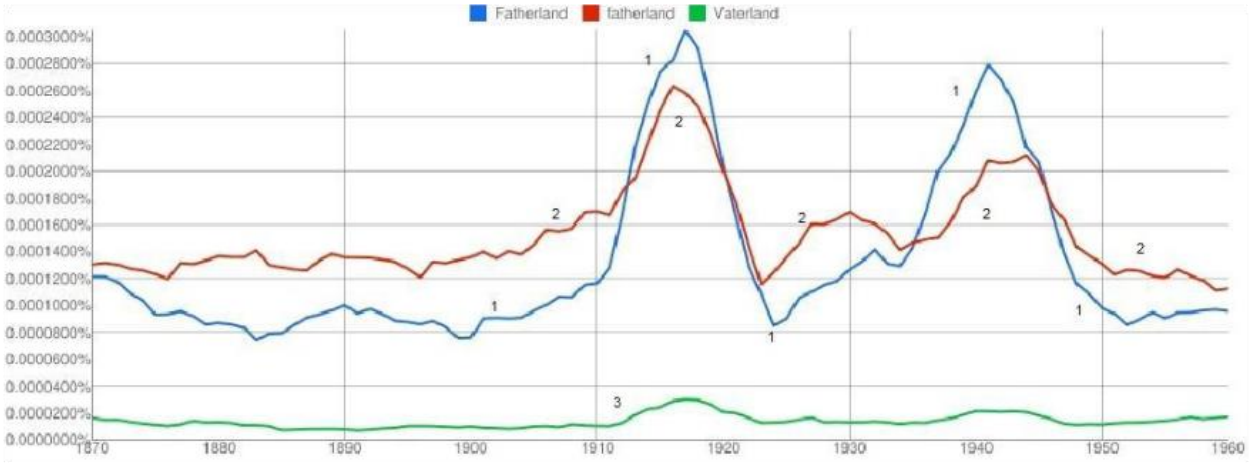
[76] Ibid, 30-2.
[77] See Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser,* 182.
[78] Le Queux, *German Spies*, 184.
[79] Le Queux, *The Great War,* 8.

further clarification was no longer necessary to suggest whose day this was to be. In Le Queux's various "non-fiction" writings on German spies, he reprints two poems, one entitled, simply, "The Day," and the other a primer of German civilian espionage in England, spattered with German jargon ("Krupps," "Zeppelins," "Kultur"), and culminating in the command, "Then 'Hoch' unto your Kaiser, 'Am Tag' your daily cry."[80] This creative appropriation of the term was not only the product of Le Queux's vivid imagination, but appeared in such works as J.M. Barrie's 1914 play *Der Tag.* Despite its success, Barrie's work left at least one Briton unconvinced of the German threat: Virginia Woolf called it "sheer balderdash of the thinnest kind."[81] Nevertheless, Le Queux's popularization of "Der Tag" led the way for other terms – "Geist," "Schweine," "Kultur" – to make their way into the English lexicon as indictments of German grossness.

One of the most frequent and widespread of such terms, "Fatherland," did not even need to be put into German for it to attain a clear political significance, pointing toward the blind, mechanistic patriotism alleged of German soldiers and citizens alike.[82] The term appears in Le Queux, Oppenheim, and Buchan,[83] and an electronic survey of British publications shows that around 1916-18, "Fatherland" reached a spike of frequency three times higher than its rate of appearance before 1910 or after 1922. The capitalized – and hence, Germanized – word surpassed the more generic "fatherland" only during wartime, and did not do so again until the

[80] Le Queux, *German Atrocities*, 127-8; *German Spies*, 223-4.
[81] Quoted in Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 41. See also "Barrie's Play 'Der Tag' A Success in London."
[82] This is, perhaps, a direct product of the word's prominence in the refrain of the German anthem "Die Wacht am Rhein," made famous during the Franco-Prussian War: "Lieb' Vaterland, magst ruhig sein" ("Dear Fatherland may be at peace (rest)").
[83] Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 8, 27, 60, 183; Oppenheim, *The Great Impersonation*, 144, 153, 217; Buchan, *Greenmantle*, 38, 88, 265.

mid-1930s.[84] In other words, it was only in these eras of paranoia toward Germanness in all of its manifestations that hints of German militarism crept into the English language via this seemingly generic term.



It is worth noting, though, that the English appropriation of these German multilingual fragments impacts not just the the indicted foreign term, but also the text into which it is inserted. Even as British writers like Le Queux take up German words in order to wield them against the Germans and galvanize English animosity, they also draw these German terms (and German concepts of patriotism or militarism) into the English language, naturalizing precisely those concepts that they wishes to eschew. To translate "Vaterland" into "Fatherland" is not only to render it comprehensible for the average, non-Germanophone English reader, but to transport its writer (even one so preposterous and populistic as Le Queux) to the inside of inimical linguistic territory. This transformation is the genesis of the spy, a patriot who may collect enemy information, yet only at the expense of gaining far too close a familiarity – a fluency – with the enemy himself.

[84] The German "Vaterland" shows a much lower frequency in British literature than its English translations. Data for word-frequency is derived from the "Google Ngram Viewer," which shows the frequency of usage of individual words or phrases in the entire holding the Google Books database.

Inimical Spies and Patriotic Secret Agents

The purpose of the Le Queux-driven spy mania that took hold of Edwardian Britain was two-fold: first, to inform the populace of the German menace among them and abroad, and second, to galvanize this populace to action against the potential German invader and his cohort of complicit naturalized German-British citizens. In essence, it was a project to produce and pit British citizen-spies against German (pseudo)-citizen-spies. Indeed, when *The Weekly News* published *Spies of the Kaiser* in 1909, it advertised for readers to send their "spy-sightings" to the "Spy Editor" for £10 apiece. Lt.-Col. Edmonds admitted that the magazine's correspondence was a basis for and aid in creating his successful subcommittee on foreign espionage (and later MI5), which was held a month after the novel was released.[85] Such real-life and fictional fervor was predicated upon the argument that Germans were the world's spy-masters, far ahead of the British in terms of cunning, unscrupulosity, and technique, and most importantly, that Britain was already overrun with German spies ready to salute their true Kaiser whenever "Der Tag" might come. As David Stafford has explained, one of the major devices for mitigating the taint of dishonor that British authors like Le Queux attached to espionage was the argument that the enemy's spies had made them do it.[86]

The catch is that it is unclear whether the Germans were ever so zealous about espionage in and of Britain and her subjects, or that, as Thomson claims, Germany "had the spy-mania even more acutely" than Britain.[87] For reasons perhaps owing more to geography, de-centralization, and military precedence than national character, German invasion and spy novels are far more

[85] See Boghardt, 30-1; Smith, 65-7.
[86] Stafford, "Spies and Gentlemen," 507.
[87] Thomson, *Queer People*, 46.

difficult to find than their English counterparts. It's true that Le Queux's most famous novel, *The Invasion of 1910*, was translated into German, complete with an abridged ending that left off the final English victory, yet Le Queux's own piqued assertions that it was used as a textbook for the German army seem rather more extreme than Samuel Hynes' explanation that it was used as a prize book in German schools. The book, after all, had been translated into 26 other languages, too (including Japanese) – it seems only natural that the Germans would be curious.[88] In the end, there remains little evidence that ordinary Germans were anywhere near as worried about British visitors and naturalized citizens as were the frightened Britons who made Le Queux a bestseller.

There also seems little evidence that German espionage in Britain was nearly as widespread as popular literature and "non-fiction" Edwardian treatises would have their readers believe. Modern historians have argued at length on this issue, with most weighing in to the negative. They concur that while there were certainly grounds for suspicion of German espionage, the evidence that Edmonds presented to support the case for hundreds of German agents was "flimsy" (derived largely from Le Queux and other tenuous sources), and in fact, the counter-espionage measures taken by Scotland Yard and the incipient MI5 were "extremely effective." This meant rounding up not hundreds, but a mere handful of German agents at the outbreak of war, while profiling and tracking thousands of other non-native citizens.[89] Such measures seem to have compensated well for the German intelligence network's relative lack of interest in Britain. Germany's military network, "IIIb," did not operate there until the outbreak of

[88] Much has been made of the novel's exceptional international popularity, as well as Le Queux's annoyance at its German expurgation. See Le Queux's introduction to *The Invasion of 1910*, x; Le Queux, *German Spies*, 16-17; Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, 42-3 and n.; Woods, *Neutral Ground*, 34 and n.

[89] On the efficacy and existence of German espionage in Britain, see Smith, *The Spying Game*, 64; Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 11, 18; Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 33-5; Deacon, *A History of the British Secret Service*, 152-9. Deacon is the only historian who argues that the British government showed "an almost criminal indifference" to the German threat (152), but his scholarship has largely been discounted. See Davies, *The British Secret Services*, 10.

war, and while its naval network, the "Nachrichten-Abteilung," was present in pre-war Britain, it was fairly ineffective.[90] As Christopher Andrew concludes, "There was, in reality, clearer evidence of British espionage in Germany than of German espionage in Britain."[91] This fact must be kept in mind when considering the vehemence with which Le Queux and others argue for precisely the opposite assertion, and consequently, for the need of Britons to match their enemies in the skills and practice of espionage, as well as in arms and training. This imagined mirroring and parity is intrinsic to the concept of British espionage: the British spy must at once emulate and outwit his opponent. As we will see, such mirroring occurs most potently at the level of shared language and code, and its often dire combination of intimacy and enmity is reflected in espionage's careful rhetoric of linguistic slippage and concealment.

The strongest evidence for the recognition of the mirroring between comrade/self and enemy in the context of espionage is the debate that raged during the Edwardian era and World War I regarding the honorableness and morality of this "second oldest" profession. As Stafford has discussed, the proven necessity of British espionage gave rise to a rhetoric of masquerade/trickery vs. patriotism, and to an imposed contrast between English "secret agents" and foreign "spies."[92] Speculation as to whether Britain or Germany valued espionage more highly – and whether this was a benefit or detraction – was leveraged as a demonstration of national character. Thomson sums up the discourse in his post-war declaration that "There is much confused thinking about the ethics of spying on movements of the enemy," such that the "very word 'spy' has acquired so ugly a significance that we prefer to disguise our own spies as 'Intelligence' or 'secret Service Officers,' and to regard them as necessary evils" (this may,

[90] See Richelson, *A Century of Spies*, 6-7, 14; Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 52; Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 69.
[91] Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 32; also Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 116.
[92] Stafford, "Spies and Gentlemen," 507.

indeed, still be the case). Nevertheless, if the government were to follow the advice of "certain censorious newspapers" and altogether refuse espionage as "dishonourable," Thomson avers that it "would be guilty of treason against its own countrymen."[93]

In line with this distinction, early spy fiction seeks to distance its English protagonists as far as possible from their opposing agents. In Max Pemberton's *Pro Patria* (1901), the traitorous villain, Robert Jeffery, jibes the Englishman Alfred Hilliard that he shows no desire to examine the French "coal mines" (actually the entrance to a secret French Chunnel) – "No curiosity? My God, and you call yourself an Englishman!" To this Hilliard responds, "Yes, but not a spy," even as, in the matter of a few hours, Jeffery's machinations will draw him into precisely this role.[94] Le Queux takes a similar approach in his 1903 novel *Secrets of the Foreign Office*, in which the agent Duckworth Drew enters willingly into a dangerous mission because, "I am an Englishman, despite the fact I am a spy."[95] As in Pemberton, "Englishman" and "agent" represent two conflicting – though ultimately commensurable – identities.

Despite British allegations to the contrary, Germans made similar distinctions in order to shield themselves from the dishonor associated with espionage. Thomas Boghardt explains that the German naval espionage system (the only German intelligence branch stationed in Britain before the War) found it difficult to recruit naval officers as spies, since they were generally of a lower class than army officers, and thus were eager to prove their "nobility" by adhering to deeply-rooted moral values that eschewed espionage. As Boghardt notes, British officers were far easier to draw in as agents, since they held no such stringent moral military code.[96] Even one of the most famous and successful German spies in England, Carl Lody, was quite clear in his

[93] Thomson, *Queer People*, 117.
[94] Pemberton, *Pro Patria*, 42.
[95] Quoted in Stafford, "Spies and Gentlemen," 490.
[96] Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 46.

desire to be executed as a German patriot, rather than a spy, and was subsequently lauded in the House of Commons and MI5 as such.[97] It is telling of the actual similarity between English and German sentiments toward espionage that Thomson later appropriates Lody's execution at the Tower of London as a marker of Englishness: "he died as one would wish all Englishmen to die – quietly and undramatically, supported in his courage by the proud consciousness of having done his duty."[98] Such reverence for noble action provides a connection between English and Germans, though it also opens ground for their common denigration – as George Bernard Shaw wrote, there could be "Junkerism" on both sides.[99]

In recognition of this potentially dangerous mirroring between the English and German intelligence forces, one mode of differentiation was to point to particular skills of espionage as natively English. Most often, this distinction played upon the stereotypical characterization of Germans as intelligent but inflexible and pompous, and the English as under-prepared but scrappy and ingenious. Thomson sums up this attitude in an anecdote describing the Kaiser's entrance into Jerusalem, a costumed spectacle of the "new Crusader" that supposedly wowed the natives until an Englishman appeared on the scene, and, uttering "one phrase in the native language," saw fit "to scatter all the official pomp to the four winds."[100] In effect, English vernacular agility here trumped Germany's mute, impersonal sartorial extravagance.

The English imperial skill of "going native" – within the bounds of respectability – is the similar basis for Richard Hannay's lauding of the English (and Scotch) as the best cultural impersonators in the world:

We call ourselves insular, but the truth is that we are the only race on earth that

[97] Ibid., 101.
[98] Thomson, *Queer People*, 125.
[99] Shaw, *Common Sense about the War*, 11.
[100] Thomson, *Queer People*, 103.

> can produce men capable of getting inside the skin of remote peoples. Perhaps the Scotch are better than the English, but we're all a thousand per cent. better than anybody else.[101]

Hannay and his comrades bear out this claim throughout their various exploits, always outsmarting their German foes by their abilities of linguistic, physical, and ideological masquerade. The Germans make many attempts at espionage via similar tactics, yet they are consistently foiled by their inability to follow the rule of Hannay's Anglo-Boer friend Peter Pienaar, "If you are playing a part, you will never keep it up unless you convince yourself that you are *it*." The Germans always fail in this matter of "conviction" – they betray themselves by a gesture, a moment of fear[102] – but Hannay and his English friends are almost always able to carry out their disguise. In this sense, Englishness comes to be measured by the Englishman's ability to act – and even to believe himself to be – not-English. A British spy in a World War II-era novel sums up this paradox when he twists the last line of Kipling's poetic paean to British masculinity, "If –" (1895), to counsel an underling: "When you quite believe it...You'll be a Real Agent, my son."[103] Buchan's Hannay is the apogee of this unobtainable ideal: the Englishman with the skills and wherewithal to descend into the depths of the enemy's conniving depravity, yet also to emerge once again unsullied and, as in the finales of both of Buchan's wartime novels (*Greenmantle* and *Mr. Standfast*), to triumph with his fellow Britons upon the field of battle.

But does he truly emerge unmarked by his experience? Although Buchan paints Hannay as the epitome of Englishness, the characters around him are less clearly nationalized. In

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[101] Buchan, *Greenmantle*, 32.

[102] The leader of the "Black Stone" catches Hannay's attention by tapping his fingers on the table in a suspicious way; the Count von Schwabing loses his disguise as "Mr. Ivery" in his terror during a World War I London air-raid. See *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, 226; *Mr. Standfast*, 166-7, 187.

[103] Coles, *Drink to Yesterday*, 83. The final lines of Kipling's "If--" read, "If you can fill the unforgiving minute | With sixty seconds' worth of distance run, | Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, | And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!"

particular, Hannay's friend Sandy Arbuthnot, a brilliant Scotch linguist with a specialty in Eastern languages (he is partly modeled on T.E. Lawrence[104]), is described as coming under the sway of the German conspirator Hilda von Einem, taking on the role of her Eastern paramour and idol, and nearly succumbing to her imprecations to join the Turkish-German cause. Sandy's weakness is that he is Hannay's inside-man, embodying the role of Turkish mystic and speaking the languages of von Einem's cohort. Hannay cannot understand von Einem when she pleads in Turkish for Sandy to join her army; all he understands is that her plea is that "of a woman to her lover." Von Einem is killed, and Sandy rides with Hannay into the final battle, yet he cannot do so with Hannay's easy coolness; Sandy insists that the English comrades give the woman-soldier a proper burial.[105]

Sandy's infection by von Einem – her ability to "stir in him...an unwilling response"[106] despite his nominal enmity – signals one of the consequences or residual effects of espionage, and particularly undercover work. As with Sandy, this effect is often linked to linguistic congress, a connection that sets the spy apart from his national fellows and comrades. Sandy and von Einem speak Turkish, and the residue of this conversation – akin to a Derridean "trace" or a Freudian "parapraxis"[107] – is exposed in Sandy's reluctance to disavow her and to align himself with his national cause. Nevertheless, some spies fight against this infection by "local knowledge," against bodily infiltration by the enemy's discourse, ideology, and passion. When Sherlock Holmes poses as the Irish-American informant "Altamont" in *The Last Bow*, he is described as having "declared war on the King's English as well as on the English King."

[104] Godine and Lownie, *John Buchan*, 163.
[105] See Buchan, *Greenmantle*, 31-2, 286-7, 324-8.
[106] Ibid., 287.
[107] See esp. Spivak and Derrida, "Translator's Preface," xvii; also Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, 17-98.

Consequently, Holmes – who, throughout his tales, has often adopted disguises, but very rarely disguised his speech – complains that in shaking off the Altamont mask, his "well of English seems to be permanently defiled."[108] And other spies are lauded for their ultimate masquerade, as is the "Baron von Ragastein" (really the Englishman Dominey) in Oppenheim's *Great Impersonation*, who declares to a German henchman that "These – we English are a strange people." The henchman remarks that he is a "good actor" and adds, "My compliments to your pronouns."[109] Yet, as the reader knows, Dominey is playing a double game here, since he's actually an Englishman posing as a German who is, as this henchman presumes, posing as an Englishman. In most cases, though, novelistic spies fall into enemy syntax and language as easily as they take it up, performing the sort of ultimate impersonation that Hannay praises in the abstract, yet laments in Sandy.

Intimate Enemies

As Gayatri Spivak has noted, the true incorporation or translation of a language that is not one's own necessitates an essential intimacy, the preference to speak in this language "about intimate things."[110] Since the spy's employment of language is always a mortal (and hence, extremely intimate) choice, this is his constant state: his "intimacies" encompass both the shared codes of his comrade spies, and also the adopted, infecting codes and languages of his enemy. The spy's intimacies equate with silence. To speak of spying is to risk betraying the wrong code or language, or of exposing oneself as an enemy spy in a moment of parapraxal indiscretion. His intimacies are also always divided. As I have suggested above, espionage requires its adherents

[108] Doyle, *His Last Bow*, 290, 301.
[109] M., *My Experiences in the German Espionage*, 40; Pemberton, *The Great Impersonation*, 65, 158.
[110] Spivak, "The Politics of Translation," 400-1.

to immerse themselves in the enemy's language, discourse, and ideology to the extent that it is difficult to return to their homeland untainted. Yet at the same time, espionage ultimately necessitates the sublimation or repression of the spy's cosmopolitan impulses in order to re-join the mainstream national cause, much as Buchan's Sandy buries Hilda von Einem then reunites with his English compatriots in battle.

It is on the basis of these central, fraught intimacies that espionage adopts the language of love and liaison: betrayal, devotion, secrecy, confession. Much as in Foucault's description of the myriad "silences" that permeate the discourse of sexuality in the nineteenth century,[111] the striated idioms and taboos of espionage create their own, specialized codes of propriety and self-censorship, as is exemplified by Chesterton's English agent Gabriel Syme, who recoils "at the word Sunday" – the code-name of his anarchist enemy – and "bit[es] his lip; the word was henceforth for hire like some indecent pun."[112] The languages of espionage not only mark their speaker's allegiances, but are also marked *by* their speakers' identities; to participate in espionage is to traverse the intimacies associated with each utterance. In the aftermath of other debates over politically dangerous liaisons – most prominently the 1885 Labouchere Amendment and the (resulting) 1895 Oscar Wilde trial – early British spy literature is extraordinarily preoccupied with the policing of intimacies between comrades and enemies. This section will briefly address the forms these intimacies take, and the methods by which the genre seeks to protect British spy-protagonists from being seduced – in a historical sense, "inverted" – to the wrong side.

Both in its secrecy and its estranging of normalized, national discourse, espionage "queers" the spy's language and persona. Following the *Oxford English Dictionary*, I use this word with a dual intent. On the one hand, espionage "queers" language in the sense of making it

[111] See esp. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 27.
[112] Chesterton, *Man Who Was Thursday*, 62.

strange, counterfeiting one identity with another, creating a palimpsest of selves, languages, intentions.[113] On the other, it also necessitates the spy's participation in a discourse of indirection, euphemism, and code, a silence-ridden language that mirrors the contemporaneous vocabulary of homosexuality and sexual transgression, as well as the signal erasures by which Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick defines Gothic "homosexual panic."[114] Although it was written well after World War I, John Banville's *The Untouchable* (1997) is the work of espionage fiction that explores and theorizes the concept of "queer" espionage most concretely. The *roman à clef* chronicles the life of Victor Markell, who, like his real-life model, the "Cambridge Five" member Anthony Blunt, becomes a Russian mole in the 1930s-50s British Intelligence network. As Markell articulates, his queer identity and work as a double-agent complement each other through their détente of unspoken danger and unspeakable action:

> When I went out on the prowl at night I was more frightened than ever; the sex and the spying had sustained a kind of equilibrium, each a cover for the other. Loitering in wait for Oleg, I was guilty but also innocent, since I was spying, not soliciting, while in my tense vigils on the shadowy steps of the city's public lavatories I was only a queer, not a betrayer of my country's most precious secrets. Do you see? When you live the kind of life that I was living, reason makes many questionable deals with itself. [115]

Christopher Andrew observes that Blunt and his fellow Cambridge spies (two of whom were gay, another bisexual, and a fourth a scholar of sexuality) may have been attracted to Communist espionage by its promise of "liberation" in this broader, multidimentional sense.[116] Ironically, though, this "liberation" only necessitated the further concealment of the spies' activities, both sexual and political. As Banville's novel and its portrayal of the Cambridge spies suggests, the illicit attractions of sex, and the unspeakable exchanges and national-couplings between spies

[113] See "queer, adj.2 and n.1"; "queer, v.2."
[114] See "queer, adj.1"; Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 94-5.
[115] Banville, *The Untouchable*, 316.
[116] Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 170-4.

may be inherently linked. Within the extremely homosocial world of early twentieth-century espionage, then, we should consider how spy novels maneuver along the continuum of the homosocial and homosexual as a means of differentiating patriotic comradeship from "queer" interaction with the enemy.[117]

On the one hand, early British espionage fiction depends overwhelmingly upon male homosocial interaction, which exults in the masculinity of English comradeship and unapologetically excludes women, thus setting itself apart from the hyper-heterosexuality that characterizes post-World War II espionage literature, such as that of Ian Fleming or John Le Carré. Buchan's Hannay is representative of the Edwardian spy in his claim that "Women had never come much my way, and I knew about as much of their ways as I did about the Chinese language."[118] The only female name mentioned in Hannay's first adventure, "Julia Czechenyi," turns out to be not a woman, but the alphabetic key to a code.[119] So homosocially grounded is *The Thirty-Nine Steps* that every subsequent version – from Alfred Hitchcock's iconic 1935 thriller to the recent Broadway stage adaptation – has seen fit to insert some female into the story, often reimagining one of Hannay's male companions as a female love-interest.[120] Buchan, for his part, lets Hannay fall in love only in his third book, where he becomes infatuated with the ultra-patriotic agent Mary Lamington, who Hannay describes as almost-male, having "the free grace of an athletic boy" and a beauty that Hannay notices only as much as "a man thinks of the

[117] On the continuum of "what *counts* as the sexual," differentiating it from the political, see Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 15.
[118] *Greenmantle*, 217.
[119] *Thirty-Nine Steps*, 32, 68.
[120] There are four films and one stage adaptation to-date: Hitchcock, *The 39 Steps* (1935); Thomas, *The 39 Steps* (1959); Sharp, *The Thirty Nine Steps* (1978); Hawes, *The 39 Steps* (2008, made for BBC); Barlow, *The 39 Steps* (2006-present, stage production). On the "crucial" addition of a woman to the dramatized versions of Buchan's story, see Miller, *Spyscreen*, 55-8.

good looks of the friend he worships."[121] It is instead to that "friend," Peter Pienaar, that Hannay devotes his real attention, longing "for another sight of my old friend as a girl longs for her lover." Hannay summarizes the division between the feminine and the masculine world of comradeship – as well as its heightened playing-field, espionage – in his rhapsody upon being reunited with Peter:

> Women, bless their hearts! can never know what long comradeship means to men...Even Mary understood only a bit of it. I had just won her love which was the greatest thing that ever came my way, but if she had entered at that moment I would scarcely have turned my head. I was back again in the old life and was not thinking of the new.

Hannay proceeds to carry the injured Peter into their shared bedroom, comparing his lightness to Mary's.[122] His too-oft-repeated protests of "the greatest thing" aside, it is clear that Hannay's true soulmate is his comrade.

Sedgwick's discussion of male homosociality is useful here in highlighting the love-language that imbues Hannay's relationship with Peter (as well as, to a lesser extent, with his other male comrades). According to Sedgwick's argument, an openly homophobic novelist such as Buchan can portray his heroic protagonist with such ingenuous queerness because the code of homosocial behavior is used as a barrier against more unruly, illicit, and politically dangerous affinities.[123] In the case of Hannay, Buchan, and the body of Edwardian and World War I spy fiction that they represent, bonds between men of the same "side" – British men – are fervent and open, often making use of the tropes of heterosexual love in a manner reminiscent of public school "romances," as well as of the fleeting and intense wartime "comradeship" which would

[121] Buchan, *Mr. Standfast*, 16, 180; see also 185. On Mary and other women as ciphers in the Buchan's spy novels, see White, *Violent Femmes*, 22-5.
[122] *Mr. Standfast*, 125, 254-7.
[123] On Buchan's homophobia, see Miller, *Spyscreen*, 58.

be fostered during World War I.[124] In fact, the tenor of espionage comradeships seem to fall somewhere between the public school and the battlefield: adopting the privileged, lackadaisical, "in-group" tone of the former (as is evidenced by Jacox and Raymond's Holmesian banter, as well as the works by Saki and Wodehouse which directly incorporate boyhood into their invasion narratives), while transposing these relationships to a scene of immediate danger which threatens to dismantle and replace them, as Sarah Cole has characterized the fleeting, incessantly embattled comradeships of World War I.[125] Spies experience the same intense, tumultuous relationships that Cole characterizes as the mark of the soldier, yet they do so within a tighter, more coded and exclusive group.

The difference and crux of these espionage comradeships is that the immediate cause of their dismemberment is not gunpowder or gas, but the direct, often intimate machinations of other, enemy men. Comrade-spies are separated not only in death, but in the course of their work – as they go undercover, they must align themselves with the enemy, continually running the risk of betraying their comrades in the line of duty, or rather, of seeming to place their enemy before their fellow countrymen in the course of their masquerade. It is for this reason that I read the passionate language of "longing" and even love for other men in works such as Buchan's or Le Queux's less as a repressed homosexual impulse, than as the reassertion of a love that "dare not speak its name" simply because the spy cannot acknowledge or contact his true comrades. The spy's longing for his comrade as a man is indiscernable from his longing for his comrade as an emblem of national loyalty and belonging. Inasmuch as the spy's often-replaceable comrade is a stand-in for his unacknowledgeable, far-off, essentially "imaginary" country (in Anderson's

[124] See Parker, *The Old Lie*, 176-7; Cole, *Modernism, Male Friendship, and the First World War*, 138-55.
[125] The circumstantial nature of espionage "comradeships," which generally exist only in the context of a shared mission, also differentiates them from more enduring "friendships," according to Cole's separation of the two terms. See *Modernism, Male Friendship, and the First World War*, 145, 153.

sense of the word), the spy valorizes and "worships" him above all others – even women – as a vote of faith that this is his true affiliation. "Even Mary" may not understand Hannay's connection to Peter, because she remains on the fringes of the British espionage establishment (though her participation offers her a partial entry – and Hannay's love). Peter, on the other hand, though a nominal Boer, is essentially "British," and so Hannay's love for him cements his inherent love for his country. Similarly, even if Le Queux's Ray Raymond epigraph "temporarily" loses the woman he loves, she is merely accidental to his mission, and (as is the case in Le Queux's novel) will turn up again tomorrow. His country, meanwhile, may not.

In stark contrast to these authors' depiction of the spy's devotion toward his comrades is the virulently tacit homophobia with which these same writers treat enemy spies who they allege or imply to be effeminate and "queer." On the broadest level, spy literature of the Edwardian and Great War era refers to any miscreant or agent of the enemy as "queer," as can be seen most obviously in the title of Thomson's memoir, *Queer People*, which refers to "the many queer people" who entered Thomson's New Scotland Yard office , and the various "sorts of queer people" whose letters Thomson censored.[126] More specifically, the allegation of effeminacy is leveled against enemy spies not only as a reiteration of their outsider status, but as a deprecation of their faculties of espionage. Like the *femmes fatales* who are their model, queer (and invariably, enemy) spies are supposed to be inappropriately seductive and laughably inept, with an "alleged susceptibility to leaking."[127] In other words, like female agents, queer spies are accused of being simultaneously too effective and not effective enough.

One way to understand this paradox of effectiveness/ineffectiveness is to examine the analogous representation of female spies in early spy literature. These are generally more

[126] Thomson, *Queer People*, 230, 223.
[127] Hepburn, *Intrigue*, 188.

hypothetical than actual, since, as in Le Queux's *Spies of the Kaiser* or Buchan's Hannay novels, the female British characters in espionage fiction are usually accidental to the plot rather than actors in it. Even when they do take on the role of sometime-spy, as do Hannay's Mary, Ray Raymond's Vera, or Alfred Hilliard's Agnes,[128] they are quickly exempted or instrumentalized in the homosocial jockeying between British comrades and enemy spies. Mary is passed as a sexual decoy between Hannay's British intelligence network and its nemesis, the Count von Schwabing, while Vera is calmly refused in her offer to gain reconnaissance on a sought-after German spy through female networks. "But cannot some information be gathered from the landlady at Hargwynne Street? He may have had visitors there," she asks Ray, to which her lover "thoughtfully" replies, "And if he did, they would speak in German, which the good lady could not understand."[129] Neither, it seems, could Vera, who cannot even grasp the concept that the spy might use this language as an exclusive code. Lastly, after Agnes makes a short foray into espionage to help her fiancé Hilliard escape France, he excludes her from his further exploits on the grounds of her purity, as if her prior participation in espionage were itself a sexual assault: "the night had robbed her of her girlhood. She would never think and act again as she had thought and acted before." Agnes takes part in the action again only at the end of the novel, yet here her care for her lover is already made superfluous by the substitution of Hilliard's male comrade, who instead administers "the doctor's every wish with a hand as gentle as a woman's."[130]

British women are thus made irrelevant to espionage, and as Le Queux implies in his assertion that many female spies are employed "by both Germany and France," there are no

[128] The very possessive phrasing by which these novels lead me to refer to their female characters (i.e. *Hannay's* Mary) is significant of those women's accidental relation to the true espionage story.
[129] Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 24.
[130] Pemberton, *Pro Patria*, 98, 284.

English female spies to speak of in Edwardian espionage literature.[131] Those trained female spies which do appear are generally foreign, and yet they are shown to be just as inept as their excluded, untrained British counterparts. Much of this characterization is given directly by non-fictional accounts of Edwardian espionage. Hamil Grant describes female agents as "rarely effective or satisfactory," since they are too "dramatic" for the spy's everyday duties, unable to devote themselves to so "essentially platonic and impersonal principle" as "love of country" (though, he notes, they might be enthralled by "matters of love or revenge").[132] Thomson concurs, adding that women are too emotional even to be good actors: "just when they have won the intimacy of a man who can really tell them something important they cannot bring themselves to betray his confidence."[133]

"Intimacy" is the single true advantage allowed to the female agent, yet even this boon is discounted, as its basis is ascribed to the same dramatic, irrational behavior that exempts women from espionage in Grant and Thomson's theories. Le Queux holds the female spy to be particularly dangerous through her ability to seduce, "especially if she is of the half-world," that is, a participant in the world's second-oldest *and* its oldest profession – prostitution.[134] The real-life spymaster and original head of MI5, Vernon Kell, though, disparaged even the efficacy of the "beautiful vamp" agent, claiming that her powers of seduction were made irrelevant by her lack of military or naval knowledge.[135] Kell's claim undercuts, too, the far-flung legend of the "German governess," which alleged that governess-agents had been planted in families throughout England, awaiting "der Tag," when, as Thomson explained, the family would find the

[131] Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 132.
[132] Grant, *Spies and Secret Service*, 23-5.
[133] Thmson, *Queer People*, 181.
[134] Le Queux, *German Spies*, 113.
[135] Smith, *The Spying Game*, 74.

governess missing and discover "high explosive bombs" hidden within the trunks she left behind. This mythically malevolent governess appears in two of Le Queux's spy books, yet she never seems to have materialized in real life. In fact, Kell himself kept a German governess as late as 1907, though such employment later proved to be a liability for the headmaster of Eton, Edward Lyttleton, who was forced to resign his position in 1916 after his German maid was prosecuted as a spy.[136] Though the German governess might well have the language abilities to insinuate herself in an English household, Kell's demystification of the "vamp" discounts her, as well, since it seems unlikely that she would have had access to bomb-making skills, let alone the materials with which to use them.

It is when the seductive powers of the female spy are wedded to actual linguistic and functional knowledge – as in the case of Matahari – that these women become most threatening to the masculine British spy-network.[137] This is precisely the combination of qualities inherent to the trained, "effeminate" male enemy spy, but here, the reaction of British agents changes from laughing disdain at feminine foibles to full-blown, homophobic hatred. Such is the case, particularly, with the real-life Irish agent Roger Casement, who had originally worked for the British government, but during World War I took up the cause of the Irish Republic, organizing (with Erskine Childers) gun-runs from Germany to Ireland, and most notably, seeking to draw Irish prisoners of war to the German side. Andrew notes the disdain with which the British intelligence bureau treated Casement's homosexuality, which was revealed through his relationship with his Norwegian-American manservant, as well as in the "Black Diaries"

[136] See Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser*, 150-7; Le Queux, *German Spies*, 77-80; Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 23; Parker, *The Old Lie*, 266-7.
[137] On the spy as "hemaphrodite figure," see White, *Violent Femmes*, 2.

uncovered just before his execution in 1916.[138] This might well be ascribed to a garden-variety Edwardian homophobia, yet Thomson's post-execution account of Casement reveals the specific connection between this homophobia and allegations about female agents' efficacy:

> Casement struck me as one of those men who are born with a strong strain of the feminine in their character. He was greedy for approbation, and had the quick intuition of a woman as to the effect he was making on the people around him. He had a strong histrionic instinct...but, like a woman, he was guided by instinct and not by reason, and where his sympathies were strongly moved it is very doubtful whether any reliance could be placed upon his accuracy.[139]

Thomson does not mention Casement's sexuality, but his careful description of the spy's "seducing" Irish prisoners and his mention of Casement's unpublishable diaries leaves little doubt as to his cognizance of it. Rather than read Casement as a legitimate threat to British security through his powers of "seduction" and his extensive knowledge of espionage and intelligence tactics, Thomson instead maneuvers Casement's tacit sexuality to align him with the female spy, whose character, as we have seen, lends every quality necessary to discount an agent's worth.

A more savage treatment is reserved for the queer spy whose sexuality fails to assuage the threat of his knowledge. This is the case with Colonel Stumm, the villain of Buchan's *Greenmantle* and the male counterpart to the female German spy Hilda von Einem (who Hannay discounts as an uninformed megalomaniacal lunatic). Stumm, by contrast, is a true threat, particularly as Hannay comes under his wing in the guise of an ignorant, pro-German Dutchman. Hannay's fear of Stumm is demonstrably emasculating; in one scene, the German agent walks in on Hannay "stark naked" in his bedroom, and Hannay recounts how "He strode up to me and stared me in the face. I was half a head shorter than he to begin with, and a man does not feel his

[138] Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 86-90.
[139] Thomson, *Queer People*, 91.

stoutest when he has no clothes, so he had the pull of me every way." Only after Hannay wraps himself in the bed-cover does he feel "more courageous."[140] The erotically tinged power-play here is reversed, though, when Hannay earns a cryptic invitation to Stumm's own home in Bavaria, gets locked inside the agent's personal lair, and finally "outs" his enemy for his true, hidden identity:

> At first sight you would have said it was a woman's drawing-room. But it wasn't. I soon saw the difference. There had never been a woman's hand in that place. It was the room of a man who had a passion for frippery, who had a perverted taste for soft delicate things. It was the complement of his bluff brutality. I began to see the queer other side of my host, that evil side which gossip had spoken of as not unknown in the German army. The room seemed a horribly unwholesome place, and I was more than ever afraid of Stumm.[141]

Afraid, perhaps, yet with new ammunition for his enmity. Hannay has already decoded Stumm's silent, presumably homosexual identity, even as Stumm has not uncovered Hannay's own hidden identity – his Englishness. When Stumm chides his "little Dutchman," grasping Hannay's shoulder on a shrapnel wound, Hannay erupts in a rage tinged with sadism and masochistically repressed joy at inflicting pain on his enemy.[142] It is only by Hannay's anger that he is able to defeat a much more agile enemy, but at last he gloats over Stumm's bloody body in "good round English" which Stumm cannot understand, and gives him a final blow that literally buries the German among his queer adornments: "He crumpled up in a heap and rolled over, upsetting a lamp and knocking a big China jar in two. His head, I remember, lay under the escritoire."[143] Even as Stumm has threatened to use physical as well as psychological intimacy to insinuate himself into Hannay's plans (as he confronts him in the nude and grasps his shoulder), Hannay

[140] Buchan, *Greenmantle*, 89-91. The chapter containing this episode is entitled "Indiscretions of the Same" (that is, of Hannay and his fellow spy, Peter Pienaar).
[141] Ibid., 101.
[142] On Buchan and Hannay's homophobia, see Hepburn, *Intrigue*, 199-205.
[143] Buchan, *Greenmantle*, 106.

grasps onto Stumm's effeminate weakness in order to re-ground the enemy spy in his proper place.[144]

Nevertheless, while "frippery" and "histrionics" may, indeed, be of little use to a spy, espionage depends upon talents that might otherwise be labeled "queer" or feminine, such as aptitudes of attraction and indirection, and the ability to "read" character. Hannay labels as "queer" not only Stumm's "other side," but also the involutions (a "queer circuit") by which the English spy Scudder moves through various places and disguises to arrive in London. Hannay also remarks upon his own ability to judge character as the "queer way" in which he likes the pacifist Sir Harry despite his disagreement with Harry's ideology.[145] The difference here, is that while Stumm *is* queer, Hannay and Scudder adopt "queer" methods only in the course of their espionage.

Nevertheless, like the adoption of the enemy's language, the slanted perspective that Hannay terms "queer" may well associate the British agent with the "wrong" side. Scudder might easily be taken for any of the myriad, invariably emasculating disguises he adopts ("a dandified young French-American," a "Jew diamond merchant," an "English student of Ibsen," a "cinema-man"), while Hannay may well be taken for a pacifist. This danger forms the central conceit of Baronness Orczy's *Pimpernel* novels (1905-1940), where the anti-French spy Percy Blakeney poses as a simpering fop – and temporarily estranges his wife Marguerite – as a cover for his contrastingly manly espionage. Marguerite's obvious passion for her husband after she

[144] Alfred Hilliard and Robert Jeffrey maintain a strikingly similar antagonism in *Pro Patria*. Jeffrey, whose slangy banter with Hilliard always borders on flirtation, lures the Englishman down to the French "mines" (the Chunnel), and it remains unclear whether this is for some assignation, the quiet murder of Hilliard, or to impress him with Jeffrey's insider knowledge. Later, as Jeffrey traps Hilliard in his house, he enters upon Hilliard in his bed and stands watching him, much as does Stumm. And much like Stumm, Jeffrey is ultimately defeated (and killed) by his own machinations.

[145] Buchan, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, 22, 89.

learns of his real exploits baffles high London society, which deems it "monstrous" that such a brilliant woman should adore a man who is by all appearances "politely indifferent" to her.[146] Similarly, Oppenheim's Everard Dominey feigns indifference to three women – two Hungarian princesses and his own wife – as he poses as the spy Baron von Ragastein. Notably, it is only as the German von Ragastein that Dominey flirts with frigidity (and implicit homosexuality); the moment of his self-exposure at the end of the novel also marks his masculine expulsion of dissenters and spies from his house, as well as his recuperation of his beautiful wife's affections.

The question remains, though, how a single spy can police these contrasting, dual roles within himself – how can he separate the effeminate and the masculine, the enemy and the patriot? An important marker of early British espionage fiction is the adoption of one of two strategies to displace this ambiguity. The first is the one taken up by Orczy and Oppenheim: in their protagonists, they reverse the usual association of effeminacy with the clandestine, and masculinity with the overt, and thus allow their narratives' ultimate revelations to "expose" the spy as a manly patriot *rather than* an effeminate enemy (or, in Blakeney's case, an amoral fop). This stratagem, though, functions only when the British spy bears only nominal "infection" by his inimical guise. Blakeney's character is only mildly singed by society's perception of him as ineffectual, and there is no reason that a man of his station would not possess the skills needed to carry out espionage (i.e. fluency in French). In the case of Dominey, Oppenheim goes to great pains to show that the Englishman is a somewhat unconvincing as von Ragastein, since his German remains "a little English" and he can't help but pursue a mutual attraction with his wife,[147] even as he seeks to maintain von Ragastein's haughty façade. In other words, Dominey is established to be a faulty spy, so that it becomes clear that he is *not*, in the end, a frigid German.

[146] Orczy, *The Elusive Pimpernel*, 40-1.
[147] Oppenheim, *The Great Impersonation*, 158.

In later and more complex Edwardian spy fiction, though, the necessary skills of the spy prove a barrier to such easy exculpation. Namely, the necessity of the undercover spy's insinuation of himself with his enemy through an adoption of foreign languages and ideologies proves too deep a commitment to be effaced by a mere disavowal or un-masking. The second strategy used to combat the danger of identification with the enemy, then, is precisely the one employed by Childers in *Riddle of the Sands*: to pair the spy compromised by linguistic skills or sympathies with another agent who lacks these attributes, yet remains remarkable and successful by reason of his unabashed *Britishness*. In Le Queux's *Spies of the Kaiser*, Jacox and Raymond share reciprocal strengths and weaknesses: Jacox has dangerous German friends, yet partially exculpates himself by his lack of German fluency; Raymond, on the other hand, is fluent in German, yet far more categorical in his suspicion of *all* Germans. Such pairing culminates in Childers' *Riddle of the Sands*, which marks an important point in the development of the spy-protagonist through its near-complete division of dangerous and patriotic qualities between Carruthers and Davies. The German-speaking Carruthers is saved by his wholehearted admiration for Davies; if the language-tainted spy cannot lose his fluency, then at least he can love the emblematic Englishman. Carruthers' "love that dare not speak its name" (his sympathy for the enemy) is replaced by a more acceptably patriotic homosociality.

In the spy novels of World War I and its immediate aftermath, though, even this pairing device begins to break down. This transition might be attributed, largely, to the experience of actual war. As multiple literary historians have noted, the war inexorably changed the form of language and the consciousness of what really constituted a "war plot."[148] In espionage literature, one change effected by this shift was that the spy became solitary. This is the case for Somerset

[148] See Jameson, "War and Representation"; Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*; Hynes, *A War Imagined*.

Maugham's Ashenden *(Ashenden*, 1928), Wilfrid Douglas Newton's Rafael Brun (*War*, 1914), and, as I will discuss further below, A.W. Wheen's Ralston (*Two Masters*). Each of these novels adopts a melancholic tone regarding its protagonist, who has no other outlet for his mixed sympathies and compromising knowledge of language or foreign ideology. As we will see, in the case of Wheen's Ralston, the spy seeks to displace the outright love of his German enemy onto a variety of other entities: Christ, the feminized nation ("she"), and his comrade, the young soldier Carter. Yet none of these alternatives functions as a successful "Davies" for Ralston's Carruthers-like character – and thus he gives up the effort entirely and strolls into deadly No-Man's Land.

In other post-World War I spy novels – as in Wheen's novella – the British spy relieves his melancholy only by placing his affections upon the entity who shares his skill-set: the enemy spy. In earlier or more stolidly English novels, this pairing of patriot/enemy would result in an erotic *Totentanz*, as it does between Hannay and Stumm in Buchan's *Greenmantle* or between Alfred Hilliard and Robert Jeffrey in Max Pemberton's *Pro Patria*. In the latter case, Hilliard seems initially enamored of the idea that he might be identified with the French spy Jeffrey – he repeats four times his astonishment that "men had called me Martel" (Jeffrey's pseudonym) – yet, like Hannay, he ultimately extracts himself from this charged relation by precipitating Jeffrey's death.[149] In H.G. Wells' precocious prewar novel *The War in the Air* (1908), the author draws a more sympathetic relation between the Cockney Bert Smallways and his German friend Kurt: the pair talk awkwardly about girls as they pick flowers together in front of a waterfall, and Kurt introduces Bert to the other Germans aboard his imperial airship.[150] Yet even with Wells' cosmopolitan sympathies, the only, ultimate remedy for Bert is that Kurt must die, and Bert must

[149] Pemberton, *Pro patria*, 83-4.
[150] Wells, *The War in the Air*, 239-44.

return to his Cockney "girl" in England. No such solution exists for Ralston, who cannot cleanly separate himself from the German officer Schaeffer, in whom he has found a fellow lover of both German and English literature, a speaker of German language, as well as, most importantly, "that one friendship which in a lifetime it is given men to enjoy."[151] If Ralston must finally kill Schaeffer in order to uphold the English side, then he must kill himself in order to avenge Schaeffer's death – there is no other recompense.

Two Masters and Espionage's Fatal Language

The spy literature of the immediate post-war is essentially a product of trauma. Only here – and often as a result of writers' direct experiences of wartime espionage and brutality – are English spies shown to suffer the same ambiguities, double-binds, and doubts that pre-war literature had ascribed unilaterally to the enemy. It shares this complexity with the later spy novels of World War II (by Manning Coles or Eric Ambler) and the early Cold War (by John le Carré or Ian Fleming), yet at the same time, lacks those later works' sense of participation in a mature genre. Arthur Wesley Wheen's novella *Two Masters*, first published in 1924, stands at the vanguard of post-war literature in general, which began to appear only toward the second half of the 1920s, and only reached full-force by the end of the decade, gaining steam in the wake of renewed European antagonisms. As Wheen himself noted, shortly after the 1929 publication of his translation of one of the greatest post-war novels, E.M. Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (*Im Westen Nichts Neues*), "anti-war literature has now found its method – mine was one of the first."[152] As a spy novella, then, *Two Masters* packs a unique amalgam into its 20-odd pages, combining anti-war sentiment and post-war reflection. It rejects the Le Queux-ian

[151] Wheen, *Two Masters*, 24.
[152] Wheen, *Letters, I*, 106 (18 April 1929).

"shilling shocker," yet at the same time exposes the real consequences and tragic liaisons of espionage and language-crossing to shock its reader into repentance and reflection. Like similarly melancholic spy and post-war literature – most notably Remarque's *All Quiet* (1928), Maugham's *Ashenden* (1928), and Coles' *Drink to Yesterday* (1940)[153] – *Two Masters* plays upon modernist experimentation with novelistic form in order to expose its reader to the inexplicable horrors of war and espionage's uneven enmities.

Specifically, *Two Masters* takes up the issue of the spy's multilingualism, showing how the language-facilitated attraction between enemies muddies Erskine Childers' claim that "War is not a matter of definitions, but of bullets and shells."[154] In Wheen's novella, "definitions" furnish a weapon as potent and possibly even more tragic than artillery. Wheen's depiction of the destruction of the undercover Australian-British spy Ralston by his divided love between his country and the German officer Schaeffer depends upon a depth of international sympathy which perhaps could arise only from the translator of one of the century's most celebrated war novels. Yet even before completing *All Quiet*, Wheen had encountered his mirror-image in the "enemy" across the trenches of France. The son of a Wesleyan minister from New South Wales, Wheen enlisted in 1915, served with distinction in Egypt and France, and eventually became a second lieutenant after officer's training at Oxford. Invalided home in 1918, he returned to England in 1920 on a Rhodes Scholarship, staying on afterward as a librarian (and eventual Keeper of the Library) at the Victoria and Albert Museum, during which time he married Aldwyth Lewers (1928) and settled in a suburb of London until his death in 1971.

[153] Despite its later date, *Drink to Yesterday* fits easily into the same genre in terms of tone and subject-matter as the 1920s' melancholic espionage literature. Strangely, Coles' sequel, *A Toast to Tomorrow* – published shortly afterward – takes on a radically different tone, much more jocular and masterful, and a better match for contemporaneous spy literature, such as the early novels of Eric Ambler.
[154] Childers, *German Influence on British Cavalry*, 10.

Despite this fairly straightforward outline, many of the parts of Wheen's biography which touch upon *Two Masters* remain unclear. Like Ralston, he refused commission repeatedly despite earning it through his "spirit of reckless daring" as a signaller.[155] There are hints in his letters that he might have also served in intelligence (a natural transition for a signaller), but there is no confirmation of this, although his 1971 obituary in *The Times* claimed that *Two Masters* was "founded on a unique episode of his life at the front." A short letter in response to Wheen's obituary in the *Sydney Morning Herald* by his longtime friend Marcel Aurousseau sums up this ambiguity: "We know that he was at some time sent on a dangerous secret mission. We could draw no information from him about it, but it may account for his tense short story 'Two Masters'...how and where he acquired his command of German remains his secret."[156] Indeed, Wheen was a gifted auto-didact who later taught himself Arabic and Chinese, bantering in his wartime letters in both French and German, yet his reminiscences of his school years mention no official study of German, and so he may well have gained his fluency in the course of the war.[157] Wartime trauma may account for Wheen's reluctance to reveal his combat autobiography more definitively in fiction (as did, for instance, Somerset Maugham or Compton Mackenzie[158]), as well as his inability to produce any original fiction beyond this single novella, despite its contemporary success and the imprecations of his friends Frank Sorley and Herbert Read. As Wheen wrote to Aldwyth in 1929, "Read and others want me to cough up the actual story, not the spiritual moanings – but that is impossible."[159]

What precisely makes such elaboration "impossible" – and where Wheen's own character

[155] See Wheen, *Letters, I*, 27 and n.
[156] Both obituary and letter are reprinted in Wheen, *Letters, II*, 98.
[157] See Wheen, *Letters, I*, 6, 12, 15, 18, 26, 141; Wheen, *Letters, II*, 1, 7.
[158] See Polmar, *Spy Book*, 347.
[159] Wheen, *Letters, I*, 106.

falls in relation to *Two Masters*' main figures, Ralston and his young comrade Carter – remains ambiguous. Like Childers, he seems to stand somewhere in between: providing his own expertise (and perhaps experience) for the depiction of Ralston's espionage, yet sharing Carter's youth and officer training, as well as, perhaps, his ultimate detachment from the denouement of Ralston's inimical connections. Wheen pairs Ralston and Carter in a manner similar to earlier duos like Davies and Carruthers or Jacox and Raymond, splitting the novel's two chapters between Carter's account of his apprentice-like relationship with Ralston, and Ralston's final letter to Carter. Yet this pairing proves merely nominal: Carter remains aloof, if intrigued by Ralston during their time together, and Ralston finally serves alone on his espionage mission. This solitude is the mark of the post-war spy, reprised in Maugham's solitary Ashenden or Coles' Bill Saunders. Carter serves less as a companion for Ralston – and never as a standard of Britishness like Childers' Davies – than as a vehicle to relay Ralston's literature-strewn reflections and philosophy, and, through his distancing awe and disdain for these ramblings of a "woman's heart," to reveal Ralston's ultimate isolation, even from his confidant.

The initial picture that Carter provides of Ralston is an elaborated echo of Carruthers' language-borne, effeminate equivocations or the veiled sexual indictment of Buchan's Stumm or Thomson's Roger Casement. Ralston, an older Gallipoli-veteran introduced to Carter's group of new Australian recruits in Egypt as "the little leaven" for their inspiration, is described as

> a slight, undersized man with stopping shoulders which gave him an unsoldierly appearance. The cast of his countenance, too, was unusual in a soldier. His face was small, and the features sensitive and delicate… When in repose he seemed dreaming in whimsey and melancholy. His whole expression suggested something fragile and feminine that sorted ill with adventure and the alarms of war… And yet he *had* served, all through the Gallipoli campaign.[160]

A more confident companion like Hannay might have drawn further conclusions from such a

[160] *Two Masters*, 9, 10 Subsequent citations will be noted parenthetically in the text.

characterization, yet true to his neophyte role, Carter leaves this as-is. He goes on to note Ralston's distaste for other returned soldiers' hair-raising tales of Gallipoli (which Carter believes) and his preference for solitary painting to such yarning. This leads Carter to label Ralston "a mean-spirited fellow and self-sufficient snob" (13), yet also to seek out his approval and instruction. Carter's initial opinions are amended, however, as he witnesses Ralston on the battlefield in France. Despite his readiness to "excuse" the old soldier "in circumstances which must in their nature unman him," Carter discovers that he is, instead, a calm, unifying force among his men, a born leader and brave soldier (19). Ralston, then, already has the makings of the ideal spy: with a "feminine" acuity to human relationships and linguistic play, yet allying these traits with the "masculine" valor and expertise of a soldier.

Carter's account of his early interactions with Ralston – mainly consisting of Ralston's convoluted ponderings and diatribes – also gives evidence of the spy's linguistic acumen. This is deployed most pervasively in the form of repeated literary allusions and quotations, their indented stanzas punctuating the first chapter of Wheen's story. In the course of Ralston's ramblings and subsequent letter to Carter, he quotes or alludes to: Ariosto (*Orlando Furioso* and a Latin ode), Shakespeare (*Hamlet, Midsummer Night's Dream, Othello*), Marlowe (*Doctor Faustus*), Dante (both in Italian and in Henry F. Cary's translation), Cervantes, Gallienus, Sir Walter Raleigh, Edmund Spencer, Machiavelli, Francis Thompson, Milton, and – as will be most pivotal to Wheen's plot – Goethe's *Faust* (in English). Ralston's final letter to Carter ends, half-despairingly, with a direct echo of Wheen's own jocular exclamation to his brother Harold in 1918: "Books! For the love of Allah! Books!" (31).[161] Ralston seems deliberately to understand

[161] Wheen's far more jovial letter to Harold (21 August 1918) asks specifically for Siegfried Sassoon's newly published poems: "Books! for the love of Allah! Books! Shake up the nineteenth century, it's out of date already. And Siegfried Whosthis's Poems, at the toot. May high heaven forgive him for writing about Counter-attacks! It will

the world through literature and language, banteringly provoking Carter, “don't tell me you do not relish best the husks of thoughts. I'll bet you know words on the outside better than within,” to which Carter replies exasperatedly, “Can't you ever see things as they are, Ralston?” (14).

Indeed, language seems to stand increasingly in the way of Ralston's doing so. Whereas *Two Masters* employs more foreign language and literary allusion in its Italian and Latin quotations than do earlier spy novels like those of Le Queux or Oppenheim, it features no actual German language at all. This contrasts with 1930s spy novels, like those of Coles or Ambler, which liberally apply multilingual fragments (particularly in German) as a performance of authenticity. Instead – perhaps in anticipation of Carter or the reader's lack of fluency – every instance of German speech or literature is translated into English in Wheen's text, and Wheen's editorial marks on the story's typescript show his elimination of several Germanic noun-capitalizations.[162] Rather than distancing Ralston from the conflict between his two dominant languages – English and German – this has the effect of deepening the sense of his submersion within their interchange, his inability fully to police the boundaries between one language and the other. This embattled linguistic boundary forms the foundation for *Two Masters*' second chapter, in which Ralston's parapraxal slippage between German and English compromises his role as a British spy and dooms his friendship with the enemy. Yet the basis for such slippage is evident already in the first chapter's seemingly incidental exchange between Ralston and Carter, in which we are given ample evidence of Ralston's inability to differentiate between quotation and self-expression, between foreign language and his own English. This acts as a justification for Ralston's later espionage and tragedy in a manner similar to Michael Kingston's linguistic education in Coles’ *Drink to Yesterday*, whose causal relationship to his intelligence work in

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be like beating my head with empty tins to read it. But I will endure it. -- 'And other poems!'"; *Letters, I*, 37.

[162] Wheen, “Papers of Arthur Wheen,” Box 10, Series 9.

World War I is summarized by the novel's cover-text:

> If Michael Kingston had not been good at languages at school none of it would ever have happened...it was his natural ability with the German language that had him transferred into the intelligence branch...It was in Germany that he learned what it was to be a spy; and he was so good at it that it broke his heart.[163]

Such a contingency might easily be adapted to Wheen's novella: "If Ralston had not been entrenched in literary allusion, none of it would ever have happened..."

Yet, like Michael Kingston, Ralston's literary and linguistic education condemns him to espionage and its consequences. This is revealed in the second chapter of Wheen's novella, which consists of Ralston's first-person account (via a letter to Carter, now training at Oxford), describing his service undercover behind the German lines, and the mortal dilemma he encounters when he accidentally reveals his true, English identity to the German officer, Schaeffer, with whom he has formed a literary, loving attachment. In his letter to Carter, Ralston strives to parse his confused allegiances via the language of "love." Unlike earlier spy-protagonists, though, he lacks the safe outlet for his affections in a doughty, unassailably English comrade (such as Carruthers' Davies or Jacox's Raymond), nor can he take recourse to an idealized heterosexual affection (as Buchan's Hannay finds in Mary Lamington, or Coles' later Bill Saunders seeks – and fails to find – in his English wife). Instead, Ralston balances himself between two idealized "loves" – the feminine Britannia and the masculine Christ – which ultimately collapse into a third love grounded in a dangerous, actual human object: his love for the German Schaeffer.

In an expansion of the general rhetoric of a spy's relationship with his country as one of "betrayal" or "faithfulness," Ralston takes to referring to his perfunctory love for his country as the devotion to a ruthless mistress: "I had pledged my soul to my country, and this spying

[163] *Drink to Yesterday*, inside front-cover text.

business, this utmost degradation that a country can demand of its citizen" (23). As espionage leads Ralston to choose between betrayal of his beloved enemy Schaeffer and betrayal of his national cause, he cautions Carter,

> Love not overmuch… Mistrust the fair ones of the world. And where is a fairer to bewitch a man's heart than his country? It is the fairest thing on earth – most like heaven. It is the best we know… I have lost my soul for her… O love of country with despair of heaven! (21-2)

Ultimately, it is this "fair one" who wins Ralston's final allegiance, if not his heart, as he concedes to eliminate Schaeffer in order to protect Britain's interest. "Dear Country, most hated, most beloved!... And still I loved her" (26). Ralston concedes, then, to a heteronormative narrative that ends in his choice of the feminine country over the male enemy-comrade – yet his final suicide in No-Man's Land returns him, in death, to sexual and national ambiguity.

Ralston's second idealized love, Christ, serves as an intermediary between his love of (female) country and love of enemy comrade, as Christ takes on the masculine pronoun, "Him," in opposition to the "she" of the nation. Ralston's original diatribe to Carter is strongly tinged with Christianity, but it is a rather confused faith, as he compares Christ to Helen of Troy, blaming this hybrid for the present war in Greece (17). In his later letter, Ralston refers repeatedly to the opposition of country and Christianity, "*virtus*" and "virtue" (18; both words grounded in the Latin "vir" – "man"), yet the capitalized "Him" which originally represents Christ becomes increasingly emancipated from any direct religious referent. As Ralston writes, "In Germany I thrice denied Him; now when I call on Him, He does not lean to me from out the skies, but I hear His Voice denying me before His Father which is in heaven" (23). Does this refer to Christ or to Schaeffer? Wheen deliberately obscures any direct answer, though it is notable that it is only in Ralston's references to this (supposed) deity that Wheen retains a Germanic capitalization of nouns, which he otherwise removes from the story's typescript

draft.[164] Further, Ralston's letter retains this deific "Him" even as it claims that he has lost his faith – "I had ceased to be a Christian long ago" (25) – and Wheen's typescript shows his erasure of more definite Christian references later in Ralston's story.[165] In the end, then, Wheen seems bent on retaining this male ambiguity while providing a potent, hybridized antonym to the unambiguously feminine nation.

Ralston's third love – Schaeffer – is his relationship most grounded in reality and most passionately, if often surreptitiously portrayed. Ralston befriends Schaeffer after the German officer saves his life by accepting his claim to be a German soldier and welcoming him into the German regiment, inviting him to join a group of officers who meet regularly to discuss literary topics. Ralston describes this comradeship in epic, fated terms:

> With him I could have made that one friendship which in a lifetime it is given men to enjoy. He was cultured, and simple to the point of winsomeness... Of all men I have met, to him my heart was warmed; in other times he would have sat in the very arm-chair of my affection. I loved him as Jonathan loved David, as Achilles loved Patroclus. We were made for friendship. He seemed as happy to be with me as I with him. Schaeffer was his name. Hatzenfeld was mine. And never did I hear him use it to me but I saw a sword that hung above our ties of friendship. (24)[166]

As in most war or espionage literature of the era, it is difficult here to differentiate the language of homosocial comradeship from that of homosexual desire.[167] Yet beyond Carter's assertions of

[164] See, for instance, "Papers of Arthur Wheen," Box 10, Series 9, TS p. 4.
[165] Ibid., TS p. 7.
[166] After "Hatzenfeld was mine," the typescript draft includes the line, canceled by Wheen, "A curse be on the name!" (TS p. 5).
[167] As Cole writes with reference to World War I, the heightened context of war (of which espionage is a specific subset) gives rise to male relations that are difficult to classify, and may not be cleanly split into the "homosocial," "homoerotic," and "homosexual": "While there may be theoretical appeal [...] in arguing that the war's flamboyant all-male theatrics trouble the smooth narrative of (hetero)normativity, I find that the protean shapes of male relations during the war do not conform to a structure of gender deviance. Ultimately, the homoerotic in this discussion will become almost an institution of its own, as war writers imagine forms of intimacy that thwart civilian definitions and categories." *Modernism, Male Friendship, and the First World War*, 140. Wheen plays heavily upon this ambiguity in *Two Masters*.

Ralston's effeminacy, Wheen offers several hints that Ralston and Schaeffer's friendship transgresses – or is queered – by more than just its international nature. In Ralston's original discussion with Carter (before his foray into espionage), he quotes a stanza from an obscure Latin ode by Ludovico Ariosto, which makes reference to the war-wearying of "sturdy Corydon":

> Rursus quid hostis prospiciat sibi
> Me nulla tangat cura, sub arbuto
> Jacentem aquae ad murmur cadentis,
> Dum segetes Corydona flavae
> Durum fatigant. (11)
>
> [Let his foe make ready for self-defence; to me it shall matter nought (no cares will touch me), as I lie in the shade hearing the falling water, while the yellow cornfields weary stalwart (sturdy) Corydon.][168]

This is a telling allusion, since the character "Corydon" originated in Virgil's second *Eclogue* as a homosexual shepherd who harbors a "hopeless love" for the young Alexis,[169] and later became the emblem for the naturalness and socio-political necessity of homosexuality as the title for André Gide's 1924 collection of Socratic dialogues on that subject.[170] Such allusion suggests that Ralston – who murmurs this stanza *à propos* of nothing – figures himself as the war-worn, hopeless, noble Corydon, anticipating the dilemma he will encounter with Schaeffer. When it comes time for Ralston to resolve either to kill Schaeffer or allow his German friend to denounce him first, he again makes use of a queered allusion, quoting from Othello's soliloquy debating whether to murder Desdemona: "It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul; | Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars! | It is the cause" (26). Othello's conclusion (not quoted by Wheen) matches

[168] Ralston quotes the stanza in Latin. The English translation is derived from Gardner, *The King of Court Poets*, 35n, with the additional help of John Kuhn.
[169] Virgil, *Eclogues*, 13.
[170] Though published together in French in 1924, the dialogues were first published separately over the course of the preceding decade.

Ralston's own entirely: "Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men."[171] Indeed, Ralston finally shoots Schaeffer just as the British forces attack the German regiment, and as he realizes that this painful choice affects the fate of "more men" than himself alone. For Ralston, it is less the case that, as Hepburn writes of Banville's Victor Markell, the "queer spy has the benefit of being always already double,"[172] than it is that his multiply queer attachments to the enemy – his attraction to the "wrong" nationality *and* gender – refract and shatter his character. Like the spy's multiple languages and masquerades – all of which, as Buchan opines, must be fully believed in order to succeed – Ralston strives to uphold multiple "loves" which are, in the end, mutually unsustainable.

It is through language that Ralston's conflicting female and male affinities (his connection to Britannia and to Christ/Schaeffer) are drawn into direct collision with each other. Left alone with Schaeffer in his dugout after one of the latter's literary discussion-groups, Ralston excitedly, euphorically quotes from the passage of Goethe's *Faust* in which Faust recognizes that his actions must send his beloved Gretchen to Hell. This passage is quoted in the text in English,[173] even as Ralston describes reading it in German, leading to his fatal linguistic slip:

> I had quoted in German the passage...I continued speaking rapidly,urging with great earnestness that after this point the play should go in one headlong down-rushing to the catastrophe, relentlessly as in Marlowe's tragedy. It was not until I saw the expression of ghastly amazement on Schaeffer's face, that I noticed how from the end of the quotation I had, in my absorption, lapsed into *English*. For some minutes neither of us spoke; but at length he took up the discussion where I had broken off, and behaved as though the incident had not occurred. (25)

[171] Shakespeare, *Othello*, V.ii.
[172] Hepburn, *Intrigue*, 215.
[173] It is quoted from the translation by Anna Swanwick, which, like Ralston's earlier quotation from the English translation of Dante, was published as part of the Harvard Classics series. See the Harvard Classics listing at <http://www.bartleby.com/hc/>.

Ralston's account of his language-crossing parapraxis rushes along with the speed of Goethe's own denouement: following the passage quoted by Ralston, Mephistopheles leads Faust to cease his doubts and to recognize that he has become "ziemlich eingeteufelt" ("fairly devilized"), after which Gretchen performs her famously despairing song at the spinning wheel.[174] Like Goethe's plot, Ralston's description of his slip resembles nothing so much as a distorted, fatal orgasm, from the heady rush of Ralston's speech to his excited literary interjection to Schaeffer's final, "ghastly amazement" and the ensuing silence. This is the simultaneous culmination and nadir of Ralston and Schaeffer's relationship: the congress of their languages in the interplay of Goethe and Marlowe and the mutual recognition of their true identities. Ralston's failed, confused code-switching between languages and plots is signified by his italicization of the word "*English*," as if this were the foreign, interloping term – as it would be to Schaeffer – rather than Ralston's real linguistic and national affiliation. In other words, at this moment in which Ralston has shown himself to be most inexorably, irremediably British, he has also taken on the perspective of his German enemy-comrade, seeing his own language as strange even as he excitedly speaks in its words. It is this fulfillment of the spy's complete hybridity which seals Ralston's fate.

Schaeffer concedes to this tragedy through his own linguistically and literarily hybridized response. After a lover's pause in which Ralston describes his "suspense, expecting, and almost hoping, that Schaeffer would denounce me" (25), Schaeffer holds another literary meeting in which he presents his interpretation of A.W. Schlegel's German translation of *Hamlet*, showing its origins in German works (Lessing, Gervinus, Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*) and arguing that the problem of the play is "to delineate a mind oppressed by the weight of an obligation which he fails to discharge." Schaeffer's profession of impotence (failed "discharge," both sexual and

[174] Goethe, *Faust*, 174.

political) through his implicit self-identification with the German translation of stymied Hamlet is interpreted privately by Ralston:

> it seemed to me as though he was explaining to my heart what until then had been a mystery and a wretchedness to me – he seemed to be telling me why he had delayed to expose my imposture. As he read his face became haggard and his voice at many points almost failed him. I began to understand. (26)

After the other German officers have left Schaeffer's dugout, the pair, again alone, launch into a series of oblique questions about their embattled love, ventriloquised through the conflict of Christ and country. To Schaeffer's "You understood?," Ralston responds, "Is the war so horrible to you too?" and "But what of Germany?" Finally, he concludes, "But how can man serve two masters?...If Christ says: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend,' and the state demands that a man take the life of his friend, against which must one sin?" (27). Christlike, Ralston begs Schaeffer to expose him, to which Schaeffer concedes, though only after concluding their final exchange of linguistically- and sexually-tinged thrusts and parries with a plea for congress through translation: "What is your name, Hatzenfeld?" After Ralston's response, Schaeffer bids him goodnight by his real name, "I will do it when I can, Ralston" (28).

As important as Ralston and Schaeffer's words are the particular forms of silence that pervade these two pivotal exchanges. One is, of course, sexual, evidenced through symptomatic diction, yet submerged beneath the surface of the text. Parallel to this silence, though, is the omission of virtually any direct reference by either soldier to espionage or the nation. It is for this reason that Ralston's aberrant "But what of Germany?" rings so resonantly at the heart of the text. Schaeffer's refusal to answer this question directly – addressing it only through literary and religious peroration – foreshadows the direction that the pair's final betrayal will take: Ralston, who alone retains a sense of his actions' national significance, will kill his German comrade. This concrete political action stands out from the text's overwhelming sense of submersion and tacit

allusion, conveyed not only through Schaeffer and Ralston's oblique romance, but also in Wheen's suppression of any actual German text, and the literary indirection which marks Ralston and Carter's initial exchange, ending in Carter's echo of Dante's words of departure from the sinners of Hell or Purgatory, "And so he ceased from speaking" (18).

In contrast to this silence and indirection, Ralston's assassination of Schaeffer in a communication trench (of all places) is rapid and direct. Wheen's blunt depiction of this act is an anomaly in early spy literature – from Doyle to Childers to Le Queux – which usually forces such violence to unfold off-stage, perpetrated not by its true cause (the British spy), but by anonymous governmental "authorities" or, in the case of Childers' villain Dollmann, by the spy's own hand. Instead, Ralston's account marks a break with this tradition, as well as with the tone of his text: "Then almost before I knew it, I had fired, and Schaeffer was dead" (30). Wheen seems to have meant to emphasize the abruptness of this act in his text, omitting a preceding, mitigating reference to Christ and the "Powers of Evil."[175] His direct treatment of Schaeffer's murder prefigures the form that such action will take in later spy novels and war literature, including Wheen's friend Herbert Read's violent 1933 poem-sequence "The End of a War," which graphically recounts the rape of a German peasant by English soldiers who have been betrayed by a German spy. No longer can the spy sit back while someone else carries out the results of his espionage. The injunction to commemorate and prevent reprisals of World War I's pointless violence demands that the spy come into contact with the consequences of his linguistic and political double-crossing.

The place for such contact is a middle-ground between languages and nations. This can be euphemistic, as it is earlier in Wheen's story, when a member of Schaeffer's literary

[175] "Papers of Arthur Wheen," TS p. 7.

discussion-group, a "truculent, intolerant fellow" named Freundlich, displaces English and German literary conflict onto a traditional third-party, the French. He holds out with "patriotic satisfaction" that Voltaire, "the Frenchman, with characteristic blindness, had failed to appreciate the significance of *Hamlet*" (27). This recourse to a third language and literature allows a brief moment of respite for Schaeffer and Ralston's sustained tension, before they launch into their final deliberations on comradeship and country. French, of course, has often served as a middle linguistic- and cultural-ground for British-German conflict, as is evidenced both in non-espionage fiction (like Ford Madox Ford's 1915 *The Good Soldier*; see Chapter 2), and also by the continued prevalence of French antagonists in Edwardian spy novels, or even the repeated, euphemistic reference to the (imagined) German subordination of England as the "fait accompli."[176] By 1914, France had become the literal meeting-place of British and Germans, as the site of most of the Western Front's trench warfare. Even though the French themselves were party to this fight, British war literature often makes it seem as if the battle were merely taking place on their land, with Britain and Germany as the only real opponents.

If the meeting-ground of German and British is displaced or euphemized to France and the French, its more direct locus is the combatants' site of actual congress, No Man's Land. This devastated ground between opposing trenches is the archetype of what Fredric Jameson describes as the "lunar landscape" of the battlefield, which "abolishes or suspends the distinction between the enemy's landscape and our own, the latter no less fraught with peril than some unknown, hostile terrain."[177] Ralston's final death here – both a war casualty and a suicide – is eminently proper to the rending of his hybridized identity after the shooting of Schaeffer. The metaphors he employs to describe himself after his return to the British trenches are those of fracture: "But

[176] Saki, *When William Came*, 16.
[177] Jameson, "War and Representation," 1537.

who am I that am so safe returned? My dreams are shattered, my faith is gone, my heart is broken now....My spirit is lying like a little heap of bones on the barren desert of my mind" (30, 32). Ralston's fractured self, split by the affiliations of language, is reminiscent of Walter Benjamin's description of the fragments of language which must be reassembled in order to complete a translation.[178] Yet rather than leaping between fragments and thus completing the connection between languages and cultures which is effected by translation,[179] Ralston, it would seem, loses himself in precisely such depths, falling into what Emily Apter has characterized as the "translation zone," the place of contact between languages. Ralston's death in No Man's Land would seem to mark a negative "translation zone," one in which languages meet, but only in their mutual destruction, rather than exchange. The spy, Ralston, tumbles into the aporatic chasm that intercedes between languages and national identities, "On and On, or Back and Back...There's nothing Different here, no On-the-other-hand" (31). This chasm – and the only place for such a fractured identity – is No Man's Land. Wheen's story provides two accounts of Ralston's death there, each offering a gloss for the other. The text's final word goes to Carter, who, in the passage quoted in this chapter's epigraph, condemns Ralston's "woman's heart" as he describes his suicide. Directly before this appended paragraph, though, Ralston provides his own conclusion to his story at the close of his letter to Carter. Here he evokes the psychological "No Man's Land" that the spy experiences between identities, languages, affiliations, and – in Ralston's case – loves: "One candle is gone out. I'll snuff the other" (32).

The Men of "No Man's Land"

[178] Benjamin, "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers," 18.

[179] Ibid., 21. Benjamin describes the movement of translation in this way: in the translation, "stürzt der Sinn von Abgrund zu Abgrund, bis er droht in bodenlosen Sprachtiefen sich zu verlieren" ("meaning pitches from abyss to abyss, until it threatens to lose itself in the bottomless depths of language").

Ralston's resignation of himself to No Man's Land is the proper end of the spy. Set apart by multilingualism and racked by the consequent division of affiliations and identities, Wheen's novella asserts that the spy has no other patria than the desolate, deadly ground which connects antagonists. His is not the first story to figure No Man's Land in this way. Even before the outbreak of war, Saki describes a bilingual, conquered London as "No Man's Land,"[180] and Buchan later substantiates this metaphorical characterization in the actuality of trench warfare, as he shows Hannay congratulating the effete Launcelot Wake on his initiation into espionage: "Why, man, last night for an hour you were in the front line – the place where the enemy forces touch our own. You were over the top – you were in No-man's-land."[181] Here, then, No Man's Land is shown to be not only a linguistic and combative contact zone, but the true home of the spy. Though Hannay invokes it as a mark of Wake's new-found valor, he also leverages its deadly import as a site of execution for an enemy spy, the Count von Schwabing. Hannay decides that rather than execute his captured opponent outright, he will send him "over the top" with the English troops, thus divesting the spy of nationality and exposing him to the violence of his own countrymen. A Scotsman's account to Hannay of von Schwabing's death shows the spy's fruitless efforts to regain national legitimacy by way of his characteristic instrument, language:

> The next we kenned he was runnin' verra fast towards the enemy, holdin' his hands ower his heid and cryin' out loud in a foreign langwidge… It was Gairman...I t seemed as if he was appealin' to the enemy to help him. But they paid no attention and he cam under the fire of their machine-guns.[182]

A contemporary tale from World War I describes a similar incident, in which "a civilian" sprinted suicidally into No Man's land. The editor's concluding questions, "Who was he? Was he

[180] Saki, *When William Came*, 58.
[181] Buchan, *Mr. Standfast*, 130.
[182] Ibid., 360-1.

a spy or a madman?,"[183] sum up the insanity associated with a man who consigns himself to this embattled space between nations, unable convincingly to align himself or find safety in either one.

No Man's Land is a locus of particular significance for A.W. Wheen, who was awarded the Military Medal for repeatedly crossing it under heavy fire in order to maintain the British lines of communication.[184] It figures strongly in Wheen's description of the reasoning behind his translation of Remarque's *All Quiet*, which he bases in the spy-like concept of recognizing his mirror-image in the enemy faces of the opposing trench. As Wheen wrote in 1931, he translated "not so much by reason of my knowledge of the language (which I had but imperfectly), as by virtue of having made the experience it ~~tells~~ treats of." In this unpublished account of the personal significance of Remarque's book, Wheen goes on to explain that:

> the startling feature of the book lay in its revealation [sic] of the fact that the enemy on the other side of No Man's Land was, as near as damn it, our very selves....The book is ~~like~~ a mirror set up for us in No Man's Land. In it we see trenches right enough, trenches opposed to our own; and heads, too, watching us apprehensively over the parapet; and other rifle barrels returning the aim of our own, and behind them faces – deadly enemy faces, so we have been told. ~~And~~ But now from this book to our great consternation we see they were our own faces all the time.[185]

Wheen's excision of the word "like" from his claim for Remarque's book as a "mirror" speaks eloquently to the way in which the post-war publication of literature like *All Quiet* recuperates the spy's unmediated mirroring of self and enemy, transforming No Man's Land from a deadly abyss to a site of fruitful (re)encounter.

This is evident even from the promotional interleaf for Wheen's translation of *All Quiet*

[183] Miller, *True Stories of the Great War*, 327-8.
[184] See Wheen, *Letters, I*, 24.
[185] From "War Among the Children," an edited typescript marked "London, 1931." Wheen, "Papers of Arthur Wheen," [Box 10, Series 9], TS pp. 5-6.

which accompanies the 1929 Faber & Faber edition of *Two Masters.* Wheen is not credited here as the book's translator, and indeed, the Remarque's novel itself is divested of nearly all national German connection. Instead, it is touted as speaking

> for the whole of the war generation of every race...the war memorial for all the 'unknown soldiers.' It is the voice of the dead crying out from their grave on the Western Front… to read it is to become fulfilled with a passion for universal goodwill… *You must read this message from the lost generation of the war*.

On the reverse of the interleaf, "First Press Opinions" are listed in order of their universalizing force, ranging from the *Times Literary Supplement*'s compliment on the novel's English and the *Times*' note that it "transcend[s] nationality," to reviews that ignore this cross-cultural transition altogether, referring to the novel as the "true story of the world's greatest nightmare" or, in a rather troubling line from the *Leeds Mercury*, promising that it "Will give ex-soldiers a savage joy."[186] The book is treated as almost entirely anonymous, and, as Benedict Anderson has noted, this anonymity, like a cenotaph, imbues such memorialization with the potential for national recuperation rather than international connection.[187] Instead of holding together two different national perspectives – British and German – such presentation collapses these into a single, deracinated platitude. Such claims belie the power of Remarque's work to stress the specific loss of Paul Bäumer and his comrades in a manner that invites such comforting extrapolation only to return the reader doggedly, repeatedly to this *one* story, this single, excruciatingly particular tragedy. As Wheen or Childers would recognize, such mediation between the "man" and the "enterprise" is precisely the lesson to be learned from the tragedies of war and espionage.

Reminiscent of Siegfried Sassoon's 1927 protest of the Menin Gate's glorifying gesture

[186] Wheen, *Two Masters*, loose interleaf.
[187] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 9.

toward the War's pointless dead,[188] this advertisement's universalization of Remarque's message effaces the act of translation and mirroring, which, as Wheen writes, should be "startling," painful, and difficult, taking place amidst the shrapnel and fractured bodies of No Man's Land. These jagged edges of congress between comrade and enemy, Briton and German, are evident in Wheen's editor's many notes to his draft translation, chiding him on his sometimes clumsy attempts at converting German idioms into British slang or inserting mistakenly literal translations.[189] As Wheen's *Two Masters* makes evident, negotiating the treacherous, uneven space between languages is the natural realm of the spy. Though all but forgotten, his novella serves as a predecessor for the spy literature of the years leading up to World War II, in which novelists show an increasing attention to the particular linguistic and syntactic hybridities inherent to espionage. In this way, then, whereas Anglophone receptions of translated war literature like Remarque's *All Quiet* become increasingly universalized over the course of the early twentieth century, the interweaving of multilingual fragments in the British literature of espionage balances out this national effacement by growing ever more specific and complex.

[188] Sassoon, "On Passing the New Menin Gate."

[189] For instance, the editor replaces Wheen's "a simple tommy" with "a peasant" for "einem Muskoten." He removes Wheen's literal translation of "Rache ist Blutwurst" ("Revenge is black pudding") and replaces it with "Revenge! That's the stuff to give 'em," noting, "German idiom not intelligible to ordinary English reader." Anonymous typescript of editorial notes to Wheen's *All Quiet* translation, "Papers of Arthur Wheen," [Box 1, Series 1], TS pp. 5, 6.

Chapter 4

"I married to get away": Linguistic Exogamy and the Novels of Jean Rhys

I wanted to go away with the same feeling a boy has when he wants to run away to sea – at least, that I imagine a boy has. Only, in my adventure, men were mixed up, because of course they had to be. You understand, don't you? Do you understand that a girl might have that feeling? I wanted to get away. I wanted it like – like iron. Besides, I wasn't frightened of anything. So I did get away. I married to get away.

-- Julia Martin, *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie* (1931)[1]

Among Gertrude Stein's Paris acquaintances was the painter Marie Laurencin. In her *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Stein provided a short sketch of Laurencin, a prolific artist from whom Stein claimed to have purchased her first painting. Yet Stein's picture of Laurencin focused less on her art than on the major impediment to it, namely, her forced flight out of France during World War I and her subsequent exile in neutral Spain. Laconically, Stein summed up both the cause and the burden of this flight: Laurencin "was intensely French and she was technically german [sic]."[2] Although born in France of French parents, Laurencin was obliged to flee the country as a result of having married the German painter Otto von Wätjen a month before the War's outbreak in August 1914, thus transforming herself into a "technical" – that is, legal – German via the French citizenship laws which expatriated female citizens who married foreigners.[3]

Marrying von Wätjen immediately divested Laurencin of her French citizenship and forced her to become an expatriate in a form quite unlike the more comfortable cosmopolitanism of the American Stein and other non-French artists living in Paris. Whereas Stein professed to delight in being surrounded by people speaking French so that she could be left "more intensely

[1] Rhys, *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie*, 51–2.
[2] Stein, *Autobiography*, 62. On Stein and Laurencin's relationship, see also Elliott, *Women Artists and Writers*, 90–121; Kahn, *Marie Laurencin*, 8–13.
[3] Kahn, *Marie Laurencin*, 8; Groult, *Marie Laurencin*, 142.

alone with my eyes and my English,"[4] Laurencin experienced a very different separation from her home country and language. Hers was an exile on top of expatriation, a rift which left her uncertain of her future or her status, "weary and distraught," perpetually suspected of being a spy for one side or the other.[5] By marrying a German – even one who "loved Marie and France" and who refused to return to Germany to join the army – the French Laurencin was legally and socially marked with the taint of foreignness. Her friend André Salmon imagined her and "son Allemand" ("her German") subjected to the worst of French xenophobia as they fled their seaside honeymoon "beneath jeers and stones."[6] Laurencin, then, had been inadvertently absorbed into a nation whose language she did not speak – even as her multilingual husband had access to her own mother tongue[7] – and she was exiled in a country where she lacked the rights of citizenship and was at the mercy of others' aspersions as to her identity and loyalty. She expressed her feeling of utter estrangement in a poem written from Barcelona: "Abandonnée | Plus qu'abandonnée | Seule au monde | Plus que seule au monde | Exilée | Plus qu'exilée | Morte | Plus que morte | Oubliée."[8]

Laurencin's predicament – her inadvertent or collateral expatriation via marriage, her consequent linguistic and cultural estrangement, and finally, her displacement and exile – was all too common in interwar Europe. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, citizenship laws in most European nations were transformed to conform with the principle of "coverture," the subsumation of a woman's legal rights by her husband upon marriage.[9] While citizenship was of little practical concern for many women before World War I, the outbreak of war in 1914 made

[4] Stein, *Autobiography*, 70.
[5] Groult, *Marie Laurencin*, 146; translation is my own.
[6] Qtd. in Marchesseau, *Marie Laurencin*, 189; translation is my own.
[7] Groult, *Marie Laurencin*, 141.
[8] "Abandoned | More than abandoned | Alone in the world | More than alone in the world | Exiled | More than exiled | Dead | More than dead | Forgotten." Qtd. in Hyland and McPherson, *Marie Laurencin*, 28.
[9] See Tabili, "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth," 798.

citizenship and national belonging an issue of prime importance, as legal nationality was increasingly used to define residents' loyalties, and as nationalized paperwork such as passports were becoming increasingly necessary for trans-European travel. Nevertheless, laws prescribing women's loss of citizenship upon marriage to foreigners continued unchallenged in most European nations through to World War II, posing an obstacle to many women as they tried to move across national borders or, during wartime, were forced either to flee or to register as "enemy aliens" in the nations of their birth.

This chapter explores the repercussions of such gendered expatriation as they are emblematized and expressed in border-crossing, multilingual literature by the Dominica-born British author Jean Rhys. Exile is the hallmark of Jean Rhys' fiction, from her first novel, *Voyage in the Dark* (written 1924[10]), to her final and most celebrated work, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966). Above all, Rhys' semi-autobiographical fiction dramatizes her own experiences of estrangement and expatriation after she married a legally-stateless Dutch-born man, Jean Lenglet, and struggled to construct a life with him in Paris. Like Laurencin, Rhys depicts her female protagonists as both expatriated and exiled, floundering in their inability to gain affiliation to any single national identity or language, or to navigate and master the hybrid idiom of the assured cosmopolitan. Yet in contrast to Laurencin, who turned from men to women after blaming the collapse of her marriage partly on her husband's having been "un Allemand," Rhys' protagonists do not renounce men.[11] Instead, they strive doggedly, and usually unsuccessfully to persist in a world in which, as Shari Benstock terms it, women are "expatriate *in patria*." Benstock goes on to explain this seeming paradox: for women, "expatriation is internalized,

[10] Published 1934.
[11] Marchesseau, *Marie Laurencin*, 192.

experienced as an exclusion imposed from the outside and lived from the inside."[12] In other words, expatriation dislocates not only a woman's legal identity, but also her sense of inalienable self, and in particular the forms of language that are available to her to settle herself in her surroundings. Rhys' protagonists, like Rhys herself, long for "escape" or, as Julia Martin puts it, "to get away," yet they often "get away" by running themselves off the map.[13] Unlike the bourgeois artists for whom Virginia Woolf countered European coverture and exogamy laws by declaring that "As a woman I have no country, as a woman I want no country," Rhys' protagonists have no defined space – no access to Woolf's proposed "whole world" – in which to create an idiom of their own.[14] Instead, they must derive what Hélène Cixous calls "complex strategies of translation" in the effort "to negotiate their loyalties to nation, language, ethnicity, class, and gender."[15] It is through a complex mixture of languages – the French and English of Rhys' 1920s and '30s Paris novels and the multiple, competing Englishes of the colonial Caribbean in *Wide Sargasso Sea* – that Rhys dramatizes the experience (indeed, *her* experience) of female protagonists who are both expatriated and exiled, floundering in their inability to gain affiliation to any single national identity or language, or to navigate and master the hybrid idiom of the assured cosmopolitan.

Exogamy and Expatriation

The laws of exogamy and coverture which caused the traumatic expatriations of Laurencin and Rhys were not isolated to their birth-nations of France and Great Britain. As of

[12] Benstock, "Expatriate Modernism," 20.
[13] Rhys' memory of her engagement to Lempert echoes Julia's declaration: "It came to me in a flash that here it was, what I had been waiting for, for so long. Now I could see escape." *Smile Please,* 112.
[14] Woolf, *Three Guineas,* 129; for the only discussion (to my knowledge) of Woolf's statement in a legal context, see the chapter on Woolf in Aarthi Vadde's dissertation, *Genres of Collectivity*. As Sheila Kineke has noted, Rhys stands decidedly apart from her fellow female and feminist modernists who were better-off financially and had better access to the machinery of publication. "'Like a Hook Fits an Eye'," 281.
[15] Qtd. in Seyhan, *Writing Outside the Nation,* 8.

1929, only eighteen countries worldwide allowed certain women to retain their original citizenship after marrying a foreigner.[16] In other words, most women who married foreigners automatically lost their original legal nationality, and most were automatically absorbed into their husband's nationality, regardless of whether he was an enemy alien or stateless (a growing predicament following the geopolitical rupture of World War I), or whether these women had any linguistic or cultural acquaintance with the nation which they must now call their own. As several historians have noted, the exclusion of women from citizenship upon marriage to a foreigner – what I will term "exogamy-expatriation law" – was of a piece with the construction of the modern nation-state, and particularly with the policing of empire, serving as a deterrent against women entering into interracial or international marriages.[17] Surprisingly little protest was made of this issue, despite the growing necessity for a woman to retain her citizenship for purposes of the right to travel by passport and – after 1918 in Britain – the right to vote.[18] In many nations (including Britain), exogamy-expatriation laws remained on the books through the start of World War II, and a few (as in Germany and the Netherlands) lasted even into the 1950s and '60s.[19]

The story of British exogamy-expatriation law is similar to that in many European and American countries and in their colonies and former colonies.[20] In 1922, census records show

[16] Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*, 195. Bredbenner lists these nations as the US, USSR, Belgium, Estonia, Norway, Romania, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Guatemala, Finland, France, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Albania, China, Cuba, and Persia. If the US is an example for these "tolerant" nations, though, its very strict exogamy laws – which expatriated nearly all American women who married foreigners – prove that even these nations were far from egalitarian.

[17] See de Hart, "The Morality of Maria Toet," 52; Baldwin, "Subject to Empire," 524, 537–8; also Tabili, "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth."

[18] Tabili, "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth," 813; women's exogamy-expatriation is not even mentioned in the 1893 study by Coudert, *Marriage and Divorce Laws in Europe, a Study in Comparative Legislation*.

[19] See Baldwin, "Subject to Empire," 536–7; Tabili, "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth," 797; Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, 215n.; Kleiber and Gömüsay, *Fremdgängerinnen*, 42; de Hart, "The Morality of Maria Toet," 49, 52.

[20] On exogamy-expatriation law in the Netherlands, Germany, France, and the United States, see, respectively: de

that 20% (30,000) of alien women in Britain were native-born, meaning in every case that they had lost their British citizenship through marriage.[21] The expatriation of exogamous women was not a product of any long-borne tradition in Britain. It began only with the Naturalisation Act of 1870 – nearly contemporaneous with the height of British imperialism – which placed women in the same category as "infants, lunatics, and idiots," effectively shifting the object and responsibility of their loyalty from the nation to their husband (and his nation). Although the Married Women's Property Act reform of 1882 instantiated women as legal entities – and allowed them, for the first time, to retain their property upon marriage – it did not alter the consequences of exogamy.[22] Only later was exogamic women's status changed such that they might reapply for naturalization in Britain after becoming widowed or divorced. Nonetheless, this process could be arduous and expensive; even with reforms in 1914 which lowered the barriers to re-naturalisation, women were asked to provide additional materials (such as character references) which were not required of alien men who might prove their worth as mariners and soldiers.[23] Protests by various groups led to the proposal of a 1922 Nationality of Married Women Bill, which was brought before Parliament, yet ultimately failed due to questions of how it would affect family unity. It was not until after World War II that exogamy-expatriation in Britain was fully amended.[24] Although exogamy-expatriation law was a relatively young legislative measure throughout Europe (begun only in 1892 in the Netherlands and 1918 in Germany), it nevertheless defined women's experience in most of the world for the first half of

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Hart, "The Morality of Maria Toet"; Kleiber and Gömüsay, *Fremdgängerinnen,* 30–42; Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, 215n.; Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*.

[21] Tabili, "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth," 796n.

[22] See Shanley, *Feminism, Marriage, and the Law*, 103ff.

[23] Baldwin, "Subject to Empire," 526–8; Tabili, "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth," 801–8.

[24] Baldwin, "Subject to Empire," 536–7.

the twentieth century.[25]

As might be expected, the issue of exogamy-expatriation held serious personal and political repercussions in the context of the two World Wars, particularly the First. In a virulently xenophobic Britain, the Alien Restriction Acts of 1905 and 1914 commanded aliens (including alien-wives) to register with the police, banned them from civil service, and required them to obtain a permit if travelling five miles beyond their homes, even for work. The children of expatriated women retained their British citizenship if born on British soil, and so expatriated women could be separated from their families when placed in enemy alien detention camps or deported. The fate of many women after the War's end was not much better: those married to German men could have their property confiscated as security for the German war debt, and those whose husbands were rendered stateless by the redrawn boundaries of the Treaty of Versailles would find themselves stateless, as well.[26] Yet the consequences were not only financial or physical. As Laura Tabili notes, the exogamous woman was tainted as having "already transgressed" her nation's boundaries through her marriage, and "her loyalty to the state as well as her respectability, bound up as the latter was with sexual probity" were "rendered permanently suspect."[27] Indeed, as modern sociologists of "marriage migration" have described – and as holds true for earlier exogamous-expatriative marriages, as well – exogamy has the power to divest women of rights of inheritance, mire them in unfamiliar customs, sever them from natal support networks, and, at times, necessitate their actual migration out of their birth-nation.[28] Nevertheless, the xenophobic clamor of World War I Britain brought women's

[25] Tabili, "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth," 797; Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, 215n.; Kleiber and Gömüsay, *Fremdgängerinnen*, 42; de Hart, "The Morality of Maria Toet," 49, 52.
[26] Tabili, "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth," 802, 806 and n.; Baldwin, "Subject to Empire," 534; Kleiber and Gömüsay, *Fremdgängerinnen*, 40.
[27] "Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth," 807–8.
[28] *Marriage, Migration and Gender*, 23–30.

advocates from unexpected places: in 1917 the hyper-jingoistic paper *John Bull* protested that "An English-born wife" who had married an enemy-alien "must not travel more than five miles to see her husband, but a 'naturalised' German relative can journey pretty nearly all over the country," concluding that the laws which permitted this incongruity required "drastic attention."[29] It seemed that the strange contrast of "loyal" British-born women lacking the rights of "disloyal" German-born men was enough to raise *John Bull*'s ire, though, like many of its protests, this came to nothing.

1930 brought the impetus for change in exogamy-expatriation law by way of the Hague Conference on the Codification of International Law, which urged the standardization of citizenship laws – although not explicitly the end of women's expatriation – mainly to eliminate the post-World War I epidemic of statelessness. As a result of the Hague Conference, about half of women in the world could marry without expatriation, and feminist advocates, like Else Lüders in Germany, used peer pressure to lead their nations toward similar parity.[30] Nevertheless, some efforts (as in Germany) were halted by the rise of fascism, and World War II brought about continued difficulties. In the Netherlands both during and after the War, women were forced to go into hiding rather than be deported to nations with whose politics they disagreed.[31] Selma Engel-Wijnberg, a Jewish woman from the Netherlands who escaped the death camp Sobibor with her Polish husband (she was one of only two Dutch women to survive) returned to her home country in 1945 only to be threatened that she would be deported back to her husband's native Poland. As her biographer reflects, "It's hard to imagine that a Dutchwoman could be deported from her country because she married the man who had saved

[29] "Visits to the Interned," 4.
[30] Kleiber and Gömüsay, *Fremdgängerinnen*, 40.
[31] See de Hart's discussion of Maria Toet, "The Morality of Maria Toet," 49–50.

her from death in the camp."[32] Yet even after the horrors of the Holocaust had been revealed, such were the consequences of exogamy-expatriation laws.

Jean Rhys: Exogamist, Exile, Illegal Immigrant

Spanning from the late nineteenth-century through to World War II, the reign of exogamy-expatriation coincided directly with the heyday of experimental modernist literature in Britain and throughout Europe. In the novels of Jean Rhys written during this time, and particularly the two "Paris" novels – *Quartet* (1928) and *Good Morning, Midnight* (1939) – this concurrence is driven beyond the point of mere coincidence, as the effects of exogamy-expatriation are dramatized and expressed through the interweaving of foreign languages (predominantly French) and the elliptical, oblique characterizations that mark Rhys as a formal modernist. As I will argue, the interplay of French and English in Rhys' Paris novels is at one with her experience and representation of the predicament of women who have lost their nationality and national belonging through marriage. It is strange, then, that while many critics have discussed Rhys as a "border-crossing" author in relation to her Dominican heritage and her most famous, post-colonial novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, they have neglected to read this later work's representation of multilingual women in relation to her earlier, Paris-based novels or her exogamous marriage to Jean Lenglet. Few critics have discussed the overwhelming bilingualism of Rhys' earlier works,[33] and none at all have noted the relationship between her novelistic language and legal situation. Perhaps such silence represents an inadvertent legacy of the silence surrounding the issue of exogamy-expatriation during its legal instantiation: this major legal

[32] van Liempt, *Selma*, 117; translation is my own.
[33] Two notable, very recent exceptions are Juliette Taylor-Batty's work on the Paris novels in *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, 80-112 and Ania Spyra's analysis of multilingualism in *Voyage in the Dark*, "Language and Belonging."

disparity between men and women was treated publically as a non-issue in Rhys' time, and so it remains one to this day. As Rhys herself noted in a 1969 short story, the most insidious and "strange" crime against women isn't "dislike" or "fear," but rather, that "it's all so completely taken for granted […]. It has settled down and become an atmosphere, or, if you like, a climate, and no one questions it, least of all the women themselves."[34] Reading Rhys' work for the effects of exogamy and expatriation is one way to facilitate a climate change.

Rhys was aware of the repercussions of exile and linguistic difference from an early age. Growing up on Dominica, she was surrounded by the local *patois* (her family's house was on "la rue Hillsborough Street"), yet never a member of the community who spoke that language.[35] She was no more at home in Britain: in her first attempts to make her way in England as an actress via study at the London Tree School, Rhys was stymied and criticized for her ineradicable Dominican accent. This linguistic failing must have marked Rhys deeply, as she never recounted her dismissal from the Tree School in such terms, but instead claimed that her father's death left her mother unable to pay her tuition. In truth, Rhys' father was not yet dead when she left the school; it was Rhys' own, insuperable accent which was at fault. Even before this, Rhys watched her friend Honor Grove march out of the school after refusing to submit to the elocution master's pronunciation of the word "Froth," which she, the daughter of a grammarian, found "cockney" and lower-class.[36] By the age of nineteen, then, Rhys was well aware of the lines that language, class, and birthplace could create.

The crux of Rhys' linguistic and physical dislocation, though, was her marriage to Jean Lenglet. Rhys met Willem Johan Marie (Jean) Lenglet in 1918 in London, where he was on an

[34] Rhys, "I Spy a Stranger," 248–9.
[35] Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 9.
[36] Ibid., 47–50; Rhys herself retold the Grove story in *Smile Please*, 84.

intelligence mission for France.[37] From their very first encounter, Rhys and Lenglet's relationship was marked by the dual themes of gender and international travel. In her 1979 memoir Rhys recounts the start of their first conversation, after Lenglet called her out for laughing at a woman she didn't know:

> In a burst of frankness I said, 'No, I don't know anything about her. There's nothing to laugh at and I don't know why I did it.' He didn't answer this, and we began to talk about passports. Before the 1914 war passports didn't exist. You had to have one for Russia or Turkey, otherwise you went where you liked provided you had the money. He told me he was in London on a diplomatic passport. His stay was limited. He was going to Holland to lecture, or so I understood. He told me he was half French, half Dutch, and lived in Paris. 'All this passport business is only because it's wartime,' I said. 'They'll stop it as soon as the war's over.' He smiled a little and said, 'Perhaps, perhaps.'"[38]

As Rhys would learn only later, Lenglet's hesitation regarding passports was well-placed. The son of a French father and a Dutch mother, Lenglet was Dutch by birth, as he had been born on Dutch soil just prior to the 1892 Dutch legal change from *jus soli* to a *jus sanguinis*, which would have rendered both himself and his mother legally French.[39] Instead, Lenglet was Dutch, yet he remained so only until 1914, when he joined the French Foreign Legion, for which, under the long-standing Napoleonic Code, his Dutch citizenship was revoked on the grounds that he had fought for a foreign army. Lenglet would later dramatize this loss of citizenship and its repercussions in his novel *In de Strik*, writing in the introduction, "The reader may well ask: 'How does one lose his nationality?'" Lenglet's answer: "Very easily."[40] The ease of Lenglet's nationality-loss is deeply ironic, for if he had only been born a few years later, under the 1892 Dutch law, he would have been born French, and thus have saved himself and Rhys much later

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[37] Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 105.
[38] Rhys, *Smile Please*, 111.
[39] On the Dutch legal change, see de Hart, "The Morality of Maria Toet," 53; According to the *Digitale Bibliothek voor de Nederlandse Letteren*, Lenglet was born in 1889 in Tilburg; "Edouard de Nève."
[40] de Nève, *In de Strik*, 7; for information on Lenglet's biography, see Kappers-den Hollander, "Jean Rhys and the Dutch Connection"; Lenglet published his fiction under the pseudonym "Edouard de Nève." *In de Strik* was published in Lenglet's own translation in French as *Sous les Verrous* and then in a translation into English by Jean Rhys (from the French) as *Barred*. The translation is my own.

adversity.[41] Despite all of this, though, when Lenglet met Rhys, he was legally "stateless," and when Rhys married him in the Hague in 1919, she automatically lost her British nationality and became stateless, too.

This is where the couple's real troubles began. Rhys and Lenglet could not depart the Netherlands for Paris for another six months, since Lenglet did not have a valid passport. Rhys, who, upon leaving Britain "had armed myself with a passport although I was convinced that when everything was back to normal it would be useless," retained this despite the fact that after her marriage it was legally void.[42] Rhys' focus on the issue of passports in her much later account of her marriage to Lenglet suggests that the issue of nationality was a central preoccupation for her during this time and inextricably linked with her memory of their marriage. Although she never commented on her and Lenglet's nationality problems directly, she addresses them constantly, obliquely in her fiction, suggesting that she was well aware of the tenuousness of her position in Paris, and even of her ability to arrive there. This is evident in a diary-like draft of *Good Morning, Midnight* which replays the experience of crossing from Belgium into France:

> here I was without money & without a passport & going to have a baby. Going without a passport to cross from Belgium to France. How? Just by walking over the frontier. By walking along the road between rows of poplar trees at night. A quiet night with a moon up. Walking along until you get past the sentry & finding yourself in Dunkirk in the early morning so tired so tired…. And the fear….
> Because just as we were going to sleep in the train a soldier came up & asked for our passports…. I looked at the ground. I didn't want to look at him or hear what he'd say. But when I looked up again he was making the gesture of passing us on. [43]

Once in Paris, Lenglet and Rhys' situation did not improve. Like Stephan Zelli in

[41] An additional irony: as Angier explains, upon marrying Rhys Lenglet was still legally married to his second wife, whom he only officially divorced in 1925. His polygamy might have nullified his marriage to Rhys had it been known, thus, again, saving her the trouble of joining him in matrimony and statelessness (and adding an interesting autobiographical twist to the polygamy plot of *Wide Sargasso Sea*). See *Jean Rhys*, 105.
[42] *Smile Please*, 114; see also Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 106.
[43] Qtd. in Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 106–7.

Quartet, Lenglet took up shady work as an antiques dealer before leaving with Rhys for Vienna, where he worked as a secretary-interpreter for the Interallied Disarmament Commission. In contrast to their earlier poverty, Lenglet's illegal monetary dealings in Vienna kept the couple flush until they were discovered and forced to flee back to Paris. There, Lenglet was arrested – whether for theft or for entering France illegally remains uncertain (Rhys claimed the latter) – and upon his release from prison, was ordered to leave France, since he was not a French citizen. Meanwhile, Rhys began an affair with Ford Madox Ford, then living in Paris with his common-law wife Stella Bowen, and her marriage to Lenglet dissolved.[44]

It is symptomatic of the prevailing dominance of male figures in the story of British modernism that Rhys' marital and citizenship troubles have been best documented through criticism discussing her relationship with Ford and the literary offspring borne by this jagged pairing. Several critics have discussed the quadrangle of texts – Bowen's 1940 memoir, Ford's 1932 novel *When the Wicked Man*, Lenglet's *In de Strik* (and its translations), and, of course, Rhys' *Quartet* – which surround Rhys and Lenglet's Paris years and the crux of their nationality troubles following Lenglet's imprisonment and deportation.[45] Yet only Lenglet's novel shows the extent of the role of exogamy-expatriation in the breakup of his and Rhys' marriage, or – interpreted slightly differently – Rhys' use of the exogamy-expatriation issue in facilitating her exchange of the stateless and disenfranchised Lenglet for the settled, successful, and British – if slightly German – Ford. (Although, as I discuss in Chapter 2, Ford had his own nationality troubles, these were more or less resolved by the time he met Rhys in postwar Paris.) In Lenglet's *In de Strik*, Rhys is depicted as the scheming, vicious Stania, for whom Lenglet's character, van Leeuwen, desires to return illegally to Paris after his deportation. Upon his return,

[44] Ibid., 108–28.
[45] See O'Connor, "Jean Rhys's Quartet"; Delany, "Jean Rhys and Ford Madox Ford"; Gilson, "Internalizing Mastery"; Gardiner, "Rhys Recalls Ford."

though, Stania refuses to let him stay in her lodging, ostensibly out of the fear that the police "will kick me out, the same as you, if they knew that you came here."[46] This marital abandonment – for which van Leeuwen ultimately blames Hübner (aka Ford) – suggests that most of the parties involved in this love-quadrangle were aware of the consequences of Lenglet's statelessness for Rhys. Even Bowen seems to have known of her predicament, enumerating Rhys' detractions as "bad health, destitution, shattered nerves, an undesirable husband, lack of nationality, and a complete absence of any desire for independence."[47] Bowen's and Lenglet's depiction of Rhys' fecklessness in her marriage may be partly accurate, yet neither takes into account the crises of conscience that must have attended Rhys' decision to take her expatriation, disenfranchisement, and general cultural estrangement into her own hands, devising some other solution than clinging to her stateless husband's apparently sinking ship. It is through the hybrid and uncertain language of Rhys' self-reflecting characters that, I will argue, Rhys herself dramatizes the challenges, ambivalence, and ultimate failure of expatriated women to forge their own path, to find an existence in the space between languages.

Linguistic Exogamy and *Quartet*, or "Love dying, because of an inequality of language"[48]

In Rhys' fiction, language and marriage are inherently linked, and their nexus is exogamy: in marrying outside of one's nation and culture, more often than not one marries outside of one's language, as well. In order to encompass this predicament, I use the term "linguistic exogamy," a concept that I adapt from its use in anthropology to describe the practices of particular indigenous groups in Australia, North America, and the Amazon in which people speaking the same language or dialect are understood as unmarriagable kin, that is, in

[46] de Nève, *In de Strik*, 177. See also 149. The translation is my own.
[47] Qtd. in Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 141.
[48] Rushdie, *Satanic Verses*, 189.

which linguistic exogamy is compulsory. For instance, in kin-groups within the Tukanoan culture in the Amazon, language precedes all other definitions of kinship: "A Bará is not likely to say, 'We are Bará because we do not marry one another' but to say, 'We are Bará because we speak the same language; people who speak the same language do not marry one another.'"[49] The contrast between this view of assumed, perfunctory linguistic exogamy[50] and the deep impediments to European linguistic exogamy in the early twentieth century makes the use of this term in relation to the latter all the more striking. Rather than being encouraged to vary their genetic heritage and cultural acumen by marrying outside their own language, women like Rhys and her protagonists are subjected to such legal exclusion and social estrangement that the differences in language between them, their husbands or lovers, and their surroundings come to signify the perils and pitfalls of border-crossing itself. For women in twentieth-century Europe, language difference and linguistic exogamy were not something to be prized, but rather something to be avoided as harbingers of exclusion and expatriation.

Rhys' first Paris novel, *Quartet* (1928), presents a case-study of the consequences of linguistic exogamy through the personal and social disintegration of a victimized, often feckless British woman, Marya Zelli, as she is caught in the fatal rift between languages and cultures after marrying a Polish husband. In this *roman à clef,* Rhys dramatizes Marya's linguistic estrangement through a careful mixture of French and English, demonstrating Marya's passive inability to navigate the idioms of her milieu, and suggesting that it is the movement between languages which prevents her from finding repatriation in any one of the groups she encounters in Paris. As Rhys shows, Marya is disenfranchised both by her circumstances – her Polish nationality-by-marriage, her husband's eventual imprisonment – and by her own fatal sense of

[49] Jackson, *The Fish People*, 84; see also Aikhenvald, "Multilingual Imperatives."
[50] See Jackson, 136.

false superiority, which prevents her from embracing a hybrid idiom. Thus, she is unable to find a home either in the French Paris of her environs, the Anglo-Saxon expatriate Paris of her lover Heidler (a stand-in for Ford), or the international, underworld Paris inhabited by her husband Stephan (a figure for Lenglet). Nor can she devise an idiom of her own by which to cope with and combat these groups' language games.

Marya's inability to integrate herself via language is indicated on the very first page of the novel:

> Often on the Boulevards St Michel and Montparnasse shabby youths would glide up to her and address her hopefully in unknown and spitting tongues. When they were very shabby she would smile in a distant manner and answer in English: 'I'm very sorry; I don't understand what you are saying.'[51]

Considering Marya's Englishness, this scene should strike the reader as strange: why do these youths address her in particular? What indefinable quality marks her as "foreign," neither French nor English, but a speaker of a "spitting tongue"? Why do they not apprehend, as Rhys herself noted in another short story, that by dint of her location in Anglo-expat-ridden Montparnasse, it should "be very easily gathered that the Lady was an Anglo-Saxon"?[52]

As we learn in the next few pages, the answer is that Marya is neither French nor wholly Anglo-Saxon nor wholly foreign. In a conversation with the English socialite Miss De Solla, Marya reveals that she doesn't "know any of the English people in Paris," pushing aside her friend's "shocked" response – "How perfectly lovely for you!" – and voicing dubiosity toward Miss De Solla claim that one ought to get away from Anglo-Saxons when in Paris. The problem, as we might infer here, is that to get away from Anglo-Saxons – Marya's own group of origin – would entail becoming integrated in the local French culture, a feat that Marya does not seem to want or be able to accomplish. As we have already seen, even youths on the street mark her as

[51] Rhys, *Quartet*, 5. Subsequent citations will be noted parenthetically in the text.
[52] Rhys, "In the Rue de La Arrivée," 50.

non-French. Miss De Solla, by contrast, reasons that if Marya remains outside the Anglo-Saxon community, then her husband must be French, to which Marya responds flatly, "No […] He's a Pole." This revelation elicits Miss De Solla's sympathy, as she changes the subject to criticize the English as having "something unreal" about them. Marya, for her part, concludes that "it's pretty lonely, not knowing any English people" (6-9). In this short exchange, Rhys reveals Marya as a character who apparently exudes foreignness, yet whose circumstances and passivity place her outside of any single locus of affinity. Unable or unwilling to share her husband's Polishness – which has been passed on to her legally by marriage – or to learn the "spitting tongues" (perhaps Polish?) spoken at her in the street, she speaks back in English, yet remains estranged from the other Parisians who speak her mother-tongue.

Rhys herself knew much about feeling separated by language and place. Legally stateless after her marriage to Lenglet, she did not, like Marya, speak her husband's native language (Dutch), and the only official identification provided to her after marriage was a 1920 "*passeport à l'etranger*" issued by the French government – a document designed not as a mark of belonging, but for the purpose of *leaving* France.[53] Expatriated from England, France, and even the Netherlands, the latter of which she knew very little, Rhys was aware that for people like herself and Marya, the term "expatriate" did not signify a unified, voluntarily expatriated community (like Stein's in Paris), but rather, an involuntary label that set one adrift from any stable identity. When Ford was introduced to her as a benefactor "famous for helping young expatriate writers," Rhys allegedly responded, "Expatriate? Expatriate from where?"[54] No question could better encapsulate the sense of utter placelessness – expatriation among expatriates – with which Rhys would infuse her depiction of Marya.

[53] Kappers-den Hollander, "Jean Rhys and the Dutch Connection," 167; Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 121.
[54] Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 131.

In *Quartet*, Rhys explains that Marya is no stranger to displacement: she "had not been suddenly and ruthlessly transplanted from solid comfort to the hazards of Montmartre. Nothing like that. Truth to say, she was used to a lack of solidity and of fixed backgrounds" (15). The presence of this instability in Marya's everyday life is dramatized by her frequent code-switching at moments of transition between her mother-tongue (English) and the language of her milieu (French). Upon returning home from the English Miss De Solla's, she is greeted by her husband Stephan not in either husband of wife's mother-tongue, but in the third-party language of their relationship – French: "*'Tiens, Mado*. […] You're very late" (11). Later, troubled by the invitation by Heidler's wife Lois to move into the Heidler household, she responds to the threat of immersion in their Englishness by comforting herself in French, "*Ah, ma pauvre vieille!*" (54). These transitions between languages emphasize the fact that Marya belongs to no single place or language, and further, suggest that she is partly at fault in rejecting affiliation when the possibility presents itself.

In seeking to "get away" (like Julia or Rhys) by marrying Stephan, Marya puts herself into a position where the stakes of estrangement and non-affiliation mount increasingly higher. Lois Heidler tells her a significant, premonitory anecdote about an Anglophone chanteuse, "Plump Polly," who starts a riot at the Dôme club by singing the Marseillaise:

> Oh, she was very serious, tears in her eyes and all that. All the Americans were delighted, but the French people thought that she was singing an English parody – well, you know what French people are sometimes. And it was the 14th of July. They broke a lot of glasses and things, and Plump Polly had to be hustled out the back door by the *patron*. (61)

This story signifies more than the patriotism or hot-headedness of the French; it shows the difficulty and potential violence of voluntarily crossing-over between languages and cultural affiliations. As it suggests further, if "Plump Polly" cannot survive such a move intact, the chances of Marya's success are even lower. Indeed, Marya's existence between languages and

between recognized affiliations elicits a more muted, but similarly aggressive reaction from those with whom she might form a more stable connection. Stephan, usually kind and patient with Marya, seems loathe to induct her into his own national, Polish identity – her legal identity – but instead presses her to join the Anglo-Saxon Parisian expatriates. "They're your country-people, aren't they? You understand them and they understand you," he urges, tentatively distancing her from him despite her demurral (56). Yet as Marya makes her first foray among the Heidlers' Anglo-Saxon set, they speak of her in the third-person, as an outsider, "as if she were a strange animal or at any rate a strayed animal – one not quite of the fold" (11). Heidler goes so far as to interrogate her, "But you are English – or aren't you?" (12). Marya responds in the affirmative, but the question itself – and the underlying perception which prompts it – suggests that no quantity of insistence will actually *make* her English in the eyes of this group. Nor *is* she actually English: she is Polish by marriage and effectively, like Rhys herself, stateless.

The single place in which Marya attains an identity is in the context of sex. Sex obviates the need for spatial, linguistic, or cultural identity at all, opening up what Kristin Czarnecki refers to as the "nihilistic space" inhabited by women both during and after an affair.[55] This is most clearly enunciated in the title of the chapter in *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie* in which Julia takes her lover Horsfield up to her boarding-house room: "It Might Have Been Anywhere."[56] Such a label places this chapter at one with sex scenes in myriad other novels of this era and after,[57] in which sex provides a respite from violent political or social conflict by creating a place-out-of-place. In Rhys' *Mackenzie*, though, the efficacy of such sexual no-space is belied by the fact that, in the end, Julia doesn't take Horsfield to bed just "anywhere" – she does so in her

[55] Czarnecki, "'Altered and Cut to an Echo'," 29.
[56] Rhys, *Mackenzie*, 150.
[57] Stevie Smith's *Over the Frontier* (1938), Elizabeth Bowen's *The Heat of the Day* (1949), or the bombed-out sexual no-space in Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair* (1951) resemble it strongly.

boarding-house, and is subsequently evicted.[58] The ultimate irony of Rhys' chapter-title suggests that we must read sex's promise of providing a freedom from place, identity, or justification for her protagonists as, at best, fleeting. Ultimately, it destabilizes the protagonists' already tenuous traction and stability in a place, as is exemplified by Julia's eviction. A similar rule holds true in *Quartet*: Stephan and Marya are lovers and married, yet the space of their marriage does not provide Marya with grounding or identity once Stephan is arrested and effectively abandons her to the Parisian Anglo-Saxons. Marya instead turns to Heidler, who makes himself her lover as he promises (in response to her hesitation) that he understands her: "Oh, yes, I do, my dear […] Oh, yes, I do" (83). In the end, though, he provides no such understanding nor, consequently, identification – and his pre-orgasmic echo of Molly Bloom's "yes I said yes I will Yes" makes mockery of the possibility of such sexualized promises to provide the reconciliation suggested by *Ulysses*' finale.[59]

If sex promises one type of respite from the question of nationality and affiliation, Rhys' protagonists seek another by engaging in imaginary, arbitrary games of identity. Sitting at a café, Marya looks over the names of foreign newspapers, "*Magyar Hirlap, Svenska, Poochi, Pesti Hirlap*" – their names representing a foreignness so complete that even French or English cognates are useless in deciphering them – and she "imagines herself in the train, thudding across the great plain of Europe" with Stephan (174-6). Without knowing where they might go, she repeatedly begs Stephan to take her with him, whether it be to Poland or Argentina (144, 172). She shows no investment in the particularity of place, but instead, as Julia does, wishes simply to be "away." Julia, wandering the streets of Paris alone, engages in a similar type of play between imaginary and real space, deciding that "If a taxi hoots before I count to three, I'll go to London.

[58] Rhys, *Mackenzie*, 170.
[59] Joyce, *Ulysses*, 644.

If not, I won't."[60] As it happens, the taxi does hoot. The precariousness of Marya or Julia's "plans" – if they can be called plans – contrasts dangerously with the male-driven mechanics of travel and belonging in Europe, the institutions of passports and border-control. This contrast enacts the central paradox of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*: communities may be imagined by women like Marya or Julia, yet only certain, predominantly male players attain the right to imagine them into actual being. As the politics of the interwar period attest, once these "imagined communities" are brought into existence as nations, they are violently and dangerously real, asserting their reality through language and bureaucracy, as well as military movement. Marya may tell a lawyer at Stephan's trial that she isn't Polish, but the fact remains that her permit to visit him in prison reads "Marya Zelli, aged 28 years, British by birth. Polish by marriage" (31, 35).

The men in Rhys' novels do suffer, too, under the arbitrariness of European bureaucracies and citizenship laws – Lenglet, after all, lost his nationality on just such a legal quirk as did Rhys – yet they differ from Rhys' female protagonists in their ability to take control of obstacles to their linguistic affiliation or national identity. Stephan's friend Bernadet voices men's different attitude toward trans-European daydreaming: "To tell you the truth […] I have no curiosity at all about other countries. None. After all, what can I find in other countries that I can't find better in France? Of course, if one went to make money it would be different" (174). Benstock explains this difference as a contrast in the mode by which men and women were expatriated during the interwar era: women internalized a sense of exile ("like the internalization of cultural misogyny") while men did not. Thus, male expatriation might be compared to female exile in analogy to the "tensions between *fatherland* and *mother tongue*."[61] In other words, for

[60] Rhys, *Mackenzie*, 57.
[61] Benstock, "Expatriate Modernism," 23.

women, expatriation and exile are something inward, affecting one's very ability to express oneself (effacing, through linguistic exogamy, the figurative female lineage of one's "mother tongue"). For men, by contrast, expatriation is something external to the self, something that can be criticized and combated, a "fatherland" that remains, even as one is forced to travel outside of it. Stephan may travel to Paris, and yet (at least in 1928) Poland still retains a place on the map.

In Rhys work and life, this dominance of "fatherland" over "mother tongue" is enacted through men's control of language. As Rhys later remembered, it was the outstandingly multilingual Lenglet who determined which language the couple should speak to each other: "Jean [Lenglet] insisted that when we were together we must speak English. He said it was far more important that he should learn to speak English without an accent than for me to learn French."[62] Similarly, it is clear in *Quartet* that Stephan is the one who determines the language (French or English) in which his relationship with Marya will take place. He prevails in doing so even as his own English is demonstrably less correct than Marya's French, as shown in a letter to her (Rhys notes expressly that it is written in English): "*My dear Mado,* […] *I fear that you must be most unquiet*. […] *Come to see me on Thursday, the day of the visits, and I will try to explain things. My dear, I have such a cafard. Stephan*" (32-3). Stephan's ability to control the language spoken – even when spoken imperfectly – is a source of strength for him, as for the various multilingual men (most modeled on Lenglet or Ford) in Rhys' Paris novels. As Angier explains, it was Lenglet's linguistic aptitude which kept him and Rhys afloat, and even temporarily solved their "passport problem": "Whenever he couldn't get a newspaper job he used his language skills, to be a spy, secretary to Colonel Miyake, tutor, travel guide."[63] In the Fresnes prison in *In de Strik*, Lenglet depicts his avatar van Leeuwen as using multilingualism to his advantage, as

[62] Rhys, *Smile Please*, 118.
[63] Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 113, 138.

well, gaining better treatment by working as a librarian, translator, and amanuensis. Only in Rhys' depiction of Lenglet as Stephan does his multilingualism serve as anything like a liability, as Stephan complains that his lawyer "didn't know his métier. Instead of defending me he told the court that I knew six languages" (46). Perhaps this is Rhys projecting her own anxieties about code-switching onto Stephan, or perhaps – more likely – this episode reveals the one vulnerability within male linguistic control: the underlying threat, discussed at length in Chapter 3, that the multilinguist could switch sides as a spy.

Yet the real master of linguistic control in Rhys' life was not, of course, Lenglet, but rather Ford Madox Ford. In *Quartet*, Rhys depicts Heidler – Ford's counterpart – as exhibiting a very Fordian "mania for classification," by which he "force[s]" Marya "to be nothing but the little woman who lived in the Hôtel du Bosphore for the express purpose of being made love to. A *petite femme*" (118). Indeed, by the time Rhys wrote this line, Ford himself had already committed the greatest act of classification, rechristening her in his *transatlantic review* as the androgynous "Jean Rhys" – a combination of her husband's first name and her paternal family name, "Rees" – and thus forever effacing her born identity as Ella Williams.[64] In doing so, Ford stamped Rhys with three acts of male naming – her husband's, her father's, and Ford's himself – and yet it is characteristic of Rhys that she transformed this hegemonic male creation into her own brand, wresting "Jean Rhys" out of Ford's hands and pinning it to her own, distinctive form of feminist fiction.

Ford's linguistic influence in Rhys' life, though, did not stop at her name. Operating within a clear patriarchal economy of letters, Rhys first met Ford as she was attempting to supplement her and Lenglet's income by publishing translations of two of his stories.[65] Ford saw

[64] O'Connor, "Jean Rhys's Quartet," 129 and 140n. See also Angier, 138.
[65] Rhys, *Smile Please*, 123.

her talent, took her under his wing, and set about educating her as a writer, which he did almost exclusively via language and translation. He assigned her French novels (Maupassant, Flaubert, Colette) to learn "clarity and precision," encouraged her to translate her work into French to check its readability, and challenged her to translate one of his own books into French. Later, he landed her the job of translating Francis Carco's *Perversité* (1928) into English, but the publisher, Pascal Covici, ended up publishing the book under Ford's name, presuming that the famous novelist would sell better than the neophyte, female translator.[66] Rhys was livid at this, just as she was years later, when Lenglet translated several of her stories into Dutch "with an occasional minor alteration" in his 1934 collection *Aan den Loopenden Band*, billing these as his own work. Rhys, who did not know Dutch, was only apprised of this "piracy" when it was outed in the *Haagse Post*.[67] In both of these cases – Lenglet's and particularly Ford's – the power of determining how language should be used and of gaining influence in the publishing world is a matter of gender politics conditioned by economics. Rhys was well aware of how this Ford-Lenglet-Rhys hierarchy worked, and she embedded it in her fiction. In a later story, "Kikimora," her clearly autobiographical protagonist "Elsa" quips to "Stephen" of their visitor Baron Mumtael (another Ford-figure) that, "It must be comforting to be able to take out naturalization papers when you find your spiritual home."[68] As Elsa (Rhys) and Stephen (Lenglet) would well have known, this option was not open to people of their class and financial standing.

Marya's Linguistic Failures

Language, while a source of instability for Rhys' displaced protagonists, is also a potential source of control and power, as its acquisition and navigation is one of the few modes

[66] O'Connor, "Jean Rhys's Quartet," 129–30; Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 134–5, 164.
[67] Kappers-den Hollander, "Jean Rhys and the Dutch Connection," 165–6.
[68] Rhys, "Kikimora (1976)," 334.

in which women can affect their own fate. Rhys depicts women like Marya as taking conscious part in a great, politically-riven Wittgensteinian "language game," what Marya calls an "intricate game of which she did not understand the rules" (29). Her downfall in *Quartet* is brought about by her failure to participate in this game effectively – to communicate, to translate. She is as abject beneath languages as she is under international law, evincing a helplessness – or, one might say, fecklessness – that is dramatized vividly in the mingled and mangled languages of Rhys' story "A Night" (1927):

> One shuts one's eyes and sees it written: red letters on a black ground:
> Le Saut dans l'Inconnu…. Le Saut…
> Stupidly I think: But why in French? Of course it must be a phrase I have read somewhere. Idiotic.
> I screw up my eyes to get rid of it: next moment it is back again.
> Red letters on a black ground.
> One lies staring at the exact shape of the S. […] I don't belong here. I don't belong here. I must get out – must get out.
> Le Saut…. Le Saut dans l'Inconnu. […] L'Inconnu: black awful. One would fall, down, down, down for ever and ever. Falling.[69]

The question, "But why in French?" is the key to this story-narrator's dilemma: how to bridge the gap between saying and doing? How to do so when the language (and the act, the "leap into the unknown") are not familiar or entirely decipherable? And perhaps most importantly, how to confront a language which seems aggressive and invasive, inhabiting one's mind passively even as one cannot actively harness its power of expression or understanding?

"But why in French?" is the prevailing question – and quandary – of Rhys' Paris novels. Rhys' novels contain more French multilingual fragments than most other works in the English canon, comparable only to Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853) in the quantity and complexity of the French that they employ. French, of course, provides the milieu in which the Paris novels and stories take place; as in Brontë's novel, we must assume that much of the action takes place in

[69] Rhys, "A Night (1927)," 47–8.

French, even as it is recounted in English. In this sense, as well as in the grammatical and semantic nuance with which Rhys employs French fragments in her novels (the passage from "A Night," above, serves as a good example), this use of French is set apart from the gentrified, incidental French which authors like Ford use to characterize upper- and upper-middle-class English characters, or which – as I discuss in Chapter 2 – they pose as a foil to more immediately inimical languages like German. By contrast, in Rhys' work, French multilingual fragments generally mark the boundaries and fractures between languages as spoken by characters, and particularly women, who are neither French nor – strictly speaking – English. As Angier notes, French is almost never spoken by a major French character, as there *are* no French characters in Rhys' novels beyond *patronnes* (landladies) and their ilk. Instead, Angier argues, "French" in Rhys' novels generally stands in as short-hand for "not English," or worse, "not respectable."[70] This, of course, must be taken as the view from amidst the Anglo-Saxon community in Montparnasse. According to this censure, women like Marya who are forced constantly to traverse the boundaries between French and English are of a liminal class. Upper-class women like Lois Heidler only speak French in Rhys' Paris novels when they are linguistically slumming.

In *Quartet*, the insertion of French words and phrases mark the boundaries and emphasize the fracture of Marya's imperfect belonging in Paris. While we can assume that many of Marya's interactions here take place in French, the repetition of French words insistently reminds us that she understands the language only imperfectly, partially, and perhaps often by half-translating it into some form of English. In a typical dialogue, as Marya learns from her landlady that Stephan has been arrested, Rhys' mixture of French and English dramatizes Marya's confusion about how to proceed, as well as her efforts to take this blow in stride:

'Your husband will not return tonight, Madame.'

[70] Angier, *Jean Rhys*, 193.

> ‘Oh!’ said Marya. ‘Ah! *Bon*! Did he telephone?’ […]
> ‘Monsieur,’ said the *patronne*, ‘has been arrested. Yes, Madame, arrested. About an hour ago, about seven o’clock. An inspector and an agent came here. *En fin*…’ (24)

Anglophone readers will have seen gentrified French in so many English novels that many will likely glance over such exchanges with little thought, yet in Rhys’ work it is necessary to pay attention to *how* it is employed. Certain French nouns – “Monsieur,” “Madame” – are left unitalicized, suggesting their assimilation into Marya’s vocabulary. By contrast, others – “*Bon*,” “*patronne*,” “*En fin*” – are distinguished from the English text by italics. Not only does this recognizable device remind us that such words are foreign and pronounced (mentally) differently, but it also makes them stand out in our perception of *Marya*’s perception of this conversation. The bookending of the exchange in italicized French terms suggests that these are the brackets within which Marya absorbs the knowledge that her husband has been arrested and her domestic situation is about to change drastically. They accent the emotional shift from “*Bon*!” – suggesting that Marya is excited to have a night off, presumably to see Heidler – and “*En fin*,” the full-stop to the crucial information that has just been conveyed in this modicum of language. At the center is the “*patronne*,” the signifier of Marya’s recognition that, as always, she is being scrutinized, this time by a foreigner, one who seems brusque and uninterested in sympathy, and most importantly, one whom Marya must convince that her husband’s arrest will not change her financial situation and lead to her eviction (which, eventually, it does). The italicization of “*patronne*” – this word and its male fellow (“*patron*”) are uniformly italicized by Rhys, who always distrusted landladies[71] – marks Marya’s interlocutor as other and, according to her perception, adversarial.

A notable foil to the volatile mix of French and English in *Quartet* can be found in Lenglet’s *In de Strik*. Even as he tells approximately the same story as Rhys, Lenglet employs

[71] Rhys, *Smile Please*, 111.

French very rarely while writing in Dutch, not even in the multiple instances in which his avatar, van Leeuwen, comments upon the French jailors' insulting use of informal rather than formal pronouns.[72] The only instances in which Lenglet does use French, sparingly, are when he comes into contact with elements outside of his control, as upon his arrival in prison, or when he muses upon the language itself, as in his consideration of "la fuite" ("flight" or "release"): "'La fuite', that's the goal. The end of slavery – the forgetting of misère. 'La fuite' is the long-sought after wish that is finally realized. 'La fuite' is the dead-drunkenness, the wild joy of the freed animal."[73] Unlike Rhys, Lenglet allows van Leeuwen to ponder and play with the meaning of the French "la fuite," to define and control it at his leisure. He is not at the mercy of the French word – the word is at the mercy of his definition of it.

Lenglet's depiction of van Leeuwen's mastery of "la fuite" stands in stark opposition to Rhys' depiction of her female protagonists' apprehension and comprehension of French. Rhys' constant intermixture of French fragments betrays the sense that her protagonists – especially Marya – are far from mastering their adopted language, and instead, are forced to leave many half-understood or only empirically comprehended words and phrases intact in French, shying at an attempt to convert them into English. The much-repeated slang "*fichu(e)*" or "*fous*" is indicative of this limitation, as it signifies a recourse to French to express the sentiment, as Marya writes to Heidler, that one is, in English slang, "screwed," or worse, "fucked" (156).[74] This serves partly as euphemism – distancing the English-speaker from Marya's state of being ("*fichue*"/"screwed") – and partly as a mode of acknowledging that the act of becoming "*fichue*" has occurred not in English but in French. In this regard, such originally French emotion gains an

[72] See, for instance, de Nève, *In de Strik*, 37. The informal and formal second-person addresses ("je"/"U" and "tu"/"vous") in Dutch and French are generally analogous, and Lenglet employs them as such.
[73] Ibid., 125. The translation is my own; I've left untranslated those words that appear in French in the original Dutch text.
[74] See also the boat in Nice called, ironically, "*Je m'en fous*" ("I'm fucked") (155).

aspect of the ineffable for the Anglophone protagonist, a property that Rhys explores throughout *Quartet*, but perhaps most fully in her contemporaneous story, "Learning to Be a Mother" (1927). This tale might just as well be called "Learning to Give Birth in French," as it dramatizes the experience of an English-speaking mother giving birth in a French charity hospital (an episode that Rhys repeats in *Good Morning, Midnight*). Here, in the power of the "Sage-femme des Hôpitaux," the new mother's attempts to comprehend and survive the birth of her son are riven by her inability to understand and communicate in French:

> It is extraordinary how that electric light hurts one. If only I could get them to put it out. Painfully I try to remember the French for light.…'*Lumière … Éteindre la lumière.*' They do not understand and I begin to cry weakly. […] '*Anesthésique…. On m'a promis….'* She smiles and pats my hand. 'La la la la,' she says as she hurries away. I am alone again with the light.[75]

Just as ineffective as the narrator's attempts to make herself understood in French are her endeavors to make sense of this language through translations into her own English – faulty translations that reveal her merely partial grasp of the language. It is not that the protagonist does not understand French, but rather, that she takes it too literally. "'*Regardez* […] *comme il est beau votre fils*," she hears the attending nurse say, and translating this grammar literally as "Look how beautiful is your son!," she converts it from an exclamation of wonder to a half-interrogation, answering it with the opposite of admiration: "I look and think weakly: Poor hideous little thing!" Later, she hears her friend Colette refer to the boy with a common French endearment, yet translates this directly as its rather ugly, pitiful English equivalent, "the poor little cabbage." With such a deprecating, limited grasp of French, it is no wonder that she remarks, finally, on the irony of the French expression, "Sacred Motherhood! *La Femme Sacrée*!"[76] Although such ironic reflection would seem to stand as an incisive comment upon the

[75] Rhys, "Learning to Be a Mother," 55–6.
[76] Ibid., 56, 58.

French cliché, we might also read it as Rhys' indication that her protagonist understands *only* the ironization-in-translation of such phrases, and not their more innocent or sincere resonances within their original language.

"Learning to Be a Mother" prefigures the role that French will play in *Quartet*, as Marya must navigate various forms of extremity in a legally and socially French-speaking milieu. Her relative comfort in her native English rather than French is demonstrated in Rhys' account of her first visit to Stephan in prison, where they greet each other with exuberant, almost Etonian English: " 'Hallo, Mado!' | 'Hallo,' she said. 'My poor boy, what rotten luck!'" At this point, though, Stephan tells Marya that they are supposed to speak in French – presumably so that the prison guards can understand them – and their conversation breaks down; they begin to discuss how they might obtain money and Stephan refuses to explain why he was arrested. Marya responds in free-indirect discourse: "He doesn't want to tell me, she thought. And, after all, what does it matter? The iron band round her head was drawn tighter. He began to talk rapidly, gesticulating, but what he said conveyed nothing at all to her. She had suddenly ceased to be able to understand French. He had become strangely remote" (36). This episode, in which Marya's panic suddenly prevents her from understanding French, echoes Rhys' own experience of getting lost in Paris and finding herself incapable of mustering any French word beyond "*Nous sommes perdus*" ("we are lost"): "all my French had deserted me."[77] Such multilingual failure in moments of extremity – for which Rhys' phrase, "*Nous sommes perdus*," is an apt summary – demarcates the boundaries of the Anglophone protagonist's grasp of French. For the most part, women like Marya or Rhys herself remain fluent enough to get by in Paris, but it is in moments of difficulty – confronting imprisonment and poverty, giving birth, navigating a strange city – that language deserts them.

[77] Rhys, *Smile Please*, 121–2.

Yet why not English? After all, this is Marya's (and Rhys's) native language – why should this not provide a linguistic home for the expatriated protagonist? Rhys' reflection upon her own vexed relationship with English gives a hint of the class-bound contradictions with which she depicts the mother-tongue in her fiction:

> Oh, the relief of words. Always like a constant aching, no, an irritation, harsh, gritty, this feeling about England and the English. Disappointed love, of course. Still, I can be annoyed to a frenzy at their hypocrisy, their self-satisfaction, their bloody, bloody sense of humor, and stupid, lord, lord. Well, no more of this. This is an English room in an English pub. That is an English tree, and all the books you read are English books. O.K. O.K.[78]

The problem, then, is that Rhys loves English for the fact that she reads and speaks it – it is her linguistic patria – yet rebels against it for its encumbrance and culpability in English culture. This is the contradiction that Marya encounters in her relationship with the Heidlers' "Anglo-Saxon" Montparnasse expat-community. Like Rhys's "relief" in English words or Julia Martin's delight in the sense of repatriation that an English-reading crowd conveys on the train to Calais[79], Marya finds solace from her marital instability as she exits the Métro at Denfert-Rochereau and imagines, "In three minutes I'll hear somebody talking English. In two minutes, in a minute" (26). Yet, as we know, Marya will find only rejection and further alienation in this English society, marked as external to it not just by language, but by class. Specifically, she speaks the wrong sort of English for this poshly, voluntarily expatriate crowd. Heidler's wife Lois, a denizen of this expat clique, speaks with an upper-class English dialect that Rhys might have been familiar with from her friend Honor Grove: she calls a girl "gel" and rhymes "Marya" with "caree-er" (88). If she speaks French, she does so as an ironic jest embedded in Anglophone phrasing, urging her cohort to go to a music-hall, "Something *canaille*, what?" (85). Marya, by contrast, speaks with the dialect of her "poverty-stricken" people, using lower-class phrases like

[78] Ibid., 135.
[79] Rhys, *Mackenzie*, 60.

"D'you get me?," unable to participate in Lois' English idiom any more than she could communicate fluently in French (16, 93). Marya's class-bound marginalization within Montparnasse's expatriate community belies the frequent claim, as made by the critic Andrea Lewis, that for Rhys' protagonists, "it is the specific act of crossing national borders that brings about their alienation from English national identity."[80] On the contrary, English national identity – and all the class striation that goes along with it – is alive and well beyond England's borders, and women like Marya are not expatriated or alienated by the physical act of border-crossing, but rather, by the laws that render them "expatriate *in patria*" and the class-confines and poverty that inhibit them from finding repatriation in such expatriate communities.

Rhys emphasizes Marya's exclusion from English identity through her failed interaction with recognizably English literary tropes. Marya effectively cuts her ties to her home country as she neglects to engage in the well-worn English tradition of the epistolary novel. She does, indeed, receive a letter (and money) from her English aunt Maria, yet the correspondence falls flat as the aunt complains that "*you write so seldom and say so little when you do write. I feel that we live, and have lived for a long time, in different worlds*" (57-8). Nor does Marya send an answer to this letter, effectively cutting short the possibility of epistolary intimacy found in works like Jane Austen's *Lady Susan* (c. 1794). Marya's epistolary failure is further emphasized by her self-exclusion from the English inheritance of names, yet another recurring trope of connection in the literary and cultural landscape. Marya calls her aunt her "namesake," yet this seems not quite accurate, as the English aunt "Maria" is related only orthographically – and certainly not homophonically – to her Europeanized niece. On the other end of the class and cultural spectrum, Marya encounters yet another "namesake" in her young, casually pretty "little *bonne*" in Nice, yet this carefree French girl is as distant from the downtrodden Marya as is her

[80] Lewis, "Immigrants, Prostitutes, and Chorus Girls," 82.

staid aunt in England (157). Rhys, who herself had been made to adopt a new name (by Ford), is keen to the distance that such renaming can effect. She demonstrates her protagonists' distance from their English patria not simply by eliminating these recognizable plotlines and literary forms from her novels, but rather, by emphasizing her protagonists' failed inclusion within them.

Marya, more than any other of Rhys' protagonists, finds herself trapped by falling into the space between languages – between her husband's (unknown) Polish, her lost-patria's English, and her environment's French. Her relationship with Stephan is endemic to this liminality, and the couple's mounting distrust of each other is signified by their uneven mixture of languages. Leaving the prison, Marya tells Stephan "I love you," yet he responds not in kind, but with the French interrogation, "*C'est vrai?*" ("Is it true?"; 45). He follows this by saying "So long," capitulating to her English, yet his "grimace of a smile" upon her departure exposes this English as ironic, distancing rather than affiliating him with her (46). Rhys emphasizes Marya's fatal estrangement from her foreign husband by making him even more foreign than his real-life model, the Dutch Lenglet. Instead, Stephan is introduced as Polish, while his surname, Zelli, implies a further remoteness, as it alludes to the well-known 1920s Italian-American Montmartre nightclub owner Joe Zelli.[81] It is not even clear that Stephan *is* definitely Polish, since Rhys relates that "He told Marya that he was of Polish nationality" (17), yet this is only verified by Marya's own prison pass, which identifies her as Polish by marriage, yet presumably only on Stephan's word. Indeed, he might be as Polish as Lenglet was Dutch when Rhys married him. In other fictionalizations of Lenglet, Rhys shifts his nationality further and makes it increasingly ambiguous, increasingly "stranger and alien" (17). In her story "The Blue Bird" (1927), the character Carlo marries a "nondescript Greek" and in *Midnight* Sasha marries the Dutch Enno,

[81] See Reynolds, *Paris with the Lid Lifted*, 149–50; Kotynek and Cohassey, *American Cultural Rebels*, 95. As Kotynek notes, Zelli's place is mentioned as a destination for Brett Ashley and Jake in Ernest Hemingway's 1926 novel *The Sun Also Rises* (68-9).

whereas in *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie* the nationality of Julia's first husband is never specified, though she marries him to leave England, and loses their child in Hamburg.[82] In "Learning to Be a Mother," the protagonist explains that her husband is French though born in Russia, yet this assurance of her vicarious citizenship in France is undercut by a government employee who jeers, "A Bolshevik, no doubt!," causing her, at the last moment, to opt for the Anglo-French name "Robert" instead of giving her boy her husband's name, "Michel Ivan" (57). All of these shifts of nationality throughout Rhys' writing emphasize the instability of her protagonists' legal place as exogamic women, and also suggest Rhys' own, persistent memory of Lenglet's problematic citizenship.

While Rhys implies that her protagonists would benefit from becoming more embedded in at least one language and the culture that speaks it – English or French – she also presents this lesson with the caveat that one should not pay *too* much attention to language at the expense of the interpersonal relationships which language is meant to fortify. For protagonists like Marya, their true downfall resides in an obsession with language as-such, rather than what is expressed *in* language. At the meeting at which she knows that Heidler is breaking up with her, Marya becomes obsessed with the French word for "to jilt," "*plaquer*," explaining, "Awfully funny […] do you see that man opposite? Well, I know him and he knows me. And he knows, I'm sure, that you are *plaquéing* me. And so does the waiter. Isn't *plaqué* a good word?" Heidler orders Marya to "pull" herself "together" (148-9), but the fact is that Marya *has* pulled herself together – only in the wrong direction. She has focused on her half-knowledge of French – demonstrated by her admiration for the French verb, which a native Francophone likely would not notice – and has drawn it into a Franco-English hybrid ("*plaquéing*") rather than addressing the problem at hand, namely, her dismissal by Heidler and the financial and social difficulties that will ensue. In other

[82] Rhys, "The Blue Bird," 61; *Mackenzie*, 54.

words, language and translation becomes a red-herring obsession for Marya: finally, she seeks to take control of language, yet only in the moment in which her efforts and attention would be best directed elsewhere. As is so often the case in Rhys' work, this contrast between the gravity of the protagonist's interpersonal situation and her incongruous focus on linguistic and translational intricacies seems to mirror a real-life episode. Rhys recounts an incident in which she told a Frenchman that "I can abstract myself from my body." In response, "He looked so shocked that I asked if I was speaking bad French. He said, '*Oh non, mais…c'est horrible*.'"[83] Like Marya, Rhys directs her concern toward her linguistic failings, rather than addressing the more acute issue – the one the Frenchman notices – of her very strange, dualistic claim. Her story prefigures what will become Marya's ultimate, tragic flaw in this drama of linguistic exogamy: that she uses her incomplete linguistic control as an alibi by which to ignore situations that she does not want to recognize.

Private Languages in *Good Morning Midnight*

Rhys' 1939 novel *Good Morning, Midnight* seems, at least at first, to take up the plight of the expatriated, exogamous woman where Marya's story left off. Yet in this later work, Rhys interweaves French multilingual fragments in English text in order to present a new facet of linguistic exogamy, an exploration of the societal barriers instituted against women who strive to take their expatriation into their own hands by deriving their own idiom. Marya's successor, Sasha Jensen, is an Englishwoman living in Paris in tenuous circumstances, having returned to the city after the tragic loss of her child and the departure of her Dutch husband Enno (another figure for Lenglet).[84] Although Rhys includes a scene in the novel in which Sasha describes her

[83] His response: "Oh no, but…that's horrible." Rhys, *Smile Please*, 95.
[84] Rhys suggests that Enno – and consequently Sasha – is, like Lenglet, stateless (cf. Sasha's difficulty with filling

sensation of not knowing Dutch – "listening, not understanding. It was like being a child again, listening and thinking of something else and hearing the voices – endless, inevitable and restful"[85] – Sasha's main concern is, once again, not her husband's language, but French. At first, Sasha's attempts to live between languages seem more certain, more declarative than Marya's; she makes efforts to translate, to understand, and to communicate that would seem to exceed Marya's diffident, self-absorbed abilities. Such a change is emblematized by the differing covers of the current Norton editions of these two novels: *Quartet* shows an impressionist rendering of a naked woman, while *Midnight* presents a stylized photograph of a woman in a café, diligently writing.[86] The message of such depictions is clear: Marya is the paradigm of the lost, expatriated woman, her outlines shadowy and indistinct; Sasha, by contrast, is the empowered single woman in Paris, taking charge of her own fate through writing.

Yet a reading of *Good Morning, Midnight* reveals that this implicit trajectory of Rhys's protagonists – from object of our gaze to agent of self-expression – is far too idealized. Sasha's account does not prove, as critics like Nagihan Haliloğlu aver, that Rhys' protagonists make use of obstacles, failure, and pain to develop lives "outside of the framework of social hierarchies" and "in their own idiom." Rather, I would agree with Kristin Czarnecki in claiming that Rhys' women, and particularly Sasha, "do not move beyond culture, beyond socially sanctioned rites such as marriage, but try to scrape by on its fringes."[87] This is precisely Sasha's mode of being: she does strive to create her "own idiom," a hybrid language proper to her hybrid, marginal

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out a nationality form at her hotel, 15).

[85] Rhys, *Good Morning, Midnight*, 113. Subsequent quotations will be cited parenthetically in the text.

[86] The former is a painting, *Portrait of Eleanor* (1930), by the Paris-trained California artist Geneve Rixford Sargeant; the latter is a photograph by the American artist Saul Leiter (the title and date are not given, but since Leiter only began work in the 1940s, the photograph must be slightly younger than Rhys' novel). See Hughes, "Geneve Sargeant"; Brierly, "Saul Leiter."

[87] Haliloğlu, *Narrating from the Margins*, 4; Czarnecki, "'Altered and Cut to an Echo'," 30. Taylor-Batty makes a similar argument to Haliloğlu in noting that Rhys uses translation as a means of "exceeding the bounds of the English language," a "subversive mode of adaptation and appropriation"; *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, 82.

identity as an ex-English, ex-Dutch, presumably stateless woman living in Paris, yet she ultimately fails in this endeavor. Unlike Marya, though, her failure is answerable less to her inability or disinclination to master a mix of French and English, or even simply, as Juliette Taylor-Batty writes, to her "very sensitivity to nuance and to the failures of language," though this latter is certainly a factor.[88] Rather, Marya's failing lies in her attempt to contradict the linguistic tenet that the parameters of communication cannot be determined by one person alone, but must be the product of communal agreement on rules and meaning. As Ludwig Wittgenstein explains in his *Philosophical Investigations,* even in experiencing what one supposes to be a private sensation or in employing a "private" (mental) language, we are only able to depict such sensations or language to ourselves via a shared language, the language we have learned through contact with others – the only language we know. By consequence, it is impossible to attempt to create or use a "private language," since the only language we have access to is created and conditioned within a community of speakers.[89] In relation to Sasha, this means that any attempt she makes to take control of her world via the employment of an idiosyncratic, personalized language and mode of translation must result in failure. In the end, Sasha may attempt to create her own idiom, but she must do so only within the forms of language which society has provided her. Since she cannot escape the language of her societal surroundings, she remains relegated to its disenfranchised margins. In a moment of fleeting recognition, Sasha despairingly confronts the preordained failure of her efforts:

> Please, please, monsieur et madame, mister, missis and miss, I am trying so hard to be like you. I know I don't succeed, but look how hard I try. Three hours to choose a hat; every morning an hour and a half trying to make myself look like everybody else. Every word I say has chains round its ankles; every thought I think is weighted with heavy weights. Since I was born, hasn't every word I've said, every thought, everything I've done, been tied up, weighted, chained?" (106)

[88] Taylor-Batty, *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, 104.
[89] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §380, 256, and (more obliquely), 268.

This is the darker side of Wittgenstein's pronouncements against "private language": every word is "chained" by family resemblances to the rest of language; no word can be wrested from language by one person alone.

Throughout *Good Morning, Midnight,* Sasha wavers between a quest to comprehend her situation through a linguistically playful internal monologue and a recognition that this attempt at a private language can exert little agency in a world in which she is a linguistic, legal, and social outsider. This contrast between imagined verbal agency and actual, oppressive silencing is introduced in the very beginning of the novel, in which Sasha describes the arrangement of her orderly "little life" in Paris, an order which is belied even as she surveys her new lodgings in the novel's opening lines:

> 'Quite like old times,' the room says. 'Yes? No?'
> There are two beds, a big one for madame and a smaller one on the opposite side for monsieur. […]
> The street outside is narrow, cobble-stoned, going sharply uphill and ending in a flight of steps. What they call an impasse. (9)

The resolution of this passage in a literal "impasse" casts doubt on the certainty of its initial pronouncement: is Sasha's Parisian tableau really like "old times" or does she simply wish it to be? Is it even possible that it could be? The equivocating "Yes? No?"[90] suggests that all answers will point to the same, rhetorical conclusion: namely, that the difference between now and "old times" is at once inevitable and undefined. The two beds in Sasha's room betray the change in her situation – there is no "monsieur" with her now – and the impassive "impasse" in the street outside delimits her horizon. Like the centripetal questions "Yes? No?," the word "impasse" has the potential to be both French and English, yet its definition in both languages comes to one and the same "dead end." However Sasha translates this phrase from one language to the other, the "impasse" remains an "impasse." Regardless of tricks of translation between "yes" and "no,"

[90] Taylor-Batty makes the point that this "Yes? No?" sounds very Gallic. *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, 105.

French and English, Sasha's marginalized identity and status remain the same.

Even Sasha's verbal wit and adaptability fail to provide escape from the contradiction and destabilization of nationality brought about by exogamy-expatriation. Asked to correct her hotel "fiche" (a "form" – etymologically related to the familiar "fichu"), she is told that "I haven't put the number of the passport on the fiche," yet wonders further, "What's wrong with the fiche? I've filled it up all right, haven't I? Name So-and-so, nationality So-and-so…. Nationality – that's what has puzzled him. I ought to have put nationality by marriage" (15). This passage fails to clarify what information Sasha's *patron* requires: does he need to know her passport number or her nationality? He asks specifically for the former, and Sasha promises to hand over her passport later that afternoon, yet Sasha seems focused on diverting attention from this detail to the question of nationality. If she retains Enno's nationality – and as an English-born woman she would keep it even after a divorce – then she must remain stateless, without a valid passport to affirm her identity. Does her focus here on nationality – and the presumption that she *has* a nationality – allow her momentarily to ignore this predicament? Does her emphasis on nationality serve as an attempt to deflect the *patron*'s attention away from her lack of a passport, delaying the necessity of turning it over to him? The probability that Sasha's rather odd response is just such a calculated, intentional diversion is supported by the acuity with which she perceives the outward manifestations of her hybrid identity as they must appear to the *patron*: "he gives my hat a gloomy, disapproving look. I don't blame him. It shouts 'Anglaise,' my hat. And my dress extinguishes me. And then this damned old fur coat slung on top of everything else – the last idiocy, the last incongruity" (15). Sasha is well aware that her appearance is an amalgam of class- and nationality-markings, even down to the specificity with which she identifies her hat as legibly English, yet only English *in French*. She is, indeed, well

aware of the nuances of nationality and the way that they can be played – or fail – to impress her onlooker.

What Sasha most wishes to accomplish by her manipulation of identity – and what such episodes as the incomplete "fiche" prove an impossible endeavor – is to make herself unmarked, to have no identity at all except for the one she elects. This unmarkedness would be quite different from her legal status as "stateless," since the latter is not simply a lack of citizenship but also a prevention of enjoying the benefits of citizenship in any country. Unmarkedness, in theory, ought to allow Sasha to exist wherever she chooses, with whatever opportunities she desires. Indeed, in the entirety of the "fiche" episode, we never do find out what her nationality is (if she has one at all). The desire to become unmarked is emblematized by Sasha's quest to have her hair dyed "blond cendré" (what in English might be termed "ash-blond"). Her stylist seeks to dissuade her:

> But blond cendré, madame, is the most difficult of colours. It is very, very rarely, madame, that hair can be successfully dyed blond cendré. It's even harder on the hair than dyeing it platinum blonde. First it must be bleached, that is to say, its own colour must be taken out of it – and then it must be dyed, that is to say, another colour must be imposed on it.

Sasha's musing response – "Educated hair…. And then what?" (52) – confirms that she understands the underlying metaphor. The irony of her stylistic endeavor is that in this "most difficult" quest, she actually succeeds in erasing and imposing a chosen identity: her "blond cendré" is a "success" (62). The conspicuousness of the metaphor between hair and identity suggests that Rhys desires her reader to be in on the joke, and to recognize the irony of agonizing over this relatively easy transformation rather than focusing on deeper markers of selfhood.

The problem with Sasha's efforts to forge a new identity and a private language in which to make sense of her world is that this idiom is not readily intelligible to her interlocutors, and more often than not, Sasha's lively, intelligent inner monologue stands in stark contrast to her

actual utterances. This contrast – and its consequences – serves as the fulcrum for the prolonged episode in which Sasha loses her position as a receptionist at a Paris boutique (19-20). Upon being introduced to the boutique's visiting "London boss," Sasha is immediately asked, "And how many languages do you speak?" Assuming that this is a "joke" she answers "One" – evidently the wrong answer, since the boss responds that she ought to speak both French *and* German "fluently." Rather than defend her knowledge, Sasha mumbles only that she "[s]ometimes" speaks French, even as she elaborates this claim in an imagined explanation: "Of course, sometimes, when I am a bit drunk and am talking to somebody I like and know, I speak French very fluently indeed. At other times I just speak it." She further proves this claim by singing to herself in mental French, "Si vous saviez, si vous saviez, si vous saviez comment ça se fait." And yet all of this takes place within her mind, and the crux of this exchange is the deep contrast between Sasha's almost manic internal conversation and the limited, stilted dialogue which she actually carries on with her English and French overseers. Rhys' pairing of Sasha's French musings with her stunted, monolingual response readily underscores the basis for her boss's suspicion and disapproval. Yet Rhys also makes it apparent that if Sasha were only able to convert her internal monologue into an intelligible expression of her qualifications for her position, she might be able to win him over.

This is where Sasha's efforts toward creating an identity through a private, linguistically-hybrid language crucially fail. Afraid that the London boss now "wants to find out if I speak German," Sasha bursts out in a prolific, disorganized explosion of mental multilingualism:

> All the little German I know flies out of my head. Jesus, help me! Ja, ja, nein, nein, was kostet es, Wien ist eine sehr schöne Stadt, Buda-Pest auch ist sehr schön, ist schön, mein Herr, ich habe meinen [sic] Blumen vergessen, aus meinen grossen Schmerzen, homo homini lupus, aus meinen grossen Schmerzen mach [sic] ich die kleinen Lieder, homo homini lupus (I've got that one, anyway), aus meinen grossen Schmerzen homo homini doh ré mi fah soh la ti doh… (24)

As this passage makes evident, Sasha's problem is less that she doesn't know German (she seems to have quite a collection of grammatically-passable phrases[91]), than that she seems unable to turn this into intelligible speech. It is telling here that the only part of this "German" which Sasha seems confident that she actually knows is not German at all, but rather, the Latin proverb "homo homini lupus" ("man is a wolf to man"), a cipher for the deep injury enacted and experienced by Sasha throughout the novel, and particularly in her altercation with the London boss. Beginning with assorted phrases in German, she flies translationally off the handle, spinning German words into the Latin phrase that best expresses her current state of mind.[92] This sort of free-radical translation and linguistic transformation occurs in several other instances in the novel, as when Sasha muses upon "Tristesse, what a nice word!" and then transforms this word into appositives which drift farther and farther from "Tristesse" ("sadness") itself: "Tristesse, lointaine, langsam, forlorn, forlorn…" ("lointaine" is "distance"/"remoteness" in French; "langsam" is "slow" in German; 47). Similarly, as she encounters the very Rhysian question, "Pourquoi êtes-vous triste, madame? Il ne faut pas être triste, madame," Sasha translates this beyond the simple "You mustn't be sad," transforming it into the further demand, "you must laugh, you must dance…" (141). The implication in all of this linguistic and translational drift is that even as Sasha strives to forge a hybrid mental idiom, she remains at the mercy of language's mutable connotations and connections, which lead her into a further mental fugue even as they estrange her from intelligible conversation with others.

The problem with Sasha's creation of a hybrid, idiosyncratic language is not that such linguistic play is entirely unintelligible to others; after all, her multilingual monologues are

[91] As Taylor-Batty notes, Sasha's allusion here to Heine, among others, demonstrates a "much greater linguistic competence and skill than she makes out." *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, 107.
[92] Sasha may well be thinking of Sigmund Freud's invocation of the phrase as an emblem of the human instinct toward aggression, in his 1930 *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur* (*Civilisation and its Discontents*), 76.

composed of a collage of shared language not dissimilar from the work of successful avant-garde modernist writers such as T.S. Eliot or James Joyce. Rather, the obstacle to Sasha's ability to make herself understood is that she does not share these writers' position of linguistic agency by which she might demand that others participate in and strive to understand her idiom. Further, Sasha's internalization of expatriation and marginalization, as described by Benstock, leads her to confine her playful idiom to her inner monologue, ceding linguistic agency to the men who she understands as holding the power of linguistic self-determination. It is this deference that finally loses Sasha her job. In a conclusion to the boutique episode, her London boss offers her a chance for redemption by delivering a letter from him to "the kise." Sasha has no idea what this word might mean, yet she neglects to ask for help, instead wandering around dumbly before she returns to find that the "kise" is really the "caisse," the cashier. Nevertheless, Sasha concludes that she had "Better not say anything" in her own defense, since to point out the boss's mispronunciation would "seem rude." She recedes, instead, into her internal monologue, absorbing the consequences of this misunderstanding rather than explaining it. Although it is the London boss's mispronunciation that gets Sasha fired, his position of power makes him immune to criticism about his French, even as Sasha's inner monologue (if not her actual utterances) prove that she is much more fluent in the language. Sasha recognizes – and reinforces – the gendered and social distinction by remarking that "He is one thing and I am another," yet she neglects to utter even this thought – in fact, she claims, "I didn't even think it" (28-9). The ultimate barrier to Sasha's communication is not that she misunderstands or lacks the language to express herself, but that she has so internalized the sense of national and linguistic marginalization that she silences even her *thoughts* of protest against the prevailing order.

As this episode makes evident, Sasha is deeply aware of the inherent incongruities of linguistic control, yet her multilingual musings have little effect in remedying misunderstandings and evening out linguistic power-dynamics. In Sasha's awareness of the limits of her language, Rhys differentiates her from Marya – who seems to have a tin ear for language politics – and also aligns Sasha's mental monologues with the modernist method of using multilingual fragments to explore situations of misunderstanding. Yet with Sasha, Rhys delves far deeper than most into the social consequences of multilingual misunderstanding, developing a complete narrative of Sasha's downward spiral into solipsism and sordidness. As Maren Linett concludes, Rhys' works are singular in that they "exemplify modernist fragmentation while intimating a deeper sense of pain and loss than most accounts of fragmentation acknowledge."[93] Rhys does not employ mental play for the mere sake of virtuosity, but instead illuminates the fault-lines of misunderstanding and futile self-aggrandizement that such multilingual, fragmented displays reveal in the mind of a woman who can claim no language as her own.

The brittleness of Sasha's mental multilingualism as a defense or cover for social alienation is revealed in two episodes in which she overhears other, more privileged Paris expatriates talking about her derogatorily in French. In both of these, Sasha understands the commentators' French barbs completely and even attempts to undercut them by mentally criticizing their French grammar and noting their speakers' foreignness. Yet in each of these instances her mental attempts at overturning these insults fail, since her mental translations and transformations of such insults cannot displace the actuality of the others' French declarations. In a restaurant, Sasha overhears a man ask his female companion "Tu la connais, la vieille?" ("Do you know the old woman?") and immediately reacts, "Now who is he talking about? Me? Impossible. Me – la vieille?" Yet the girl's responding question, "The Englishwoman?,"

[93] Linett, "New Words, New Everything," 437.

confirms her suspicions, and Sasha concludes that "This is as I thought and worse than I thought…. A mad old Englishwoman, wandering around Montparnasse. 'A Paris il ya des Anglaises, Oah, yes, oah, yes" (41). For Sasha, it is the knowledge of her conspicuous foreignness (she is *the* Englishwoman) that proves that the insult is directed at her. She strives to counter it by three different methods: first, by turning it into a sing-song demonstration of her own French knowledge ("A Paris…"); second, by discerning that its speaker is not actually French (he turns out to be Dutch, 44); and third, by staring the speaker down until he becomes embarrassed. The first and last tactics fail, since they serve simply as outward proof that Sasha is, indeed, a "mad old Englishwoman," and the observation that the man is not French fails to draw him down to Sasha's level of marginalization. Instead, it exposes the difference between the integrated, socially adept Dutch male expatriate – the one who can level a French insult with casual yet precise aim – and the silent, alienated, stateless woman who becomes the butt of his careless joke.

Yet it is not only men who out-spar Sasha in French; as Marya's experience with Lois Heidler demonstrates in *Quartet*, women can be just as off-handedly ruthless in asserting their place in the linguistic and social hierarchy. In yet another café, Théodore's, Sasha overhears an evidently expatriate girl ask "Et qu'est-ce qu'elle fout ici, maintenant?" ("Now what the hell is she doing here?"). Sasha immediately recognizes the harshness of the question, remarking upon such girls' "voices like uniforms […] Those voices that they brandish like weapons," yet instead of shooting a retort back at the rude girl, she mentally dresses down her French. "But what language! Considering the general get-up what you should have said was: 'Que'est-ce qu'elle fiche ici?' Considering the general get-up, surely that's what you should have said. What language, what language!" (51). Further, she steps up to the girl's challenge for female

dominance, analyzing her motivation and deciding that she has leveled this insulting question "partly because she didn't like the look of me and partly because she wanted to show how well she spoke French and partly because she thought that Théodore's was her own particular discovery." Mentally, Sasha assures her that "to my certain knowledge" the place has been known by "Anglo-Saxons" long before. Despite Sasha's acuity in perceiving her adversary's reasoning, her haste to defend herself by criticizing the girl's French and to engage with the girl in this silent competition for social and linguistic acumen reveals her underlying insecurity. Further, Sasha's futile attempts to place herself above this girl actually suggest that it is the girl who has the upper hand, since at least she has uttered her insult out loud – and to a companion – while Sasha is alone and unable to voice her retorts to anyone but herself.

In spite of Sasha's attempts to make light of and analyze away the insults leveled at her by the Anglo-Saxon girl or the Dutch man, it is clear that she is deeply wounded by them. After leaving the café, she continues to hear echoes of their criticisms as if they were reproaches against her very existence, the constant preoccupation of the stateless woman. Entering a park, Sasha buys a ticket: "Now everything is legal. If anyone says 'Que'est-ce qu'elle fout ici?' I can show the ticket. This is legal…. I feel safe, clutching it" (53-4), yet as darkness falls and the gates close, she repeats this question as a refrain of exile, "Qu'est-ce qu'elle fout ici, la vieille?" (56). This question is more than an insult; it is an existential interrogation: "Qu'est-ce qu'elle fout ici, la vieille? What the devil (translating it politely) is she doing here, that old woman? What is she doing here, the stranger, the alien, the old one? … I quite agree too, quite. I have seen that in people's eyes all my life. I am asking myself all the time what the devil I am doing here. All the time" (54). For the stateless woman – even one well enough versed in French to understand and toy with the insults launched at her, like a cat clawing at a ball of thread – the

most insistent, inexorable question is that of border-control: what are you doing here? And a more insidious question resides behind it: do you belong anywhere at all? why don't you just get out? Sasha is well aware that the answer to this question is that she doesn't belong here, nor does she belong anywhere – and no amount of mental exertion, no flaunting of French knowledge, no success in the game of expatriate-hipster one-upmanship will give her a footing.

Despite her suffering at the hands of other expatriates' French offenses, Sasha herself strives to wield and manipulate linguistic power over those foreigners whose ability to exist in a hybridized French/English is even less stable than her own. This is her ultimate failure – not only in failing to find solace in an idiom of her own, but in perpetuating the hierarchy of linguistic control, precedence, and exploitation that she herself experiences. Upon meeting the displaced Russian Nicolas Delmar, who claims to be a "naturalized Frenchman" yet seems even less at home in France than the stateless Sasha, Sasha focuses in on his imperfect grasp of French, launching into a "full blast of philosophical discussion" because his non-fluency "gives me confidence" (64). She capitalizes upon Delmar's linguistic diffidence, as she does, too, upon the insecurity of the young Russian to whom she gives English language lessons. Despite the fact that he speaks English nearly perfectly, she takes advantage of his dependency and accepts his money without protest (132). She is paid for doing practically nothing, and even less than nothing, as she does not correct the young man on the one grammatical mistake he makes (calling Sasha "dear sir"), effectively perpetuating the hierarchy by which Sasha will always maintain a greater control of English than this cautious Russian (139).

Most of all, Sasha attempts to assert linguistic control over her most enigmatic acquaintance, the gigolo René. Unlike the more affluent expatriates who exclude Sasha by insulting her in French or the French employers who induce the anxiety that she does not speak

French well enough, René immediately sets Sasha at linguistic ease by asking her to speak in her mother-tongue: "Excuse me, but can I speak to you? I think you speak English. […] Please allow me to speak to you. I wish to so much." As Sasha notes, he "speaks English with a very slight accent" whose origin she cannot identify (71), yet which places her in a position of control, since she speaks English demonstrably better than her interlocutor. In contrast to her other relationships, Sasha's friendship with René allows her to operate as the master linguist, instructing him in slang and fluency (151), and, through him, participating in a mixture of French and English in which her mental, private language becomes a communal language, at least between this pair. René speaks *like Sasha*, yet from the moment that he meets her and begs for her to speak English with him, he cedes the upper hand to her. The final tragedy of Rhys' novel is that rather than embracing René as a fellow in exile, Sasha grasps at his deference only as a mode of taking advantage of him. Her strategy backfires as she strives to hurt and exclude him much as she has been maimed by others, yet in the end harms herself far more deeply, recapitulating and solidifying her own loneliness. As in the rest of the novel, this conclusion is figured in linguistic terms. René tells Sasha, "Now everything's going to be all right" and in their shared mix of English and French, asks her "T'as compris?" Sasha knows that "the ritual answer" is "Si, j'ai compris," yet at this critical moment of fellowship and comfort, she cannot utter the words that would cement this communion. Instead, she recedes back from their shared idiom to her mental language, the failed language (since there can be no private language) that signifies her loneliness: "I lie there thinking 'Yes, I understand.' Thinking 'For the last time.' Thinking nothing. Listening to a high, clear, cold voice. My voice" (182-3). Instead of the French "Si, j'ai compris," she answers in silent English, "Yes, I understand," an utterance which, fundamentally, serves only to contradict its own claim. Having rejected René's friendship and

participation in a shared exile's idiom in favor of maintaining her own fleeting sense of power and linguistic control, Sasha is left alone with her only interlocutor, herself.

Exogamy in English: *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Self-silencing and the internalization of disenfranchisement are at the heart of Rhys' final and most acclaimed work, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), even as this last novel would seem – at least at first – to be an outlier among her earlier stories of linguistic exogamy in twentieth-century Paris. In many regards this is true: not only is *Wide Sargasso Sea* written nearly two decades after *Good Morning Midnight* and set a century earlier (in the 1830s), but it takes place not in Paris but very near to Rhys' own birthplace, in colonial Jamaica. More importantly, this story, which presents the early history of Antoinette Mason Rochester, the first wife of Edward Rochester and the proverbial "madwoman in the attic" of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), makes a notable departure from Rhys' earlier works in terms of its form and style, and specifically in its use of foreign language and its interweaving of multiple character perspectives. Although *Wide Sargasso Sea* includes fragments of French patois mixed into its English text, it does so much less extensively than in a work like *Good Morning Midnight*; Antoinette does not inhabit a world or a mindset that would support the sort of solipsistic verbal play employed by Sasha, and indeed, we are never brought close enough to Antoinette to become buried in her voice as we are in Sasha's. Although the novel begins by delving into Antoinette's first-person narration, it differs markedly from Rhys' earlier works (either the third-person *Quartet* or the first-person *Midnight*) in that it moves back and forth between Antoinette's own voice and that of her husband, the unnamed but readily identifiable Edward Rochester.

It would be easy, thus, to construe *Wide Sargasso Sea* as an entirely unrelated work, yet a

focus on linguistic exogamy demonstrates a deeper connection and progression from Rhys' earlier novels. In fact, to read *Wide Sargasso Sea*'s depiction of colonial women's multilingual navigation in light of the linguistic exogamy in Rhys' earlier Paris novels is to find the key to deciphering the linguistic anguish at the heart of Rhys' post-colonial critique. Rhys' adaptation of multilingual fragmentation from her Paris novels to a colonial context illuminates the colonial and misogynist violence buried in the rifts between languages, the collateral damage of gendered, racially-riven language games. To apply the rubric of linguistic exogamy to *Wide Sargasso Sea* is, in fact, to read it (and the post-colonial fiction of which it is an exemplar) as an amplification of the multilingual stories of exogamy, estrangement, and exile that run through all of Rhys' fiction. From the start, the basic similarities between Antoinette's marital situation and that of Marya or Sasha are readily apparent: even more so than her modernist counterparts, Antoinette suffers under the misogyny of British marital law, since her substantial colonial inheritance is the basis for her transatlantic marriage to the impecunious Rochester, and passes entirely into her husband's hands upon their marriage. Despite the disbelieving protest of her servant and confidante, the Martinican ex-slave Christophine, Antoinette explains that "I am not rich now, I have no money of my own at all, everything I had belongs to him. […] That is English law."[94] Such was the plight of any British heiress before the 1882 Married Women's Property Act reforms,[95] but Christophine's exaggerated disbelief suggests that there is a deeper conflict at play here, not only a contrast between possession and dispossession, but a clash between two disparate cultures. Indeed, how might we answer if we ask whether Antoinette is exogamic? Legally, she is as British as Rochester, yet as a white creole woman who is neither

[94] Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, 110.

[95] See Shanley, *Feminism, Marriage, and the Law*. If Antoinette had compared her situation with that of women in the U.S., she might have found it substantially different, as American married women began to be able to retain property as early as the 1830s (depending on the state in which they lived); see Wayne, *Women's Roles in Nineteenth-Century America*, 17–18.

fully at home among the black, recently emancipated population of the Caribbean nor, certainly, in Rochester's English homeland, she takes part in an expatriation more pervasive and profound than that experienced even by Marya, Sasha, or Rhys herself. As a female colonial subject, Antoinette is an expatriate even in her "home" country, and if she is exogamic, her experience of exogamy is one not simply of legal alienation but of extreme personal dislocation, an exogamy which cannot be ameliorated by divorce or repatriation, but one which exposes and widens a rift in Antoinette's very self. In this regard, Antoinette is the extreme conclusion of the story that Rhys has been telling all along: that the expatriation occasioned by sex, marriage, and exogamy is a legal and practical exponentiation of the alienation felt by women even from their birth.

Read in this light, we can understand Antoinette as experiencing a profound linguistic exogamy, but one of a slightly different sort than in Rhys' earlier works. This difference is signaled by the altered use of foreign language in *Wide Sargasso Sea* as compared with Rhys' Paris novels. Although Antoinette's ability to speak patois with Christophine sets her apart from the English-speaking Rochester, we cannot simply chart Antoinette's increasing sense of alienation by pointing to her recourse to a mix of languages, but must see the untranslatable rift between languages as penetrating to the very English that she speaks, setting her apart not only from Rochester but alienating her from her self. In other words, Rhys transposes the division that Marya or Sasha feel between French and English *into* English itself, exposing the language's divisions between different registers (as in the contrast between Christophine and Antoinette's English), as well as the divisions, multiple definitions, and uncertainties that lurk beneath even a "standard" form of the language. Antoinette doesn't need to speak in French to feel alienated from herself and her surroundings, nor does she even need to engage in exogamy to feel its linguistic effects; these experiences are already present in the English that she speaks from her

childhood, a consequence, Rhys suggests, of the inherent alienation of the colonial woman. As Carole Angier notes, *Wide Sargasso Sea* continues Rhys' earlier work in demonstrating, above all, "that truth is hidden beneath the surface, and particularly beneath the surface of words"[96]

Rhys' turn to *Wide Sargasso Sea*'s account of profound alienation may well be inflected by her own experiences in the years interceding between her publication of *Good Morning, Midnight* and, after two decades of gestation, her final publication of *Wide Sargasso Sea*. After divorcing Lenglet, Rhys returned to England, marrying first one English husband and, after his untimely death, another. Yet despite her recuperation, through marriage, of her British nationality and her achievement of a comparative financial equilibrium, Rhys struggled with repeated bouts of alcoholism and depression, and after her second husband's death so retreated from the literary world that it was rumored that she had died.[97] Indeed, in the course of a protracted dispute with her neighbors which resulted in Rhys' arrest and trial, she was allegedly accused of "impersonating a dead writer called Jean Rhys." As she reflected, "It's a weird feeling being told you are impersonating yourself. Rather nightmarish. You think: perhaps I am!"[98] This episode suggests the heightened sense of self-alienation which so delayed Rhys' completion of *Wide Sargasso Sea*. No longer could Rhys point to expatriation and statelessness as the root of her estrangement; the core of the alienation she had once expressed through linguistic exogamy must be in her very self, and even in her own language. This immediate experience of language and alienation forms the basis for Rhys' final novel.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Rhys makes several key innovations in her depiction of linguistic exogamy from her earlier Paris novels. Chief among these is her demonstration that a linguistic

[96] Angier, 556.
[97] Theories as to how she died abounded, including in a sanatorium, in "tragic circumstances" in Paris, or during the war. Ibid., 437.
[98] Ibid., 437, 450.

estrangement on par with linguistic exogamy can take place even within a single language (that is, within English), and further, that this single language can encompass multiple, competing linguistic forms. She had alluded to this concept earlier – as with the contrast between Marya and Lois Heidler's English accents – but here it is underscored by the social fractures inherent to a colony and a former slave-holding society. Thus, Christophine's, Antionette's, and Rochester's Englishes (and the other Englishes of minor characters) clash with and undermine each other in much the same way that Rhys had shown English and French to compete and interweave in her Paris novels. From its first page, *Wide Sargasso Sea* reveals the existence of multiple Englishes and thematizes the dangerous rift between the semblance of successful communication and the actual, obscure depth of the languages in which each person thinks and speaks. Yet as Gayatri Spivak has warned, it is all too easy to "blithely step […] over" the book's opening lines in the voice of Christophine "without asking or knowing what Christophine's patois, so-called incorrect English, might mean."[99] Although Christophine is clearly central in Rhys' postcolonial comment on the embedded violence, misogyny, and power-dynamics of the colonial past she depicts, her opening remark that Antoinette's mother never fit in with the Jamaican ladies "because she pretty like pretty self"[100] is in English, and thus seems self-explanatory and short enough that the reader can move on quickly to the colonial voice that drives the novel, that of Antoinette. Nevertheless, Christophine's speech stands out from Antoinette's by its unusual syntax, marking it as a form of patois, a phrase which the *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* employs to exemplify the use of "self" as an "absolute" intensifier of the preceding adjective or phrase.[101] Yet it isn't the precise meaning of this phrase that Spivak finds politically important, but the very fact that the phrase *has* a meaning. Indeed, the phrase is *not*, as it may seem, a mere tautology,

[99] Spivak, "Three Women's Texts," 252.
[100] Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, 17. Subsequent citations are noted parenthetically in the text.
[101] Allsopp and Allsopp, "self," 497.

but an incisive point of emphasis, and it demonstrates that Christophine may have access to a level of English that remains obscure to those (Antoinette and Rochester, as well as many of Rhys' readers) who are not initiated into its grammar. This is not deficient English, but *different* English. As this phrase suggests, Christophine is an exemplar of the central theme of the novel itself: that every person speaks in an idiolect, reinforcing the linguistic rifts that separate one person from another, the rifts that threaten to trap the exogamic woman, Antoinette, in their midst.

The introduction of Antoinette's voice at the novel's outset suggests that such multilingual rifts might occur not only between different people, but in one's very self. This sense of linguistic division and polyvocality emerges from the strange, recursive parentheses that Antoinette inserts into her own account of her Jamaican childhood. As she recounts a childhood conversation with her mother, "When I asked her why so few people came to see us, she told me that the road from Spanish Town to Coulibri Estate where we lived was very bad and that road repairing was now a thing of the past. (My father, visitors, horses, feeling safe in bed – all belonged to the past.)" (17). Such parentheses occur repeatedly, particularly in the first pages of the novel, and seem to come from a time long past Antoinette's sad childhood.[102] Further, these parenthetical comments seem certainly to arise from Antoinette herself, rather than – as several critics have suggested[103] – from mimicry of elders' language (her mother's, Christophine's), since the parenthesis is clearly from her own perspective. Such lacunae fracture our understanding of Antoinette into two perspectives, calling us to see her both as the child she depicts and as the commentator upon this depiction, and further, to understand her as seeing *herself* split between these and perhaps other roles. Although they appear entirely in English,

[102] On this temporal split, see Mardorossian, "Shutting up the Subaltern," 1074–5.
[103] See Wilson, "'Women Must Have Spunks'," 444; Mardorossian, "Shutting up the Subaltern," 1073; Brown, "Textual Entanglement," 582.

these parenthetical comments act much like the multilingual fragments that emphasize the fracture of linguistic exogamy in Rhys' earlier novels, as they call into question how power is distributed between multiple languages or – in this case – voices. Further, Antoinette's parenthetical polyvocality illuminates the novel's ur-fracture: not only is Antoinette retelling her own story in a different voice, but Rhys herself is 'retelling' Brontë's fiction from a new perspective. From the beginning, the novel is a classic of hybridity, commenting on its own hybrid state. Here, Christophine's "pretty like pretty self" takes on a new significance: just as Christophine's phrase seems to repeat itself ("pretty like pretty") yet in fact provides further, *mise en abyme*-like depth of expression ("pretty" *par excellence*), Rhys' novel and Antoinette's narration repeat an earlier account, yet cast it into a more profound sense of self-alienation and uncertainty.

Importantly, all of this verbal and perspectival fracturing begins well *before* Rochester enters the novel.[104] This is not, then, *just* a novel about the subjugation of a creole woman by an English man; it is also the story of the pain of hybridity and self-alienation for a woman suspended between the slave-trade past and post-emancipation present, between the Britain to which she legally belongs and the racially diverse colony she inhabits, between her tenuous position in the white, British merchant class and her labeling by blacks and whites alike as a "white nigger" (132), a tainted product of her island heritage. By beginning the novel with Antoinette's self-fracturing parentheses, Rhys primes us to read the spreading infection of this distracting, dual perspective over the course of Antoinette's youth. Soon she internalizes her horror at finding a dead horse – a symbol of her family's decay – by burying this horror in an unuttered, private parenthesis, telling us "I ran away and did not speak of it for I thought if I told no one it might not be true" (18). Antoinette's internalized, fracturing discourse invests her with

[104] See Ciolkowski, "Navigating the Wide Sargasso Sea," 342.

a foreboding and distrust that she cannot bring herself to articulate. What is more, such internalization may set her on the road to becoming increasingly like her mad mother, who frightens Antoinette precisely because she talks *to herself* (20). Indeed, Antoinette's very name inscribes this dangerous, solipsistic self-recursion in its derivation from her mother's name, Annette, since "Annette" spliced with "toi" ("you") becomes "Antoinette."[105] As the novel's first part progresses, the uncertain provenance and control of Antoinette's parentheses becomes increasingly troubling. Upon leaving her aunt's house for a convent school, she tells us "I clung to Aunt Cora as you would cling to life if you loved it" (48). The implicitly parenthetical perspective here is, notably, not Antoinette's – it is the hypothetical viewpoint of a person who *does* love life. That Antoinette's "if" sets her world apart from a place in which life might be loved – and that this alternative, happy life runs alongside her own like a parenthetical, asymptotic commentary – makes Antoinette's own situation all the more tragic, and her mental anguish the more acute.

The fracture in Antoinette's idiom occurs largely in this monolingual mode – her first-person narration is comprised almost uniformly of her own English, though the parentheses and recursions within it point to a palimpsest of self-alienation. What is largely lacking in Antoinette's narration is precisely what one might expect: the multilingual fragments inherent to linguistic exogamy. Instead, the surprising fact of *Wide Sargasso Sea* is that the greatest volume of foreign-language fragments – mainly in the form of untranslated, italicized patois – appears not in Antoinette's initial portion of the novel, but in the novel's second part, which occurs after Antoinette has met and married Rochester, and which is told predominantly in Rochester's first-person narration. In this second part of the novel, Rochester not only takes over the narrative, but he becomes the ventriloquist of Antoinette's voice, as Antoinette literally becomes his

[105] My thanks to Marianne Hirsch for this observation.

"marionette" (149-50). Rochester seizes control of the novel's language itself, becoming the arbiter of how the foreignness of patois is intermixed with his native English. From the start, Rochester's attitude toward and representation of non-standard English and patois is very different from Antoinette's more catholic acceptance of multiple idioms. Earlier, in the novel's first part, Antoinette recounts her memory of Christophine's patois songs, one of which ends with "'Adieu.' Not adieu as we said it, but *à dieu*, which made more sense after all" (20). As this comment demonstrates, Antoinette is ready to embrace the expressiveness of Christophine's alternative pronunciation even as she notes that it is different from the standard (its italicization emphasizes this fact). In Rochester's portion of the novel, most italicized foreign language appears in Antoinette and Christophine's conversation, and although not all of this conversation occurs within Rochester's earshot, it seems that his observational distance maintains an influence over what language is included. For the English Rochester – in contrast to the Jamaican Antoinette, daughter of a French-speaking Martinican mother and longtime confidante of Christophine – terms like "*béké*" ("white person") or "*doudou ché*" ("dear sweet one") (e.g. 112-14) are new, and thus, notable. As such, these fragments of patois act similarly to the parenthetical intrusions in Antoinette's Part I: as lacunae that sharpen Rochester's sense that he understands Antoinette's colonial world and its interwoven idioms only incompletely. At first such bits of opaque language are charming to Rochester; he hears the street cry of "*Bon sirop, Bon sirop*" ("good syrup") and feels "peaceful" (69). Later, though, he seeks to eradicate these little uncertainties by taking discourse into his own hands. Over the course of the novel, Rochester shifts from an attitude of understated wonderment and a complaint that "I don't always understand what they say or sing" to the conclusion and resolution that "whatever they were singing or saying was dangerous. I must protect myself" (102, 149). He does so by

separating his discourse away from Antoinette's casually multilingual world, inserting and imposing his own terms: "Every evening we saw the sun go down from the thatched shelter she called the *ajoupa*, I the summer house" (88). Eventually, he goes so far as to translate Antoinette herself, converting her into the "Bertha" who readers will encounter in the English attic of *Jane Eyre.* Rochester's move from a sort of bland linguistic tourism ("*Bon sirop*") to an overt violence exerted upon Antoinette's story, identity, and language suggests that it is not Christophine and Antoinette's patois that is overwhelming him with his own ignorance, but rather, he himself who is doing violence to and stamping out those languages and speakers that he cannot understand.

This creates a rather different linguistic situation than in Rhys' earlier, Paris novels, for two reasons. Firstly, Caribbean patois is *not* the high (or at least Continental) French that Rhys' earlier protagonists encounter in Paris, a language which is identified with power and culture, and thus a language in which imperfect or diffident fluency (as with Rhys' protagonists) signals a severe social liability. Patois, by contrast, is a minority language which may be recognizable through its relation to French, but would not seem for most of Rhys' readers (i.e. those outside of the Caribbean) like a language that one would or should know. Indeed, Antoinette even sees the need to gloss terms like "*glacis*" (a roofed terrace) for what one can only assume to be a non-fluent reader (19). In Rhys' earlier novels, to speak French is a social necessity; in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, to speak patois is a social marker, and – from the point of view of the imperial center – not a particularly advantageous one. Secondly – and relatedly – patois is a language spoken by a colonial group to which Rochester himself would certainly not aspire to belong. Thus, although Rochester finds it irksome that he cannot entirely understand and thus control his colonial setting and wife, he is not put at a social disadvantage by this fact, and consequently, can wield his non-fluency as an *advantage* against the multiple perspectives and linguistic and

cultural hybridity of his bilingual wife and servants like Christophine.

Perhaps, then, this is why the patois in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is so much more sparse than the French in Rhys' earlier works: for Rhys to provide more might be to invite her readers to the sort of linguistic slumming or 'tourism' indulged in by Rochester. Further, we only get as much patois in the novel as Rochester himself registers as the 'other' language punctuating his own understanding. To some extent, the fact that Christophine and Antoinette are speaking a language which resides outside of the novel protects that language from Rochester's exploitation. Rather than the verbal, multilingual tumult that characterizes Rhys' earlier work, this dearth of multilingual fragments – lacunae akin to the fears and premonitions that Antoinette herself fails to voice – stands as a site of palimpsestic violence, a language erased much like the buried, violent history of the island's own slave trade.[106] In this context, the bits of heterogeneous English or the parentheses that signal Christophine or Antoinette's subsumed polyvocality in the text take on the status of "lost" multilingual fragments – sites of dissent that punctuate the linguistic hegemony of Rochester's English and the inexorable thrust – already established by Brontë – of Antoinette's tragic story.

If Rochester finds Antoinette's language and worldview to be aggravatingly "undecided, uncertain" (87), it is Christophine whose language is, for him, fully opaque. This is true even on the most basic level, for Christophine speaks in a mix of English and various patois that is alien to Rochester and, at times, may not be fully comprehensible even to Antoinette.[107] From the start, Rochester finds Christophine's language so off-putting and unplaceable that Antoinette feels the need to assure him that her earthy diction "doesn't mean anything" (85). Nevertheless, Rochester's perception of Christophine's inscrutability clearly poses the greatest threat toward

[106] See the "Massacre" episode (65-6); also Cole, *At the Violet Hour*, 32–5.
[107] The various forms of patois in the novel have been codified very thoroughly in Sumillera, "Postcolonialism and Translation," 31; and Russell, "'Now Every Word She Said Was Echoed'," 89, 93.

his mastery of Antoinette and his understanding of her world. This is evident in the encounter – nothing short of a showdown – between Christophine and Rochester, a meeting which cements his full control of Antoinette's future, as his voice overtakes Christophine's and she – now incommensurable with his world – silently exits the novel, never to return.

> 'Only you she see. But all you want is to break her up.'
> (*Not the way you mean, I thought*)
> 'But she hold out eh? She hold out.'
> (*Yes, she held out. A pity*)
> […] Now every word she said was echoed, echoed loudly in my head.
> 'So that you can leave her alone.'
> (*Leave her alone*)
> 'Not telling her why.'
> (*Why?*)
> 'No more love, eh?'
> (*No more love*)
> '[…] She come to me and ask me for something to make you love her again and I tell her no I don't meddle in that for *béké*. I tell her it's foolishness.'
> (*Foolishness foolishness*)
> 'And even if it's no foolishness, it's too strong for *béké*.'
> (*Too strong for* béké. *Too strong*)
> 'But she cry and she beg me.'
> (*She cry and she beg me*)
> 'So I give her something for love.'
> (*For love*)
> 'But you don't love. All you want is to break her up. And it help you break her up.'
> (*Break her up*)
> 'She tell me in the middle of all this you start calling her names. Marionette. Some word so.'
> 'Yes, I remember, I did.'
> (*Marionette, Antoinette, Marionetta, Antoinetta*)
> 'That word mean doll, eh? Because she don't speak. You want to force her to cry and to speak.'
> (*Force her to cry and to speak*)
> 'But she won't. So you think up something else. You bring that worthless girl to play with next door and you talk and laugh and love so that she hear everything. You meant her to hear.'
> Yes, that didn't just happen. I meant it. (154)

The scene depicts a series of Rochester's parenthetical, italicized, and seemingly silent reflections, yet unlike Antoinette's parentheses at the opening of the novel, Rochester's are not

retrospective but proleptic, indicating an appropriation of future power. At first they are labeled as his thoughts ("*I thought*"), but as Christophine's words echo, they become a silent commentary alongside her condemnation, editing out what Rochester cannot understand or does not wish to hear, and converting it into counter-assertions, self-pity, and resolve. Christophine, whose words Rochester cannot or will not understand (whether they are in patois or in English), furnishes the friction against which Rochester burnishes his enmity. Rochester's exchange with Christophine is adamantly *not* a case – as several critics have argued – of her local culture and idiom triumphantly invading Rochester's mind, but rather that Rochester serves as "an obstructing surface from which Christophine's words bounce back unheeded."[108] This is evident in his standardizing of her idiosyncratic speech forms, as in the transformation of her encouraging reminder that "She [Antoinette] hold out" into his standardly grammatical and (in past tense) valedictory "*she held out*." Yet even more than deflecting Christophine's words "unheeded," Rochester twists her expressions of concern into his own resolutions of destruction. Where Christophine worries that Rochester will "force her [Antoinette] to cry and to speak," he turns this into a cold command to himself, to "*Force her to cry and to speak*." Rochester may not be able to understand what Christophine says – both in terms of her linguistic forms and in her sympathy for Antoinette – but he finds that he doesn't need to, so long as he can distort her words into his own construction of an idiom of hegemony. In a novel that resounds with unassimilable echoes of palimpsestic pain and violence – one thinks of the self-repeating cry of Antoinette's doomed parrot, "*Ché Coco*" (41-3), or the ruptured "looking-glass" in which Antoinette sees her black friend Tia (45) – Rochester does something new: he turns his parenthetical, parroting echoes into a weapon of mastery.

This is the true brilliance of Rhys' appropriation of Brontë's novel: that she gives

[108] On the critical debate surrounding this episode, see Russell, 97–8; Mardorossian, 1079.

Rochester a voice to hang himself with. Unlike Rhys' earlier novels, whose often malevolent male figures are largely absent, *Wide Sargasso Sea* consists *mostly* of Rochester's voice, and in doing so, not only shows his control over Antoinette via language and definition, but also his creation *of* the tongue – the weapon – that achieves that hegemony. This is what we see in his exchange with Christophine, in which Rochester ignores, appropriates, and redefines Christophine's admonitions first in repudiation, then in re-application to his own worldview, and finally in violent resolve. As if translated into reality, this last stage breaks through the parentheses and italics entirely, an attitude of hegemony bursting apart the weakened bonds of affection and the tenuous claim that he is "listening" to Christophine's words. Rochester declares, "Yes, that didn't just happen. I meant it," and in doing so, he confirms himself as an aggressor. This declaration remains a thought rather than an enunciation, yet it is emancipated from the tentativeness and polyvocality of italics and parentheses, the two textual modes so often associated with the experience of living between languages or cobbling together a hybrid idiom, as in the linguistic exogamy of Rhys' earlier novels or the parenthetical intrusions in Antoinette's thoughts in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

Rochester's dialogue with Christophine serves as a map of his character's conversion from uncertainty and misunderstanding to an attitude of violence and domination. Yet, as Rhys herself affirms, up until this shift, "Mr Rochester is *not* a heel."[109] Indeed, he elicits and even calls for our pity as a man encountering a new culture and idiom (164). By exposing Rochester's derivation of a hegemonic language, Rhys subverts the model by which the conquering white male is depicted as a one-dimensional villain, and thus undercuts the assumption that the white male is always, intrinsically in power. Instead, we see Rochester in all his vulnerability and fear, and we see how his frustration is translated into anger and finally, to villainous oppression. We

[109] Angier, 515.

see not the 'objective' depiction of an English man dominating a creole woman, but rather the subjectivity of this power-exchange. As Rhys suggests, Rochester is no more adept at moving between languages than is Antoinette – and in fact, she has more practice – but the difference between them is that Rochester has the power to *decide* the language that will be spoken, to counter the instability of multiple interpretations and multiple idioms with his own, arbitrary and hegemonic tongue. This is evident in his exchange with Christophine, where at first it seems unclear which of their languages is intruding on the other, which is the 'foreign' language and which the 'main text.' Ultimately, though, Rochester exerts his control over the conversation, imposing his interpretation and language as standard and, consequently, casting Christophine's as the non-standard, multilingual intrusion. As Rhys makes clear, just because Rochester 'wins' the argument and, by conventional measure, wins out in Brontë's ending to his story, does not mean that his language isn't just as idiosyncratic as is Christophine's, his view of the world just as subjective and uncertain as Antoinette's. He simply holds the reins to the dominant narrative, the ability to decree the dominant language. It is Rhys' intervention to expose the multiple, alternative idioms of Antoinette and Christophine which are, in Brontë's telling, thus drowned out by Rochester's dominating voice. As Rhys bears out, in Christophine's words, there is "always the other side, always" (128).

Nevertheless – and as Rhys had shown in her earlier novels – it is difficult to find a place to live on that "other side," particularly for a linguistically exogamous woman. As Rochester adopts control of Antoinette's language and brings her back to England, Antoinette finds no one and nothing to converse with beyond her own dreams, which drive her into a suicidal tailspin. For Christophine's part, after her altercation with Rochester she exits the novel entirely, an act which has garnered multiple interpretations, some contending that Christophine defies "the

demands of the discriminatory discourse" that surrounds her, while others argue that, in fact, Christophine recedes back into the obscurity proper to the subaltern.[110] Regardless, it is Rochester's idiom and his appropriation of Christophine's language that is allowed to win out, and Rhys shows, ultimately, that the prejudicial laws of society are enough to alienate a woman not only in the space between languages, but in the realm of her own mother-tongue.

Coda: The Author's Language

None of Rhys' protagonists escapes linguistic exogamy to gain some form of linguistic repatriation – except, that is, if we count among these protagonists Rhys herself, for it is through the very act of writing her novels that Rhys demonstrates her ability to derive – and share – a linguistic patria of her own. As a conclusion to this study of multilingualism in her novels, it is worth returning, then, to the question of where Rhys herself stands in relation to the play of linguistic mastery, control, and marginalization that she depicts in her fiction. On the one hand, like Ford Madox Ford's experience as an Anglo-German, Rhys' experience of statelessness, linguistic exogamy, and multilingualism must unquestionably be understood as an origin for her depiction of linguistically exiled protagonists like Marya and Sasha. After all, Rhys herself acknowledged her novels' overwhelming debt to autobiography, claiming famously that "I am the only real truth I know."[111] Yet as several critics of Rhys have noted, autobiography ought to be seen more as a beginning than as a result of Rhys' fiction, or as Linett phrases it, Rhys' fragmented style should be read as "strategic and mimetic rather than symptomatic."[112] In particular, biographical readings fall short when it comes to assertions about Rhys' use of

[110] Parry, "Problems in Current Theories," 38; Spivak, "Three Women's Texts," 253.
[111] Qtd. in Gilson, "Internalizing Mastery," 637.
[112] Linett, "New Words, New Everything," 439; see also O'Connor, "Jean Rhys's Quartet," 131; Haliloğlu, *Narrating from the Margins*, 3–4; Gilson, "Internalizing Mastery," 638; Thomas, *The Worlding of Jean Rhys*, 3.

multilingualism in her novels. It is, after all, impossible to depict complex linguistic failures and misunderstandings without linguistic mastery: Rhys must not only be proficient in all of the languages and linguistic intermixing that she employs within her works, but must also be in control of language to a far greater degree than her floundering protagonists. In other words, even if Rhys expresses her own experience of statelessness and linguistic exogamy through the languages encountered, spoken, and thought by women like Marya and Sasha, she herself must retain a greater control of these languages in order to depict her protagonists' experiences. Consequently, even as Rhys bases Sasha's linguistic loneliness or Marya's multilingual loss on autobiographical detail, her novels themselves mark a triumph over linguistic exogamy by giving voice to those who have none, and by asserting the voice of one real-life woman – Rhys – who had herself experienced the vicissitudes of statelessness, exogamy, and a life between languages. Even as Rhys depicts her protagonists' multilinguistic failures, she does so in fellowship with them, and via her own multilinguistic triumph.

It is through the translation of her experiences into fiction that Rhys comes to create a literary place of belonging for expatriated women like herself and her characters. Legally divested of her birth-identity and far from her place of birth, she redefines and repatriates herself in the context of modernist form and culture, following Azade Seyhan's dictum that culture is defined not as "origin and ancestral roots, […] birthrights and blood rites," but as "transposition and translation."[113] By transposing her autobiography of exogamic expatriation into fiction, and further, by translating her experience of linguistic exogamy into the complex multilingualism employed in that fiction's text, Rhys exposes a predicament faced by women around the world in the interwar period. In doing so, she creates a space in which expatriate(d) women can find utterance for experiences of marginalization, a place and a paradigm in which a variety of

[113] Seyhan, *Writing Outside the Nation*, 18–19.

marginalized women can recognize their own identity. Such a space may have laid the groundwork for the later communion and literary reciprocation that Rhys found with Jean Lenglet's second wife, Henriëtte van Eyk, whose novel *Gabriël* (1935) Rhys revised in its English translation, and who herself translated Rhys' *Voyage in the Dark* into Dutch (1969). Whereas Lenglet himself had translated that same novel in 1935, entitling it *Melodie in Mineur* (*Melody in Minor*), van Eyk stayed far truer not only to Rhys' novel's title (she called it *Reis door het Duister*, an exact translation), but also to its female perspective, maintaining the intimacy of Rhys' first-person narrative that Lenglet had distanced and ironized in the third-person.[114] Thus, Rhys' fiction provides a space for her and van Eyk's translational exchange, as well as for the further life of Rhys' embattled protagonists in a Dutch idiom.

Although laws of exogamy and expatriation have changed since Rhys wrote her novels – and even by the time van Eyk completed her translation – the influence of Rhys' fictional space continues. This is exemplified *par excellence* by Ellis Avery's recent novel, *The Last Nude* (2012), which adopts a recognizably Rhys-ian 1930s Paris landscape as the context for a portrayal of a young, bisexual American woman's challenges in finding an identity through art and sexuality. Though it would be unfair to boil Avery's complex novel down to a simple reflection upon current events, it seems plausible to guess that her transposition of a lesbian love-story to Rhys' Paris may itself imply a parallelism between Rhys' depiction of gender inequality through exogamy-expatriation and the current (and historical) legal and social marginalization of queer relationships in the United States and abroad. Even if the struggle for exogamic women's rights has ended, Rhys' subtle narratives of women's transnational, multilingual challenges live on as the fight for equality in marriage and nationality continues.

[114] Kappers-den Hollander, "Jean Rhys and the Dutch Connection," 164.

Chapter 5

A Language Neither Conquering nor Conquered: Multilingual Fragments in a Postcolonial Age

The previous chapters of this study have made evident two important results of the use of multilingual fragments. First of all, they emphasize the lesson that the English language is far from an impermeable, stolidly British fortress, but rather a mongrel tongue born not only out of ancient Saxon, Latin, and Norman fragments, but constantly intruded upon and enveloping words and phrases from a variety of provenances and in a variety of forms. Each of these intrusions draws its own political implications and resonances into the English language, and each evinces these differently in every text in which it is used. Consequently, we must read these foreign incursions – what I've come to call "multilingual fragments" – with particular attention to the particularities of how they occur *in a specific text*, not simply remarking upon their existence, but applying the combined processes of close reading and historical criticism to discern their function in literature, both modernist and otherwise. Virginia Woolf once ironically advised that "the less we enquire into the past of our dear Mother English the better it will be for that lady's reputation. For she has gone a-roving, a-roving fair maid."[1] As Woolf so archly suggests, to look into the language's chequered history reveals a wilder, more subversive tale than the chaste decorousness of a more prim and proper language.

A second, and related fact, is that this hybrid English is constantly, proteanly changing as a result of every voice and pen that takes it up. As Derek Walcott declares in his 1992 Nobel Prize lecture on "The Antilles," each "individual voice is a dialect; it shapes its own accent, its own vocabulary and melody in defiance of an imperial concept of language, the language of Ozymandias, libraries and dictionaries, law courts and critics, and churches, universities,

[1] Woolf, "Craftsmanship," 205.

political dogma, the diction of institutions."[2] Consequently, the ownership of the English language is its most enduring and politically fraught question: is "English" possessed by a group, and if so, what group? Does there exist a form of English 'authentic' to a particular person, place, or constituency? Can one 'betray' one's language or identity by writing it differently from a particular standard? In my inquiry into multilingual fragments, I have been exploring moments where the answers to such questions come into direct conflict. To whom does the word "pukka" belong? Does uttering the word "verboten" make someone a spy? What about the phrase "under four eyes"? Or claiming that one "has a cafard"? Each foreign word or phrase characterizes a particular character, narrative, authorial style or stance through the implicit comparison between the hybrid English that contains such foreign fragments and the (perhaps impossible) "standard" English that serves as a paradigm.

Yet each foreign incursion can shift that paradigm of "standard English" ever so slightly. For instance, to use the word "verboten" in everyday English in 2013 might barely register as having any connection to the German militarism it connoted in 1913,[3] and it would certainly not suggest that one was secretly collecting intelligence for Angela Merkel. Nonetheless, the word would not have earned this ubiquity *without* its widespread, politicized use during World War I; somewhere in the interim, "English" has shifted to encompass the word with different senses of its underlying implications. Further, the standard of English against which such usage is compared is itself mutable. The "cafard" professed and possessed by Jean Rhys' protagonists is notable as a multilingual fragment only inasmuch as other English-speakers in Rhys' novels do not use her protagonists' peculiar Francophone English. Were *everyone* in a Rhys novel to speak

[2] Walcott, "The Antilles."
[3] See, for instance, Brooke's "The Old Vicarage, Grantchester," which boasts English "meads" where "Where das *Betreten*'s not *verboten*," *The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke*, 156; or Saki's invasion novel in which Hyde Park is plastered with signs announcing "ES IST VERBOTEN," *When William Came*, 62.

of "cafards" and the like, we would interpret her protagonists' language and identity as more "standard" or "normal." And yet even if such Francophone multilingualism were to become the norm for all characters in Rhys' novels, we might still interpret the vocabulary of these novels themselves as eccentric in the context of other works of "English literature." Further, this broad category ("English literature") might itself be fractured into a variety of sub-categories, from British modernism to West Indian (post)colonial literature to the expatriate literature of 1930s Paris to the literature of stateless female authors – each of which would offer yet another context in which to evaluate Rhys' vocabulary as "strange," "standard," or (more likely) somewhere in between. In short, multilingual fragments like "verboten" or "cafard" disrupt our conception of a monolithically "standard" or "authentic" English (or even several 'authentic' English*es*), even as they point to the necessity of positing different forms and contexts of English in order to interpret the import and impact of a particular multilingual fragment by a particular author in a particular time, place, social stratum, and so on.

Nowhere are these two conclusions more evident than in the literature and critical matter arising out of Britain's former colonies in the second half of the twentieth century. As this chapter will discuss, this body of literature, which has taken on (or been given) the label "postcolonial," has been characterized by many of the same concerns that I have discussed in the previous chapters with regard to multilingual fragments. Indeed, the works that I will discuss here, G.V. Desani's *All About H. Hatterr* (1948) and Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988) might well be considered not only postcolonial but, by dint of their style and attitude toward multilingualism, (very) late modernist. Rushdie, one of the most renowned and heatedly discussed late twentieth-century Anglophone authors, aptly summarizes the view of the function of the English language in the work of authors writing from Britain's former colonies and

peripheries, declaring that

> we can't simply use the language in the way the British did; […] it needs remaking for our own purposes. Those of us who do use English do so in spite of our ambiguity towards it, or perhaps because of that, perhaps because we can find in that linguistic struggle a reflection of other struggles taking place in the real world, struggles between the cultures within ourselves and the influences at work upon our societies. To conquer English may be to complete the process of making ourselves free.[4]

Rushdie's connection between linguistic conflicts and the "struggles between the cultures within ourselves" rings true not only for writers from the British periphery, but also for the largely metropolitan, modernist writers discussed in earlier chapters, from Forster to Ford to Rhys.

At the same time, my reading of these writers calls into question Rushdie's final claim that an objective of postcolonial writing should – and, more importantly, *could* – be that of "conquering" English. If nothing else, the evidence of Ford's sublimated "under four eyes" or of the linguistic slippage in spy novels makes clear that "to conquer" is never really a possibility in English or, for that matter, in any other language. In fact, it may even be *less* possible in English than in other languages precisely because of English's peculiar malleability and constant contusion by different voices and tongues. In other words, it's English's perpetual ripeness for "remaking," as Rushdie proclaims, that foils any effort to "conquer" it; to do so is to wrestle Proteus. Most likely and certainly sympathetically, Rushdie's final claim seeks to reverse the imperial British use of English as a conquering tool,[5] yet in doing so it adopts the misleading assumption that language ever might be (or might have been) conquered by anyone at all. Rather, a focus on multilingual fragments in twentieth-century literature demonstrates that English is neither conquering nor conquered, but rather, the unwieldy tool adopted by colonizer and colonized, citizen, native, and migrant alike, as a mode of seeking to encapsulate the experience

[4] Rushdie, "Imaginary Homelands," 17.
[5] See Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest*; for an egregious example of the attitude, see Macaulay, "Minute on Indian Education."

of existing *in English* in a particular place, time, and situation. I will explore this dynamic in this final section by discussing two texts that take on the role and use of English from the vantage-point of the former imperial periphery, showing how the use of multilingual fragments in modernist literature has influenced and come into conversation with the use of various forms of English in postwar literature, as well as how modernism's multilingual fragments can offer a lens for understanding postcolonial writers' struggle with the task of writing in the unconquerable and dangerous, yet also unconquering and supple medium of English.

Many writers have announced their commitment to the task of "remaking" English by literally renaming it, seeking to differentiate *their* English from the "Standard" version taught in the British metropolis and foisted upon the imperial periphery. This has meant rehabilitating pejorative terms like "dialect," or replacing them with others, from Kamau Brathwaite's "nation language" to Dohra Ahmad and Evelyn Nien-Ming Ch'ien's "rotten" or "weird English."[6] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin put it most succinctly when they simply draw the line of capitalization between the non-normative "english" of the former colonies and the "Standard" "English" of the English metropolitan center.[7] I find that here, in my own effort to deconstruct the differentiation between "english" and "English," it seems even more accurate and productive to refer to a multitude of "english*es*," or, to give these variants their due, "Englishes."

In other words, I would ask us to trouble the boundary that even a critic like Homi Bhabha, so acute to the workings of hybridity, creates in his own memoir between his recollection of the "contradictory strains" of "languages *lived*" and "languages *learned*" (italics are Bhabha's). As Bhabha recounts,

[6] See Ahmad, "Introduction," 17, 15; Ch`ien, *Weird English*.
[7] Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, 8.

> At times, the English language had the archaic feel of a carved almirah that engulfed you in the faded smell of moth-balls and beautiful brittle linens; at other times it had the mix-and-match quality of the moveable feast, like Bombay street food, spicy, cheap, available in all kinds of quantities and combinations, subtle delicacies with a street-wise savour. I went to Oxford to embellish the antique charms of the armoire; I ended up realizing how much I desired street food.[8]

Yet if we are discussing multiple Englishes, it seems difficult to pose one as "contradictory" to the other – is not a "learned" language also part of the process of "living," and vice versa? Is not Bhabha's alienating experience of English at Oxford – the *living* of this particular English – what illuminates Bhabha's feelings for the English of Bombay? Far from "contradictory strains," these Englishes are inextricably intertwined in Bhabha's own idiolectic, idiosyncratic English. Even this short passage makes obvious the impossibility of separating one 'pure' English from an 'impure' English (or vice versa), or even one 'impure' English from another – whatever such standards of 'purity' or 'impurity' might be taken to mean. The "almirah" that Bhabha connects with Oxford's academic, *English*-"English" is the relic of an old, Hobson-Jobson adoption of a Bengali term, "almari," which itself derives from the Portuguese "almario," meaning "cabinet" or "chest." On the flip-side, the "moveable feast" that Bhabha ascribes to Bombay "english" is derived from the old European Christian tradition of feast-days that occur on different dates each calendar year, a term which was, of course, later repurposed by Ernest Hemingway as the title for his memoir of expatriate life in 1920s Paris.[9] In other words, Bhabha's Oxford-English descriptor is thoroughly Indian; his Bombay-English descriptor decidedly European.

Bhabha himself is, of course, well aware of the sort of hetereogeneous idiom that his own, multinational, multi-English background produces. Only pages later, he describes precisely this phenomenon in relation to the migrant characters of V.S. Naipaul, who demonstrate "hybrid forms of life and art that do not have prior existence within the discrete world of any single

[8] Bhabha, "Looking Back, Moving Forward," x.
[9] "almirah, n."; also Hobson-Jobson's "almyra, s."; "moveable Feast, n."

culture or language."[10] Yet I would argue that such hybridity is often overlooked, even among astute critics, when it takes the form of the subtle interminglings between what Woolf might call the "scraps, orts, and fragments" of different Englishes – precisely the small pieces or multilingual fragments that I have focused on in this study. Instead, the discourse surrounding heterogeneous Englishes often circles back to discussions of "authenticity," i.e. whether a particular "English" is authentic to a given group, person, character or background. Even Bhabha slips into this vein as he suggests that Bombay's "street food" English is more authentic to him (to his identity? his background? his legal nationality?) than is the Oxford English that dominates his written work and speech. Arguably this mostly-Oxford English is the idiom in which people typically encounter Bhabha; is it possible to label it as 'less authentic' or 'in-authentic' than the Bombay English in which he was raised? The way out of this discourse of authenticity is to allow that English can vary as much within a single author's work or even within a single sentence as it does between London, Bombay, and Cape Town. And one key to examining this variety is to pay attention to multilingual fragments – fragments of different *Englishes* as well as the more recognizable multilingual fragments of translated or untranslated foreign languages – that mark the sites of linguistic collision.

In its response to imperial-linguistic power structures, postcolonial fiction like Rushdie or Desani's displays some of the most insightful considerations of the relationship between language(s) and power. This is one of two main reasons that I conclude my reading of modernist multilingual fragments with a study of their 'afterlife' in literature by authors from Britain's periphery. Because language was one of the main means by which imperial Britain sought to cement its power and subjugate its colonized people (in the words of Rushdie's *Satanic Verses,*

[10] Bhabha, "Looking Back, Moving Forward," xiii.

"They have the power of description, and we succumb to the pictures they construct"[11]), and because language is the main tool given to colonized people to, as James Baldwin writes, "control their circumstance" and not to "be submerged by a reality that they cannot articulate,"[12] language is central to our thinking about the colonial past and the postcolonial present. The multitude of embattled Englishes that sprout from all corners of the former British Empire come to represent the hybridity embedded in both the colonies and the British metropolis. As Ian Baucom explains, empire leaves behind a double-bind:

> The trouble with the English *is* that 'their' history happened overseas; but it is also the problem of the possessive pronoun which at once separates and links the 'English' and the 'overseas history' that may or may not be 'theirs.' To say it is not 'theirs' is to affirm that the histories of India, Nigeria, and Jamaica are autonomous histories, independent histories, local histories, in which England played a part but that England never managed to possess. But to say this is also to permit 'the English' to say that 'theirs' is not a global but a local history, to deny that the imperial beyond was ever a living part of the English within, to suggest […] that England was uninvolved, untroubled, unaffected by 'its' empire, and that the history of Englishness, consequently, is an entirely local affair.[13]

Baucom is speaking of history, but language fits here just as well, and serves as a metonym for that history. Were this "theirs" to serve as a disjunction rather than a conjunction, Bombayites (or now, Mumbaikars) might never speak of a "moveable feast," and the *Oxford English Dictionary* might not include the word "almirah." Instead, and irrevocably, Bengali continues to mix with English, and Bombay-English to mix with the Ox-bridge tongue, and twentieth- and twenty-first-century writing becomes not only a rejection of normative "Standard" English, but, in the words of Derek Walcott, "an Adamic celebration of language,"[14] the ongoing creation of new Englishes.

It is in this language-creating vein that theorists like Baucom and Bhabha frequently take

[11] Rushdie, *Satanic Verses*, 174.
[12] Baldwin, "If Black English Isn't a Language," 453.
[13] Baucom, *Out of Place*, 40.
[14] Qtd. in Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, 49–50.

up a text seemingly unconnected to issues of empire, Walter Benjamin's seminal essay, "The Task of the Translator" (1922), and apply it to describe both the way that postcolonial authors use language and the experience of postcoloniality itself. While Baucom invokes Benjamin's concept of translation to call into question the 'authenticity' and authority of the 'original' language or culture (i.e. that of the metropolitan center), Bhabha furthers this identification between translation and postcolonial hybridity by comparing Benjamin's image of the "fragmented vessel" to the possibilities of a collective, postcolonial power-in-difference. Benjamin writes of the broken "vessel" that "instead of making itself similar to the meaning of the original, [the translation] must lovingly and in detail form itself according to the manner of meaning of the original, to make them *both* recognizable as the broken fragments of the greater language." Bhabha appropriates and expands this image into an ontology of hybridity: "it is by living on the borderline of history and language, on the limits of race and gender, that we are in a position to translate the difference between them into a kind of solidarity."[15] The strength of the analogy here is that the relationship between postcolonial hybridity and translation is threefold: a postcolonial, hybrid identity *looks like* translation, this identity *makes use of* translation in its self-creation, and, profoundly, it *is* translation inasmuch as the hybrid identity resides at the heart of linguistic mixing. This multifold identity/linguistic relation may be best expressed by Radha Radhakrishnan's breathless description of hybridity itself:

> hybridity is heady stuff: transgressive in more than one direction, de-territorializing, and immanently *sui generis* in its mode of signification. With hybridity, anything is possible for the simple reason that hybridity is about making meaning without the repression of a pre-existing normativity or teleology: in the exhilarating a-nomie between 'having been deterritorialized' and 'awaiting to be reterritorialized' there is all manner of unprecedented 'becoming.'[16]

Translation, like hybridity, opens up the possibility of a wealth of new meaning.

[15] Baucom, *Out of Place*, 215; Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 244.
[16] Radhakrishnan, "Adjudicating Hybridity," n.p.

As Bhabha writes (and Baucom concurs), migrancy – and the languages of migrancy – are "*internal*" to Britain's *"national identity*."[17] Postcolonial authors often emphasize this 'making strange,' or, in the words of the *Satanic Verses*, "tropicalizing" of the imperial center. This is well illustrated in the scene of George Lamming's 1954 novel *The Emigrants*, in which the cast of West Indian migrants arrive in England and immediately come into contact with the strangeness of the "Standard" English spoken there:

> Would you have a cup of tea? With or without?
> (What she mean with or without.)
> Milk and sugar?
> (What she mean milk an' sugar.)
> Good. Won't be a minute.
> Say Tornado what wrong wid dese people at all? You doan' mean to say people drink tea when it ain't got milk.
> […]
> 'Ave 'alf pint o' bitter John?
> My name ain't John.
> Oh no 'arm meant. Jes' gettin' to know you.[18]

Rather than drawing our focus to the heterogeneous English of Lamming's West Indians' "ain't"s and so on, this passage forefronts the oddity of that which would, in another context, pose as the norm against which "ain't" is labeled as heterogeneous: the vocabulary of "tea" with "milk and sugar," the land of "John" (or *John Bull*). This is the point of confluence between Bhabha's work on hybridity and this study of multilingual fragments: to show that *every* form of English falls into the category of "english," and vice versa.

In this regard, then, works like Desani's and Rushdie's novels seem to arise directly out of the modernist fiction that precedes them. Indeed, their stylistic commonalities with the works of authors like Forster and Ford suggests that Rushdie is correct in naming "migrancy" a "metaphor for all humanity" or, as Andrew Smith phrases it, "the name for the condition of

[17] Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 9, italics his.
[18] Lamming, *Emigrants*, 111–12.

human beings *as such*."[19] We can thus read the terms often associated with postcolonial thinking – migrancy, hybridity, border-crossing – in conjunction with the modernist works discussed earlier in this study. At the same time, we might view this connection from the opposite direction, understanding postcolonial writing as springing in part from a legacy of modernism. To claim such an influence is by no means to overwrite the very important interventions made by authors and theorists in re-writing or shedding light on many of modernism's imperialist and racial wrongs – from Chinua Achebe, Edward Said, and others' critique of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* to the literary criticism which uncovers and analyzes the imperial underpinnings of even the most seemingly 'English' of modernist texts (one thinks, for instance, of Peter Walsh's imperial romance in *Mrs. Dalloway*). What this study makes plain, though, is that many of the concerns that are central to later twentieth-century literature – particularly those at the nexus of identity and language – are woven deeply into many modernist texts, as well. Multilingual fragments, in particular, illuminate modernist writers' critical considerations of heterogeneous Englishes in a manner which paves the way for the work of authors like Rushdie. Many postcolonial writers, too, stand at the boundary-line between modernism and what comes after, such as Lamming and Achebe, and a few, such as Rhys, very clearly span the distance between modernism and postcolonialism. J. Dillon Brown articulates this overlap between modernism and postcolonialism in terms of form, arguing that both literary groupings privilege "a counter-discursive hermeneutical posture that consistently labors to defamiliarize habitually accepted understandings of words and, hence, the world."[20] I concur, yet I argue that we can take this claim further, and on the basis of our discussion of multilingual fragments, make the assertion that a set of linguistically astute – and often linguistically disadvantaged or heterogeneous –

[19] Rushdie, "Imaginary Homelands," 394; Smith, "Migrancy, Hybridity," 247.
[20] Brown, "Textual Entanglement," 584.

modernist writers draw together many of the *ethical* and *political* implications of linguistic defamiliarization which will later constitute the heart of discussions of multilingualism or multiple Englishes after the end of empire.

All About H. Hatterr: "Life is contrast!"

If, as I have discussed in Chapter 4, Rhys adapts her own, earlier modernist techniques of using multilingual fragments to serve the even more complex and rich postcolonial and feminist critique of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the Nigeria-born Indian author G.V. Desani turns to another strain of modernist multilingualism as a means of representing and counteracting the experience of colonization in his 1948 novel, *All About H. Hatterr*. Like Rhys, Desani calls into question whether there exists a standard "English," yet he does so not by paring down multilingual fragments, as Rhys does in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, but rather, by following the lead of James Joyce in *Finnegans Wake* (1939) and allowing multilingual fragments to dominate his text. Anthony Burgess describes this approach in his 1969 introduction to the novel:

> it is language that makes the book, a sort of creative chaos that grumbles at the restraining banks. It is what may be termed Whole Language, in which philosophical terms, the colloquialisms of Calcutta and London, Shakespearian archaisms, bazaar whinings, quack spiels, references to the Hindu pantheon, the jargon of Indian litigation, and shrill babu irritability seethe together. It is not pure English; it is, like the English of Shakespeare, Joyce and Kipling, gloriously impure.[21]

Burgess defends this "impurity" and the charge that Desani is, in F.W. Bateson's term, a "*métèque*," a "writer with a non-English linguistic, racial or political background." As such, Burgess argues, Desani has as much a right to manipulate English as Bateson himself, and, what is more, is among those who may "have done more for English in the twentieth century (meaning that they have shown what the language is capable of, or demonstrated what English is really

[21] Burgess, "Introduction," 10.

like) than any of the pure-blooded men of letters who stick to the finer rules."[22] Indeed, upon the appearance of Desani's novel close upon the heels of Indian Independence, prominent British writers from E.M. Forster to T.S. Eliot hailed its idiolectic plenitude as a truly new and exciting idiom in late modernist literature, one which clearly took up the mantle of Joyce's multilingual *Wake* yet did so in a language all its own.[23]

Yet from the beginning, the challenge for Desani's novel was that its language – primarily a mixture of different registers of English and smatterings of Hindi – was at once of Burgess, Forster, and Joyce's Anglo-European world, and radically distant from it. It seems dubious that even Joyce would have come up with a characteristic Hatterrian outburst such as this one (describing his arrival in England):

> I took off my tropical-lid, the sola-*topi*, in sincere salutation, and next, without a waterproof, in my white drill shorts, I knelt on the mud-beds of the old country, the soft depths of its textilopolis County Palatine, aye, Keeper, luv, the blessed wet earth of Liverpool, Lancs., in a thousand salaams![24]

While the praise of the novel's innovative language-play by English authors certainly raised Desani's star in the former-imperial center, in Desani's India the novel's critical reception was far less unanimous. Strikingly, Indian critics pointed to Desani's heterogeneous, very un-Standard English as the source of the novel's failure *as* an Indian novel. Namely, they charged that the modernist strain of the novel – its protean, perpetual toying with the English language through puns, malapropisms, colloquialisms, and multilingual fragments – overtook any claim it might have toward presenting an "authentic" Indian voice. In the words of S. Krishnan, *Hatterr* registered as "a very un-Indian book about things Indian […] not the kind of book Indians write about India." In other words, Desani did not adopt the tone of an author like Raja Rao, who,

[22] Ibid., 7.
[23] See Aravamundan, *Guru English*, 293-4n.
[24] Desani, *All About H. Hatterr*, 36. Subsequent citations are noted parenthetically in the text.

though writing in English and acknowledging the language as part of his "intellectual make-up," made it clear that he did so only reluctantly and with concessions that it was a language not his "own."[25] Desani was charged with placing the concerns of language-play over those of the characterization of his half-Malay, half-European protagonist. In Meenakshi Mukherjee's reading, H. (Hindustaaniwalla) Hatterr "is not conditioned by the language in which he experiences reality. Contrarily, the language, the need for the stylistic experimentation conditions his choice of character."[26] Or as Feroza Jussawalla put it, Desani is among those authors "who feel compelled to experiment only to develop an experimental poetry."[27] Such charges follow even into contemporary criticism, as with Bishnupriya Ghosh, who contrasts Desani's work with that of Salman Rushdie, reading the former as participating in a kind of extra-historical modernism that is concerned with style and language-play alone. Ghosh argues that Desani's work's "contestation between authenticities and hybridities in language and thought" is a "modernist gesture" and thus quite different from the "situated hybridity" – the cultural specificity – of Rushdie's "vernacular."[28] In summary, Desani's novel is marked as too modernist – too experimental, too linguistically heterodox – to be really Indian.

This reception signals both a misreading of modernism as apolitical, as well as a strange recursion of the conservative search for linguistic authenticity. Here, though, the definition of 'authentic' language has shifted from the "Standard" English of the imperial center (the domain of pedants like F.W. Bateson) to the formerly marginalized linguistic terrain of the imperial periphery. And yet it is precisely what irks these critics – Desani's modernist experimentation – that allows him to carry out one of his novel's major objectives, that is, to present a critique of

[25] Qtd. in Jussawalla, "Beyond Indianness," 38; Rao, "Foreword," 2–3.
[26] Qtd. in Jussawalla, "Beyond Indianness," 29.
[27] Ibid., 42.
[28] Ghosh, "An Invitation to Indian Postmodernity," 133.

nascent Indian nationalism while at the same time celebrating the country's vernacular wealth. This is a new and important move for postcolonial writing: a shift from the attitude of a writer like Rhys, "uncertain as to whether Englishness itself is real,"[29] to a questioning both of Englishness and of the 'authentic' Indianness that arrives to take its place in the wake of empire.[30] And as we would expect, a questioning of Englishness and Indianness in turn implies a questioning of both England-English and the hybridized English language of India. Like Rhys, Desani weaves together a heterogeneous variety of languages in his novel, thus calling into question whether there is such a thing as a dominant, standard, or authentic tongue. The challenge for critics and readers alike (and perhaps a reason that the novel has remained relatively obscure, despite its famous English heralds) is that Desani deftly – I will argue purposefully – obscures the boundaries between his eccentric protagonist' speech and that of both himself as author and of the other, often equally eccentric characters whom Hatterr encounters through his picaresque travels. For some critics, like Raji Narashiman, the melding of voices into one another is a fault of the book because there is no clear separation of "the original and the devalued, signifying the presence of discretions in the author's mind."[31] Even Rushdie, who often praises *Hatterr* for its "zany," "dazzling, puzzling, leaping prose," its distinction as the "first genuine effort to go beyond the Englishness of the English language," labels Desani's language as "babu-English," the "semi-literate, half-learned English of the bazaars."[32] Yet I think even Rushdie is inaccurate in this: while the novel does include "babu English" (Ghosh evocatively labels the novel "a satiric romp through the entrails of babu English"[33]), it does not all fall into this category, and one can discern different types of hybrid English – even different

[29] Ciolkowski, "Navigating the Wide Sargasso Sea," 350.
[30] For a discussion of the politics of Desani's novel and the founding of India, see Smith, "'Ambiguity at Its Best!'".
[31] Qtd. in Jussawalla, "Beyond Indianness," 30; see also McCutchion, "The Indian Novel in English," 318.
[32] Rushdie, "'Damme, This Is the Oriental Scene for You!'," 153–4; Rushdie, "The Literary Rushdie," 25.
[33] Ghosh, "An Invitation to Indian Postmodernity," 133.

types of "babu English" – imbricated together, each calling into question the extent to which the other is pandering or defiant, half-baked or perceptive. Indeed, Narashiman is right in finding that there is no clear boundary between the 'good' and the 'bad' language of the novel, but I would argue that this is precisely the strength of Desani's vision: that there are many, perhaps infinite types of "Indian" English, and most importantly, that even the most dubious of "babu English" may hold its own capacity for both communication and ridicule.

Amardeep Singh comes closest to accurately characterizing Desani's linguistic goals in his parallel discussion of the author's seeming religious contradictions (namely, *Hatterr* seems largely to satirize the various faiths of India, while Desani himself migrated back to India from England in the 1950s in order to enter into religious seclusion[34]). Rather than pin Desani to any single orthodoxy, Singh declares that the novel "is not fully in control […] of the target of its critique," and that in consequence, Hatterr himself is "neither a mimic-man nor a Babu, but a kind of blank template."[35] "Blank" is surely the wrong word to describe so profusely self-characterizing a figure as Hatterr, yet Singh is perceptive in marking Desani as purposefully evading a clear position of unilateral satire, censure, or praise of any one type of religious perspective and any single version of Indianness or Indian language. Rather, I will argue that Desani takes up a linguistic version of the strategy proposed by Rushdie for addressing the legacy of empire's cultural violence and domination in postcolonial literature: the "mingling of fantasy and naturalism."[36] This is the factor that critics have often found "most innovative and daring" in Rushdie's own work,[37] yet in Desani's novel it is perhaps more subtly deployed through a mixture of language which is at once deeply natural – patching together 'found' pieces

[34] "All About G.V. Desani." He spent time at a Theravada Buddhist monastery in Burma, after having first travelled to Japan to study Zen Buddhism.
[35] Singh, "More Than 'Priestly Mumbo-jumbo'," 96.
[36] Rushdie, "Imaginary Homelands," 19.
[37] Goonetilleke, *Salman Rushdie*, 93.

of language – and overwhelmingly fantastical, culminating in an idiom that combines many elements of English in India while comprising a "Whole Language" (to use Burgess' phrase) which no single Indian might plausibly speak. The censure of Desani for being 'inauthentic' to Indian English is off the mark because the fantastical mixing of character-perspectives and the exaggerated linguistic patchwork were never meant to represent an authentic idiom in themselves, but rather, to celebrate the variety of language and expression that can be achieved by looking to India's plethora of non-Standard English, as well as to deconstruct any would-be authoritarian discourse, be it political or religious. As Rushdie writes, earlier authors like Kipling had, indeed, already mixed together "exoticism" and "authenticity" to create an "invented Indiaspeak,"[38] yet Desani does Kipling one better by burying his own, authorial voice in this invention, intentionally preventing his reader from claiming any single, authorial/authoritative language – and thus one single religious or political perspective – as "standard" (i.e. Kipling's narrative voice) or even separating out one 'authentic' Indian English from his variety of English*es*. For Desani, it is all "english."

Desani sets about accomplishing this undermining of linguistic essentialism by short-circuiting the reader's discernment of who exactly his book is "All About," that is, where the author (Desani) ends and where the first-person protagonist (Hatterr) begins. *Hatterr* really isn't "All About" its protagonist, as it claims, but also about the author and the protagonist's interlocutors. Before we even encounter Hatterr, though, it is the author's (ostensibly Desani's) voice that we meet in the first pages of the novel, offering a "*Warning!*" (Hatterr will provide his own warning once the novel-proper begins) and even his own, self-introductory "All About…" The ellipsis that leads from this title into Desani's introduction seems to highlight the ambiguity of Hatterr and Desani's connection: All About *Whom*? Further, the tone in which Desani begins

[38] Rushdie, "Kipling," 77.

the novel in his "*Warning*" – a mock-dialogue between an "*Author*" and an "*Indian middle-man*" (italics are Desani's) – almost perfectly echoes the mock-formal speech of characters like Banerrji and Hatterr himself (12). Is this just how Desani speaks? Or is this Hatterr already? That question proves difficult to answer, since, on the one hand, Desani counters those critics who "find fault with me because the writing isn't up to the Standards" by claiming that it's "wholly H. Hatterr," who "tells his own story" (18, 21). Since Hatterr "isn't a writer," how "could he know the theory and the practice of Perfections? If, in spite of it, I have made him write at all, well, it is because I am clever. Why should a clever man get the raspberry? Tell me that!" (18). Yet, of course, we know that it is Desani who is writing this, and even the tone of his self-defense echoes his protagonist. As a later interviewer of Desani, C.R. Mandy claimed, Desani's own way of speaking was, indeed, "rather Hatterr-like."[39]

If Desani and Hatterr's voices thus meld into one another, then it becomes impossible to charge either author or character with being unconscious of the way that he shapes and plays with language. It would seem absurd to argue that Desani is anything less than Joyceanly virtuosic in his ability to twist his idiom, and if his and Hatterr's voices converge, then Hatterr himself must transcend the category of hapless "babu English" to something more calculated and artistically self-conscious. Further, if Desani and Hatterr's voices are so intertwined with one another, then this precludes any claim that one or the other speaks a "dominant" or "Standard," or, conversely, "non-Standard" language. By speaking in a manner similar to Hatterr, Desani at once sets the standard of his novelistic language *as* Hatterr-like, and at the same time, in shifting the responsibility of the narrative onto Hatterr-as-author, undercuts any categorical claim that Hatterr's idiom is *the* standard against which others should be measured. As Desani claims in a doffing of the authorial hat, "I never was involved in the struggle for newer forms of expression,

[39] Qtd. in Singh, "More Than 'Priestly Mumbo-jumbo'," 93.

Neo-morality, or any such *thing*! What do you take me for? A busybody?" (17)

A similar strategy is taken up in other postcolonial works, among them Samuel Selvon's *Lonely Londoners* (1956),[40] which depicts a group of Trinidadian immigrants to London, yet presents them via an omniscient, third-person narrator who speaks in the same Caribbean English as the characters themselves. For instance: "'Jesus Christ,' Moses tell Harris, a friend he have, 'I never see thing so.'" It is not that Selvon cannot write in "Standard" English – indeed, Moses' friend Harris says things like "I'm going to have high tea with Lord ——'s daughter"[41] – but that he chooses to set his narratorial, authorial voice in the same idiom as his characters as a way of asserting that the novel's heterogeneous English possesses the same expressive capacity as the more usual, "Standard" British-English, and that Selvon, as author, sees no need to separate himself from his characters by way of a 'dominant' or 'standard' authorial idiom. Similarly, in his rare autobiographical writings, Desani speaks in a much more "Standard" English, yet in *Hatterr* he makes a point of providing no such standard against which to evaluate his characters' language.

Indeed, Desani emphasizes that, above all, he and his authorial language are not to be trusted. His "All About…" itself begins with a sort of liar's paradox:

> during '39- '45, these warring years, an appalling thing happened to me. I acquired a major Fault. I became secretive, told lies, at any rate, rarely the whole truth. Life seemed so many clashes and contests, sorry! and, well, Invention helps. […] Now discredit me if you wish, but I play safe. I lie only to the trusting. (13)

In other words, we're being told by a novelist-narrator that he tells lies, which is, essentially, the truth, lest he be a memoirist. Yet we're being told this in the context of a novel which is supposedly a memoir by a (fictional) Hatterr, who, by his very language, seems to come to life.

[40] In a recent panel at the meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association (March 2014), Dohra Ahmad noted that Selvon's novel may well be the first in which the narrator speaks in a deliberately non-standard English.
[41] Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*, 24, 111.

To make matters more complex, Hatterr himself *in the novel* indicts "the Pharisee G.V. Desani" as an exemplar of the "obscurantisms and subtlety" to be found among India's wandering priests (many of whom he encounters in the novel, to his general detriment). Hatterr makes reference to "the feller's tract *All About…*, publisher, the same publishing company" and critiques its message – the self-same liar's paradox:

> *Wherefore, pious brethren, by confessing I lie, yoiks! I tell the truth,* sort of topholy trumpeting-it, […] a language deliberately designed to mystify the majority, tempt 'em to start guessing, and interpreting our real drift, and allegory, what the hell we mean: pursue our meaning on their *sthula* (gross), the *sukshama* (subtle) and *para* (supreme) planes, and levels, and *still* miss the issue and dash their heads against the crazy-paved rock of confusion. (120)

The liar is being called out for lying about lying. I do not read this, as Singh does, as an indication of Desani's "refusal of both sincerity and 'meaning' in the interest of self-reflexivity,"[42] but rather, as a very sincere declaration, in good faith, that there is no standard of truth or clarity against which his work should be judged. Hatterr's reflection on Desani, while mocking, at the same time takes part in Desani's admission of a sort of Montaignian "*que scais-je?*" What could be more sincere than the admission that, at times, sincerity and understanding fail, that in the midst of "clashes and contests" (World War II, India's struggle for independence), "Invention helps"? Here Desani as much as admits to the sort of imbrication of "fantasy and naturalism" that Rushdie prescribes as a salve for the writer's collision with a history of violence and hegemony. Can Desani write a novel in Indian English without inciting a war between different standards (within India, between India and England, amidst religious factions) of linguistic authenticity? To do so requires a creation of an idiom that combines 'natural' linguistic elements in the hyperbolic, semi-fantastic idiom of the inimitable H. Hatterr. And it requires the sincere commitment of the 'real' (that is, 'natural') Desani to the mixed-up,

[42] Singh, "More Than 'Priestly Mumbo-jumbo'," 97.

fantastical relation with his protagonist that may "mystify the majority" yet also forecloses on attempts to deny that protagonist's perceptiveness and authority on the basis of his heterogeneous language.

Further, Hatterr's language itself proves thoroughly uncategorizable. He calls his English "the Christian lingo," his "second vernacular from the orphan-adoption age onwards," and defends this "rigmarole English" against charges of "staining your goodly godly tongue," by claiming that "I forsook my Form, School and Head, while you stuck to yours, learning reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic" (32, 37). If there is a category in which to understand his tongue, it is that of the migrant, and in Bhabha or Emily Apter's description, the untranslatable,[43] a language and identity caught in a perpetual 'between.' For Hatterr, this derives from his "orphan" provenance from a European father and Malay mother in India (33); for Desani himself, it derived from a childhood spent with his Indian family in Nigeria, followed by a move to India and a teenage flight to England. Hatterr's first language appears to have been Hindi (his self-chosen first name, "Hindustaaniwalla," in Anglo-Indian, literally means "related to Hindi"); Desani's was a dialect of Kikuyu.[44] As a result, Hatterr's language does include a great deal of Hindi, which he clearly glosses for a Western audience, yet does so in such a way that the gloss often furthers the narrative itself. At times it does so by humor, as when Hatterr encounters the faux-guru "Sadanand," whom he proceeds to call by his literal translation "Always-Happy" (121), an epithet which not only underlines the guru's fakery,[45] but also makes him seem thoroughly ridiculous. Similarly, in his autobiographical sketch, Desani defuses (or, subtly, underlines) his account of Guru Govind Singh's mustering of the Sikhs to drive Islam forcibly out of India by swerving off into an anecdote of linguistic amusement: "Singh means lion. It's quite absurd, if

[43] Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 321; See also Apter, *Against World Literature*.
[44] Desani, "Liars, Hypocrites, Immoralists and Sages," 120.
[45] Srinath, "G.V. Desani," 45.

you have about ten people in your household and each calling themselves So-and-so Lion, So-and-so Lion."[46] The migrant's acuity to the strangeness of language provides a decoy from the charged politics of India, even as it suggests Desani's underlying criticism of lionish territorialism.

In other instances, Hatterr's glosses add to the movement of his narrative, as in his delayed clarification of the word "*maro*":

> Then Always Happy gives the signal-cry: affirming the battle's on!
> '*Maro, maro, maro!* May they have sexy and swollen lizards for their sisters, *maro!*'
> I stood aloof.
> I did not *maro*. I did not beat up a cardinal. Sportsmanship came to my rescue. (138)

Only in the last line does the non-Hindi-speaker discover what "*maro*" means, and in the meantime, the use of the word elicits a sense of suspense, waiting to see what Hatterr will be obliged to do by the spurious "Always Happy." Thus, even while clarifying his narrative for a non-Hindi-speaking Western audience, Desani (and Hatterr) deftly situates such glosses so as to further his narrative. As this implies, he wishes his reader not only to use these glosses to understand his language, but also to *notice* them, and perhaps even to gain a bit of Hatterr's language in the process. As Hatterr will come to recognize, it is through such linguistic acuity and heterogeneity that one can avoid being taken in by such unilateral appeals to violence, that one can maintain an adherence to multiple doctrines rather than a single orthodoxy. This commitment to teaching a sort of bilingual sensibility is evident even in Desani's autobiography. Here, Desani throws in a seemingly offhand explanation that the word "Hindu" is actually an Iranian mispronunciation of "Sapta Sindhu" province, yet pages later, just as offhandedly, he refers to his second-language as "Sindhi." With this word, Desani seems to call on his reader to

[46] Desani, "Liars, Hypocrites, Immoralists and Sages," 124.

wonder whether "Sindhi" really means "Sindhi," the language of Desani's ancestral Sindh province (in Pakistan), or whether, via his previous comment on "Sapta Sindhu," it should be read as "Hindi," the pan-Indian language that Desani uses throughout his own writing.[47] Perhaps it is meant to be read as both languages at once, suggesting that Desani is speaking at once from both sides of the recent partition between Pakistan and India. This bit of language pedagogy is at once light-hearted and, implicitly, a serious invitation by Desani to consider how we actively learn from such multilingual fragments.

Yet what makes Hatterr's language so difficult to classify is that it is not simply a matter of English with a smattering of Hindi fragments, but incorporates a true cornucopia of heterogeneous Englishes and multilingual fragments from various provenances, calling us to reconsider how exactly we define the "otherness" of another language. These take the form of fully English puns, such as "I was in South Dakota, You Essay (as they say of U.S.A.)" (88) or constructions of a *Hobson-Jobson* Anglo-Indian hybridity, as in Hatterr's description of his wedding, "*I equipped myself with the blarney-phrases, convinced this female that she was real jam, had me led to the middle aisle and gave the ready 'I do' to the amenwallah her brother had hired for the occasion*" (226; italics Desani's). Others are simple, exuberant explosions of pan-European multilingual fragments, left unglossed as if to remain equally obscure to English and Indian readers alike: "Run along, laddie! Go play trains to Glamorgan, os gwelwch yn dda! Go join a verbindungen! Nothing doing, *mun*!" (194). A loose translation of the Welsh, German, and Scots here would render it as "Run along, laddie! Go play trains to Glamorgan, if you please! Go join a club! Nothing doing, man!," yet even in translating it thus, Hatterr's remaining English slang ("Run along," "Nothing doing") stands out as possibly requiring translation itself – again emphasizing that even idiomatic English in an ostensibly English text can seem a 'multilingual

[47] Ibid., 118, 120.

fragment' when it becomes so imbricated in a mix of other tongues and dialects.

The most idiosyncratic 'multilingual fragment' in Hatterr's speech, though, arises out of his obsession with medical jargon, resulting in declarations such as "Medically speaking, the happy circumstances vibrated my ductless glands and fused into me a wibble-wobble *Whoa, Jamieson!* fillip-and-flair to live, *live!*" (34). Here, Hatterr introduces his medicalese ("Medically speaking…") just as one might another language (e.g. "As one would say in Hindi…"), and the medical words he draws in are often just as opaque as unglossed Welsh. Indeed, Hatterr at times goes so far as to translate them, e.g. "my armpits, the axillae" (54), and in emphasis of the view that he understands medical language as another language entirely, is credited by his friend Banerrji with having begun a project "to translate dear Omar's *Rubá'iyát* medically," producing the "Dictume Khayyam. Free medical translation" (258-9; this is a play on the term "free metrical translation"). Though an English-speaking reader might distinguish Hatterr's medicalese as 'technical language,' it is only in his use of it as a half-learned *foreign* language that it is exposed as such, thus placing a language which is generally revered as an indicator of high learning (medical acumen) on the same plane as the 'unlearned' vernaculars (Hindi, Scots, and so on) with which it is interwoven and similarly shaped as a multilingual fragment. Hatterr collapses medical and poetic language into a single, multifarious hybrid, much along the lines of his fellow medical-literary enthusiast (and an actual doctor) Aziz in Forster's *A Passage to India*: "'Half a sec,' said Aziz, biting his pencil. He was writing out a prescription. 'Here you are...Is not this better than a poem?'" His friend responds, "Happy the man who can compose both."[48]

Not only are a multitude of languages compared within Hatterr's language, but his own form of English itself is compared with the equally – but very differently – idiosyncratic versions of "Indian English" employed by his wannabe English scholar and friend Banerrji and Banerrji's

[48] Forster, *A Passage to India*, 297.

pedantic acquaintance, the ex-lawyer Y. Beliram, as well as those of myriad other minor characters. These characters' hybrid Englishes, which are often far more broadly satirizing than Hatterr's, throw into relief the deep wisdom of Hatterr's madcap idiom, while also exposing the impossibility of identifying a single form of English as authentically 'Indian,' since each of these idiolects includes elements that might be natural to Indian English, yet each is also spun into the realm of the fantastical by the exaggeration of its idiosyncrasy.

Banerrji's English is the most prominent foil to Hatterr's in its classical example of colonial mimicry – a true "babu English," which, as Srinivas Aravamudan explains, upholds the "glory of English culture" through its mimicry, while at the same time constituting "a performative parody that decenters, interrogates, and exposes the pretentiousness of the model." The babu (and the babu's English) "is living proof of the impossibility, and hence the comedy, of his aspirations," as well as the failure of the "reforming, civilizing mission" of the colonizer.[49] Banerrji's speech is entirely un-Hatterrian, fraught as it is with Biblical, Shakespearian, and miscellaneous other misappropriated references. In counseling Hatterr on the latter's romantic intrigue with his washerwoman, for instance, Banerrji declares,

> Well might I exclaim with 2 Samuel XVIII, 33, Absalom, my son, my son! I can see you confer kisses on her, and I can visualise her reflex. Out of Christian charity, yet unawares, by your lip-salute, you were actually fanning her passion for you to the pitch of a '*Cossack, charge!*' I deeply regret that this took place. (44)

Such outbursts, though certainly as energetic as Hatterr's (it's no wonder the men get along), are of quite a different character than his friend's. For this reason, I find David McCutchion's claim that the two share a "bastard jargon" to be patently incorrect,[50] evidence of a critical inquiry that stops at the point of noticing that both Hatterr and Banerrji speak non-Standard English, but fails

[49] Aravamudan, *Guru English*, 135; Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 123.
[50] McCutchion, "The Indian Novel in English," 317.

to investigate more deeply into the breadth of difference available beyond that Standard.

The major difference between Desani's presentation of Banerrji and Hatterr's speech is that the latter is broadly, exaggeratedly satirical. This is evident even in the short (and very representative) passage above: in the unnecessarily (but punctiliously correct) citation of the Bible verse, in the grossly malapropriated quotation of King David's lament for his dead son, in the constant peroration, and finally, in the unexplained allusion to the "Cossacks" (likely a misremembering of Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade"). The speech is so over-the-top that there is no doubt it is meant to be comical, nor is there any doubt that Banerrji himself takes no share in the joke. By contrast, although Hatterr also indulges in wordplay, circumlocution, and allusion, he does so always with a suggestion that he is in nearly-full control of his runaway idiom, his puns and misappropriations often evincing a sense that he's aware of their humor and haphazard cleverness (as with his translation of "Always-Happy"), much more in the spirit of a winking crossword-puzzle clue than a bumbling colonial mimic. Indeed, Hatterr's difference from Banerrji is frequently emphasized by his inability to understand what his friend says and his exasperation that he does not arrive sooner at the point. "Kindly explain the exclamatories, old feller" (44), he begs Banerrji, but unlike Hatterr, Banerrji rarely provides a gloss. Instead, he keeps the "vernacular" (presumably Hindi) and English strictly segregated; rather than living between languages, as Hatterr does, he maintains them as separated and stunted. Thus, he makes claims like, "as we were not speaking in the vernacular, only the highest English poetical words of the Bard could do justice to my emotion" (190). Banerrji does not participate in the mélange of languages that, for Hatterr (and Desani), provides the possibility of an entirely new idiom. As Hatterr protests to his friend, "I am interested in *Life today*, not as it was in Elizabethan England!" (165). Hatterr is willing to use Shakespeare's English inasmuch as it best expresses

his point, but not to the exclusion of other linguistic fragments or other Englishes.

Yet even as Banerrji furnishes a ridiculous figure in Desani's text, he is presented with real sympathy and even a gesture toward his own peculiar intelligence. Even in misappropriating quotations, as he does above from *2 Samuel*, his application of "Absalom" to his friend's romantic plight is touching, if also something like hitting a fly with a sledgehammer. And when Banerrji is incorrect (as he often is) in his understanding of English culture, his mistake points more to the opacity of the original than it does to a fault in his own intelligence. For instance, he cautions Hatterr,

> you must not underrate the great Bard. He observed Life. He held an untarnished mirror to Mother Nature. He reported Truth faithfully. Maybe, in his day, the ophthalmic optician's art was not as advanced as it is today. Only rich and well-to-do people could afford glasses. If a poor man could see a church by daylight, without spectacles, it must have been assumed that he had a good eyesight. There was a great deal of fog in Elizabethan England. (165)

Banerrji's reading of *Much Ado About Nothing* (Beatrice: "I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by daylight"[51]) is patently incorrect, and yet his "ophthalmic" hypothesis for the line and for the synesthetic prodigality of Shakespeare's verbal imagery is really rather clever, particularly when made by a reader who has read Shakespeare's words yet not been taught *how* to comprehend them. For any English-speaking reader who has been flummoxed by a Shakespearian metaphor, Banerrji's predicament is instantly familiar, and his effort to devise an explanation rings as obviously untutored yet deeply sympathetic.

Desani's warm feeling for Banerrji's misguided humanity is made even more evident by his thoroughly unsympathetic portrayal of other characters who present their own, even more egregious versions of malapropriative and mimetic "babu" English. In one of the prefatory stories of "Sages" with which Hatterr begins each of his chapters, the "Sheik 'Ell See Arabi"

[51] "Much Ado," II.i, *Arden Shakespeare*, 919.

presents himself as a huckster-guru whose English puts that of Banerrji to shame, and for whose manipulative exuberance Desani's linguistic portrayal provokes little sympathy:

> "Hallo! I am monetary, client! I know the Occidental dialect! *Dank-oo! Dank-oo! Mo-ee, min' hair! Ya, ya, danke shoon! Farvel! Farvel! Oui, cher mud'ham!* Unlike your Sages, *Ek dum, och aye!* […] I have the temper of a king of men! I am a burrasahib! Verily, I am Headmaster!" (100-1)

The Sheik's claim to be "monetary" in the midst of all this "Occidental dialect" may throw into relief the capitalistic tendencies of India's Western occupiers, yet it does not soften the depiction of a "Sheik" who would demand money for teaching his disciples that a "*Neck-tie*" is a "mystic symbol" and "Soprano" an "Occidental science" (104). Unlike Banerrji's generous, if malaproprious treatment of Hatterr-as-Absalom, the Sheik's mistakes are made only in his own self-interest.

Desani turns an even more critical eye to Banerrji's acquaintance Y. Beliram, an ex-lawyer whose critique of Hatterr's autobiography is appended to the book as an index, yet whose pompous prose turns the brunt of his criticism toward himself rather than his chosen subject. For instance:

> Myself, having been brought up on the classics, the Authorized Version and the Bard, I may submit to you, Mr H. Hatterr, that your prose *composition* is *unacceptable*. The scenario – laissez-aller – is full of serious mistakes. Least to say, an author has no right to do so. An English author must learn to write the English language, please. Why do you not write a simple, concise, straight phrase like *To be or not to be* which has all the virtues of prose *composition*, rhetoric, style, etc., and no ambiguity whatever, being Anglo-Saxon assonance and no Romance, as the highest English composition should be? Why do you repeat yourself, excuse me? Why do you write such difficult English language for literati, when even the late Mr Bernard Shaw writes simple prose *composition* like *Do not spit* […]? Also, why do you employ Latin-French overuse, which is not elegant English language? The critics will find out. Little dogs have long tails, you will pardon me. (299-300; italics are Beliram's)

Beliram is a critic and inspirational speaker of the worst kind, arguing that "It is up to us to change the world *now!*" (285), yet really agitating for assimilation, even down to the "universal

language" that he propones on the basis that the word "pyjamas" occurs in similar forms in a variety of European languages (295). Little does Beliram care that the word comes originally from Urdu, or that it is, of course, the same in European languages because they all adopted it in a chain from this single source. Nor does he seem to be aware that his assimilationist strategy and his criticism of Hatterr's lively, heterogeneous English is undermined by his own Hindi-isms (most notably his repeated appending of "please" and "you will pardon me"), as well as his misreading of Shakespeare and Shaw (is *Hamlet* anything *but* "ambiguity"?) and misuse of English idioms like "little dogs have long tails" (a Scottish phrase meaning "Small people are capable of good work"[52]). None of these would be condemnable, if they did not occur in the midst of the condemnation of another writer's "composition" on linguistic grounds. In the case that any reader supposed that the Indian English spoken and written in *Hatterr* were the same for every character, Beliram disproves this claim by presenting the opposite linguistic personality to Hatterr himself. Where Hatterr makes allowances for the linguistic foibles of everyone from Banerrji to "Always-Happy," Beliram is pedantic, criticizing Hatterr's "not allowable spellings" of the place-name "Hanchow" (Hangzhou) and correcting him by providing the precise geographic coordinates of the city (300).[53] Where Hatterr is modest and full of humor, Beliram is pompous and humorless, missing the mockery in a letter of "praise" from an English professor ("Congratulations, Counsellor! PS. Bless my sole! what a feet!") and instead simply correcting what he sees as a typo and hanging the letter on his wall (318). Beliram's language is as amusing as Hatterr's, but the fun is very clearly at his expense. After all, how could an author like Desani show anything less than disdain for a man who promotes "universal language" and criticizes

[52] Wilkinson, "Little Dogs Have Long Tails."

[53] As anyone familiar with Chinese languages knows, the standard systems for writing these languages with Western characters have changed radically over time and may differ greatly. For instance, the Wade-Giles system (c. 1892) would write the city to which Beliram is referring (杭州) as "Hangchou," while the more current Pinyin system (c. 1958) would write it "Hangzhou"; "Hangchow" is also a common (if out-dated) transliteration.

Hatterr for his delightful bon-mot(e)s while failing to see the log in his own eye?

The key to Desani's novel is that he creates these comparisons – between Hatterr and himself, Hatterr and Banerrji, Banerrji and Beliram, etc. – by way of the subtle differences in the ways they use "Indian" English. No two characters in the novel speak in precisely the same version of the language, and even those voices that meld into one another (i.e. Hatterr and Desani's) do so only to underline the point that there is no Standard against which we might judge these Englishes against each other – except, of course, as in the case of Beliram, by the standard that the English-speaker himself provides (Desani has no problem hoisting Beliram on his own petard). Fittingly, then, the hero of the novel – Hatterr – makes this very strategy his "*crux-Statement*": "*Life is contrast* […] Damme, look at *Life*! *Life* is ups and downs, light and shade, sun and cloud, opposites and opposites" (155). Although Beliram claims that "linguistically speaking," "contrast" is a "rotten word," since Shakespeare never used it (155), Hatterr uses his own linguistic argument to make the case that contrast supersedes truth:

> Hell, what is *Truth*? as one P. Pilate once asked!
> Posterity expects: and no dam' use funking the issue.
> But can words ever communicate *Truth* – whatever it is?
> All words are pointers, indicators, symbols: and there isn't a single word in any lingo, dialect or doggerel, which is absolutely cast-true, suggesting in the exact infallible, *Truth*.
> A feller's attention-intelligence is an instrument, a flex-wire medium, there present to communicate sensation-stuff to him, *viz.*, all things and ideas, capable of producing sensation.
> A *Truth*-thing, or a *Truth*-idea, might be an *a*. By the time a feller has the notion of this *a*, a sensation of it, its nature changes. What a feller has is not an *a*, but an awareness of an *a*.
> Below the belt! He hasn't the true *a*, but a *translation*! (274)

Taking this one step further, he then concludes that this plenitude of expression and meaning is reason enough that humans should get along with each other (a fitting theme for the 1940s):

> *What is Truth?* (And, regardless, *too*, of whatever the word *Truth* is the *Translation* of!)
> Maybe, damme, all humans – the Shem, Ham and Japheth – just like you say,

> come from one branched-off source: our grand-dad chimpanzee, our gorilla grandma, and the orang-patriarch. O.K. and granted. But sans sense, primates, and progeny of puny primates! why bite one another *now*, though your ancestors might have?
> Parlyvoo la France, chums?
> Répondez s'il vous plait! *man hunting man!*
> Ach, main Gott! are human beings fools or what? (278)

Hatterr's parting multilingual fragments, drawing together warring languages (French, English, German) and incorporating – with potent relevance – his own version of Freud's "homo homini lupus" and Shakespeare's "Lord, what fools these mortals be," put a perfect finale to his conclusion that the precise "*Translation*" of "*Truth*" doesn't matter so long as the will toward reconciliation, coexistence, and charitable understanding persists. This most inclusive of all mottos mirrors precisely – and depends upon entirely – the coexistence of languages with which Hatterr (and his author, Desani) frames and phrases his account.

The Satanic Verses: "How are you supposed to read a man who writes in a made-up lingo of his own?"

But what of the work of that most vocal of participants in any discussion of heterogeneous or Indian English, Salman Rushdie? Rushdie, so often grouped together with predecessors like Desani, has occasionally been charged with similar flaws of language, namely a linguistic inauthenticity in the context of Indo-Pakistani English.[54] Yet he adamantly contests the view that "continuing use of the old colonial tongue" constitutes a "fatal flaw that renders it forever inauthentic," and does so by reference to Desani himself:

> So if I am to speak for Indian writers in England I would say this, paraphrasing G.V. Desani's H. Hatterr: The migrations of the fifties and sixties happened. 'We are. We are here.' And we are not willing to be exclude from any part of our heritage; which heritage includes both a Bradford-born India kid's right to be treated as a full member of British society, and also the right of any member of

[54] See Jussawalla, "Beyond Indianness," 41.

> this post-diaspora community to draw on its roots for its art, just as all the world's community of displaced writers has always done.[55]

Rushdie defends his use of particular Indian English forms – "I know a lot of people who speak like that, so I didn't make it up, I just heard it" – as well of his use of English at all, declaring that "in the end the language chose me; it wasn't I that chose it."[56] Rushdie may be over-simplifying here – isn't any choice of language a decision fraught with anxiety?[57] – but what Rushdie shares with Hatterr and other authors from the imperial periphery is the argument for the legitimacy of a space, a language, and an identity *in between*, strategically and permanently suspended in the very act of translation. This image of 'suspension' is a thoroughly modernist one – one thinks of Woolf's Mrs. Ramsay looking over her dinner table "like a hawk suspended, like a flag floated in an element of joy"[58] or of Benjamin's image of the translation plunging "from abyss to abyss."[59] Yet Rushdie takes it to a new arena in his novels, particularly his novel of migrancy, *The Satanic Verses* (1988), in which he dramatizes not only the experience of language as difference or the exuberance of language as play (as in Desani), but the very act of making a *new* language, of living within a language as it comes into being.

Because of its resonance with Rushdie as a linguistic innovator, by far the most celebrated passage in *The Satanic Verses* is that in which a minor character, the unsuccessful London migrant poet Jumpy Joshi, comments on his "*linguistic*" rivalry with his friend Hanif:

> Hanif was in perfect control of the languages that mattered: sociological, socialistic, black-radical, anti-anti-anti-racist, demagogic, oratorical, sermonic: the vocabularies of power. *But you bastard you rummage in my drawers and laugh at my stupid poems. The real language problem: how to bend it shape it, how to let it be our freedom, how to repossess its poisoned wells, how to master the river of words of time of blood: about all that you haven't got a clue.* How

[55] Rushdie, "'Damme, This Is the Oriental Scene for You!'," 148, 150.
[56] Rushdie, "The Literary Rushdie," 26, 30.
[57] See Noske and Young, "A Postcolonial Aesthetic?," 6-7.
[58] Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 157.
[59] Benjamin, *Die Aufgabe Des Übersetzers*, 21.

> hard that struggle, how inevitable the defeat. [….] *No power-base, no constituency: just the battle with the words.* […] Language is courage: the ability to conceive a thought, to speak it, and by doing so to make it true.[60]

This passage's connection to Rushdie's view (and that of many other writers) on postcolonial and migrant language is so self-evident that it barely requires exegesis. Yet I would argue that its seemingly retroactive view of language – as a thing that is already here, to be dealt with as we can – is most evocative of Rushdie's real innovation in his novel when it is paired with another, less familiar passage, in which the novel's main characters, Saladin Chamcha and Gibreel Farishta, both Indians who have migrated to London by way of an airplane exploded by terrorists over the English Channel, discuss the work of Vladimir Nabokov:

> ' "Minnamin, Gut mag alkan, Pern dirstan,"' Chamcha replied. 'It means, "My darling, God makes hungry, the Devil thirsty." Nabokov.'
> 'Him again,' Gibreel complained. 'What bloody language?'
> 'He made it up. It's what Kinbote's Zemblan nurse tells him as a child. In *Pale Fire*.'
> '*Perndirstan*,' Farishta repeated. 'Sounds like a country: Hell, maybe. I give up, anyways. How are you supposed to read a man who writes in a made-up lingo of his own?' (456)

This is the question at the heart of the novel: how do you read – or understand – a language that's in the process of being created? What's more, how do you foil an attempt to solidify this language into something static and dead, how do you continue to, in the famous injunction of Ezra Pound, make it new? It is a question which applies immediately to the situation of migrants like Chamcha and Farishta, but it can easily be pushed beyond the bounds of this particular arena, applying to *all* of the idiosyncratic idioms that are used by one person and understood (or rather, attempted to be understood) by another. That such language *can* be understood – at least inasmuch as any language can – is made evident by the fact that even Nabokov's made-up

[60] Rushdie, *Satanic Verses*, 290. The italics are Rushdie's. Subsequent citations are noted parenthetically in the text. On the importance of the passage with regards to Rushdie's perspective on authorship, see, for instance, Miller, "'It was so it was not so'," 40–1.

Zemblan is quoted in context by Chamcha, and even the disbelieving Farishta strives instinctively to incorporate it into his own schema ("Sounds like a country"). Indeed, he's not half-wrong: "*Perndirstan*," though *not* a country, sounds very much like the made-up estate, "Peristan" (a contraction of "Perownistan") that furnishes the setting for Farishta's later dream of a young female prophet's mass-suicidal Hajj into the Arabian Sea (500). That Rushdie actually took the name of the villa from the one used in Satyajit Ray's 1984 film of Rabindranath Tagore's 1916 Bengali novel *The Home and the World*[61] does not detract from this play on false cognates, but rather, enhances it, opening out the dynamic connections inherent to this single, strange multilingual fragment. As Aamir Mufti points out regarding Rushdie's style of appropriation, to "borrow" is "also to appropriate and renew,"[62] and here Rushdie makes evident that even a made-up tongue can serve as the site for connection between disparate artists (Nabokov, Ray, Tagore, Rushdie), the real and the fantastic, and most of all, new forms of communication. In summary, Rushdie's perspective on language, I would argue, is half-Joshi, half-Nabokov: both an encouragement to use the language one has encountered or received, and also an incitement to use it in a new way.

Connection *in* language, the spark of communication that is encapsulated in the act of translation, is the signal space for Rushdie, the "between" or "migrant's-eye view of the world"[63] that Desani's Hatterr might simply refer to as "contrast." This view is adamantly *not* Raja Rao's reluctant, apologetic English, but an idiom and culture that is, as Rebecca Walkowitz writes, unabashedly "mixed up from the start."[64] Rushdie outspokenly defends the validity and elasticity of this liminal perspective even as he recognizes its internal volatility, a position he

[61] Rushdie, "Introduction," 4.
[62] Mufti, "Reading the Rushdie Affair," 67.
[63] Rushdie, "In Good Faith," 394.
[64] Walkowitz, "The Post-Consensus Novel," 232.

ventriloquizes through the words of the India-born, English-educated narrator in his story "The Courter":

> I, too, have ropes around my neck, I have them to this day, pulling me this way and that, East and West, the nooses tightening, commanding, *choose, choose*. I buck, I snort, I whinny, I rear, I kick. Ropes, I do not choose between you. Lassoes, lariats, I choose neither of you, and both. Do you hear? I refuse to choose.[65]

It is no wonder, then, that Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* – even more than his other, less migrancy-oriented novels – is a work more fraught with multilingual fragments than most others in the postcolonial canon, since he adamantly refuses to choose one language or another. Rushdie's use of Hindi-Urdu[66] (and a smattering of Arabic) throughout the novel is so noticeable and central that several critics have commented upon the work as, in Peter Kalliney's judgment, a "contemporary Bakhtinian masterpiece," a novel almost entirely composed of what Bakhtin termed "heteroglossia" (see Introduction).[67] This is evident even from the novel's first lines, in which a flurry of languages falls from the sky alongside Farishta, Chamcha, and the wreckage of their exploded flight:

> 'To be born again,' sang Gibreel Farishta tumbling from the heavens, 'first you have to die. Ho ji! Ho ji! To land upon the bosomy earth, first one needs to fly. Tat-taa! Taka-thun!' […] Gibreel, the tuneless soloist, had been cavorting in moonlight as he sang his impromptu gazal. […] 'Ohé, Salad baba, it's you, too good. What-ho, old Chumch.' […] 'Hey, Spoono,' Gibreel yelled, eliciting a second inverted wince, 'Proper London, bhai! Here we come! Those bastards down there won't know what hit them. Meteor or lightning or vengeance of God. Out of thin air, baby. *Dharrraaammm!* Wham, na? What an entrance, yaar. I swear: splat.' (3-4)

Up in the air, Chamcha feels himself "metamorphic, hybrid" (7), while the violent explosion and

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[65] Rushdie, *East, West*, 211.

[66] Since all of the foreign language in the novel is transliterated into Latin script, the fragments that Rushdie includes might (for the most part) be in either Hindi or Urdu, so I'll refer to them as both. In fact, this linguistic ambiguity may itself be a subtle way of drawing together both sides of the 1947 Partition, much along the same lines of Desani's "Sindhi"/"Hindi" collation.

[67] Kalliney, "Globalization, Postcoloniality," 70; on the Bakhtin/Rushdie connection, see also Engblom, "A Multitude of Voices."

subsequent free-fall over Britain comes to signify the experience of migrancy itself:

> mingling with the remnants of the plane, equally fragmented, equally absurd, there floated the debris of the soul, broken memories, sloughed-off selves, severed mother-tongues, violated privacies, untranslatable jokes, extinguished futures, lost loves, the forgotten meaning of hollow, booming words, *land, belonging, home*. (4-5)

It is through this painful but also miraculous falling that Rushdie himself answers the central, famous question of his novel, "How does newness come into the world?" He replies:

> *Mélange*, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is *how newness enters the world.* It is the great possibility that mass migration gives the world and I have tried to embrace it. *The Satanic Verses* is a change-by-fusion, change-by-conjoining. It is a love-song to our mongrel selves.[68]

While this "hotchpotch" is evident in the language of the novel's characters (as in Farishta's speech above), Rushdie's challenge is in striving to maintain this sense of an uncertain liminality rather than allowing it to lapse into either English assimilationism or Indian nativism.

One method by which he seeks to do so is – in emulation of Desani – in refusing to provide a narrative or authorial voice that speaks in a different, more standard idiom than his characters themselves. The novel's unnamed, first-person narrator, who often (but always ambiguously) seems to constitute some figure of divinity, speaks in the energetic, elision-filled English familiar from Rushdie's other novels, with neologisms worthy of H. Hatterr, e.g. "sotospeak" and "thenagain" (11, 17). Of all of the novel's characters, this narrative voice sounds most like Chamcha's, yet it lacks the self-editing assimilationist impulses that mark the latter's speech for much of the novel. Chamcha, who has changed his name from Salahuddin Chamchawala and married an Englishwoman, seeks to flee from his own "traitor voice" that surprises him with phrases like "So okay, bibi, give one whiskysoda only" (34). Thus, he is very different from the narrator's unabashed, if often relatively subtle Indian-English. Although this

[68] Rushdie, "In Good Faith," 394.

narrative voice certainly does not speak Standard England-English, it is also removed from the broader dialect that Rushdie displays in works like his short story "Chekov and Zulu": " 'Adaabarz, Mrs. Zulu. Permission to enter?' 'Of course come in, Dipty sahib, why such formality?'"[69] In short, the narrator speaks a language suspended between two continents.

As a consequence, the narrator's use of multilingual fragments is notably even-handed with regards to the comprehension of an English or an Indian audience. The narrator seems to take middle-path with regards to the use of multilingual fragments by the novel's dual protagonists: Farishta, who at times believes and experiences himself to be the Quranic Angel Gibreel ("Farishta" means "angel" in Urdu and Hindi), indulges in frequent Hindi-Urdu interpolations, while Chamcha, the assimilationist who endures a temporary transformation into a demonic form, seeks to rid his speech of them entirely. Despite charges that Rushdie leans toward his non-Urdu-speaking English audience (as opposed to his Indian one) by providing "rather intrusive" and "amateurish" glosses for Hindi-Urdu words and little explanation for his rampant Western allusions,[70] his use of multilingual fragments in the voice of *The Satanic Verses*' narrator is remarkably careful and seems to endeavor towards clarifying his own hybrid language rather than focusing on one language or the other (English or Hindi-Urdu). This is evident, for instance, in his use of unglossed Hindi-Urdu words, as in the description of Farishta's suicidal mistress: "she gave him hell, she bawled him out and cursed him for a useless lafanga and haramzada and salah and even, in extremis, for being guilty of the impossible feat of fucking the sister he did not have" (27). While the narrator offers no gloss for the mistress' foreign vocabulary,[71] the words themselves maintain their insulting impact even for an audience which cannot understand their discrete meanings: the non-Hindi/Urdu-speaking reader's

[69] Rushdie, *East, West*, 149.
[70] Sachdeva, "'Being Borne Across.'"
[71] In fact, she is calling him a "loafer," "bastard," and a "brother-in-law" (which is an insult).

ignorance of the words actually allows them to take on the most insulting meaning he or she can imagine, expressing the speaker's anger to a greater extent than any single word might articulate. Yet for a Hindi- or Urdu-speaking audience, such unglossed language offers a privileged understanding of the exact meaning of these insults, as well as, even more subtly, the allusion to the obscenity "bhaenchud," literally meaning "sister-fucker" (Farishta will later refer to his dream of the prophet Mahound as a "*bhaenchud nightmare*," 111). The narrator's language, then, works on two different levels: the non-Hindi/Urdu-speaking reader understands the gist of the insult because of its tone and the blunt translation of "sister-fucker," while the Hindi/Urdu-speaking reader catches the meaning of the Hindi-Urdu as well as the sly, linguistic inside-joke on the somewhat absurd (albeit common) application of "bhaenchud" in contexts where it does not, strictly speaking, pertain.

By contrast, where the narrator *does* gloss Hindi-Urdu vocabulary, he often does so as a way of teaching and initiating his monolingual English reader, much as Desani, in his autobiography, teaches his reader to recognize "Hindi"'s derivation from "Sindhi." At one point in the novel, Rushdie's narrator describes London's "chic but unfortunately named" "Pagal Khana" restaurant, which is "popular enough, especially among the younger set of British Asians," yet whose name he translates both as the intriguing "Crazy Food" and the more off-putting "*Madhouse*" (352). This double-gloss may constitute a comment on the migrant crowd that gathers at the restaurant, yet it also prepares the reader for the suggestion, a few pages later, that the increasingly delusional Farishta be committed to a "Pagal Khana. Asylum" (356). This second use of the phrase is again glossed, yet its repetition offers a frisson of recognition, particularly for the non-Hindi/Urdu-speaking reader, since the phrase has already made its way into the reader's short-term vocabulary. Further, the contrast between the two instances of "Pagal

Khana" underscores the significatory distance between them: while the crowd at the "Pagal Khana" restaurant (which includes Chamcha) may *resemble* a "madhouse" in its liveliness and heterogeneity of opinion and language, this is also its inherent power – as a haven for dissonance and activist dissidence in the context of the English capital, as a site of migrant hybridity. Even its name takes on an ironic re-definition: a madhouse that one wants to take part in. By contrast, the "Pagal Khana" to which Farishta may be sent is a very real threat, a "madhouse" which retains all the assumed associations of confinement and ignominy. Understood in this light, even the narrator's glosses seem to be archly ironic, pointing to the duplicity of English euphemisms: it's the restaurant "Pagal Khana" which provides a true "asylum" for migrants, while Farishta's potential "Pagal Khana" is actually, ominously, a "madhouse."

The novel's narrator, ever an ambiguous presence, seems to reside precisely in such chiasmic translations, the network of meaning that forms a web between and within disparate languages. Although he claims to be a sort of deity or, in linguistic terms, a dictionary – "I know the truth, obviously," he tells us (10) – he makes a point of keeping this role and its associated certainty opaque; there are no fixed definitions, no definite *primum mobilis*. As the narrator tells us, in one of his rare overt intrusions in the text: "As to omnipresence and –potence, I'm making no claims at present" (10). Later he clarifies this commitment to a lack of clarity: "I'm saying nothing. Don't ask me to clear things up one way or the other; the time of revelations is long gone. The rules of Creation are pretty clear: you set things up, you make them thus and so, and then you let them roll. Where's the pleasure if you're always intervening to give hints, change the rules, fix the fights?" (423). In casting his narrator as a rather diffident deity, Rushdie suggests that even at the highest echelon of power, the only ethical recourse is to a sustainment of indeterminacy or "betweenness." As Rushdie himself explains,

> the novel has always been *about* the way in which different languages, values and narratives quarrel, and about the shifting relations between them, which are relations of power. The novel does not seek to establish a privileged language, but insists upon the freedom to portray and analyse the struggle between the different contestants for such privileges.[72]

Rushdie's narrator is thus one who knows as much as a being *could* know, yet also refuses to claim that he knows *everything* or that he would reveal it if he did. In the end, then, the only authority in the novel is, as M. Keith Booker writes, "language itself," an authority which implies the very impossibility *of* authority (or the complete control of the author), since language precludes mastery and calls for repeated interpretation.[73] It is, as *The Satanic Verses* suggests, the only authority proper to a world marked by the multiple definitions of time, place, and person brought about by migrancy. Rushdie articulates the effect of migrancy on multiple definitions in his description of the fatal flight that tosses Chamcha and Farishta out over England:

> How far did they fly? Five and a half thousand as the crow. Or: from Indianness to Englishness, an immeasurable distance. Or, not very far at all, because they rose from one great city, fell to another. The distance between cities is always small; a villager, travelling a hundred miles to town, traverses emptier, darker, more terrifying space. (41)

This polydefinitional, polyvocal, multilingual narrative ethics is, of course, also the crux of what has come to be known as the "Rushdie affair," the *fatwa* issued by the Ayatollah Khomeini against Rushdie shortly after *The Satanic Verses*' publication, which sent Rushdie into hiding, caused the novel to be banned in several countries (including India and Pakistan), and launched the book into a dubious fame often sharply disconnected from its actual content. As Sara Suleri and Homi Bhabha discuss, in *The Satanic Verses*, "hybridity is heresy,"[74] a phrase which encapsulates much of the controversy over the novel, including the hybridity of language which, in Rushdie's world, allows his *one* version of Mahound to be very different from the

[72] Rushdie, "Is Nothing Sacred?," 420.
[73] Booker, "*Finnegans Wake* and *The Satanic Verses*," 197; see also Kuortti, "*The Satanic Verses*," 128.
[74] See Suleri, *The Rhetoric of English India*, Chapter 8; Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 322–3.

Ayatollah's prophet Mohammed. It is this same hybridity that allows Rushdie's self-doubting Farishta-as-Angel-Gibreel to proclaim both the Satanic and the Koranic verses, contradictorily permitting and condemning the Muslim worship of female deities in addition to Allah. As Farishta acknowledges, "*it was me both times, baba, me first and second also me.* From my mouth, both the statement and repudiation, verses and converses, universes and reverses, the whole thing" (126). In other words, contrary to Khomeini's form of Islam, which fatally prohibits multiple depictions of the Prophet and depends upon the concept of a single, divinely-inspired, prophetic text, Rushdie's novel celebrates, demonstrates, and necessitates multiple interpretation and a questioning of all authorship or inspiration (though, signally, it never *precludes* worship, so long as worship's dependence on uncertain understanding is taken as a given). "Hybridity is heresy," indeed.

Rushdie's is a novel in which the figure supposedly closest to a divine power – the Angel Gabriel (that is, Farishta) – realizes that the world is full of people made hybrid by their own diverse experience, "hearing voices, being seduced by words. But not his; never his original material. – Then whose? Who is whispering in their ears, enabling them to move mountains, halt clocks, diagnose disease?" (241). It is a novel in which the character who takes Rushdie's own given name, Mahound's scribe "Salman the Persian," is responsible for inscribing a sacred text with words different than those dictated by his prophet. As he explains, "trust an immigrant not to play the game" (378). By contrast, Khomeini's world is one in which, as Srinivas Aravamudan explains, every enunciation is performative, in which "'what can Khomeini do?' is entirely inseparable from 'what does Khomeini say?'"[75] Linguistically and epistemologically, then, Rushdie and Khomeini inhabit different worlds, and indeed, Rushdie's plea to his readers after the *fatwa* was to allow him to escape from under "a language that does not fit me," that is, a

[75] Aravamudan, "'Being God's Postman'," 206.

world in which language-as-such signifies and *is* something far afield of what it does in *The Satanic Verses*.[76] The conflict is fundamentally one regarding the ethics of authorship, which in Rushdie's case (as he demonstrates through his novel's narrator), constitutes a disavowal of mastery and a radical promotion of multiple interpretations. According to Rushdie's own account of the aftermath of the *fatwa*, what most troubled him literarily was the necessity of explicating and defending his own literature in a manner that he felt should be left up to his readers' own multiple perspectives.[77] As Gayatri Spivak summarizes, in Barthesian terms:

> *in* the novel, Rushdie's staging of the author is more recognizably 'modernist' […], not decentered but fragmented by dramatic irony, the question of authorship repeatedly and visibly suspended by foregrounding. But the violence of the *fatwa* continuing the signature after its author's death, has jolted modernist playfulness into a Nietzschean *Ecce Homo* in Rushdie's irreproducible poem.[78]

What Spivak rightly terms Rushdie's "modernist" stance is incommensurable with the *fatwa*'s demand for a single author coterminous with a single meaning.

Rushdie creates a novel in which language is at once the most powerful of objects and, concomitantly, the least sacred. London, that bastion of empire, becomes "Ellowen Deeowen" of the Indian children's game, a "migrant's mimicry" of pronunciation that is transformed into a dominant label.[79] It is "no Proper London," but "a confusion of languages," "Babylondon" (474). Even when Chamcha, in his assimilationist phase, wishes to describe the city's "Proper" state, his vision of it is articulated in a series of (perhaps accidentally) Indian-English conjunctions of British landmarks: "Bigben Nelsonscolumn Lordstavern Bloodytower Queen" (39). There is no comma – let alone an Oxford comma – in sight.

Like London, Chamcha undergoes his own mongrelizing transformation from within, or

[76] Rushdie, "In Good Faith," 405.
[77] Rushdie, "A Response," 137.
[78] Spivak, "Reading *The Satanic Verses*," 219.
[79] Miller, "'It Was so It Was Not So'," 36; Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 243.

rather, the process of acknowledging a hybridity that was always already there. Before he leaves on his fateful flight to London, he is derided by his sometimes-lover Zeeny Vakil as a "deserter," "more English than, your Angrez accent wrapped around you like a flag," but an accent that "slips, baba, like a false moustache" (53). Indeed, even as Chamcha changes his name to Anglicize it, the result is both comical ("Chamcha" literally means "spoon," but is also Hindi-Urdu slang for "sycophant"[80]) and ineffectual – "Saladin Chamcha" is a truncated version of "Salahuddin Chamchawala," but it still registers as thoroughly Indian. Even as Chamcha aspires to be a "goodandproper Englishman" (43), his self-labelling as such does not sound English at all, but rather, smacks of the conjunctionizing syntax shared by all Indian-English speaking characters in the novel (including the narrator). Chamcha's character-arc follows the process of his acceptance of his own hybridity by way of his violent ejection from an airplane, his transformation into a migrant-devil and erstwhile hero of London's migrant community, and finally, his return to the bedside of his dying father in Bombay and re-adoption of his given name. Nevertheless, even as he attains something like self-acceptance, Chamcha remains hyper-aware of language, as when he notes the facile pun that the English would fashion out of his father's doctor's name, "Panikkar" (542). Notably, though, the rehabilitated Chamcha does not himself take sides in the joke, suggesting that he is less eager to strive for assimilation via denunciation. Further, in referring to his bedridden father's room as "Finnegan's [sic] wake" (542), Chamcha echoes his London acquaintance Mimi Mamoulian's mention of the novel as synonymous with Western learning (270), yet he reapplies and resituates this reference to Joyce's preeminently multilingual work in the most incongruous of places: an Indian sickroom.

In the end, Sara Suleri's pronouncement on the conclusion of the novel in religious (or blasphemic) terms holds true for its perspective on language, as well: Chamcha's return to India

[80] Kuortti, "*The Satanic Verses*," 126–7; see also Zeeny's comment, Rushdie, *Satanic Verses*, 55.

creates "a curious textual atmosphere in which the narrative appears to be forgiving itself for its own transgressions, even as it reconfirms the inevitability of their utterance."[81] In other words, Chamcha accepts the languages that he's been dealt – both Hindi-Urdu *and* English – yet does so in the awareness that it is his prerogative to actively *make* language, to create his own idiom out of his newly acknowledged hybridity. This, perhaps, is also the lesson that postwar and postcolonial literature adapts from modernist multilingualism and amplifies in its political profundity: multilingual fragments, though often small and at times even unacknowledged, signify the hybrid underpinnings of the English language itself, as well as the twentieth-century experience of *being* English – or British – hemmed in by a warring Europe and a disintegrating empire. As such, authors like Rhys, Desani, Rushdie, and others demonstrate that the inheritance of modernism's multilingual fragments goes far beyond mere experimental technique, introducing a strategy for gathering together the fragmentary pieces of nation and empire, and fitting them together into a potent and entirely new political critique.

[81] Suleri, *The Rhetoric of English India*, 193.

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